

Public Reacts to Watergate News

By George Gallup

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A majority of Americans — 53 per cent — now believe the mass media — newspapers, television and radio — are providing “too much” coverage of Watergate.

Four times as many in the current survey say “too much” as say “too little.” Another three persons in ten (30 per cent) believe the coverage of Watergate to be “about right.”

The proportion who believe Watergate coverage is excessive has increased from one year ago, when 44 per cent said the media were providing too much coverage, 12 per cent said too little and 36 per cent believed coverage to be “about right.”

While the issue remains politically partisan, Democrats account for much of the change during the last 12 months.

In the earlier survey, conducted in June of 1973, 32 per cent of Democrats believed the media coverage of Watergate was “too much,”

compared to 43 per cent today.

Among Republicans, the proportion saying the coverage of Watergate is “too much” has increased from 65 per cent a year ago to 75 per cent today. Among independents, the figure has increased from 43 to 51 per cent.

Views on news coverage depend to a considerable extent on how people view Watergate. Those who believe Watergate is “just politics” and not a serious matter are far more inclined to say the media are devoting too much time and space to Watergate than are those who view it as a serious matter.

Even among those who regard Watergate as a serious matter, however, as many as one-third feel that there is currently too much coverage.

Here is the question asked:

“With regard to the Watergate affair, do you think the mass media — that is, newspapers, television and radio — have provided too

Postal Union President

Woodrow Williams Jr. was elected president of 8000-member San Francisco Local of the American Postal Workers Union yesterday.

The union represents postal clerks, maintenance workers and delivery drivers, who had previously been represented by separate unions.

much coverage, about the right amount, or too little?”

Here are the latest national findings compared with those from the earlier survey:

	NATIONWIDE	
	June, 1973	June, 1974
Too much	44%	53%
Too little	12	13
About right	36	30
No opinion	8	4

The following table shows the change in the percentage who believe the media coverage of Watergate is “too much”:

	PER CENT SAYING “TOO MUCH”	
	June, 1973	June, 1974
National	44%	53%
College	44	48
High School	44	54
Grade School	42	55
Under 30 years	38	43
30 to 49 years	44	57
50 and over	48	56
East	42	47
Midwest	44	55
South	50	56
West	39	53
Professional and business	45	54
Clerical and sales	41	56
Manual workers	42	52
Republicans	66	75
Democrats	31	43
Independents	43	51

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