

Ford Popularity Slips to 47%; Economy Role Approval at 32%

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J. —President Ford's popularity rating has declined to its lowest point to date, with 47 per cent of the public expressing approval at the way he is handling his job as chief executive, 33 per cent disapproving and 20 per cent undecided.

The latest approval rating is 9 points down from the previous measurement taken in late October.

Discontent over the economy is a key factor. In the current survey only 32 per cent say they approve of the way Mr. Ford is dealing with economic conditions in this country, while nearly half (48 per cent) disapprove.

The history of popularity ratings reveals that a President does not usually run into popularity problems until well into his second year in office. In Mr. Ford's case, however, the traditional presidential honeymoon ended prematurely with his pardon of former President Nixon on Sept. 8, an action disapproved of by the public by a 2-to-1 vote.

Mr. Ford's current popularity rating is 14 per cen-

tage points below that of Nixon after a comparable period in time—the "first 100 days" in office. In a survey conducted in late April, 1969, 61 per cent said they approved of the way Nixon was handling his job, compared to 11 per cent who disapproved.

Economic problems can have a major impact on the popularity of the chief executive even though he may have little or no control over these developments.

President Truman's popularity slid 44 points between mid-1945 and mid-1946 largely as a result of economic problems. President Eisenhower's low point in popularity, 49 per cent, was recorded in the spring of 1958 during a period of recession. And concern over the high cost of living, which in regular surveys during 1973 and 1974 consistently overshadowed to the 44-point drop in Nixon's popularity between January, 1973, and July, 1974.

Following is the question that has been asked over the last 35 years to measure presidential popularity:

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way [name of incumbent] is handling his job as President?"

Here is the trend for Mr. Ford:

	Ap- prove	Disap- prove	No Opinion
Latest (post-elections)	47%	33%	20%
Oct. 18-21	55	28	17
Oct. 11-14	52	29	19
Sept. 27-30	50	28	22
Sept. 6-9	56	13	21
Aug. 16-19	71	3	26

Mr. Ford's approval rating is slightly lower in the East than in the other three major regions of the nation:

	Ap- prove	Disap- prove	No Opinion
East	42%	38%	20%
Midwest	49	33	18
South	51	27	22
West	47	35	18

Here are the results by party affiliation:

	Ap- prove	Disap- prove	No Opinion
Republicans	72%	13%	15%
Democrats	36	43	21
Independents	48	35	17

Here is the question asked to determine the public's rating of the President's economic policies:

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ford is dealing with economic conditions in this country?"

Here are the results by key groups:

	Ap- prove	Disap- prove	No Opinion
Nationwide	32%	48%	20%
Republicans	30	29	21
Democrats	26	54	20
Independents	29	54	17
East	27	53	20
Midwest	34	48	18
South	38	39	23
West	30	53	17

These findings are based on interviews with 1,557 adults in more than 350 locations across the nation during the period of Nov. 8 through 11.