

The election eye...

Crossover vote crucial in Hansen-Jones race

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U.S.Rep. George V.Hansen,
R-Idaho, must be viewed as a
decided favorite in his rematch
with young Jerome attorney,
Jim Jones, but an anticipated
crossover vote to the Republi-
can primary Tuesday raises
certain doubts on outcome of
this contest.

Both Hansen and Jones are
aware of this and although Han-
sen feigns overflowing confi-
dence he acknowledged in a
interview with this writer
Wednesday that it is an impon-
derable, which is hard to assess,
along with the impact of the
presidential contests on both
tickets.

Hansen pointed out in his first
skirmish with Jones two years
ago it was the crossover vote
that closed the gap and enabled
him to win by only 35,736, or 55.5
percent, to Jones' 28,593, or 44.5
percent.

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The crossover vote in Tues-
day's election is anticipated to
be even greater because a presi-
dential contest, even in the pri-
mary, will draw a far larger
than usual turnout. But even
more important, there isn't a
single major contest in the Dem-
ocratic primary and only a few
on the legislative and county
levels. In 1978, there was a bitter
congressional battle between
Stan Kress and Ralph Harding,
but this year only Diane Bilyeu
is the lone Democratic candi-
date.

Hansen won by only 8,490
votes in the 1978 primary, which
would mean a shift of less than
5,000 votes could bring a Jones
victory, actually less than 4,500.
Thus, there is reason for Hansen
and his avid supporters to be
highly concerned.

The huge crossover by the
Democrats and independents to
the Republican primary could
mean bad news to Hansen. Most
of these can be expected to vote
against Hansen, meaning that
Jones will be the beneficiary.
Both Hansen and Jones know
this.

Hansen contends that the
voters support him because of
his aggressiveness in behalf of
Idaho and the nation. This is true
but it extends largely to his war-
mest followers. As observed
previously, there are about 40
percent who are his dedicated
backers but 40 percent who feel
strongly against him. That
leaves the crucial 20 percent
swing vote that will decided the
race.

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ably rolling up better than a 4-1
margin over George Bush and
others, and President Carter
also a winner by more than 2-1
over Sen. Kennedy.

The Republican presidential
results will determine the dele-
gates to the national convention
while the Democratic tally is lit-
tle more than a beauty contest,
although it likely will sway the
four uncommitted votes. Eight
are for Carter and five are for
Kennedy on basis of the loose-
ly held caucuses last month
which hardly reflected the Dem-
ocratic views as will be proven
in the primary.

Signs point to a tight Hansen-
Jones race, especially if there is
a large turnout. A light vote
likely will help Hansen. Hansen

In Hansen favor this year is a
more vigorous campaigning and
he contends he has better orga-
nization, particularly in Magic
Valley, where his showing was
comparatively weak in 1978. He
said he will spend \$75,000, where
two years ago his cost was only
about \$15,000. He thus is not tak-
ing Jones lightly.

On the other hand, Jones has
been intensely campaigning
since last winter, although his
organization is less than impos-
ing. Two years ago he cam-
paigned less than two months.
He also is spending more than
\$70,000 and his comparative
moderate views will attract the
moderate Republicans, Demo-
crats and independents.

In East Idaho, for example,
where Hansen always runs
strong, there are few contests
on the Democratic ticket but
there are a number on the
Republican ballot.

In Bonneville County, there's
not a single local Democratic
race but there are two on the
Republican side, both interest-
ing. One is for county commis-
sioner between incumbent Tom
Loertscher and Delmar Ander-
son and the other for state sena-
tor in Legislative District 31
between William Floyd and Don
Penfold.

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The presidential contests on
both parties are expected to be
lopsided — Ronald Reagan, who
is highly popular in Idaho, prob-

must be favored but if there is a
heavy Republican ballot don't
be surprised if Jones noses
through for a victory.