

The McGovern Image

Positive elements in McGovern's image include "his stand on the war" (16 per cent); he is "honest, sincere" (9 per cent); "he is a Democrat" (7 per cent); "he is for the common man" (6 per cent). No other single positive mention exceeds 4 per cent when voters are citing McGovern's attributes.

When asked why they might vote for Mr. Nixon, 22 per cent reply that he "has done a good job, he is the best choice." Next frequently mentioned is his handling of the Vietnam war (21 per cent) and then "Nixon's foreign policy, his visits to Russia and China" (13 per cent). Other less frequently offered comments are "dislike McGovern" (6 per cent), Mr. Nixon is "honest, sincere" (5 per cent) and the President's economic policy (4 per cent).

Reasons for voting against Mr. Nixon are his stand on the war (18 per cent), his economic policy (9 per cent), "not for the common man, for big business," (7 per cent). He's "too political" (6 per cent); "he's dishonest" (6 per cent), "just don't like him" (6 per cent). Only one voter in one hundred (1 per cent) referred to Mr. Nixon's running mate, Spiro Agnew, as a reason for voting against Mr. Nixon.

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"Apart from whether or not you prefer him, is there anything in particular about Nixon/McGovern that might make you vote for him?"

"Is there anything in particular about Nixon/McGovern that might make you vote against him?"

Might vote for Nixon

	All voters	Nixon supporters
Best choice, best man for the office, has done a good job	22%	36%
Stand on war, like his war policy, brought troops home	21	33
Foreign policy—visited Russia and China	13	18
Dislike McGovern; Nixon lesser of two evils	6	10
Honest, sincere	5	9
Economic policy, has helped the economy, stopped inflation	4	7
Like his policies, stand on issues, like what he does	3	6
Domestic policy, interested in country, concerned about country	2	4
A conservative, more conservative views	1	2
Can't think of anything which would make me vote for Nixon	39	—

Might vote for McGovern

	All voters	McGovern supporters
His stand on the war, he will end the war	16%	32%
Honest, sincere	9	17
The Democrat, always vote Democratic	7	14
For the common man, working people	6	14
Like his policies, stand on issues, like what he says	6	9
Dislike Nixon, don't want Nixon	4	8
Employment, creating jobs	4	7
Domestic policy, has good of country at heart	3	7
Tax reform, income distribution	3	6
He's the man, he will do a good/better job	3	5
A liberal, liberal views	3	6
Welfare reforms	2	5
Minorities, concerned about blacks, minority groups	2	5
Good for a change, time for a change	2	4
Appeals to youth, for younger generation	2	3
Can't think of anything which would make me vote for McGovern	51	—

Might vote against Nixon

	All voters	McGovern supporters
Stand on war, hasn't brought boys home, didn't stop war	18%	32%
Economic policy, inflation, cost of living up	9	12
Not for common man, working man, interested in big business	7	11
A politician, too political minded, plays politics	6	11
Dishonest, a liar, fake, phony, don't trust him	6	12
Just don't like him, his personality	6	8
A Republican, don't like Republicans	4	8
Foreign policy, his visits to China and Russia	4	6
Unrealistic, makes promises he can't keep, too many false promises	3	6
Unemployment, high rate of unemployment	3	6
Dislike his policies, ideas, what he says, don't like what he's done	3	4
Domestic policy, neglects domestic issues, should do more	3	4
Tax reforms, didn't lower taxes	2	3
Welfare reforms, social reforms	2	2
Educational programs, busing	2	3
Do not like Agnew	1	1
Can't think of anything which would make me vote against Nixon, don't know	41	12

Might vote against McGovern

	All voters	Nixon supporters
Eagleton affair, bad judgment in Eagleton affair	12%	11%
Stand on war, pulling out troops, immediate withdrawal	12	21
Too liberal, too radical, socialistic, far-out	10	18
Weak, can't make decisions, yields under pressure	10	13
Welfare reforms	10	14
Unrealistic, makes promises he can't keep	8	13
Guaranteed income plan, giving everybody something	7	11
Poor choice, could have picked a better man	4	7
Tax reforms, raising taxes, taxing wrong people	4	5
Defense cutbacks in defense, stand on defense	4	7
Dislike policies, dislike his ideas	3	5
Don't like him, his personality, gives a sloppy image	3	5
Dishonest, a liar, fake, phony, don't trust him	3	4
Foreign policy, cutting foreign aid, naive about world affairs	3	3
Can't think of anything which would make me vote against McGovern, don't know	33	11

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California Poll

The War and How It Affects Nixon, McGovern

By Mervin D. Field

One of the major developments in the presidential campaign to date is the success that President Nixon has had in defusing the Vietnam war as an issue in his bid for re-election.

It was Senator George McGovern's persistent emphasis on the Vietnam war which more than any other single issue sparked his successful drive for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Not many months ago it appeared that failure to "end" the Vietnam war would turn out to be Mr. Nixon's Achilles heel, and might be the issue which would deny him another term in office as it denied his predecessor, Lyndon Johnson. However, the California Poll's latest survey indicates that the way he has handled the Vietnam war does not appear to be hurting Mr. Nixon's chances for re-election at this time, and may on balance even be helping him.

This turn of events is revealed by a recent California Poll survey which asked voters to give reasons they might vote for or against either man.

The Vietnam War Issue

First of all, among all voters, irrespective of whom they presently support, the Vietnam war is mentioned more often than any other specific issue as a factor in their support or opposition for either man. And while about one in six of all voters (16 per cent) cite Vietnam as a reason for voting for McGovern, an even larger number of voters (21 per cent) say that Mr. Nixon's handling of the conflict, especially his troop withdrawal program, is their reason for voting for him.

Furthermore, when each man's supporters are looked at separately, Mr. Nixon's success in handling this issue shows up again — while 32 per cent of McGovern's supporters say it is his stand on Vietnam that is motivating them to vote for him, 33 per cent of Mr. Nixon's supporters offer the President's war policies as a leading reason for voting for him.

Another finding from this survey suggests that McGovern has not succeeded in building a positive image as yet. As the lesser-known candidate, he theoretically has a better opportunity to impress voters favorably, while Mr. Nixon, who has been on the national scene for more than 25 years, should theoretically suffer the handicap of being locked into an image which has many unfavorable elements. However, when all voters were asked to offer any reason for voting for Mr. Nixon or McGovern, regardless of whom they presently support, only about half (49 per cent) can say something positive about McGovern, while 61 per cent can do this for Mr. Nixon. And even more significantly, while 59 per cent can think of a reason for not supporting Mr. Nixon, even a larger proportion (67 per cent) cite something negative about McGovern.