

# *Jean Westwood Is Dead at 73; Led Democrats in Rout of '72*

By Irvin Molotsky, *The New York Times*

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Jean Westwood, who was a leader of George McGovern's disastrous Democratic campaign for President in 1972 and was the first woman to be chairman of a major political party, died on Monday in American Fork Hospital in American Fork, Utah, where she had lived for the last two years. She was 73.

The cause was complications from a pituitary tumor, said her husband, Richard E. Westwood.

Mrs. Westwood was an enthusiastic supporter of Democratic candidates and Democratic causes. But her period of leadership came during a time of Republican victories. So the unenviable task of trying to put a brave face on the McGovern campaign fell to Mrs. Westwood, who became the chairman of the Democratic National Committee after Mr. McGovern won the Democratic nomination.

"It is pompous nonsense for anyone to presume to predict the result of an election seven weeks hence," she said in September 1972 as Mr. McGovern badly trailed President Richard M. Nixon. "And it is ridiculous for any observer to conclude now that the whole thing is decided and the campaign is all over."

But the whole thing was decided and the campaign was all over. Mr. McGovern carried only the Democratic bastions of Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. He was not the only loser. Mrs. Westwood faced her share of the blame for the rout and, three weeks after the election, found herself combating suggestions that she resign.

"I will not quit," she declared. But by December, she was gone after just five months as party chairman, whose title she preferred over chairwoman ("It's not something I'm going to fret about," Mrs. Westwood said when she got the job.)

Mr. McGovern, reached today at his vacation home in Montana, remembered Mrs. Westwood as "a person who combined a tough mind with a warm heart." As an example, he offered a description of how he reached the decision to drop Senator Thomas F. Eagleton as his Vice-Presidential running mate.

Mr. Eagleton had revealed that he was hospitalized for "fatigue and nervous exhaustion" three times and underwent electric shock treatments for depression, almost derailing an already stumbling Presidential campaign.

Mr. McGovern said: "I was calling key people in the campaign to decide what to do, and I can remember almost her exact words. She said, 'It's painful for me to do anything that might hurt Senator Eagleton, but if his staying on the ticket endangers our election chances, that hurts all the millions of people we want to serve, so I think he should step down.' That showed her compassion and tough-mindedness."

Mr. McGovern later settled on Sargent Shriver as a running mate.

In 1968, Mrs. Westwood worked for the Presidential campaign of Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York and, after his assassination, turned to Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, another loser to Mr. Nixon.

In 1975, she helped lead the Presidential campaign of Terry Sanford, then the president of Duke University, and in 1985 she played a similar role for Bruce Babbitt. She lived in Arizona from 1976 to 1995 and served as an adviser to Mr. Babbitt when he was the Governor.

The success that eluded Mrs. Westwood in politics came to her in business. In their home state, Utah, she and her husband simultaneously ran businesses that raised minks, built apartments and installed swimming pools.

Besides her husband, Mrs. Westwood is survived by a son, Richard E. Westwood Jr., of Highland, Utah; a daughter, Beth Davies of American Fork; two brothers, John K. Miles of Provo, Utah, and David H. Miles of Orem, Utah; 15 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren.