

# Ford at Low Point in Poll; Economic Concern Cited

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 27— President Ford's popularity has fallen to its lowest point to date, in part because of discontent over the economy, according to a Gallup Poll made public today.

The poll, taken Nov. 8 to 11, just after the midterm election and before the President's trip to the Far East, found that 47 per cent of those interviewed approved of the way Mr. Ford was handling his job, down from 55 per cent three weeks earlier and from a high of 71 per cent last August, just after Mr. Ford took office.

The poll, based on interviews with 1,557 persons in 350 areas across the nation also found that only 32 per cent of those interviewed said they approved of the way Mr. Ford was dealing with economic conditions, while 48 per cent said they disapproved.

The poll was made public on a day Mr. Ford met for an hour at the White House with his economic advisers in one of a series of meetings with aides he has held since he returned from the Far East Sunday evening.

## Energy Policy Stands

Ron Nessen, the President's press secretary, said that Mr. Ford also spent a total of three hours yesterday and today reviewing the energy situation. Mr. Nessen said that the President was still opposed to an increase in the Federal tax on gasoline as well as the imposition of wage and price controls.

In an exchange of letters, Mr. Ford accepted "with the deepest regret" the resignation of Anne L. Armstrong, a counselor to the President. She is the only woman in his Administration with Cabinet rank.

Mrs. Armstrong, a former co-chairman of the Republican National committee who has held the White House post for two years, said she was resigning "because of unforeseen and pressing family responsibilities which make it necessary for me to return to my home in Texas."

There was no further elaboration on the reasons for her resignation, which will take effect Dec. 21. "You will be greatly missed at the White House," Mr. Ford said in his letter.

Mr. Nessen said that there were no plans to replace Mrs. Armstrong and that her duties, which include work for the bicentennial and programs for women and Spanish-speaking Americans, would be assigned to other Presidential aides as part of an effort to reduce the size of the White House staff.

Mr. Nessen declined to answer questions about possible resignations soon of other Cabinet members. "If and when anybody leaves," he said, "we'll announce it."

Also today, President Ford briefed George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, on the tentative arms control agreement reached last weekend with the Soviet Union.

## Ziegler Briefed

Mr. Nessen said that he assumed there would be "a lot of meetings" to discuss the agreement. He disclosed that Ronald L. Ziegler, press secretary to former President Richard M. Nixon, received, at Mr. Ziegler's request, a 10-minute briefing yesterday on the accord from a White House aide, who was not identified.

According to Mr. Nessen, Mr. Ziegler, who was in San Clemente, Calif., received the information on a "secure" telephone line and was to relay it to Mr. Nixon.

Mr. Nessen also appeared to soften a remark he made in Vladivostok last Sunday that Mr. Ford had accomplished in three months what Mr. Nixon had failed to achieve in three years.

Mr. Nessen made the remark after announcement of the United States-Soviet accord to limit the numbers of offensive nuclear weapons and the apparent amity of Mr. Ford's talks with Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader.

Mr. Nessen said today in response to questions that he had probably made "a hasty and oversimplified remark" but that Mr. Ford had not been critical of it.

"On reflection," the press secretary went on, "it's clear to me that what happened in Vladivostok was kind of a culmination of steps that had been taken over the years."