

# Poll on the Gravity of Watergate

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Despite the revelations of recent months regarding the Watergate scandal, the American people remain closely divided on the issue of whether Watergate is a "serious matter" or "just politics — the kind of thing that both parties engage in."

In the latest survey, 48 per cent say Watergate is a "serious matter, revealing corruption in the Nixon administration," while only slightly fewer, 43 per cent, dismiss it as "just politics." These findings nearly match those recorded in late August, 1973, the last time the question was asked, when 48 per cent also said Watergate is a serious matter and 46 per cent viewed it as just a matter of politics.

Here is the question asked:

"Which of these two statements comes closer to your point of view about Watergate? (1) It's a very serious matter because it reveals corruption in the Nixon administration. (2) It's just politics — the kind of thing that both parties engage in."

The issue remains a highly partisan one from a political standpoint. Republicans in the survey are 2-to-1 of the opinion Watergate is "just politics," while Democrats are 2-to-1 on the other side. Independents are fairly evenly divided in their opinions.

The findings differ little from region to region, although Southerners are slightly less inclined to view Watergate in a serious light than are persons living in other parts of the nation.

While little difference is found between the views of men and women, the youngest interviewed adults and persons with a college background are most likely to say Watergate is a serious matter.