

SUPPORT OF DINKINS IN BLACK AND WHITE

By Warren J. Mitofsky

David Dinkins's victory in the Democratic mayoral primary was a dramatic triumph for a black politician, and one achieved in a somewhat unusual fashion. First, Dinkins ran quite strongly in the white community. Second, while there was no new record for black turnout, Dinkins attracted only a slightly smaller share of the registered blacks than Jesse Jackson did a year earlier in the New York Democratic presidential primary. In both contests, moreover, black turnout outpaced white by about 10 percentage points.

An analysis of the WCBS/New York Times exit poll in New York City shows that 28% of the voters in the mayoral primary were black. This is down slightly from the 31% proportion black in the 1988 presidential primary. That 3-point decline comes mostly from areas where blacks predominate. In neighborhoods like Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant, where turnout was a smaller share of registration than in 1988, Dinkins also had a smaller share of the vote than Jackson by about 6 percentage points. In the city as a whole, however, Dinkins's share surpassed what Jackson got in the presidential primary.

Citywide, blacks voted 94% for Dinkins, which was about the same proportion they gave Jackson. White voters went just enough for Dinkins to make the difference in this year's mayoralty primary: They gave him more than half again the proportion of support they gave Jackson. Whereas Jackson won only 17% of the white vote, Dinkins got 30%—which, for a non-incumbent big-city mayoral candidate, was topped only by Tom Bradley's showing in his first race for mayor of Los Angeles. And the New York mayoralty contest was held in a climate of greater racial tension than was Bradley's first L.A. race. City-wide, Dinkins won almost as many votes from non-blacks as from black voters.

Analysis of the *aggregate* vote by district provides a picture of racial voting that accords fully with that from the exit poll.

| <u>ASSEMBLY DISTRICTS</u> | <u>TURNOUT</u> | | <u>VOTE</u> | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | <u>MAYORALTY RACE 1989</u> | <u>PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY 1988</u> | <u>DINKINS</u> | <u>JACKSON</u> |
| Mostly Black | 43% | 46% | 83% | 88% |
| Mostly White | 31 | 30 | 26 | 15 |
| Mixed White/Hispanic | 32 | 34 | 37 | 26 |
| Mixed Black/Hispanic | 35 | 36 | 61 | 67 |
| Others | 37 | 39 | 52 | 46 |
| TOTAL | 35% | 36% | 52% | 46% |