

Nixon's Popularity Rises, But Most Doubt Speech

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J.—President Nixon has registered a gain in popularity following his speech on Watergate last Wednesday—from a low point of 31 per cent to 38 per cent approval—but at the same time a large majority of Americans continue to believe he was involved in the planning or cover-up of Watergate.

Further evidence that the president's speech failed to elicit widespread confidence among the American people is the finding that 33 per cent of those who have seen or heard the speech say they are dissatisfied with his explanation regarding Watergate, compared to 34 per cent who say they are satisfied.

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Nixon's gain in popularity following his nationwide televised speech could, at least in part, be expected. Surveys taken immediately after major televised addresses by Presidents over a number of years on a wide range of topics typically have shown increase in the approval rating for the chief executive.

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season's lowest approval rating for Nixon's administration was recorded in the survey conducted in the week following the disclosure of the Watergate cover-up. The lowest recorded approval rating for the period was also the lowest since the arrival of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953, when it was 27 per cent. Approval ratings for the president have risen in 10 of the 11 months since the survey.

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