

# *Do Americans Support Gasoline Rationing?*

**Trend Report Based on Eight Nation-Wide Surveys**

**(11,144 Interviews)**



**NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER**

**UNIVERSITY OF DENVER**

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# Do Americans Support Gasoline Rationing?

The government's program of gasoline rationing has the approval of the majority of American citizens. Public opinion during the last year has become crystallized on three important aspects of gasoline rationing.

**Two out of three Americans with opinions are convinced that there is a serious rubber shortage in this country.**

Since the first survey on this question in July, 1942, clear majorities of the American public have indicated an understanding of the fundamental problem of rubber shortage. But during the first seven months of 1943 concern regarding rubber has declined slightly. This decline can probably be attributed to the progress of the synthetic rubber and reclaimed rubber programs.

**More than eight out of ten Americans with opinions believe that gas rationing is the best way to save tires.**

Since the early summer of 1942, when the educational program regarding tire and gas shortages first went into effect, substantial majorities have expressed the opinion that gas rationing is the best means of tire conservation. No significant change in opinion on this point is discernible since the fall of 1942.

**Today more than seven out of ten Americans with opinions think nation-wide gasoline rationing is necessary**

When rationing was first suggested only a minority of Americans felt the plan was necessary on a nation-wide scale. During the summer and fall of 1942, when rationing was first in effect in the eastern states, public approval of nation-wide regulation increased markedly. By the time coast-to-coast rationing was actually instituted, majorities in every section of the country favored the move. Public approval today is insignificantly less than it was in December, 1942.

Clearly a number of people are inclined to think the rubber shortage is becoming less serious but that gas rationing is essential. It would seem that these people recognize the fact that—in addition to the rubber problem—the petroleum needs of our army, navy, and air force and those of our Allies make gasoline rationing still a necessity.

## CRYSTALLIZATION OF OPINION

The decline in "No Opinion" responses on all three questions during the somewhat more than a year covered by the surveys indicates that public attitudes on the issues involved are becoming more clearly defined. The decline in the average "No Opinion" vote on all three questions is indicated on the chart opposite.

## REGIONAL COMPARISONS

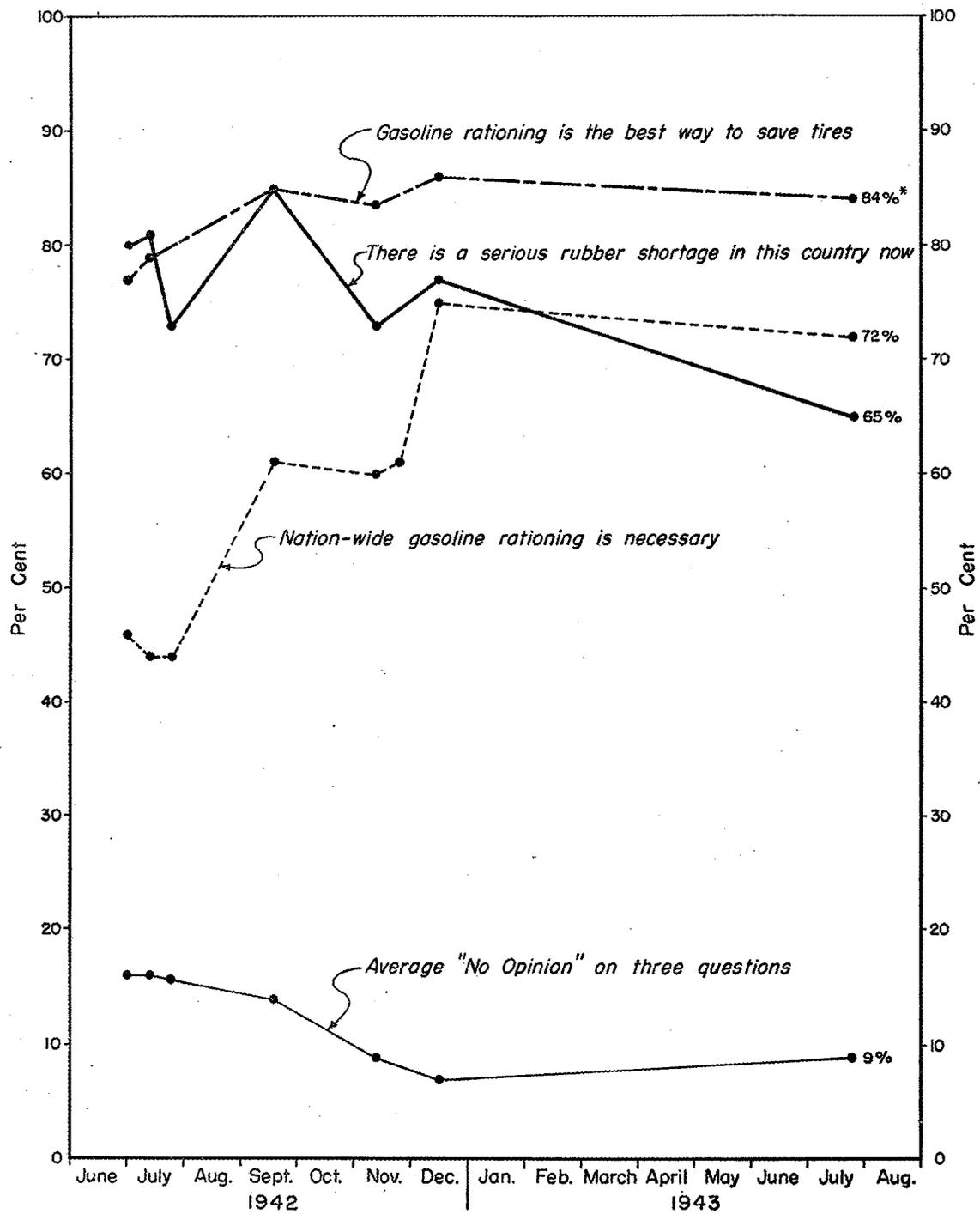
The survey results broken down between the seventeen eastern seaboard states on a 6 gallon a month gasoline ration and the rest of the country on a 16 gallon monthly ration indicate that residents of the small ration area regard the situation somewhat more seriously than do those of the rest of the United States. The exact wording of the questions and the regional percentages are:

		DECEMBER '42		TODAY	
		6-Gallon Area	16-Gallon Area	6-Gallon Area	16-Gallon Area
"Do you think there is a serious rubber shortage in this country now?"	Yes	74%	67%	61%	55%
	No	16	23	26	31
	No Opinion	10	10	13	14
		100%	100%	100%	100%
"Do you think that gasoline rationing is the best way to save tires?"	Yes	84	82	80	81
	No	11	14	15	15
	No Opinion	5	4	5	4
		100%	100%	100%	100%
"Do you think that gasoline rationing throughout the nation is necessary?"	Yes	79	67	74	62
	No	14	26	18	30
	No Opinion	7	7	8	8
		100%	100%	100%	100%

Number of interviews is as follows: July, 1942 (1)—969; (2)—983; (3)—3,556; September, 1942—502; November, 1942 (1)—1,059; (2)—1,069; December, 1942—997; July, 1943—2,009.

N.O.R.C. will be glad to send additional information regarding the national cross-section and methods used in the surveys on which this report is based.

## DO AMERICANS SUPPORT GASOLINE RATIONING?



\* Percentages exclude "No Opinion"

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