

# Labor-Management Choices For President

## What Sort of Predisposition Do Union Members and Managers have, As Groups, For the National Election?

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There has been much speculation on the extent to which the work loyalties of voters would translate themselves into actual votes this coming November. Special interest has centered on whether the work roles of management and labor groups will predispose the members of these groups toward a particular candidate.

Various tentative suggestions on employer-employee voting activities have been made. Both the Gallup Poll on union members and Sheppard and Mayers' study published last year by the Wayne University Press indicated that union members paid little heed to union membership in their voting. In the September, 1960, issue of *Management*

*Review*, James Menzies Black comments, ". . . Although many voters, including union members may object to the control that labor exercises over their private lives, they don't object strongly enough to back an anti-labor political candidate . . . In short, the labor leader doesn't present a clear target at the polls; the voter can't shoot at him without the risk of hitting a friend."

While recognizing the difference between attitudes toward particular candidates and the actual pulling of a lever in a polling booth, it appeared useful to attempt to determine whether labor and management political choices were consistent. One classic study of "Industrial Conflict" made by the Society for the

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Study of Social Issues demonstrated that management and labor often had totally different perceptions of the same situation.

### A Special Survey

These data for the present study were collected during the spring of 1960. Specific questions on candidates were administered to three groups. In addition, personality data of the groups were obtained. This material was cross-tabulated against the candidate choices. The groups represented three distinct activities; one, a middle management group in the division of a large corporation. Another, city administrators in the municipal government of a large American city. The third was a group of union leaders and shop stewards in a craft union. Although the groups varied in number, only 15 in each group completed the battery of tests, giving a total of 45 cases available for study.

Among many questions asked were those dealing with the forthcoming election. The range of responses are extremely interesting to the student of opinion research. For example, the groups were asked in one of the questionnaires to select from a number of choices those men whom they felt were the most outstanding persons for consideration as presidential candidates. Four specific qualities of experience,

education, leadership, and personality were listed and ratings of 1 for perfect to 5 for poor were used as a scale. It is interesting that two men who did not become candidates were picked in two of the categories. The study was undertaken in the spring, prior to the conventions. Of all three groups together, 66% gave the highest rating (first and second choices) to Mr. Nixon on the basis of experience. Sixty percent of all three groups ranked Mr. Stevenson (first and second choices) for education, 57% of all three groups gave the highest choice to Mr. Rockefeller for leadership and 57% of all three groups selected Mr. Kennedy for personality.

### Rejections

On the negative side, the 4th and 5th choice, which is interpreted as a fair and poor rating respectively, the following low choices were indicated by all three groups.

The choices of the three groups as to who would be elected president was also interesting. The Management Group divided equally among Nixon, Kennedy, and Rockefeller (this was prior to the conventions). In the Municipal Group, 60% thought Nixon would be elected; 20% thought Kennedy would win. Forty per cent of the Union Group predicted Kennedy would be elected; 25% thought it would be Nixon.

	<i>Nixon</i>	<i>Kennedy</i>	<i>Rockefeller</i>	<i>Stevenson</i>
Experience (4th & 5th choices— Fair to Poor) . . . . .	51%	91%	99%	24%
Education . . . . .	48	20	24	17
Leadership . . . . .	88	47	41	21
Personality . . . . .	99	44	44	44

## MANAGEMENT GROUP

	<i>Nixon</i>	<i>Kennedy</i>	<i>Rockefeller</i>	<i>Stevenson</i>
Experience (1st & 2nd choices) . . . . .	80%	0	30%	50%
Education . . . . .	40	50	50	70
Leadership . . . . .	60	50	60	40
Personality . . . . .	30	70	50	30

## MUNICIPAL GROUP

	<i>Nixon</i>	<i>Kennedy</i>	<i>Rockefeller</i>	<i>Stevenson</i>
Experience (1st & 2nd choices) . . . . .	40%	20%	10%	40%
Education . . . . .	30	30	50	30
Leadership . . . . .	10	40	40	70
Personality . . . . .	10	60	50	50

## UNION GROUP

	<i>Nixon</i>	<i>Kennedy</i>	<i>Rockefeller</i>	<i>Stevenson</i>
Experience (1st & 2nd choices) . . . . .	77%	42%	77%	20%
Education . . . . .	50	55	63	50
Leadership . . . . .	50	28	70	50
Personality . . . . .	42	50	42	55

The choices of each group individually, with respect to the political personalities, indicate not only differences but a startling amount of agreement between them on individual characteristics of the candidates.

Other characteristics of the three groups offer interesting comparison. The Wonderlic is a standard personnel aptitude test used in many company personnel departments. The Study of Values by Allport, Vernes and Gordon is used in many executive development programs as a measure of personality, education and interests.

The Management Group was by far the youngest and scored the highest on

the Wonderlic. Both the Management and Municipal Groups had more men with higher education. The Union Group, however, had the older group. It should be noted also that a score of 29 on the Wonderlic is considered high. The Union Group had little or no test experience as compared to the Management Group.

The value profile of all three groups does not differ significantly each from the other. In fact, none differs more than 6 points from the norms of some 4000 college males. However, it is interesting to note that the widest deviation is caused by the Municipal Group in the political value average. Yet, both

	<i>Management</i>	<i>Municipal</i>	<i>Union</i>
Average Age .....	35.4	44	45.6
Average Score			
Wonderlic Test .....	41.1	36.5	29
<i>Education</i>			
High School .....	40%	40%	70%
College .....	60%	60%	70%
<i>Study of Values</i>			
Theoretical			
(Gen. Norm - Male - 43) .....	46	43	45
Economics			
(Norm - 42) .....	48	43	45
Aesthetics			
(Norm - 37) .....	35	40	35
Social			
(Norm - 37) .....	38	42	41
Political			
(Norm - 43) .....	41	37	41
Religious			
(Norm - 38) .....	37	42	35

the Management and Union Groups averaged the exact same score deviating by only 2 points from the norms.

An analysis of other details of the groups is continuing. A comparison of viewpoints on the differences between Communism and Democracy by the three groups is another field under investigation.

Still others include: choice of vocation desired for one's son and the reasons; prestige status given to various industries and a comparison of reasons for the feelings of insecurity at work; in the community, and in the world.

As for political choices, this study is not advanced as an election barometer. The closeness of the forth-coming election has been suggested by trained political observers and the range of this study perhaps reinforces the observation.

It certainly appears as if some labor leadership recognizes Mr. Nixon's strong record of experience. On the other hand, Mr. Kennedy's personality appears more attractive to all three groups. Most interesting, of course, is the intensity of the "grass roots" feeling with respect to the hidden candidates, Rockefeller and Stevenson.

Rockefeller was named as high or higher than either Nixon or Kennedy in three out of four categories by both the Union and Municipal Groups.

Stevenson on the other hand ranked higher in some categories even with the Management Group.

The sample, while intense, should be interpreted with caution. It provides an interesting commentary on America's current preoccupation—the forth-coming elections.