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PAGE 4

MONTGOMERY, ALA., TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1969

Third Party Polarizes Politics

IN A LETTER printed below, Richard Boone, who was the candidate for Congress of the National Democratic Party of Alabama, purports to give a "different viewpoint" from the one we expressed last week regarding the Supreme Court's recent decision on Alabama election laws.

But when we read the letter, we discover that the viewpoint is not very different after all. Mr. Boone acknowledges the essential points we sought to make: (1) the Garrett Act, requiring all candidates for public office in Alabama to declare their intentions to run eight months in advance of the general election, was aimed not at Negroes but at Republicans; and (2) the NDPA failed to comply with that law. Boone goes on that the law was "simple unreasonable." That, of course, is a matter of subjective judgment. But the point is, if the law is unreasonable, the Supreme Court could have struck it down on that basis rather than on the

unsupportable ground that the law was intended to discriminate against Negroes. That was the sum and substance of our editorial.

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BOONE goes on to defend the existence of his party—a matter which was not discussed at all in our remarks.

However, no one can seriously claim—as he does—that the NDPA was a "racially-integrated party." In actual fact, the NDPA very likely had less white participation than George Wallace's party had black participation. The only party which could justly make such a claim was the Alabama Independent Democratic Party, a moderate group who sought to redeem the two-party system in the state.

The NDPA is essentially a black party, and as such it tends to perpetuate racially-polarized politics in Alabama. As long as it exists as a third party, the NDPA will isolate the Negro from state politics and make him as ineffective as he was before he obtained the vote.

OTON
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Dear Fellow Democrat,

I felt that you would be as interested in the editorial which is reproduced on the reverse side of this letter as I am. It seems to me that this sums up the position of our party in a very real way. I hope you will agree and that you might make use of this editorial to help strengthen our efforts in the political arena.

Yours very sincerely,

Rufus A. Lewis,

Chairman

Alabama Democratic Conference