

Specimen Response for Study Theme 3C

STUDY THEME 3C: THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Question

Assess the importance of the minority ethnic vote to the Democratic and Republican parties. (15 marks)

Response

In the USA, there are only two major Political Parties for voters to choose from. While both parties gain support from all sections of the population and regions of America, they are clearly divided.

Democrats have the support of the Liberals, poor and the ethnic minority, and the Republicans, have the support of big business, the rich and rural communities.

Afro Americans make up 12% of the population and are concentrated in the southern states and cities in the North East. Many moved from the cotton and tobacco plantations to find work in the cities. Hispanics are the fastest growing population in the USA and have 12% of the population. This group is made up of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and those from Central and South America. Hispanics tend to be concentrated in Southern and Western states, Mexicans in New Mexico and Texas and Cubans in Florida.

The Democratic Party was the Party that gave civil rights to Afro-Americans in the 1960's and also help to poor people. Since many African-Americans are poor they strongly support the Democratic Party. As such many Democratic representatives depend for their majorities on the black vote in win the election. In fact Jesse Jackson, a famous black leader, ran for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency in the 1980's. He also set up an organisation called Push to make black adults more responsible and to register to vote No Black politician has tried to become the Republican candidate. There are far more elected Black Democratic representatives than Republican.

The Hispanic vote is made up of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and people from Central America. They are the fastest growing population in the USA and there will soon be more Hispanics than blacks The Hispanic vote is very important for both parties The Hispanic vote tend to support the Democrats, although some Hispanic

groups support the Republican .

Unfortunately for the Democratic party having the support of the poor and ethnic minority does not lead to getting their vote. Many do not vote or even register. Many African Americans live in run down ghetto areas in inner cities which are plagued by poverty and crime. They regard voting as pointless as it will not change anything.

Some states also punish the poor by not allowing them to vote if they have a criminal record. In the 2000 elections 200,000 potential black voters were excluded because of their criminal record. If they had been allowed to vote Gore would have won Florida and would have become President. This would have increased the importance of the black vote.

Overall the black vote is very important to the Democrats but less so for the Republicans. While the Hispanic vote is more important for the Democrats, the Republicans are making an effort to win their support as they are the fastest growing population group in America. The Republicans regard the white conservative vote as being the most important vote.