

3 Oct 72

Cynicism, Skepticism Cover the Nation

by Joseph Kraft

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Perhaps the best handle is the attitude toward corruption and dishonesty in government. All the celebrated scandals are well-known to the public. There was instant crowd recognition whenever McGovern mentioned Watergate or the wheat deal or ITT. But there were few signs of anger, or even irritation.

Just why is something of a mystery. My own experience, however, suggests that people have become so used to dishonesty in high places that one more set of frauds is no big deal. Thus a leading Democratic politico in Seattle said of the attempt to break into Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate: "It doesn't hurt anybody out here. To most people, it's just one bunch of thieves robbing another bunch of thieves."

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