

TV Polls Say Majority Felt Nixon Lied

New York

The majority of a sample of those who watched former President Nixon talk about Watergate on television this week felt he lied several times in response to questions from David Frost, according to a Harris Poll commissioned by the American Broadcasting Corp.

ABC said yesterday that 51 per cent of the viewers felt Nixon did not tell the truth, 27 per cent felt he told the truth and that others questioned had no opinion on the subject.

Despite the belief that he "lied

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several times," the 1506 persons responding to the poll, which was taken after the telecast Wednesday and on Thursday, split 50-50 when asked whether the former president "was mostly telling the truth."

By 71 to 24 per cent, viewers said, "Nixon could not return to public life."

Another poll, taken by the Roger Seasonwein organization, said 62 per cent of those who watched the interview didn't believe what Nixon said.

The Seasonwein telephone sampling of 500 adults said 75 per cent of the viewers maintained they do not respect Nixon.

The Harris poll was said 74 per cent of those responding believed "Nixon knew he was obstructing justice;" 15 per cent did not.

A 58 to 21 per cent majority said, "Nixon lied when he said he didn't know about the cash payments to the Watergate defendants until March 21, nine months after the Watergate break-in."

But a 67 to 25 per cent majority said it felt Nixon defended himself as well as he could under the circumstances.

"Fundamentally, the viewers of the show believed that Nixon did not lie throughout the program, but rather was shading the facts to defend himself and that he was caught by Frost in some outright lies," Harris said.

The Nixon-Frost interview was not produced by any of the three major networks. Rather, it was independently produced and broadcast on more than 150 stations, some of which are network affiliates.

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