

Are Public Opinion Polls Likely To Go Wrong In 1956

By Kenneth Fink, Director Princeton Research Service

PRINCETON, N. J. — Public opinion polls today give Eisenhower the nod over Stevenson—and by a somewhat larger margin than Eisenhower had in 1952.

How accurate are the Polls today? And what will be the effect on the two major Presidential candidates and on rank and file voters of knowing that the Polls have established Eisenhower the 1956 favorite?

Former President Harry S. Truman, who feels that he should know, maintains sturdily that he doesn't believe in Polls. He argues that in 1948, Polls showed Dewey to be the winner, but that he was elected nevertheless. Adlai Stevenson firmly believes

that he can beat the President for re-election in spite of the opinions of the pollsters and political experts.

Stevenson argues that the Democrats have picked up nine governorships and gained more than 500 seats in State Legislatures in the last four years. This record he feels argues that public opinion polls are misleading.

Mr. Stevenson could also point up the fact that in 1954, Congress (House of Representatives) went Democratic. In the 1954 Congressional elections, Democratic Congressional candidates took 52.58 per cent of the official nationwide two party vote; the Republicans, 47.42 per cent.

Now what about the Polls this year? How accurate are they at this time? How accurate are they likely to be in November?

This is the way MAN ON THE STREET sizes up the Polls.

First of all, the Polls could go wrong again but they are not very likely to. Polls are a man-made technique; and as such, are imperfect and thus likely to go wrong at times. MAN ON THE STREET, however, believes that the likelihood of the Polls being wrong at this time are very slim and that the Polls have a far better chance of being right this November than in past years.

One fact that MAN ON THE STREET believes should make Poll predictions more accurate

this year is that he finds voters showing little hesitancy in stating their preferences between the two Presidential candidates with the result that a very low proportion of voters say they are UNDECIDED. The low proportion of undecided voters this Presidential Election year should make the job of predicting the election somewhat easier this year than heretofore.

Now what effect are the Polls likely to have on the two major political candidates—Eisenhower and Stevenson and their advisers—in the coming campaign?

The fact that Stevenson is shown to be the low man could very well make Stevenson and his advisers decide to fight even harder than they would have if they were given at least an even chance.

With everything to gain and presumably nothing to lose, the Stevenson camp will undoubtedly decide to fight harder and hit harder in the clinches. Other things being equal, American voters love a fighter who hits hard and solidly.

Should Stevenson and his aides work out a fighting campaign that would attract the attention and gain the sympathy of rank and file voters, changes in sentiment could and probably would take place.

In this connection, MAN ON THE STREET would like to point out this one important fact to leaders in both political camps: Voters do change their minds during a political campaign, MAN ON THE STREET has personally seen voters change their minds overnight in a number of elections that he has worked on and predicted correctly.

Today's findings are no indication that the vote will turn out in the same way on November 6.

Should the Stevenson team decide to roll up their sleeves and wage a fighting campaign, they unquestionably have a chance to win supporters.

What of the effect on Eisenhower and his team of knowing that Ike is the established favorite at this time? Will the GOP leaders be likely to try to coast in on today's sentiment? Will they be likely to wage a lofty, idealistic campaign in somewhat the same way that Governor Dewey did in 1948? If they do decide to wage the same kind of campaign that Dewey did; namely to infer that opinion does not change and that all they need to do is to preserve the status quo and do nothing to upset the applecart, history may

Gardner-Webb Night Classes Begin Sept. 10

BOILING SPRINGS — Gardner-Webb College is ready to offer night classes for college credit beginning Sept. 10, it was announced today by Dr. P. L. Elliott, president. The student must meet regular entrance and attendance requirements for credit.

Registration for the classes will begin Sept. 7 at 6:30 p. m. Courses are offered in freshman English, typing, history and Bible. All courses offer fully transferable college credit, and classes will be taught by fully qualified faculty members.

According to Dean J. O. Terrill the classes will meet each Monday, Tuesday and Thursday night for one hour each. English and typing will be taught at 6:30 p. m., Bible at 7:30, and history at 8:30. A student may enroll for one, two, or three courses. A number of students are expected from Cleveland, Gaston, and Rutherford counties.

Dr. E. S. Wehant Rites Held Friday

Funeral services were held Friday at 2:30 p. m. at First Methodist church, Cherryville, for Dr. E. S. Wehant, 64, who died in Presbyterian Hospital Wednesday.

Dr. Wehant was a native of Lincoln County, and lived and practiced dentistry in Cherryville for the past 35 years. He was a leader in all civic and community affairs.

Survivors include his wife, Vida L. Hevner Wehant; two daughters, Mrs. C. T. Hampton of Germany, and Miss Libby Wehant* of the home who is the fiancée of Paul McGinnis, Jr., of Kings Mountain; two sons, Evon B. Wehant of Franklin Park, Ill., and Lloyd Wehant of Valdese; three brothers, Forrest and Love Wehant of Vale, and J. Carr Wehant of Cherryville; and a sister, Mrs. Ray Hoyle of Cherryville.

The Rev. Mr. Cook and the Rev. Mr. Lamb officiated. Burial was in the church cemetery.

repeat itself the way it did in 1948.

Should this happen, it still does not mean that the POLLS WILL GO WRONG, MAN ON THE STREET believes that should a change in sentiment take place among rank and file voters between now and Election Day, the Polls will very likely find and report it.

One other matter should be mentioned here is the effect today's Polls showing Eisenhower a heavy favorite will have on rank and file voters. Is the fact that Polls show Ike the favorite today likely to create a bandwagon effect and cause even more voters to switch to the GOP candidate? Man On The Street doesn't believe that this will happen.

The Literary Digest Poll in 1936 which showed Landon the winner over F. D. R. (President Roosevelt that year took every state in the Union except Maine and Vermont); and the 1948 Dewey-Truman forecast showing Dewey the winner have disproved any such bandwagon effect and show conclusively that voters cast their ballots the way they want to, regardless of what he Polls show.

Summing up then: the Polls that up to now have shown Eisenhower the favorite have been correct; that the Polls could go wrong in November but they are

Summing up then, the Polls not very likely to; that the low proportion of Undecided Voters this year should make the task of the Pollsters easier; that voters do change their minds during an election campaign; that a hard hitting campaign by Stevenson combined with a lofty, high-level campaign by Eisenhower could very well change sentiment between now and Election Day; and finally, that there is little or no bandwagon effect engendered by the Polls establishing one candidate a heavy favorite over the other.

The Herald presents MAN ON THE STREET exclusively in this area.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Driver: You don't know my little daughter Debby who is just six and has started her first year of school.

You haven't seen how she can turn from eager enthusiasm to solemn unconcern to youthful wisdom. No, you couldn't know her or love her as I do—that's why it seems strange that I have to trust her very life to you!

Yes, to you—because as she marches off to school regularly she'll be crossing streets, playing along the way, frolicking around the school.

I hoped I was preparing her when I threw in some advice about the safe way to do these things—in answering her questions about all the wonders of the first grade.

But this is pretty new to her and she may make mistakes. Debby isn't irresponsible, yet she is not responsible. For her, the crushing dangers of traffic are not real. I can tell her, but it would be like describing the Giant in the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

Sincerely,
Bill Crowell

stake. But you know and you can watch out for her. You can watch for her as she plays on the way home from school, and you can use caution when you see her. You can be ready to stop if she should dash out from behind a parked car or follow a rolling ball into the street. If you remember how dear she is to me you'll drive slowly through every school zone.

Since you have been granted the privilege to drive, I have to assume that you will do these things. But will you? Will you drive carefully, wherever there are children, not only because it is your legal responsibility but because you care as much as I do that the frightening roar of traffic death-of the Giant—never becomes real for a little girl who has so much ahead of her to learn?

Royster Services Held Thursday

Funeral services were held Thursday at 4 p. m. at Grover First Baptist church for John Bunyon Royster, 69, of Grover who died in a Gaffney, S. C., hospital Wednesday afternoon.

A native of Cleveland County, he was a partner, with his son, in the Royster Grocery Co., of Grover. He was a member of First Baptist church and the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Lee Royster.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Annie Blalock Royster; four sons, Grier and Frank Royster of Grover, J. B. Royster, Jr., of Greenville, S. C., and George Royster of Gaffney; three daughters, Mrs. James Blalock, of Grover, Mrs. Robert Moritz of Eureka, Calif., and Mrs. Richard Luckenbaugh of Portland, Ore.

The Rev. W. F. Monroe, and the Rev. Donald Cabiness officiated. Burial was in Grover Cemetery.

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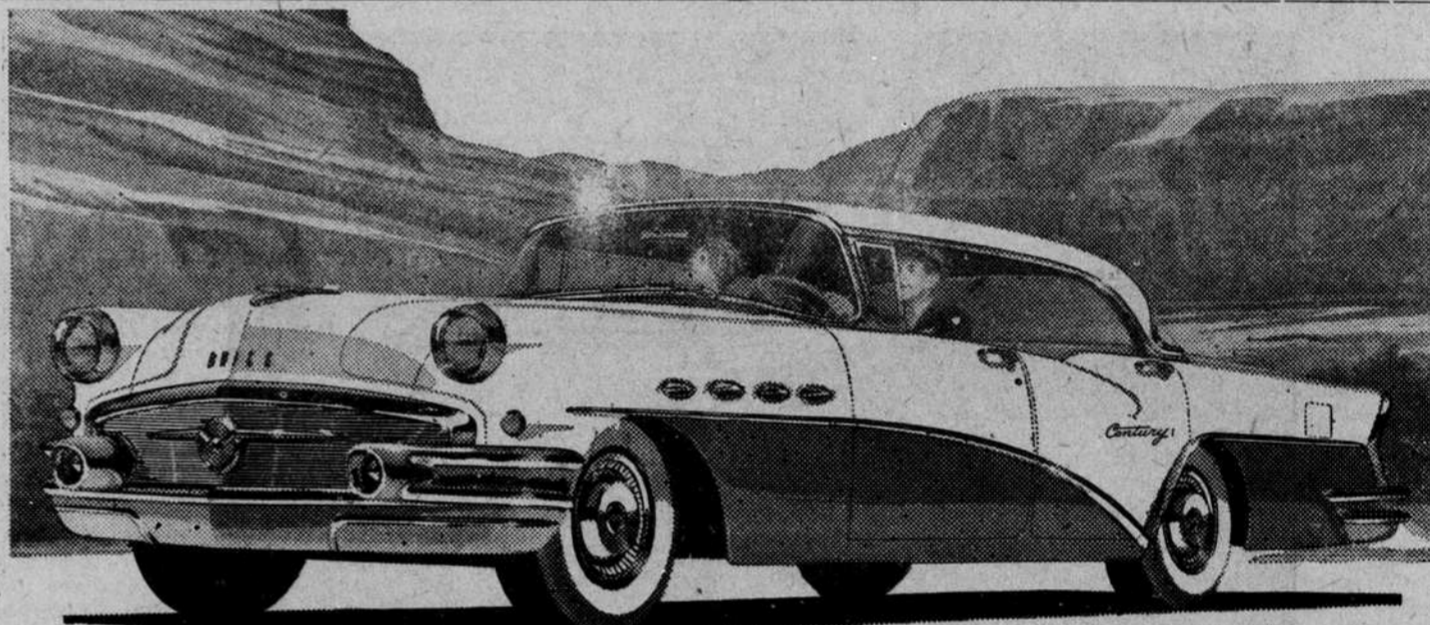
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