

## California Poll

# Kennedy Slips as Demo Choice

By Mervin D. Field

Senator Edward Kennedy continued to exert a strong pull on the vote inclinations of rank and file California Democrats, but this preference for Kennedy appears to be waning.

This fall-off in Kennedy support may be due to several factors. First, as the time for the California primary election comes closer, and as Kennedy continues to disavow any intention to run in 1972, more people begin to believe him. Further, any serious thought of Kennedy as a presidential candidate brings back recollections of (1) the Chappaquidick incident and (2) concern of many about the surviving male member of the Kennedy family taking a political route that resulted in two of his brothers being assassinated.

Maine Senator Edmund Muskie is not yet a declared candidate and remains in

second position behind Kennedy. One element which favors Muskie's chances in the long run is the fact that he seemingly does not polarize voter sentiment to the same degree that Kennedy does. A relatively smaller proportion of Democrats have an unfavorable view of him or feel that it would be difficult to vote for him.

Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey is in a strong third position behind Kennedy and Muskie. Humphrey has a solid body of support among potential Democratic

voters, but there is also a sizable segment of Democratic voters who say they would find it difficult to vote for the 1968 nominee.

Other possible candidates, including New York Mayor John Lindsay, former Senator Eugene McCarthy and Senator George McGovern are holding their previously established positions apparently neither gaining nor losing ground.

While Washington Senator Henry Jackson has improved his position somewhat he does

not rank among the front runners. This may be due to the fact that he is not as well known as the other candidates. New York Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm and Arkansas Congressman Wilbur Mills are even less well known to California Democratic voters. Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty has little positive appeal to rank and file Democrats, and is unacceptable to an unusually large number of voters: twice as many Democrats have an unfavorable view as have a favorable view of Yorty.

Following is a comparison of the vote preferences between two comparable statewide surveys of representative samples of California Democrats:

Democrats—Statewide			
		Nov.	Aug.
Edward Kennedy		31%	37%
Edmund Muskie		19	19
Hubert Humphrey		17	13
Eugene McCarthy		9	9
John Lindsay		8	8
George McGovern		5	8
Henry Jackson		3	1
Samuel Yorty		3	3
Wilbur Mills		1	1
Shirley Chisholm		1	—
None of these		5	4

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