

# Ford's Sharp Drop In the Gallup Poll

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The latest nationwide Gallup Poll, showing a 21-point decline in President Ford's approval rating since he took office, suggests that the traditional "honeymoon" period enjoyed by a President is at an end.

The survey shows half (50 per cent) of those polled saying they approve of the way President Ford is handling his job, while 28 per cent disapprove and 22 per cent do not express an opinion.

The current rating represents a decline of 21 percentage points since the first measurement of Mr. Ford's popularity, taken shortly after he became President August 9, and represents the sharpest decline recorded for any President during his first two months in office.

In that first measurement, 71 per cent approved of the way Mr. Ford was taking over the leadership of the nation, compared with only three per cent who disapproved and 26 per cent who were undecided.

His approval rating fell off

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five points between the first survey and the next conducted in early September. Then came the big drop to 50 per cent in the latest poll, which was conducted after Mr. Ford's pardon of former President Nixon but before his recent speech on the economy.

A key factor in the President's popularity decline was his pardon of Mr. Nixon September 8. A special sur-

vey conducted immediately after the pardon found the public expressing opposition by a 2-to-1 margin.

Another important factor is concern over the economy. The overwhelming majority of Americans considers this to be the top problem facing the nation, with nearly half predicting a depression such as that of the 1930s.

Mr. Ford's popularity losses have been principally among Democrats. Although Democrats gave him a big vote of confidence when he took over the presidency, subsequent developments and actions by Mr. Ford — namely a worsening economy and the pardon of Mr. Nixon — have caused Democrats to fall away from President Ford at an accelerated rate.

This 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?"

	Approve	Dis-approve	No Opinion
Latest	50%	28% x	22%
Sept. 6-9	66	13	21
Aug. 16-9	71	3 x	26

#### Views by Party Affiliation

	Approve	Dis-approve	No Opinion
Independents	52	24	24
Republicans	65%	16%	19%
Democrats	43	37	20

The results are based on interviews with 1527 adults during September 27-30 in more than 30 localities.

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