

Surveying the Past

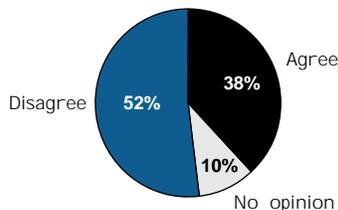
Deep Suspicion

There probably will always be mysteries surrounding "Watergate," the web of scandals that brought down the presidency of Richard M. Nixon. We still don't know who "Deep Throat" was, or exactly what Nixon knew and when he knew it.

As Watergate unfolded between 1972 and 1974, with such secrets only gradually coming to light, the public began to harbor doubts about how much they could trust this president, in matters touching many aspects both of his personal dealings and his dealings with the American people.

Question:

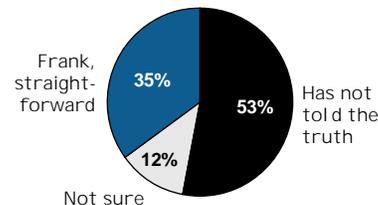
The charge has been made that President Nixon could have made the Vietnam peace settlement long ago and that he delayed it just to help his reelection. Do you agree or disagree with this charge?



Source: Survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, October 27-29, 1972. One of a series of surveys conducted for Richard Nixon while he was president.

Question:

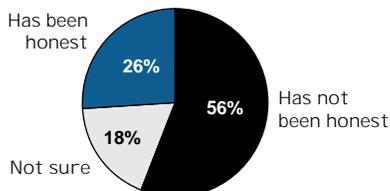
As far as the war in Vietnam is concerned, do you think President Nixon has been frank and straightforward about the war, or do you think he has not told the American people the real truth about the situation there?



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, February 1972.

Question:

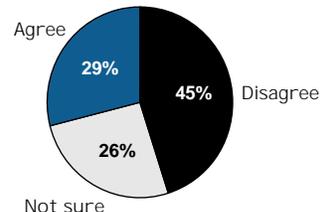
Do you feel President Nixon has been honest or not about the financing of his houses in San Clemente and Key Biscayne?



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, January 7-10, 1974.

Question:

[Let me read you some statements about President Nixon's releasing information about his income and the taxes he has paid. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.] ...The tax breaks the president took were all legal and proper.

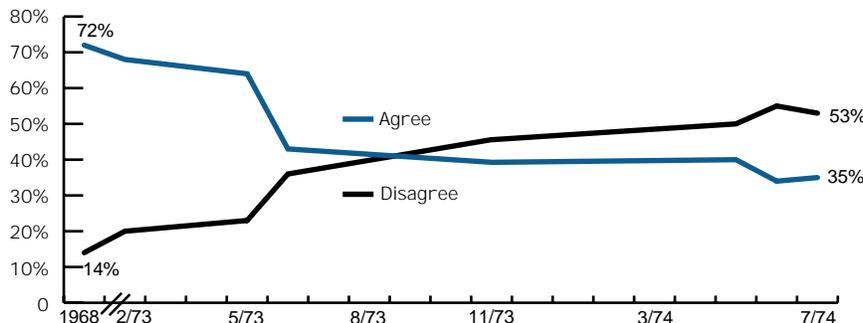


Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, January 7-10, 1974.

I Am Not...

Question:

[Let me read you some statements about Richard Nixon. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.] ...He is a man of high integrity.



Source: Surveys by Louis Harris and Associates, latest that of July 17-21, 1974.

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
1968			
September 11-13	72%	14%	14%
1973			
February 14-18	68	20	12
May 1-3	64	23	13
June 14-18	43	36	21
November 12-15	39	46	15
1974			
May 4-7	40	50	10
June 1-4	34	55	11
July 17-21	35	53	12

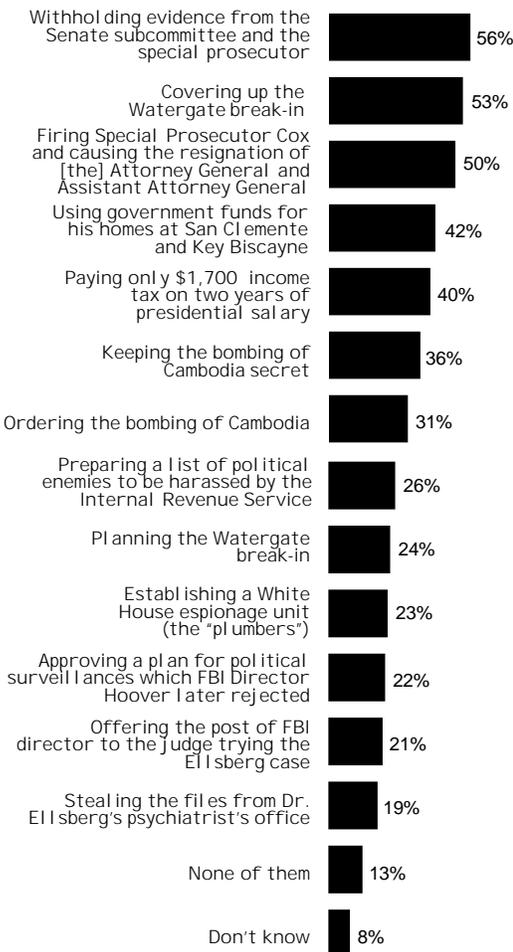
Worth Pursuing?

Critical Mass

It can be hard to locate the line of integrity that politicians are not supposed to cross, but one of the earlier known occasions on which Nixon's staff leaped right over it was when White House "plumbers" burglarized the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. "The president's men" hoped to find information damaging to Ellsberg, a former defense analyst who leaked the Pentagon Papers—a secret Defense Department study of the Vietnam War—to *The New York Times*. By late 1973, the Ellsberg caper would be only one of many dubious dealings being paraded before the eyes of a wearying public.

Question:

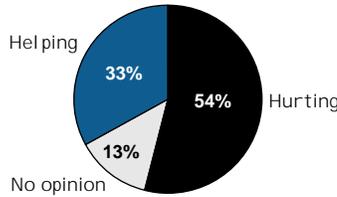
Here is a list of charges or criticisms that have been made against President Nixon. You may feel that some are not true, and that others are not bad. Would you... call off any that you personally are concerned about both because you think it is a serious offense and because you think he may be responsible for it?



Note: Multiple responses were allowed.
Source: Survey by the Roper Organization, November 3-17, 1973.

Question:

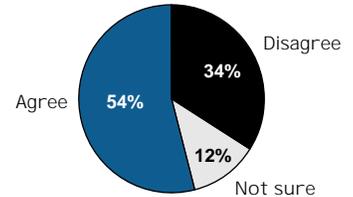
Do you believe that the Senate hearings on the Watergate matter are helping or hurting the country?



Source: Survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, August 18-20, 1973. One of a series of surveys conducted for Richard Nixon while he was president.

Question:

[Tell me if you agree or disagree.] ...President Nixon still has most of his second term in the White House to go, so it is best to give him the benefit of the doubt in the Watergate bugging and cover-up.

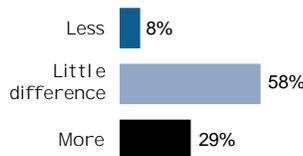


Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, June 14-18, 1973.

Just Politics

Question:

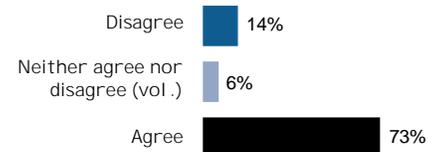
Compared to other administrations of the last 25 years, do you think there is more corruption in the Nixon administration, less corruption, or little difference in this respect?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, May 2, 1973.

Question:

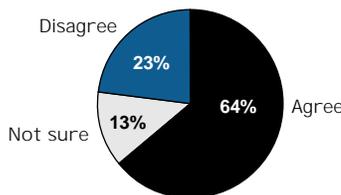
[Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?] ...There is a certain amount of corruption in every administration, and this one is no better or worse than most.



Source: Survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, October 6-8, 1972. One of a series of surveys conducted for Richard Nixon while he was president.

Question:

...[T]ell me if you agree or disagree... Dirty campaign tactics exist among most Republicans and Democrats, and the Nixon campaign people were no worse than the Democrats, except that they got caught.



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, June 14-18, 1973.

Question:

Which of these two statements comes closer to your point of view about Watergate?... It's a very serious matter because it reveals corruption in the Nixon administration, [or] it's just politics—the kind of thing both parties engage in.



Note: Asked of those who have heard or read about Watergate (98%).
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 17-20, 1973.