

# Poll Shows Drop in Ford Approval

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President Ford ended his first year in office with a 45 per cent approval rating, down 7 points from his 1975 high point, recorded in late June.

The latest survey was conducted during the final days of the

President's recent trip to the Helsinki summit. While the summity of American Presidents often boosts their popularity rating with their countrymen, Mr. Ford's recent trip appears to have had little positive effect on his rating.

Any positive gains as a result of the trip, however, may have been blunted by the public's con-

cern over the economy. Nearly seven in ten Americans currently name an economic problem as the nation's top problem. In addition, optimism regarding the economic outlook, which had climbed steadily during the first months of 1975, has now levelled off, with about as many now saying economic conditions will get worse as will get better (See Page 8.)

## Rating

Mr. Ford took office with a high vote of confidence (71 per cent) from a public desperately seeking a fresh beginning in government and eager to give Mr. Ford a chance.

Less than a month after he took office, Mr. Ford touched off a storm of criticism when he

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granted a blanket pardon to Richard Nixon. The public disapproved of Ford's action by a 2-to-1 margin and his overall performance rating slipped to 50 per cent.

Recouping some ground when he agreed to testify on the pardon, Mr. Ford's rating subsequently declined as a result of public concern over the economy. His rating continued to slide, reaching a low point of 37 per cent in early January of the current year. His approval score remained remarkable stable over ensuing months, but then rose sharply following Mr. Ford's decisive action in the Mayaguez incident. His popularity gain at the time — from 40 to 51 per cent — represented one of the sharpest increases recorded for any President during nearly four decades of such measurements.

Ford maintained his new popularity level, due to some measure to growing public optimism regarding the economy. His early June tour of Europe also appears to have helped him temporarily consolidate these popularity gains.

But with public optimism on the economy now dampened, and the growing feeling that action is not being taken on vital issues, Mr. Ford's popularity has declined and now stands at 45 per cent approval.

Following is the question asked to measure presidential popularity: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way (name of incumbent) is handling his job as President?"

Here is the full trend for Ford since taking office:

	Approve	Disapprove	No Opinion
Latest (Aug. 1-4).....	45 pct	37 pct	18 pct
June 27-30 .....	52	33	15
May 30-June 2 .....	51	33	16
May 2-5 .....	40	43	17
April 18-21 .....	39	46	15
April 4-7 .....	44	37	19
March 28-31 .....	37	43	20
March 7-10 .....	38	45	17
Feb. 28-March 3 .....	39	45	16
Jan. 31-Feb. 3.....	39	43	18
Jan. 10-13 .....	37	39	24
1974			
Dec. 6-9 .....	42	41	17
Nov. 15-18 .....	48	32	20
Nov. 8-11 .....	47	33	20
Oct. 18-21 .....	55	28	17
Oct. 11-14 .....	52	29	19
Sept. 27-30 .....	50	28	22
Sept. 6-9 .....	66	13	21
Aug. 16-19 .....	71	3	26

FORD POPULARITY (Per cent who approve)			
Current .....		45	pct
Average in current year .....		42	pct
(recorded August 1974).....		71	pct
(recorded January, April 1975 .....		37	pct

OTHER PRESIDENTS				
	High	Low	Average	
Nixon .....	68 pct	24 pct	48	pct
Johnson .....	80	35	54	
Kennedy .....	83	57	70	
Eisenhower .....	79	49	66	
Truman .....	87	23	46	
Roosevelt .....	84	54	68	