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WPOST

The Gallup Poll

Nixon's Popularity Rises, But Most Doubt Speech

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J.—President Nixon has registered a gain in popularity following his speech on Watergate last Wednesday—from a low point of 31 per cent to 38 per cent approval—but at the same time a large majority of Americans continue to believe he was involved in the planning or cover-up of Watergate. Further evidence, that the President's speech failed to dispel widespread doubts among the American people is the finding that 58 per cent of those who have seen or heard the speech say they are dissatisfied with his explanation regarding Watergate, compared to 34 per cent who say they are satisfied.

Despite the fact that as many people as ever (3 in 4) think Nixon played some role in the Watergate situation, only about one person in five (23 per cent) in the latest survey, thinks the President should be impeached and compelled to leave the presidency.

Nixon's gain in popularity following his nationwide televised speech could, at least in part, be expected. Surveys taken immediately after major televised addresses by Presidents over a number of years on a wide range of topics typically have shown increases in the approval rating for the chief executive.

The President's lowest rating since he has been in office (31 per cent) was recorded in the previous (Aug. 3-6) survey, following several weeks of televised hearings on Watergate. That

rating represented a drop of 37 points from Nixon's high point of 68 per cent recorded last January following the Vietnam peace settlement—the most precipitous drop yet recorded for a seven-month period. It was also the lowest rating given any President in 20 years—since January, 1953, when 31 per cent registered approval in President Truman's final month in office.

The following table shows the highest and lowest popularity rating for each of the last five Presidents:

	High	Low	Average
Nixon (To Date)	68	31	55
Johnson	80	35	54
Kennedy	83	57	70
Eisenhower	79	49	66
Truman	87	23	46

This is the question which has been asked about the incumbent President since the Roosevelt years to measure presidential popularity:

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way Nixon is handling his job as President?"

	Approve	Disapprove	No Opinion
Aug. 17-19	38	54	8
Aug. 3-6	31	57	12
July 6-9	40	49	11
June 22-25	45	45	10
June 1-4	44	45	11
May 11-14	44	45	11
May 4-7	45	42	13
April 27-30	48	40	12
April 6-9	54	36	10
March 30-April 2	59	32	9
Feb. 16-19	65	25	10
Jan. 26-29	68	25	7
Jan. 12-15	51	37	12

This is the question asked to measure attitudes on Nixon's involvement in Watergate:

"Here are four statements concerning President Nixon's connection with the Watergate affair. Will you tell me which one comes closest to your own point of view?"

A. Nixon planned the Watergate bugging from the beginning.

B. Nixon did not plan the bugging but knew about it before it took place.

C. Nixon found out about the bugging after it occurred, but tried to cover it up.

D. Nixon had no knowledge of the bugging and spoke up as soon as he learned about it.

	Planned	About	Know- edge	Opin- ion
Aug. 17-20	9	24	40	23
(Aug. 15: Nixon's speech on Watergate)	8	29	37	15
Aug. 3-6	8	30	34	15
July 6-9	9	27	36	17
June 22-25	8	28	31	19
June 1-4	8	28	31	19

This question was also asked:

"Do you think President Nixon should be impeached and compelled to leave the presidency, or not?"

The percentage favoring removing the President from office rose between late June and early August and subsequently (since the speech) declined slightly, as follows:

Aug. 17-19	23	70
Aug. 3-6	26	61
June 22-25	19	69

The findings reported today are based on a full-scale national survey of 1,452 adults, 18 and older. Interviewing was conducted in person in more than 300 scientifically selected localities between Friday and Sunday evening.

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Police Computer

WIESBADEN, West Germany, Aug. 21 (AP)—West German police announced they have begun using a computer that can supply a police station with information about any of 180,000 wanted persons in less than 10 seconds.