

# Example of term paper on voting rights act - section 5 - from justice to unjustic...

[Politics](#), [President](#)



The war for independence was over 200 years ago. The tensions between Great Britain and the US have long been forgotten and the two countries are, in fact, very close. Regarding the international issues and world politics, London and Washington are almost always on the same side.

The civil war ended in late 19th century. It seems that it is, as well, a part of our nation's history. The slavery has been abolished completely in all the states and former slaves became citizens. Of course, the process took a while. Many states continued to practice racial segregation. An excellent example is the building of the Pentagon (designed in the second quarter of the 20th century) which has twice as many toilets as required, since there were separate cabins for black and white in the original design.

It is hardly surprising, though, that there were practices in some states that were aimed to limit certain portions of population from voting - usually the African Americans, Indian and Alaskan natives etc. But all of that happened over 50 years ago.

When the Voting Rights Act passed the Senate and the Congress and was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson it was rightfully reviewed as a giant step towards justice. It secured once again the right of every citizen to cast his vote in the elections and prevented possible "unhealthy" and "legal-but-dirty" tricks to interfere with this essential right of every democratic country. As those practices were observed to be happening in certain states, counties, township etc., Section 5 of the VRA had addressed them specifically, imposing all sorts of limitations to altering voting procedure. One might argue that this was not constitutional from the very beginning, but the Senate and the Congress ratified it with great majority. By the way, those

were the Democrats who opposed the act: of the 32 Republicans in the Senate only two objected, while there were 16 objecting Democrats, almost a quarter of their total number

**So, the VRA has been signed by the President and the " bad guys" from the Southern States have been " warned".**

However, as the years passed, Section Five became more and more irrelevant. Why should there be a difference between Texas and Ohio? Why the procedure of changing the voting process in Alabama should be different than that of California? The act that opposes discrimination is, in fact, imposing it throughout the US

It is true that there have been certain appeals that were rejected on the basis of the Act. Yet it has to be noted that their number has decreased dramatically over the years. Department of Justice (the body that approves proposed changes) has been reported to find a contradiction with the Act in 5. 5% of the occurrences in the first years. In the last ten years the number has dropped below 0. 1%, which means only a fraction of the proposed changes are regarded by the lawyers (who tend to be over-protective in regard to human rights anyway) as possibly discriminating certain minorities. Obviously, the changes in " non-covered" jurisdictions, which are not viewed by DOJ, could be regarded as such as well

## **References:**

Suevon Lee, Voting Rights Act: The State of Section 5, ProPublica, Aug. 30, 2012