Many observers of New Jersey politics point out that the state exists in a media vacuum, since all commercial television covering the state comes from New York City and Philadelphia and there is no other statewide source of political information. Where, then, does the New Jersey citizen get information about state politics?

In a statewide poll conducted March 23-31, the Eagleton Institute attempted to answer this question. The clear indication of the poll is that the well informed Jerseyan reads a newspaper.

Respondents were asked where they got information about what is happening in New Jersey politics and they were allowed to mention more than one source. Newspapers were mentioned by 91% of the sample, television by 78%, radio by 57%, and friends and acquaintances by 50%.

Respondents were also asked to identify the source of political information that they considered most valuable. Newspapers topped the list with 48% of the sample saying they were the most reliable source. Television was named by 31%, radio by 5%, and friends and acquaintances by 7%. The remaining 9% gave other responses or no opinion.

Eagleton asked if people could name any of the candidates for governor of New Jersey running in the June 5 primary. The poll showed that persons who identified newspapers as the best source of political information on New Jersey were more likely to name a candidate than persons who said television was their best source. Of those
persons who listed newspapers as the best source of information on N.J., 32% could name at least one candidate for governor. Of those who listed television as the best source, only 17% could name at least one candidate for governor.

Furthermore, among those naming newspapers as the best source of information on N.J. politics, 10% could name more than one candidate while only 4% of those identifying television could do likewise.

Eagleton surveyed a statewide random sample of 1224 persons 18 years of age and over by telephone between March 23 and 31. The results of the poll were tabulated by Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey.