



Reagan's Job Performance Rating Bolstered by Speech on TV

By George Gallup, Jr.

PRINCETON, N.J. — President Reagan's standing with the American people, which dropped sharply following the Tower Commission report, has improved gradually since his televised address to the nation early last month. Nevertheless, according to a just-completed Gallup Poll, confidence in Reagan's leadership remains far lower than it was last Fall, before the revelation of his Administration's sale of arms to Iran.

In the new survey, completed last Sunday, 49% approve and 43% disapprove of the President's job performance.

Reagan's current approval rating is about the same as those found in Gallup surveys conducted since early last December — with the exception of a post-Tower Report poll in which 40% approved and 53% disapproved. The President's March 4 speech on TV evoked an immediate and positive public reaction, with his job rating rising to 46% approval. In surveys conducted before the Iran-contra scandal erupted, however, more than six in 10 Americans approved of Reagan's handling of his presidential duties.

Buoyed by Personal Appeal

Although the President's job performance rating plunged in the wake of the Iran-contra revelations, his personal appeal declined only slightly and remains at a high level. Currently, 74% approve of Reagan as a person while only 19% disapprove.

The strength of Reagan's personal popularity is attested to by the fact that among persons who disapprove of his overall performance in office — 43% of the total sample — a 52% majority nevertheless approves of Reagan as a person. Among those who give the President a favorable job rating, his personal approval rating is a virtually unanimous 96%.

Impact of Iran-Contra Affair

The new survey also found evidence of a growing public perception that the Iran-contra affair will impair the Reagan presidency during its last two years. In the early-December poll, 58% felt the controversy had made it "very difficult" for Reagan to be an effective president while 36% thought it had not. By January, the negative perception had increased to 63% and in the current poll, to 66%.

Following are the questions asked and the findings in table form:

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?

Here are highlights of the recent trend:

Reagan Job Performance Ratings

	Approve %	Disap- prove %	No opinion %
1987-Apr. 10-12	49	43	8
-Mar. 14-18	47	44	9
-Mar. 5-6	46	46	8
-Feb. 27	40	53	7
-Jan. 16-19	48	43	9
1986-Dec. 27-Jan. 4	52	39	9
-Dec. 4-5	47	44	9
-Oct. 24-27	63	29	8
-Sept. 12-15	61	25	14

Apart from whether you approve or disapprove of the way Reagan is handling his job as president, what do you think of Reagan as a person? Would you say you approve or disapprove of him?

Here is the full trend:

Reagan, the Man

	Approve %	Disap- prove %	No opinion %
1987-Apr. 10-12	74	19	7
-Feb. 27	71	23	6
-Jan. 16-19	74	18	8
1986-December	75	18	7
-September	80	12	8
1985-November	81	10	9
1983-August	67	21	12
1982-April-May	69	19	12
-February	70	20	10
1981-November	73	17	10
-July	78	13	9

Do you think the controversy over the Iran-contra affair has made it very difficult for Ronald Reagan to be an effective president over the next two years, or not?

**Impact of Iran-Contra Affair
on Reagan's Effectiveness**

	Apr. 1987	Jan. 1987	Dec. 1986
Very difficult	66%	63%	58%
Not very difficult	28	31	36
No opinion	6	6	6
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

The latest findings are based on in-person interviews with 1,192 adults, conducted in scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period April 10-12. For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 4 percentage points in either direction.

In addition to sampling error, the reader should bear in mind that question wording and other practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls. *These statements conform to the standards of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.*