

Gallup Poll Finds Small Drop In President Ford's Popularity

By George Gallup

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President Ford's popularity rating has been on a down curve since March, with 45 per cent in the latest survey expressing approval of his performance in office and 40 per cent disapproval.

In March, his approval rating was 50 per cent. In subsequent surveys his rating dropped to 48 per cent in April, 47 per cent in May and to the current 45 per cent.

A composite of reasons given for approval shows the President receiving good marks for being "honest," "straightforward," "sincere," a "good family man" and a "nice guy." He is applauded by many for trying to "keep spending in line."

He is seen as doing the best he can in a tough situation — "he inherited a bucket of worms." Others say he has "restored trust in the White House."

On the negative side, the President is criticized for not having clearly defined programs — "he reacts rather than leads." Some feel he lacks imagination and creativity — "he takes the oomph out of

proposals." Others say he favors business and the more affluent segments of society — "the little man doesn't have a chance in the type of veto government that is being run by Ford."

Still others have not forgiven him for his pardon of Richard Nixon.

Mr. Nixon's rating at a comparable point in the presidential election year of 1972 was 14 percentage points higher than Mr. Ford's current rating. Mr. Nixon went to a decisive victory over Senator George McGovern in the November election, winning by the landslide margin of 62 to 38 per cent.

A key factor in Mr. Ford's lower rating is the fact that as many as one-fourth of Republicans currently express disapproval of his performance in office. Mr. Ford's relatively low rating among his own party members is reflected in the strong challenge being given the President for the GOP nomination by Ronald Reagan.

The latest survey shows 68 per cent of the President's fellow party members expressing approval.

In contrast, at this time in 1972, Mr. Nixon was accorded an approv-

al rating of 84 per cent of his fellow Republicans. He also had higher scores among Democrats and independents.

President Ford was accorded an overwhelming vote of approval in the first weeks of his presidency in August, 1974. Then came his pardon of Richard Nixon, and his popularity plunged 21 points, to 50 per cent.

Only once since that time has the President's job performance rating gone above the 50 per cent line — for a brief period following the Mayaguez incident in May, 1975.

Here is the question that has been asked to determine the American President's popularity since Franklin Roosevelt's administration, and the trend for Mr. Ford since the beginning of the current year:

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way (name of incumbent) is handling his job as President?"

	Approve	Disapprove	No Opinion
Latest	45%	40%	15%
May 21-24	47%	38%	15%
April 9-12	48%	41%	11%
March 19-22	50%	36%	14%
Feb. 27-March 1	48%	38%	14%
Jan. 30-Feb. 2	46%	40%	14%
Jan. 23-26	45%	45%	10%
Jan. 2-5	46%	42%	12%

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