Nixon the Real Winner in Maryland

Wallace Weak in Direct Test

By Haynes Johnson 5-19-72
Washington Post Staff Writer

George Wallace was the big winner in Maryland, but it was Richard Nixon who emerges as the most formidable candidate in a state that has gone Democratic in the last three presidential elections.

Although Wallace swept the state against his Democratic rivals Tuesday, he failed to win a direct test of strength against the President. When Maryland voters were asked to choose between the President and the Alabama governor, five out of eight picked Mr. Nixon.

And of those who voted for Wallace yesterday, four out of five said they would vote for the President in November rather than support either of the other major Democratic candidates, George McGovern and Hubert Humphrey.

All that obviously adds up to bad news for Democratic prospects in Maryland next November.

These findings are based on a voter survey conducted for The Washington Post throughout Maryland Tues-

See SURVEY, A11, Col. 1

SURVEY, From A1

day. The survey, latest in a series on major presidential primary states by Hart Research Associates, interviewed 542 voters as they left their polling places. The sample took in 55 precincts in 15 of Maryland's counties and Baltimore City.

In looking at the way the citizens actually voted, two distinct constituencies stand out. One is solidly for Wallace. The other takes in the Humphrey-McGovern voters.

These two groups are poles apart and are politically incompatible.

One way of seeing how sharply they differ in their political allegiances is to look at how they would vote in the November election. While the Wallace voters overwhelmingly favored Mr. Nixon, those who voted for either Humphrey or McGovern could back either of those senators if he is the Democratic nominee.

Complicating the picture even further is the sharp polarization that surrounds George Wallace. Despite his strong showing in Maryland, a substantial number of all voters surveyed — 44 per cent—said they could not under any circumstances support the governor for President in November.

What Wallace did achieve in Maryland was a considerable broadening of the base of his support. In other primaries, the Wallace voter was concentrated principally among low-income whites, many of them from rural areas and small towns. They were, generally speaking, working men and women, althoug often not members of a labor union.

In Maryland, a distinctly different portrait of the Wallace constituency emerges.

For the first time in states surveyed, Wallace was capturing upper-income voters from the suburbs. Previously these types of voters heavily favored George McGovern.

But in Maryland Wallace and McGovern evenly divided that suburban vote, each getting about 35 per cent. Wallace also improved his standing among white-collar, civil service employees, taking a majority of that ovte, and did better among blue-collar and union members. More union members voted for Wallace (39 per cent) than for any other candidate.

Among those voters, Wallace was cutting most deeply into Humphrey strength. Humphrey got 35 per cent of the union vote and McGovern trailed far behind with 20 per cent.

Attracts Older Voters

Perhaps most surprisingly of all, Wallace for the first time recieved more voters among citizens over the age of 50 and those who are retired. These had been the province of Humphrey.

But yesterday Wallace beat Humphrey by 2 to 1 among voters over 50, and by the same margin defeated the senator among those who are retired.

As in other primaries, the Wallace sample in the Post/Hart survey was totally white.

Wallace was also almost completely rejected by another group of voters. Only 2 per cent of Jewish voters cast their ballots for him.

The Wallace supporter in Maryland is therefore more of a cross-section of the American electorate than in other states. He earns more

—33 per cent made over $15,000 a year — and he comes from a more representative group by occupations. Blue-collar workers and union members voted for George Wallace Tuesday; so did real estate operators, motel owners, insurance salesmen and owners of small stores.

War, Crime Mentioned

Among all voters surveyed, the war in Vietnam was mentioned most often as the major issue facing the country. More than half of the voters cited Vietnam. Next in importance to them was crime. Unlike the Ohio primary survey, where crime was ranked far down the list of key issues, in Maryland it was mentioned by more than a third of all voters.

It was the Wallace voter in Maryland who elevated the crime issue. Crime was the most important American problem to the largest number of Wallace voters. Half of them mentioned crime, whereas only a third of the Humphrey voters brought it up and 20 per cent of the McGovern voters.

Next in importance to the Wallace voters were taxes and busing. Only a third of the Wallace voters mentioned Vietnam as a major concern, but they were the most strongly aligned with the Nixon policies in Southeast Asia.

When asked what they thought about the President's recent actions in mining North Vietnamese ports, the Wallace voters overwhelmingly approved by a 10-to-1 margin.

The question of the war, however, was another way of distinguishing the Wallace constituency from those of Humphrey and McGovern.

Half of all the voters in the state mentioned Vietnam as a paramount issue, with three out of four of McGovern's voters citing it and half of Humphrey's. By 5 to 4, the Humphrey voters backed the President's recent actions, but by 7 to 2 the McGovern voters strongly disapproved.

With such a strong Wallace showing in Maryland, the base of both Humphrey and McGovern's constituency inevitably was diminished.

McGovern ran well in the Washington suburbs, but was weaker in other suburban areas around the state.

Slips With young

For the first time in the Hart samples, McGovern failed to win a majority of the young vote. In Maryland, he received 47 per cent of the vote of those between the ages of 18 and 24. In other states, he had been getting three out of every four of those voters.

Both Wallace and Humphrey got about 20 per cent each of the young vote, with the rest dividend among other candidates on the ballot.

McGovern maintained his hold among those calling themselves liberals, taking 53 per cent of that vote, and Jewish citizens, 55 per cent.

Humphrey lost ground on several fronts. Not only did his support among older voters and blue-collar workers drop, but he even slipped among the one group that has given him the most solid backing this year — the blacks.

Although he won the support of two out of three black voters, his was far below his previous showing in other states. The decline among black voters in Maryland was largely attributable to the ballots cast for Shirley Chisholm, the black congresswoman from New york.

She was drawing one out of six black voters in the state on Tuesday.

The way the voters perceived the three major candidates also said much about the relative strengths and weaknesses of their support.

When asked what two or three issues they most associated Humphrey with, one of two said he would honorably end the war in Vietnam, one in three said he would reform the tax structure, and another third said he was for a guaranteed annual income for the poor.

On McGovern, three out of four voters said he is for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, two of five said he wanted to reform the tax structure and one-third said he is for amnesty for those who resisted the draft.

But for Wallace, 82 per cent of all voters identified him with the issue of busing to achieve racial balance in schools.

Another question attempted to gauge the voters' attitudes about the candidates from a different perspective.

The voters were asked if they would be inclined to favor or oppose a candidate if he took certain positions on such controversial issues as legalizing the use of marijuana, more liberal approaches to abortion, amnesty, and busing.

Half of all voters said they would be inclined to oppose a candidate who favors amnesty. On that question, McGovern voters said they were more favorably inclined to such a candidate by a 3-to-1 ratio, while Wallace voters were opposed by 7 to 1 and Humphrey's also opposed by 5 to 3.

A majority of all voters—52 per cent — said they would be inclined to oppose a candidate who favored liberalizing marijuana laws. Again, those who voted for respective candidates differed. McGovern's voters, by better than 2 to 1, would look on such a candidate favorably while 70 per cent of Wallace voters would oppose him and 54 per cent of Humphrey's were against.

the responses about abortion and busing brought surprises.

Interestingly, 57 per cent of all Maryland voters surveyed by Hart Tuesday said they would tend to be for a candidate who favors liberalizing the abortion laws. Of McGovern's voters, 78 per cent felt that way. Of Humphrey's, 54 per cent agreed, and 44 per cent of the Wallace voters had the same opinion.

Even among Catholic voters, only 53 per cent opposed abortion law reform.

On the question of busing to achieve racial balance in schools, a bare majority—51 per cent—of all voters said they would be inclined to oppose a candidate taking a pro-busing stand. The Wallace voters most predictably were strongly against any candidate who favored busing. The figure was 72 per cent.

But the Humphrey voters divided evenly on that question; 43 per cent would tend to oppose a candidate in favor of busing, and 43 per cent said they would be for him. The rest of Humphrey's voters were undecided.

This story is based on interviews conducted for The Washington Post by Hart Research Associates of Washington. The company interviewed 542 Maryland voters in 55 precincts in 15 Maryland counties in addition to Baltimore City. These counties and Baltimore City represent 95 per cent of the potential Democratic primary vote. The voters were contacted immediately after they had voted in Tuesday's election. The purpose of the interviews was to determine the kind and depth of support various Democratic candidates enjoyed. Similar interviews will be conducted for The Post by Hart Research in the California primary election June 6.

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Michigan Protest Vote Strong

By Robert L. Pisor

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DETROIT, May 17—Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace built his sweeping victory in Michigan's presidential primary on a strong protest vote joined in by as many as 250,000 Republicans.

Twenty per cent of those who supported Wallace in Tuesday's election identified themselves as "core Republicans" who were breaking a lifelong GOP voting habit to support the Southern governor.

Fully 38 per cent of the Wallace voters named President Nixon as their second choice for the presidency; 32 per cent named Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota; 8 per cent named Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota.

These and other statistics came from a voter survey made for The Detroit News by Market Opinion Research at a cross-section of 40 polling places throughout Michigan Tuesday with a scientifically selected sample of 573 voters.

See VOTER, A14, Col. 1

VOTER, From A1

The error factor in a poll of this size is plus or minus 4 per cent but in this case the survey was aimed at discovering. Why people voted as they did and the error factor is considered less crucial.

Gov. Wallace's call to voters to "Send Them a Message"—to tell the nation's leadership it was time for a change—found a receptive audience in the Michigan primary, the survey showed.

More than one-third, or 35 per cent of Wallace's vote came from those, both Democrats and Republicans, who staunchly oppose busing.

About 17 per cent of his support came from those uneasy about the nation's well being, about "the way things are going"—a frequent comment encountered by the survey interviews.

The strong mood of protest carried into every aspect of the election. In Livonia, for example, voters turned down a tax proposal and four separate charter changes while giving Wallace 62 per cent of the vote.

"They came to protest," said Livonia Mayor Edward H. McNamara, "and when voters are in that kind of mood, they vote 'No.' "

The Market Opinion Research survey discovered that the single most important issue cited by voters in both the Democratic and Republican primaries was Vietnam.

On the GOP aide of the ballot, 39 per cent of the Republican voters gave Vietnam as their reason for supporting Mr. Nixon. Twenty-eight per cent of all Democratic voters cited Vietnam as the key issue.

In the survey Gov. Wallace's greatest strength was shown to be his stand against busing, a stand that by itself accounted for 35 per cent of his support. But, the governor's voters also named a number of other reasons for backing him, including "the way things are going," plus crime, Vietnam, taxes and inflation.

McGovern, on the other hand, emerged in the survey as a single-issue candidate. His television ads, speeches and leaflets focused heavily on his early, strong opposition to U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia.

About 55 per cent of those who voted for McGovern told the interviewers that his stand against the war was the single most important factor in their vote.

One surprise disclosed by the Market Opinion Research poll was that McGovern, widely recognized as the "youth candidate" because of his support from young people, ran second to Wallace among younger voters.

New voters, those between 18 and 24, preferred Wallace over McGovern by 41 percent to 37 percent. Sen. Humphrey, who finished third in the primary, won only 8 per cent of the youth vote.

Gov. Wallace, the poll showed, outdrew his Democratic opponents in every age group, particularly in the over-40 segment. He won half of those in the 40-59 age group while McGovern was pulling less than 25 per cent and Humphrey about 15 per cent.

Gov. Wallace's great strength came in the suburbs of Detroit—in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties outside Detroit—where he pulled 45 per cent of his total statewide vote of more than 800,000.

But Gov. Wallace's popularity stretched far beyond the limits of the metropolitan Detroit area as he carried 79 of Michigan's 83 counties—losing only four to McGovern, including Waahtenaw County (home of the University of Michigan) and Ingham County (home of Michigan State University).

Gov. Wallace, who would have won the Michigan primary even without the boost he received from the Republican crossovers, had his victory margin swelled to 51 per cent by normally GOP voters who marked a Democratic ballot.