

Newsletter

President Ford Committee

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No. 32

PRESIDENT GAINING IN POLLS

Louis Harris reported in a new Harris Survey published in the Chicago Tribune Monday that "for the first time Ford has moved into substantial leads among those groups that are most likely to vote."

The new Harris poll, a survey of 1,503 voters taken October 7-11 after the last debate between the President and Candidate Carter, shows that over-all the Carter lead of two weeks ago has been cut almost in half.

With Independent Candidate Eugene McCarthy figured into the poll, Carter leads the President by only 44-40% nationwide in this poll.

An NBC News poll released over the weekend reports that among those considered likely to vote the President had cut Carter's lead to 42%-40%.

Harris reported that among those groups that are most likely to vote, President Ford is ahead among the college-educated by a substantial 48-33%, among the \$15,000-and-over income group by 47-35%, among the professional people by 45-35%, and among small businessmen and executives by 54-30%.

The Harris poll also showed the President leading Candidate Carter in the West 43-34%, among white-collar workers by 48-35%, and by a significant 45-31% among voters classing themselves as Independents. In regard to its nationwide results, Harris reported that the election race "is likely to narrow even further in the final two weeks. Make no mistake about it, this election is up for grabs."

And the Philadelphia Inquirer reported Monday that "Jimmy the Greek" Snyder, described as America's favorite oddsmaker, "says President Ford will defeat Jimmy Carter on November 2." The Inquirer said Snyder cited the President's "dramatic surge in public opinion polls in announcing his pick."

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MORE NEWSPAPERS ENDORSE PRESIDENT FORD

During the past week, President Ford has been endorsed for election by the Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal, the Dallas Morning News, Orlando Sentinel-Star and the Chattanooga News-Free Press, UPI reported.

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PRESIDENT PLANS TEN-DAY, CROSS-COUNTRY CAMPAIGN BLITZ

President Ford plans a 10-day cross-country campaign blitz starting next Saturday and ending on election eve, AP and UPI reported Monday.

Fred Barnes wrote in a similar story on page one of the Washington Star Monday that the President is "convinced that the momentum" of the campaign "is again on his side." Barnes said the final 10-day swing will take the President to at least 25 cities, concentrating on the nation's 8 most populous states, but maybe hitting as many as 15 states.

He said the concentration will be on California, New York, Texas, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Besides these 8 states, the Star story said the President will campaign in Washington, Oregon, Virginia, Connecticut "and perhaps 3 other states" during the last 10 days of the campaign.

The wire services reported that the President plans only one out-of-town appearance before his final debate with Candidate Carter in Williamsburg, Virginia, Friday night. That will involve a fast trip to New York City to attend the annual Al Smith dinner Thursday night.

They said the closing campaign trip may hit as many as 40 cities. The President, they said, will spend Friday night in Richmond, campaign briefly there, and then fly on to Connecticut before flying to California to work his way back East.

The wire services reported that the President will end the tour election eve in his home town of Grand Rapids, Mich., and, after voting there November 2, fly back to the White House to await the returns.

Barnes quoted PFC Chairman Jim Baker as saying that the President is ahead in Mississippi, Louisiana and Virginia, and is trailing Carter by only 2 or 3 percentage points--within the margin of error in any poll--in North Carolina and South Carolina. The Star story said that the upcoming extensive campaign excursion is one of three key elements in the President's final bid for election victory. The other two were described as the third debate Friday night and a television advertising blitz.

Baker was quoted as pointing out that the PFC has spent far less than the Carter campaign so far, giving it more to spend on television advertising in the last two weeks.

For the closing drive, Barnes wrote, the President's campaign will add an anti-Carter commercial to its staple TV spots emphasizing that President Ford is a "warm family man, decent, honorable and kind."

Baker was quoted as saying that the new ad will stress that Carter "is unknown and he's inexperienced and he's been inconsistent on the issues. That's as negative as we will be."

The New York Times reported Monday that the latest television commercials for the President "make heavy use of man-in-the-street interviews--in the streets of Atlanta, especially--in order to underscore the doubts that voters most often voice about Jimmy Carter."

Two of three Ford commercials that started running in 60-second versions on network television over the weekend follow exactly the same format, the Times reported. "They start off with a single voter saying something positive about the President, then cut immediately to a line-up of voters--six in one case, eight in the other--all expressing doubts about Carter's stands or misgivings about his qualifications for the Presidency."

The Times added:

"In each case, the Atlanta voters are saved for maximum impact at the end. One commercial ends with an Atlanta voter talking about promises that she said the former Governor failed to keep and the increases that occurred in the state's payroll under his administration...in the other Ford commercial that uses Atlanta voters...one describes Carter as 'just average, an average run-of-the-mill governor.' The next three wonder aloud whether he ever did anything.

"Well, I've tried--and all my friends--to remember what he did as Governor of Georgia,' the last of these voters drawls, 'and nobody really knows.'

"In the third of the commercials that uses voter interviews, there is a little more emphasis on Mr. Ford's merits before voters start voicing their skepticism about his opponent."

These comments, the Times said, establish a contrast for the comments about Carter, who is described as "ambiguous, contradictory, and...wishy-washy."

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SPECIAL POLLS FAVOR PRESIDENT

UPI reported Monday that the Topeka Capital-Journal says President Ford has a 7% lead over Candidate Carter among registered voters in Kansas.

The Capital-Journal's poll showed the President was favored by 44% against 37% for Candidate Carter.

And, from St. Louis, UPI reported that the National Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association said President Ford received 42.3% against 37.1% for Carter in ballots cast in beauty salons in 46 states and the District of Columbia last month. The President received 13,211 votes to Carter's 11,584, with the President carrying 27 states and Carter 20.

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AND THE PRESIDENT LEADS IN "ICE CREAM POLL"

In Eaton Rapids, Mich., AP reports, an ice cream sundae called "Jerry's Butter Fudge Festival" is ahead of "Jimmy's Peanut Jubilee" at a 10-store dairy chain.

A spokesman for the chain, AP said, that is scattered around southern Michigan, said the President is ahead in both sundae sales and in separate secret ballots

given to adult ice cream buffs in the shops. The spokesman said the ice cream poll has been accurate since 1952 in predicting national election results.

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FARMERS SWINGING TOWARD FORD

That was the headline over a story in the Christian Science Monitor Monday reporting that President Ford's "new help for those who make their living on the land-- tax concessions, beef import limitations, and other moves or announcements of intended moves to improve prices--is beginning to pay off."

The Monitor story added:

"Farmers and those in cities and villages who are a part of the agriculture community and economy were particularly impressed with the debating performance of Ford running mate Robert Dole in his encounter with his Democratic counterpart Walter Mondale.

"They look upon Mr. Dole as the President's 'designated hitter' within the farm belt--someone Mr. Ford has picked to be their representative in the White House if the GOP ticket is elected...

"Peace is an important issue, and many of them (farmers) are persuaded that they are more likely to have peace with a GOP regime than with a Democrat running the country.

"So with a little more confidence in Mr. Ford and with a considerable amount of confidence in Mr. Dole, the Midwest farmers are moving back to the party of Lincoln."

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MISSISSIPPI LOOKING GOOD FOR THE PRESIDENT

A story in the Baltimore Sun last Friday from Martinville, Miss., indicated that Candidate Carter is in trouble in Mississippi.

Excerpts from the Sun story:

"Ford Sullivan was sitting there in the shade of the water oak in his backyard peeling onions to be put in the salad for a weekend meeting at the local Baptist church, as unlikely a threat to anyone's political ambition as you could imagine.

"But Mr. Sullivan is a Mississippi Democrat and from the Presidential viewpoint of Southern neighbor Jimmy Carter, a troublesome one.

"Unmoved by regional pride, unimpressed by the Georgian Candidate's personality and policies, and unflinching in his gut conservatism, Mr. Sullivan is going to vote for President Ford.

"Not only that. He believes that most of those around him in the rural hills of Simpson County in central Mississippi will do the same.

"When us hillbilly rednecks get together to put a man in, he goes in. When we all go to sign on the line, it's going to be for Ford. That's the way I hear it," said Mr. Sullivan...

"There are enough older or younger like-minded Democrats in Mississippi to make the outcome of the election here, once taken for granted for Mr. Carter, uncertain.

"Harry Dent, one of Mr. Ford's southern advisors, said this week that the latest Republican polls here show President Ford has actually overtaken Mr. Carter."

DOLE HITS CARTER KOREA POLICY

At a reception and press conference in Kansas City, our Vice-Presidential nominee Bob Dole criticized Candidate Carter's proposal to reduce U.S. troop strength and remove nuclear weapons from South Korea, AP reported Monday.

Carter advocates removal of nuclear weapons from South Korea and said Saturday he would withdraw U.S. troops from that country over a 4 to 5-year period, AP noted.

"He sends signals to our allies that we're going to desert you in 4 or 5 years," Dole told reporters.

AP also reported that Dole said Sunday the Democratic candidates are resorting to "dirty politics" by trying to link President Ford to Watergate and that he intends to "fight fire with fire." He accused Candidate Carter and his running mate, Fritz Mondale, of a deliberate effort to smear the President.

CHINATOWN RALLIES FOR FORD-DOLE

Under that headline, the New York Daily News Monday reported that "the usually crowded streets of Chinatown virtually overflowed" during a rally in support of President Ford Sunday.

An estimated 10,000 people observed and participated in the giant rally, the News said.

Clarabelle Hong of the Chinese-American Heritage group of Nassau County was quoted as saying that "Ford has our vote to the last person."

CORPORATE CONTRIBUTIONS ON JIMMY'S 1970 LIST

The New York Times reported Monday that Candidate Carter received about \$57,000 in corporate and business contributions while running for Governor of Georgia in 1970, according to a list he made public Sunday.

Included were substantial donations from concerns that dealt with the state and an organization that later came under a federal investigation, the Times said.

The Carter campaign issued a list of about 4,800 contributors who gave Carter a total of \$695,037 in his campaign six years ago, the Times added. The story also said that Carter's staff did not estimate what the campaign cost, but interviews by the Times indicated it cost \$400,000 to \$500,000 and "there is no clear information whether there was a surplus from the campaign or what its disposition might have been."

The Times story continued:

"Included in the Carter list of contributors were the names of over 100 businesses or corporations that gave Mr. Carter a total of \$57,000. In 1970 corporate contributions were permissible under Georgia State law...

"Carter received contributions from the McDougald Construction Co., a major road contractor, \$5,000; Dalton Asphalt Inc., a paving concern, \$1,500, and Dan P. Shepherd, another major road contractor, \$5,000. These companies bid or have had sub-contracts on state road construction. Mr. Carter also received substantial contributions from heavy road machinery contractors.

"According to the list, Mr. Carter obtained money...from groups that had special interest in Georgia legislation. For instance, he received \$1,000 from the Georgia Package Stores Institute, which represented local liquor store merchants, who are concerned with regulatory legislation...

"One of Mr. Carter's early supporters, according to the report, was Rabhan Associates of Savannah, a concern that had interests in nursing homes across the state as well as in food processing and other ventures. The owner, Erwin D. Rabhan, the lists showed, gave Mr. Carter some \$8,600 over two years in \$200 and \$300 allotments.

"Mr. Carter's aides in the 1970 campaign also confirmed in interviews that Mr. Rabhan, a private pilot, flew Mr. Carter around the state during the campaign.

"While Mr. Carter was Governor, Mr. Rabhan's concern came under federal investigation in connection with Federal Housing Administration violations, senior law enforcement sources have said. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has sought to question Mr. Rabhan and he is reportedly living outside the country."

The Times said that Carter also received contributions amounting to \$4,000 from Coca-Cola Corporation executives, and that later, when he was Governor, Carter made flights aboard Coca-Cola Company aircraft.

The Washington Post reported that several persons who contributed to Carter's 1970 gubernatorial campaign were later appointed by him to state posts.

Those listed by the Post included:

David Gambrell of Atlanta who later was appointed to the U.S. Senate to fill a vacancy created by the death of Senator Richard B. Russell. His contributions and those of his wife and father total \$4,950.

Conley Ingram of Marietta, appointed an associate justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, who made contributions totaling \$770.

Joel T. Fryer of Atlanta, appointed to the Fulton County Supreme Court, whose contributions totaled \$1,175.

R. Dean Fowler, an operator of nursing homes whose contributions amounted to \$600 and who was appointed to the board of the Department of Human Resources created by Carter. Jimmy's successor, Governor George Busby, the Post said, removed Fowler on grounds of conflict of interest because he benefited in his business from Medicaid contracts administered by the Department.

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THINGS LOOKING UP IN CAROLINAS

Republican Governor James E. Holshouser of North Carolina said Monday that a survey by President Ford's campaign polling firm shows that the President has closed to within 2 percentage points of Candidate Carter in his state, UPI reported Monday.

Holshouser was quoted as saying the poll showed Carter favored by 39% to 37% for the President, with 24% undecided.

"Given the margin of error in polls, it's too close to call," Holshouser said, according to UPI.

The Governor added that "it's been very obvious that the tide has turned." He disclosed the results of the poll at a press conference before going to Washington to urge the President to visit North Carolina before the election.

And, from Columbia, S.C., UPI reported that William Harrison, executive director of the PFC in South Carolina, said that the PFC, sensing possible victory in South Carolina, has doubled its advertising budget for the state.

"We were informed over the weekend that South Carolina has been moved to a 'first priority' status," Harrison was quoted as saying. "This is a designation they give to as many as a half dozen states that their research tells them week by week could swing into the President's column."

UPI also reported that Mayor John Bourne of North Charleston, chairman of the Ford-Dole Campaign in South Carolina, said the increase in the advertising budget

for the state "indicates to me very strongly that the committee feels President Ford can carry South Carolina."

In Greenville, S.C., UPI reported that Elizabeth Dole, wife of our Vice-Presidential nominee, told about 200 Republican women at a breakfast meeting that the Republican national ticket is more in tune with the political beliefs of the South than is Candidate Carter.

"He may be your geographical neighbor, but President Ford and Bob Dole are your philosophical neighbors," she said.

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DEMOCRATS' CHAIRMAN SEES WEST A TOSSUP

After a strategy meeting with Democratic Party officials from 13 Western states in Las Vegas Sunday, Democratic National Chairman Robert Strauss said "the race is a tossup in nearly every one of them." UPI reported.

He also was quoted as saying that the Democrats not only have to overcome President Ford, but also are battling among themselves.

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ANOTHER CARTER GAFFE

The Washington Post reported from Rochester, N.Y., last Friday that Candidate Carter pledged flatly there Thursday that Americans who work for a living and report all their income to the government for tax purposes "will never have their income taxes raised under my administration."

The Post story added: "However, he later backed off somewhat, qualifying the promise to exclude a crisis situation--a change in position similar to one he made in August in Iowa in modifying a pledge to farmers not to order any agricultural embargoes if he's elected."

When Carter press secretary Jody Powell was pressed by reporters for an elaboration of the first unequivocal statement, the Post said Powell checked with Carter and reported back that Jimmy anticipated no tax increases "barring unforeseen developments, crises and so forth."

"What he should have said is 'no tax increase under my tax reform plan'," the Post said Powell explained after talking with the candidate. The Post noted that Carter's "tax reform" plan has not been disclosed in any detail. The Post story went on to say that, alluding to some of his own previous campaign gaffes at a Liberal Party dinner in New York City later, Carter said: "If any of my supporters began the campaign believing I was infallible, I think I have by now disabused them of that notion."

He sure has.

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