

# Julie says Watergate was minor,

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Watergate bugging was minor and unimportant, but the coverup that followed proved a tragedy for the nation, according to Julie Nixon Eisenhower, the former president's younger daughter.

In taping sessions for weeklong television appearance on the Mike Douglas Show, Mrs. Eisenhower called Watergate, "A tragedy for the nation that something as minor as a political bugging, which has gone on since the beginning of time—my parents' campaign plane in 1968 was bugged by the (Hubert) Humphrey campaign—that something like that, that people in power could make the mistake of trying to cover up something that was really unimportant and let this whole thing mushroom and balloon until it became what it did.

"I think that's a tragedy and it's hurt the country and I think people are more cynical and skeptical about politicians and politics."

Mrs. Eisenhower, who continues to be one of her father's strongest supporters, commented on a wide range of subjects while taping the television shows for Group W Productions. As cohost of the Douglas show, she interviewed conservative columnist William Buckley Jr., actor Charlton Heston, odds-maker Jimmy the Greek and her husband, David Eisenhower.

The first of five shows was aired on Monday.

She reiterated her earlier statements that the former president should return to public life as a roving ambassador; and offered a look into the private lives of herself and that of her father.

Secluded in San Clemente, Nixon's

favorite television show, according to Mrs. Eisenhower, is "Kojak," a police drama.

"I think the hardest thing about going to San Clemente is that he'd worked an 18-hour day for 5½ years, and the next day he's out at San Clemente and he's supposed to start relaxing, and it's hard to do," Mrs. Eisenhower said.

The former president's daughter urged voters to get more involved in politics and their candidates—in order to help smooth away the pains of Watergate.

"I think the way confidence in government can be improved," she said, "as hard as it might sound, is for people, instead of not voting in November, to go out and take a personal stake in a candidate's future and vote and really become active.

"You've got to be more involved,

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## cover-up a tragedy for nation

rather than sitting home and being angry."

Mrs. Eisenhower said that her father had never been comfortable on television, though she said his televised news conferences "helped him rather than hurt him."

"He just didn't like TV as a medium," she said. "He'd always go out there and say, 'I've got to give a speech tonight and everybody's going to want it to be the best in the whole world, and it never can be the best.'"

On the press, Mrs. Eisenhower said, "I'm concerned that we are delving too much into private lives and sometimes when we don't need to. I think you have to draw the line somewhere."

At one point she said that since her father's leaving the White House, Julie is relieved that she is no longer chaperoned by Secret Service agents.

She told of one time during her days at Smith College in Massachusetts, when irritated by the agents, she leaped through a window to flee her escorts.

"I went for an hour's walk and felt much better that I had escaped them," she said. "It was raining and dark, and I finally got scared and went home."