

The Gallup Poll

Watergate Cuts Nixon Popularity

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As public awareness of and concern over the Watergate affair grow, President Nixon's popularity continues to decline.

In a nationwide survey completed on the eve of his speech concerning Watergate on April 30, Mr. Nixon's popularity dropped to 48 per cent, equaling his all-time low.

The latest findings represent a decline of six points from the previous survey taken in early April, and a drop of 20 points since the President's popularity reached a high following the Vietnam peace settlement in late January.

Equally ominous for the Republican party is an additional survey finding indicating a loss in the appeal of the GOP in terms of next year's congressional races. Three persons in ten said that because of the Watergate affair they are less likely to vote for Republican candidate in the congressional elections in 1974.

Among those who consider themselves Republicans, 13 per cent indicated they are less likely to vote for a member of their own party.

The survey reveals 27 per cent of independents saying they would be less likely to vote for a Republican next year.

REACTION

In a nationwide telephone survey conducted by the Gallup Poll two days after the President's speech, half the respondents said they believed Mr. Nixon participated in a coverup of the facts surrounding Watergate, while 40 per cent stated they believed Mr. Nixon

knew about the bugging operation in advance.

Additionally, while 29 per cent said they thought there is more corruption in the Nixon administration than in others during the last 25 or 30 years, 58 per cent felt there was no difference in this respect.

Here are the questions asked with the results nationally and by political affiliation:

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mr. Nixon is handling his job as president?"

	Approve	Disapprove	No Opinion
National	48	40	12
Republicans	76	17	7
Democrats	33	55	12
Independents	45	42	13

All respondents who said they had heard or read about Watergate were asked:

"Does the Watergate affair make you less likely than before to vote for a Republican candidate in next year's congressional elections, or not?"

	Yes, Less Likely	No	No Opinion
National	31	56	13
Republicans	13	77	10
Democrats	48	43	9
Independents	27	57	16

NIXON POPULARITY INDEX

PER CENT WHO APPROVE	
Current	48%
Average in current year	57%
Average since taking office	57%
High since taking office	69%
(Recorded Nov. '69 & Jan. '73)	
Low since taking office	48%
(Recorded June '71 & Apr. '73)	

OTHER PRESIDENTS

	PER CENT WHO APPROVE		
	High	Low	Average
President Johnson	80	35	54
President Kennedy	83	57	70
President Eisenhower	79	48	66
President Truman	87	23	46

The findings are based on interviews with a total of 1548 adults, 18 and older, interviewed in person in more than 300 scientifically selected localities during the period April 27-30.

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