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# Mail on Watergate Light, Area Delegation Reports

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The nine members of Congress representing Washington's suburban population have received a low volume of mail from constituents on Watergate and the letters are antiadministration by a modest margin, a survey of the area delegation has shown.

The senators and representatives themselves said they see little impact on their own political fortunes as a result of the revelations, but fear that politicians in general have suffered a loss of stature.

Despite the fact that all but one of the nine are Republican and many are considered strong backers of President Nixon, most members of the area delegation feel that the President should have released tapes of White House discussions of Watergate to the Senate committee probing the affair.

"It's just not the sort of thing people write to their Congressman about," a spokesman for Rep. Gilbert Gude (R-Md.) said in an interview. "We get more letters about vitamin C than we do about Watergate."

The staffs of all nine area congressmen said they have been receiving no more than three to five letters a day during the summer of daily television coverage of the Senate Watergate hearings.

Gude's spokesman estimated

that about two-thirds of the mail from the congressman's heavily Democratic district in Montgomery County has been anti-administration and about one-third critical of the hearings and the attention given Watergate by newspapers and television.

At the other end of the spectrum of constituency reaction, Watergate mail to Sen. William L. Scott (R-Va.) is running about 3-1 in defense of the President and against the Senate hearings and press coverage, a spokesman said.

A spokesman for Scott said that a significant amount of the senator's mail apparently has been in response to Scott's support of Mr. Nixon's decision to withhold the tapes from the Senate Committee.

Scott is in a minority on this point. Sen. Harry F. Byrd Jr. (Ind.-Va.) and Sen. Charles McC. Mathias (R-Md.) both said that the President should turn over the tapes, and Mathias said he believes Mr. Nixon should testify in person before the Committee.

Sen. J. Glenn Beall (R-Md.) said he believes the President should have given the tapes to special Watergate prosecutor

Archibald Cox, but is undecided on the question of giving them to the committee.

"I'm not absolutely sure the committee would be able to prevent leaks of material in the tapes," Beall said.

There are strong feelings in the area delegation that the White House tapes hold the key to proof of the President's involvement or noninvolvement in the cover-up and that they should be released.

Asked his own judgment of the President's role in the affair, Rep. Stanford E. Parris (R-Va.) said, "It is too early to tell. I would like to hear the tapes."

Of the committee's right to the tapes, Parris said, "The need for disclosure of any wrongdoing supercedes separation of powers in this case, in my opinion."

There is a consensus within the area delegation that Watergate should and will lead to new restrictions on campaign financing.

"I think there is no question but that there will be new controls on campaign financing and possibly legislation governing public financing of campaigns," Gude said.