

Watergate Poll

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As determined by a nationwide survey Wednesday night, approximately half of the United States public thinks President Nixon was involved in the Watergate affair.

At the same time, however, nearly two persons in three believe the Nixon administration is no more corrupt than were previous administrations — as of the last 25 years.

Indicative of the increasing concern of Americans over Watergate is the fact that more than nine persons in ten are now aware of the situation and that more than eight in ten saw, heard or read about the President's speech.

Regarding the question of Mr. Nixon's involvement in Watergate, 40 per cent of persons in the survey believe Mr. Nixon did not tell the "whole truth" about Watergate in his speech Monday, while 30 per cent think he did. The remaining 30 per cent either were not aware of the speech or else did not have an opinion.

Four persons in ten in the survey (40 per cent) think President Nixon knew in advance about the Watergate "bugging" of last June, compared to 47 per cent who say he did not.

Half of those interviewed, 50 per cent, think Mr. Nixon "bugged" the Watergate situation, while 35 per cent say he was not involved.

Three fourths of those persons who think Mr. Nixon knew in advance about the "bugging" indicate that they now have a more unfavorable opinion of Mr. Nixon.

In addition, almost six persons in ten say the Watergate situation has reduced their confidence in the federal government, with 21 per cent saying "a great deal" and 37 per cent saying "somewhat."

INVESTIGATION

In regard to the proposed investigations, a large majority of persons interviewed (743) think a person from outside the Nixon administration should be appointed to head the investigations.

Asked what action, if any, should be taken if it is determined from the investigations that Mr. Nixon knew in advance about the "bugging" or participated in a cover-up, 30 per cent said they favor starting impeachment proceedings, while nearly half said they favor strong action, including the 30 per cent who said impeachment proceedings should be initiated.

Following are questions asked and the results:

Did you happen to hear or

read about President Nixon's speech to the nation about Watergate on Monday night?

per cent
 Yes 85
 No 15

Do you think President Nixon told the whole truth in his speech, or not?

per cent
 Yes 30
 No 40
 No opinion 15
 Total 85

Do you think President Nixon knew in advance about the Watergate "bugging" of last June, or not?

per cent
 Yes 40
 No 47
 No opinion 13

Because of this, do you have a more unfavorable opinion of Mr. Nixon than you did previously, or not?

per cent
 Yes 29
 No 10
 No opinion 1
 Total 40

Do you think President Nixon has participated in a coverup of the Watergate situation, or not?

per cent
 Yes 50
 No 35
 No opinion 15

To what degree, if at all, has the Watergate situation reduced your confidence in the federal government as an institution — a great deal, somewhat, or not at all?

per cent
 A great deal 21
 Somewhat 37
 Not at all 37
 No opinion 5

Do you think a person from outside the Nixon administration should be appointed to head the Watergate investigation, or not?

per cent
 Yes 74
 No 12
 No opinion 14

Suppose it is determined from the proposed investigations that Mr. Nixon knew about the Watergate "bugging" in advance, or participated in a coverup, what action, if any, do you think should be taken?

per cent
 Impeachment/
 brought to trial 30
 Nothing/
 nothing at present 20
 Take some strong action
 Should be censured
 by Congress 8
 Other 6
 No opinion 25

Compared to other administrations of the last 25 years, do you think there is more corruption in the Nixon administration, less corruption, or little difference in this respect?

per cent
 More 29
 Less 8
 Little difference 58
 No opinion 5