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# Realigning Elections

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# REALIGNING ELECTIONS

I. REPUBLICAN SURGE OF 1994
   A. REPUBLICAN CONTROL OF BOTH HOUSES
      1. Gain of 54 seats in House
      2. Newt Gingrich: first Republican Speaker since 1955
      3. Republican Governors and State Legislatures
      4. Defeat of Thomas Foley

II. CRITICAL ELECTIONS OR PARTY REALIGNMENTS
   A. DEFINITION: NEW PARTY COALITION
      1. V. O. Key, Jr.: Theory of Critical Elections, 1955
      2. Criticisms

III. THE 1994 ELECTION: SOME OBSERVATIONS
   A. LARGEST TURNOVER OF INCUMBENTS IN RECENT YEARS
   B. THE DESIRE FOR PREDICTABLE OUTCOMES
      1. Importance of Poll-Taking
   C. THE ADVANTAGES OF INCUMBENCY
      1. Low Turnover in the 1980s had become the Norm
      2. Casework and Perks
   D. THE ROLE OF SWING VOTERS

IV. HISTORICAL PATTERNS
   A. LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR CRITICAL ELECTIONS
      1. Republicans in 1854 and 1860
      2. Republicans in 1894 and 1896
      3. Democrats in 1930 and 1932
   B. PATTERNS OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

V. CONCLUSION: REALIGNMENT IS RARE
   A. HOUSE WAS DESIGNED TO GAUGE THE PUBLIC MOOD