

Chapter Ten

Elections and Campaigns

Presidential v. Congressional Campaigns

- There is more voter participation in presidential campaigns
- Presidential races are more competitive than House races

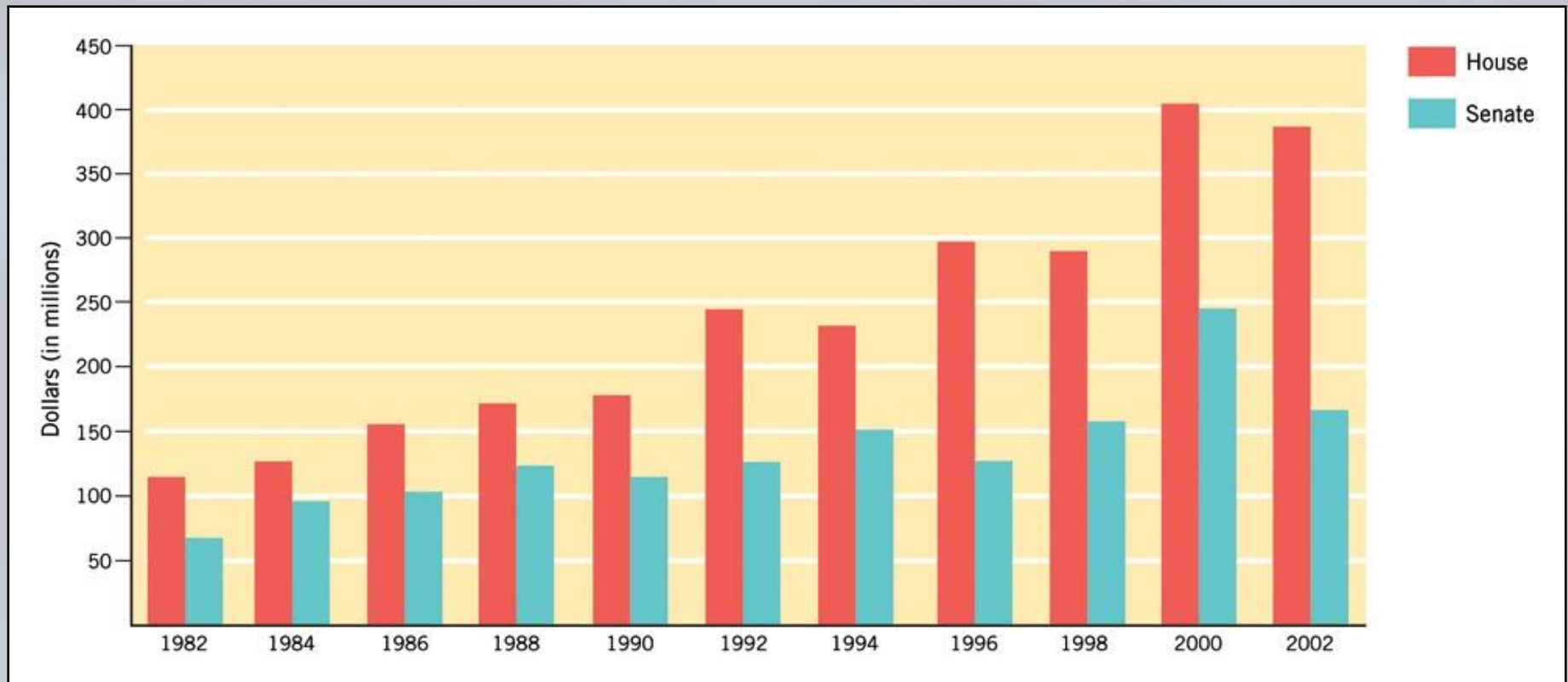
Presidential v. Congressional Campaigns

- Lower turnout in off years means that candidates must appeal to more motivated and partisan voters
- Members of Congress can do things for their constituents that the president cannot
- Members of Congress can distance themselves from the “mess in Washington”

Funding for Congressional Elections

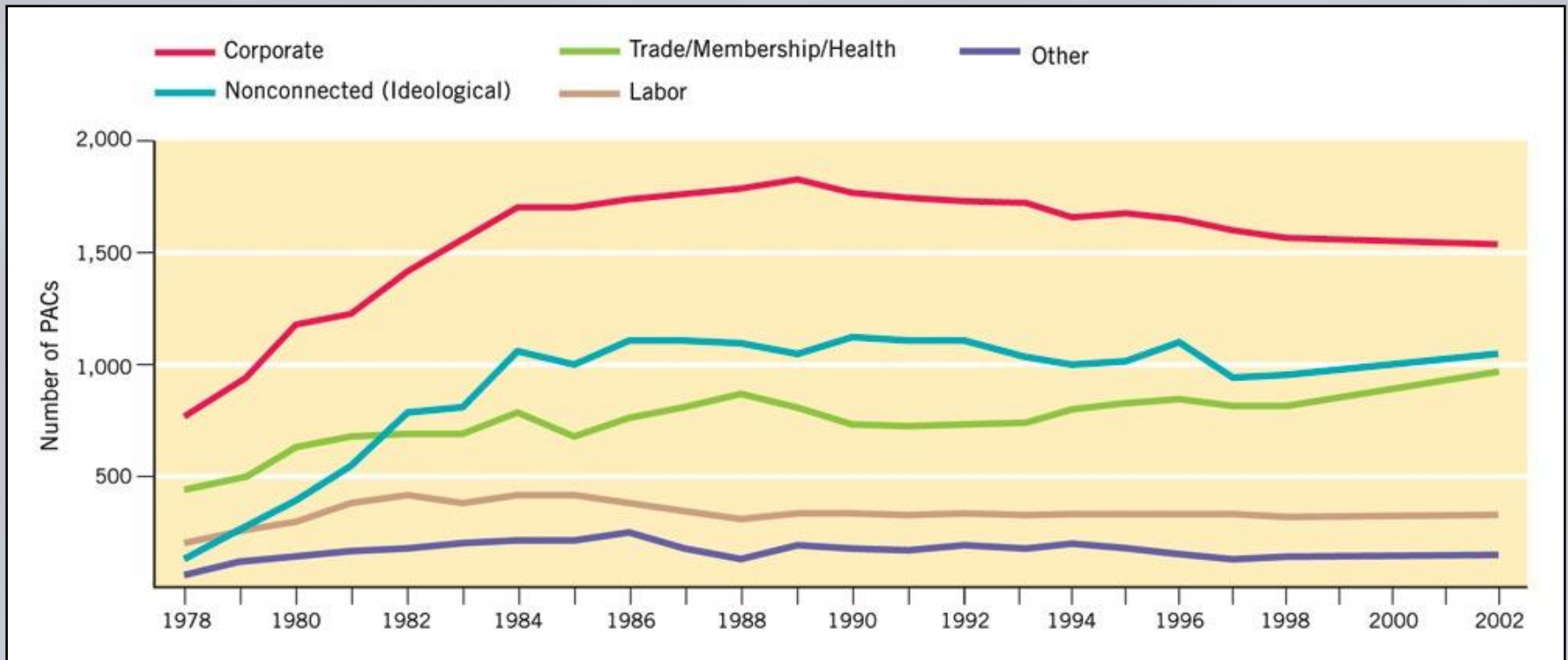
- Most money comes from individual small donors (\$100–\$200 a person)
- \$2,000 maximum for individual donors
- \$5,000 limit for PACs, but most give just a few hundred dollars
- Challengers must supply much of their own money

Figure 10.1: The Cost of Winning



Updated from Federal Election Commission report, May 15, 2001.

Figure 10.2: Growth of PACs



Federal Election Commission.

Congressional Elections

- Incumbents have an extraordinary advantage – and no terms limits in Congress
- Each state has two senators; number of House representatives based on state population, as determined by the census
- House members are now elected from single-member districts

Table 10.2: Sources of Campaign Funds: All House and Senate Candidates in 2001-2002, by Party (in Millions)

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Sources	Incumbents	Challengers	Open Seats
Individuals			
Democrats	\$132.7	\$47.1	\$40.2
Republicans	125.5	44.1	55.8
PACs			
Democrats	93.2	13.6	14.5
Republicans	100.1	8.8	20.0

Source: Calculated from Harold W. Stanley and Richard G. Niemi, *Vital Statistics on American Politics, 2003–2004* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2003), Table 2.6.

Drawing District Boundaries

- **Malapportionment:** districts have very different populations, so the votes in the less-populated district “weigh more” than those in the more-populated district
- **Gerrymandering:** boundaries are drawn to favor one party rather than another, resulting in odd-shaped districts

Staying in Congress

- Members gear their offices to help individual constituents
- Committee members secure pork for the district
- Members must decide to what extent to be delegates (to do what the district wants) versus trustees (to use their independent judgment)

1974 Campaign Finance Reform

- 1972: Watergate and illegal donations from corporation, unions, and individuals catalyzed change
- Brought about the 1974 federal campaign reform law and Federal Election Commission (FEC)

Raising Money

- Individuals can give \$2,000; PACs can give \$5,000 in each election to each candidate
- Candidates must raise \$5,000 in twenty states in individual contributions of \$250 or less to qualify for federal matching grants to pay for primary campaigns

Problems with Campaign Financing

- **Independent expenditures:** an organization or PAC can spend as much as it wishes on advertising, so long as it is not coordinated with a candidate's campaign
- **Soft money:** unlimited amounts of money may be given to a political party, so long as a candidate is not named

Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act

- Banned soft money contributions to national parties from corporations and unions after the 2002 election
- Raised the limit on individual donations to \$2,000 per candidate per election

Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act

- Sharply restricted independent expenditures
 - Corporations, unions, trade associations, nonprofit organizations cannot use their own money for an advertisement referring to a candidate by name 30 days before a primary and 60 days before a general election

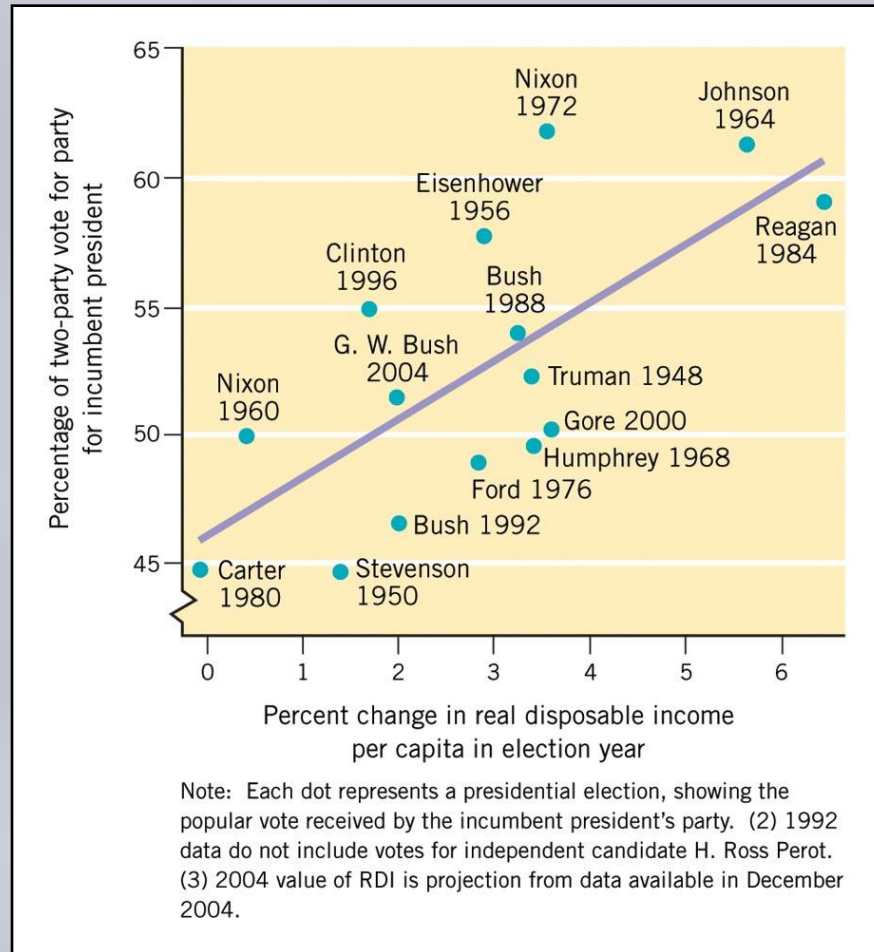
527 Organizations

- A new source of money under the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act
- Designed to permit the kind of soft money expenditures once made by political parties
- They can spend their money on politics so long as they do not coordinate with a candidate or lobby directly for that person

Money and Winning

- Presidential candidates have similar funds because of federal funding
- During peacetime, presidential elections are usually decided on the basis of three factors:
 - Political party affiliation
 - The economy
 - Character

Figure 10.3: The Economy and Vote for President, 1948-2004



Updated from Robert S. Erikson and Kent L. Tedin, *American Public Opinion*, 5th ed., p. 271.
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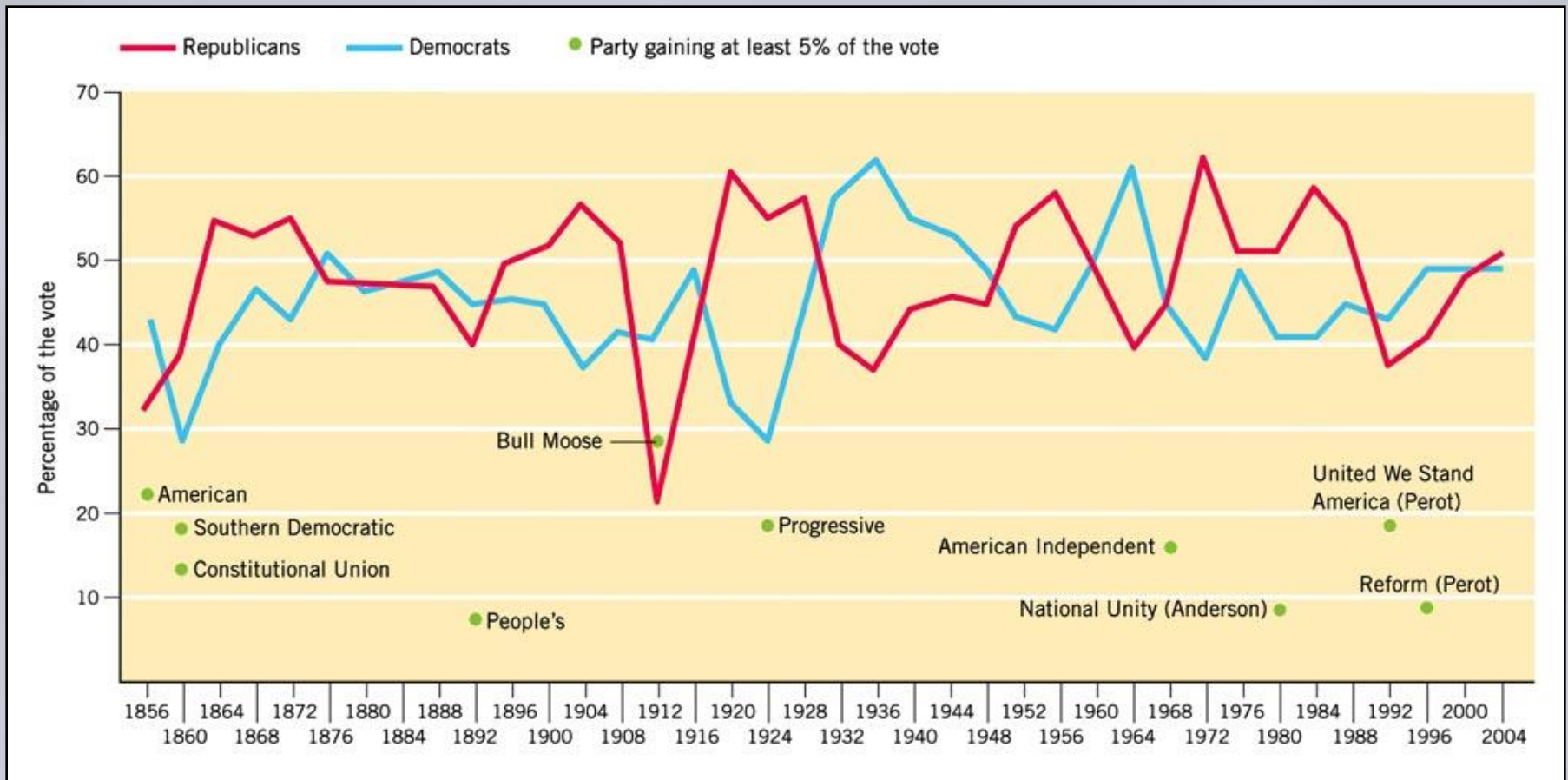
Voter Behavior

- V. O. Key: most voters who switch parties do so in their own interests
- Prospective voting is used by relatively few voters
- Retrospective voting is practiced by most voters, and decides most elections

Coalitions

- Democratic coalition: African Americans, Jews, Hispanics (not Cuban)
- Catholics, southerners and union members are leaving the Democrats
- Republican coalition: business and professional people who are very loyal, farmers

Figure 10.4: Partisan Division of Presidential Vote, 1856-2004



Updated from Historical Data Archive, Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, as reported in William H. Flanigan and Nancy H. Zingale, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, 3rd ed., 32.

Do Elections Make a Difference in Policy?

- Many American elections do make differences in policy
- But the constitutional system generally moderates the pace of change