

The Gallup Poll

President's Popularity Reaches New Low Point

By George Gallup

Princeton, N.J.

President Richard Nixon's popularity has declined to the lowest point so far, with 40 per cent of respondents in the latest nationwide survey saying they approve of the way he is handling his job as chief executive and 49 per cent expressing disapproval.

The President's current approval score, based on a survey conducted following John Dean III's testimony at the Senate Watergate hearings but before former Attorney General John Mitchell took the stand, represents a five-point drop from the previous survey in late June.

President Nixon's current rating, which represents the first time more Americans disapprove than approve of his performance in office, is down 28 points from Mr. Nixon's high point, recorded in late January following the Vietnam peace settlement.

This decline — from 68 per cent in January to 40 per cent in the latest (early July) survey — is the sharpest decline for a six-month period yet recorded in Gallup surveys on presidential popularity since the mid-30s.

President Nixon's current popularity score — his low point since taking office — is, however, five points higher than that of his successor, President Lyndon Johnson's low point in popularity was 35 per cent, and was recorded in August of 1968 during a period of profound discouragement among the American people over the course of the Vietnam war.

QUESTION

This is the question that was asked:

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mr. Nixon is handling his job as President?"

The table below shows the trend in his popularity since the beginning of the current year.

	Approve %	Disapprove %	No opinion %
July 6-9	40	49	11
June 22-25	45	45	10
June 1-4	44	45	11
May 11-14	44	45	11
May 4-7	45	42	13
April 27-30	48	40	12
April 6-9	54	36	10
Mar 30-April 2	59	32	9
Feb. 16-19	65	25	10
Jan. 26-29	68	25	7
Jan. 12-15	51	37	12

The latest survey included a special analysis of intensity of approval and disapproval of the President's performance in office. This shows a sharply increased polarization of views since a similar survey taken two years ago.

In the current survey, those who approve are divided about equally between those who approve strongly and those who approve "not so strongly."

CONTRAST

In contrast, those who said "not so strongly" in the earlier survey outweighed those who said "strongly" by more than a 2-to-1 ratio.

On the disapproval side, the latest survey shows those who express strong disapproval outweighing those who indicate mild disapproval by more than a 2-to-1 ratio. The earlier survey showed about equal proportions of people saying they disapprove strongly and "not so strongly."

The following table shows the current division between strong and mild approval and disapproval!

DEGREE OF APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL (%)

Strong Approval	18
Mild Approval	22
No Opinion	11
Mild Disapproval	15
Strong Disapproval	34

Copyright, 1973, Field Enterprises Inc.