Democrats Jimmy Carter and Hubert Humphrey would both defeat either of the two leading Republican candidates, Gerald Ford or Ronald Reagan, if the Presidential election were held now. The latest New Jersey Poll, conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics of Rutgers University earlier this month before the Michigan and Maryland primaries, shows Carter leading the President by 50 to 34 percent. Humphrey tops Ford by the narrower margin of 47 to 40 percent.

Reagan would lose to either Democrat by even wider margins. Carter defeats Reagan by 53 to 28 percent while Humphrey tops the former California Governor by an almost as large margin of 52 to 33 percent.

Since Democrats outnumber Republicans by almost two to one and almost half the state's voters are Independents, a Republican Presidential candidate in order to win in New Jersey must attract large numbers of Independents and Democrats in addition to holding his fellow party members. Among Republican voters President Ford does much better than Reagan against either Democrat. He defeats Carter by 73 to 16 percent and Humphrey by 79 to 12 percent. Reagan, however, barely attracts half of the GOP voters in beating Carter by 53 to 33 percent and Humphrey by 55 to 31 percent.

Ford also does better than Reagan among Independent voters, but not well enough to win. Ford ties Humphrey among Independents at 41 to 41 percent while losing to Carter by 46 to 34 percent. Reagan trails both Democrats among Independent voters. He loses to Carter by 47 to 29 percent and to Humphrey by 49 to 33 percent.

-more-
Both Democratic Presidential contenders do very well among Democratic voters in the state - a necessity for a Democratic victory. Humphrey leads Ford among Democrats by 77 to 15 percent and Reagan by 75 to 18 percent. Carter does as well topping Ford by 77 to 14 percent and Reagan by 77 to 11 percent.

As already noted, Carter runs better than Humphrey against Ford among Independent voters. Against Reagan, Carter and Humphrey defeat him among Independents and draw significant numbers of Republican voters.

Poll officials pointed out that the results of this latest survey portend a divisive split in the Republican party in the state no matter who wins the Republican nomination. They noted that about half of the supporters of either Ford or Reagan would defect to the Democratic column if their choice loses at the Republican convention and the Democrats nominate current frontrunner Jimmy Carter.

In a Carter-Reagan contest, Ford supporters prefer the Democrat by 43 to 38 percent. In a Carter-Ford race Reagan supporters only give the President a narrow lead of 45 to 41 percent. Hubert Humphrey would get 41 percent of Ford supporters to Reagan's 43 percent in a Humphrey-Reagan contest, but Reagan supporters back the President by the much wider margin of 58 to 27 percent in a Humphrey-Ford race.

Thus, the nomination of either Republican might produce serious defections among GOP voters, with a Carter nomination by the Democrats leading to the most fragmentation.

Among Democrats, about two-thirds of the Humphrey supporters would vote for Carter against either Reagan or Ford, giving him a 64 to 12 percent margin over the former California Governor, and 64 to 20 percent over the President.

-more-
However, among those Democrats who favor Carter over Humphrey, serious defections might occur if Humphrey should be the Democratic nominee. Humphrey leads Ford by only 45 to 38 percent among Carter supporters, and loses to this group to Reagan by 47 to 39 percent.

"While Carter seems acceptable to Humphrey supporters in the state," a poll analyst remarked, "there could be significant problems for the Democrats in New Jersey if Carter is denied his party's nomination."

The New Jersey Poll is conducted regularly throughout the year by the Eagleton Institute of Politics. The latest Poll was conducted between May 3 and May 13, when a scientifically selected sample of 800 adults 18 years and older were interviewed by telephone.
BACKGROUND MEMO--RELEASE #21-2, MONDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 24, 1976

The question referred to in this release is as follows:

"Suppose the election for President were being held right now, would you vote for Gerald Ford the Republican or Jimmy Carter the Democrat? If the election were held right now, would you vote for Gerald Ford the Republican or Hubert Humphrey the Democrat? Would you vote for Ronald Reagan the Republican or Jimmy Carter the Democrat? And would you vote for Ronald Reagan the Republican or Hubert Humphrey the Democrat?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gerald Ford</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>(47)</td>
<td>(13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald Ford</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald Reagan</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald Reagan</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures in parentheses are from the previous New Jersey Poll conducted between March 29 and April 4.