

Views on Nixon Involvement Little Changed by Hearings

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J. — After seven weeks of the Senate hearings, the views of the American people regarding Watergate can be summed up as follows:

1. A large majority of Americans (3 of 4 in the latest survey) continue to believe President Nixon was involved, at least to some degree, in Watergate. Views on Mr. Nixon's involvement have changed very little in three national surveys over the last six weeks. The latest survey was conducted following testimony by John W. Dean III at the Senate hearings but before former Attorney General John N. Mitchell took the stand.

2. The public is divided about evenly between those who believe Watergate is a "very serious matter," revealing corruption in the Nixon administration, and those who dismiss Water-

gate as "just politics—the kind of thing in which both parties engage." Again, views have changed little in the last three surveys.

3. A slightly increased number of Americans—24 per cent in the latest survey compared to 18 per cent in a late June survey—think President Nixon should be impeached and removed from the presidency.

A cross-section was asked: *Should President Nixon be compelled to leave office?*

	Yes	No	No opinion
Nationwide	24%	62%	14%
Nixon planned bugging	67	20	13
Not planned but knew in advance	33	54	13
Found out and tried to cover up	19	73	8
No knowledge of the bugging	4	89	7

Here is the question asked and the trend:

Which of these two statements comes closer to your point of view about Watergate? (1) It's a very serious

matter because it reveals corruption in the Nixon administration. (2) It's just politics—the kind of thing that both parties engage in.

	Serious Matter	Just Politics	No Opinion
July 6-9	48%	45%	7%
June 22-25	48	45	7
June 1-4	47	46	7
April 6-9	31	53	16

The findings show that nearly three in four Americans believe Mr. Nixon was involved to some extent in Watergate, with little change noted since early June.

	June 1-4	June 22-25	July 6-9
Nixon planned the Watergate "bugging" from the beginning	8%	8%	9%
Nixon did not plan the "bugging" but knew about it before it took place	28	27	30
Nixon found out about the "bugging" after it occurred but tried to cover it up	31	36	34
Nixon had no knowledge of the "bugging" and spoke up as soon as he learned about it	19	17	15
No opinion/Not heard or read about Watergate	14	12	12