

The Harris Survey

Majority Is Doubtful Of Ford's Decisiveness

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By Louis Harris

Although a strong majority of Americans believes that President Ford is a 'nice guy,' many are doubtful about how strong and decisive he will be and how intelligently he will handle "issues facing the country."

Only 39 per cent now feel Mr. Ford will become "a strong and decisive President," which represents a major drop in public confidence since last September, when 70 per cent believed Mr. Ford would eventually become "strong and decisive."

Forty-one per cent agree that Mr. Ford "does not seem to be very smart about the issues facing the country," compared to a small number of people, 18 per cent, who thought so in September.

Although Americans don't have strong expectations about Mr. Ford's performance during his term in office, they are reluctant to go as far as calling him "weak and wishy-washy" or to believe that he "doesn't take decisive action" whatsoever. A 52 to 31 per cent majority reject the charge that Mr. Ford is "wishy-washy," which was common in December and early January, but apparently weakened by the vigor with which the President presented his new economic program.

The public's view of Mr. Ford is nearly opposite that of his predecessor, former President Nixon. A substantial 77 per cent believe Mr. Ford is a "man of high in-

tegrity," a 59 to 21 per cent majority considers him "not very experienced in foreign affairs, his weak point." At the end of Nixon's tenure as President, a 53 to 35 per cent majority doubted his integrity while 62 per cent praised the way he conducted foreign policy.

In a Harris Survey conducted just after Mr. Ford put forth his new economic program, a cross section of 1,543 households was asked:

Let me read you some statements that have been made about President Ford. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
He is a nice guy.	78%	6%	16%
He is a man of high integrity.			
Jan. '75	77	11	12
Oct. '74	75	13	12
Sept.	87	4	9
June	63	8	29
May	67	6	27
May	67		27
He is running an open administration and listens to people, which is good.			
Jan. '75	70	16	14
Oct. '74	67	18	15
Sept.	81	6	13
He appoints good people to high office.			
Jan. '75	49	24	27
He will surprise people by being a strong and decisive President.			
Jan. '75	39	36	25
Oct. '74	52	26	22
Sept.	70	11	19
NEGATIVE			
He did not do the right thing in giving former President Nixon a full pardon.			
Jan. '75	63	29	8
Oct. '74	59	35	6
He is not very experienced in foreign affairs, and that is his weak point.			
Jan. '75	59	21	20
Oct. '74	62	19	19
Sept.	52	26	22
He and the Republicans are too close to big business.			
Jan. '75	51	28	21
He does not seem to be very smart about the issues facing the country.			
Jan. '75	41	45	14
Oct. '74	32	52	16
Sept.	18	66	16
June	32	33	35
May	26	36	38
He is weak and wishy-washy and doesn't take decisive action.			
Jan. '75	31	52	17