

New State Poll on Job Nixon's Doing

By Mervin D. Field

The California public's esteem for President Richard Nixon reached a new low this month. Less than one California adult in five (18 per cent) thinks he is doing a good job as president.

These findings come from a statewide California Poll survey made in early February in which a representative sample of 1179 Californians was interviewed. Trends on Mr. Nixon's popularity since November, 1970 are shown below:

Feel Mr. Nixon is doing —

| | February 1974 | August 1973 | May 1973 | November 1970 |
|------------------|---------------|-------------|----------|---------------|
| Good Job | 18% | 20% | 34% | 37% |
| Fair Job | 32 | 31 | 27 | 44 |
| Poor Job | 47 | 44 | 35 | 16 |
| No Opinion | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 |

Respondents questioned in this survey were also asked to rate the job they feel Nixon has done in a number of specific areas.

Apart from the omnipresent Watergate factor, Mr. Nixon is criticized most often for the way in which he has handled the economy, not being able to slow down inflation and rising prices, and for the way he has responded to charges that large contributors to his election campaign got special favors. The public is also highly critical of the president for the way he has responded to criticism about his personal income taxes.

In addition, he is heavily criticized for not providing strong, effective leadership to the country, his handling of the energy crisis, not showing a good example of traditional American virtues in his personal life, in failing to push programs to benefit lower income and needy people, and the way he is dealing with rising crime rates.

In foreign affairs, however, both in improving U.S. relations with Russia and China and in helping to end the fighting between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East, President Nixon gets very high ratings from the public. The public is about evenly divided on his performance in taking steps to make proper medical care available to all citizens.

How public rates Mr. Nixon on various items—statewide

| | Good Job | Poor Job | No Opinion |
|---|----------|----------|------------|
| Keeping the economy healthy and slowing down inflation and rising prices.. | 13% | 81% | 6% |
| Answering charges that large contributors to his election campaign got special favors.. | 14 | 72 | 14 |
| Providing strong, effective leadership to the country | 22 | 71 | 7 |
| Answering criticisms about his personal income taxes | 20 | 67 | 13 |
| Handling the energy crisis | 25 | 63 | 12 |
| Showing a good example of traditional American virtues in his personal life..... | 31 | 57 | 12 |
| Pushing programs to benefit lower income and needy people | 31 | 56 | 13 |
| Dealing with rising crime rates | 30 | 47 | 23 |
| Taking steps to make proper medical care available to all citizens | 44 | 40 | 16 |
| Helping to end the fighting between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East..... | 80 | 24 | 16 |
| Improving U.S. relations with Russia and Red China | 73 | 15 | 12 |