

NEW ORLEANS POLL REPORT

May, 1983

Rose-Stekler Associates conducted a poll of New Orleans residents during the last three weeks of April, 1983. People were asked their views on election races, local government performance, and policy choices facing the city. Results for each question are appended, broken down by race and the mayor's job rating. The main findings include that Mayor Morial is seen to be doing a good job (though there is a racial split), that Edwards has broad support, that people want to keep the two-term limit for mayor, that Orleanians want police brutality curbed, that NOPSI is viewed unfavorably but people are divided on a city takeover, and that higher taxes would be supported if they produced better services. Analysis of the relation of one opinion to another clarifies the meaning of the results.

The percentages reported in the analysis, unless otherwise indicate ^{is deli}
are those of respondents with an opinion, hence they will not match exactly
the percentages reported in the appendix where those respondents with 'don't know' and 'no answer' responses were included in the percentage calculations. The absence of opinion is noted when significant, but the focus is on the relation of one attitude to another, which requires analysis of opinion percentages.

Poll Background

Two hundred interviews were conducted by telephone during the April 9-27 period for randomly-selected phone numbers. Because New Orleans adult residents are the population, results may differ from those based on a poll of expected voters. Percentages reported in the analysis, unless otherwise indicated, are those of respondents with an opinion, hence they will not match exactly the percentages reported in the appendix. For a sample of this size, poll results are expected to differ from actual opinions in the population by 2%: hence, an apparent division of 51-49 should, one-quarter of the time, reflect an actually reversed division of 49-51 or more, so small differences should not be stressed. When smaller sub-groups such as blacks and whites are analyzed, the expected error rises to 3%. Because some of the analysis involves sub-groups with nearly a 5% expected error, only sizable differences are highlighted. Rose-Stekler Associates is operated by Douglas Rose (Ph.D. Minnesota) and Paul Stekler (Ph.D. Harvard), who can be reached at the Department of Political Science, Tulane University (865-5166).

New Orleans Police

Police in New Orleans received mixed job ratings. Almost everyone had an opinion, but few gave the police either excellent (14%) or poor (4%) marks.

The public was evenly split among positive (44%) and negative (46%) ratings.

Higher ratings tended to be concentrated among whites (71% positive) and lower ratings among blacks (68% negative). The racial differences here appear due to the police themselves, as job ratings of Morial and of the police are not closely related. The black-white splits involving the police are not the same ones as those involving Morial.

Some sympathy with the police was based on perceptions that they were doing a tough job, were undermanned and underpaid: "I feel for them", "as good as they can with the resources they have", "need maybe double the manpower", and "not enough of them". Responses based on personal contact tended to be positive -"helped when I needed it"- with some reservations ("they could come quicker"), with one respondent saying "they treat you like a criminal". Some thought that if the police did an excellent job in preventing crime, little contact would be necessary.

When the questions turned to the Algiers incident, responses tended to be more uniform. Of those with an opinion, 89% thought that changes should be made as a result of the incident and the trial. Most suggested changes are to cut down on police brutality (58%): "they should treat people like people" and "they overdo it". Suggestions included training police in how to deal with people. Majorities of both blacks and whites thought changes should be made to diminish brutality. Concern over police brutality appears more intense among blacks, as is reflected in the ratings of the police. When asked whether changes would be made, people split, 38% believing changes likely and 57% seeing change as unlikely, with men and blacks more likely to expect change. Most of the expected changes involved cutting down on brutality. A number of comments traced the brutality problem to putting an overworked police

force in tough situations without any training. Some whites and hispanics
mentioned too much police "politics" about promotions and opposed "quotas
and "discrimination" for police promotions.

	<u>Entire Sample</u>	<u>Race</u>		<u>Mayor Morial Job Rating</u>	
		White	Black	Excellent-Good	Fair-Poor
<u>Mayor's Race -</u> <u>Valteau v. Jefferson</u>					
Valteau	15	5	26	22	10
Jefferson	31	(27)	37	37	27
Neither	4	2	6	2	6
Mentioned Someone Else	2	3	1	5	0
Don't Know, No Answer	48	63	30	34	57
<u>Governor's Race -</u> <u>Treen v. Edwards</u>					
Treen	25	27	18	20	38
Edwards	53	41	70	67	30
Neither	5	9	1	1	12
Don't Know, No Answer	17	23	11	12	20
<u>Police Job Rating</u>					
Excellent	13	(24)	5	10	18
Good	29	46	14	27	29
Mixed Feelings	8	7	10	7	10
Fair	40	19	(56)	46	37
Poor	4	0	7	4	3
Don't Know, No Answer, Other	5	2	9	7	3

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<u>What Kind of Changes Should Come (only asked to those who thought changes should come)</u>					
Anti-Brutality Changes	59	49	69	71	45
Convict Guilty Police	5	①	11	4	0
Help Blacks More	4	9	0	3	6
No Limits on White Promotions	7	12	0	3	16
Change Everything	3	6	0	0	0
Acquit Police, Anti-OMI	11	18	5	9	21
Other Answers	11	6	16	10	12
<u>Is the City of New Orleans Heading in the Right Direction ?</u>					
Right Direction	38	29	48	47	17
Mixed Feelings	18	20	18	24	33
Wrong Direction	24	32	17	9	50
Don't Know, No Answer, Other	20	20	20	21	0
<u>Has the $\frac{1}{2}$ Sales Tax Improved the Public School System ?</u>					
Yes	26	①	③	33	17
Mixed Feelings	5	0	9	8	3
No	③	46	30	28	54
Don't Know, No Answer, Other	32	39	25	32	27

	<u>Entire Sample</u>	<u>Race</u>		<u>Mayor Morial Job Rating</u>	
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<u>Do You Think that the Algiers Incident will cause Changes in the Police Dept. ?</u>					
Yes	28	20	33	37	22
Maybe	2	0	5	3	3
No	42	53	37	34	55
Don't Know, No Answer, Other	29	27	30	26	20
<u>What Kind of Change Expected ? (only asked to respondents who expected change)</u>					
Anti-Brutality Changes	75	60	84	89	60
Convict Guilty Police	3	0	5	5	0
Change Everything	4	11	0	0	0
Acquit Police, Anti-OMI	11	30	0	0	40
Other Answers	7	0	11	5	0
<u>Should Changes in the Police Dept. Come About Because of the Algiers Incident ?</u>					
Yes	70	69	71	77	66
Maybe	1	0	1	1	0
No	7	12	0	0	19
Don't Know, No Answer, Other	22	18	28	21	15