

State Poll

Reagan's Rating

ALSO NIXON RATINGS

By Mervin D. Field

Republican Ronald Reagan will leave office in a few months, and he appears to be departing with a relatively positive public appraisal of the job he has done as governor during his eight-year tenure.

By way of comparison, the California Poll finds that the public has given Reagan higher marks as governor than it gave his immediate predecessor, former Governor Edmund G. Brown, during his term in office.

During the first year of Reagan's term in 1967, more than two times as many people said he was doing a good job as thought he was doing a poor job. As time went on, his rating dropped but a recent measure shows that the public appraisal of Reagan as governor is now on the up-trend. During his eight years in office, the most favorable public appraisal of the job Reagan was doing as measured by the California Poll occurred in February, 1969, when 42 per cent of the public thought he was doing a "good" job, while just 15 per cent thought he was doing a "poor" job.

The low point in Reagan's ratings was found by the California Poll in August, 1971, when 28 per cent thought he was doing a "good" job and 33 per cent rated his job performance as "poor."

Public appraisal of Reagan's performance has rebounded somewhat from that point. This latest measure taken last month shows 35 per cent of the public believing Reagan is doing a "good" job and 24 per cent saying a "poor" job.

Throughout the eight years of Reagan's administration, the proportion of the public rating his job performance as "fair" has been remarkably constant at about 35 per cent, varying no more than two percentage points.

In the 1966 election, Reagan defeated Brown, a two-term Democratic governor and father of this year's Democratic party gubernatorial nominee. A review of California Poll measurements made during Brown's tenure shows that while he was in office the public rated his performance lower than it has rated Reagan's. In four different measurements taken between 1961 and 1965, more people rated Brown's job performance as "poor" than rated it "good."

A comparison of the trends in public appraisal of the two governors:

JOB APPRAISAL OF GOVERNOR

Ronald Reagan job rating—

	Good	Fair	Poor
June 1967	41%	33	17
February 1969	42%	36	15
August 1971	28%	37	33
October 1972	29%	35	30
August 1974	35%	36	24

Pat Brown job rating—

	Good	Fair	Poor
March 1961	21%	35	32
February 1962	24%	35	30
October 1963	23%	39	29
January 1965	26%	33	36

The California public's appraisal of Richard Nixon's performance as president while he was in office showed a steady and pronounced decline during the past four years. The California Poll's final survey of public opinion of Mr. Nixon's job performance produced the highest negative rating recorded for any U.S. president or state office holder since the California Poll began its measurements in 1946.

Just before Mr. Nixon resigned as president early in August, just 16 per cent of the public thought he was doing a "good" job as president, while 61 per cent thought he was doing a "poor" job.

The table below discloses that since November, 1970, the proportion who thought Mr. Nixon was doing a "poor" job almost quadrupled while the proportion who thought he was doing a "good" job dropped by half.

Appraisal of Nixon's job performance—

	Good	Fair	Poor
November 1970	37%	44	16
May 1973	34%	27	35
August 1973	20%	31	44
February 1974	18%	32	47
August 1974	16%	21	61

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