

ELECTION • CONTINUED FROM 1

the next leader. "What is important now is to form a stable government for the people in Germany, and we ... quite clearly have the mandate to do that," Merkel said.

In contrast, Schroeder was exuberant and branded the performance of Merkel's party "disastrous."

"I do not understand how the (Christian Democratic) Union, which started off so confidently and arrogantly, takes a claim to political leadership from a disastrous election result," Schroeder said, adding defiantly that he could foresee four years of stable government "under my leadership."

With 298 of 299 districts declaring, the results showed

Merkel's Christian Democrats party with 35.2 percent of the vote compared to 34.3 percent for Schroeder's Social Democrats. Voting in the final district, Dresden, was delayed until Oct. 2 because of the death of a candidate. But that outcome was not expected to affect the final result.

Merkel's party won 225 seats, three more than the Social Democrats; the Free Democrats got 61, the Left Party 54 and the Greens 51. Germany's legislature has at least 598 seats — but often more — elected under proportional representation from party lists. The outgoing parliament, for example, has 601 lawmakers.

Merkel's preferred coalition partners — the pro-business Free Democrats — had 9.8 percent, leaving such an

alliance short of outright victory. The Greens, the Social Democrats' current governing partner, had 8.1 percent; together, the two parties failed to reach a majority, ending Schroeder's government.

The Left Party had 8.7 percent of the vote, but Schroeder said he would not work with them. The overall election turnout was 77.7 percent.

Both Merkel and Schroeder said they would talk to all parties except the new Left Party, a combination of ex-communists and renegade Social Democrats.

One leading possibility: a linkup between her Christian Democrats and Schroeder's Social Democrats, viewed by some as a recipe for paralysis in a country plagued by 11.4 percent unemployment.

RELIEF • CONTINUED FROM 1

academic and personal counseling, developmental studies workshops and cultural enrichment. The program also has more than \$50,000 in its regular budget this semester to provide grants and financial assistance to eligible students.

Additional funding will allow the program to assist displaced students who might be facing financial or academic burdens by expanding its support services, Anderson said.

"We're two and a half weeks into the semester, so (displaced students enrolled in existing programs) obviously have a lot of catching up to do," Anderson said. "They can use our tutoring services. The financial aid will be beneficial for students who were only able to enroll here with an emergency tuition or book loan that has to be paid back in 90 days."

The program will also provide personal counseling to students traumatized by the hurricane's devastation.

"These students have had to uproot themselves and their entire families to come to what may be a strange city, so the counseling aspect of our program will give them someone to talk to about what they're facing," he said.

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CONSTITUTION • CONTINUED FROM 1

Student leaders and administrators will each read about a page of the Constitution during today's 1 p.m. event. SG also made a public address announcement over the

loudspeaker at USC's football game Saturday in recognition of Constitution Day.

In addition to handing out pocket Constitutions and buttons Friday, a large version of the document was displayed with a piece of paper that gave

students the opportunity to sign "the Constitution."

Holt said SG officials took about pictures of weekend's events for "posterity's sake."

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MONEY • CONTINUED FROM 1

Barry Scanlon, senior vice president in the consulting firm of former FEMA Director James Lee Witt, said he believes the agency did what it needed when it gave the money to the state.

"FEMA received an earmark which it processed through to the state as instructed by Congress," Scanlon said. Witt is now a private consultant to Gov. Kathleen Blanco, D-La., on the Katrina aftermath.

Tauzin said he, too, could never find out where the money went. "They gave it to the causeway commission? That's wacky," he said.

At the time eight years ago, the Louisiana delegation had plenty of political muscle to get

the money. Then-Rep. Bob Livingston, R-La., was chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, which controls the government's purse strings.

Livingston, now a lobbyist, said he could not explain what happened either, although he knew of other predictive hurricane studies over the years.

FEMA typically contracts its studies to private or government entities. Kinerney, the agency spokesman, said it appeared the money went through the Louisiana government. State emergency and transportation officials said they did not recall it.

After nothing came of its first directive, FEMA addressed the need for an evacuation plan "off

and on" over the years, Kinerney said. Last year, the agency undertook the massive "Hurricane Pam" project that was supposed to create a comprehensive emergency plan for New Orleans.

That work was unfinished when Katrina struck, though its first phase involved an elaborate hurricane simulation that was eerily predictive of Katrina's disaster.

FEMA's parent agency, the Homeland Security Department, did provide \$75,000 to print 1 million evacuation maps that were distributed this year for the state's updated transportation evacuation blueprint, state transportation spokesman Mark Lambert said.



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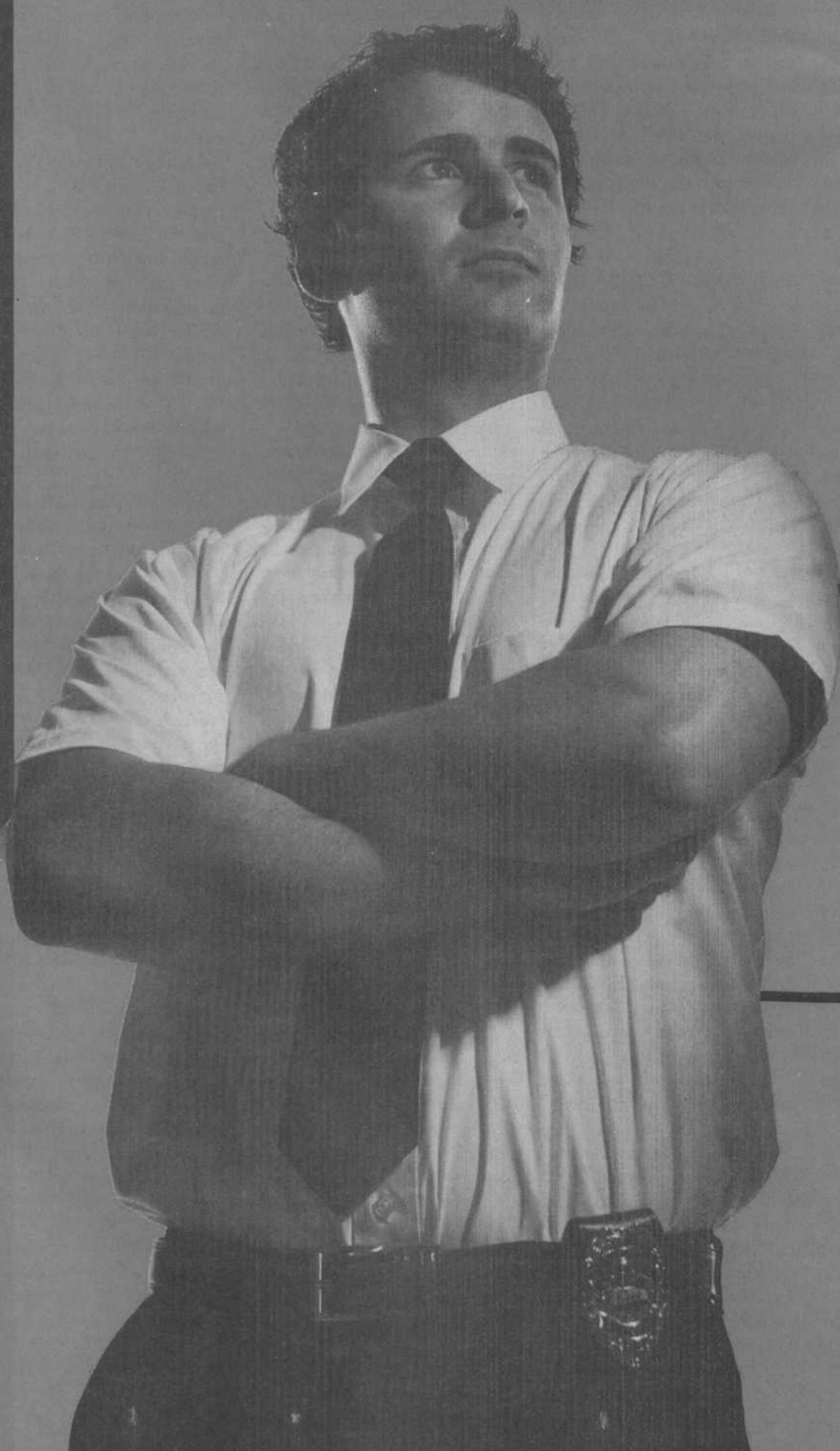
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