

# PUBLIC OPINION NEWS SERVICE

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## **PUBLIC GIVES OVERWHELMING VOTE OF CONFIDENCE TO J. EDGAR HOOVER**

### **Only 2 Per Cent of Adults Say Their Attitude is Unfavorable Toward FBI Chief, Survey Finds**

By **GEORGE GALLUP**

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PRINCETON, N. J., Dec. 25—J. Edgar Hoover, whose testimony in the Harry Dexter White case convinced many voters that Communists had infiltrated the government, is given a remarkable vote of confidence by the general public in a coast-to-coast survey by the American Institute of Public Opinion.

Among adults questioned who had an opinion about Hoover—they add up to the phenomenally high figure of 80 per cent—the ratio of favorable to unfavorable attitudes is an overwhelming 99-to-1.

In terms of percentages, 78 per cent said they held a favorable attitude toward the FBI director, compared to 2 per cent holding an unfavorable opinion.

Although recent headlines have dealt heavily with Hoover's anti-spy activities, the public for some time has praised the Bureau and its director for their work against criminals and racketeers.

In an Institute survey in 1950, for every voter who lauded their efforts in tracking down communists and spies, five praised their skill in tracking down criminals.

Here is how the public's attitudes shape up in today's survey:

*"In general, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of J. Edgar Hoover?"*

The vote:  
 Favorable opinion ..... 78%  
 Unfavorable ..... 2  
 Don't know Hoover,  
 No Opinion ..... 20  
 100%

The small proportion of persons voicing an unfavorable opinion of Hoover—only about one in 40—is phenomenal in opinion surveys that have dealt with men in public life.

On other occasions the public has tossed bouquets to government

officials, but rarely is the attitude as favorable as that expressed in today's vote.

The overwhelmingly favorable impression of the FBI chief is found in all segments of the population, as shown in the following vote by education levels:

|                    | Col-lege | High School | Grade School |
|--------------------|----------|-------------|--------------|
| Favorable ...      | 92%      | 83%         | 65%          |
| Unfavorable ..     | 1        | 3           | 2            |
| Don't know Hoover, |          |             |              |
| No Opinion         | 7        | 14          | 33           |
|                    | 100%     | 100%        | 100%         |

Although there was some partisan criticism of Hoover following his appearance before the Senate committee, where he backed up Attorney-General Brownell in his exchange of charges with former President Truman, today's survey offers little evidence that the FBI chief himself is a political issue.

Republican and Democratic voters have virtually the same attitudes toward Hoover, as the following table shows:

|                    | Rep. | Dem. | Ind. |
|--------------------|------|------|------|
| Favorable .....    | 84%  | 74%  | 81%  |
| Unfavorable ..     | 1    | 3    | 2    |
| Don't know Hoover, |      |      |      |
| No Opinion         | 15   | 23   | 17   |
|                    | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Earlier Institute surveys also have shown that the FBI would likely have little difficulty enlisting public support if it comes to a question of enlarging the Bureau to carry on investigations of communist or subversive groups.

In 1949, the Institute found a 3-to-1 vote in favor of increasing the amount of money given to the FBI.

The public's continued approval of the job done by Hoover is shown in a comparison of today's survey with the results of a similar study made in February, 1950:

*"Do you think J. Edgar Hoover has done a good job or a poor job as head of the FBI?"*

The vote:  
 Good job ..... 79%  
 Poor job ..... 2  
 Don't know Hoover,  
 No Opinion ..... 19  
 100%

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WHO will be the winner this year?

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