

The Star-Ledger/EAGLETON POLL

FOR RELEASE: SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 1988
RELEASE: SL/EP19-2 (EP69-2)

CONTACT: CLIFF ZUKIN OR
BOB CARTER

.....
RELEASE INFORMATION

A story based on the survey findings presented in this release and background memo will appear in Sunday's Star-Ledger. Other newspapers may also use this information in their Sunday editions. Electronic media may release after 5:00 p.m. Saturday, June 11. We ask users to properly attribute this copyrighted information to the "Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll".

NOTE: This is one of two Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll releases being distributed on Friday, June 10. A story based on the second release--the Lautenberg-Dawkins Senate race--will appear in Monday's Star-Ledger (June 13). Other newspapers may also use this information in their Monday editions. Electronic media may release after 5:00 p.m. Sunday, June 12.

.....

DUKAKIS BEGINS '88 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN WITH 14 POINT LEAD;

JACKSON HURTS TICKET IN JERSEY

Democrat Michael Dukakis holds a 14 point lead over his Republican opponent George Bush among Garden State voters as the candidates point toward the summer's nominating conventions. New Jersey has not voted Democratic in a presidential election since 1964.

The latest Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll, conducted before last Tuesday's primary, also finds the race would become a virtual dead heat if Jesse Jackson were added to the Democratic ticket.

The survey, conducted by telephone with a statewide sample of 611 registered voters between May 18 and 26, shows that most New Jerseyans do not yet feel strongly about either presidential candidate. However, initial impressions of Governor Dukakis are highly favorable while views of Vice President Bush are decidedly mixed.

-more-

ATTENTION RADIO STATIONS:

Audio is available after 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 11, 1988 from: (201) 932-3605 (Rutgers Feature Phone)

Dukakis holds a 50 to 36 percent advantage over Bush among those saying they are likely to vote in November's election, with 14 percent undecided. The Democratic edge completely disappears when a Dukakis-Jackson ticket is paired against Bush and mainstream Republican Robert Dole, with each ticket receiving support from 44 percent of voters.

Statewide, favorable impressions of Dukakis outnumber unfavorable ones by a lopsided margin of 58 to 14 percent, with the remaining 28 percent saying they have formed no impression of the Massachusetts Democrat. Positive assessments of Bush run ahead of negative ones by a much smaller margin of 42 to 32 percent, with one-quarter offering no opinion. More held an unfavorable than favorable view of Jesse Jackson by 43 to 33 percent, with 25 percent again expressing no opinion.

Cliff Zukin, director of the poll, commented, "It is somewhat surprising that Dukakis came through the nomination battle virtually unscathed while George Bush, uncontested most of the way, emerged with substantial negatives. Bush appears to be getting none of the credit for accomplishments of the Reagan administration while carrying some of the baggage for its failures.

"It is also important to note that it is very early in the process and that voters' images of both candidates are not well defined. Assessments of 'somewhat' favorable outnumber those of 'very' favorable by about two to one for both candidates. This means they are quite 'soft,' and can change quickly and easily as we move to the parties' conventions this summer. Firm opinions of the candidates are held by only one-quarter to one-third of the electorate at this time."

Poll figures identify four keys to Dukakis' current 14 point lead: the behavior of the state's independent voters, an even larger gender gap than was seen in 1984, a return of blue collar voters to the Democratic camp, and Dukakis' surprising margin among those in the 30 to 49 year old age bracket.

-more-

Independents divided their preferences by a margin of 63 to 25 percent for Ronald Reagan over Walter Mondale in August of 1984. The current survey finds this same group favoring Dukakis by a margin of 49 to 36 percent. Additionally, while Dukakis is the choice of 83 percent of the Democrats interviewed, Bush receives the support of only 77 percent of Republicans.

Men now split their vote down the middle--45 percent Bush to 43 percent Dukakis. Women, however, give the Democrat a whopping plurality of 30 percentage points--57 to 27 percent, with the remainder undecided.

Whereas in August 1984 Ronald Reagan enjoyed a 13 percentage point plurality among blue collar workers--traditionally a cornerstone of the Democratic coalition--Michael Dukakis holds a 36 point advantage over George Bush among this group at the start of the 1988 campaign.

While Reagan ran ahead of Mondale among all age groupings in the summer of 1984, his strength was particularly apparent in the 30 to 49 year cohort, where turnout is generally highest, besting Mondale by 59 to 31 percent. The current survey shows a commanding 62 to 31 percent lead for Dukakis among this age group.

Zukin said that the poll figures are best viewed simply as a reading of the relative positions of the candidates as they begin the presidential campaign. "With voters knowing so little about either man, and with the issues of debate not yet sharpened, we should expect a number of changes as the campaign unfolds. The conventions will be more important than usual, as Vice Presidential candidates are selected and people come to form more concrete images of the candidates and react to their visions of the country's future.

"But at this point it is clear that Ronald Reagan's popularity and appeal is not transferable to Vice President Bush, that New Jerseyans do not view the record of the Republicans over the last eight years as sufficient to warrant automatic continuation, and that they are a little bit more comfortable with Michael Dukakis than George Bush at the outset of the campaign."

The survey also asked voters to choose between two "home state" tickets-- Dukakis and Senator Bill Bradley for the Democrats versus Bush and Governor Tom Kean for the Republicans. The presence of these popular Garden State politicians on the tickets evidently cancelled each other out: Dukakis retained his same margin over Bush--49 to 36 percent, with the remainder either undecided or hopelessly cross-pressured.

-30-

Copyright: June 12, 1988, The Eagleton Institute and Newark Star-Ledger

The Star-Ledger/EAGLETON POLL

BACKGROUND MEMO--RELEASE SL/EP19-2 (EP69-2), SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 1988

The latest Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll was conducted between May 18 and 26, 1988, when a random sample of 800 New Jerseyans ages 18 years and older was interviewed by telephone. Figures in this release are based on the 611 respondents who reported being registered to vote and saying they would "definitely" or "probably" vote in November's election, and are subject to a sampling error of ± 4 percent. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from that population. Sampling error does not take into account other possible sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The questions and figures referred to in this release are as follows:

"I'm going to read you the names of some of the candidates. For each name I read, please tell me if your general impression is favorable, unfavorable, or if you have no opinion about him. (FOR EACH FAVORABLE/UNFAVORABLE, PROBE: Is that very or somewhat (favorable/unfavorable?)"

GEORGE BUSH	FAVORABLE		UNFAVORABLE		No	Total	(n)
	Very	Somewhat	Somewhat	Very	Opinion		
TOTAL	15%	27%	14%	18%	26%	100%	(611)
Party							
--Democrat	6	13	20	29	32	100	(202)
--Independent	11	28	17	18	26	100	(212)
--Republican	34	44	5	2	16	101	(169)
MICHAEL DUKAKIS							
TOTAL	19	39	7	7	28	100	(611)
Party							
--Democrat	30	40	2	1	26	99	(202)
--Independent	14	45	9	7	25	100	(212)
--Republican	10	28	12	16	34	100	(169)
JESSE JACKSON							
TOTAL	11	22	18	25	25	101	(611)
Party							
--Democrat	21	29	17	12	22	101	(202)
--Independent	8	22	20	28	23	101	(212)
--Republican	1	14	18	39	28	100	(169)

August, 1984

--Ronald Reagan	34	31	12	13	10	100	(637)
--Walter Mondale	12	32	22	17	18	101	(637)
--George Bush	16	32	12	9	31	100	(637)

"Suppose the presidential election is between Michael Dukakis, for the Democrats and George Bush for the Republicans. Without knowing who the vice presidential candidates are, would you vote for Dukakis or Bush? (IF UNDECIDED/DEPENDS/DON'T KNOW, PROBE: Do you lean more toward Dukakis or toward Bush?)"

	Chooses Dukakis	INITIALLY UNDECIDED			Chooses Bush	Total	(n)
		Leans to Dukakis	Pure Undecided	Leans to Bush			
TOTAL	50%	4%	6%	4%	36%	100%	(570)*
<u>Party</u>							
--Democrat	83	4	6	0	7	100	(190)
--Independent	49	6	6	4	36	101	(197)
--Republican	11	1	5	6	77	100	(164)
<u>Age</u>							
--18-29	53	3	1	5	38	100	(105)
--30-49	62	2	3	2	31	100	(249)
--50-64	47	4	6	5	38	100	(116)
--65+	29	9	15	4	43	100	(94)
<u>Race</u>							
--white	45	5	7	5	39	101	(486)
--non-white	78	0	1	0	21	100	(80)
<u>Sex</u>							
--male	43	4	3	4	45	99	(283)
--female	57	4	8	3	27	99	(287)
<u>Respondent Occupation</u>							
--blue collar	64	2	3	3	28	100	(147)
--white collar; self employed	47	3	3	5	42	100	(250)
--not employed	60	0	5	2	33	100	(70)
--retired	31	9	15	5	40	100	(102)

AUGUST 1984 COMPARISONS:

	<u>Mondale</u>	<u>Reagan</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	32%	55%	13%	100%	(619)
<u>Party</u>					
--Democrat	62	27	10	99	(186)
--Independent	25	63	13	101	(226)
--Republican	5	88	6	99	(163)

MAY 1988

	<u>Dukakis</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	50%	36%	14%	100%	(570)*
<u>Party</u>					
--Democrat	83	7	10	100	(190)
--Independent	49	36	16	101	(197)
--Republican	11	77	12	100	(164)

"Suppose the presidential election is between Michael Dukakis for the Democrats and George Bush for the Republicans, with Jesse Jackson and Robert Dole as the vice presidential nominees. Would you vote for Dukakis and Jackson or Bush and Dole? (IF UNDECIDED/DEPENDS/DON'T KNOW, PROBE: Do you lean more toward Dukakis or more toward Bush?)"

	<u>Chooses Dukakis/ Jackson</u>	<u>Leans to Dukakis/ Jackson</u>	<u>Pure Undecided</u>	<u>Leans Bush/ Dole</u>	<u>Chooses Bush/ Dole</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	44%	4%	7%	2%	44%	101%	(571)*
<u>Party</u>							
--Democrat	80	3	8	1	9	101	(190)
--Independent	38	5	5	3	49	100	(197)
--Republican	4	2	5	1	88	100	(164)

"Finally, how about if you had to choose between a Democratic ticket of Michael Dukakis and Bill Bradley against a Republican slate of George Bush and Tom Kean? (IF UNDECIDED/DEPENDS/DON'T KNOW, PROBE: Do you lean more toward Dukakis or more toward Bush?)"

	<u>Chooses Dukakis/ Bradley</u>	<u>Leans to Dukakis/ Bradley</u>	<u>Pure Undecided</u>	<u>Leans Bush/ Kean</u>	<u>Chooses Bush/ Kean</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	49%	4%	7%	5%	36%	101%	(570)*
<u>Party</u>							
--Democrat	83	2	5	2	9	101	(192)
--Independent	45	7	9	5	34	100	(204)
--Republican	9	2	4	9	76	100	(163)

* Excludes those saying they will not vote in the presidential election or plan to vote for some "other" candidate.

"How would you rate the job Ronald Reagan is doing as President--excellent, good, only fair or poor?"

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
TOTAL	12%	42%	33%	11%	3%	101%	(800)
<u>Party</u>							
--Democrat	4	32	43	20	0	99	(249)
--Independent	9	42	34	11	4	100	(291)
--Republican	27	56	16	1	1	101	(207)

The table below shows changes in the voting intentions and candidate evaluations among various groups in the electorate at comparable times in 1984 and 1988.

The "vote intention" entries in August, 1984 and May, 1988 are made by subtracting the percentage of each group planning to vote for the Democratic candidate (Mondale in '84, Dukakis in '88) from the percentage planning to vote for the Republican candidates. Undecided voters are omitted. Thus the August 1984 figures of Reagan's 55 to 32 percent lead over Mondale yields a figure of +23. The Dukakis 50 to 36 advantage this May yields a -14 score. The third column indicates the total change within each group, with a negative number signifying a Democratic gain.

The "candidate evaluation" entries are similar. The August, 1984 and May, 1988 columns show the percentage of unfavorable impressions subtracted from the percentage of favorable ones. Negative numbers indicate more unfavorable than favorable comments about a candidate by the specific group. The "difference" column represents the change between 1984 and 1988. Positive numbers indicate a more favorable evaluation; negative numbers indicate a less favorable image for the Democratic/Republican candidates in 1988 than in 1984.

	<u>Vote Intention</u>			<u>Cand. Eval. Rep.</u>			:	<u>Cand. Eval. Dem.</u>		
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>Diff.</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>Diff.</u>	:	<u>1988</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>Diff.</u>
TOTAL	-14	23	-37	10	40	-30	:	44	5	39
<u>Party</u>							:			
--Democrat	-76	-35	-41	-30	-12	-18	:	63	42	21
--Independent	-13	38	-51	4	53	-49	:	43	-3	46
--Republican	66	83	-17	71	91	-20	:	10	-36	46
<u>Ideology</u>							:			
--Liberal	-37	-8	-29	-10	11	-21	:	64	21	43
--Moderate	-18	15	-33	4	34	-30	:	49	13	36
--Conservative	18	60	-42	37	60	-23	:	18	-21	39
<u>Occupation</u>							:			
--blue collar	-36	13	-49	4	58	-54	:	42	16	26
--white collar	-12	30	-42	8	52	-44	:	50	0	50
<u>Sex</u>							:			
--male	2	31	-29	18	42	-24	:	31	0	31
--female	-30	16	-46	2	37	-35	:	57	9	48
<u>Education</u>							:			
--less than H.S.	-17	5	-22	12	22	-10	:	44	16	28
--H.S. graduate	-15	27	-42	12	46	-34	:	49	1	48
--more than H.S.	-11	31	-42	8	46	-38	:	39	3	36
<u>Income</u>							:			
--under \$15,000	-27	3	-30	15	21	-6	:	49	14	35
--\$15-\$30,000	-28	14	-42	0	33	-33	:	51	15	36
--over \$30,000	-4	42	-46	17	56	-39	:	39	-9	48
<u>Age</u>							:			
--18-29	-15	22	-37	8	53	-45	:	43	13	30
--30-49	-31	28	-59	-3	43	-46	:	57	7	50
--50-64	-9	17	-26	3	29	-26	:	28	6	22
--65+	14	25	-11	34	38	-4	:	39	-12	51
<u>Race</u>							:			
--white	-6	33	-39	18	47	-29	:	45	-3	48
--non-white	-57	-53	-4	-21	-14	-7	:	39	68	-29