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1996 AGGIELAND Texas A&M University Volume 94

Republicans retain control of House

(AP) — Democrats made inroads Tuesday into Speaker Newt Gingrich's Republican majority in the House, but the GOP trimmed its losses by capturing seats vacated by veteran Democrats.

"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. It would be their first back-to-back House majorities in 66 years.

Democrats won seven seats previously held by Republicans, five of them freshmen and three targeted by organized labor's expensive television ad campaign. Republicans defeated one incumbent and picked up five open Democratic

seats, four 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 [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.

Three-term Rep. Gary Franks, one of two black Republicans in the House, lost to Democrat James Maloney in western Connecticut. Two-term Republican Peter Blute lost in Massachusetts to Jim McGovern, a Democratic congressional aide.

Democratic candidates jumped out to early but inconclusive leads against Republican freshmen in Maine and Texas, and led in open seats formerly held by the GOP in Wisconsin.

One GOP freshman under as-

HOUSE RESULTS

Democrats
Won: 169
Leading: 33

Republicans
Won: 193
Leading: 35

Change
Democrats gained six seats.

Results as of 11:30 p.m.

See HOUSE, Page 1

Republicans vow to make Senate more conservative

(AP) — Republicans drove for continued control of the Senate Tuesday night, laying claim to Democratic seats in Alabama and Nebraska. On a night generally kind to incumbents, Sen. Jesse Helms triumphed in North Carolina and Strom Thurmond coasted to a new

term in South Carolina at 93. In the marquee contest of the night among Democratic incumbents, Massachusetts Democrat John Kerry prevailed over Gov. William Weld.

With the polls still open in the West, Majority Leader Trent 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.

In New Hampshire, exit polls indicated Dick Swett would unseat Republican Sen. Robert Smith but the outcome was unclear later in the evening and indeed Smith held the lead with half the vote counted.

"I've campaigned a long time. I guess I'll miss it," Thurmond said as he savored the prospect of his eighth — and last — term.

In North Carolina, Harvey Gantt spoke for the vanquished candidates everywhere as he conceded defeat to Helms. "It is painful," he said. "It hurts not to win."

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 won a strong challenge from Democrat 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.

Four Southern state were crucial to Democratic chances. They held an open seat in Georgia, where Max Cleland triumphed. Close races loomed for other Democratic open seats in Arkansas and Louisiana.

Democrats held seats in half the states that had been fought over by Rep. Dick Zimmer and conservative foe Al Salvi; and in New Jersey, where Rep. Bob Torricelli triumphed over Rep. Dick Zimmer. In one of the nation's costliest and nastiest contests.

"There's no shame in losing if you're not giving it your best," Zimmer told NBC.

See SENATE, Page 1

SENATE RESULTS

Democrats
Won: 13
Leading: 1
Holdovers: 32

Republicans
Won: 17
Leading: 3
Holdovers: 34

Change
Republicans gained one seat.

Results as of 11:30 p.m.

Election Briefs

Networks race to predict outcome first

NEW YORK (AP) — Television had the artillery to respond to any surprises in the presidential election. They just never came.

By 9:01 p.m. EST Tuesday, five major networks declared President Clinton the winner over Bob Dole — just as many had anticipated and as politicians who were worried about voter turnout in the West had feared.

On the night its news divisions had prime time all to itself, television networks pulled out all of their technological tricks. Yet they could do nothing about the deflating sense that it wasn't really necessary.

"To tell you the truth, Dan, the victory party has already begun here," CBS's Rita Braver told Dan Rather in a report from Clinton headquarters at Little Rock.

It was 7:09 p.m. EST. Prime time hadn't even begun yet.

For the television networks, the quadrennial race to declare a presidential victor was no real competition, either.

Essentially simultaneously, they noted the benchmarks that pointed to a Clinton victory — putting Florida in the president's camp shortly after 7 p.m. and Ohio at 7:30 p.m. Two networks even privately alerted the news media about 10 minutes before they made the presidential call.

CBS, NBC, CNN and Fox all said Clinton had reached the needed electoral votes for election at 9 p.m.

Americans blame GOP for shutdown

WASHINGTON (AP) — The mold for President Clinton's victory wasn't set in the winter Republican primaries, the party conventions, the general election campaign or the televised debates. It was forged on Dec. 16, 1995, in the halls of Congress.

That's when House Speaker Newt Gingrich refused to strike a budget deal with the White House, triggering a Christmas-season partial shutdown of the federal government.

More Americans blamed the shutdown on the Republicans who controlled Congress than on Clinton.

Overseas papers celebrate results

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

"Jubilant Clinton Cruises Home," said an early edition of Wednesday's Times of London, which hit the stands at 6 p.m. EST. "Clinton Surges to Victory," hailed The Guardian.

American expatriates gathered to await the election results. The moment Clinton's 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.

GOVERNORS RESULTS

Democrats
Won: 7
Leading: 0
Holdovers: 10

Republicans
Won: 4
Leading: 0
Holdovers: 28

Change
No change.

Results as of 11:30 p.m.

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