

Beebe's Loss Ties The Senate

By DENNIS L. PAJOT
State Sen. N. Lorraine Beebe, whose 12th District includes all of Redford Township, became the only casualty of the majority Republican party of the Senate Tuesday.

Her much-publicized support of abortion reform, and possibly her opposition to parochialism, are blamed for her defeat by a 22-year-old unknown from her own home community of Dearborn Heights, David Plawewski.

Plawewski opposed abortion reform plank in the heavily Catholic district and helped arouse Catholics, who were smarting away from an anti-parochial constitutional amendment proposal.

Mrs. Beebe had voted against direct state aid to parochial school teachers of secular subjects in the just-completed legislative session. Her campaign stance against the constitutional amendment was too late and too little known.

Ironically, while Democrats were sweeping most Redford Township contests, the voters gave majorities to Republican Gov. Milliken, who proposed state aid for parochial school teachers salaries.

Another factor might have been crucial because of the "spring district" status of Mrs. Beebe's office. It is the all-too apparent weakness of both local and state Republican organization, contrasted with strong local and state Democratic organizations.

MRS. BEEBE went down to defeat in Redford Township by about the same percentage margin as she lost overall.

Redfordites favored Plawewski, a General Motors process engineer, with 12,650 votes to 11,509 for Mrs. Beebe. Total returns were 33,669 for Plawewski and 33,001 for Mrs. Beebe, including Dearborn Heights and Dearborn portions of her district.

American Independent Party candidate Peter Bill drew just 676 votes.

Mrs. Beebe, a former Dearborn Community College instructor, had taken the district from a Democrat in 1966 by 912 votes and lost it this year by 4,668.

With all other incumbents or at least members of the incumbent party returned by Michigan's 37 other Senate districts, a 19-19 deadlock now exists on the Senate floor. Republicans had held a 20-18 majority.

WITH THE apparent election of Gov. Milliken, his lieutenant governor, William Brickley, in the speaker's chair will represent the tie-breaking vote whenever debate breaks along party lines.

Ironically, Mrs. Beebe was not the prime sponsor of abortion reform legislation considered on the Senate floor this year. Ann Arbor Sen. Gilbert Bursley, who won re-election handily in that Republican bailiwick, was.

Mrs. Beebe's loss will be critical to Republicans in another way, also. She had been assistant majority leader, an unusual first term honor that also placed her in a strategic leadership position.

She had demonstrated a deep well of enthusiasm and energy and had been one of the busiest workers among the senators, thrusting strongly into health, education and welfare issues.

PLAWEWSKI, although young and considered a neophyte, had strong UAW union support and hewed close to the established Democratic Party platform.

He had never held any type of public office before. As such as he was of qualified voting age he ran for Dearborn Heights Common Council but lost despite being a member of the dominant political party.

In his campaign appearances, Plawewski demonstrated a high degree of poise and political acumen. Dressed in stylish suits with a youthful touch of color and pattern in his ties, he impressed even confirmed Republicans.

He obviously impressed enough Democrats, Republicans and independents to cause them to throw over an experienced officeholder.

All eyes will be on this district, and the young man occupying its Senate seat, when Milliken next places his governorship on the line in 1974.

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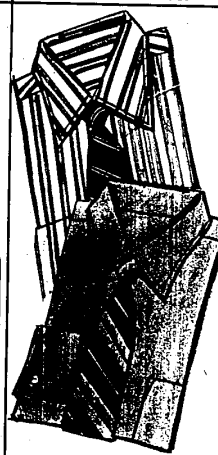
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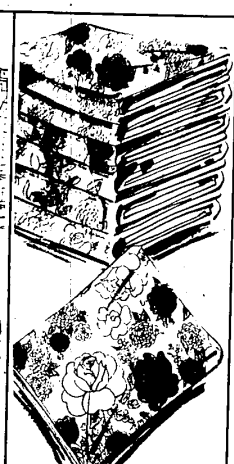
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