

A Gallup Poll Finds 56% Want Nixon to Face Criminal Charges

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A majority of the American people believe that former President Richard M. Nixon should be tried for possible criminal charges arising from the Watergate case, according to the latest Gallup Poll.

The survey showed that 56 per cent of those interviewed favored prosecution of the former President, 37 per cent opposed it, and 7 per cent had no opinion.

Democrats favored prosecution, 70 to 25 per cent, while 33 per cent of the Republicans interviewed favored a trial for Mr. Nixon, and 59 per cent opposed one. Just over half of those who regard themselves as independents favored prosecution.

Mr. Nixon was named as an unindicted co-conspirator by the grand jury that accused several of his White House and election aides of a Watergate cover-up.

"If he violated the law he should be prosecuted, just like I certainly would be," a 46-year-old salesman said.

Others felt it would be unfair to the former Nixon subordinates who have been indicted, or who have already

stood trial, if Mr. Nixon were not prosecuted.

Among those who felt Mr. Nixon should not be tried, an educator said:

"He has been punished quite adequately, and any further charges can only be regarded as childishly vindictive."

Some felt that Mr. Nixon had done nothing wrong. "His punishment has already exceeded any alleged criminal activities," said a shop owner in a small town.

Others said that it would be impossible for the former President to get a fair trial anywhere in the country.

Interviewers, who conducted the survey between Aug. 16 and Aug. 19, asked 1,590 persons the following question: "Do you think Nixon should or should not be tried for possible criminal charges arising from Watergate?"

These were the results:

| | He should | He should not | No opinion |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| National average | 56 | 37 | 7 |
| Whites | 53 | 40 | 7 |
| Nonwhites | 73 | 20 | 7 |
| Under 30 years | 66 | 30 | 4 |
| 30-49 years | 54 | 38 | 8 |
| 50 and over | 51 | 41 | 8 |
| East | 61 | 31 | 8 |
| Middle West | 54 | 40 | 6 |
| South | 55 | 41 | 4 |
| West | 56 | 35 | 9 |
| Republicans | 33 | 59 | 8 |
| Democrats | 70 | 25 | 5 |
| Independents | 55 | 36 | 9 |