



Thad Cochran and Mississippi Election Burning

A recent study found that Mississippi is the [most corrupt](#) state in the union. Now revelations about voting irregularities in the state's June 24 GOP primary runoff have many critics wondering if Senator Thad Cochran's narrow victory in it isn't just the latest chapter in that corruption.



Facing Tea Party challenger Chris McDaniel, Cochran prevailed in the Tuesday, June 24 contest by a [1.9 percent margin](#) that amounted to just 6,700 votes. But the senator received up to five times that many votes — perhaps 35,000 — from Democrats who crossed the aisle to cast ballots in the Republican primary. This in and of itself isn't illegal in Mississippi, but doing so after also having voted in the June 3 Democratic primary is. And evidence of this is precisely what McDaniel's supporters now claim to have found — hundreds of instances in one county alone. Writes Bryan Fischer at [GOPUSA](#):

Evidence is emerging that there may be hundreds and perhaps thousands of improperly cast ballots in the runoff election in Mississippi between incumbent Thad Cochran and challenger Chris McDaniel.

[Jim Hoft reports at Gateway Pundit](#) that in Hinds County alone 800 ballots have been identified that may have been improperly cast for Cochran. And he provides the photographic evidence to support the claim.

... Hoft reproduces photographs of the Hinds County Democratic roll book that clearly shows that some Democratic voters who voted on June 3 in the Democratic primary also voted on June 24. By law, no such votes should count.

McDaniel's camp has reason to suspect voter irregularities in at least 10 counties.

Mississippi has 82 counties in total.

Hoft also accuses the Cochran campaign of pressuring counties to delay certification of the vote until the last minute so that the McDaniel campaign will have a very narrow window in which to audit the poll books and mount a possible legal challenge. To make matters worse, Gateway Pundit is [reporting](#) that Cochran's operatives are now preventing McDaniel's supporters from reviewing the voter rolls in nine counties — in violation of Mississippi law.

And this is just the latest in a campaign marked by underhanded tactics and vicious personal attacks. A large number of the anti-McDaniel Democrat voters were black Mississippi residents, and it has now



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on June 29, 2014

surfaced that a scurrilous advertising campaign was used to rally them to the polls. As the UK *Daily Mail's* David Martosko [writes](#):

A series of three racially charged radio ads that ran in rural Mississippi on Election Day played a role in driving black Democrats to vote in a Republican primary run-off election. MailOnline has exclusively obtained audio of the ads.

... They claimed that supporters of conservative McDaniel had connections to the Ku Klux Klan and that McDaniel had a "racist agenda." They also warned that black Democrats "could lose food stamps, housing assistance, student loans, early breakfast and lunch programs and disaster assistance" if he were to become the Republican U.S. Senate nominee.

"Vote against the tea party. Vote Thad Cochran," one ad said. "If the tea party, with their racist ideas, win, we will be sent back to the '50s and '60s."

... Each [ad] carried a required acknowledgement stating that it was "paid for by Citizens for Progress." Clerks at the office of Mississippi's secretary of state told MailOnline that no such group is registered there as a political committee.

The story gets even stranger, however. It turns out that Citizens for Progress is tied to an openly lesbian, longtime black Democrat operative named Mitzi Bickers. Bickers had to resign in disgrace from a job in the Atlanta mayor's office last year after filing false financial disclosures, but she was back in action in the weeks leading up to the June 24 Mississippi runoff, hired by Cochran forces to get out the black vote. The *National Review's* [Eliana Johnson](#) provides more detail:

Two Atlanta-based entities affiliated with Bickers, The Bickers Group and the Pirouette Company, were paid thousands of dollars to make robo-calls on Senator Cochran's behalf by a super PAC that backed Cochran in his bid for reelection. [Documents](#) filed with the Federal Election Commission show that Mississippi Conservatives, the political-action committee run by former Mississippi governor Haley Barbour's nephew Henry, paid the groups a total of \$44,000 for get-out-the-vote "phone services."

As for the politics that made these strange bedfellows, Johnson writes:

When the June 3 primary election was thrown into a runoff, the Cochran campaign began looking to expand the electorate. That meant courting Mississippi's large African-American population. The campaign deployed volunteers throughout the state's Delta region, which has a concentrated African-American population, and even hired Democratic operative James "Scooby Doo" Watson to lend a hand. It worked: Turnout in the Delta increased nearly 40 percent on Tuesday.

Note that the robo-calls used some of the same rhetoric as the radio ads.

It also now appears that the Senate-race skullduggery in Mississippi has claimed at least one life. Writes the [Clarion-Ledger](#), "Attorney Mark Mayfield was found dead of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound Friday at his Ridgeland home. Mayfield, vice chairman of the Mississippi Tea Party, was one of three men charged with conspiring with Clayton Kelly to photograph U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran's bedridden wife in her nursing home to use in a political video against Cochran in the Republican Senate primary against state Sen. Chris McDaniel." And while police found no evidence of foul play, Mayfield's supporters beg to differ. They say that he was accused wrongly and that the political foul play used against him destroyed him emotionally.

As for McDaniel, he hasn't yet conceded the race, [saying](#), "This was not a fair election. Activity was



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illegal, at worst. Unethical, at best.” But will his campaign be able to find enough tainted votes to overturn the result? Some observers think that’s a tough mountain to climb. McDaniel’s other option is to run as a write-in candidate in November, a course of action that, given Cochran’s dirty campaigning, many anti-establishment Republicans would relish perhaps as much as the Democrats would.

Photo of Sen. Thad Cochran



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