

# Depth of Demo Victory

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New York

The American electorate vented its wrath on Republican candidates across the nation Tuesday, striking hardest at state legislators and U.S. representatives — those theoretically most responsive to the public will.

The Democrats made marked gains in state legislatures, posting triumphs in states as diverse as New



York, Tennessee, Illinois and Wisconsin. They did equally well in the

House of Representatives, picking up two or more seats each in California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin.

The Democratic advances in the Senate and in the governorships were more modest, about four in each case, but still substantial.

By the measurement of most politicians, including President Ford, the results, taken together, constituted a Democratic sweep, if not quite the utter debacle some Republicans had feared earlier this year.

Measured against the recent past, the Democratic gains were above average, but not extraordinary. In the postwar era, the party out of power in the White House has gained in off-year elections an average of four senators (as against four or five this year), six governors (as against 42 or 43 this year.)

But the comparison is misleading. The underlying reason for the long-term trend is that most presidents pull in many members of their party in the presidential years. But Richard M. Nixon did not do that in 1972, so the Democrats began this year from a much stronger position than usual for the party out of power.

Thus, it may be fairer to

## Near-Record Low In Voter Turnout

Washington

A preliminary analysis of election returns yesterday showed that voter turnout Tuesday was the lowest of any year since 1946, and possibly earlier.

An Associated Press tabulation of nearly complete unofficial returns indicated that only about 38 per cent of the voting-age population cast ballots.

That would be the lowest voter turnout since the 37.1 per cent recorded by the Census Bureau for 1946.

The official figure for Tuesday may actually turn out to be less than 38 per cent. The Census Bureau bases its figure on the vote cast for all House races, which is usually less than the vote in statewide races which was used for the calculation.

look at the levels the Democratic majorities attained. In the House, the Democrats will hold at least 292 seats, a level reached by either party only five times in this century. In the Senate, they will hold at least 62 seats, a level reached only nine times since 1900.

In terms of the popular vote, according to computer projections by the television networks, the Democrats pulled 60 per cent, probably a 20th century record.

In an era when it had supposedly become all but impossible to dislodge incumbents in the House and Senate, three Republicans senator and 36 Republican representatives were ousted, more House members than both parties lost in the three previous elections combined. Only four House Democrats lost and not a single Senate

The lowest figure on record is 32.5 per cent for 1942, when millions of men were away from home because of the mobilization for World War II. Census turnout figures go back to 1930.

Tuesday's poor turnout was attributed in part to lack of voter interest in politics after a year and a half of the Watergate scandals.

It is also traceable to widespread state laws making it difficult to register to vote.

Another factor is the new youthfulness of the electorate. Millions of persons between the ages of 18 and 21 were allowed to vote for the first time in the 1972 presidential election, when the turnout was 51 per cent. Young people have proved to be less inclined to vote than their elders.

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publican heartland — the Middle West and the mountain states.

Apart from the size of the Democratic triumph, there were other patterns:

**Turnout:** The trend toward lighter and lighter voting, disturbing to most political theorists, apparently continued. Although computer projections differed, it is safe to say that those who stayed home could have reversed the result in almost every race if they had decided to vote.

**Money:** Despite the Watergate-induced flurry of concern about campaign financing, there was the usual overwhelming correlation between big spenders and big winners.

**Women:** For the first time, a woman was elected governor of a state her husband had not previously governed (Connecticut), chief justice of a state supreme court (North Carolina) and mayor of a city of more than 500,000 population (San Jose, Calif.). And, in a year when four women representatives retired, six new ones were apparently elected.

**Moderate Republicans:** Contrary to some predictions, the party's left and center survived nicely, in the person of governors such as William G. Milliken of Michigan, senators such as Robert W. Packwood of Oregon and Jacob K. Javits of New York and Charles McC. Mathias Jr. of Maryland, representatives such as William S. Cohen of Maine and Alan Steelman of Texas and Ronald A. Sarasin of Connecticut. EF Watergate: It clobbered the Republicans. Four of Mr. Nixon's staunchest Judiciary Committee defenders lost. So did Representative Earl F. Landgrebe of Indiana, who had vowed to stick with the former president "until they take me out and shoot me," and Representative Richard G. Shoup of Montana, who described the impeachment proceedings as a "cheap partisan witch-hunt."

**Age:** New faces abounded, most of them young, and many of them with unusual credentials. For example, in the 21st district in Texas, O. C. Fisher, a 70-year-old country lawyer, will be succeeded by Robert Krueger, a 39-year-old Shakespearean scholar, college dean and Oxford graduate.

Democrat was voted out.

In terms of stunning reversals, the Republicans had all the worst of it. The Democrats' one real heartbreaker was the loss of Governor John J. Gilligan in Ohio. But the Republicans had many — the loss of a Senate seat in Vermont for the first time since the founding of their party; the loss of their coastal bases in Albany and Sacramento, the devastation of their House delegations in Oregon and Indiana and New Jersey.

In regional terms, the Democrats accomplished their goals, but not with the decisiveness they would have liked. They checked but did not wholly reverse their slippage in the South (a net gain of seven House seats and two Senate seats). They made substantial inroads as well into the Re-