

THE CALIFORNIA POLL

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NO GAIN FOR GOLDWATER IN CALIFORNIA; JOHNSON STILL LEADS BY WIDE MARGIN

by Mervin D. Field

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Senator Barry Goldwater has not made any appreciable headway in California during the past month in his campaign for the presidency. There are signs of a slight increase in the number of "undecided" voters, but President Lyndon B. Johnson still commands a wide lead over his GOP rival.

A statewide survey just completed among a representative cross section of 1,256 voters shows that President Johnson gets the vote of 58% of Californians, Senator Goldwater gets 32%, and 10% are undecided. One month ago, Johnson had 62%, Goldwater had 33% and just 5% were undecided.

Assuming that the presently undecided voters will either not vote at all, or that if they do vote they will divide in about the same proportions as those who indicate a preference, the two-man vote division would go about 64% for Johnson at this time. Comparison with the findings of a survey made early in September shows that there has been no significant change in the vote split during the past month.

	<u>Today</u>	<u>Early September</u>
Johnson	64%	65%
Goldwater	36	35

Today's report, as well as September's, reflects the opinions of a proportionate sampling of voters by party, by region of the state, and by other characteristics. The California Secretary of State's current voter registration shows that approximately 58 out of every 100 registered voters are Democrats, 39 are Republicans, and 3 decline to state party preference or register with some other party.

Two Interviewing Techniques

There has been speculation that public opinion polls understate the true strength of Goldwater's vote because some people may be reluctant to voice their intention to vote for the controversial Senator. To determine how much of an effect this "hidden Goldwater vote" might have, the California Poll used two different interviewing techniques. One-half of the survey sample of potential voters was asked to indicate preference for the presidency in response to the standard public opinion poll question:

(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 and television stations that have exclusive 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.

"If you were voting today for President and Vice President do you think you would vote for the Republican ticket of Goldwater and Miller, or the Democratic ticket of Johnson and Humphrey?"

Persons who said they were "undecided" in response to this question were then asked which way they were leaning. Responses to this two-step line of questioning are shown below:

	<u>Direct question</u>
Johnson	57%
Goldwater	27
Undecided	<u>16</u>
Leaning to Johnson	5%
Leaning to Goldwater	4
Still undecided	<u>7</u>
Johnson total	62%
Goldwater total	31
Undecided	7

Secret Ballot

The second half of the survey sample was an identical group of people representative of voters of each party from various sections of the state and matched on other characteristics as well. These people were given a "secret ballot" on which to mark their preferences. This ballot was then deposited in a ballot box carried by each of the 91 interviewers working on this survey. In this way, the voter was not required to tell the interviewer which candidate he favored.

The results of this measurement show that there is a somewhat lower vote for President Johnson on the secret ballot than there is on the direct question. However, Senator Goldwater's percentage on the secret ballot is not any higher than it is on the direct question when the "leaners" are included. The secret ballot results are shown below:

	<u>Secret ballot</u>
Johnson	54%
Goldwater	32
Undecided	14

The question arises whether the "secret ballot" or the direct question method is the better indicator of probable voting intention. Previous elections have shown that the direct question method can provide highly reliable results; however, the secret ballot technique may be more sensitive to undercurrents of feeling. For the purposes of estimating where the presidential race stands today, the California Poll has combined the data from both methods and averaged them to arrive at the figures quoted earlier (58% for Johnson, 32% for Goldwater, and 10% undecided).

Voting Patterns

Goldwater's relatively poor showing in California is the result of his failure to make any appreciable headway among Democratic party voters, and, even more significantly, his continuing failure to hold a substantial number of Republicans who are crossing over to vote for President Johnson. Johnson's voting strength is greater in Northern California than it is in Southern California.

	<u>Johnson</u>	<u>Goldwater</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Democrats	84%	8	8
Republicans	22%	66	12
Northern California	66%	24	10
Southern California	51%	38	11

(Southern California includes the following counties: Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, Ventura, Santa Barbara)