

Gallup Poll Finds Fewer Nixon-Haters

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The ranks of those who have an intense disliking for President Richard Nixon have thinned measurably in the latest nationwide Gallup survey, which was conducted following the David Frost-Nixon Watergate interview.

At the same time, however, Nixon has failed to gain any new strong admirers.

These findings were obtained by a ten-point attitude scale called the Stapel Scalometer, designed to measure intensity of liking or disliking.

The former President's "highly unfavorable" rating (the bottom two positions on the scale) has declined from 50 per cent in a survey conducted in February, 1976, to 42 per cent in the latest survey.

At the same time, Nixon's "highly favorable" rating (the top two positions on the scale) has shown no appreciable change, with six per cent giving him this rating in the earlier survey and seven per cent in the latest survey.

Few individuals in the 40-year history of polling have shown such a rapid decline in public esteem as Nixon. In 1969, shortly after winning the presidency for the first time, he reached a high point of 56 per cent. He maintained a relatively high level of respect until the Watergate affair. As the Watergate revelations became known, he dropped from 40 per cent to six per cent in 1976 and since then he has stayed at this low level.

Analysis shows that Nixon's highest ratings come understandably from Republicans who currently give him a "highly favorable" rating of 16 per cent. This contrasts with a rating by Democrats of four per cent.

Nixon gets the highest unfavorable vote in the Eastern states, 50 per cent; by residents of the nation's largest cities, 53 per cent; and by labor union households, 50 per cent.

To measure attitudes toward Nixon, the Stapel Scalometer was used. It consists of ten squares ranging from plus five (for someone liked very much) down to minus five (for someone disliked very much).

Each respondent is asked to indicate the square that best corresponds to his or her feelings about a particular person. For purposes of analysis the two top boxes (plus fours and fives) are considered a highly favorable rating and the two bottom boxes (minus fours and fives) a highly unfavorable rating.

Here are the latest results for Nixon and the trend from last year:

	Today	May 1976	Feb 1976
Highly favorable	7%	7%	6%
Mildly favorable	25	22	18
No Opinion	3	3	6
Mildly unfavorable	23	21	20
Highly unfavorable	42	47	50

Here is the trend in "highly favorable" ratings since Nixon's high point, recorded soon after he took office in 1969:

1969	
March	56%
July	48
November	42
1970	
January	44
June	33
October	43
1972	
August	40
October	41
1973	
August	20
1975	
October	7
1976	
February	6
May	7
1977	
May	7

The current ratings given Nixon closely parallel those given President Harry S. Truman during a particularly bleak period in the Korean War. Truman's "highly favorable" rating was ten per cent, while his "highly unfavorable" rating was 48 per cent. Truman, however, regained popularity in subsequent measurements. Five years later, he had recovered to the extent that his overall plus ratings outweighed negative ratings.

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