

How McGovern Cut Nixon Lead

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Senator George McGovern's success in reducing President Nixon's lead nationally is accounted for in large measure by his success in winning back Democratic defectors. In the latest survey, 32 per cent of Democrats prefer Mr. Nixon, while in the earlier survey the figure was 40 per cent.

McGovern's headway in winning back Democratic defectors is reflected in his improved standing among two groups that are traditionally Democratic in their presidential preferences but have been in Mr. Nixon's camp since the Democratic Convention — Catholics and labor union voters.

In the latest survey, Mr. Nixon leads McGovern among Catholics by 52 per cent to 40 per cent. In the previous survey (late August), the President's margin was considerably wider, 62 per cent to 29 per cent.

An upturn in McGovern's fortunes has also been recorded among labor union families. In the latest survey members of labor union families give Mr. Nixon a 52 per cent to 42 per cent lead over his rival, while in the previous survey, Nixon held a 61 per cent to 30 per cent lead.

YOUTH

McGovern also appears to be winning back young voters, 18 to 29, who were solidly in his camp during the spring and early summer, but who began to slide away after the Eagleton disclosures and then went over to Mr. Nixon's side following the GOP convention.

The race today among this group of young voters is close, with 52 per cent favoring Nixon and 46 per cent McGovern. The previous survey showed Mr. Nixon with a 62 per cent to 35 per cent lead.

Despite McGovern's gains in recent weeks, President Nixon continues to hold leads in all major regions of the nation and with all major groups in the population, with the exception of Blacks and Jews.

As reported Monday, Mr. Nixon leads McGovern among registered voters nationwide by the vote of 61 per cent to 33 per cent with 1 per cent for other candidates and 5 per cent undecided. The previous survey showed Mr. Nixon leading 64 per cent to 30 per cent with 6 per cent for other candidates or undecided.

QUESTION

This question was asked:
If the presidential election were being held TODAY, which candidate would you vote for — McGovern, the Democrat, or Nixon, the Republican?

The following table shows the vote by groups in the latest survey, based on the choices of registered voters:

	Nixon	McG.	Other	Un- dec.
NATIONAL	61	33	1	5
Republicans	95	4	*	1
Democrats	32	61	1	6
Independents	67	25	2	6
Catholics	52	40	*	8
Protestants	70	26	1	3
Labor union families	52	42	*	6
18-29 years	52	46	—	2
30-49 years	65	29	1	5
50 & older	62	31	1	6
Whites	67	28	*	5
Non-whites	10	82	2	6
College background	61	35	1	3
High school	65	30	*	5
Grade school	51	41	1	7
Professional & Business	68	29	*	3
Clerical & Sales	62	32	2	4
Manual workers	57	35	1	7
Men	58	36	1	5
Women	64	30	1	5
South	70	24	1	5
Non-South	59	36	*	5

* Less than one-half of 1 per cent

These results are based upon personal interviews conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected communities with a total sample of 1505 respondents, of whom 1168 were registered. Interviewing was conducted September 22 to 25.

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