

Impeachment 'No Opinions' Up Sharply in Gallup Poll

Twenty-eight per cent of Americans believe that President Nixon should be impeached, according to a Gallup poll conducted after his news conference Friday.

Fifty-five per cent said they thought he should not be impeached and 17 per cent had no opinion.

The results were not markedly different from other polls on the subject of impeachment. Previous Gallup organizations polls have found between 23 and 26 per cent favoring impeachment. The margin of statistical error in the latest poll is so great that it could not be said to represent a real change since the earlier Gallup surveys.

The major difference between Friday's poll and previous Gallup surveys is in the proportion of people who have no opinion. That proportion increased significantly since the last Gallup poll.

A poll taken in mid-August recorded only 7 per cent as having no opinion on the subject of impeachment. Last Friday night, 17 per cent of the persons interviewed said they had no opinion.

The increase appeared to result from a change among those who before had opposed impeachment. The percentage who opposed impeachment fell about 15 points—from 70 to 55 per cent between the August and the October Gallup surveys.

However, the latest Gallup survey is not as precise as earlier ones. It was a telephone sample of 623 adults. According to the Gallup organization, the margin of error is at least plus or minus 5 percentage points in a poll of that size.

Most Gallup polls are personal interviews of about 1550 persons. Telephone polls such as last Friday's usually turn up a higher proportion of persons having no opinion than do those based on personal interviews.

The latest Gallup survey used this question:

"Do you think President Nixon should be impeached and compelled to leave the presidency, or not?"

The results: Yes, 28 per cent; No, 55 per cent; No opinion, 17 per cent.

The responses were similar to those in a September

survey by Louis Harris and Associates who found 31 per cent favoring impeachment, 56 per cent opposing it, and 13 per cent unsure.

Another Gallup question asked if people thought it would be "in the best interests of the country" for President Nixon to resign. Twenty-eight per cent said yes, 62 per cent said no, and 10 per cent had no opinion.

The persons questioned also were asked to say how much confidence they have in the Nixon Administration. Nineteen per cent said

they had a "great deal" of confidence; 23 per cent said a "fair amount"; 32 per cent said "not very much"; and 23 per cent said "none at all." Three per cent had no opinion.

Those who had seen the news conference were asked if they found the President's responses concerning Watergate convincing. Thirty-one per cent found them convincing and 53 per cent found them not convincing. Nine per cent held mixed opinions and 7 per cent had no opinion at all.