

A REMARKABLE SURVEY

So you want to know which presidential candidate you should vote for? Okay. There have been a number of requests to this column for that information. But first, a little background.

A survey of public opinion on presidential choices has just been concluded by the Remarkable Survey Inc (you know the slogan: "If it's a good survey, it's Remarkable."). The first question they asked was: "Which candidate do you think would make an *ideal* President?"

To this question, about 3 (three) per cent of the population named each of the major candidates. The largest group, about 49 per cent of the public, said that the question gave them a stomach ache. The interviewers reported a variety of reactions among the other respondents, such as: "became quite red in the face," "shook with hysterical laughter," "chased me out of his kitchen."

The next question was asked only of married persons: "Do you think your mother-in-law has been an *ideal* mother-in-law?" The response was about the same as in the presidential question, with about the same proportion of stomach aches.

However, fewer than one per cent of those with stomach aches said that their mothers-in-law had ruined their marriages. And then, when asked whether "the world would come to an end" if the "wrong" candidate were elected President, 93 per cent of the respondents finally answered "no." (To be exact, 17 per cent thought that the world *was* going to come to an end, but they didn't think any of the major candidates would affect that eventuality one way or another.)

The interviewers reported that the contemplation of the last two questions seemed to give most of their respondents instant relief. And for good reason.

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After all, there *is* a Congress, with primary control over domestic programs -- and increasing control over foreign affairs, through the purse-strings and other new controls. No single man in the White House is going to be able to destroy us as a nation -- or save us, for that matter.

All that should give second thought to anyone who contemplates staying away from the polls next Tuesday because of unhappiness with the presidential choice. In that case, our Congressmen are more important than ever. The bad ones should be rejected; the good ones should receive the added strength of our vote. Indeed, there would be a message if there were more congressional votes than presidential votes.

However, as long as you are going to the polling places anyway, you might as well give the nod to the presidential candidate you think would be better than the others. No President may be ideal, but they do represent somewhat different directions. You might as well indicate which direction you prefer.

That brings us to the original question of a presidential choice. There are, of course, many other considerations, but for this purpose, let us stick with just one of the considerations: which presidential choice would be best for Israel?

There are four guidelines that can be used, not necessarily in order of importance. First, which candidate is least likely to succumb to an appeasement policy in the Middle East? Appeasement, in this case, means giving in to the Arab and oil interests who say that everything will be dandy if we will only give the PLO its "state," without further ado. Second, since Israel's security is so dependent on America's military support and deterrent power, which candidate is most likely to maintain a strong American military presence?

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Third, since America's ability to help Israel, either financially or militarily, depends on America's economic strength -- which candidate is most likely to repair America's economy; its shredding industries, its inflation, its unemployment? Fourth, since America's ability to help Israel depends upon a stable democratic order in this country, which candidate is most likely to pay compassionate and effective attention to our disadvantaged groups, to prevent a crippling national fragmentation?

All you have to do is to simply apply these guidelines, along with the other considerations, and you will come up with the proper, if non-ideal answer -- which, unfortunately, we have run out of room to print this week.

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