

# THE CALIFORNIA POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND IMPARTIAL STATEWIDE SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION  
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JOHNSON SWEEPS STATE TODAY. LODGE AND NIXON MAKE STRONGEST REPUBLICAN SHOWING

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by Mervin D. Field

If the presidential election were being held today in California, President Lyndon B. Johnson would sweep the state against any possible Republican ticket. The strongest races made by any Republican potential candidates are by Henry Cabot Lodge and Richard Nixon.

President Johnson's great popularity with the California public, <sup>also</sup> gives him an unprecedented margin of support against both Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater, two avowed candidates for the Republican nomination. Neither Lodge nor Nixon has declared himself in the running, although Nixon has said he would accept a "draft" by his party. Nixon and Lodge were the Republican ticket for the presidency in 1960.

## Popularity Measure

To measure the current popularity of presidential candidates, the California Poll recently conducted a sounding of public opinion throughout the state among a scientifically designed sampling of the state's electorate. Proportionate numbers of members of both parties in all walks of life were interviewed. The question was put to them in this way:

"Suppose the presidential election were being held today, which of these candidates would you probably vote for?"

Each respondent was then shown a series of cards on which the various possible candidate pairings were printed. The choices which voters made place President Johnson well out in front of every Republican.

Johnson . . . . .	72%	Johnson . . . . .	69%
Goldwater . . . . .	22	Nixon . . . . .	25
Undecided . . . . .	6	Undecided . . . . .	6
Johnson . . . . .	71%	Johnson . . . . .	64%
Rockefeller . . . . .	22	Lodge . . . . .	28
Undecided . . . . .	7	Undecided . . . . .	8

Also included in the survey were Governor William Scranton, who polled 17% against 74% for Johnson with 9% undecided; Governor George Romney, who polled 23% to 69% for Johnson with 8% undecided; and Harold Stassen, who received 12% as compared to 77% for Johnson and 11% undecided.

(MORE)

The California Poll was founded in 1946 as a medium for promoting public opinion research. The California Poll is completely independent of all political parties and candidates. Its sole purpose is to report public opinion accurately and objectively. Most of the financial support for the Poll comes from newspapers that have publication rights within the city of publication. The Poll utilizes accepted scientific sampling and questioning procedures in obtaining the data reported in its releases. Representative samples of adults are interviewed at periodic intervals on election issues and other socially important questions of the day. Proportionate numbers of people of both sexes, from all parts of the state, from different sized communities, and of all age, economic, political, and occupation groups are included in the samples. Major surveys are made with samples of 1,200 or more respondents. Interim surveys sometimes are made with smaller samples but not less than 600 interviews.

Kennedy Standing

The feeling of national shock at President Kennedy's assassination in November has been followed by a great wave of support for newly-seated President Johnson. Where the late President Kennedy was polling about 60% as compared to Goldwater's and Rockefeller's 30% to 35% in California in October, President Johnson has gained a better than three to one edge over these two candidates today.

Richard Nixon who, prior to Kennedy's death, was not considered a likely aspirant for the Republican nomination, now emerges as a serious contender. More surprising, perhaps, is the relatively strong showing made by Ambassador Lodge.

Party Support

At the present time, President Johnson commands the vote of about nine out of ten Democrats in California against any of the suggested Republican candidates. More significantly, Johnson also polls about as many votes among Republicans as either Goldwater or Rockefeller does. Only Lodge and Nixon are able to command a majority of votes among their own party members in California.

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Johnson	91%	44%
Goldwater	6	47
Undecided	3	9
Johnson	89%	44%
Rockefeller	7	44
Undecided	4	12
Johnson	92%	36%
Nixon	5	55
Undecided	3	9
Johnson	87%	33%
Lodge	9	56
Undecided	4	11

The present high level of President Johnson's popularity with both parties is almost certain to decline as the mood of national sympathy and support for the new president is replaced by the more normal partisanship of a presidential election campaign. However, there is no doubt that the presidential picture has been considerably shaken up by events since November 22.

Not only have Goldwater and Rockefeller both received severe setbacks from their former levels of popularity, but two formidable new contenders -- Nixon and Lodge -- have entered the race with strong voter support. Not to be discounted either is the growing talk of Scranton or Romney as possible "dark horse" candidates at the Republican Convention in San Francisco in July. Whether these new developments will help or hinder Republican chances to capture the Presidency remain to be seen.

The California Poll conducts regular surveys throughout the state. Reports on the findings of these timely soundings of public opinion appear exclusively in the \_\_\_\_\_. Next Tuesday: "How do voters compare President Johnson's stand on civil rights, relations with Russia, and attitudes toward business and labor with those of the late President Kennedy?"