

## Party Realignment in Congress

A realignment represents a fundamental change in the way substantive issues map onto the spatial model we described in chapter 2. Our findings differ from those presented in the realignment literature in political science, which has largely drawn its evidence from the voting behavior of the *mass electorate* rather than from the roll call record of the *congressional elite*. In contrast to the usual finding that three major realignments have occurred since Jackson's presidency, we claim there has been only a single *legislative* realignment. This realignment was produced by the conflict over slavery, and the critical years are 1851–52, well before the Civil War.

There was no major realignment in either the 1890s or the early 1930s. Nevertheless, the Democratic landslides of the 1930s initiated a minor realignment, or perturbation, of the space. Like the conflict over slavery, this minor realignment arose over matters related to the rights of African-Americans. In contrast to these race-related issues, most issues in American politics are simply absorbed into the major dimension of political conflict. Indeed, the politics of race has, for much of American history (including the contemporary period), also been encompassed by the major dimension.

In this chapter, we present a simple model of realignment that is based on the spatial model in chapter 2. We then seek evidence in the roll call voting behavior of realignments in Congress that would be concurrent with changes in the mass electorate that occurred during the 1850s, 1890s, and 1930s. We find that only in the early 1850s does a major change in the structure of congressional voting occur: the realignments of the 1890s and 1930s occurred along the line of cleavage that had solidified after the Civil War. The late 1930s did witness the birth of a second realignment, which focused on the issue of civil rights for African-Americans. But as this second realignment proved to be less intense than the first (and only a temporary one), we describe it, more appropriately, as a perturbation.

We also examine the nature of issue change more generally. We investigate how new issues are accommodated within an existing spatial structure. Most of the galaxy of policy issues that confront Congress are neither as intense nor as enduring as the question of race, which led to the realignment of the 1850s and to the perturbation that occurred from the 1940s to the 1970s. If an issue is to result in sustained public policy, we hypothesize that the policy must eventually be supported by a coalition that can be represented as a split on the first, or major, dimension. Policy developed by coalitions that are nonspatial or built along the second dimension is likely to be tran-

sient and unstable. We analyze several issue areas, including abortion and prohibition, and find considerable support for our hypothesis.

### The Realignment Literature

E. E. Schattschneider, in his classic *Party Government* (1942, p. 1), wrote that the "political parties created democracy," and that "modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties." Schattschneider argued that freedom of association and the guarantee of regular elections with plurality winners made the development of two mass-based political parties inevitable. American political history can be written almost entirely around the conflict between and within political parties because the parties have acted as mirrors of the great social and economic conflicts that have divided the country. When the political parties failed to mirror such conflicts, they have been torn apart and replaced by new parties that represent mass opinion.

The realignment literature in political science is concerned with such changes in the mass support for the political parties and with how the leaders of the parties responded to the changes. The prevailing view in this literature is that there have been three major realignments since Jackson assumed the presidency: one in the 1850s over the issue of the extension of slavery to the territories; one in the 1890s over the issue of currency inflation (greenbacks and bimetallism); and one in the 1930s because of the collapse of the economy in the Great Depression.<sup>1</sup>

The most complete statement of this thesis is by Sundquist (1983, p. 4). He argues that a realignment is a durable change in patterns of political behavior. His basic model of realignment emphasizes that a new issue emerges that cuts across the existing cleavage and reorganizes the political parties around it. He notes (1983, p. 37): "The party system has a new rationale, an old conflict has been displaced by a new one for a segment of the electorate, and that segment of the electorate has formed new party attachments on the basis of that rationale. If the segment is large enough, . . . a new party system supplants the old one."

Sundquist marshals an impressive body of evidence for his thesis—including changes in party registration and voting at the county level in various states. There can be little debate about the fact that major changes in the mass electorate occurred during the 1850s, 1890s, and 1930s. The evidence is convincing. Less convincing is Sundquist's argument that these changes in the mass electorate "shifted" the party system on its axis. In Sundquist's model, if a new issue does not seriously divide the political parties *internally*, then "the crisis will be reached and resolved relatively quickly," and the scale of the realignment "will be relatively minor" (1983, pp. 44–45). In other words, the severity of a realignment is a direct function of the internal divisions of the parties.

In Sundquist's work, the mass electorate and the professional politicians are part and parcel of the same process. Sundquist's evidence comes from changes in the mass electorate. We draw our evidence from changes in congressional voting behavior as revealed by our dynamic spatial model.

We set forth here a simple model of realignment based on the spatial model of party competition and offer evidence that the realignments of the 1890s and the 1930s did

not change the basic structure of congressional voting that preceded these realignment periods. Indeed, the basic structure set in place during the 1870s was not changed by either realignment. A fundamental change in the structure of congressional voting occurred in only two realignments in American history.<sup>2</sup> The first was the 1850s realignment due to the extension of slavery to the territories. The second began in the late 1930s with voting on the minimum wage (see chapter 6) and then intensified with voting during World War II over the voting rights of blacks in uniform. This later realignment was only indirectly the result of the Great Depression. Indeed, the large Democratic majority created by the economic catastrophe split over the race issue. The realignment forced by the North-South conflict was (as we noted earlier) less intense than the 1850s realignment and only a temporary one; so we more appropriately call this realignment a perturbation of the long-run liberal/conservative conflict.

### Interpreting Realignment with the Spatial Model of Voting

Realignment, as defined by Sundquist, is easily accommodated by the dynamic spatial model we outlined in chapter 2. For example, before a realignment is initiated, roll call voting should be stable and organized around the cleavage of the last realignment. In terms of spatial theory, this means that the policy space is stable—the same dimensions structure voting over time, and legislators' ideal points should show little change from Congress to Congress. A new issue then emerges, which splits the political parties internally and begins the process of polarization. It can be modeled as a new dimension—orthogonal to the stable structure of legislators in the current voting alignment—across which both political parties become increasingly polarized. The realignment is due partly to the replacement of members—the newly elected members are more attuned to the new issue—and partly to modifications of the spatial positions of continuing members (see figure 4.7). As the process continues, more and more of the voting is concerned with the new issue, so that the old stable set begins to wither away. Finally, the old spatial structure collapses entirely, and a new alignment emerges in which the major dimension is coterminous with the new issue.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 5.1 shows the realignment process at five stages—the early, middle, and late stages of the old alignment; the period of spatial collapse; and the new alignment. Two political parties are shown as contour maps over a space of two dimensions, with most members being located near the center of the contours. One dimension is the original line of cleavage, and the other is the new, realignment issue. Early in the process, as shown by part A of the figure, the parties are relatively homogeneous, with some diversity. The new issue has not yet produced polarized factions within the parties. The legislators, as a whole, are centrally distributed over the original dimension, and because the new issue has only recently emerged, not all members have been forced to take positions on it. Then, as the issue heats up within the electorate and becomes more salient, the legislators begin reacting more forcefully and polarization begins, as shown in part B. Part C of the figure shows the process in its later stage: Both political parties are now polarized. The new dimension is now the primary focus of voting, and the legislators are bimodally distributed across it. The parties are highly divided internally.

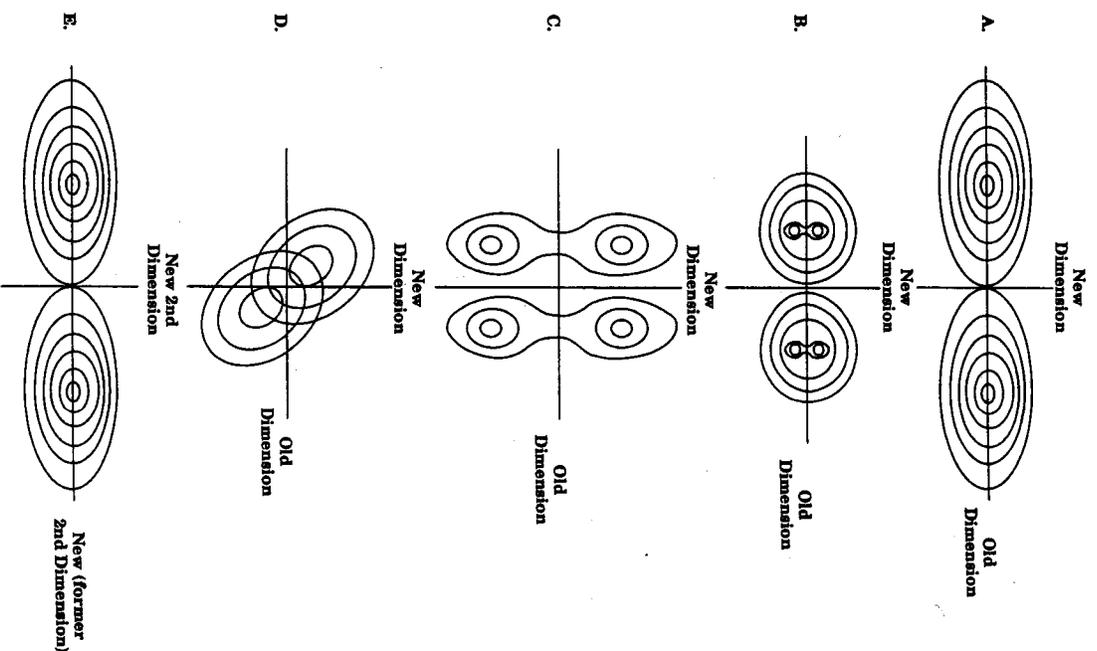


Figure 5.1. Spatial realignment. The contours in the figures show the distribution of legislators' ideal points, with legislators concentrating near the more central concentric contours. Before a realignment (part A), legislators have a largely unidimensional distribution. The major parties are clusters on the dimension. As a new issue arises, it polarizes the parties on the second dimension (parts B and C). When the new issue becomes too intense for the old alignment to survive, the party system collapses (part D). A new system forms, with the new dimension as the first dimension (part E).

When internal party divisions become too strong, the space can collapse, as shown in part D—parties are no longer distinct clusters in the space. In addition, the fit of the model (which cannot be seen from the map of the legislators' ideal points), will be poor. (See, for example, the evidence on the 31st House, in figure 3.6.) Voting alignments within the legislature are unstable. After the collapse, the political system is reorganized, possibly with the formation of new parties. The contours in the new system, part E, are the same as those in the old system (part A), except that the first dimension is now represented by the realigning issue.

Below, we test this model with our two-dimensional D-NOMINATE scaling. We first discuss our scaling results for the 1850s, 1890s, and 1930s. We then cover the period from the 1940s to the 1970s and show that a minor realignment, or perturbation, occurred after World War II.

### *Evidence of Realignments?*

Our realignment model has three potential implications: continuing members should be more volatile in the space, making more changes in their positions; replacements should position themselves distinctly from continuing members; and the realignment issue should change its orientation in the space.

The evidence on continuing members was already presented in figure 4.7. The situation for the 1890s and the 1930s is clearest. In the figure, there is an uptick for both houses of Congress for both of these periods, but it is small. Position changes never reach the levels observed from the initiation of the Era of Good Feelings (1815) through the emergence of the Whig/Democratic system in the elections of 1836, or, particularly for the Senate, during the realignment in the 1850s and 1860s. Nevertheless, two caveats are in order. First, it is difficult to compare the upticks of the 1890s and 1930s to the antebellum realignments, because there has been a secular increase in the stability of legislators' positions. Second, the antebellum picture is less systematic than the postbellum one—in large part because replacement, rather than adjustment, is the major vehicle for realignment in the antebellum period (see figure 4.8).

In order to analyze realignments and issue change in more detail, we select all roll calls on the relevant issue and examine the spatial voting patterns for the issue across time. In particular, we focus on how well the voting on each roll call is accounted for by the first dimension of our estimation and on the increase in fit that results from adding the second dimension. In our analysis of specific roll call votes later in this chapter, we will focus on the *PRE1* and *PRE2* for each roll call. To analyze an issue area, we will compute the aggregate *PRE* (*APRE*) using all the scaled roll calls in the area.

Comparing the *APRE* for one dimension (*APRE1*) with the *APRE* for two dimensions (*APRE2*) gives a good indication of the spatial character of the roll calls. If *APRE1* is high and *APRE2* — *APRE1* is small, then the votes are concerned primarily with the first dimension. If *APRE1* is low and *APRE2* — *APRE1* is large, then the votes are along the second dimension. If both *APRE1* and *APRE2* are low, the votes are poorly fit by the model (or very lopsided). In our figures below, we focus on these sorts of differences by issue areas.

Note that, for a specific roll call, it is possible for *PRE2* — *PRE1* to be negative, for two reasons. First, our scaling maximizes a likelihood function, not classification.

Second, the legislator coordinates are chosen as a function of all the votes, and not just the vote on one roll call; therefore, two-dimensional coordinates can improve the fit of the model overall, while decreasing the fit on some individual roll calls.

### *Slavery and the Realignment of the 1850s*

Slavery, of course, was the issue that produced the realignment of the 1850s. By the 1850s, slavery was not a new issue but a very old one that had become more intense in both the North and the South. Indeed, slavery was already an issue in the writing of the Constitution, which reflects a compromise: the counting of each slave as three-fifths of a person, for purposes of congressional apportionment, and the ending of importation of slaves in 1808. Slavery fits nicely into our model of realignment, but not portation of slaves in 1808. Slavery fits nicely into our model of realignment, but not exactly, as many other issues surfaced between 1789 and the 1850s. Indeed, before the spatial collapse of the 1850s, the space also collapsed in the Era of Good Feelings. As we look at slavery, therefore, we will have to keep in mind other "shocks" to the political system.

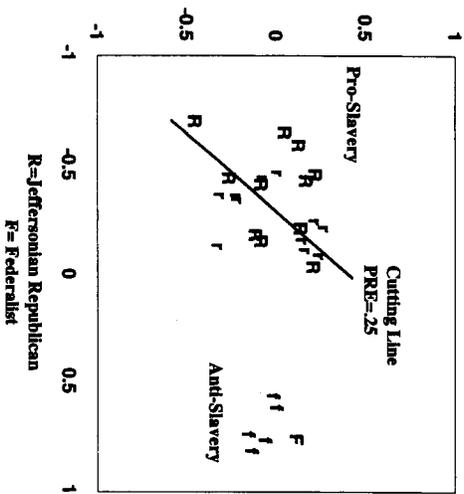
A total of 891 roll calls concerning slavery were included in our scaling of the House and 386 for the Senate.<sup>5</sup> For every Congress in which there were at least 5 scaled roll call votes concerning slavery, we computed *APRE1* and *APRE2*.

In the first 14 Congresses, the slavery compromise embodied in the Constitution held. During this period, we coded only 27 slavery roll calls for the House. Although some of these concerned two issues—fugitive slaves and slavery in the District of Columbia, which would remain active issues until the eve of the Civil War—the bulk of the roll calls concerned the taxation of slaves and, in particular, slave imports. In fact, 13 of the 27 roll calls were held on slave imports in 1806 and 1807. But this issue vanished when the constitutional ban on slave imports became effective in 1808. Subsequent to the end of the 9th Congress in March 1807, no slavery roll calls occurred for a decade.

Slavery roll calls were slightly more frequent in the Senate, where 34 roll calls were coded. A very large part of these were represented by 11 roll calls early in 1804, when the Senate was drafting legislation to organize the land acquired in the Louisiana Purchase. These roll calls can be used to illustrate part A of figure 5.1. The closest roll calls were two 16–12 decisions on a provision to bar the bringing of slaves into the territory, except by settlers who were slaveholders. Consistent with slavery not being a salient issue in the old alignment, the *PRE2* is low for these roll calls. The higher *PRE2* occurs on a January 31, 1804, vote (VOTTEVIEW number 49) and is only 0.25.

This vote is illustrated in figure 5.2. Throughout our discussion of slavery, in the figures, lowercase letters represent antislavery positions; and uppercase letters, proslavery. Parallel to part A of figure 5.1, the parties are distinctly separated on the first dimension; the second dimension shows little overall dispersion; and the parties are smoothly clustered around a central point. Although the cutting line on the roll call passes through the heart of the Jeffersonian Republicans, there is also a proslavery vote among the Federalists. Moreover, as the United States map panel in the figure shows, except for New England, Tennessee, and Georgia, proslavery and antislavery voters could be found on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line. (South Carolina's two senators did not vote.) Southern legislators, particularly those from the middle

Senate: Louisiana Slavery



White = Pro-Slavery  
 Black = Anti-Slavery  
 Waves = Not Voting  
 Vertical Stripes = One Senator Not Voting  
 Horizontal Stripes = One Senator Pro,  
 One Senator Anti

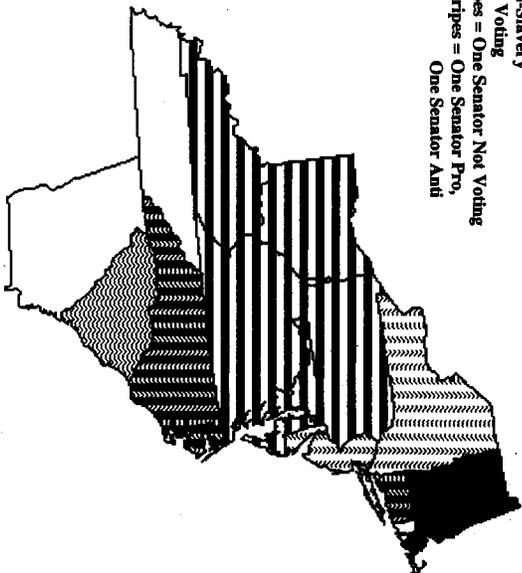


Figure 5.2. Vote on the prohibition of slavery in Louisiana Purchase lands, January 31, 1804 (VOTEVIEW number 49). Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; anti-slavery, in lowercase.

and border states of the South, were not yet prevented from expressing mild antislavery positions, as they would be later (Freehling, 1990).

The relative peace that preceded the 15th Congress was not to continue. Figure 5.3 displays *APRE1* and *APRE2* – *APRE1* for the House from the 15th Congress to the 38th (1815–65). The corresponding graph for the Senate is similar but less smooth. We begin with a discussion of the period before 1831—there were only 39 additional

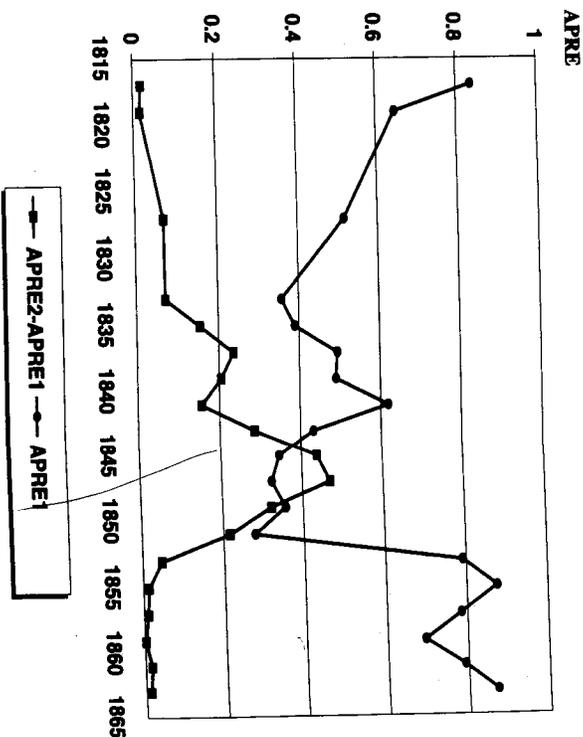


Figure 5.3. Slavery votes in the House of Representatives (1815–65). The first dimension becomes weaker (*APRE1*) and the second becomes stronger (*APRE2* – *APRE1*), in accounting for slavery votes, until the old alignment collapses. In the 32nd House (1851–57), the two dimensions together fail to account for the votes. By the 33rd House (1853–55), the new alignment is largely in place and slavery has become the major dimension.

roll calls in the House and 20 in the Senate between 1817 and 1831. The remaining 823 House roll calls and 332 of the 386 Senate roll calls came after 1832.

Nearly three fourths of the roll calls, in both the House and the Senate, in the 1817–31 period came in the 15th and 16th Congresses. The central issue at the time was slavery in Missouri. This proved far more explosive than any previous slave issue because each new state influenced the balance of power in Congress and in the Electoral College (Weingast, 1991). Figure 3.1 shows that the 15th and 16th Congresses (elections of 1816 and 1818) occurred in the period of spatial collapse constituted by the Era of Good Feelings, with the 17th Congress—in both houses—being the worst-fitting Congress in American history. Yet, as illustrated by figure 5.4, slavery votes in the 15th and 16th Houses fit very well in one dimension. Even in the Senate, where the fits are poorer, the 16th House has the best slavery fits in one dimension before the 33rd Congress. Indeed, the level of House fits in the 16th House would have been even higher were it not for several lopsided procedural votes or votes unrelated to Missouri with very low and even negative *PREs*. The critical votes all exhibited a high degree of spatial structure.<sup>6</sup>

What explains these results is that the spatial collapse of the Federalist/Republican system was unrelated to slavery but arose when the end of the Napoleonic Wars eliminated the foreign-policy issue dividing the parties and when the economic issue was eliminated by a partial Republican embrace of Alexander Hamilton's economic viewpoint. But slavery remained active as a divisive issue. Indeed, an examination of all

roll call for the 16th House revealed that slavery was the only issue with a high degree of fit. Without the slavery votes, the classifications in figure 3.1 would have been even worse. Because slavery was the only strongly spatial issue at the time, it defines the first dimension when there is a spatial collapse on most issues.

To illustrate this period, we use the critical vote on the Missouri Compromise in the House, which took place on March 1, 1820. The compromise admitted Missouri as a slave state for the South and admitted Maine as a free state and banned slavery north of 36°30' latitude in the Louisiana Purchase lands for the North. The compromise was actually passed as two votes—one admitting Missouri and Maine, which allowed the North to take antislavery positions by voting against, and the other, on the 36°30' line, which allowed the South to take proslavery positions by voting against. The first vote was close, 90–87, and fit the model well, with only 10 classification errors; it is illustrated in figure 5.4. The ideal point distribution resembles the spatial-collapse panel, part D, of figure 5.1. The parties, in contrast to figure 5.2's picture for 1804, are no longer well differentiated. The vote indeed splits both parties (the Federalists: 12 Yeas and 14 Nays; the Republicans: 78 Yeas and 73 Nays). Yet there was a solid southern vote in favor, and there were only a few northern defections (but strategically sufficient to guarantee passage).

The Missouri Compromise did not give the South a long-run commitment to maintain a free state/slavery state balance in the Senate. (Our view here contrasts with that of Weingast [1991], who argues that such a commitment existed until 1850, when California entered as a free state and no slave state was admitted.) On the contrary, be-

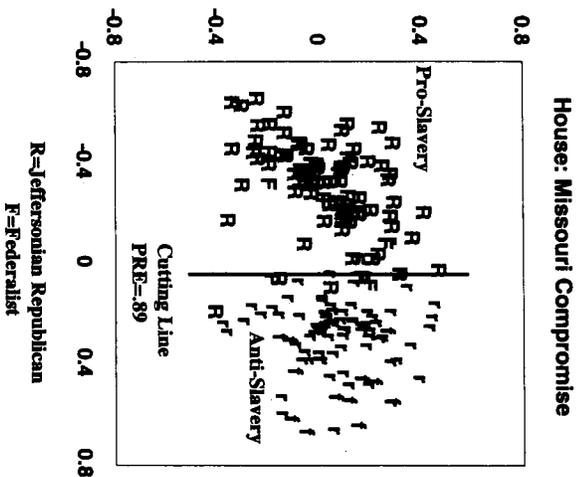


Figure 5.4. Critical vote on the Missouri Compromise in the 16th House, March 1, 1820 (VOTEVIEW number 18). Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; antislavery, in lowercase.

cause slavery was banned in most of the territories, the compromise placed the South at a long-run disadvantage that it sought to undo. The compromise succeeded, in the short run, in our view, largely because the pace of settlement slowed down. The next states admitted, Arkansas and Michigan, entered only in 1836 and 1837. There were no sufficiently populated areas outside the existing states to make slavery an intense issue for many years after the Missouri Compromise. There were fewer than five slavery roll calls in the 17th, 18th, 21st, and 22nd Houses, and none at all in the 19th.

Consequently, the collapse of a well-organized party system in the Era of Good Feelings (evident in figure 5.4) did not occur because slavery was the new, destabilizing dimension. The Federalist/Republican system collapsed largely because the previously salient foreign-policy and economic issues had waned. The movement of settlers into Missouri made slavery, for a brief period, a salient issue with strong regional divisions. Both the success of the compromise and the absence of new settlements in the 1820s and 1830s implied that the Whig/Democratic system was able to arise along an economic dimension. However, slavery never completely vanished as an issue, and voting on slavery intensified just as the Whig/Democratic system emerged.

Indeed, the great bulk of all slavery roll calls were cast after 1835, during the period of the Whig/Democratic political-party system. Voting on slavery fell increasingly along the second dimension. In line with the scenario outlined in figure 5.1, the gap between *APREZ* and *APREL* trends upward from 1835 until the late 1840s (during Congresses 24–30) and then drops to nearly zero after the 33rd Congress (1851–52). In addition, *APREL* climbs dramatically after 1852, and the gap between *APREZ* and *APREL* disappears, indicating that the first dimension is now the slavery dimension. The picture is clear: As the conflict within the country grew, the Whig and Democratic parties split along North-South lines along the second dimension, and the first dimension continued to divide the Whigs from the Democrats on traditional economic issues (for example, tariffs, internal improvements, the national bank, and public lands). By 1853, this economic dimension collapsed and was replaced by the slavery dimension.

The 32nd Congress (1851–52) was pivotal. By then the conflict had become so intense that it destroyed the spatial structure of congressional voting—the spatial model simply does not fit, or fits very poorly, voting in the 32nd Congress.<sup>7</sup> Outside Congress, the Compromise of 1850 was unraveling. Northern resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law was at first scattered, but with the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852, northern disregard for the law increased. The number of fugitive slaves was never very large (only about 1,000 out of a population of 3,000,000 in 1850 [Hofstadter et al., 1959]), but the law had great symbolic importance for southerners. Northern aid to the fugitives was seen as evidence of hostility toward the South and only deepened suspicions between the regions.

The realignment was sealed by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in May 1854 by the 33rd Congress. Both parties were badly split. The Whigs were primarily against the bill, and the Democrats mostly for it. Senator Stephen A. Douglas, an Illinois Democrat, tried to buy southern votes for a northern (as against a southern) route for the transcontinental railway. He introduced a measure that would have allowed the Nebraska territory, which was north of the Missouri Compromise line, to enter as two states. One, Kansas, would be a slave state, and the other, Nebraska, would be free, even though slavery was almost certainly economically unworkable in Kansas. The

bill passed, after being pushed by the longstanding Democratic party alliance in which the current Middle West traded votes on slavery for votes on economic matters (Weingast, 1991).

Douglas thought that the act would settle the territorial question once and for all by repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and by allowing the new states that were to be formed in the territories to decide the issue for themselves (popular sovereignty). Douglas evidently thought that by repealing the Missouri Compromise and thereby removing the federal government from deciding the slavery issue, the act would mollify southerners. Since most of the territories would undoubtedly be settled by migrants from the more populous northern states, popular sovereignty would ensure free-soil victories in the new states, thereby pleasing the northerners. Unfortunately for Douglas, however, regional divisions were much more powerful than he thought.<sup>8</sup>

Voting on the act was along regional lines; and the spatial structure of the voting is very coherent (see figure 5.8). Slavery became the primary dimension of voting. Northern politicians unwilling to trade away the slavery issue, displaced the old political class of the Whig/Democratic party system. The Republican party, and its 1860 presidential candidate, Abraham Lincoln, came to power, sealing the spatial realignment.

The realignment is illustrated by figures 5.5 to 5.9. Because slavery was already present as a salient issue when the Whig/Democratic system arose, there is no equivalent, in these figures, to part A of figure 5.1 or to figure 5.2. The phases of the realignment corresponding to parts B and C (of figure 5.1) are shown by figures 5.5 and 5.6.

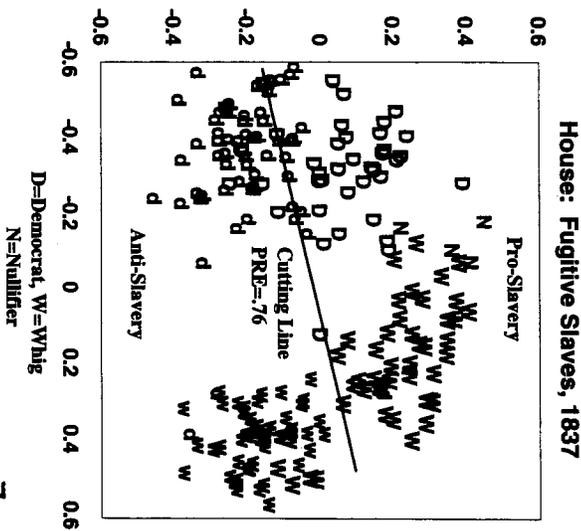


Figure 5.5. Motion for a fugitive-slave resolution, December 13, 1837 (VOTEVIEW number 357). Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; antislavery, in lowercase.

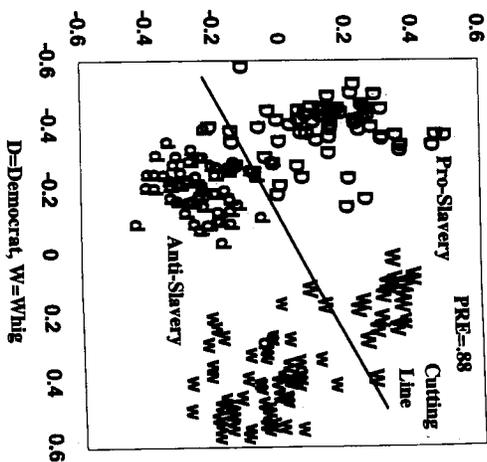


Figure 5.6. Vote on a petition about slavery in the District of Columbia, December 10, 1844 (VOTEVIEW number 433). Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; anti-slavery, in lowercase.

Part B is illustrated by figure 5.5, which shows the vote on a fugitive-slave resolution on December 13, 1837 (VOTEVIEW number 357); part C, by figure 5.6, which shows a vote on whether to accept a petition concerning slavery in the District of Columbia, on December 10, 1844 (VOTEVIEW number 433).

The cutting lines are quite similar in the two figures, with both showing the influence of the second dimension on slavery votes. Both fit the model well—the *PRE2* is 0.76 for 1837 and 0.89 for 1844. In both figures, the first dimension separates the Whig and Democratic parties, and the second dimension separates the representatives into southerners (on the top) and northerners (on the bottom). The spatial structure in shown in the figures held from approximately 1832 to 1849. The main difference in the figures—parallel to the differences between parts B and C of figure 5.1—is that the parties are more strongly separated into regional blocs by 1844.

After the passage of the Compromise of 1850, however, a spatial collapse transpired quickly, as illustrated by a vote on March 1, 1852, calling for support of the fugitive-slave provisions of the compromise.<sup>9</sup> Although this vote had the highest turnout of any slavery roll call in the 32nd Congress, the *PRE2* was a relatively narrow 0.53. Figure 5.7 shows, consonant with part D of figure 5.1, the overlap in party positions.<sup>10</sup> Minor parties are prolific in figure 5.7. The cutting line has rotated considerably from its location in the two previous figures. Strategic voting has much to do with the poor fit. Many northern Democrats, seeking to maintain their party's dominance of national politics, voted Yea. On the other hand, although only 7 southerners in the most strongly pro-slavery delegation, that of South Carolina, came from the most strongly pro-slavery delegation, that of South Carolina. Note further that, consistent with an earlier discussion of figure 5.1, the South Carolina delegation moved from the top of the plot in figure 5.6 to the left-most positions in figure 5.7.

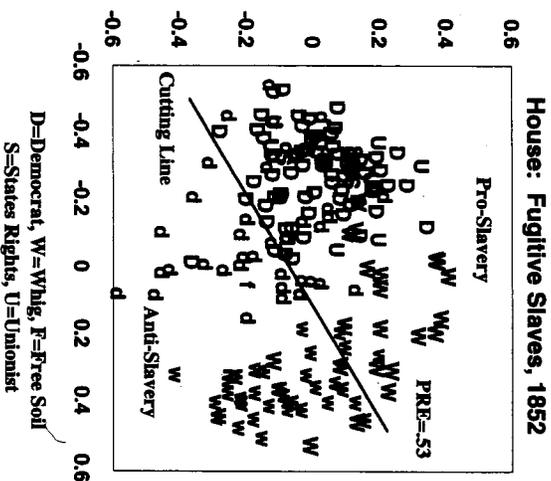


Figure 5.7. Vote to support fugitive-slave provisions of the Compromise of 1850, March 1, 1852 (VOTEVIEW number 71). Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; antislavery, in lowercase.

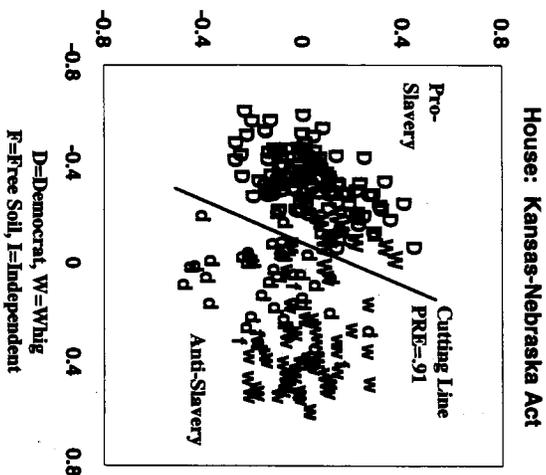


Figure 5.8. Passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, May 22, 1854 (VOTEVIEW number 309). Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; antislavery, in lowercase.

The collapse of the party system is illustrated again in figure 5.8, which shows the vote that passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act on May 22, 1854.<sup>11</sup> Although most minor parties have vanished in figure 5.8, the Democratic and Whig parties are mixed together in the center of the space, which is similar to part D of figure 5.1. The cutting line has, compared to figures 5.5 and 5.6, become more vertical, foreshadowing slavery's emergence as the main dimension of the realigned space. Indeed, unlike the fugitive-slave vote and other votes in the preceding Congress, the Kansas-Nebraska Act votes have high degrees of fit—the *PRE* for the illustrated vote is 0.91.

Finally, figure 5.9 shows the first slavery roll call in the 35th House, which took place on February 2, 1858. The vote was on a proposal by the Democratic majority to postpone consideration of the president's message on Kansas. The vote has a *PRE* of 0.81 and is now fully on the first dimension. The move to postpone failed (105–109) because of defections of moderate Democrats, as the figure shows; these were all northerners. (The only slave-state representative to vote against the motion was an American-party member from Baltimore.) The realignment was complete by this time, and the new party—the Republicans—was tightly clustered, in line with part E of figure 5.1. Southern representatives for the next 80 years remained on the Left on the major dimension, with views on the treatment of African-Americans being highly correlated with views on economic regulation, the tariff, and monetary policy (as seen later in this chapter and in chapter 6).

Figure 5.3 and figures 5.5 through 5.9 show that the 1850s realignment within Congress was sudden and was initiated *before* the Republican party became a real force in American politics. This result questions some recent work by political economists and historians.

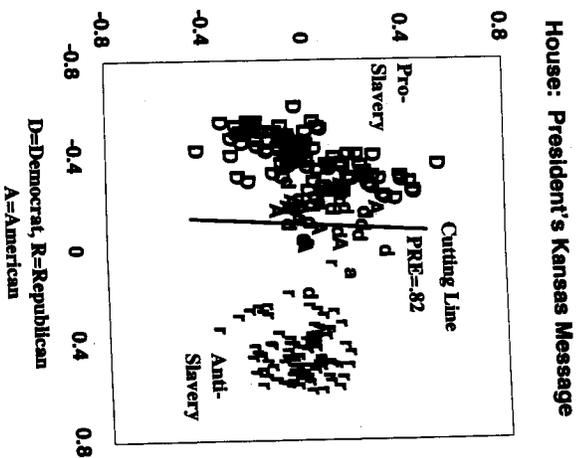


Figure 5.9. Vote to postpone consideration of the president's message on Kansas, February 2, 1858. Proslavery legislators' ideal points are shown in uppercase; antislavery, in lowercase.

Fogel (1990) studies the realignment that produced Lincoln's electoral victory by comparing the elections of 1852 and 1860. But, at least in Congress, we see that the old Whig system had largely disintegrated by the time of the elections of 1852. To compare the old system to the new, 1848 would appear to be a better benchmark.

Weingast (1991) correctly identifies 1850 as a crucial date in the slavery conflict. The old spatial alignment collapsed in the 1851-52 House and Senate. But Weingast attributes the sudden change to a single event—the destruction of a credible commitment to slavery in the South by the breaking of the North-South balance in the Senate after the admission of California in 1850. We show that the tension over slavery had built gradually over time, as shown by the steadily rising importance of the second dimension in the 1840s. The realignment of the 1850s was more a matter of a process that gradually increases stress until a breaking point is reached than one of a single overwhelming event.

This pattern does fit Sundquist's (1983) model rather nicely. A new issue (actually a version of a very old issue)—the extension of slavery into the territories—emerges, cutting across the existing line of cleavage (conflicts over economic policy) and causing the two political parties to polarize. One party is destroyed in the process, and a new party system is formed around the new issue. In spatial terms, a stable two-dimensional, two-party system becomes unstable. The first dimension disappears, and its place is taken by the old second dimension.<sup>12</sup>

*Gold and Silver and the "Realignment" of the 1890s*

Sundquist (1983) notes that in the aftermath of the Civil War, the new dimension of conflict was concerned with Reconstruction, secession, black rights, and related issues. The groups shut out of the system were the farmers and the emerging labor movement. The 1866-97 period saw a persistent, long-run deflation accompanied by falling commodity prices (Friedman and Schwartz, 1971). This was the driving force behind the inflation issue; and according to Sundquist (1983), this issue represented the new line of cleavage that culminated in the realigning election of 1896, in which the Gold Democrats deserted the Democratic party for the Republican party. The Silver Republicans were not able to overcome their aversion to the Democrats because of the Civil War and remained in the Republican party. This shift made the Republican party the majority party until the 1930s.

The inflation issue had its roots in the tremendous expansion of the money supply during the Civil War. The cost of the Civil War forced the Union government to borrow heavily and print "greenbacks." Although some of the colonies had experimented with fiat money (paper money with no specie backing [Weiss, 1970]), the issuance of greenbacks in 1862 marked the first time that the United States had resorted to paper money not backed by specie. The expansion of the money supply during the war caused inflation and the abandonment of the gold standard. By the war's end, inflation had approximately doubled the overall price level.

The efforts of the government to deal with the inflation problem immediately after the war became an issue in the 1868 presidential election, prefiguring the splits within and between the two major parties that were to recur for the next 25 years. The effort by Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCulloch to contract the money supply by with-

drawing greenbacks from circulation contributed to postwar deflation. Heeding the protests of midwestern farmers, the Democrats proposed in their 1868 party platform that the greenbacks be reissued to redeem war bonds that did not specifically require redemption in gold. This was the first of many inflationary, or "soft money," proposals, and it became known at the time as the "Ohio Idea."<sup>13</sup>

A total of 481 roll calls in the House and 523 roll calls in the Senate were cast on banking and currency during the 1865-1908 period (39th to 60th Congresses). For every House in which there were at least 5 roll calls on banking and currency, we computed *APRE1* and *APRE2*. The results are shown in figure 5.10, which is done in the same format as figure 5.3.

The pattern for the currency issue is quite different from the one for slavery in that there is no *sustained* gap, for the former, between *APRE1* and *APRE2*. Rather, the gap peaks in the 43rd to 45th Congresses and in the 52nd to 53rd Congresses. These two peaks coincide with the financial panics of 1873 and 1893. (Once again, the pattern for the Senate is similar to that for the House.)

The financial panic of September 1873 produced a contraction in the money supply and generated demands for inflation. Before the panic, farmers were, in general, suspicious of paper money. After 1873, however, farmer support for greenbackism increased (Unger, 1964, pp. 228-33). The result was the Inflation Bill of 1874, which

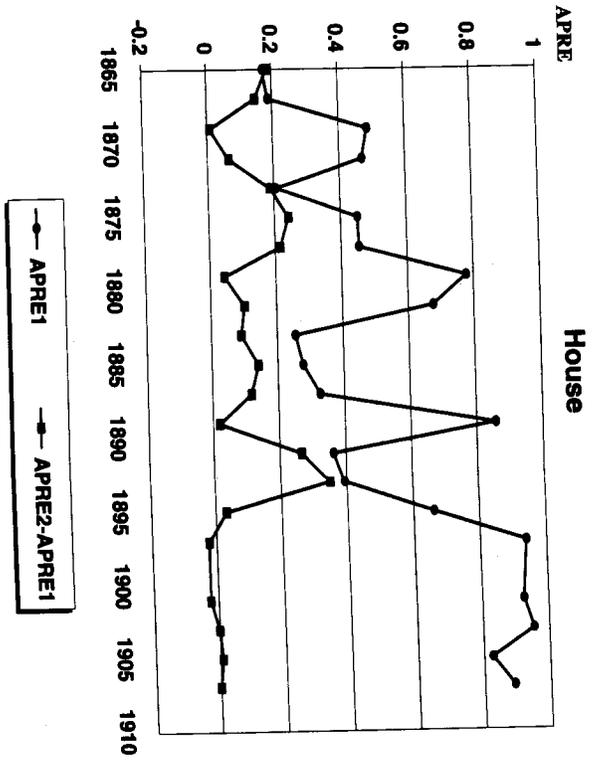


Figure 5.10. Banking and currency votes in the House of Representatives (1865-1908). The first dimension gradually becomes stronger over time. The second dimension never clearly becomes the more important dimension. A realignment does not occur. (*APRE2* - *APRE1* is sometimes slightly negative because the two-dimensional model actually resulted in a lower correct-classification rate than the one-dimensional model. For all roll calls in a Congress, however, the two-dimensional model always improves classification.)

was passed by the 43rd Congress and vetoed by President Grant. Figure 5.11 shows the final passage votes in the House and the Senate in April 1874 on the Inflation Bill.<sup>14</sup>

Voiting on the bill split both political parties along the second dimension. Prefiguring the splits that were later to occur on the silver question, the opposition to the inflation bill was concentrated in the New England states and New York; the proponents came primarily from the South and the Midwest. During this period, however, the regional coalitions were not yet completely solid. All the representatives and senators

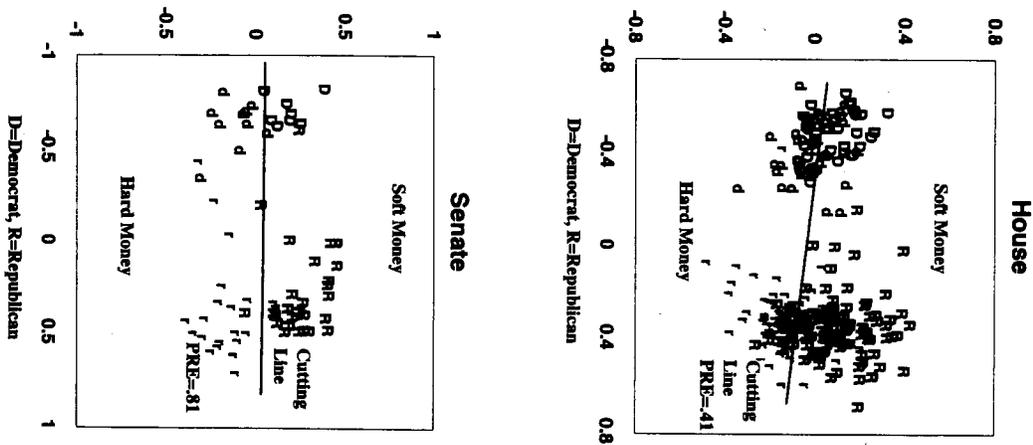


Figure 5.11. Final passage of the Inflation Bill of 1874. The House vote (VOTVIEW number 126) was on April 14; the Senate vote (VOTVIEW number 119) was on April 6. A soft-money vote is shown in uppercase; a hard-money vote is in lowercase.

from Nevada and Texas and all the representatives from California (the senators from California did not vote) opposed the inflation bill.

After the 1876 elections, the focus of the inflationists shifted from greenbacks to remonetizing silver. The tremendous increase in silver production in the western states that occurred after the Civil War produced a decline in the price of silver in the 1870s. This drop produced a coalition of convenience among the Western mining interests, farmers, and greenbackers. The result was the Bland-Allison Act of 1878, which was passed in the 45th Congress. It required the Treasury to purchase between 2 million and 4 million ounces of silver per month and to coin it into silver legal-tender dollars. Figure 5.12 shows the votes of February 28, 1878 in the House and the Senate that overrode the veto of President Hayes.<sup>15</sup>

Voiting on the act was primarily along the second dimension, which was now clearly a regional dimension. Only 7 representatives and 4 senators from the western and southern states voted to sustain Hayes's veto, whereas only 10 representatives and no senators from New York and New England voted to override.

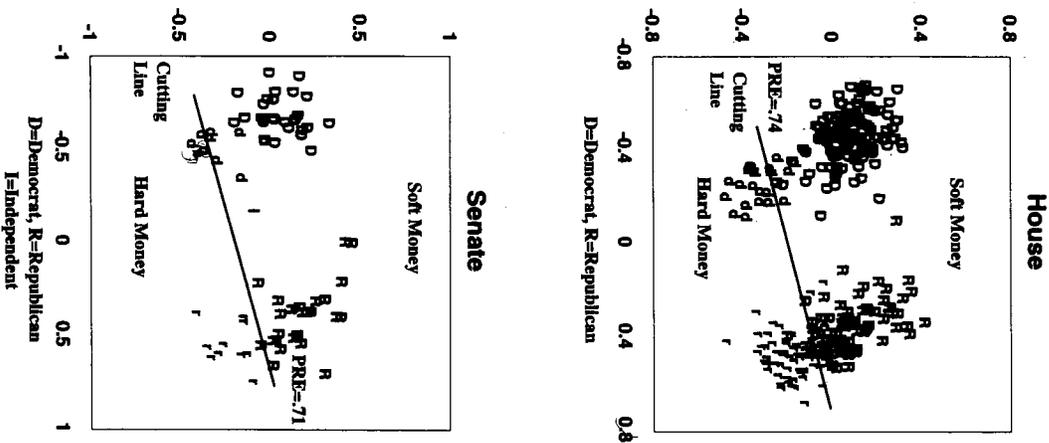
With the triumph of the "soft money" forces, voting on banking and currency issues from 46th Congress through the 51st (1879-90) reverted to a more normal pattern—that is, voting was more along party lines, and therefore the gap between *APRE1* and *APRE2* is small.

In the 1888 elections the Republicans gained control of both the Congress and the presidency. The blessings of a unified government allowed them to admit to the Union only those parts of the frontier that would be firmly in the Republican camp. Although relatively heavily populated Arizona and New Mexico were denied statehood, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota were admitted in 1889 and 1890. They promptly sent an additional 12 Republican senators to Washington.<sup>16</sup> The entry of the western states created great pressure within the Republican party for further action to increase inflation. The Republicans responded by pushing through a logroll which included the McKinley Tariff, the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, all in 1890.

In return for western votes in the Senate and the House in favor of the McKinley Tariff, the eastern Republicans supported the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, which was passed in both houses in July by straight party-line votes. In effect, the Sherman Silver Purchase Act obligated the government to buy nearly the entire output of the western silver mines. But even this measure did not brake the decline of the price of silver. The falling price of silver only further encouraged people to exchange silver and paper money for gold. The result was a steady drain of the Treasury's gold reserves.

The financial panic that began in May 1893 was touched off, in part, by the drop in the nation's gold reserves. The resulting crisis led to the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act in October 1893. Figure 5.13 shows that voting on the repeal served to again split the two political parties along regional lines.<sup>17</sup>

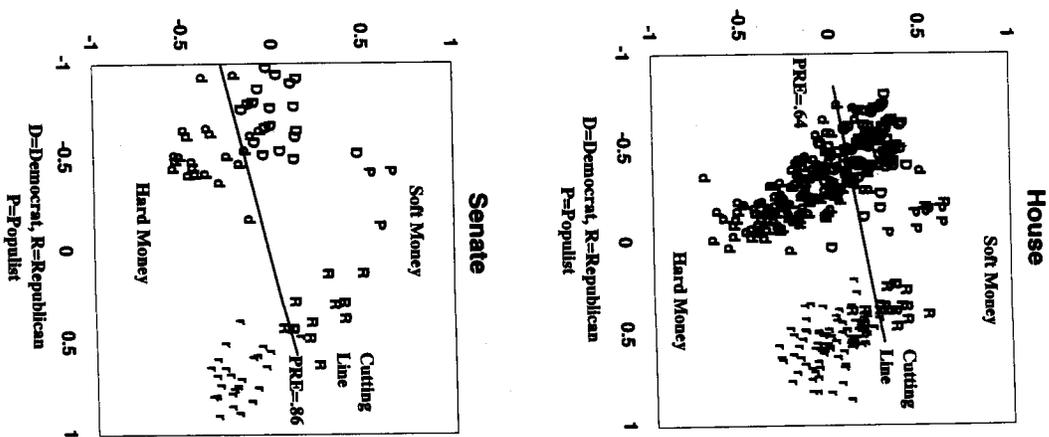
In the Senate, 6 southern Democrats and 4 western Republicans along with all the senators from New England, New York, and New Jersey, voted to repeal. In the House, 11 of the 18 Republicans who voted against repeal were from the western states, whereas 31 southern Democrats—mostly from Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and Texas—voted for repeal. New England, New York, New Jersey, and all the representatives from the major eastern cities—New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore—voted for repeal.



**Figure 5.12.** Votes to override President Hayes's veto of the Bland-Allison Act. The House (VOTEVIEW number 93) and Senate (VOTEVIEW number 153) both voted on February 28, 1878. A soft-money vote is shown in uppercase; a hard-money vote is in lowercase.

With the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act by the 53rd Congress, the banking and currency issue again reverted to a more normal pattern of voting along the first dimension. Indeed, after the 53rd Congress, the gap between *APRE2* and *APRE1* disappears, and *APRE1* climbs above 0.8 in both chambers, indicating that the banking and currency issue is absorbed into the first dimension after the 53rd Congress. (See figure 5.10 for the House results.)

What killed the inflation issue was not the "realignment" of the 1890s, but inflation itself. Farm prices started to go back up in 1896, and the general price level began to



**Figure 5.13.** Votes to repeal the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. The House vote (VOTEVIEW number 60) was on November 1, 1893; the Senate vote (VOTEVIEW number 80) was on October 30. A soft-money vote is shown in uppercase; a hard-money vote is in lowercase.

increase shortly thereafter. Several major gold discoveries and the introduction of a cheap cyanide process for extracting gold from tailings dramatically increased the money supply after 1896 (Hofstadter et al., 1959; Friedman and Schwartz, 1971).

That the issue was finally drawn into the first dimension does not mean that the regional differences disappeared. Indeed, an examination of the spatial maps for Congresses throughout the post-Civil War period shows that the second dimension tended to separate westerners from easterners—and the effect was greater within the Republican party. In addition, this separation was maintained after the 1896 elections.

In sum, the evidence indicates that the status of inflation as an issue changed. That is, the basic configuration of the House and Senate was fairly stable throughout this period, but the *mapping* of inflation changed—inflation slowly changed from a two-dimensional issue to a strongly one-dimensional issue over the period. Unlike the 1850s, though, the first dimension was never replaced. The realignment at the level of congressional voting did not change the basic structure of voting; rather, as an issue, inflation evolved until voting on it lined up along the first dimension.

### *The Great Depression and the "Realignment" of the 1930s*

The collapse of the stock market in October 1929 was followed by an economic slide that turned into the Great Depression of the 1930s. By the summer of 1932, industrial production was down 50 percent, commodity prices were down 50 percent, and unemployment was around 24 percent. The consequences for the Republican party were equally severe: The four congressional elections between 1930 and 1936 resulted in a massive replacement of Republicans by Democrats in Congress. By 1937 the Democratic party held a 334-to-88 margin over the Republicans in the House (13 congressmen belonged to minor parties), and a 76-to-16 lead in the Senate (4 came from minor parties). This wholesale replacement is the result of realignment in the voting behavior of the mass electorate in the 1930s. Never before or after this period were the Democratic and Republican parties so imbalanced in Congress during peacetime.<sup>18</sup>

The economic catastrophe changed the agenda of Congress. Before the Great Depression, providing relief for the destitute was the function of private and religious organizations, not the federal government. Moreover, the New Deal altered for good the role of the federal government in regulating the economy. Sinclair argues that the New Deal agenda "increased the ideological content of American politics" and produced "a much clearer ideological distinction between the congressional parties" (1977, p. 952). Ginsberg argues that "changes in policy after 1933 are in keeping with voter choices favoring alterations in the economic system and redistributions of opportunities in favor of urban working class elements" (1976, p. 49).

There is no question that the congressional agenda changed radically during the 1930s. The real question is: Did the change in content bring with it a change in the spatial structure of voting? The answer is no. The change in agenda was accommodated within the existing framework. What *did* change was the ratio of Democrats to Republicans. This fact is illustrated in figures 5.14 and 5.15, which show the estimated positions of representatives in the 71st House (1929–30) and the 74th House (1935–36), respectively. In both figures, southern Democrats (denoted by a capital S) represent the left wing of the Democratic party. The shape of the Republican cluster changes but largely as a result of the elimination of a part of the cluster.

The spatial structure of figure 5.14 is essentially repeated in figure 5.15, indicating that the Depression did not result in an immediate realignment of congressional voting patterns. In addition, through this period, the fit of the two-dimensional dynamic model to the roll call data is quite good. That is, the results in figure 3.1, for this period, do not show a dramatic drop in PRE, like the ones in the 16th and 31st Congresses. The second dimension through this period picked up a weak Western-versus-Eastern-states effect, along with the voting on the social issues of the day—prohibition and immigration.

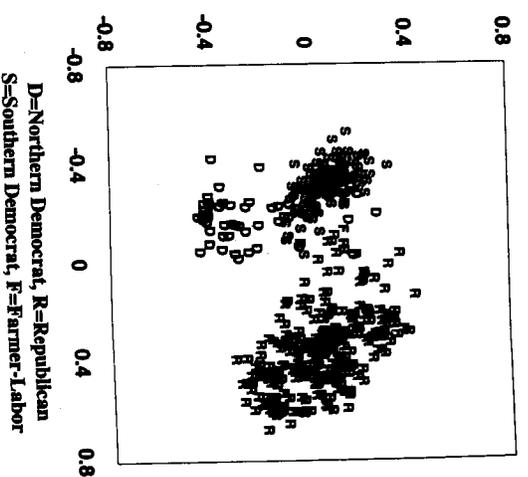


Figure 5.14. Ideal points of representatives in the 71st House (1929–30). On the first dimension, the southern Democrats are slightly to the left of the northern Democrats.

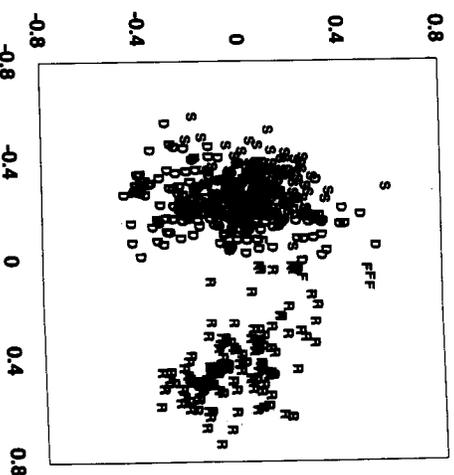


Figure 5.15. Ideal points of representatives in the 73rd House (1933–34). Although there are many more northern Democrats here than in the previous figure, the relative positions of southern Democrats and northern Democrats have shown no substantial change. Indeed, the Great Depression did not produce an immediate realignment in Congress.

The stable spatial structure shows that the legislation of the *first* New Deal was indeed largely accommodated within the spatial structure that had prevailed since the end of Reconstruction. The legislation reflected either new issues that mapped readily onto the old lines of conflict or old issues, latent during the period of the Democrats' prolonged minority status, that could be brought to the table as new measures and passed into law with the new Democratic majorities.

A good illustration of the absence of realignment in the Depression is provided by roll call voting in the labor area, shown in figure 5.16. In the House, 276 such roll calls were cast from the 59th Congress through the 100th. For every House for which there were at least 3 roll calls on labor regulation, we computed *APRE1* and *APRE2*. Not until the battle over the Fair Labor Standards Act—the original minimum-wage bill—in 1937–38 (75th Congress) did the second dimension influence legislation in the labor area. When the second dimension did come into play, it closely tracked the North-South division within the Democratic party over the race issue. Similar results are found for the Senate.

Another illustration of the absence of realignment in the Depression is roll call voting within Clausen's social-welfare category, shown in figure 5.17 for the House (results for the Senate are similar to those for the House). We removed voting on liquor regulation and immigration from this category because they were strongly two-dimensional issues *before* the Depression. (See figures 5.20 and 5.21; these issues will be discussed further below.) In the House, 1,775 roll calls were cast on social welfare

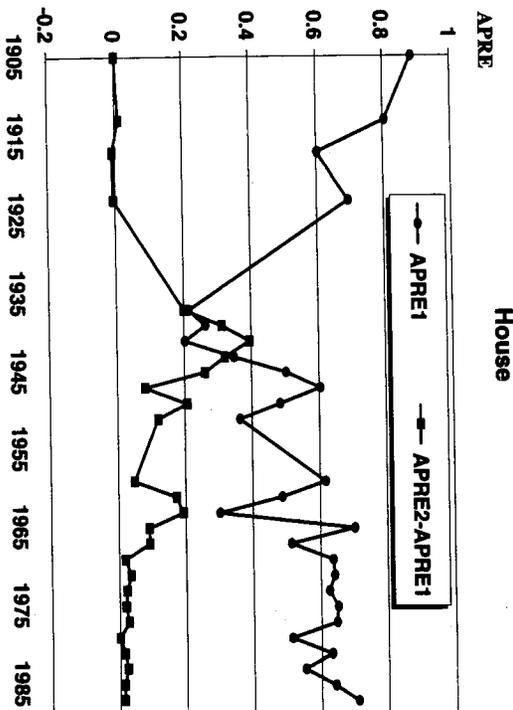


Figure 5.16. Labor-regulation votes in the House of Representatives (1905–88). Before the second New Deal, votes on labor were rare but were fit by the first dimension when they did occur. After the second New Deal perturbed the position of southern Democrats in the space, labor votes became almost entirely first-dimension votes. (*APRE2* – *APRE1* is sometimes slightly negative because the two-dimensional model actually resulted in a lower correct-classification rate than the one-dimensional model. For all roll calls in a Congress, however, the two-dimensional model always improves classification.)

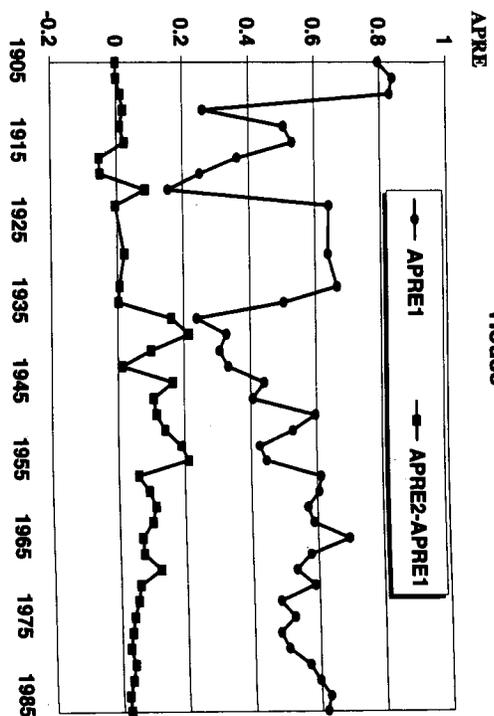


Figure 5.17. Votes coded in Clausen's social-welfare category, House of Representatives (1905–88). These votes have always been predominantly first-dimension votes. They have been, since the second New Deal, an increasingly good fit for the dimension.

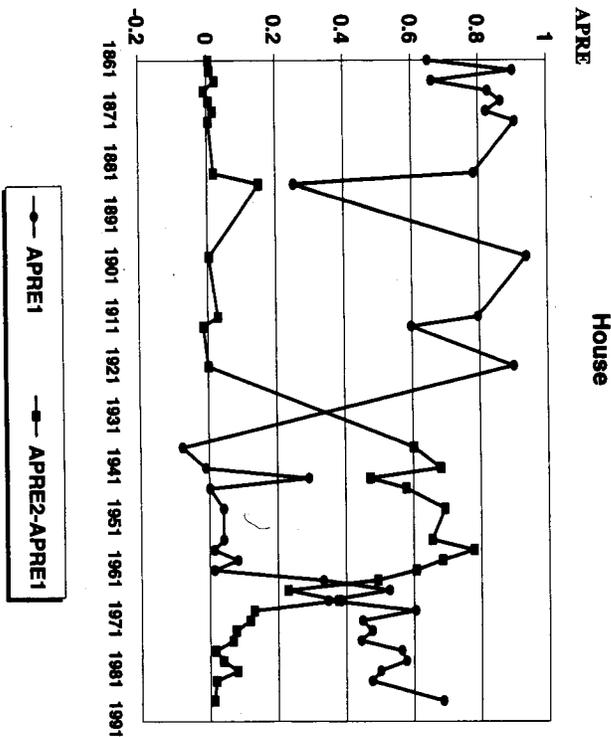
during the 1905–89 period (the 59th Congress through the 100th). For every House for which there were at least 3 roll calls on social welfare, we computed *APRE1* and *APRE2*. Social welfare has been largely a first-dimensional issue throughout the century, with occasional minor increments arising from the second dimension. These increments occurred in the late 1930s, the 1950s, and the 1960s. There is no evidence of a realignment brought about by the Depression.

#### *Civil Rights and the Perturbation of the Space, circa 1940–1970*

In perhaps a classic illustration of Riker's (1962) size principle, the extraordinarily large Democratic majority of 1937 was too big to last. Northern Democrats, who outnumbered southern Democrats 219 to 115, embarked on the second New Deal. Many of the new programs were not to the liking of the South. The conflict is most evident in the area of civil rights for blacks.

Roll calls on civil rights are shown in figure 5.18. Totals of 486 roll calls in the House and 742 in the Senate were taken on civil rights from the 37th Congress through the 100th (1861–1989). In the Senate, very few votes were taken on civil rights from the 46th Senate through the 75th. Consequently, we focus on the House, for which we computed the *APRE1* and *APRE2* for every Congress in which there were at least 3 roll calls on civil rights.

During the Civil War and Reconstruction (the 37th House through the 44th), civil-rights votes were highly structured on the first dimension. During the Civil War, there were many votes on the role of African-Americans in the military. The Reconstruction period saw votes on the Bureau of Freedmen and civil-rights bills. Between Reconstruction and the New Deal, votes on civil rights had somewhat lower PREDs, but the voting was picked up on the first dimension. This is largely because being left on eco-



**Figure 5.18.** Votes on civil rights for blacks, House of Representatives (1861–1988). Having traditionally been first-dimension votes in postbellum America, civil-rights votes became entirely second-dimension votes (with the *APRE1* near zero) during the era of the three-party system. After the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights in the 1960s, this issue area returned to the first dimension as the civil-rights agenda shifted toward issues of economic redistribution.

nomie issues meant favoring redistribution from richer whites in the Northeast to poorer whites in the South.<sup>19</sup> The split on economic issues happened to match, with reverse logic, the split on a host of antilynching roll calls in 1921 and 1922 (the 67th House).

Between 1922 and 1937 (the 68th Congress through the 74th), there were only two civil-rights roll calls in the House. Only one fell in the first Roosevelt administration. By the time votes on lynch laws recurred, in 1937 and 1940, and were joined, during World War II, by roll calls on the poll tax and voting rights in the armed forces,<sup>20</sup> there was a horde of northern Democrats who voted left on economic issues. A second dimension became necessary to differentiate northerners and southerners on civil-rights votes.

The economic agenda itself became infused with the conflict over race. Although the South's opposition to the minimum-wage legislation introduced in 1937 and passed in 1938 might have been motivated by the economic interest of a low-wage area,<sup>21</sup> southern white congressmen also explicitly opposed minimum wages as favoring southern blacks (see chapter 6). To accommodate the South, the tobacco industry and other sectors of the economy concentrated in the South (and in areas where competition with the North was not an issue) were kept out of the initial minimum-wage petition. Even so, southerners largely opposed the labor legislation of the second

New Deal. Consequently, labor also had an important second-dimension component from the late 1930s onward. (See figure 5.16, and the discussion of minimum-wage legislation in chapter 6.)

As economic issues also turned from redistribution among whites to redistribution from whites to blacks, particularly in the South, the southern Democratic delegation in Congress gradually became more conservative on the first dimension as it began to define a pole on the second dimension. By the late 1950s, this realignment of southern Democrats meant that the first dimension alone was largely sufficient to classify roll call votes, greatly reducing *PRE2*—*PRE1* on most labor issues. By 1970, first-dimension *PRE* levels returned to those found in the twenties and thirties (see figure 5.13).

Civil rights remained a second-dimension issue longer than labor did. Economic conservatives in the Republican party joined northern Democrats to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. After these two events, civil rights could increasingly be accounted for by the first dimension. In signing the legislation and “delivering the South to the Republicans for 50 years,” Lyndon Johnson signaled a realignment in mass voting behavior. But this did not lead to a spatial realignment in Congress. Rather, it ended the perturbation of the space by the civil-rights issue. As southern Democrats took on a black clientele, they became increasingly like northern Democrats. Unlike the 1920s, there is now a consistent right-wing position, personified by Jesse Helms, on economics and race. Not a single southern Democratic senator failed to vote to override President Bush’s veto of the Civil Rights Bill of 1990. The veto was sustained by conservative Republicans, from the North and the South. Indeed, the bill involved substantial economic redistribution, and its impact would have been nationwide.

Figure 5.19 shows the override vote in the 101st Senate. The configuration of senators was produced by running *W-NOMINATE* on the 101st Senate. What is striking about the configuration is the fact that the southern and northern Democrats are no longer clearly separated on the second dimension. The most extreme southern Democrats are now indistinguishable, along the main dimension, from liberal Republican senators such as Bob Packwood of Oregon. Indeed, the second dimension adds only 2 percent to the 83 percent of the total choices classified by the first dimension. The second dimension has been gradually disappearing since the middle of the 1970s, and the trend has continued into the 1990s (see chapter 11).

The civil-rights episode, lasting roughly from 1940 to 1966, is instructive in regard to spatial realignment. Although substantively race and economics are quite distinct, only one dimension was needed before 1940. This was just fortuitous, as conservative positions on race and economics just happened to be strongly, albeit negatively, correlated. The breakup of the overlarge Roosevelt coalition and the subsequent enfranchisement of Southern blacks took place in a framework of spatial perturbation. A second dimension was needed to capture the resolution of this conflict, but the conflict never managed to dominate the basic economic conflict inherent in democracy. Voting never became chaotic, as in 1851–52. The perturbation ended with legislation that induced a strong positive correlation of conservative positions on race and economic policy. Converse’s (1964) view of constraint in ideology is now reflected in a basically one-dimensional political space in Congress.

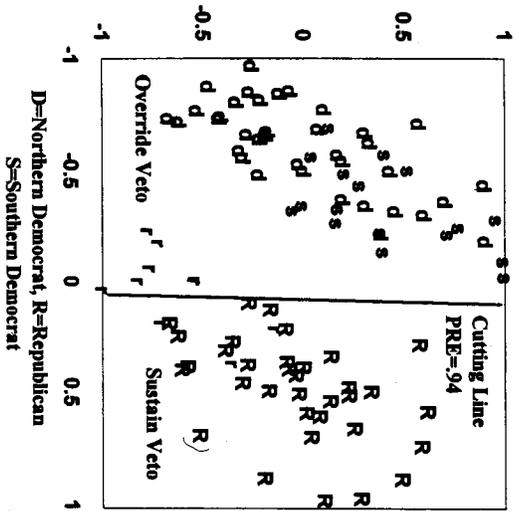


Figure 5.19. Senate vote to override President Bush's veto of the 1990 Civil Rights Bill. Lowercase letters denote votes to override; uppercase, votes to sustain. Southern Democrats are no longer distinctly separated from northern Democrats, as all southern Democrats voted to override. There are only three classification errors.

**Incorporation of Substantive Issues into the Basic Space**

As we noted earlier, most of the galaxy of policy issues that confront Congress are neither as intense nor as enduring as the race question that led to the realignment of the 1850s and to the perturbation of the 1950s. How are these issues accommodated in the basic space?

We indicated earlier that if an issue is to result in sustained public policies, we hypothesize that the policies must eventually be supported by a coalition that can be represented as a split on the first, or major, dimension. Policy developed by coalitions that are nonspatial or built along the second dimension is likely to be transient and unstable.

To investigate this hypothesis requires us to sharpen our focus and look at issue areas that are relatively narrowly defined, permitting us to keep substance relatively constant. Our first effort of this type was a detailed study of the history of minimum-wage legislation (Poole and Rosenthal, 1991b; see also chapter 6 of this book). Before World War II, the minimum-wage issue was relatively poorly mapped onto the space. Even using two dimensions, the classifications were much worse than they were after the war. Indeed, after the war, the minimum wage became a first-dimensional issue with a high degree of classification accuracy.

An example of an issue in the initial, ripening phase is the abortion issue. Between 1973 and 1989 (the 93rd Congress through the 100th), a total of 61 roll calls in the House and 67 in the Senate were cast on abortion. Figure 5.20 shows the APRE values for each House and Senate for which there were at least 3 roll calls on abortion. As

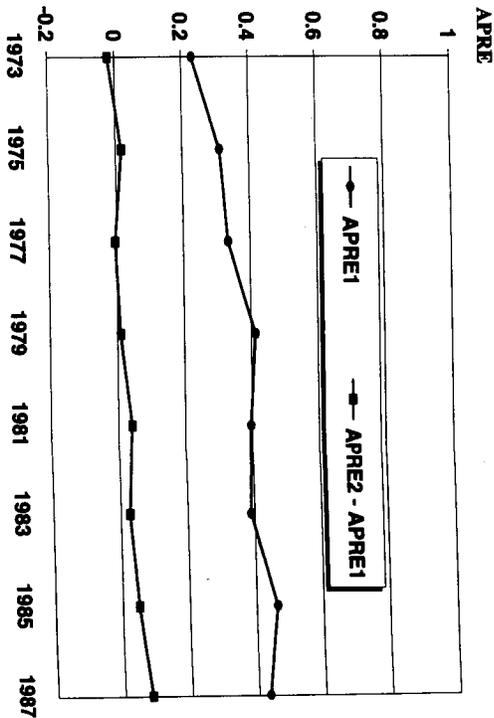


Figure 5.20. Abortion roll calls, House of Representatives (1973-88). Abortion is slowly becoming a liberal/conservative, first-dimension issue, with a better fit for the spatial model.

shown in figure 5.20, when abortion was first put on the agenda, shortly after the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* ruling in 1973 (the 93rd Congress), the issue did not fit the existing spatial dimensions very well—it falls along the first dimension but with a low level of APRE. However, the APRE has gradually increased. Part of this increase has resulted from well-known flip-flops, such as the conversion by Richard Gephardt (D-MO) to a pro-choice position. It no longer seems possible that abortion policy can be decided by single-issue politics because it is slowly being drawn into the first dimension.

The prohibition issue is a nice counterpoint to the abortion issue. The temperance movement was a classical example of single-issue politics. Seventy-three roll calls in the House were taken on liquor regulation from the 59th Congress through the 74th (1905-36). For every House for which there were at least 3 roll calls on liquor regulation, we computed the APREs. Unfortunately, there were not enough Senates with 3 or more liquor regulation roll calls to make a comparison between the House and Senate.

Figure 5.21 shows that voting on the passage of prohibition (unlike repeal) did not map at all onto the first dimension and had only a moderately high level of APRE on the second dimension. Although the special-interest coalition in this case was strong enough to amend the Constitution, it did not produce a lasting element of public policy.

Although much more work is required to determine how specific issues map onto the basic unidimensional structure of congressional voting, the results from the minimum-wage, abortion, and prohibition issues (and, in an earlier period, from that of the monetary policy) support our hypothesis that stable policy coalitions are built on the first dimension.

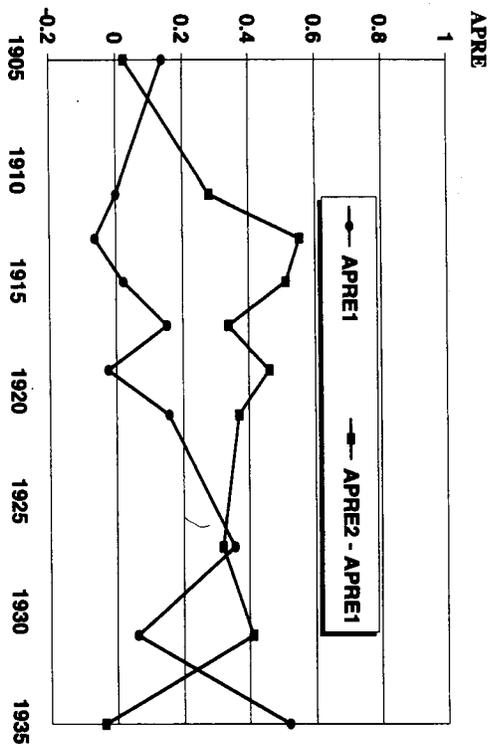


Figure 5.21. Alcoholic-beverage roll calls, House of Representatives (1905–36). Single-issue politics prevail, with *APRE1* actually negative at times, until Prohibition is enacted. Voting is largely on the second dimension, until repeal.

### Summary

Major changes in the voting behavior of the mass electorate occurred during the 1850s, 1890s, and 1930s. Only in the 1850s, however, is there evidence that these changes produced a corresponding shift in the structure of congressional roll call voting. The congressional changes of the 1890s and 1930s were mainly the massive re-placements of legislators of one party by new legislators from the opposing party. These replacements did not change the basic structure of congressional voting in the late 1890s and early 1930s. The great changes in the voting behavior of the mass public at these times produced new majorities but not a fundamental alteration of how issues mapped onto the space.

Beginning in the late 1930s, however, a perturbation of the space did change the structure of congressional voting. The overlarge Roosevelt coalition gradually fell apart over the old issue of race. It gave rise to the three-party system with distinct clusters for northern Democrats, southern Democrats, and Republicans (see figure 3.3). This division peaked in the 1960s and then slowly faded away. Southern Democrats are now to the Left of most of the moderate Republicans.

Our results suggest a general model for issue change. We have found that the first dimension, throughout most of American history, has captured the main economic conflicts between the two major political parties. During normal periods, a weak second dimension is usually present, capturing the social, or regional, issues of the day. New issues that have staying power will eventually be drawn into the existing one- or two-dimensional alignment because it is easier to build stable coalitions within the existing stable structure of voting.

## 6 Issues, Constituency Interests, and the Basic Space

We have demonstrated that the great bulk of congressional roll call voting can be accounted for by the simple one- or two-dimensional spatial model. How is this so, given the complex and diverse interests that must be addressed by every session of Congress?

In this chapter, we suggest some answers to this problem and illustrate our answers with five important substantive examples: (1) House voting that initiated the food-stamp program in 1964 and renewed it in 1967; (2) the development of railroad regulation from 1874 to 1887, culminating in the passage of the Interstate Commerce Act; (3) minimum-wage legislation from the initial passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1937 through the 1990 increase in the minimum wage; (4) strip mine legislation in 1974; and (5) Senate votes on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in 1975.

These topics have been intensively studied by other researchers. Ferejohn (1986), in his case study of food stamps, stresses the importance of logrolling, which, we believe, is critical to the process that projects specific economic issues onto the abstract, low-dimensional space. In contrast, Gilligan et al. (1989) analyzed railroad regulation in relation to economic interests specific to the railroad issue: a similar approach was taken by several researchers who studied the minimum wage.<sup>1</sup> With respect to strip mining, Kalt and Zupan (1984) made the seminal attempt at comparing a detailed model of economic interests with an ideological explanation of roll call voting.<sup>2</sup> As a measure of ideology, they constructed a pro-environment index from votes supported by the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), a single-issue environmental group. Kalt and Zupan, controlling for ideology, find that most other variables are of minor importance. We go one step further and find that the general D-NOMINATE measure of ideology does just as well as the LCV measure that is related to the topical issue. We also find that ideology dominates economic-interest measures for railroads, minimum wages, and food stamps. A similar result is obtained in comparing ideology to a set of economic and demographic variables used in analyzing a large set of roll calls in the manner of Peltzman (1984). In all the analyses presented in this chapter, D-NOMINATE (or W-NOMINATE) scores are the variables that have the most influence on individual roll call votes.

One important reason that our scores are such powerful variables is their ability to incorporate party-line voting. As previously seen in figures 3.3, 3.4, and 5.2 to 5.15, throughout nearly all of congressional history, the parties are represented as two dis-