

Public Feels Nixon Got Off Too Easy

By Mervin D. Field

Eighteen months after Richard Nixon was pardoned for any crimes he might have committed as president, a 2-to-1 majority of the California public still thinks he should have had to stand trial.

A growing number also feel that having to resign as president and to live in a sort of exile in San Clemente was not a sufficient penalty for Mr. Nixon.

In this climate of continuing bitterness about Mr. Nixon, the idea that he might serve as this country's ambassador to China also meets overwhelming disapproval by the California public.

Nor would very many people support Mr. Nixon if he were to re-enter politics. All but a few think he would hurt the Republican party's election chances if he campaigned for the GOP ticket in this year's presidential race.

One year ago, about six months after Mr. Nixon had resigned as president, the California Poll found 62 per cent of the people saying they felt Mr. Nixon should have been required to stand trial for the crimes he committed while in office. Today, 63 per cent think he should be put on trial.

Last year, a slight majority of the public (51 per cent) thought that in having to resign as president and live in a sort of exile in San Clemente, Mr. Nixon had been punished enough. Now, however, there appears to be an erosion of the level of compassion for him, and today, a more solid majority feel he has not been penalized enough.

Some of this growing antagonism to Mr. Nixon may be the results of his re-emergence into public prominence earlier this year when he accepted an invitation to visit China again. That visit was

Ulster Bombings

Belfast

Two men were killed and 19 persons were injured last night by bombs thrown from passing cars into bars owned by Roman Catholics, police reported.

They said the bombers struck without warning in Belfast and Armagh.

The worst casualty toll was in Armagh where a 73-year-old man was killed and 14 persons were injured in Lenny's bar.

Associated Press

criticized by many people as being in poor taste, and as an unwarranted attempt to influence this country's foreign relations.

Campaign aides of President Ford were fearful that Mr. Nixon's trip would hurt the President, who was then locked in a tough primary fight with Ronald Reagan in New Hampshire.

As it turned out, President Ford won a narrow victory in New Hampshire, and in several subsequent state primaries, but his campaign people are still apprehensive that the Watergate affair and Mr. Ford's pardon of Mr. Nixon will become a 1976 campaign issue that could hurt the incumbent.

California Poll findings today indicate that the people of Mr. Nixon's home state still harbor strong resentment toward him. These feelings could easily become a campaign liability for President Ford, especially if Mr. Nixon takes a more active role in public life.

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