

Bereuter's victory margin is larger than anticipated

By L. Kent Wolgamott

State Sen. Douglas Bereuter of Utica Tuesday was elected to the 1st District House of Representatives seat by a comfortable margin over Hess Dyas in what was expected to be a close election.

The Bereuter victory was called at 11:50 by United Press International. He led Dyas with 55.7 percent of the vote at 11:30.

Interviewed at his victory party at the National Bank of Commerce, Bereuter said

he credited his victory to a "tremendous volunteer effort" by county organizations, part-time paid staff and people involved in their first political campaigns, especially young people.

Bereuter also said "our message must have gotten through. The message of experience, demonstrated ability that I know how to work in Washington, but yet a new face."

He credited door-to-door campaigning by his wife, Louise, in 50 communities in counties bordering Seward County where

he lives, during the final three weeks of the campaign as being a great aid in his campaign.

He also said a newspaper insert in the major daily newspapers in the district, a strategy used in the primary in Norfolk, surprised Dyas and was an important factor in his election.

He said he "was a little nervous" awaiting the election results on Tuesday, but he said he "was more confident than the day before the primary."

Bereuter said he was less confident than he had been a week before, due to "two shocks" his campaign had received on Saturday, when an Omaha World-Herald poll which showed him trailing Dyas, and a postcard mailed out by the Dyas campaign featuring a photograph of Dyas with Bereuter's primary opponent, State Sen. Loran Schmit of Bellewood.

"We were confused by the World-Herald poll," Bereuter said. "We had been relying exclusively on newspaper polls since June."

But he said the poll motivated volunteers to work harder in the last three days of the campaign in their get-out-and-vote effort.

He said his fears that he would lose support due to the postcard mailing did not prove to be true.

"By the looks of things, it didn't seem to have a large negative effect," Bereuter said.

The confidence of the Bereuter campaign was illustrated by stickers which began to appear when the election swung toward Bereuter. The stickers read "Join the Re-election Team, Cong. Bereuter in '80."

He said he had no immediate plans following the election, as "I am a little superstitious and do not plan beyond the election."

But he said he would "take about two and one half days off. We have about enough money left in the budget to take a trip all the way to some exotic place like Ashland."

He said he had some personal arrangements to make, such as finding living quarters in Washington, before taking office and said he would like to attend seminars for newly elected congressmen sponsored by the Republican Congressional Committee and by the Kennedy Institute of Government at Harvard.

Bereuter had participated in the first Kennedy Institute seminar when he was a graduate student at Harvard in 1973, he said.

He said his biggest immediate job "might be to understand who the people are I need to thank and then thank them the way I want to."

Bereuter was conciliatory to Dyas and his supporters in a statement given to Lincoln's KOLN TV.

He said he realized that Dyas and his supporters had worked hard in the campaign and said, "I believe very much in representing people first. Parties come second, but I believe we are seeing a resurgence in the state Republican party."

Dyas was unavailable for comment as he had let the Democratic party at the Knolls before the *Daily Nebraskan* arrived to interview him.



Photo by Ted Kirk

Former Utica Sen. Douglas Bereuter talks to reporters after being elected to represent Nebraska's 1st district in the House of Representatives Tuesday night. Bereuter defeated Hess Dyas of Lincoln.

ASUN voter mix-up disturbs students

By Brenda Moskovits

ASUN officials have received 25 to 30 complaints from students who could not vote Tuesday because ASUN's voter registration drive procedures were illegal, according to ASUN President Ken Marienau.

Marienau said 150 to 200 students were ineligible, mostly student's who tried to register in Lancaster County as absentees. About 30 were trying to register in their home counties.

Marienau admitted that ASUN was wrong in trying to get absentee ballots for students who would be in Lancaster County on election day.

"We were obviously wrong. We made an assumption that was incorrect," he said.

State law makes voting by absentee ballot while in home county a criminal offense, according to Secretary of State Allen Beermann.

Marienau said more than 150 students were contacted by phone and told they could not vote in Lancaster County. They could vote, however, in their home counties if registered there, he said.

Apologies sent

Letters of apology were sent to those who were affected.

Marienau said ASUN's Government Liaison Committee originally contacted Lancaster County Election Commissioner Bill Davidson around October 1, asking him to set up registration booths at UNL.

Davidson refused because his office was overworked and the election was so near, Marienau said.

Davidson said he refused the request because his office did not set up registration booths outside the County-City Building except at the Gateway shopping center.

ASUN then contacted the League of Women Voters to see if it would be willing to serve as registrars, Marienau said.

Davidson refused to deputize them, saying they were not qualified, according to Marienau.

To be deputized the women would have had to go to Davidson's office, been instructed in law and procedures and given the supplies and forms, according to Davidson.

Last resort

As a last resort to register voters on campus, ASUN set up a booth for students to request absentee ballots and registrations.

When the requests were brought into the election commission office about an hour before the October 27 deadline, "they were very upset with us, saying we broke all kinds of laws," Marienau said, and they refused to process them.

By the time Secretary of State Allen Beermann could be reached on the matter, the deadline for registration had passed, he said.

Beermann told them it would be alright to send the requests for other counties' registration to their election offices, Marienau said.

About two-thirds of those were processed, he added, but the other counties were uncertain whether to process them.

Beermann said the problem with the other county's forms was that they requested absentee registration forms and not ballots.

No such thing

"There is no such thing as absentee registration," he said.

The law stipulates that a person may request an absentee ballot. When the county checks the person's registration and finds he or she has not registered, a registration form is sent along, Beermann said.

"We have to follow the law precisely. The problem is they requested registrations instead of ballots."

Beermann said his office never even sees absentee ballot requests.

One of the students complaining in the ASUN Office Tuesday was Heidi Schlitt, daughter of Marge Schlitt, who was running for Nebraska Legislature.

Schlitt said Davidson's office told her that ASUN's registration drive was illegal.

In tears, she later accused Marienau of helping her mother lose the election.

Waited four years

Schlitt, 18, told him that she had waited four years to vote for her mother.

"This is my first and last chance to vote for my mother."

"I found out you can't trust ASUN for one thing," Schlitt said.

She said part of the blame should be placed on the election commissioner for not setting up a registration booth.

Another who complained was Nicolas Tabet, a research technologist for the agronomy department.

Tabet said he was told he would receive more information in the mail but when he did not, he contacted the election commission and was told he could not vote.

"I was very mad," he said. "I was getting involved in the election."

Tabet said he had filled out his absentee ballots so he could be prepared to vote.

Defeating

"It's very defeating when you spend so much time and you get it all ripped out from under you."

Agriculture major Jane Palmer said she received her letter of apology on Tuesday which suggested she get an absentee ballot from her home county.

"It's a little late," she said.

"I'm a strong supporter of the bottle bill. If your issue or candidate loses you have a license to complain."

Palmer said she was told that the form she filled out was all she needed to register in Lancaster County.

Marienau said Davidson's office promised to set up a booth for next spring's election.

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