

Clinton triumphs in electoral landslide

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electoral votes he won in 1992, and he was close to the majority vote that eluded him in 1992.

With 75 percent of the national vote counted, Clinton was at 50 percent, Dole 42 and Perot 8 percent. The president asked his Little Rock rally to applaud Dole and his running mate, Jack Kemp, and they did so.

"I wish him well, and I pledge my support," Dole said in conceding the race, hushing supporters who booed Clinton's name. Dole and other Republican leaders took solace in returns suggesting that voters would keep the Congress in GOP hands even as they gave Clinton four more years.

"We're going to keep the Senate, we're going to keep the House," Dole said.

Turnout declined in some states, and exit polls suggested that less than half the American electorate voted. Voter News Service projected that 49 percent of the voting-age population cast ballots, which would be the lowest voter turnout since 1924.

There were 34 Senate races on the ballot. Republicans won 19 of those to hold their majority and led for two more. Democrats won 13. If those numbers held up, Republican ranks would grow by one seat to 54.

Republicans entered the election with 236 House seats. They won 206 on Tuesday and were leading for

22 more — enough for a slim majority. Democrats won 182 seats and led for 23 more.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott said Republicans were willing to work with Clinton on balancing the budget and tax cuts for families — but voiced skepticism that Clinton would follow through on his election-year conservative conversion.

"He talks about how the era of big government is over," Lott told The Associated Press. "We'd like to help him keep his word on that, keep the government smaller and smarter." In a sobering note for Clinton, Lott promised tough investigations of questionable Democratic fund-raising from foreign interests.

Dole's concession was also a farewell of sorts, his last speech as a candidate. It ended a remarkable political career that included 35 years in Congress and a record 12 years as the Senate Republican leader. "Tomorrow will be the first time in my life I don't have anything to do," Dole said.

Reform Party candidate Ross Perot was a distant third everywhere and well below the 19 percent he won in 1992. He conceded defeat but was not ready to fade into the shadows.

"We are going to have to stand at the gate and keep the pressure on, and we will," Perot said in Texas, looking ahead — perhaps to 2000.

Victories in 30 states and the Dis-

trict of Columbia gave Clinton 375 electoral votes — well above the necessary 270 and more than the 370 he claimed in defeating George Bush in 1992. An electoral landslide assured, Clinton had one last hope for the night: that Perot's candidacy would not cost him a majority of the popular vote.

Clinton was already weighing Cabinet changes as he plotted a second-term agenda and looked for his place in history. He promised to continue peace-making efforts in the Middle East, Bosnia and Northern Ireland and to push for campaign finance reform.

Republicans hoped for a milestone of their own: Not since 1930 has the GOP won both chambers of Congress in consecutive elections.

It was a victory by Republican Tim Hutchinson in Clinton's Arkansas that assured the GOP of keeping its Senate majority. One incumbent Republican senator lost: Larry Pressler of South Dakota, who lost to Democratic Rep. Tim Johnson.

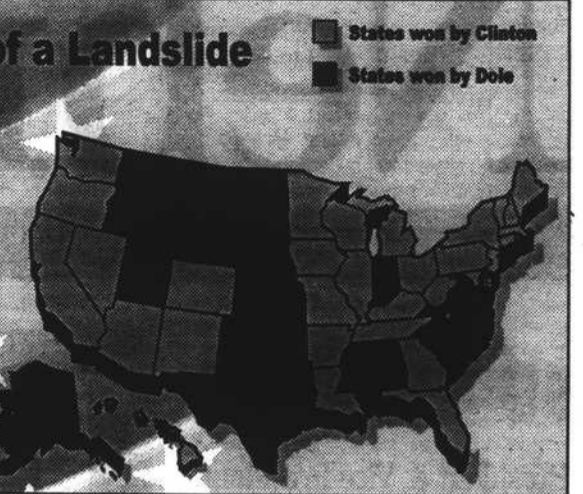
House Speaker Newt Gingrich celebrated his own re-election in Georgia.

The breadth of Clinton's victory was sobering news to Republicans who once held an Electoral College advantage based on strength in the South, Plains and Mountain West.

Clinton began the big night by becoming the first Democrat to win Florida in 20 years and hours later got the Pacific West sweep that guaranteed

Anatomy of a Landslide

Victories in 30 states and the District of Columbia gave Clinton at least 375 electoral votes — more than the 370 he claimed in defeating George Bush, and 105 more than he needed to win the presidency.



an electoral landslide.

Dole monitored the results from his Watergate apartment before calling Clinton to offer congratulations. He then headed to a Republican gathering. Ohio delivered a telling early blow to Dole's upset hopes: no Republican has ever won the White House without winning that state.

Clinton went on to an industrial belt sweep, winning New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Illinois. Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota added to Clinton's Midwest rout. The border states of Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee, home state of Vice President Al Gore, also were in the Democratic column, as was Clinton's Arkansas.

Arizona and New Mexico brought good news from the Southwest; Louisiana from the South.

Clinton carried the six New England states and rolled through New York, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. California, Oregon and Washington continued the rout.

Dole and Jack Kemp, on the other hand, carried 14 states with a combined 129 electoral votes. Dole's wins came in North Dakota, Oklahoma, Indiana, Alabama, Wyoming, Mississippi, North Carolina, Nebraska, Texas, Utah, Idaho, Virginia, South Carolina and his native Kansas — all states carried by George Bush against Clinton in 1992.

GOP: Clinton should constrain agenda this term

Sen. Majority Leader Trent Lott says voters want president to avoid "big government and big taxes" program

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton sails into a second term that is distinctly different from the first. His initial task: shake up his administration and try to build momentum for a modest agenda built around limited tax cuts.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., predicted Clinton's reach would be limited again by divided government, with at least the Senate remaining in GOP control.

Lott asserted that voters want to make sure that the president "doesn't return to the old Bill Clinton of big government and big taxes."

Four years ago, Clinton promised an explosive opening to his presidency, an action-packed first 100 days. It was a disaster, marred by controversies over gays in the military, embarrassing appointments and a focus on liberal abortion policies.

This time, Clinton is not trying to bring sweeping change to Washington. His agenda is limited, restrained by budget problems and the more conservative mood of voters.

"Both the president and the Republicans felt obliged to move toward the center," said Brookings Institution presidential scholar Thomas Mann. "The public sent a signal and they listened."

There was no mandate in the election for big change. Clinton did not seek one. The president and Congress seem inclined toward more gradual problem-solving. Clinton will move

swiftly to make a gesture of bipartisanship toward Republicans disappointed over Bob Dole's overwhelming defeat.

A Cabinet reshuffling is afoot, with Defense Secretary William Perry, Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary said to be ready to leave. Clinton might find room for a GOP official high in his administration.

"The message for his agenda is that he has to be bipartisan," said Dick Morris, Clinton's former political strategist who resigned in a sex scandal. "He has to form a national government, not a Democratic government. He needs to reach out to Republicans, put some in his Cabinet and bring the legislative leaders of both parties into his planning."

"That way," Morris said, "he can use the Republicans to avoid being captured by the left wing of his own party."

One possibility: Ask Dole to head a bipartisan commission charged with finding a way to keep Medicare from going bankrupt.

In Congress a top priority will be campaign finance reform. Both sides claim they want changes but it will be an explosive issue.

Angry Republicans want to embarrass Clinton with investigations of the Democrats' questionable fund-raising among foreign donors. The administration is ready to accuse Republicans of foot-dragging if they balk at legislation to ban political action committee contributions to all federal candidates and end unlimited "soft money" donations to political parties.

Even with impressive victories in Republican states such as Florida, Clinton cannot claim a mandate to take big steps. There was no burning issue in the campaign, no single problem that

troubled the nation.

The future holds no grand schemes like the massive health insurance program that Clinton attempted in his first term, or the fiery Republican revolution that the GOP promised when it captured control of Congress.

The president's agenda is built around modest proposals, including tax breaks to send people to college, help them buy their first homes and encourage employers to hire welfare recipients.

Norman Ornstein, a presidential analyst at the American Enterprise Institute, said: "What it gives him (Clinton) is no blank check."

"No matter how many electoral votes he wins," Ornstein said before the count was complete, "there's no mandate to do anything other than move slowly and tentatively forward from this status quo."

Republican vote sweeps Nebraska

Voters express optimism, disappointment after Clinton's re-election

BY JOSH FUNK AND PETE MARHOEFER
Staff Reporters

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

While Nebraska voters sent a Republican to the U.S. Senate for the first time in 24 years Tuesday, they again favored the Republican presidential candidate, just as they have in every election since 1964.

Bob Dole carried the state by a comfortable margin. Some Lincoln residents who did not vote for Dole said they favored President Clinton because of his proven track record and his accomplishments in office.

"Clinton has a great personality, and I like what he has done in office," said Mike Gallup, a recent University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate.

Other voters were optimistic following Clinton's victory, hoping his productivity will increase without the pressure of facing re-election.

"Hopefully without having to be re-elected, he can get some stuff done," Timothy Beukner said. "I want to see one great thing or lasting effect from his administration."

Clinton's accomplishments in international relations compared to Dole's worked in the president's favor, said Garry Baker, a graduate political science student.

Another Clinton voter said abortion was an important factor.

"I voted for Clinton because he's pro-choice," Tami Hladik of Lincoln said.

Dole supporters were skeptical. "I'm worried about the country," said Craig Peters, 45, of Lincoln. "Now that Clinton's won, I'm afraid he will go back to his real liberal roots, knowing he doesn't have to face re-election."

Dole supporter Janet Kleine shared Peters' fear.

"There's going to be a lot of bad changes the next four years," Kleine said.

Ethics also played an important role

for those who chose to vote for Dole or Reform Party candidate Ross Perot.

"Clinton has to go to court to clear his name; he still needs to answer some questions about Whitewater," said Pat McManus, 28, of Lincoln.

UNL College Republicans President Chad Pekron said he was sickened by Clinton's re-election.

"I'll be surprised if he serves out his term, because he is completely unethical," Pekron said.

Reform Party supporters were the most vocal of the three parties, saying Perot's business approach to government is still attractive.

Perot voter Jeff Morrison liked the Reform Party's stance for less government.

"I don't like career politicians," he said, "and I don't trust them either."

The issue of trust was also important to other Reform Party supporters. "We need a businessman. I don't trust Dole or Clinton," said Kelly Lilleholm, 22, of Lincoln. "Basically, they're both worthless."

Voter apathy seen in turnout; precincts report record lows

WASHINGTON (AP) — Voter apathy prompted declines in turnout in some states Tuesday, an election expert found, though how that could be was a mystery to Randy Frank, a Maryland Republican.

"If a scandal a week hasn't brought people out to the polls, I give up faith in the people," said Frank, 36, a Dole voter from Germantown, Md.

Turnout appeared heavy in some places, like a polling place in North Carolina where voters waited an hour or more, and Arizona, where 40 voters were lined up at a church shortly after the polls opened.

"We wanted our votes to be counted before the polls closed on the East Coast," said Jennifer Pletka, 24, who voted for Dole at a church in Chandler, Ariz. "We wanted our votes to matter."

Election expert Curtis Gans said that in the seven states where at least 85 percent of precincts had reported by early Tuesday night, voter turn-

out was lower than it had been in the 1992 presidential election.

He predicted before the returns started coming in that just over half the U.S. electorate — down from 55 percent in the last election — would cast ballots in this century's final presidential election.

Americans are turned off by attack ads, consultants telling candidates what to say and misaligned political parties, while television has urged Americans to become spectators in the political process, Gans said.

Ulycees Thomas, 68, who has polio, struggled on crutches to his voting place in Mobile, Ala.

And Kenny Sorensen, 64, who voted at the rural Saylor Township fire station north of Des Moines, Iowa, said he had no sympathy for those who don't vote yet complain about government.

"When people sit around and gripe, I say, 'Did you vote? No? Then quit your griping.'"