

# The elections — a GOP runaway?

analysis by  
Steve Arvanette

## The nation

What began early last spring in the small, snow covered state of New Hampshire, comes to a close for four more years, Tuesday, as the American voting public goes to the polls to select its national political leader.

It was in New Hampshire last March, that the 46th attempt at choosing a nation's chief executive began with that state's presidential preference primary.

Besides voting for a presidential and vice presidential ticket Tuesday, the country's voters will select 435 congressmen to serve in the House of Representatives. Also, 33 states will vote on whom to send to the U.S. Senate as one of their two senators.

On the state level, 18 governorships will be decided along with hundreds of executive and legislative races.

Californians have several lively additional ballot proposals to vote on. One would drop criminal penalties for the possession of marijuana. Other issues are whether to reinstate the death penalty and whether to establish a tough obscenity law.

Colorado voters will vote whether to cut off state funds for the 1976 Winter Olympic games in Denver. Proponents of the measure stress possible overcrowding and environmental pollution caused by the games.

In the presidential race, Richard Nixon and his running mate Spiro Agnew appear assured of a second four-year term as president and vice president respectively.

Unless there is a drastic change in public opinion, or public opinion pollsters failed in their job, the Republican incumbent team should beat their Democratic opponents by a wide margin.

The Democratic ticket of George McGovern and Sargent Shriver's only hope is that the polls are wrong and that they can make a come-from-behind win much like Harry Truman made in 1948 over Thomas Dewey.

The latest Gallup poll of the race showed Nixon leading McGovern 59 per cent to 36 per cent. The remaining five per cent, according to Gallup, were

undecided when the poll was taken.

According to the Harris poll, Nixon holds even a wider margin. That poll shows the President leading his opponent 60 per cent to 32 per cent. The other eight per cent were undecided.

Republican leaders are hoping the Nixon-Agnew team can whip their opponents by a wider figure than Lyndon Johnson's 60-40 per cent landslide victory in 1964.

Speculation among most political observers is that Nixon should win by a landslide. However, the percentage will most likely be less than 60 per cent.

Once loyal Democrats enter the pollbooth, it is anticipated many will swallow hard and vote for McGovern even though they may disagree with many of the South Dakota senator's policies.

Assuming that Nixon will win by a wide margin, many Republican politicians are saying the party has a chance to win control of the U.S. Senate.

Democrats hold a 55-45 split in the Senate. Of the 33 seats up for election, Republicans control 19 and Democrats 14.

Republicans are publically speaking of a pick-up of five to seven seats. Privately they are hoping for three.

Democrats on the other hand, think aloud of a net increase of one or two Senate seats. To themselves, they hope to hold on to the 55-45 existing split.

Republican seats considered safe are those in Nebraska, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Alaska, South Carolina, Illinois, Colorado and Maine.

The Democrats should have no trouble holding Mississippi, Arkansas, West Virginia and Minnesota.

Republicans are holding on to slim leads in Texas, Michigan, Delaware and Oregon. Democrats are leading in tight races in Louisiana, North Carolina and Alabama.

The best chances for a gain in the number of Republican senators will be in contests in Georgia, New Mexico and Rhode Island. Democrats should take the Republican seat in South Dakota and have a chance in Delaware.



The best indication of how the Senate will be next session seems to depend on how big Nixon's victory is.

In the other chamber of Congress, the House of Representatives, little change is anticipated in the party split after Tuesday's election.

With all 435 seats up for election, Democrats presently hold a 256 to 179 advantage.

At the state level, 18 state governor positions will be decided Tuesday. Of those, ten are held by Democrats and eight by Republicans.

Republicans are having trouble holding Delaware, West Virginia, Illinois and Washington. It appears the only place Republicans have a chance to pick up a gubernatorial spot is in Missouri.

What started early one cold spring morning in New Hampshire, will be all over Wednesday. All over, that is, except for the cheering and inaugural speeches—only to start again.