

## Got Message On Inflation

### Washington

Members of Congress, returning from their home states yesterday after a month-long recess, said inflation is by far the top issue among their constituents, outdistancing the Watergate scandal by a big margin.

"The economy is the overriding issue," said Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem - Wash.). "America's pride has been hurt by Watergate . . . but the economy is the overriding issue."

"Pocketbook issues, the cost of living are the biggest issues," said Representative John B. Anderson (Rep - Ill.), chairman of the House Republican Conference.

"Inflation number one and Watergate number two," said Senator Alan Cranston (Dem - Calif.).

"The biggest issues are first and foremost prices, secondly the Watergate matter," said Senate Republican whip Robert P. Griffin of Michigan.

These statements, from men who represent both political parties and a wide range of policy views, reflect the consensus of dozens of interviews conducted as the House and Senate reconvened after a month-long holiday.

A handful of members — like Senators Milton R. Young (Rep-N.D.) Walter Mondale (Dem-Minn.), Philip A. Hart (Dem-Mich.) and Mike Gravel (Dem-Alaska) — said they had found the Watergate scandal to be of equal or greater concern to constituents than inflation and economic problems.

But most of those interviewed said that in travels through their states, they had found inflation to be way out in front as a matter of deep concern, with Watergate not even as high as second place in many areas.

Asked what were the chief issues in Montana, majority leader Mike Mansfield (Dem-Mont.) first listed "inflation, beef, forest and grass fires, drought, Watergate, energy and strip-mining" but then emphasized that "inflation, primarily . . . and Watergate were the two biggest."

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