

President Won 49 States And 521 Electoral Votes

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By decisively re-electing President Nixon and a Democratic Congress, the American voter delivered a mixed mandate Tuesday along with fresh evidence that he remains planted in the middle of the political spectrum.

As the counting of Tuesday's election returns neared completion, Mr. Nixon's personal triumph was virtually total. He swept 49 states, losing only Massachusetts and the District of Columbia, for a total of 521 electoral votes out of 538.

The President won 60.83 per cent of the popular vote, just a shade under Lyndon B. Johnson's 61.09 in 1964. By any measure, Senator George McGovern suffered the worst defeat of any Democratic Presidential candidate in history.

Up to half the voters in many states, however, switched to Democrats in their votes for Congress and governorships. They increased the Democratic strength in the Senate by two, to a margin of 57-43, and diminished it by a minimal 13 seats in the House to a margin of 243-192.

More than one-third of the

nation's Democrats rejected the nominee of their party, thus cutting back Mr. McGovern in every major metropolis. The South Dakotan took New York City by the meager majority of 51.6 per cent.

Mr. Nixon became the first Republican to win a majority of Roman Catholic votes. He carried nearly half the young first-time voters and cut into the traditional Democratic strength in union households and Jewish, Spanish-surname and even black communities.

In the seven largest states, where Mr. McGovern had staked all, the Nixon majorities were 56 per cent in California and Michigan, 60 per cent in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois and 67 per cent in Texas. His majorities in the South were still higher, up to Mississippi's 79 per cent.

In the states that he lost, Mr. McGovern ran above 45 per cent only in Rhode Island, his native South Dakota and neighboring Minnesota.

Yet in every section, there were remarkable swings back to the Democrats on other ballot positions. Mr. Nixon's re-

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PRESIDENT SWEEP 49 OF THE STATES

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luctant support of Republican colleagues was helpful in only a handful of situations, notably in North Carolina, where the party captured the governorship and a Senate seat in the wake of Mr. Nixon's 70 per cent majority.

But the Democrats won the governorship and a Senate seat in Delaware despite the President's 60 per cent. Mr. Nixon carried Arkansas by 69 per cent while Democrats remained Governor and Senator by 76 and 62 per cent.

The Democrats captured Senate seats in Colorado, Delaware, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine and South Dakota, while losing seats in New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Virginia. Their majority in the House of Representatives declined from 77 to 51, but the political coloration of Congress as a whole shifted ever so lightly to the left, if at all.

Liberals Pan Well

And in 18 gubernatorial contests, Democrats captured control in Delaware, Illinois and Vermont while losing it in Mis-

souri and North Carolina. As a whole, liberals ran well.

While it could be argued, therefore, that Mr. Nixon's re-election with the massive support of former supporters of Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama was at least a slight shift to the right, the net record of voter sentiment Tuesday remained anchored near the center of American political opinion.

The President could claim a resounding vote of confidence in his diplomacy abroad, in his personal capacity for leadership and in the social values he expressed on such subjects as public spending, abortion, amnesty, busing for racial balance and the work ethic.

He failed, however, to persuade the country that Democrats were spending too freely to manage Congress or that they did not sufficiently follow his lead in other respects.

Extent of Nixon Support

Indeed, it was fiddiculous to tell from the results what production of Mr. Nixon's huge margin was a positive expression of support and which part represented a judgment—widely expressed in the opinion polls—that Mr. McGovern was either too extreme in his views or too unreliable in his capacities to deserve the White Hou-

Not even the low turnout of eligible voters shed much light on this question.

On the 139.6 million citizens of voting age, only about 55 per cent came to the polls, the lowest proportion since 1948. Presumably, the stay-at-homes included voters who felt no enthusiasm for either candidate as well as those who had been led by the remarkably accurate public opinion polls to believe that their ballots would make no difference.

The first-time voters, between the ages of 18 and 24 this year, appeared to have participated in lesser proportions than their elders, as has usually been the case.

Overconfidence Avoided

In any event, the President and his re-election committee clearly did not repeat their party's 1948 mistake of overconfidence. Their vigorous and well-financed get-out-the-vote campaign outdid even Mr. McGovern's grass-roots organization in most places.

Despite the overwhelming result, however, political leaders outside the Congress as well as on Capitol Hill read a variety of interpretations into the election returns.

Governor Wallace and former Gov. John B. Connally Jr. of Texas were quick to argue that

their more conservative counsel to the Democratic party could have avoided the McGovern rout.

Mayor Lindsay and the supporters of Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts were just as quick to contend that their brand of liberalism, if espoused by a more forceful leader, would have prevailed.

George Meany and other labor leaders who remained "neutral" against Senator McGovern felt vindicated and entitled to greater respect in Democratic counsels, and most members of Congress were confirmed in the view that they had better not rely on either party organization or Presidential candidates for political success.

Looking precisely for the kind of popular endorsement he won in his final campaign for public office, Mr. Nixon had refused to identify himself very closely with other Republican office-seekers, even on his few campaign forays out of the White House.

Record of Service

Like most incumbent candidates, he ran as President on a record of four years' service, stressing his foreign trips, his opposition to tax increases, the imposition of wage and price controls and the restoration of calm in the nation's inner cities and schools.

To woo the Wallace voters

of 1968, he opposed busing for school integration and sought out like-minded Supreme Court Justices. To capitalize on opposition to long-haired youth and other "radicals," he tried to associate his opponent with the relaxation of standards in sex, with drugs and with amnesty for draft evaders.

When Mr. McGovern came to the nomination with the conspicuous support of this "counterculture," Mr. Nixon moved in for the kill, portraying his opponent as alternately radical and indecisive, neither prudent nor competent enough to protect the nation in a dangerous world or against misguided youth and other troublemakers at home.

By the end of the Democratic convention, the President held a 3-to-2 lead in all the opinion polls. After the confusion over Mr. McGovern's choice of a running mate, the Nixon advantage edged up to 2 to 1. The President simply held on after that and never felt threatened.

His theme boiled down to the rally cry of "four more years," and that is what he won, for himself in the White House and the Democrats in Congress and for the political analysts who struggled throughout his first term with the problem of what all these split ballots really mean.