

WKPPost

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Mr. Nixon and the Upper Class

LARCHMONT, N.Y.—The fact that the well-heeled suburbanite is every bit as terrified as blue-collar workers of an inflationary present and future is strongly reinforcing his firm verdict on impeachment: President Nixon must go and go now.

Only that conclusion can be drawn from interviews we conducted in Maroon Neck District 8 of plush Westchester County, with the help of Patrick Caddell's polling organization. Preponderantly Republican but with independent characteristics which make it a weathervane, this district gave Mr. Nixon 57.3 per cent of the vote in 1972. Today, however, it has made up its mind about impeachment—and cannot understand why Congress does not do the same.

Accompanied by Doty Lynch, senior analyst for the Caddell organization, we interviewed 54 registered voters. By an astounding 6 to 1 margin, they agreed the President should be thrown out of office. Only one opposed a Senate trial for the President, and only two believe Mr. Nixon's avowals of innocence in the Watergate cover-up.

This lopsided condemnation by upper middle class voters, nearly all with family income over \$20,000, coincided with an unexpected mood of panic about the economy, usually associated with working class voters. Nearly half of our voters complained their standard of living has declined over the past year. As for next year, only 7 voters expected improvement

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and 19 predicted still worse times.

"I just can't support my family at the same level anymore," the attractive wife of an advertising executive, dressed for tennis, told us at the door of her mansion. A wholesale food products executive declared that "inflation is the one thing that changes my life directly." Both were 1972 Nixon voters; both now favor impeachment.

Indeed, there was no sign of the effect, so desired by the White House, of economic woes building support for the President. Although many voters voiced impatience with the slow pace of the impeachment proceedings, only 9 agreed that Watergate problems should be shelved to let Mr. Nixon get on with solving problems of the economy.

Indeed, confidence in Mr. Nixon's economic savvy was wholly lacking. Overwhelmingly and most surprisingly, these voters favor exactly what the

President has ruled out: renewal of wage-price controls. The 26 voters who volunteered inflation as the nation's most important problem chose the Democrats as the party best equipped to handle it by a 5 to 1 margin.

This dissatisfaction in a Republican stronghold is typified by the elegant 40ish wife of a television executive who, asked to name the three toughest problems today, replied, "Nixon, Nixon and Nixon." (She voted for him in 1972.) "I wish Congress would hurry and do something," she added. That "something" is Mr. Nixon's removal. Another erstwhile Nixon supporter, an advertising man, told us the President ought to be "thrown in jail" if he defies a Supreme Court order to give up tape recordings.

There were a few dissenters. "I feel everyone is sick to death of impeachment," the wife of a computer consultant told us. "Get over with it. It's costing us so much money."

But such sentiments were rare. The White House anti-impeachment campaign has conspicuously failed to take hold in District 8. By a 9 to 1 margin, our voters feel newspapers and television have been fair to the President. By 6 to 1, they believe Mr. Nixon carried the flag to the Mideast and Moscow to take the spotlight off impeachment. By 6 to 1, they blame the President—not Congress—for the delay in the impeachment proceedings. Only three voters agreed with the statement that the House Judiciary Committee is out to get the President.

This overwhelming Nixonphobia has not yet transferred itself into anti-Republican sentiment. Only a few Republicans indicated that their hostility to the President would lead them to vote Democratic for Congress. These voters favored Republican Gov. Malcolm Wilson over either of his potential Democratic foes. Two-thirds of those interviewed had a favorable opinion of Vice President Ford compared with four-fifths unfavorable toward President Nixon.

This reflects the tendency of these well-paid, well-educated commuters to isolate the President. Frightened about the economy, the nation, and the future, their loyalties seem open to competition in the days ahead. But for the present, they have put Richard M. Nixon behind them, delivering a negative verdict which is probably unchangeable.