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Going East

The most surprising—and to us, the most disturbing—of the Republican upsets in last Tuesday's election was John East's toppling of incumbent Sen. Robert Morgan. Morgan was generally expected to win, and no one has been able to figure out quite why he lost. Morgan and East are clearly different in style and substance; unfortunately, it seems as if most voters' decisions were determined by the former.

Morgan, an experienced legislator, began his political career as a state senator in 1955. After serving five terms there, he was elected North Carolina's attorney general in 1968 and 1972. He won his Senate seat in 1974 by a wide margin. Morgan had run for the Senate only after serving the state in other capacities, and he had been a moderately effective senator. Few of Morgan's votes had set the home folks' blood to boiling, and he had little reason to expect stiff opposition this fall.

Then East, a political science professor at East Carolina University, declared that he would run against Morgan despite his lack of political or governmental experience. East's campaign was run, as were those of fellow Republicans I. Beverly Lake for governor and Bill Cobey for lieutenant governor, by the conservative Congressional Club political action committee. The organization raised more than \$1 million and began to flood the state's television stations with 30- and 60-second East spots. Morgan, who was able to raise only two-thirds as much as East, relied on down-home Democratic politicking—barbecues and backwoods stumping.

Morgan might have won this test of political styles if East's Congressional Club handlers had run some kind of fair campaign. Instead, they chose to dredge up old stands and misconstrue others in an effort to make East appear even more conservative than Morgan, who is probably the most conservative Democrat in the Senate.

The East campaign asserted that Morgan was irresponsible because he voted against a B-1 bomber bill—even when that piece of legislation was already hopelessly dead. It decried him for supporting aid to "the Marxist government in Nicaragua" and "giving away our Panama Canal." These shrill denunciations from the far right have little to do with Morgan's overall record. Yet, as the senator said, if the voters have such accusations beamed at them all day by the television set, they'll begin to believe them and perhaps even the blind philosophy behind them.

East proved little in the campaign; it is clear only that he supports any and all military expenditures. Since the state is stuck with Senator-elect East for six years, we can only hope he broadens his areas of interest.

Jamaica's mandate

The United States is not the only country holding elections this year. And it is not the only country that apparently reached rope's end with the government in power. In Jamaica, a country violence-ridden as it struggled to solve its woes, a new government came into power last week as free enterprise advocate Edward Seaga defeated Prime Minister Michael Manley's "democratic socialist" government.

Jamaica suffers from a 40 percent inflation rate, a severe food shortage and a large foreign debt certain to take its toll for some time. It also must weather the meddling of the seemingly omnipresent Cuba, whose Fidel Castro has taken a strong interest in the affairs of Manley and Jamaica for strategic reasons.

The victory of Seaga's Labor Party—which took 51 of 60 seats in the House of Representatives—was devastating to Manley's People's National Party. Seaga called the victory a mandate against communism and Manley admitted the election was fair, if not favorable. Seaga will now try to piece together a country in which more than 700 people have died this year in political terrorist action and open fighting in the streets. That is the first priority of Seaga's moderate government.

High on that list, however, is seeking the aid of the friendly nations. In this instance, the United States would do well to lend a hand to Seaga and the Jamaican people in an effort to stabilize the country and perhaps win a loyal ally that respects the idealism on which this country was founded. Otherwise, violence and instability may continue unabated and Jamaica's call for economic and political freedom will go unanswered.

Frustration turns nation to Republican leaders

By BRAD KUTROW

Sometime Tuesday night, the nation's eyes glazed over. Bathed in the glow of a million television sets, America watched its collective opinion take shape. Anchorman Walter Cronkite of CBS, John Chancellor of NBC and Frank Reynolds of ABC began predicting Ronald Reagan's triumph in the race for president almost before the polls closed. NBC was using red to signify a Reagan victory on its map of the states, and red splashes moved across the nation. "The nation's going red!" John Chancellor said, and he laughed nervously.

At Large

Reagan's victory was quicker and more overwhelming than anyone, even his staffers, had expected. With it came dozens of victories in the House and Senate, and the GOP won its first majority in the upper house in 24 years. The Republicans won 33 House seats, 12 Senate seats and four governorships from the Democrats. On Tuesday, the nation turned quickly to the right, and the reasons for that turn are becoming apparent.

It would be easy to blame President Carter for Reagan's victory and to argue that many voted against the Democrat rather than for the

Republican. Carter is widely perceived as a failure, an ineffective president who has left the nation in worse shape than he found it. Reagan's margin of 10 percent in the popular vote seems to indicate that Americans simply wanted to turn the rascal out.

Carter said yesterday, though, that he did not see "any indication of a personal turn against me." Although that may not be a completely objective, or accurate, assessment of electoral opinion, Carter is not solely responsible for the Democratic defeats that occurred all over the country. It is difficult to argue that, say, Richardson Preyer, who has been in the House since 1968, lost because the voters were dissatisfied with Jimmy Carter. There is a latent, less obvious feeling among voters. It is, simply, that things have to change.

Carter cited voter concern over the economy and the year-long ordeal of the American hostages in Iran as the factors that led to his landslide defeat. Carter's problems in those areas undoubtedly contributed to Reagan's victory, but there is a larger feeling of frustration about the general course the country has taken under Carter and years of Democratic control of Congress. This was borne out by interviews conducted as voters left their polling places. Among those who had voted for Carter, many expressed reservations about their choice. Many

of those who had voted for Reagan expressed doubts about his policies, but saw him as a sure way to see that things were changed.

Reagan and the Republicans offered a clearly conservative philosophy, one that offered an opportunity for quick, clean change. The nation's most severe problems—dwindling influence abroad, a stagnant, inflationary economy and failure to respond to domestic problems—have developed under Democratic leadership in Congress.

The Republicans elbowed aside the Democrats who had most consistently and clearly voiced their party's liberal position: Sen. George

McGovern of South Dakota, Sen. Birch Bayh of Indiana, Sen. Frank Church of Idaho and Sen. John Culver of Iowa. That will largely remove the Senate's liberal caucus, with Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Gary Hart of Colorado left to lead the left-wing opposition.

Moreover, the new Republican majority will mean drastic changes in the structure of the Senate committees through which all legislation must move. For instance, the new chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee will be Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, who replaces the liberal Kennedy. Thurmond has pledged to work

as chairman for a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget and for bills to allow prayer in public schools and restrict busing for the purposes of integration. Thurmond's position on those measures is directly opposite Kennedy's, and his statement signals a reversal in attitude on the Judiciary Committee.

Our own Sen. Jesse Helms, who will likely become chairman of the Agriculture

Committee, also has made his objectives clear. His committee has jurisdiction over the food stamp program, which Helms says could be cut by 40 percent if all "freeloaders" were taken off its rolls.

He also opposes the expansion of wilderness preserves, which are protected from mining, drilling and development. Helms sponsored a bill that would have prohibited the setting aside of any more wilderness areas in North Carolina, which at least proves that he is objective about which state's wilderness land ought to be exploited. Helms will bring this clear-cut conservatism to the chair of the Agriculture Committee in the new, predominantly Republican senate.

Certainly, this is change. It is doubtful, however, that it is the kind of change that the voters had in mind when they cast their votes for conservative Republicans this week. Still, the Republicans may offer new solution to the problems of the economy and foreign relations—and that, for most Americans, is what counts now.

Brad Kutrow, a senior political science and journalism major from Wilmington, is associate editor for The Daily Tar Heel.

Two-party system

Republican surge will be beneficial

By JOHN DRESCHER

Tuesday was a day North Carolina Democrats would like to forget. Democratic U.S. Sen. Robert Morgan failed to keep his Senate seat from Republican John East, and incumbent U.S. Representatives Richardson Preyer and Lamar Gudger lost to Republican opponents. These three losses, coupled with surprisingly strong showings by Republicans in the races for governor and lieutenant governor, made it difficult for state Democrats to be optimistic about the election results.

The State

At stake was more than just the selection of various candidates. The 1980 election was a battle of basic political ideology. For Democrats, and especially for those believers in the more liberal philosophies of social equality and government activity, it was a bitter pill to swallow. There may be, however, a brighter side of the election results for Democrats: The recent rise of the Republican party in North Carolina, held down since Watergate, may be a good thing for the state's politics.

For a moment, forget the political philosophies of the two parties. Forget the attack-and-counterattack campaigning of East and Morgan, of Lake and Hunt. What may be more important to the state is that the rise of the two-party system has given North Carolinians a second choice, one that it has lacked for most of the past 100 years. It is a choice North Carolinians should have for one simple reason: A one-party political system is bad and a two-party political system is good.

Two-party politics is a variation on the basic American idea of competition as a desirable value. Competition among two political parties has been the American system of politics for nearly 200 years. It is a system based

on the virtues of competition, and it is a system that works. Americans have thrived on this theory for more than two centuries, and it's no accident that our government reflects this.

It is especially difficult for N.C. Democrats to realize the advantages of competition in light of the recent tactics of their opposition, which is really not the Republican Party, but actually the Congressional Club, a conservative political action committee.

"The Republicans are getting credit, but don't kid yourself," said Thad Beyle, a UNC political science professor. "It's the Congressional Club that's providing the gas for the machine."

Democrats must wonder how good competition can be after being victimized by the negative campaigning and big-buck media war staged by the Congressional Club. The Congressional Club is an organization that relies on money, and works from

the top downward—there is no grassroots level of the Club—and it certainly is threatening to change accepted practices of campaigning and party organization in the state. There are many Republicans in the state who oppose the club's methods, but Tuesday's results have given it added strength.

"Some of the older lines of the Republicans might say, 'We better not fight this.' Nothing looks better the day after the election than the winning strategy," Beyle said. The question, however, is what's wrong with change in North Carolina? The state has been classified by noted political observer and author Daniel Elazar as having a "traditionalistic" political culture, part of which means that North Carolinians believe in preserving the status quo. This is the main reason why the state ranks among the lowest in minimum wage and quality of public education. The state will continue to be deficient in these and many other areas



until North Carolinians realize they are going to have to make changes, both at the ballot box and in their political ideology.

To make these changes, voters need two clear-cut opposing views based on differences in political ideology. For most of North Carolina's history, voters have had no choice on Election Day. The only decision they ever had to make was who to vote for in the primaries, and these choices often were pre-decided by high-ranking party officials. There was very little public debate on issues and, hence, the preservation of the status quo. It was a vicious cycle: There were no issues and consequently no opposition, so the one-party system and status quo continued to reign.

The dissatisfaction with the status quo is what has finally led to the rise of a second party in the state. There was much public debate this election year and, hence, there was a choice.

"Ideally, you get competing ideas on how a particular problem will be handled," Beyle said. "The voter just sits back and chooses."

North Carolina voters definitely did choose. Despite heavy rainfall in many areas of the state, more than 62 percent of the state's 2.8 million registered voters voted, a record for voter turnout in the state. Voting is the ultimate sign that the participants believe the system works.

"So you throw a lot of rascals out and put some new rascals in," Beyle said. "It's an imperfect system anyway, but it works."

The 1980 elections have shown that given distinct party choices, voters will become involved in the issues around them. Voter participation, a healthy sign for any democracy, is the best reason for having two strong parties in North Carolina.

John Drescher, a junior journalism major from Raleigh, is an editorial assistant for The Daily Tar Heel.

Students must oppose condo conversion

By ANN SMALLWOOD

You are as good a student as the next person. You work hard; you play hard; you pay a high rent for a small apartment you share with three other people. You don't have time to move in the middle of a semester, to look for a new apartment, new roommates. You and your friends certainly can't afford to pay \$600 a month—\$200 each—to buy your old apartment that has gained that new fancy name: condominium.

But you got this notice shoved under your door that gave you 30 days to make your decision—buy or get out. You're mad; something should be done. You appeal to your Town Council member, but sadly, he says, his hands are tied. The state has given him no authority to obstruct free trade by violating the landlord's right to sell his property.

This scenario is not as farfetched as it may sound, even for Chapel Hill. Protection for tenants in condominium conversion is a new idea, one that North Carolina has just begun to deal with. Although Chapel Hill students have been spared the strong-armed, quick-sales tactics used by profiteering developers, the Town Council's recent denial of a permit modification to allow the conversion of The Oaks Apartments has brought this whole emotional issue into the local spotlight.

Technically, the state has given Chapel Hill no authority to prevent a change from landlord to resident ownership, but since a special-use permit was required in both the attempted Graham Court conversion and the similar proposal for The Oaks, town policies were invoked.

Council opponents of The Oaks conversion argued that the proposed conversion was not consistent with the town's stated plans for development. These opponents, notably Mayor Joe Nassif, contended that it was implicit in the town's Comprehensive Plan that the town needed to support a mix of private and rental

housing for its lower-income and transient population. Nassif said that with no new apartments built since 1974 and a low vacancy rate, the town rental market could ill-afford to lose the 124 units of The Oaks.

Other council members agreed with the developer, Jerry Hyman of Greensboro, that requiring any review by the council of a property sale was illegal. Hyman, however, since the Oct. 13 decision to deny his conversion request, has withdrawn his suit challenging this special-use permitting procedure.

In any case, most town officials, whether fans or foes of condominium conversion, agree that something more needs to be done by the state legislature to define local powers in cases like The Oaks. A committee has been meeting since February to prepare condominium conversion and construction guidelines.

Locally

The Condominium Statutes Drafting Committee has been using a Uniform Condominium Act recently passed by Congress as a model for its state legislation. Among the tenant protections being considered in the third draft of a possible conversion bill were:

- requiring a 45-day notice period for tenants of a building being converted.

- allowing inspection of an apartment by prospective buyers only after this period has expired, giving the current tenant first choice in his unit's purchase.

- providing a 75-day period before a non-purchasing tenant can be forced to move.

- requiring the converter to present prospective buyers with a financial analysis of the entire development, estimating costs of routine maintenance and membership in a homeowners association.

The committee also is studying the practicality of drafting separate laws for group-owned vacation condominiums. This would protect the elderly and help towns, presumably with a limited rental vacancy rate, that need state authority to declare temporary moratoriums on condominium conversion.

Although few students were threatened with displacement by the proposed conversions of Graham

Court and The Oaks, town Planning Director Mike Jennings warns that other student apartment developments are not immune.

"National experience has been that owners of rental property, especially investment groups, will milk them (apartments) for what they can for the first eight years," Jennings says. "Then, when the property is fully depreciated under federal tax laws, they start looking to make a quick, capital gain, so they sell to a developer (who resells the units as condominiums)."

"Since about everything in town is over eight years old, there is a potential for conversion to happen in other complexes. Usually, apartments have to be in more marketable forms like the townhouse, but in a crowded market, anything is possible."

This is the fear that gripped UNC Student Government when it opposed The Oaks conversion. Student Government sent letters opposing conversion to town council members and spoke out against the issue in public.

So far, undergraduate apartment dwellers have been lucky. Most residents of The Oaks who spoke out against conversion were retirees or graduate and postdoctoral students, many with families, who could see no middle-income rental alternative to the "luxury" three-bedroom Oaks.

Others of us, the less-affluent student tenants, should be conscientious in monitoring the passage of tenant-protection or condominium moratorium bills when they reach the General Assembly in early '81.

If, as in many states and cities, lawmakers can be convinced to restrict conversions to communities with no less than a 5 percent rental vacancy rate, we could keep big-city condominium out of Chapel Hill indefinitely. Otherwise, we may all find ourselves standing at the door of the apartment we have learned to call home, as residents of The Oaks did this August, with mimeographed conversion notices in our hands and no legal way to defy them.

Ann Smallwood, a senior journalism major from Greensboro, covers the Chapel Hill town government for The Daily Tar Heel.



Our own Sen. Jesse Helms, who will likely become chairman of the Agriculture