

Gallup Poll Finds Support for Nixon At 50%, Lowest Yet

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WASHINGTON, March 31—

Only 50 per cent of American adults approve of President Nixon's performance in the White House, according to the latest Gallup Poll, released today.

The rating, a drop of one percentage point from the previous month, was Mr. Nixon's lowest since he took office. Furthermore, it was based on personal interviews conducted between March 19 and 21 — within days of a flurry of Presidential appearances on television and in print, talking about his policies, hopes and family.

Nationally, the Gallup organization reported that 50 per cent of 1,566 adults who were interviewed had expressed approval of Mr. Nixon's performance in office, while 37 per cent had voiced disapproval and 13 per cent had had no opinion.

In a regional breakdown of the results, Mr. Nixon's popularity rating was below 50 per cent in every area but the South, where it stood at 56 per cent. It was 49 per cent in the East, 46 per cent in the Middle West and 47 percent in the West.

January Rating Was 56%

The President's popularity stood at 56 per cent in a January poll conducted by the Gallup organization. It dropped five percentage points in the February opinion-sampling. The one-point drop in March was interpreted as a "leveling off" of the downward trend by the American Institute of Public Opinion, which conducts the polls.

But Mr. Nixon, in what had been interpreted widely as an attempt to improve his public image, had an unusual series of public appearances and conversations just before the March survey was taken.

He was on a morning television program for two hours, spent 75 minutes discussing his family with nine women journalists, granted a long interview to The New York Times's columnist, C. L. Sulzberger, and had a separate conversation with a British newsman.

The President told Barbara Walters of the NBC-TV "Today" show that he was not concerned about polls.

"When Presidents begin to worry about images, when they begin to be concerned about polls, when they begin to read their press clippings," he said, they become like athletes who are "so concerned about what is written about them, and what is said about them, that they don't play the game well."