

Chapter 25

Modern Georgia's Changing Politics

Chapter Preview

TERMS

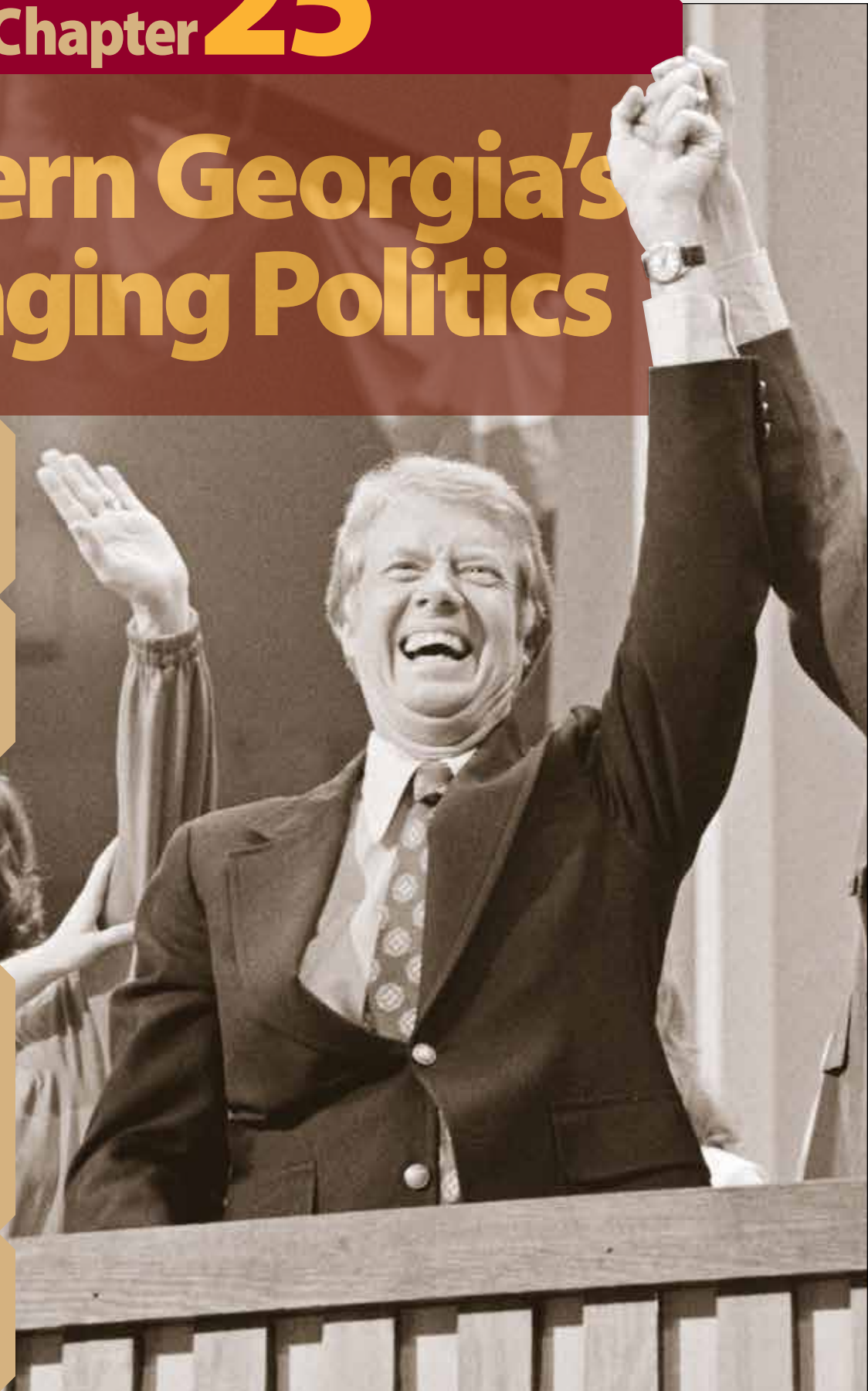
one-person-one-vote principle, grassroots campaign

PEOPLE

Richard B. Russell, James V. Carmichael, Herman Talmadge, Melvin Thompson, Marvin Griffin, Ernest Vandiver, Lester Maddox, Howard "Bo" Callaway, Jimmy Carter, Millard Fuller, Sonny Perdue

PLACES

Fulton County, Echols County, Plains, Carter Center





At the end of World War II, Georgia was still controlled by the Democratic Party. The national Democratic Party had undergone major changes, becoming a party that believed in a strong national government that would regulate the economy and provide some services for citizens similar to those in the New Deal. After the war, the national Democrats also became the party that pushed for civil rights and an end to the Jim Crow system of the South.

These changes made white Georgians who still supported segregation and more power for the state government very unhappy with the party. As early as the 1950s, some white Democrats began to vote for Republicans for the U.S. presidency. By the 1960s, some permanently left the Democratic Party and moved to the Republican Party, which supported less power for the national government. That led to the first Republicans being elected to local and state office, as well as Georgia's first Republican congressmen. By the 1990s, Georgians had the first Republican senator since the Reconstruction Era. By the early twenty-first century, Republicans controlled the Georgia legislature and many other offices in local and state government.

Two other major changes to Georgia politics were the end of the disfranchisement of African Americans and the end of the county unit system. Court decisions brought about these changes. The decisions led to some of the voting shifts that have characterized modern Georgia politics and had an impact on other rights for African Americans. The growing political power of urban areas also impacted the direction and growth of Georgia's economy.

Left: Plains peanut farmer Jimmy Carter celebrates winning the Democratic Party's nomination for president with his wife Rosalynn, and vice presidential nominee Walter Mondale.

Section 1

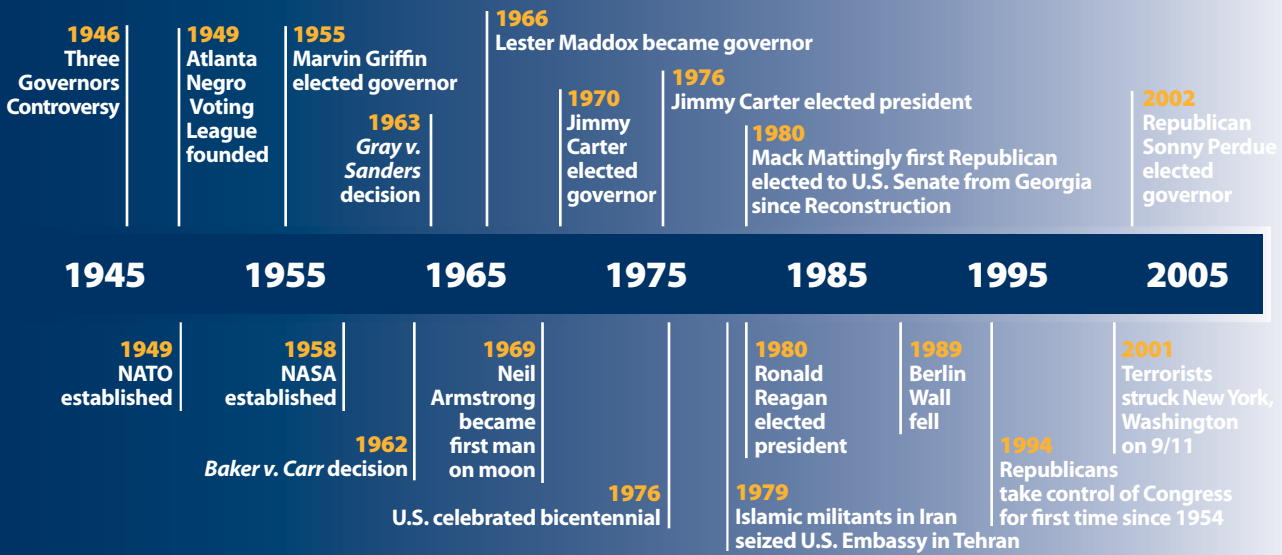
Postwar Politics to 1970

As you read, look for

- the Three Governors Controversy,
- the end of the white-only primary in 1946,
- the end of the county unit system,
- term: **one-person-one-vote principle**.

As World War II ended, Georgia politics became focused on the issues of white supremacy versus civil rights for African Americans and states' rights versus national government programs, including civil rights legislation. For most of the 1940s and 1950s, the Talmadge faction controlled state politics. In the 1960s, however, many business-oriented urban Democrats began to soften their stance on segregation and focus instead on economic growth.

Figure 47
Timeline:
1945 to 2005



African Americans became part of the political process as court decisions and laws began to take down the Jim Crow system and the system of rural domination that had been held in place by the county unit system and the boundaries of voting districts. By the end of the 1960s, politics in Georgia not only included African American voters but also an emerging Republican Party.

Georgia's Influence in National Government

Throughout the twenty-five-year period following World War II, Georgia had influential members in the U.S. Congress. In the House of Representatives, Carl Vinson was a powerful representative. In the Senate, Walter George served until 1957. He was followed by Herman Talmadge, who served through 1980. Georgia's other senator continued to be Richard B. Russell until his death in 1971.

Vinson and Russell were particularly important men in the national government. Vinson was elected in 1914 and was considered an expert in military affairs. He had been chair of the Naval Affairs Committee for sixteen years. He was a leader in building a strong navy and naval air force. Except for two years (1953 to 1955) when Republicans were in control, Vinson chaired the House Armed Services Committee from 1949 until his retirement in 1965. Throughout the Cold War, Vinson supported a strong military and was one of the reasons Georgia was able to keep such a strong military presence in the state.

The other man responsible for the large number of military installations in the state was Senator Richard Russell. Russell entered the U.S. Senate in 1933. In his first term, he became a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, which recommends how money will be spent. There he served as chairman of the subcommittee on agriculture, which was important to Georgia's rural areas. Russell also served on the Naval Affairs Committee. In a reorganization of the committee structure in 1946, naval and military affairs committees were combined into the powerful Armed Services Committee, of which he remained a member. Russell also believed in a strong military during the Cold War. However, he opposed U.S. military intervention unless the United States had direct interests in a conflict. He advised against the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. As a leading expert on military affairs, Russell was an advisor to Cold War presidents, both Republican and Democrat.



Above: Congressman Carl Vinson (right) confers with Secretary of the Navy Charles Edison at a meeting of the Naval Affairs Committee, which Vinson chaired, during World War II.

Something Extra!

In 1964, Carl Vinson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest award that a president can give a civilian.



The Three Governors Controversy

At the end of World War II, Ellis Arnall, whom you studied in Chapter 23, was still Georgia's governor. He was a reformer who supported eighteen-year-old voting, a merit system for state workers, prison reform, and repeal of the poll tax that kept many of the poor from voting. He also sponsored the revisions to the state's 1877 constitution that produced the Constitution of 1945. He was respected even outside the state of Georgia. In 1946, however, Arnall could not run for reelection because the constitution barred two consecutive terms.

Because he had been out of office for a term, Eugene Talmadge could run again for governor. The 1946 election was the first since the courts ended the white primary in 1944. Talmadge made that a campaign issue, saying he would bring it back. He tried to get the support of white segregationist voters by stating that blacks' voting was a danger to white supremacy.

Those opposed to Talmadge, including Governor Arnall, supported a Marietta native who was an executive at the Bell Bomber Plant during World War II—James V. Carmichael. Carmichael represented those who wanted to promote Georgia's business growth. Even with a third candidate in the race, Carmichael won the popular vote by over 16,000 votes. However, the popular vote did not count because Georgia was still under the county unit system. By getting the votes of Georgia's rural counties, Talmadge was able to win the primary election. In November, he also won the general election, with Melvin Thompson elected as lieutenant governor. Talmadge, however, was very sick and died before he was sworn in as governor.

A major controversy began when Herman Talmadge (Eugene's son) claimed and even took over the governor's office on the basis of write-in votes for him. Some of those write-ins were "found" after the election in Herman's home county. In spite of that seeming fraud, the General Assembly, which was controlled by Talmadge supporters, voted to recognize Herman Talmadge as the governor on January 15 and swore him in. Arnall still claimed to be governor, because he did not believe Talmadge was the legal governor. For a day, Arnall worked in the inner governor's office, while Talmadge worked

in the reception area to the office. After Arnall left for the day, Talmadge ordered the adjutant general to change the locks on the doors, and he moved into the office.

Because he was locked out of his own office, Governor Arnall set up a temporary office at the Capitol information counter on January 16. The fol-





Following day, a supporter of Talmadge had taken that area, and Arnall moved to an office building downtown. On January 18, Melvin Thompson took the oath of lieutenant governor and two days later that of governor. With the man he believed to be the legitimate governor sworn in, Arnall officially resigned. In the meantime, Lieutenant Governor Thompson opened an office in downtown Atlanta and began legal proceedings to become governor. The government was in a state of total confusion.

Secretary of State Ben Fortson refused to give the official state seal (used to legalize documents) to either Talmadge or Thompson. The secretary of the treasury froze the state's treasury. As a result, no one was in a position to run the state. The national news media had a field day reporting Georgia's political chaos.

The case worked its way through the courts. Before reaching the Supreme Court, the *Atlanta Journal* broke the story that some of the supposed voters in Telfair County were dead or no longer lived there, meaning that those Talmadge votes had been the result of fraud. Finally, in March, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled that Thompson was the rightful head of state until a special election could be held in 1948 to fill the unexpired term of Governor-elect Eugene Talmadge. Thompson had some major accomplishments during his term, including higher teacher salaries, construction of roads and bridges, and the purchase of Jekyll Island by the state. In spite of that, the Talmadge forces came back in that special election of 1948 and elected Herman Talmadge to finish out the rest of that term.

Opposite page, above: When Eugene Talmadge paid the fee to enter his fourth gubernatorial race, he did not know that he would not live to take office. **Opposite page, below:** Talmadge's main opponent in the Democratic primary was businessman James Carmichael, who won the popular vote in part because of the increased participation of black voters. Talmadge, however, won the county unit vote, and the nomination. **Above:** Following the death of Eugene Talmadge, outgoing governor Ellis Arnall disagreed with the legislature's choice of Herman Talmadge to replace him and decided to stay in office. When Talmadge's men locked him out, he took up residence at the Capitol's information desk.



Above: Herman Talmadge, like his father Eugene Talmadge, continued the politics of segregation, white supremacy, and states' rights. After one term as governor, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, where he served until 1980. **Opposite page:** Marvin Griffin served as lieutenant governor under Herman Talmadge, and succeeded him as governor. Griffin's administration was notable for increases in education spending for both black and white schools but was marred by charges of corruption.

Politics in the 1950s

The Three Governors Controversy made headlines all over the country, much to the dismay of business leaders in Georgia's cities, especially Atlanta. They did not want the rest of the country to see Georgia politics as laughable. In Georgia, however, Talmadge's campaign, based on the defense of white supremacy, segregation, and states' rights, struck a chord with many whites. White supremacists worried about the growing support for civil rights from President Truman and some of the national Democrats. In fact, some southern Democrats broke off from the national Democratic Party in 1948 to form the Southern Rights Party and support its presidential candidate, Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina. Georgia's electoral votes did not go to Thurmond, but those of neighboring states to the east and west did.

In the elections in the late 1940s, the major themes of Georgia politics continued to revolve around segregation and economic growth. The Talmadge faction

of the Georgia Democrats ran campaigns that strongly defended white supremacy and states' rights, especially the state's power to determine race relations. Moderate white Democrats supported candidates who were more business-oriented and willing to be less vocal in supporting white supremacy in order to attract business investment from other parts of the country.

The end of the white-only primary in 1946 led to the registration of thousands of black voters over the next few years. In 1949, African American leaders in Atlanta founded the Atlanta Negro Voting League with the goal of registering voters. They planned to use the black vote to get support from white politicians for the needs of black citizens. The League chose which whites it would endorse in particular elections. Then, through the black-owned radio station WERD and the black *Atlanta Daily World* newspaper, the League asked black voters to support those white candidates who were racially moderate. Atlanta Mayor William B. Hartsfield fit into that category. When African Americans began voting, Hartsfield joined with black leaders to forge a working relationship.

The Talmadge faction still controlled the governor's office and the state legislature until the 1960s. When Herman Talmadge left the governor's office in 1955, his lieutenant governor, Marvin Griffin, took his place. After Griffin's term, Talmadge supporter Ernest Vandiver became governor. Much of their effort was trying to maintain the "southern way of life," which meant

segregation. As the U.S. Supreme Court began to make decisions that ended segregation and granted civil rights to African Americans, most of the state's leaders resisted those changes. However, these governors did make improvements to state education and the state's system of roads and highways. Ernest Vandiver cleaned up state government after corruption in the Griffin administration, improved the treatment of the mentally ill at the state hospital in Milledgeville, and worked to expand Georgia's trade.

The End of the County Unit System

The other Georgia institution defended by the leaders in power in the 1950s was the county unit system. As you learned, that system gave far more power to the voters in rural counties than to the voters in the cities. When the county unit system was first put in place, the differences between rural and urban counties were not as great. Over the years, however, the urban counties grew much more populous, and the imbalance became much greater. As long as the county unit system was in place, the business-oriented moderates would remain a minority in government and had little chance of winning the governor's race.

Baker v. Carr

In 1962, a major U.S. Supreme Court decision was about to change this foundation of Georgia's politics. Before this decision, the Supreme Court had not become involved in how voting took place within a state believing that it was a state political issue. In the 1962 *Baker v. Carr* case from Tennessee, the Supreme Court agreed to hear cases about how voting districts were apportioned (divided up) based on the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This was an important decision that opened the door for citizens to sue in states where voting districts were set up to favor a particular group.

Gray v. Sanders

The next year, Atlanta voter James Sanders sued the Democratic Party of Georgia, headed by James Gray, for using the county unit system to determine the outcome of statewide elections. He argued that it violated his Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection of the law. The state of Georgia argued back that it was using the system to get a balance between rural and urban areas.

As you learned in Chapter 18, candidates for statewide office were chosen not by the popular vote but by the county unit vote. Whoever won a majority of the popular vote got all of the county's unit votes. Since there were more town and rural counties, they always outvoted the urban counties. Sometimes, if there were more than two candidates running against one another, no one candidate would get more than 50 percent. The top two vote-getters in the state would have a run-off to choose the candidate. Whoever won got



Something Extra!

During Governor Griffin's term, the state purchased Stone Mountain and made it a state park.



Something Extra!

When he was elected, Carl Sanders was the country's youngest governor at age 37.

all the county unit votes; they were never split between candidates.

The attorneys for Sanders used the 1960 census to illustrate the mathematics of that system. In 1960, Georgia had a population of 3,943,116 people. Of those, 556,326 lived in Fulton County. Echols, the county with the lowest population, had 1,876 people. So, one unit vote in Echols County represented 938 people; one unit vote in Fulton County represented 92,721 people. Echols County voters had far more power than Fulton County voters.

When the case was in district court, the legislature tried to save the county unit system by passing a law making it a little more representative. But the court said that, even with those changes, the system still violated the rights of Fulton County voters. The state appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1962, Georgia's Democratic Party even agreed to allow the popular vote to decide the outcome of the elections that year. By the time of

the primary, the federal district court had issued an injunction against using the county unit system in the fall primary while the appeal was being decided. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that what Georgia did voluntarily in one year did not guarantee that the popular vote would determine every election. In the end, the court said, "There is no indication in the Constitution that homesite . . . affords a permissible basis for distinguishing between qualified voters within the State." In other words, a voter could not be discriminated against based on where he or she lived. The county unit system was unconstitutional.

The 1963 decision in *Gray v. Sanders* had a major impact on Georgia politics. No longer could politicians control the state by controlling the rural areas. Urban leaders now had a better chance of electing governors who were sympathetic to the growing business interests of the state. Some politicians began to change their positions to be more appealing to urban voters.

Former Governor Marvin Griffin thought trying to change the message meant caving in to desegregation, so he decided to run for governor. His main opposition was young Augusta lawyer and state senator Carl Sanders. Sanders had been one of the few legislators urging Governor Vandiver to keep schools open after the Supreme Court ordered desegregation. Sanders

campaigning on the New South ideas of growth and education reform. Griffin was a rural Democrat who focused on defending segregation. Without the advantage of the county unit system, Griffin could not overcome Sanders' appeal to those who wanted to attract business and investment to the state and create a more modern image for Georgia. In this election based on the popular vote, Sanders won a major victory. In his speech on the day he became governor, Sanders said, "This is a new Georgia." His administration led to a shift in the state's direction toward modernization.

Reapportionment

Other court decisions required that Georgia reapportion (redraw) the voting districts both for the General Assembly (House and Senate) and for the U.S. House of Representatives. These voting districts had to be drawn so that each type of district had about the same number of people living in it. The state reapportionment decision was ordered in 1962. In fact, Carl Sanders got the reapportionment of the state Senate passed while he was president pro tem of that body. While Sanders was governor, the state House of Representatives was also reapportioned. Once done, the urban areas had much more representation than they had before.

In a 1964 case, brought by citizens in the Atlanta area, the court ordered that new boundaries be drawn for representatives serving in the U.S. House of Representatives. In all of these decisions, the U.S. Supreme Court used the **one-person-one-vote principle**. That means that the vote of each citizen should be equal to every other citizen's vote no matter where that citizen lived. Every ten years, after the U.S. census is taken and new population figures become known, the Georgia legislature redraws its districts for both the state legislature and the U.S. House. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 also guaranteed that this process could not be used to draw district lines in ways that would prevent African Americans or other minority groups from having any voting strength.

The Rise of the Republican Party

While Carl Sanders was an extremely popular and effective governor, he could not succeed himself. So the 1966 election was an open field. The person favored to win, however, was former governor Ellis Arnall, who was a reformer like Sanders. There were many candidates in the Democratic primary, so no one candidate got a majority. Although Ellis Arnall had more votes than the other candidates, he did not have over 50 percent of the vote. Lester Maddox came in second in the primary, an indication that many Georgians still held on to ideas of segregation and were resistant to change.

Lester Maddox had a reputation as a strong segregationist. In fact, he closed his very successful Atlanta restaurant rather than allow African Americans to eat there after the passage of the Civil Rights Act. In 1957 and



Above: Unrepentant segregationist Lester Maddox stunned the Georgia political establishment when he unexpectedly won the Democratic nomination for governor in 1966. Despite the fact that Maddox continued his segregationist rhetoric while in office, he appointed more blacks to state office than anyone before him.



Above: An early sign that Republicans were making inroads in Georgia came in the 1968 presidential election. Alabama Governor George Wallace (top) an ardent segregationist running as an independent, won Georgia's electoral votes, but the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon (above), came in second.

1961, Maddox had run unsuccessfully for mayor of Atlanta. In the run-off for the 1966 Democratic nomination, Maddox and his supporters campaigned tirelessly, while Arnall was so sure of victory that he did not campaign. In one of the greatest election surprises in Georgia, Maddox won the Democratic nomination. For the first time since Reconstruction, this opened the door for the Republican Party in Georgia to have a chance against the Democrats in the general election.

While most Georgians continued to vote Democratic on the state level, many became increasingly upset with the direction of the national Democratic Party in the 1950s and 1960s. From President Truman's desegregation of the military in the 1950s to the support for desegregation by Presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s, the national party had become the party of civil rights. That caused some discontent among a number of Democrats. The Republicans were attractive to some of the business upper classes because the party supported big business and called for less regulation. They were also the party that was more conservative about taxes and spending money.

Howard "Bo" Callaway was from a very wealthy Georgia family who made their money in textiles. He became the director of the Callaway Gardens vacation resort. He had been in the Talmadge faction in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1964, he switched to the Republican Party. Callaway ran that year for the U.S. House of Representatives and became the first Republican since Reconstruction to represent the state when he won that election. In 1964, the first Republicans were also elected to the state legislature. This was the beginning of a return in Georgia to a two-party system.

In the 1966 election, both Callaway and Maddox were too conservative for some Georgia progressives. They urged people to write-in a vote for Ellis Arnall. Congressman Callaway won the popular vote for governor. The write-in votes for Arnall, however, kept Callaway from having a majority (over 50 percent) of the vote. Under the Georgia constitution, if no candidate had a majority, the election was decided by the state legislature. In spite of the popular vote, the legislature, controlled by Democrats, chose Maddox as governor.

Even though the Republicans lost that election, they moved closer to being accepted in Georgia politics. In the 1968 presidential election, Independent candidate George Wallace, former governor of Alabama, carried the state's electoral votes and about 43 percent of the state's popular vote. The second most popular choice for president was not Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey, but Republican candidate Richard Nixon. Wallace's votes came

from many of the old Talmadge faction, while the urban conservatives voted for Nixon. Humphrey, a liberal on both racial issues and social welfare issues, got the votes of Georgia's African Americans, white liberals, and some old Democrats who had not yet changed parties.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define: one-person-one-vote principle.
2. What caused the Three Governors Controversy?
3. Why was Georgia's county unit system ended?

Georgia Portraits

Howard “Bo” Callaway

Howard Hollis Callaway, known as “Bo,” was born in LaGrange in 1927. He grew up in LaGrange and nearby Hamilton. His family sent him to Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Virginia. After graduation, he attended Georgia Tech for one year before becoming a cadet at the U.S. Military Academy (West Point).

Callaway graduated from West Point in 1949, served in the army in Korea, and was an instructor at Fort Benning in Columbus. His parents, Cason and Virginia, had begun reclaiming hundreds of acres of cotton land in Pine Mountain for a model farm. Later, it became a garden and natural resort. In 1952, they opened the Ida Cason Gardens, named for Cason’s mother, to the public. After his military service, Bo Callaway returned home to work with what became known as Callaway Gardens. He later wrote a book called *The Story of a Man and His Garden* detailing his father’s work to create the thousands of acres of beauty at the resort.

Politically, Callaway supported the Talmadge faction in the 1950s and 1960s. During this time, he served as a member of the Board of Regents, which oversees the University System in Georgia. In 1964, however, he switched to the Republican Party when the conservative Barry Goldwater ran for president. Goldwater won Georgia’s electoral votes that year, an



indication that the Republican Party was growing in the state. Callaway ran that year for the U.S. House of Representatives and became the first Republican elected to represent Georgia since Reconstruction. He served a two-year term, voting with conservative interests during that time.

In 1966, rather than running for a second term in the House, Callaway decided to run for governor. If elected, he would have been the first Republican governor since Rufus Bullock in the early 1870s. He lost, however, to Lester Maddox in an election decided in

the Georgia House of Representatives.

In the 1970s, he and his family moved to Colorado to develop a resort at Crested Butte. He became chair of that state’s Republican Party. His hard work was rewarded by his appointment as the secretary of the army under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. In 1976, Callaway was the chair of Gerald Ford’s presidential campaign committee. In 1980, Callaway ran unsuccessfully as the Republican candidate for U.S. senator from Colorado.

In the 1990s, Callaway returned to Georgia. He served as chair of the Ida Cason Callaway Foundation for many years and continued to remain active in service and charitable work. In 2007, the Georgia General Assembly passed a resolution honoring his achievements in “service to his state and country.”

Section 2

Politics in Georgia since 1970



Above: Visitors to Plains, Georgia, are welcomed by this three-dimensional caricature of the town's most famous citizen, former peanut farmer, and former president, Jimmy Carter.

As you read, look for:

- the first Georgian elected president,
- the first Republican governor since Reconstruction,
- the rise of the two-party system,
- term: **grassroots campaign**.

Although Democrats continued to win statewide offices, since 1970 Georgia has had two organized political parties. As the period progressed, the Republican Party grew as voters began to shift. Increasingly, white conservative voters began to shift from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party. New Republicans moved into the state. Most upper- and middle-class whites became Republicans. By that time, rural and working class white southerners were losing the dislike they had for Republicans that dated all the way back to the Civil War and Reconstruction. African Americans, for the most part, remained loyal Democrats, as did white liberals and some moderates. The voting shift was clearer in national elections in the early years where Republican presidential candidates could, but not always did, win the state's electoral votes.

Although Georgia continued to elect Democrats to Congress, they tended to be conservative Democrats who often voted against many of the bills that the national Democratic Party supported. Democrats also controlled the state legislature in the 1970s and 1980s. By the 1980s and 1990s, however, the number of Republicans in the state legislature grew as old Democrats switched parties, some even while they were in office.

Voting districts drawn in the late 1900s and early 2000s almost guaranteed that Republicans would have an edge in some areas, while in others Democrats would. Republicans began to win the statewide elections, although a few state offices did remain Democratic. As the population began to change in the twenty-first century, the votes of new groups to Georgia, including immigrants from Mexico and Central American countries, became more important.

Jimmy Carter

In 1970, state leaders wanted to improve Georgia's national image with a different kind of leader who would seem more progressive. In 1970, the

race for governor was once again in the Democratic primary. Former Governor Carl Sanders came back into politics. His opponent was a former state senator from southwest Georgia named Jimmy Carter.

Jimmy Carter grew up during the depression in the small town of Plains. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy with a degree in engineering, Carter served on one of the early nuclear submarines and seemed destined for a successful Navy career. He returned home, however, after the death of his father in 1953 to take over the family's peanut business.

In the State Senate

Carter became a civic leader in his area of southwest Georgia before being elected to the state Senate, where he served two 2-year terms. In the state Senate while Carl Sanders was governor, Carter usually supported Sanders' ideas. He was interested in educational improvement and served as chair of the Committee on Education.

He was also concerned about the problems of the poor. Carter tried to be informed about the bills being considered and was the only member of the legislature to actually read every bill. The public saw him as an effective senator.

As Governor

In 1966, Carter came in third in the Democratic primary for governor behind Ellis Arnall and Lester Maddox. After that loss, he began campaigning for 1970. Carter's determination to win led to an ugly campaign in which he courted the vote of segregationists. He defeated his Democratic opponents and the Republican candidate to become governor.

During his campaign, he projected himself as the traditional common man from rural Georgia. He shocked both supporters and opponents in his inaugural address when he called for an end to racial discrimination. During his administration, Carter appointed more African Americans and women to state government and other boards than all the governors before him. He had the portraits of three African Americans put up in the state Capitol as a symbol of his commitment to ending racial prejudice.



Above: Jimmy Carter was elected governor of Georgia in 1970 after serving in the state senate. His administration was characterized by positive action to end racism in state government.

Something Extra!

Jimmy Carter was a speed reader, having been recorded reading 2,000 words a minute.

Something Extra!

Jimmy Carter was the first president born in a hospital and also the first Georgian to become president.



Above: Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign headquarters in the Plains depot has been preserved. Carter's small-town background lent credence to his campaign themes emphasizing moral values, in contrast to the scandals of the Nixon administration.

He also undertook a major reorganization of state government, making it more modern and much more efficient. To end duplication of activities and services, he streamlined the departments of the executive branch of state government, reducing the number from around 300 to 22. He was interested in education, preservation of both natural and historic resources, and reforms in mental health, a cause his wife Rosalynn championed. Not everyone supported Carter's efforts, and his term was full of conflict with Lieutenant Governor Lester Maddox and with many in the legislature.

As President

After serving his term, Carter was not eligible for reelection. He began his campaign for the U.S. presidency. During Carter's governorship, President Richard Nixon and his aides were caught in a web of deceit and illegal activity that became known as the Watergate Scandal. In 1974, Nixon was forced to resign. The public was shocked and disillusioned. The Democrats, including Carter, knew that the Republicans were out of favor because of the activities of Nixon's administration. Carter realized that what the public most wanted was a government it could trust again.

When Carter announced that he was going to run for the presidency, many people did not take it very seriously. When he told his mother of his plans to run for president, she said, "Of what?" Most of the country did not know who Carter was. But Carter ran a **grassroots campaign**,

meaning he traveled all over the country for two years, meeting and talking directly to ordinary people in small towns and big cities. He talked about moral values and trust and he began to win state Democratic presidential primaries. When the Democratic convention was held in the summer of 1976, he won the nomination on the first ballot.

In a very close election, Carter defeated his Republican opponent, President Gerald Ford. While his administration started well, Carter had some difficult problems to solve. The economy had been in trouble for several years with two major problems: high inflation and high unemployment. An energy crisis had begun in 1973 when Arab oil-producing countries in the Middle East stopped selling oil to the United States as a punishment for U.S. support of Israel. Then in 1979, Islamic militants in Iran took the Americans at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran as hostages. Carter spent the next year trying to get them home.

Carter did have several accomplishments. As he had in Georgia, Carter appointed women, African Americans, and other minorities to government positions. He worked for environmental policies. He also created two new



departments in the executive branch: the Department of Energy and the Department of Education.

In foreign policy, Carter became a strong advocate for human rights and for international peace. One of the accomplishments for which Carter became best known would be an omen of some of his important work after his presidency: peacemaking. In 1979, Carter was able to work out the Camp David Accords, a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel.

In 1980, however, he was not popular because he had not been effective in solving many of the country's problems. His policies to get inflation under control cost people jobs, most of them workers who normally would have voted for a Democrat. As an outsider, he had not been able to tap into the Washington networks very well. He was able to get the Democratic presidential nomination, but his Republican opponent Ronald Reagan handed him a major defeat. Georgia was the only state in the South, and one of the few in the nation, whose electoral votes went to Carter. This "Reagan Revolution" sped up the shift of the South to a majority Republican region.

After the Presidency

Jimmy Carter was in his fifties when he returned to Georgia convinced that his life was meant to be of service to others. Over the next thirty years, he wrote over a dozen books. Some were memoirs, and some were books on international affairs. His book *Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis*, which came out in 2005, was a *New York Times* best seller.

With his wife Rosalynn, he founded the Carter Center in Atlanta. The Carter Center supports research on global issues and their impact on people. It also does work around the world promoting democracy, human rights, and peace. Carter himself has monitored elections in countries all over the

Above: Perhaps the most significant foreign policy accomplishment of Jimmy Carter's presidency was the Camp David Accords, the first agreement to normalize relations between Israel and any Arab country. Here, President Carter, center, shakes hands with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt (left) and President Menachem Begin of Israel (right) to celebrate the conclusion of the negotiations.

Something Extra!

Paul Coverdell served as the director of the Peace Corps from 1989 to 1991.



Above: In 2002, Sonny Perdue became the first Republican to be elected governor of Georgia since Reconstruction. He was elected to a second term in 2006. Like many other white southern politicians of his generation, he started his career as a Democrat, switching to the Republican party in 1998.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define: grassroots campaign.
2. Who was the first Republican elected governor in Georgia since Reconstruction?
3. What factors led to Georgia becoming a two-party state?

world and has worked to find peaceful solutions to conflict. The Center's slogan is "Waging Peace. Fighting Disease. Building Hope."

In the twenty-first century, the Carters have worked to bring an end to diseases, such as guinea worm, that have been the cause of great suffering and tragedy in many developing nations. Through their own example, the Carters also brought attention to a Georgia charity named Habitat for Humanity, which was founded by Carter's friend Millard Fuller. In 2002, Carter became the second native Georgian to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Republicans and Democrats

Georgia's electoral vote went to Carter in the 1976 and 1980 elections. Since then, Georgia's electoral votes have gone to Republicans in every election, except the first election of Bill Clinton in 1992. On national issues, the majority of Georgians supported the strong conservatism represented by the Republican Party platforms of the last three decades.

However, Georgians did not always vote a straight ticket (voting for the candidates of only one party). At the same time Georgians were helping to elect a Republican president, they were voting to send Democrats to the U.S. Senate and the governor's office. One Senate seat was held by a Democrat until 2002, while the seat held by Herman Talmadge was won by Republican Mack Mattingly in 1980, Democrat Wyche Fowler in 1986, and Republican Paul Coverdell in 1992.

Control of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives depended on what type of people lived in the voting districts. It was also affected by how those districts were reapportioned by the state legislature following the censuses. Cities were more likely to elect Democrats, while the suburbs were more likely to elect Republicans. Both Democrats and Republicans represented Georgia in the U.S. House in the early twenty-first century.

Georgia continued to elect Democratic governors until 2002, when Sonny Perdue of Houston County became the first Republican governor since Reconstruction. Perdue's political career is a good example of the trend of Georgia politics. Perdue's state political career began in 1990 when he was elected to the state Senate. At that time, he was a Democrat. He changed parties in 1998 and continued to serve in the state Senate as a Republican. He then ran for governor as a Republican. Many white Democrats of Perdue's age and older had similar stories.

At the end of this period, Georgia was a two-party state, although the Republican Party was more dominant. Each party had representatives in statewide offices, in the U.S. House of Representatives, and in both chambers of the Georgia General Assembly. As the population continues to change, especially with citizens of Hispanic heritage moving to the state, the direction of politics as the twenty-first century progresses remains unknown.

Georgia Portraits

Georgia House Speaker Tom Murphy

For over two decades, one of the most powerful politicians in the state of Georgia was House Speaker Thomas Bailey Murphy of Bremen in Haralson County. Serving for twenty-eight years in the position, he became the longest-serving state house speaker in the country. During that time, five different men served as governors.

Born in 1924, Tom Murphy grew up during the Great Depression. His father, a railroad worker and Primitive Baptist minister, was a supporter of the New Deal. After graduating from North Georgia College in Dahlonega, the young Murphy entered the U.S. Navy in 1943, serving in the South Pacific as a Seabee. After the war, he attended law school at the University of Georgia and, in the 1950s, practiced law in his hometown of Bremen. He also served on the local board of education before his election to the Georgia House in 1960.

Murphy served for a time as the floor leader (the House member who introduces legislation the governor supports) and as the speaker pro tem. When House Speaker George Smith died in 1973, Murphy moved up to the speaker's position. He was reelected to the position for almost three decades.



Murphy took the speaker's position in a new direction, making it far more independent of the governor than it had been.

He became an extremely powerful force in state politics. Legislation could pass or fail depending on his support. Although Murphy was from a rural district, he realized the importance of Atlanta for the state and supported causes that made Atlanta stronger and gave it economic power in the South. That included buildings such as the World Congress Center and transportation improvements such as an expanded airport.

Murphy was a lifelong Democrat. By the early twenty-first century, his position became less secure as the Republican Party grew throughout the state. He had barely won reelection in 2001. In 2003, he was defeated by his Republican opponent. Two years later, the Republican Party gained a majority in the Georgia House, and a Republican became the speaker of the House. By that time, Murphy was practicing law in his hometown. He died in 2007. On his birthday in 2010, the Georgia House honored him by hanging his portrait in the Capitol building outside the House chamber.

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

Section 1 Postwar Politics

- During and after World War II, Georgia had influential members in Congress: Carl Vinson in the House of Representatives; Walter George, Herman Talmadge, and Richard B. Russell in the Senate.
- The 1946 Three Governors Controversy occurred when Eugene Talmadge was elected governor but died before being sworn in. Ellis Arnold refused to leave the office to Herman Talmadge (Eugene's son). However, the courts declared Lieutenant Governor Melvin Thompson governor.
- The white-only primary ended in 1946 and led to the registration of thousands of black voters in the next few years.
- The Talmadge faction controlled the governor's office and state legislature until the 1960s.
- In 1963, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Gray v. Sanders* declared the county unit system unconstitutional.
- In 1963, Georgia was required to reapportion voting districts for both the state legislature and the districts for electing representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives. In this and other cases, the U.S. Supreme Court used the one-person-one-vote principle.
- In the Democratic primary run-off in 1967, Lester Maddox defeated Ellis Arnall for the governor's nomination. Republican Howard "Bo" Callaway won the popular vote, but the legislature chose Maddox as governor.

Section 2 Politics in Georgia since 1970

- After losing the Democratic primary for governor in 1966, Jimmy Carter was elected governor in 1970.
- During his administration, Carter called for an end to racial discrimination and appointed more African Americans and women to state government and other boards than all the governors before him. He also reorganized state government, making it more modern and much more efficient.
- In 1976, Carter ran a successful grassroots campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.
- Jimmy Carter was the first Georgian to become president of the United States, defeating Gerald Ford.
- Carter appointed minorities to government positions and created the Departments of Energy and Education. He worked for environmental policies and was a strong advocate for human rights and international peace. He also brokered the Camp David Accords, a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel.
- When he lost the presidency in 1970 to Ronald Reagan, Carter returned to Georgia to work on the issues of peace, human rights, and the environment.
- In 1980 Mack Mattingly became the first Republican senator from Georgia since Reconstruction.
- In 2002, Sonny Perdue became the first Republican governor since Reconstruction.
- Today, Georgia is a two-party state.



Understanding the Facts

1. Explain the impact of Richard Russell and Carl Vinson as they served Georgians in the U.S. Senate and House.
2. Review the section entitled “The Rise of the Republican Party” in Section 1 and list some reasons that the party began to gain ground in Georgia.
3. Describe how President Carter helped establish a safer environment for Israel through international negotiations.
4. Describe the significance of the election of Sonny Perdue as governor in 2002.



Developing Critical Thinking

Evaluate the impact of politics in Georgia under the county unit system. How did the declaration of the county unit system as unconstitutional change the face of statewide elections?



Writing Across the Curriculum

Write a letter to President Jimmy Carter. You may either ask him a question that you think is appropriate or comment on his time in public service. Mail your letter to President Carter at the presidential library.



Extending Reading Skills

Read the section entitled “Republicans and Democrats” on page 644. Make a summarizing chart like the one on page 602 to record information on how Georgia became a two-party state. Then, write a summary from the information you collect.



Exploring Technology

Use a search engine to locate the Electoral College results for Georgia in presidential elections dating back to the 1950s. Make a chart that shows the trend of voting for Republican or Democratic candidates. Evaluate how or if this chart indicates the impact of two-party politics in Georgia.



Practicing Your Skills

Review and summarize the events surrounding the Three Governors Controversy. Make a timeline that shows the order of events.