

Decision '96

GOP looks to hold Senate control

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Lott forecast a GOP victory. He looked ahead to a GOP agenda of lower taxes and less government in the new Senate — and said Republicans would make sure a re-elected President Clinton was on the same page.

"He talks about how the era of big government is over," the Mississippi Republican said in an interview with The Associated Press. "We'd like to help him keep his word on that."

One senior Democrat conceded the GOP would retain control. "The Senate will stay Republican and it is going to be much more conservative than it was before," said Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, who led the Democratic campaign effort nationwide. "Much more conservative."

The GOP picked up seats in Alabama, where state attorney general Jeff Sessions triumphed; in Nebraska, Republican businessman Chuck Hagel won a Democratic seat in his first try at elective office.

With Clinton winning a second term in the White House, Election Day interviews with the voters showed the nation narrowly split over whether Congress should be in Republican or Democratic hands. About 55 percent of the voters said Congress would not be too conservative if controlled by the GOP, though.

And about half said it would be too liberal with the Democrats in charge.

The exit polls were conducted by Voter News Service for The Associated Press and five television networks.

A few veterans of both parties faced stiff challenges. Republican John Warner withstood a strong challenge from Mark Warner in Virginia; Larry Pressler struggled in South Dakota. Democrat Tom Harkin of Iowa also faced a stern test, but won.

In all, there were 14 Senate races with no incumbent on the ballot, a record produced by eight retirements among the Democrats and six among the GOP.

Republicans still rule House

Democrats fail to capture control with gained seats

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats made modest inroads Tuesday in Speaker Newt Gingrich's Republican majority in the House, but the GOP partly offset its losses by capturing Southern seats vacated by veteran Democrats. Republicans were poised to capture their first back-to-back majorities in 66 years.

"It looks like we will almost certainly keep control of the U.S. House," Gingrich told a cheering crowd in suburban Atlanta. He said the two sides were "in the process of swapping seats."

Control of the chamber appeared likely to be determined by fewer than a dozen seats, the closest margin since Dwight D. Eisenhower was president.

Voter News Service, a consortium of The Associated Press and five television networks, projected the Republicans would likely retain control of the House.

"We cemented the majority tonight," said Rep. Bill Paxon, R-N.Y., chairman of the party's House campaign committee. "We will hold the House for the foreseeable future."

Democrats won 11 seats previously held by Republicans, six of them freshmen and five targeted by organized labor's expensive television ad campaign. Republicans de-

feated two incumbents and picked up eight open Democratic seats, six of them in the South, but the Democrats successfully defended many more.

Indianapolis voters picked their first black representative, local township trustee Julia Carson, to keep Democratic control of the hotly contested seat of retiring Democrat Andy Jacobs with extensive help from organized labor.

Democrats needed a net gain of 18 seats to take control of the chamber and pinned their hopes on toppling GOP freshmen.

In North Carolina, freshmen Republicans Fred Heineman and David Funderburk, who rode into office behind Gingrich's "Contract With America" campaign in 1994, were turned out by Democrats David Price, a former congressman, and Bobby Etheridge. And in New Jersey, freshman Bill Martini lost to Democrat William Pascrell, the mayor of Paterson.

In New York, Democrat Carolyn McCarthy defeated freshman Republican Daniel Frisa in a race dominated by the issue of gun control. McCarthy's husband was killed in the 1993 Long Island Railroad massacre, and she took on Frisa after he voted to repeal a ban on assault weapons.

"All we were out to do was make something good come out of a horrible situation," McCarthy said in a victory speech. "I certainly have beaten the

person I wanted to beat....I have beaten the NRA (National Rifle Association)."

Another victim was Chicago Republican Michael Patrick Flanagan, who reached Congress two years ago by defeating indicted Democratic power Dan Rostenkowski. He was ousted by Democratic state Rep. Rod Blagojevich.

Gingrich and House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt easily won reelection.

Voters interviewed in exit polls across the country were splitting evenly between Democratic and Republican House candidates; only in the South, where the GOP has grown in recent years, did Republicans appear to have a comfortable edge.

By a 51-45 margin, voters disapproved of Congress' performance under GOP leadership the past two years.

And by almost a 2-to-1 margin, those interviewed expressed a negative view of Gingrich, who was hoping for a second term as House speaker. Half of the voters surveyed said their view of the speaker played a role in their choice for U.S. representative. The exit polls were conducted by Voter News Service.

Nearly one in 10 voters told interviewers they decided whom to vote for only in the last three days. Of those, 56 percent chose Republicans.

Experts say stasis important to economy

NEW YORK (AP) — If Election '96 reverberates through the economy, it's hard to see where.

Business executives say forces like the strength of trading partners Japan, Britain and Germany and the decisions of the Federal Reserve Board will play a bigger role in the financial health of the nation than the next Clinton administration and a new Congress.

"It's an odd kind of situation," said Robert Johnson, chairman and chief executive officer of BET Holdings Inc., the Washington-based parent of Black Entertainment Television.

"If you look at it from a pure business standpoint, the real issue is certainty: not who's in the White House and who's in the Congress but whether the status quo will continue," he said. "We know who we've got in the White House, so the status quo is maintained there."

Many business leaders said the rules have changed in recent years.

"The agenda, whether it be a Republican or Democratic Congress or half-and-half, is far smaller," said Leslie M. Alperstein, executive managing director of HSBC Washington Analysis.

Some feared that Clinton, if supported by a Democratic Congress,

would have reverted to his more liberal roots in his second term and would have brought forth additional regulations that would hamstring business.

Gary Parker, chairman and CEO of Lindsay Manufacturing Co., an automated irrigation products maker based in Lindsay, is one of those who fears additional regulations.

"People feel the economy is in good shape, and they're giving Clinton a lot of the credit."

But, Parker added, Clinton does not deserve all the applause — the Republican Congress should get its due. The private sector, he said, played the biggest role.

For investors, the election may have been moot from the start. A mid-October survey of investors' sentiment by the discount brokerage Quick & Reilly found two-thirds expected the election to have little impact on the stock market over the next 12 months.

That's not as crazy as it seems.

Joseph Battipaglia, market strategist at the brokerage firm Gruntal & Co., said on average since 1937 the difference in the S&P 500-stock index's performance between Democratic and Republican administrations is 1 percentage point. So far this year, the S&P 500 is up 16 percent.

Judge ousted from Nebraska Supreme Court

Lanphier opponents say judges are now held accountable for decisions

OMAHA (AP) — Nebraska Supreme Court Judge David Lanphier lost his seat on the bench Tuesday but other judges were retained.

Voters decided to keep four state Appeals Court judges and 15 district judges on the bench but turned out Lanphier by a two-to-one vote.

With 72 percent of the precincts reporting, 68 percent of the voters did not want to keep Lanphier on the high court, while 32 percent supported giving him another six-year term.

It was the first time a state Supreme Court judge had been the target of an election-year campaign. The people behind the campaign were angry at rulings that threw out term limits and required malice to be part of second-degree murder charges and jury instructions.

The second-degree murder ruling

made more than 100 inmates eligible for new trials and dozens have taken their cases back to court.

"When we raised these issues and brought his record to the foreground, we knew all along the voters were on our side," said Kent Bernbeck of Citizens for Responsible Judges. Bernbeck led the effort to toss out Lanphier.

"The retention process works well in Nebraska. When a judge has to run on his or record, it works well," Bernbeck said.

Lanphier defended himself for the first time last week, saying voters shouldn't judge him by the issues he's ruled on, but by how well he's applied the law to those issues.

Carole Hartz, 25, of Bellevue said she voted against Lanphier because she

was upset with the Supreme Court's term-limit decision that also changed

the number of signatures needed for ballot petition drives.

Attorney John Cavanaugh, the head of the pro-Lanphier group Nebraskans for an Impartial Judiciary, said judges now need to consider the political ramifications of their decisions.

"We've set a new precedent that now judges can be attacked on individual decisions," Cavanaugh said. "It won't be good for justice in Nebraska."

He said other groups would use this process to target judges who were just doing their jobs.

Cavanaugh has asked the state Accountability and Disclosure Commission to force Bernbeck's group to name the donors behind the campaign.

World has split emotions over Clinton re-election

WASHINGTON (AP) — British newspapers called President Clinton's victory hours before U.S. polls closed, reflecting confidence throughout the world that Americans would re-elect their chief executive.

"Jubilant Clinton Cruises Home," said an early edition of Wednesday's Times of London, which hit the stands at 5 p.m. "Clinton Surges to Victory," hailed The Guardian.

Tony Blair, leader of Britain's Labor Party, said he was "absolutely delighted" for Clinton.

Blair and his party are bidding to take power in the next election, which must be held by next May. They are

keen to make ties with Clinton and the Democrats — the party's traditional allies across the Atlantic.

American expatriates gathered to await the election results. The moment Clinton's re-election was announced in Sydney, Australia, a cake of stars and stripes was brought out to about 250 Americans gathered in a hotel. Some wore both Dole and Clinton buttons.

One of the Democratic Party's largest overseas arms, Democrats Abroad Japan, prepared to celebrate Clinton's victory with apple pie and country music in Tokyo.

Republican expatriates in Tokyo saw Clinton's win far differently.

"The man clearly doesn't have moral responsibility," said Joan Shepard, head of the rival Republican organization in Japan. "If they are going to have a party, they better do it before he's indicted."

The president of a leading Japanese business organization applauded the victory on Wednesday, saying Clinton would help the nation further open its markets to foreign competition.

"Clinton will devote himself to achievements that will go down in history and will help (Japan) become a truly international nation," said Jiro Nemoto, chairman of the Japan Federation of Employers' Associations.

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