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Republicanism in Georgia: A Contemporary Perspective

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Like the rules for Alice's croquet game with the Queen of Hearts, the electoral patterns of the Republican party in Georgia defy systematic description. We thus approach a nebulous topic which at any given time displays apparently inconsistent trends. Republican electoral fortunes in Georgia have waxed and waned with little regularity over the last decade, from overwhelming victories at the presidential level to stunning defeats in state contests. This paper seeks to make some conceptual sense of these patterns by examining previous typologies of Republican voters and suggesting which elements of these retain the greatest validity. It is hoped that our efforts will place Georgia's Republicanism in regional perspective and offer some guideposts for further research into the future of the two-party system in the American South.

Arguments concerning the strength and durability of the American two party system tend to be dichotomized into two principal groups. One set of observers believes in the basic viability of the competitive two party system. Frank Sorauf, for example, notes that "while the future of the minor parties seems uncertain, one can with confidence point to a . . . general trend in the American party system: the increasing competitiveness of the major parties."¹ In contrast, other political analysts see a less optimistic future for the extant party system, insisting that it requires basic restructuring and revitalization. James McGregor Burns' *Deadlock of Democracy*² and David Broder's *The Party's Over*³ are examples of the less sanguine view of the future of the two party system. This dichotomous perception of the nature of the American party system is undoubtedly related to the historical role of party systems, as Lipset and Rokkan have noted. "'Party' has throughout the history of Western government stood for division, conflict, opposition within a body politic."⁴ At the same time, the authors note, political

¹ Frank J. Sorauf, *Party Politics in America*, second edition (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), pp. 51-52.

² Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

³ New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

⁴ Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in their *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 3.

parties have also "served as essential agencies of mobilization and as such have helped to integrate local communities."⁵

While some critiques of the American party system are based upon thoughtful analysis of several years of party electoral conflict, it often seems that serious questioning of the viability of the two party system follows closely on the heels of an electoral disaster for one of the parties. The Republican party was prematurely interred by some commentators after the Goldwater defeat in the 1964 presidential election, while the "Emerging Republican Majority" touted after McGovern's defeat by Nixon in 1972, was submerged in the 1974 off-year elections.⁶ After the latter election, the long-term viability of the Republican party has again come into question.

The American South constitutes an area in which Republican losses were particularly acute. Republican hopes for a viable "Southern Strategy" had been spurred on by Republican successes in the "rim South," as well as encouraging developments in such southern states as Georgia, where Republican candidates for the governor's seat had performed credibly, although not actually attaining success. In 1974, however, Republicans lost two United States Senate seats in the South to Democrats, while seeing ten incumbent House members suffer defeat as well (two each from Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina; one each from Georgia, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas).

The state of Georgia, which constitutes the focus of this paper, evidenced considerable decline in Republican fortunes in 1974. Howard "Bo" Callaway won a plurality of 46.5% of the votes in the general election in 1966, and Hal Suit had garnered 40.1% of that vote in 1970. In 1974, however, Ronnie Thompson could obtain the support of only 30.9% of the statewide electorate. Before the 1974 elections the Republican party in Georgia had one incumbent candidate for the United States House of Representatives and was given some chance of gaining one or two more House seats (Quincy Collins versus Larry McDonald in the 7th district and Newt Gingrich against John Flynt in the 6th district). Incumbent Republican Ben Blackburn lost his seat to Elliott Levitas and the other serious Republican challengers were also defeated. Indeed, Republicans did not win a single statewide office. In many cases token opposition, or none at all emerged: Democratic incumbents in the second and eighth districts ran unopposed. Furthermore, the numbers of Republicans in the Georgia State House of Representatives dropped from 29 to 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁶ See Kevin P. Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (New Rochelle, N. Y.: Arlington House, 1969).

An analysis of the nature and scope of the Republican defeat in Georgia, while hardly representative of the nation or the region, may provide some insights into the future of Republicanism in the region. The Republican defeat nation-wide has been attributed in whole or in part to such phenomena as the declining economic situation in the nation and the taint of the Watergate affair upon the national Republican party. To the extent that such forces affected Republicans in Georgia, this analysis may suggest some relationships which will have relevance for elections in other parts of the nation or the region.

That national-level events have had some impact upon the electoral process in Georgia is likely, but difficult to document with any degree of certainty. Some observers in Georgia feel that the myriad events which have made up the Watergate affair have led to a type of self-fulfilling prophecy of political pathology among Republicans.⁷ Attractive Republicans seem to have surmised that 1974 would not be a banner year for Republican electoral fortunes. In turn, less attractive candidates were nominated and summarily defeated. At an early stage in the Republican gubernatorial primary campaigns in Georgia in 1974, a newspaper reported that "GOPs Find No Heavyweights" in the headline of a page-one story. The article begins: "Watergate can hardly have a more devastating effect on the Georgia Republican party in the November election that it has already had on the GOP's chances of having a first-rate candidate for governor."⁸

Such impressionistic discourses are interesting in themselves, but a more carefully structured analysis of the correlates of the Republican vote in Georgia is needed, in particular in relation to earlier electoral contests in which the GOP had attained more success. The question might be asked in Georgia whether the decline in the Republican percentage of the statewide vote was due primarily to national level events or to the quality of the candidates presented. Was the GOP vote *qualitatively* different from earlier balloting, or was the support GOP candidates received simply lower in magnitude while its distribution remained similar to earlier patterns? Were "fringe" Republicans disaffected, or were more ardent supporters lost? The answers to such questions may allow some estimates to be made concerning the viability of the two-party system in Georgia. That is, if it can be demonstrated that a substantial "hard core" of Republican voters exists upon which later electoral efforts may be based, that party may have a brighter future than suggested by the recent election. If the Republicans, on the other

⁷ See, For Example, Linton Broome, "Republicans Their Own Worst Enemy?" *The Dekalb News*, January 15, 1975, p. 1.

⁸ Howell Raines, *The Atlanta Constitution*, June 19, 1974, pp 1A, 15A.

hand, have lost some constituencies which had hitherto remained loyal, the 1974 elections may have marked the demise of a fledgling competitive party system. Of course, several different factors may have combined to produce Republican electoral defeat in Georgia: Watergate and other national events, local party factionalism, or the primary election successes of candidates unattractive to a larger electorate. This paper cannot delve into the individual contributions made by such factors, but instead will concentrate its effort upon determining to what degree the 1974 gubernatorial election in Georgia deviated from past elections.

The basic focus of this paper is to examine the nature of the Republican gubernatorial vote in 1974 with two previous races for the governor's chair in 1966 and 1970. In recent times Republicans first began mounting effective challenges in gubernatorial elections in 1966.⁹ The gubernatorial races in 1966, 1970, and 1974 offer a relatively pure indicator of Republican strength in the state. Since such elections are consistently held during nonpresidential election years, the contamination from "presidential Republicanism" is minimized.¹⁰ The percentage of the vote gathered by Republican candidates in these three elections at the county level will thus constitute the dependent variables for this study.

The independent variables, also aggregated at the county level, include county population size (to be referred to as population), the percentage of the population engaged in white collar and manufacturing occupations (white collar and manufacturing), median family income (income), mean school years completed by the adult population over 25 years of age (education), percentage of the population considered rural (rural), percentage of population growth between 1960 and 1970 (growth), percentage of nonwhite residents (race), and population per square mile (density).¹¹ Included also are the 1973 county millage tax rates, which give a rough measure of the extractive capability and inclination of a county.¹² This variable relates indirectly, at least, to the level of services which county residents might expect and are required

⁹ Republicans had not nominated a gubernatorial candidate in Georgia prior to 1962 since Reconstruction. Their nominee in 1962 died prior to the election and no successor was named.

¹⁰ V. O. Key, Jr. discusses the concept of "presidential" Republicanism in his *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), pp. 277-297.

¹¹ These variables were obtained from the *1970 Census of Population* for the state of Georgia, published by the Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

¹² Source: *1973 Statistical Report*, Georgia Department of Revenue.

to finance. In addition, a "dummy" variable, labelled "SMSA" was constructed as a measure of the proximity of a county to an urban area. Counties within an SMSA in 1970 were coded highest, and in decreasing order, counties were grouped according to whether they had shown a clearly urbanizing trend, contained cities between 25,000 and 50,000 in population, cities between 15,000 and 25,000 population, and finally, those not containing a place of over 15,000 population.¹³ These data, derived from census sources, are demographic-descriptive and have been used in other aggregate studies seeking to explain electoral choice.¹⁴ The SMSA variable will be used as a rough indicator of the effects of urban influence where the rural variable may not be an accurate indicator because of the lag in the census tabulation of urban growth.

Since aggregate data are the basis for this analysis, it suffers from the inherent weaknesses of such efforts: there is a danger that the "ecological fallacy" may occur in that inferences concerning individual voting behavior are speculative at best.¹⁵ Further, the wide range in the size of Georgia counties (607,542 in Fulton county and 1,924 in Echols in 1970) creates uneven units of analysis. The former pitfall will be minimized by limiting inferences to aggregate units and by pointing out the limitations of the data where appropriate. The latter problem will be attacked by employing first-order partial correlations to control bivariate relationships for population size (Table 1), and

¹³ Counties within SMSA's were Bibb, Chatham, Chattahooche, Clayton, Cobb, Fulton, Dougherty, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Muscogee, Richmond, and Walker. The urbanizing counties include Barrow, Bartow, Cherokee, Coweta, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Henry, Paulding, Peach, Rockdale and Walton. Clarke, Floyd, and Lowndes are counties containing a town of 25,000-50,000. Glynn, Hall, Houston, Spalding, Sumter, Whitfield, Ware, and Troup are counties with towns of 15,000-25,000. The remaining 124 counties are considered "rural."

These breakdowns reflect a rough division of a "cosmopolitan" dimension in terms of proximity to an urban center of some kind. Considerable urban-rural variety and cleavage undoubtedly does exist within some counties. However, the relatively small size of Georgia counties (the only state in the union with more counties is Texas, a much larger state) does not tend to limit such within-unit variance.

¹⁴ See, for example, M. Margaret Conway, "The White Backlash Re-examined: Wallace and the 1964 Primaries," *Social Science Quarterly*, 49 (December, 1968), 710-719; Michael Rogin, "Wallace and the Middle Class: the White Backlash in Wisconsin," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 30 (Spring, 1966), 98-108; and Numan V. Bartley, *From Thurmond to Wallace: Political Tendencies in Georgia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970).

¹⁵ For discussions of these problems, see W. Phillips Shively, "Ecological Inference: The Use of Aggregate Data to Study Individuals," *American Political Science Review*, 67 (December, 1969), 1183-96; Douglas D. Rose, "National and Local Forces in State Politics," *American Political Science Review*, 67 (December, 1973), 1162-64; Eric A. Hanushek, et al., "Model Specification, Use of Aggregate Data, and the Ecological Correlation Fallacy," *Political Methodology*, 1 (Winter, 1974), 90, 97-98.

by examining subgroup means and standard deviations for certain characteristics.¹⁶

An observer first coming upon the political scene in Georgia may be surprised that Republicans have not been more successful at the state level. Republicans have carried the state in the Presidential elections of 1964 and 1972, and have elected Republican members to Congress from three of Georgia's congressional districts since 1964. Although the Republicans have not won a statewide race, "Bo" Callaway did win a plurality of the vote in the 1966 gubernatorial campaign. Charles B. Pyles has noted that "the factors of population change, urbanization, increased incomes, and higher educational attainment appear to be favorable to the long-term growth of the GOP."¹⁷ In addition, many observers believe that the Republicans are better organized politically than the Democrats. How, then, does one account for the statewide electoral contest in 1974 in which Ronnie Thompson suffered a 70% to 30% defeat?

An analysis of Thompson's vote relative to earlier votes may aid in determining whether the 1974 election marks the end of Republican resurgence in Georgia or whether it was merely a temporary aberration in the trend toward a competitive two-party system in Georgia. An examination of typologies of Republican voters developed by other theorists may cast some light about the shifting Republican constituencies.

In *Southern Politics* V. O. Key, Jr. identified four different kinds of Republicans: presidential, mountain, Negro, and party professional Republicans. The latter group referred to individuals who were attracted to state politics primarily by patronage opportunities.¹⁸ The Republican vote has, of course, changed considerably in composition in the quarter of a century since Key's work was published, as more recent analysis suggests. Donald Strong has noted the existence of two major types of Southern Republicans in recent elections: business, professional, and

¹⁶ Hanushek, et al., p. 90, argue that since political scientists are interested in "the regularities in human behavior associated with the effects of various characteristics, rather than individual behavior *per se*, aggregate data, analyzed with a properly specified model and sufficient numbers of relevant variables, may be more useful in inferring individual behavior than political scientists have realized. All relevant variables cannot be included, but we believe that a sufficient number have been included in this analysis. On this issue, see also, W. S. Robinson, "Ecological Correlations and the Behavior of Individuals," *American Sociological Review*, 15 (June, 1950), 351-57, and Austin Ranney, "The Utility and Limitations of Aggregate Data in the Study of Electoral Systems," *Essays on the Behavioral Study of Politics*, ed. Austin Ranney (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), 99-110.

¹⁷ Charles B. Pyles, "Georgia," in George E. Dyer and Richard W. Griffin (eds.), *The New Southern Politics* (Chandler-Intext, forthcoming), p. 15.

¹⁸ V. O. Key, Jr., *op. cit.*, pp. 277-297.

white collar citizens residing in urban areas who are motivated by economic issues, and white voters in the black-belt counties who are motivated by racial concerns.¹⁹ James Sundquist, in turn, rather than presenting a static typology, has focused upon three processes through which "presidential" Republicans—those who cast a Republican vote only for presidential candidates—are converted to Republican voters in sub-presidential contests. Sundquist's processes include: the conversion of leading Democrats into Republicans, bringing along their personal constituencies; liberal Democrats defecting to the Republicans to defeat a conservative Democratic nominee; and conservative Democrats defecting to defeat a liberal Democratic nominee.²⁰ All three of these processes have been in evidence in Georgia in recent elections. Phil Campbell and Jimmy Bentley are well-known examples of Democratic converts to Republicanism. Many liberal or at least moderate Democrats refused to endorse the Maddox Candidacy in 1966 and voted for "Bo" Callaway.²¹ The election of Ben Blackburn to the U. S. House of Representatives is an apparent instance of conservative Democrats bolting their party in opposition to the moderately liberal Democratic nominee, James MacKay. While Republican, rather than Democratic defections are at issue here, Sundquist's processes may of course be readily converted to the alternate directions he hypothesized.²²

With these typologies and conversion processes in mind, we will now turn to the electoral and demographic data which may clarify which conceptual framework most adequately describes the 1974 electoral picture. Table 1 contains the simple and multiple correlations of the Republican gubernatorial vote in 1966, 1970 and 1974 with the 11 independent variables described above.

Table 1 indicates that while there are some continuities in the relationships between Thompson's correlations with Callaway and Suit (most notably in regards to SMSA and income), the general picture is one of discontinuity. Callaway and Suit received more electoral support than Thompson did in counties which: had larger populations, were densely settled, were urban, reflected high education levels, and contained high percentages of individuals employed in white collar occupa-

¹⁹ Donald S. Strong, "Further Reflections on Southern Politics," *Journal of Politics*, 33 (May, 1971), 239-256.

²⁰ James L. Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System*, (Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution, (1973), pp. 269-274.

²¹ Admittedly, many liberal Democrats were involved in the Ellis Arnall Write-In Georgia (WIG) campaign. See Bruce Galphin, *The Riddle of Lester Maddox: An Unauthorized Biography* (Atlanta: Camelot, 1968), pp. 105-167.

²² On Blackburn's campaign in 1966, see David L. Paletz, "The Neglected Context of Congressional Campaigns," *Polity*, 4 (Winter, 1971), 195-217.

TABLE 1. Simple and Multiple Correlations between Republican Gubernatorial Nominees and Several Demographic Variables (County Level Data)

	<i>Callaway</i> 1966	<i>Suit</i> 1970	<i>Thompson</i> 1974
Population Size	.470***	.517***	.037
Density	.486***	.571***	.085
% Rural	-.475***	-.331***	.090
SMSA	.319***	.534***	.268***
Education	.458***	.464***	.072
Income	.295***	.674***	.401***
% White Collar	.580***	.584***	.056
% Manufacturing	-.233**	.103	.201**
Growth	.100	.501***	.368***
% Non-White	.175°	-.444°	-.270***
Millage	.358***	.587***	.191**
Multiple Correlation	.715	.763	.583
Coefficient of Determination	.511	.582	.340

° = Bivariate Correlation $p < .05$ ** = Bivariate Correlation $p < .01$ *** = Bivariate Correlation $p < .001$

Underlined bivariate correlations remained significant at least at the .05 level when controlled for population size with first-order partial correlations.

tions. The correlations for Callaway and Suit are strongly suggestive of Donald Strong's first type of Republican, the business-professional-white collar urbanite. One conclusion which may thus be readily drawn is that Thompson failed to appeal to a constituency established by the two previous Republican gubernatorial nominees. Since Thompson can safely be considered as a conservative candidate, it may be supposed that this segment of his potential constituency is relatively moderate and was alienated by Thompson's style and campaign appeals.

The vote of Strong's second type of Republican, the black belt white, is more difficult to assess. In previous decades the vast majority of Georgia's black belt vote could safely be assumed to be almost totally white. Since the Voting Rights Act of 1965, however, increasing numbers of blacks have registered and voted. The aggregate data analyzed here thus limit the type of inferences which may be drawn. As recently as 1970, however, Lester Maddox's vote was positively correlated with the

percentage nonwhite in a county,²³ although Maddox lost the black belt in the 1974 gubernatorial primary. There is some basis to believe, then, that whites in black belt counties may be activated when racial issues are salient. In any event, Callaway seems to have received a slightly higher share of the vote in black belt counties (against Lester Maddox) in 1966, while both Suit and Thompson's votes were negatively correlated with the percent of nonwhite population.

Thompson thus achieved the unique distinction of losing support from both of the major types of Republican voters outlined by Strong. For a number of reasons, Thompson might not have been expected to appeal to affluent, well educated, urban Republicans. However, it is also evident that Thompson failed to activate the white voters who might have been expected to be most responsive to the race issue. In this respect, Thompson's campaign and failure parallel that of Lester Maddox in the 1974 gubernatorial primary: Maddox lost the black belt counties to George Busbee. Maddox and Thompson both seemed to project an image for which there was no longer much of a constituency.

Table 1 may also be interpreted as the reverse of one of Sundquist's conversion processes. To the degree that "liberalism" may be inferred from high levels of education, white collar occupations, and urbanization, it appears as though many "liberal," or perhaps urban Republicans defected from their party to help defeat an unpalatable candidate. There are many possible reasons for this. Thompson was a "maverick" candidate, who ran in both the Republican and Democratic primaries. He defeated a number of regular Republicans in the first party primary and won the nomination by narrowly defeating the more moderate and "respectable" Harold Dye in the runoff. Thompson spent the campaign quarreling with the Republican state party chairman, Bob Shaw. In addition, Thompson's demagogic style was not designed to attract more thoughtful, issue-oriented urban voters. Still, a process of urban defection in the Republican party is a relatively recent phenomenon in the South, because Republicans previously had few votes they could lose. The fact that such a reversal is possible may be an indicator of growing two-party competition in the South. It remains to be seen, however, whether this Republican vote defection is permanent or temporary.

²³ See Michael W. McKinney and Robert K. Whelan, "Urbanism, Localism, and the Race Factor in Southern Political Patterns," Paper delivered at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 7-9, p. 8.

Both V. O. Key and Sundquist refer to "presidential" Republicans. One way of assessing the degree of vote transference from the presidential to the state level is to correlate the county-by-county vote for recent presidential elections with the gubernatorial contests being examined here. Since Georgia's gubernatorial elections are held in the middle of the presidential term, several intervening factors are capable of biasing the analysis: changes in county demographic characteristics, national or international events, and changes in the nature of campaigns and opponents. In addition, the concepts of "conversion" or vote "transference" are dynamic ones, while correlations are static representation of the distribution of votes. The correlations in Table 2 thus can only be considered as rough indicators of the congruence between pairs of elections.

Table 2 offers a mixed picture in regard to Sundquist's hypotheses concerning the conversion of "presidential Republicans" to state and local Republican voters. There are some substantial correlations between votes that might be interpreted as supporting the notion of conversion. In

TABLE 2. Correlations between Republican Gubernatorial and Presidential Votes, 1960-1972

	<i>Nixon</i> 1960	<i>Goldwater</i> 1964	<i>Nixon</i> 1968	<i>Nixon</i> 1972
Callaway 1966 .....	.480***	.167*	.501***	-.332***
Suit 1970 .....	.507***	-.208**	.847***	-.022
Thompson 1974 .....	.068	.016	.289***	.208**

* = $p < .05$

** = $p < .01$

*** = $p < .001$

particular, Suit's correlation with the Nixon vote in 1968 is substantial, as is "Bo" Callaway's. The general pattern, however, is far from clear. It might be expected that any transference from national to local candidates would occur immediately after an election in which the national figure obtains a large preponderance of the vote. If a transference is to occur, a necessary condition would seem to be that a substantial number of Democrats had been induced to vote for the presidential candidacy of a Republican. In 1972 Richard Nixon carried more than 70% of the popular vote in Georgia. Two years later Republican Ronnie Thompson could garner only 31% of the vote in his quest for governor. The correlation (.208) between Thompson's vote and Nixon's 1972 vote is significant, indicating that the county percentage distributions were related. However, the magnitude of the Thompson vote does not approach that of Nixon's. The data used here do not lend themselves directly to the type of dynamic analysis suggested by Sundquist. How-

ever, if vote transference were taking place, more consistent correlations between national and state level candidates should manifest themselves.

The data examined above may be used to argue that any type of vote transference among national and Georgia state Republican candidates is very limited, and indeed, this may represent the weakness of Republicanism in Georgia. That is, the limited continuity among all state and national level Republican votes suggests that candidate attractiveness powerfully reinforces (or fails to reinforce) Republican identification, perhaps to the point that the nature of a candidate's appeal (and of course his opposition's) is a more important determinant than party label. This does not imply that any "hard core" Republican continuity exists. The correlations among the three Republican gubernatorial votes studied here suggest that a temporal continuity does exist, but that it does not extend beyond one election. The Callaway-Suit correlation is .466, Suit-Thompson is .458, but Thompson-Callaway is $-.144$. The first two product-moment correlations are significant at the .001 level, the last one at the .05 level. It could, of course, be argued that Ronnie Thompson was a very different type of candidate in relation to Suit and Callaway. This is undoubtedly true, yet the point is that for whatever reason, a consistent Republican vote, at least at the gubernatorial level in Georgia, has not emerged. Thus while Democrats in Georgia may be able to take a certain "residual" loyalty for granted, Republicans have yet to develop such an electoral foundation.

One other way in which the shifting nature of Republican electoral bases may be depicted is by means of an analysis of the geo-demographic distributions of the three recent gubernatorial elections. Table 3 contains the unweighted means of the Callaway, Suit, and Thompson percentages of the county votes, grouped by categories of the SMSA variable. Several analysts of the southern political arena have noted that urban, town, and rural areas differ widely in respect to the support they grant to candidates for political office.²⁴ Examining the breakdowns in Table 3 to determine whether significant differences exist between urban, town, and rural voting patterns allows some assessment of the nature of the Republican vote.²⁵

In wide perspective, Table 3 shows that the Republican vote in Georgia has been an urban one, although the Suit, and in particular the Thompson election, suggest that this is decreasingly the case. The

²⁴ See Bartley, *op. cit.*; Joseph L. Bernd, "Georgia: Static and Dynamic," in William C. Hovard (ed.), *The Changing Politics of the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), pp. 304-311; and V. O. Key, *op. cit.*

²⁵ The Difference of Means test used is described in Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Social Statistics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, first edition, 1960), pp. 170-176.

Republican vote has in the past been centered in the counties within Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas. These areas, which presented Callaway with 56% of their votes in 1966, cast 42% for Suit in 1970, and only 31% for Thompson in 1974. Moreover, Thompson's vote differs from the others in that only in the 12 urbanizing counties is his percentage of the vote significantly higher than in the rural counties. Callaway and Suit consistently generated significantly more electoral support in the SMSA and town counties than in the rural counties.

TABLE 3. Unweighted Means and Standard Deviations of Republican Gubernatorial Votes by SMSA Categories, 1966-1974

<i>Callaway 1966</i>	<i>Suit 1970</i>	<i>Thompson 1974</i>
	<i>Total Counties (N = 159)</i>	
Mean = .384	.274	.295
SD = .128	.114	.902
	<i>SMSA Counties (N = 12)</i>	
Mean = .561***	.416***	.311
SD = .141	.142	.102
	<i>Urbanizing Counties (N = 12)</i>	
Mean = .322	.368***	.413***
SD = .099	.062	.062
	<i>Large Town Counties (N = 3)</i>	
Mean = .566***	.452**	.240
SD = .056	.071	.059
	<i>Small Town Counties (N = 8)</i>	
Mean = .524***	.332*	.268
SD = .078	.086	.059
	<i>Rural Counties (N = 124)</i>	
Mean = .358	.239	.283
SD = .108	.087	.083

*** = significantly different from Rural Counties mean at .001 level

** = significantly different from Rural Counties mean at .01 level

* = significantly different from Rural Counties mean at .05 level

These findings further suggest that the Republican hold on an urban and town electoral base is tentative at best.

Other possible sources of Republican electoral support exist in the "mountain" counties, as suggested by V. O. Key.²⁶ The electoral percentages for Republican presidential and gubernatorial candidates in four of the north Georgia counties which have consistently provided support for Republicans is presented in Table 4. In 1972, these four counties each cast in excess of 75% of their ballots for the presidential candidacy of Richard Nixon. Their levels of support for Callaway and Suit were higher than other rural counties. In 1974, however, Fannin and Gilmer counties' percentages for Thompson were only slightly above

²⁶ E. Merton Coulter provides an historical perspective on Georgia's mountain counties in his *Georgia: A Short History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, Third Revised Edition, 1960), p. 458.

TABLE 4. Republican Percentages of the Vote in Four "Mountain" Counties in Georgia, 1960-1974

	<i>Nixon</i> 1960	<i>Gold-</i> <i>water</i> 1964	<i>Nixon</i> 1968	<i>Nixon</i> 1972	<i>Calla-</i> <i>way</i> 1966	<i>Suit</i> 1970	<i>Thomp-</i> <i>son</i> 1974
Fannin	66%	54%	59%	80%	63%	63%	42%
Gilmer	56	50	52	78	49	50	35
Towns	55	47	52	80	51	48	29
Union	56	41	39	76	38	38	29

the statewide mean, while Towns and Union were below. Here again, as with urban and black belt Republicans, candidate attractiveness did not reinforce or activate latent Republican tendencies. Transference of Republican electoral strength from the presidential election in 1972 to Thompson's 1974 governor's race also appears to be absent.

None of the typologies discussed above offer a totally satisfactory explanation of the sources of contemporary Republican electoral support in Georgia. This is the case largely because Republican success at the ballot box depends so little upon party identification and so much upon the appeal of a candidate to independent and Democratic voters. Typical of this state of affairs is the difference between the numbers of Republican votes in the primary runoff as compared to the general election in 1974. The gubernatorial nominees in the Republican primary runoff election, Harold Dye and Ronnie Thompson, received a combined total of 43,880 votes. Thompson, in turn, received 289,013 votes while losing to George Busbee in the general election. This figure represents more than *13 times* the number of votes Thompson received in the Republican primary runoff (although he received more votes in the *Democratic* primary). If voting in a party primary is any indication at all of party identification levels (and primary election crossovers undoubtedly exist in Georgia, although the degree of such crossover voting has yet to be established), a candidate might expect to make little political capital by appealing to Republican party loyalty. Indeed, the only rational strategy for a Republican candidate in Georgia would seem to be to appeal to the largest possible number of elements that make up the potential Republican vote: white collar urbanites, mountain Republicans, black belt whites, and suburban voters.