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California Poll

Kennedy Still 1st

By Mervin D. Field

The 1976 Democratic party presidential race is in a very confused state, with more than 15 declared or would-be candidates in the running.

The California Poll recently made a sounding of current voter preferences among Democrats in this state and found these trends in evidence:

- Senator Edward Kennedy has repeatedly denied that he is candidate, but if he were, he would have an overwhelming lead in California over the large field of Democrats. Should he actually make the declaration of non-candidacy necessary to keep his name off the California ballot, his support would disperse among a number of the other candidates and no one of them stands out as a natural second choice to Kennedy voters today.

- Alabama Governor George Wallace has a small but significant body of support among California Democrats, but he also polarizes party voters here to unprecedented degree. More than

half of all the state's Democrats say he is the one candidate they would have the hardest time supporting.

- Governor Edmund Brown Jr. is a strong favorite with the state's Democratic voters, and after Kennedy, leads all other Democrats at this time.

The California Poll's latest survey of candidate popularity shows this ranking:

If voting now for 1976 Democratic nominee, first choice—	Democrats statewide
Kennedy	37%
Brown	12
Wallace	10
Humphrey	9
Jackson	6
McGovern	6
Muskie	6
Church	2
Bayh	2
Udall	1
Bentsen	1
Harris	1
Shriver	1
Carter	*
Shapp	*
Sanford	*
None of these, no opinion	5

*Less than one-half of one per cent.

Second choice candidate preferences were obtained in this survey and with Kennedy out of the running the distribution would put Brown in first place.

Presidential preferences if Kennedy not a candidate	Democrats statewide
Brown	20%
Humphrey	16
Wallace	13
McGovern	12
Jackson	11
Muskie	8
Church	3
Bayh	2
Harris	2
Shriver	2
Udall	1
Bentsen	1
Carter	1
Shapp	1
Sanford	1
Undecided	7

*Less than one-half of one per cent.

More than half (52 per cent) of this state's Democrats say they would find it difficult to vote for Wallace if he were the candidate. Senators Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern also have sizable (27 per cent and 23 per cent respectively) segments of Democrats who are most negatively inclined toward them.

Would find this man most difficult to vote for as president	Democrats statewide
Wallace	52%
Humphrey	27
McGovern	23
Kennedy	15
Brown	14
Shriver	13
Muskie	13
Jackson	13
Carter	7
Bentsen	6
Sanford	6
Bayh	4
Harris	4
Udall	4
Shapp	3
Church	2

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