

Acceptance speech given

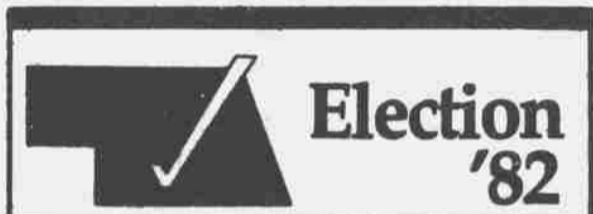
Kerrey win apparent in close race

By Pat Higgins

Bob Kerrey, Democratic candidate for governor, delivered what appeared to be an acceptance speech as early as 9 p.m. Tuesday night, saying he was proud to be standing in front of his supporters "as the governor-elect of this state."

He continued an acceptance speech later in the evening when he arrived at the Lincoln Hilton Hotel, headquarters for the Democratic party.

At his campaign celebration at the Omaha Old Mill Holiday Inn, Kerrey said



earlier he was confident of victory.

Although the vote was close, as of late Tuesday night Kerrey appeared to be the preliminary winner over Republican incumbent Gov. Charles Thone.

By 11:30 p.m., polling results showed that Kerrey won 51 percent of the state's vote and Thone had 49 percent. At that hour, 41 percent of the ballots were uncounted; most of those votes were to come from the 3rd District. That district, represented by Republican U.S. Rep. Virginia Smith, is heavily Republican.

As of 11:30 p.m., Thone supporters were stressing that 41 percent of the vote was still out. By that time, Thone had not appeared at the Republican Party's election-night party at the Lincoln Hilton.

Marilyn Bath, co-chairperson of Thone's re-election committee, would not comment on the race until the governor arrived.

"Well, it looks like we did it," Kerrey said to his Lincoln supporters at the Hilton. "We deserve to be standing here right now, cheering and feeling very good about this victory."

"We've worked hard, we've had 'up moments' and 'down moments,' this is an 'up moment' as we stand here celebrating victory," he said in Omaha.

Kerrey said there is much work to be done as governor since the state faces a severe fiscal crisis.

"There's not going to be easy solutions;

I'm glad we have four years to do it."

Kerrey said the election results showed that Nebraskans are "trusting me to be the next governor of the state of Nebraska."

Kerrey said he would try to make the state's government strong and efficient, but not big.

Kerrey said it would be an awkward situation with the special session of the Nebraska Legislature convening Friday and the State Board of Equalization meeting Nov. 15.

He said he would keep collecting information from his crisis committee but since he is not governor yet, he will not try to influence what happens during the special session.

Kerrey addressed the argument of his opponents that he lacks government experience.

Kerrey said he had plenty of government experience and "Nebraskans aren't going to vote for a babe in the woods."

"The people trust me," he said.

Former 2nd District Congressman John Cavanaugh acted as master of ceremonies at the Kerrey celebration party. Cavanaugh credited Omaha state senators Bernice Labedz, Marge Higgins, Dave Newell and Steve Wiitala for Kerrey's success in Omaha.

Kerrey shared the podium with Omaha Mayor Mike Boyle and his wife, Ann, and with his Lt. Gov. candidate Don McGinley, who commented that "I don't want to detract from the festivities; we all need to celebrate."

Meanwhile, at a Lincoln Hilton Hotel Democratic gathering, Mayor Helen Boosalis stated her support for Kerrey.

"If Kerrey wins, and I'm optimistic he will, it will show that low-level smear campaign tactics are not acceptable to the majority of Nebraskans," the mayor said at about 10 p.m.

"He will provide leadership," she said. She said she thinks he understands the Reagan administration's New Federalism and will use this to the advantage of the state.

"As mayor of the second largest city in Nebraska, I feel that Kerrey will help create a partnership between city government and state government," she said.



Photo by Craig Andresen

Apparent governor-elect Bob Kerrey appears at the Lincoln Hilton Tuesday night.

Early results: Hoch is new regent

By Kathleen Green and Chuck Jagoda

Cautiously optimistic about her lead in early returns in the 4th District regents race, candidate Nancy Hoch promised to emphasize academics, classroom instruction and faculty salaries if she won.

"A regent should be more aware of the concerns of the people represented, the students and the faculty,"



Hoch said. "Faculty salaries are an underlying factor that should be given priority."

Just before 11 p.m., The Associated Press reported that Hoch had won about 57 percent of the vote while incumbent Robert Prokop had about 43 percent. At that time, only 22.5 percent of the ballots had been counted.

Interviewed from her Nebraska City home late Tuesday evening, Hoch said that during 12 years, a regent has time to express his or her ideas. Prokop has had that opportunity, during his two six-year terms as regent, she said.

Again referring to her opponent, Hoch said "a lot of people were very disappointed in Prokop's phone issue." Earlier this year, the Omaha World-Herald revealed that Prokop had charged the university for more than \$200 worth of phone calls that appeared to be personal.

She also said student regents should have an opportunity to express their ideas to the board and pledged to be more open in communication with students.

In the 8th District race, incumbent James Moylan of Omaha won a clear majority with all precincts counted. He gained 58 percent of the vote to challenger Sharon Donnermeyer Jackson's 42 percent.

Jackson said a lack of voter interest prompted her to run for the board. She said Tuesday night when reached at her Omaha home that that lack of interest may have contributed to her loss.

The public needs to be more aware that 25 percent of each state tax dollar goes to the university, she said. Moylan could not be reached for comment.

In the 3rd District, Margaret Robinson of Norfolk appeared to be winning by a large majority with only 11 percent of the vote counted. She had 70 percent of the vote, while Don Dworak, a state senator from Columbus, had about 30 percent of the vote.

Neither candidate could be reached for comment. No results from the 5th District race were available by midnight. In that district, James Norton, a lawyer from David City, was challenging incumbent Robert Koefoot, a doctor from Grand Island.

Norton said he had no plans to run for the position again.

"It was a one-shot deal," he said. "I had a great deal of interest because of my son being a student in the university. I also assumed others would feel as I do that 18 years is too long" for a regent to hold the job.

If Koefoot wins a third term he will have served 18 years on the board.



Photo courtesy of Nancy Hoch

Nancy Hoch