

Olsen says labor gave Evans edge

Nov. 4, 1982

By BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

"There was some good news and some bad news" was the way Idaho Republican Party Chairman Dennis M. Olsen phrased his view Thursday of Tuesday's general election.

And Olsen said some of the bad news was labor "coercion" in some areas of the state.

Olsen noted the big Democratic vote in Bannock and Nezperce counties which are both labor-dominated gave Evans the victory.

"Labor used scare tactics and almost coercion in these areas," said Olsen. "They threatened the loss of jobs and pensions if they didn't vote Democratic.

Disturbed him

"I think the thing that disturbed me most was in the governor's race which was one of lone special interest," said Olsen. "The unions put over \$140,000 in his campaign, plus hundreds of hours of labor to win the victory."

"I think that is not a good situation for a single special interest to win that much power and in essence buy the election."

Olsen said the good news was return of the two Idaho Republican congressmen and the bad news was again losing the governor's chair to the Democrats.

On the national scale, Olsen said most national Republican leaders expected to lose between 25 and 40 seats and they lost 26 at the last count. He was pleased at only one loss in the Senate but disappointed at the loss of at least five governors with one still in doubt.

"Under circumstances in relation to the economy we came out as well as we could," said Olsen in a Post-Register interview.

"I think in another two years after people see the fruits of Reagan's policies, we will see a difference in circumstances.

Olsen said some of these issues include Democrat Larry LaRocco, charging that 1st District Congressman Larry Craig wanted to sell off public lands.

Stallings race

He also said Stallings accused Hansen being unfavorable to education and that did not favor Palisades Dam power expansion construction.

"These were phony issues," said Olsen. "Stallings was groping for straws and nothing of substance."