

Ford Widens Lead Over Rest of Field

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J.—President Ford has widened his lead over former California Gov. Ronald Reagan and other possible candidates for the Republican nomination in 1976.

In the latest Gallup survey, 45 per cent of Republicans select Mr. Ford as their first choice for the nomination next year. Reagan is named next most often, by 19 per cent, followed by Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) 11 per cent.

Reagan has been losing ground to the President since March, however. The latest results support the fears of conservative strategists who have been urging Reagan to formally announce his candidacy before he falls too far behind Mr. Ford. Reagan trails the President by 26 percentage points in June and 12 points in March.

Following is the question asked 348 respondents who say they're Republicans, out of a total sample of 1,515 adults, throughout the nation from Aug. 15-18:

Here is a list of people (respondents were handed a card with the names of 10 men whose names have figured prominently in speculation for the '76 GOP nomination) who have been mentioned as possible presidential candidates for the Republican nomination in 1976. Which ONE would you like to see nominated as the Republican candidate in 1976?

	Latest	June	March
Gerald R. Ford ...	45%	41%	34%
Ronald Reagan ...	19	20	22
Barry Goldwater ...	11	13	17
Nelson A. Rockefeller	7	5	10
Charles H. Percy ...	4	4	3
John B. Connally ...	3	2	*
Howard H. Baker, Jr.	3	4	4
James L. Buckley ...	2	1	1
Mark O. Hatfield ...	2	2	3
Elliot L. Richardson	1	3	3
No preference ...	3	5	3

* Not included on March list.
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