

Voting Rights Showdown

AN EDITORIAL

If the Dixiecrats and the Nixon Administration get their way this week, the 1965 Voting Rights Act will be emasculated.

The "southern strategy" cannot work if thousands upon thousands of black citizens in the southern states are able to register and vote their convictions.

That is why Atty. Gen. John Mitchell wants to switch the law's coverage from the seven states in Dixie where it has been so effective and give it national scope, meaning he will have an excuse for not enforcing it.

This civil rights legislation, the only piece on the congressional agenda this year, has been as effective as any passed.

That too is behind the proposal to sabotage the law.

There still is time to wire or call your Senator. Urge him to vote against the Nixon-Mitchell plan. Urge him to fight for a simple extension of

the present law.

Unless this law is saved pretty much in its present form, the Congress will have failed miserably to advance the cause of equality of citizens during this session.

If the law is butchered by the Nixon-Mitchell proposals the increase in black elected officials in Dixie will taper off.

No man can claim equal opportunity with another in this country if one is restricted in his rights to political and economic power.

The government should not be part of a conspiracy with Dixie to prevent citizens from registering to vote. The government should encourage citizens to vote and make it easy for them to do so.

Changing the Voting Rights Act in line with the Nixon-Mitchell proposal would make the government party to Dixie's historic practice of restricting the right of suffrage enjoyed by black citizens.