

NEW SURVEY FINDS NIXON IS LEADING M'GOVERN 62-23%

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Poll Taken in Last Month of
Summer Puts President
Ahead Among Democrats

MARGIN GROWING WIDER

Lead Earlier Was 56-28%
—2,329 Voters Queried
in 16 Largest States

NYTimes

By JACK ROSENTHAL

Voter preference for President Nixon grew so much in the last month of the summer that he took the lead over Senator George McGovern even among registered Democrats, according to a new 16-state electoral vote survey.

The survey, conducted through Sept. 12, found that Mr. Nixon had moved to a 39-point margin of 62 to 23 per cent. A parallel survey a month earlier found a 28-point Nixon margin of 56 to 28 per cent.

The 16 states surveyed are the nation's largest. They account for two-thirds of the total electoral vote. A total of 2,329 registered voters were interviewed by telephone in the new survey.

Surveys Subdivided

The surveys are among a series conducted by Daniel Yankelovich, Inc., a major survey research company, for The New York Times. They differ from other political polls because they are subdivided by state, permitting appraisal of the potential electoral vote as well as the popular vote.

In some states Mr. Nixon widened his popularity even more dramatically than in the entire sample. In Texas, the spread was 53 points—71 per cent for Mr. Nixon, 18 per cent for Senator McGovern, and 11 per cent undecided.

Even in New York, which traditionally votes Democratic in Presidential elections, the new survey found a Nixon lead of 57 to 26. This 31-point margin compared with a 17-point Nixon lead in the first survey. In New Jersey, the Nixon spread increased from 30 points to 34, and in Connecticut from 30 points to 39.

Landslide for Nixon

There was an indication in the survey that Mr. McGovern may have narrowed the Nixon margin during early September, but this shift was so small that it could be explained by sampling error.

The over-all verdict of the new survey was that, if the election had just been held, Mr. Nixon would have won by a landslide among virtually all ages, social classes, income lev-

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els, nationalities and regions. The President led by 34 points among Catholics, 38 points among independents, 43 points among middle-income voters, 47 points among Italian-Americans, 51 points among Protestants and 54 points in the South.

But the most dramatic finding was of a Nixon lead even among Democrats. The August findings indicated significant defections, although Mr. McGovern still led among all Democratic voters, 45 to 37 per cent.

The new survey showed that Democrats for Nixon now total 43 per cent, compared with 40 per cent who said they would remain loyal to their party's nominee.

Further, the Democrats for Nixon appear to be increasingly committed. In the first survey, half said they were sure to cross party lines to vote for Mr. Nixon. In the new survey, 70 per cent said they were sure they would do so.

The seriousness of this shift among Democrats is illustrated by analysis of the survey. If Senator McGovern had the support of all the defectors, the survey would have showed a Nixon lead of only three points—44 per cent to 41.

Reason for Popularity

A major reason for Mr. Nixon's increasingly strong showing appeared to be high voter confidence in his handling of the Vietnam war and foreign affairs. Another reason appeared to be a pronounced view among many voters that Mr. McGovern was radical and indecisive.

There were few findings in the survey favorable to the Democratic nominee, and even these were touched with ambiguity.

About 40 per cent of the 16-

state sample was interviewed after Labor Day, and the findings for this subgroup suggested a slight narrowing of the Nixon lead. The pre-Labor Day segment gave Mr. Nixon a 41-point lead of 63 to 22. The later segment came out 61 to 24, a 37-point lead for the President.

Even this small upturn, however, could be accounted for by sampling error, which is plus or minus 4 percentage points for the 2,329-person sample.

In the total sample, the only category in which Senator McGovern appeared to be gaining was among Jewish voters, who make up about 5 per cent of the electorate. They now prefer him to Mr. Nixon by a 20-point margin of 52 to 32, more than twice the spread found in the first survey.

The Youth Vote

Mr. McGovern continues to lead among college students, 53 to 40. Among noncollege youths aged 18 to 24, however, the Nixon lead has risen from 10 points to 15—49 to 34 per cent. Since the noncollege group is twice as large as the college group, Mr. Nixon now appears to hold a narrow lead among all young voters.

Mr. McGovern also retained a massive lead among black voters, but it appeared to be a little smaller than the earlier survey and, in any event, was lower than the proportion won by Democratic nominees in recent Presidential elections.

Analysis of the survey data shows that the Democratic voter who favors Mr. Nixon is somewhat more likely to be male, middle-aged, white and Protestant than other Democrats. He is apt to be a white-collar worker and to earn more than the national median income of about \$10,000. And he is twice as likely to prefer Gov.

George C. Wallace of Alabama for the Presidency than are other Democrats.

The new survey, like previous Times/Yankelovich polls, showed that a sizable share of the electorate would vote for Mr. Wallace if he were a third-party candidate again.

Wallace Strength Cited

Even though he is not campaigning now, Governor Wallace would pull 18 per cent of the vote in the 16 states sampled. Virtually all of this would come from the Nixon column, but it still would nearly equal the McGovern total. The three-way findings were: Nixon 47 per cent, McGovern 21, Wallace 18, and undecided 13.

The 16-state survey involved 250 registered voters from each of seven states—New York, California, Pennsylvania, Texas, Illinois, Michigan and Ohio. Smaller numbers were interviewed in nine other states—New Jersey, Massachusetts, Indiana, Wisconsin, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, Missouri and Virginia.

The new survey was made between Aug. 25 and Sept. 12. It was conducted by the Yankelovich concern for The Times and Time magazine. A separate but simultaneous survey of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region, conducted for The Times, was of 670 registered voters, also interviewed by telephone.

Both survey samples are chosen by random digit dialing and random selection from telephone directories. While the sampling error is four points for the total 16-state survey, it is about eight points in the tri-state survey.

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