

Approval of Nixon Hits All-Time Low

By Louis Harris

President Nixon's standing with the American people has reached its all-time low in the Harris Survey, with only 30 per cent giving him high marks on the way he is handling his job and 68 per cent rating him negatively. This marks a 7-point drop from the last survey in November, when his standing showed a rise to 37 per cent from a previous low of 32 per cent positive.

In addition, on "inspiring confidence personally in the White House," Mr. Nixon has also hit his all-time low, with only 17 per cent giving him high marks and a record 78 per cent rating him negatively. Less than a year ago, in February, the President's standing on this confidence measure was 48 to 41 per cent positive.

By 47 to 42 per cent a plurality of the American people agrees with the statement that "President Nixon has reached the point where he no longer can be an effective President and should resign for the good of the country." In November, by 45 to 44 per cent, the public did not feel that Mr. Nixon should resign.

These findings are particularly significant because they were drawn from an in-depth survey of 1,460 households interviewed between Jan. 7-10 of this year, just as President Nixon was concluding his "Operation Candor," in which he tried to explain the facts surrounding his possible involvement in the misdeeds of the 1972 elec-

tion. When asked directly about "Operation Candor," by 73 to 18 per cent, the public deemed it a failure, believing instead that Mr. Nixon "has withheld important information about his involvement in the Watergate affair."

Thus, the issue of Watergate and its spreading implications about presidential integrity has not gone away, and President Nixon is in worse shape than ever before with American public opinion. The public is still deeply interested in the issue, and, with the passage of time, Mr. Nixon appears to be in more, rather than in less, trouble.

"Do you tend to agree or disagree with the statement that President Nixon has reached the point where he no longer can be an effective President and should resign for the good of the country?"

SHOULD NIXON RESIGN FOR GOOD OF COUNTRY?

	Jan. 1974	Nov. 1973
Agree, Nixon should resign	47%	44%
Disagree, he should not	42	45
Not sure	11	11

Although the shift has not been great, the trend among the people for Mr. Nixon's resignation continues up. It seems now certain that, although "Operation Candor" may have been ended by the President, his trial by public opinion on his basic integrity and fitness to remain in office has now reached new and more serious dimensions than ever before.