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Re: State Legislatures and Re-apportionment

This picture does not look so good. Viz big states where the legislature is OK, New York can be counted; so can New Jersey. In Mass., the legislature is hopeless, so too in Missouri and Texas.

That leaves Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and California as the legislature/governorship/re-apportionment battlegrounds. All of these states presently have GOP governors. California, Ohio and Illinois have GOP majorities in both legislative chambers; the Michigan and Pennsylvania legislatures are divided.

California: The current Reagan polls show the legislature going under. The present majority in the Senate is 20-19; in the Assembly, 41-39. As of now, one Senate seat would definitely be lost in Alameda County, likewise the Mulford Assembly seat in Alameda. According to the Reagan people, the Alameda problem is substantially a result of Don Rumsfeld's not cutting off - despite Chotiner's urging - OEO funding of registration efforts in Alameda County that have added thousands of Chicanos and blacks to the rolls. The GOP majority in the Alameda Senate district was only 1,000 last time and is probably doomed.

Besides the mess in Alameda, there are some other vulnerable GOP seats. In the Assembly, as follows: 25th District (Santa Clara) - Crandall; 30th (Central Valley) - Veneman's old seat; 41st (Los Angeles) - Arklin; and maybe the 79th (San Diego) - Hom. On the Democratic side, there are vulnerable seats in Ventura (37th Dist), middle-class L.A. (44th, 45th, 58th, 67th) and Orange (69th). In the Senate, it is hard to see GOP gain opportunities, although Reagan has singled out Sen. Stierns (D) in Bakersfield, and that one is a remote possibility.

Holding the Assembly seems like a better bet, and if that can be achieved, then there should be enough GOP redistricting leverage that much of the new population gain can be put to party advantage. Even a fair re-apportionment has to help Republican suburbia. On the basis of both voting and registration trends, the most vulnerable Democratic Assembly seats are the 37th (Ventura) and the 69th (Orange). Money could be usefully directed to those contests, the Mulford race (Alameda) and the other GOP marginals.

(This does not purport to be first-hand information. Most of it is just derived from data, not on-the-scene contact.)

Michigan: The Democrats control the lower House and the GOP margin in the upper House is very thin. Twenty Republicans and eighteen Democrats were elected in 1968. Some local Republicans are worried about the districts where George Romney's suburban stupidity has made Republicanism suspect. One such district is that of State Senator Huber, who narrowly lost to Lenore Romney in the primary. Observers say that only millionaire Huber's lavish financing of his own race (as well as local popularity) keeps his suburban Detroit district in GOP hands. The Republican seats in danger are mostly in the area around Detroit and nearby middle-sized cities.

Inasmuch as there is acknowledged to be little chance of picking up control of Michigan's lower House, it is vital to hold the Senate, and to that end, support should be concentrated behind the three or four key Senate races in the urbanized southeastern part of the state where anti-Romneyism was rife in the primary.

Pennsylvania: The Democrats control the lower House, and no opportunity to capture it is seen. Republican control of the upper House is wobbly. At present, the GOP edge is 25-24, with one GOP marginal seat vacant because of a recent death.

The marginal GOP seats are in York (York), Lackawanna (Scranton) and Clearfield-Central Penna. All of these are in areas where Milton Shapp is not too popular and did not run too well in the primary, and thus the GOP has a decent chance to hold them. There is also a Republican Senate opportunity in Philadelphia.

Participation in the Pennsylvania legislative race should emphasize holding the GOP marginals in York, Lackawanna and Clearfield.

Ohio: There are decent GOP majorities in both houses, but there is danger nevertheless in light of the scandal-ridden weakness of the GOP state ticket.

The GOP has a large majority in the lower House not likely to be overturned by anything less than the sort of sweep that would make the whole subject academic. But the Senate is something else. GOP control could be overturned this year by the twin circumstances of a) the scandal-weakened state GOP image and b) the fact that quite a few of the seats up this year are Republican marginals.

There are six marginal GOP Senate seats up this year: the 5th district, 13th, 15th, 17th, 25th and 29th. Four have particularly narrow GOP victory margins: 13th (Lorain-Erie), 15th (Franklin), 25th (Cuyahoga-Lorain) and the 29th (Stark-Summit). These are urban districts, three of them in the northeastern part of the state where the trend is not so good -- in overall terms -- as it is elsewhere.

Inasmuch as the Democrats seem very likely to win the governorship, it is important to hold the legislature so that re-apportionment is relatively favorable. To this end, prime emphasis should be put on the Senate.

Illinois -- the governorship is not at stake here, and the legislature does not seem menaced to the extent it does in these other states.

Conclusion: Re-apportionment concern should emphasize the following 1) California legislature -- the big prize; 2) the Pennsylvania governorship and State Senate; 3) the Michigan State Senate; and 4) the Ohio State Senate. Substantial funds, organizational attention and any other assistance should be made available to GOP candidates in the dozen or so prime legislative races that have been singled out. Control of these legislatures could mean a difference of 15-20 House seats -- i.e., control -- in the 1972 election.