

# The Harris Survey

## IT'S MONDALE OVER DOLE

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By Louis Harris

Senator Walter Mondale is helping Jimmy Carter more in this election than Senator Robert Dole is helping Gerald Ford, according to the voters.

When asked to choose between Mondale and Dole for vice president, a cross-section of 1,516 voters prefers Mondale by 48-36%. This margin of 12 points is greater than the 50-41% lead that Jimmy Carter now has over President Ford nationwide.

When Carter picked Mondale as his running mate, it was widely assumed that he wanted someone who would sit well with Northern labor and the liberal segments of the Democratic Party. Today Mondale is running stronger against Dole than Carter is against Ford among union members and liberals nationwide. In addition, Mondale is also ahead of Dole among independent voters, professional people, voters with incomes of \$15,000 and over and the college educated. In each of these segments of the electorate, Carter is now running behind President Ford.

The one area of the country where Mondale is considerably weaker than Carter is the South. But even in the South, Mondale is preferred to Dole by a 48-37% margin. So it seems that Mondale is not the drain on the Carter ticket below the Mason-Dixon line that some Republicans had assumed, and he is making a positive contribution to voter support elsewhere.

Nevertheless, neither Mondale nor Dole has become American household words. A full 45% of the electorate do not feel familiar with Mondale and an even higher 50% are unfamiliar with Dole.

Among those voters who are familiar with them, the vice presidential candidates are felt to be on opposite sides of the political spectrum. A 53% majority of those who know Mondale describes his political philosophy as "liberal," while 52% of the voters familiar with Dole believe him to be a "conservative." Yet their perceived ideological difference does not seem to be very important. Among voters who call themselves conservatives, Dole is preferred to Mondale by only a relatively close 48-39%, in contrast to the 54-37% of conservatives who prefer Ford to Carter.

The fact that voters prefer Mondale to Dole is probably due to the way they perceive the personalities of the two candidates as they have campaigned around the country. Undoubtedly a handicap for Dole was the widely discussed speculation that he was going to be a kind of political "hit man" who would go after Carter and try to get him to blow his cool.

If Mondale is to have an important influence on the outcome of the election, it could well be in the biggest six states of the North, which are likely to determine the next President. Mondale runs a strong 48-34% ahead of Dole in California, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan, compared to a much narrower 48-43% lead Governor Carter holds over President Ford.

Of course, the chances of either Mondale or Dole having a decisive effect on the election are not high, despite the fact that four of the last six Presidents served as vice president before succeeding to the White House. The two men running for the top spot tend to dominate all the news, and the ultimate choice in the minds of most voters will come down to a selection between them.

Indeed, in next week's nationally televised debate between Mondale and Dole, the candidates are likely to spend more of their time supporting their presidential running mates than putting forward arguments of their own. Nonetheless, if the election turns out to be close, it is just possible that in 1976 the choices for the second place on the ticket can make a critical difference.

### TABLES

Recently, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 1,516 voters: "In the race for vice president, if you had to choose right now, would you vote for Senator Walter Mondale the Democrat or Senator Robert Dole the Republican?"

MONDALE VS. DOLE FOR VICE PRESIDENT

	<u>Mondale</u>	<u>Dole</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Nationwide	48	36	16
<u>Region</u>			
East	50	32	18
Midwest	44	40	16
South	48	37	15
West	54	32	14
<u>Political Party</u>			
Republican	18	71	11
Democratic	70	17	13
Independent	41	36	23
<u>Philosophy</u>			
Conservative	39	48	13
Middle of the road	50	35	15
Liberal	68	19	13
Union members	58	26	16
Big six northern states	48	34	18

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