

The Social Research Laboratory

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COLIN POWELL GETS THUMBS UP FROM ARIZONANS; BOB DOLE RUNNING STRONG

A new poll shows that retired General Colin Powell is the front runner in Arizona. According to a recent Arizona Poll survey, Arizonans would cast more votes for Colin Powell than for other candidates regardless of whether Powell runs for president as a Republican or as an Independent candidate. Looking toward next year's presidential primary elections, likely Republican voters support Bob Dole over Phil Gramm and five other candidates for the Republican nomination.

The Arizona Poll, conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University, found that half of all Arizonans (51%) say Colin Powell should run for president in 1996. One quarter of Arizonans (24%) say he should not run and 19 percent don't know. The Arizona Poll was conducted between October 24 and October 28 with 527 respondents. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.4 percent.

ARIZONANS PREFER POWELL

Respondents who said they were likely to vote in the November general election were asked how they would vote if Colin Powell was the Republican nominee for president and he was running against incumbent Bill Clinton, the Democrat. In this two-way race, a majority of likely voters (53%) said they would vote for Powell, while 24 percent said they would vote for Clinton. Eighteen percent said they didn't know who they would vote for.

Likely voters were also asked who they would support if Colin Powell ran for president as an Independent candidate against an as yet unnamed Republican and Bill Clinton, the Democrat. In this three-way race, a plurality of voters--28 percent---said they would support Powell. Twenty-one percent of likely voters said they would support Bill Clinton and 17 percent would vote for the Republican candidate. Twelve percent of likely voters are withholding judgment until they know who the Republican nominee is.

Arizona Poll results demonstrate that Colin Powell's support lies primarily among conservatives and Republican party identifiers, raising concern that an independent candidacy would draw support away from a Republican nominee.

Fred Solop, Director of the Arizona Poll said, "The level of support for Colin Powell in Arizona parallels a trend we are seeing throughout the nation. Voters are embracing a potential candidate that is not tied to the two major political parties. The parties are going to have to wake up and expand their appeals or risk suffering deep losses in the 1996 presidential election."

DISAFFECTION IN ARIZONA

Why is Colin Powell so favored in Arizona? Part of the answer may lie in a feeling of disaffection among Arizonans. When asked if our nation is basically on the right track or going in the wrong direction, almost half of Arizonans say we are headed in the wrong direction (49%). Only one third of Arizonans (31%) believe our nation is headed in the right direction.

Arizonans also express negative feelings about the job Bill Clinton is doing as president. Almost three-quarters of Arizonans (70%) think Clinton is doing either a fair or poor job as president. In contrast, 28 percent say Clinton is doing an excellent or good job as president. These ratings are slightly worse than Arizona Poll ratings from March 1995. At that time, two-thirds of Arizonans (66%) said Bill Clinton was doing a fair or poor job as president, and 32 percent rated his performance as good or excellent.

"People are dissatisfied with how this country is being run. This mood has dominated the political landscape for quite some time," said Solop.

DOLE BEATS GRAMM IN PRIMARY SUPPORT

The Arizona Poll also asked questions about next year's primary election in Arizona. Seventy eight percent of respondents indicated that they were likely to vote in the primary elections. Half of these likely voters (50%) said they would vote in the Republican primary and 37 percent said they would vote in the Democratic primary. Voters must select either the Democratic or Republican party primary election to participate in.

Among Republican primary voters choosing from a 7 candidate field that does not include Colin Powell, Bob Dole would receive the most votes if the primary election were held today. Thirty-four percent of Republican primary voters would vote for Bob Dole. Steve Forbes is supported by 12 percent of likely Republican primary voters in the state and Phil Gramm has 11 percent support. Pat Buchanan (6% support), Lamar Alexander (3% support), and Richard Lugar (1% support) are running in the back of the pack. Twenty-seven percent of likely voters in the Republican primary are still undecided as to how to cast their vote.

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