

# Press Rated on Watergate Issue

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The California public is inclined to praise the press for its handling of the Watergate affair.

A statewide California Poll survey found that a substantial majority of the public feels that if it hadn't been for the press' activities, the Watergate affair would have remained covered up.

The press has been under severe attack from the Nixon administration, but the public as a whole believes the press would have worked just as hard to uncover wrongdoing no matter who had been President.

Almost twice as many people say that the news coverage of the Watergate affair has been fair and unbiased as say that it has been unfair and biased.

These results were obtained in a statewide survey between May 7th and 17th, in which a representative cross-section of 1043 adults throughout the state was interviewed.

Attitudes toward the press handling of the Watergate affair varies somewhat by political party identification. Responses to the questions

asked in the survey are shown below:

"Do you feel the news coverage that the Watergate matter has received has been generally fair and unbiased, or do you feel the news about Watergate has been presented in an unfair and unbiased way?"

	State-wide	Demo-crats	Repub-licans
Fair & unbiased	50%	59%	34%
Mixed	17	16	19
Unfair & biased	27	18	42
No opinion	6	7	5

"If the press reporters had not kept on writing about Watergate, do you believe the facts of the matter would eventually have come out anyway, or not?"

	State-wide	Demo-crats	Repub-licans
Would have	29%	28%	35%
Would not have	64	67	57
Don't know/no opinion	7	5	8

"Do you feel that in the Watergate matter the news media have tried extra hard to uncover a scandal against President Nixon, or do you feel they would work just as hard to try to uncover wrongdoing no matter who was President?"

	State-wide	Demo-crats	Repub-licans
Tried extra hard against Nixon	23%	16%	36%
Would work just as hard no matter who	71	79	57
No opinion	6	5	7

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