

# TICKET SPLITTERS CALLED '70'S KEY

## Book Criticizes Traditional Views on the Voters

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 4—Swelling numbers of split-ticket voters, well-informed and surprisingly resistant to televised political advertising, hold the key to the elections of the seventies, according to a slim, statistic-studded new political book.

Entitled "The Ticket Splitter," the book—to be issued Friday—has already attracted interest here among students of politics in both parties. Some believe it may influence 1972 campaigns around the country.

The authors are two former Republican campaign strategists, Walter De Vries, now a professor at the University of Michigan, and Lance Tarrance Jr., now an official of the Census Bureau.

Using extensive election and survey data, they sharply assail the traditional analysis of voters as Republicans, Democrats or independents, based on how people describe themselves.

Instead of using self-identification, the authors analyze how voters say they actually voted, in secret, coded ballots used in post-election surveys.

### Independents With Ties

This analysis shows that about a quarter of all persons who say they are independents in fact vote straight Republican and a third of professed Democrats, meanwhile, vote split tickets.

Thus, the authors calculate, about a third of all voters are predictably Republicans and about a third are predictably Democratic. The remaining third consists of a ticket-splitting swing vote—one that is substantially different from the smaller bloc traditionally classified as independent.

"The rapid growth of a large number of voters who regularly split their ballots," the authors wrote, "has meant that the traditional two-party analysis of American voting behavior has lost its explanatory power."

Documentation for the book includes studies of Michigan campaigns in which Mr. De Vries participated and work in Texas by Mr. Tarrance, who was once research director of the Republican National Committee. They also presented extensive national election data.

One national table gives clear evidence of rapid increases in split-ticket voting. It lists the number of elections in which Governors and Senators of different parties were elected.

In 1920, there were no such split outcomes. In 1950, there were five. In 1970, there were 11. There were 24 state elections in each of those years.

### Traditional View Doubted

The authors also sharply challenged traditional views that independent voters are those least interested in politics and political news, least educated and most susceptible to emotional and television appeals.

Their studies demonstrated, they wrote, that "the ticket-splitter is slightly younger, somewhat more educated, somewhat more white-collar and more suburban than the typical middle-class voter."

He is not "a one-issue person or a voter who could be easily reached by a highly emotional appeals [but is] a complex voter" informed on issues and oriented to candidates rather than parties.

The strongest influences on the ticket-splitter's voting decisions are, at least according to a May, 1970, state survey in Michigan, all news-related.

Out of 36 possible influencing factors, split-ticket voters ranked television political advertising as 24th in importance, the study showed. Newspaper ads were 22d, billboards 32d.

The most important factors cited were, in order: Television news, television documentaries and specials, newspaper articles, newspaper editorials, television editorials, television talk shows, television educational programs, talks with one's own family, radio educational programs and radio news.

Thus, the authors argued, "the way to win elections is not through traditional television advertising that 'sells' the candidate, but through an overall communications strategy" linking him to ticket-splitting voters.

"These are the most discriminating voters," the authors concluded. "They will be the third force in the politics of the 1970's—they are the new independent electorate."

The book, containing 25 pages of technical appendices, is being published by the Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich.