

# REAGAN TOPS FORD

## Ford in Poll of GOP

By George Gallup

Princeton, N.J.

Newly announced presidential candidate Ronald Reagan, former governor of California, has registered dramatic gains since mid-October and has moved into a lead over President Ford as the top 1976 nomination choice of Republican voters nationwide.

Trailing President Ford in a mid-October survey, 25 per cent to 48 per cent, as the No. 1 pick of Republican voters (asked to choose from a list of ten), Reagan now leads 40 per cent to 32 per cent.

Factors that could help explain Reagan's sharp gains are his announcement of his candidacy on November 20, as well as President Ford's declining popularity. The President's approval rating, 47 per cent in the mid-October survey, declined to 41 per cent in the latest survey, which was conducted after his sudden Cabinet shakeup.

The survey, however, was conducted before President Ford's just-completed trip to China.

Currently No. 3 in the nomination choices, although far behind Reagan and Mr. Ford, is Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, selected by ten per cent. Next is Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, the choice of six per cent.

This question was asked to determine the first choice of GOP voters from a list of possible presidential candidates:

"Here is a list of people (respondents were handed a card with ten names) 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?"

Here are the latest results compared with those recorded in October:

	Latest	October
	pct	pct
Ronald Reagan .....	40	25
Gerald Ford .....	32	48
Barry Goldwater .....	10	7
Nelson Rockefeller .....	6	5
Charles Percy .....	3	2
Howard Baker .....	2	2
Elliot Richardson .....	2	3
Mark Hatfield .....	2	1
John Connally .....	1	1
James Buckley .....	1	1
No preference .....	1	5

Until the latest survey, President Ford had consistently led the field of GOP presidential possibilities, including Reagan, by a wide margin. Prior to Mr. Ford's becoming President, however, Reagan had been the favorite of Republican voters nationwide.

With the sharp gains made by Reagan in recent weeks, the conservative vote, as represented

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by the vote given the three men on the list who are identified with the conservative viewpoint — Reagan, Goldwater, and Senator James Buckley of New York — now matches the non-conservative vote. In earlier surveys, the total non-conservative vote was predominant, by about 2-to-1 ratio.

Candidate Reagan has also registered gains among independents and is now in a virtual tie with Mr. Ford as the top Republican choice of this important bloc of voters. Reagan wins 27 per cent, and Mr. Ford 25 per cent.

In the mid-October survey, Mr. Ford led Reagan with independents 26 per cent to 20 per cent.

## A Different Stripe

Williams, Iowa

A ten-mile-long green stripe along a newly finished portion of Interstate 35 in northern Iowa goes nowhere special and has no official significance, state highway officials conceded yesterday.

The stripe of green paint apparently resulted from an accidental spill as a truck traveled the new highway, says Robert Henely, district highway engineer for the Department of Transportation.

The stripe is on a portion of the road not in contact with normal traffic, and state engineers say removing the stripe would not be worth the expense.

Associated Press

In third and fourth places among independents today are Goldwater, the choice of 11 per cent of independents, and Rockefeller, the choice of eight per cent. All others receive six per cent or less of the vote.

With Republican party affiliation at an all-time low, the GOP must obviously nominate a candidate who has the widest appeal among independents and dissident Democrats. And although independents lean 2-to-1 Democratic in their basic political outlook, they remain important to GOP presidential fortunes because they have voted Republican in every presidential election in the last quarter-century, with the exception of 1964.

Following are the latest Republican presidential choices of independents compared with those recorded in the mid-October survey:

	Latest	October
	pct	pct
Reagan .....	27	20
Ford .....	25	26
Goldwater .....	11	1
Rockefeller .....	8	8
Percy .....	6	6
Richardson .....	5	5
Baker .....	4	4
Hatfield .....	3	3
Buckley .....	3	1
Connally .....	2	4
No preference .....	6	13

The latest findings are based on in-person interviews with 352 respondents who classify themselves as Republicans and 497 who consider themselves independents out of a total sample of 1507 adults, 18 and older. Interviewing was conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period November 21-24.

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