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**Series:** Sununu, John, Files  
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**OA/ID Number:** 29168  
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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

THE CHIEF of STAFF  
has seen

April 25, 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM:

ED ROGERS *ER*

SUBJECT:

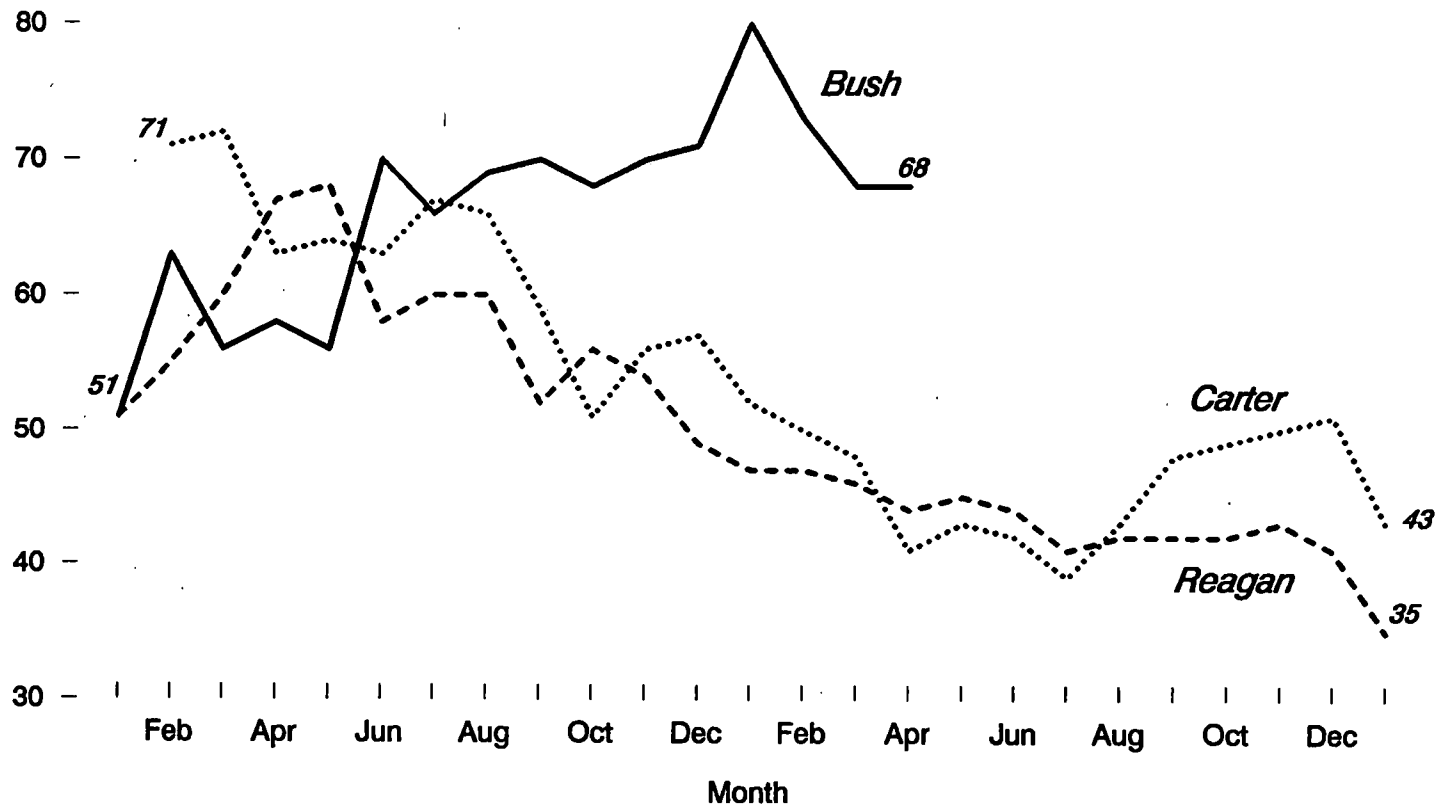
LATEST COMPARATIVE POLL

For your information, attached please find the most recent Comparative presidential Job Approval poll.

# Comparative Presidential Job Approval

## Through Second Year in Office

Percent Approval



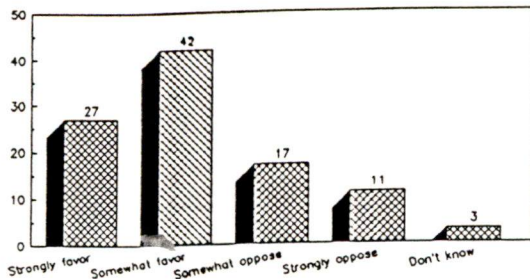
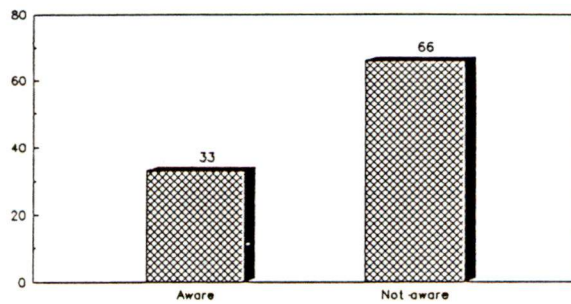
Source: Gallup Organization  
RNC Survey Research

## NEW SPACE CRAFT TECHNOLOGY

Are you aware or not aware of a program to build a new re-usable space plane that unlike the shuttle, would take off and land from a regular airport?

The federal government has started the development of new technologies that may lead to the construction of a new MANNED SPACE CRAFT called the National Aerospace Plane that would fly into space and could use commercial airports to take off and land. Do you view the idea of such a program very favorably, somewhat favorably, somewhat unfavorably, or very unfavorably?

A third of the public is aware of the new space craft proposal. Awareness tends to be higher among those groups that traditionally support the space program (younger, male and the more educated).



Seventy percent supports the space plane.

\* 16% has 'seriously considered becoming an astronaut'; 40% would 'pay for a trip into space'; 2.5% of the population would be willing to pay \$50,000 or more for a trip into space!

## APPROVAL OF THE CIVILIAN SPACE PROGRAM

Agree or disagree with the following.....

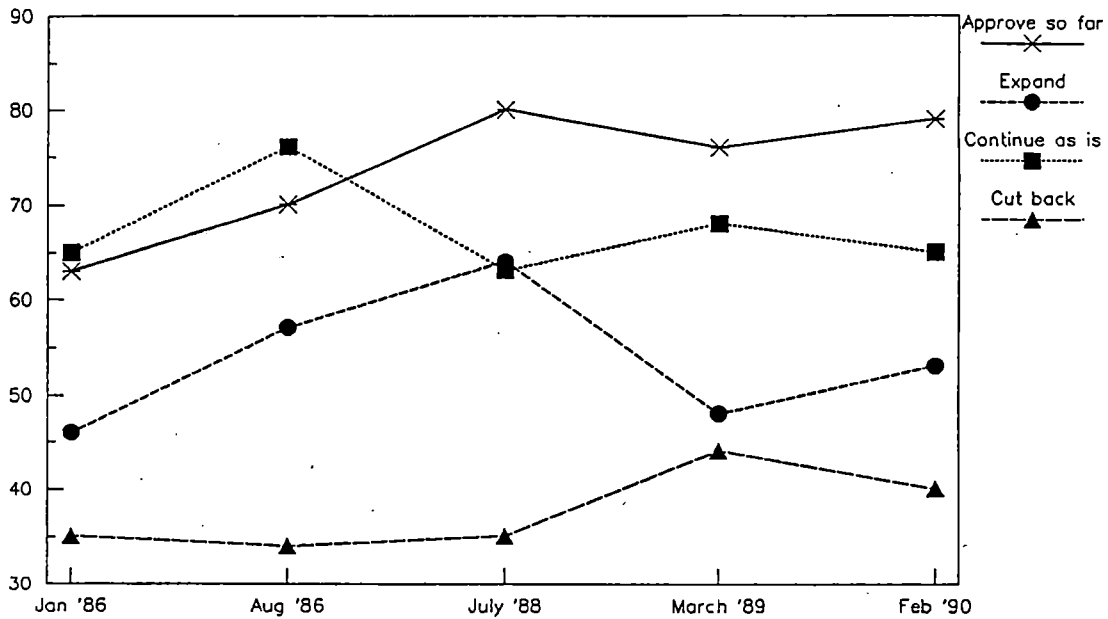
*I approve of America's civilian space program so far.*

*America's civilian space program should be expanded.*

*America's civilian space program should be continued as is.*

*Expenditures for America's civilian space program should be cut back.*

### Support for Space Program Time Trends



Approve of program so far  
Continue program as is  
Expand program, Cut back program

- \* Public approval of the civilian space program is at an all time high (79%)<sup>1</sup>. Sub-groups more likely to approve of the space program include younger voters, men, high income and more educated groups.
- \* Compared to a year ago, voters are more likely to agree that the space program should be expanded.
- \* 'Technological' and 'medical' advances are mentioned most often as the important benefits of the space program. The 'high cost' of the program is viewed as the most important disadvantage of the civilian space program.

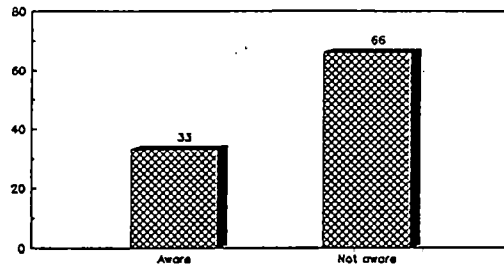
<sup>1</sup> Questions regarding the space program are from a separate national survey of 1200 registered voters conducted in February. The margin of error on this survey is +/- 2.8%. The survey was commissioned by Rockwell International.

## PRESIDENT BUSH'S PROPOSAL

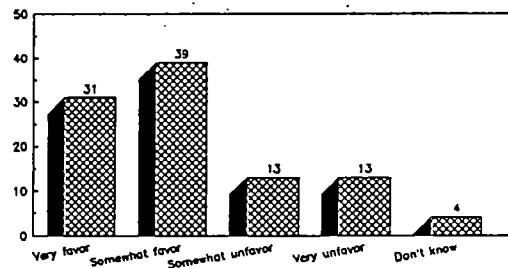
Are you aware or not aware of recent proposals by President Bush for new space missions?

Last July, the President proposed a program to use space satellites to monitor the Earth's environment and begin new manned missions to the Moon, followed by manned exploration of Mars. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this proposed program?

Thirty-three percent of the public is aware of President Bush's proposed space program. Awareness of the proposal correlates with media and news attentiveness as well as specific interest in the space program.



Once familiarized with the main points of President Bush's proposal, 70% supports it. One of the primary reasons for favoring the Bush program is the earth observation function of the program. Increased concern with environment finds an expression in support for the space program. The main reason for opposing the program is its cost.

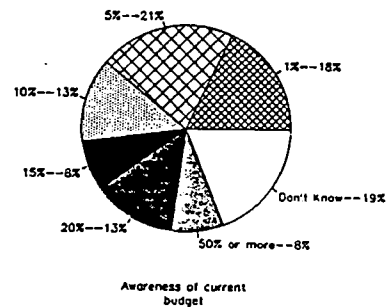


## EXPENDITURES FOR THE CIVILIAN SPACE PROGRAM

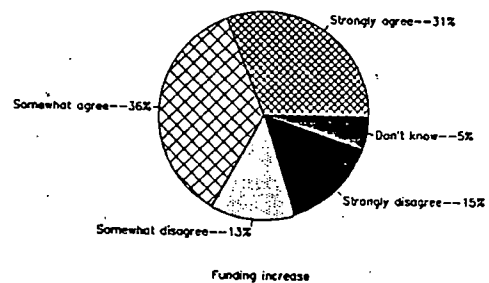
*About what percentage of the federal government's budget do you think is spent for civilian space programs like satellites and space missions?*

*Approximately 1% of the annual federal budget is currently spent on the civilian space program.. It has been estimated that the starting of new initiatives in space will require increasing NASA's budget to about 2% of the total federal budget. Do you agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that this is a reasonable amount to spend?*

Awareness of the space program's share of the federal budget is low. A majority of the public feels NASA's share is substantially higher than it actually is (Correct answer is 1%).



When told what the actual share of the space program's budget is, support for an increased budget is substantial. Sixty-seven percent of the public would support increasing NASA's budget share to about 2%.



*P*  
*Finished*  
*CB*

Summary of Findings

DEM. BULLETS: ABORTION  
HEALTH CARE  
S/L

ANS. BY 1) SAVING DEFENSE  
2) COMING AT HEART

President Bush

The President receives the highest marks yet in the RNC national surveys. A 77% to 17% majority approve of his job performance, and a 67% to 13% majority give him a warm/favorable rating on the warm/cold scale.

Thirty-three percent now say that they strongly approve of the President's job, an indication of deepening support for his performance. Only 22 percent (down from 31 percent last October) believe he has been "too cautious" in handling his responsibilities; 69 percent believe he has been "about right" rather than too bold or too cautious.

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN

Return to summary

Current Issue Agenda

Concern with the drug problem is unabated. It remains the highest rated priority for the federal government with close to 80 percent of the public now rating it at the top of the issue importance scale. The drug problem also topped two other lists in the survey; the most important of the President's six education goals, ie., "schools will be free of drugs and violence" and as the most closely followed issue in the news.

Contrary to the normal pattern, the voters have more confidence in the incumbent party to handle the nation's most serious problem. By 42% to 26%, they prefer the Republican Party over the Democrats on combatting drugs. Moreover, the Republican margin has slightly increased, rather than eroded, over the past 15 months.

Education and the environment remain just behind the drug problem in the voters' priorities for the federal government. Both problems are rated as important as last year. There are no significant differences between Republicans and Democrats or core Bush and anti-Bush voters in their ratings of drugs, education, and the environment as the nation's top three issues.

The public's preference for the Democratic Party to handle the education issue continues to shrink. Currently, a 40% to 37% plurality prefer the Democrats to improve education.

On the environment, the Democrats continue to hold a large lead, 49% to 26%, with their current margin being slightly larger than last year.

After drugs, education, and the environment there are four issues on the public agenda: economic competitiveness, the budget deficit, health insurance, and nuclear arms control. The Republican Party is the preferred party to handle all but health insurance.

Completing the list of issues tested, the voters rank in order of importance: the economy, housing for the homeless, national defense, abortion, and taxes. The Republican Party is the party of preference on national defense, the economy, and taxes. The Democratic Party is the party of preference on the homeless. The Democrats are slightly preferred on the abortion issue, 36% to 33%.

PHOTOCOPY  
GB HANDWRITING

Republicans and core Bush voters rank economic competitiveness and the budget deficit as high on their agenda as they rank the environment and just behind their ranking of education. Democrats and anti-Bush voters place health insurance as high as the environment on their agenda, and they rank housing for the homeless close behind health insurance. Health insurance and the homeless generate the largest partisan differences in these priority rankings with Democrats rating them very high and Republicans rating them relatively low.

### **The Deficit and Taxes**

General support for a tax increase is the same as last April: 41 percent would support a tax increase "as one part of an overall plan to reduce the federal budget deficit." Fifty-five percent are opposed. Surprisingly, there is little difference between Republicans and Democrats or core Bush and anti-Bush voters. All are opposed to a tax increase by about the same moderate margins.

A 52% to 43% majority think it will be necessary, eventually, to increase taxes to reduce the deficit, but a 55% to 38% majority do not think it will be necessary to have such a tax increase in the next year. The majority acknowledging the inevitability of a tax increase has *not* grown in the past year. Instead, it is down slightly from the previous results.

Increasing the gasoline tax, specifically, to reduce the deficit is met with about the same result as an undefined tax increase although the wording is admittedly biased toward a favorable response. By 53% to 45%, the voters *disagree* with the statement that "an increase in the gasoline tax to reduce the deficit is a good idea because it would encourage Americans to conserve gasoline and our gasoline prices would still be lower than in most other countries." Again, the Republican and Democratic coalitions are similarly divided in their responses to this issue.

### **The President's Education Goals**

Forty-six percent of the public, over one-half of the core Bush voters and four-in-ten anti-Bush voters, say they have read or heard about the national education goals announced by the President in January.

Of the six goals, the public believes the most important one is making the schools drug-free. They judge adult literacy and training as the next most important. The other four goals are ranked as follows: ninety percent graduation rate, demonstrated competency in core subjects, pre-school preparation, and reaching first place in math and science.

## Foreign Policy Issues

The President's current policy toward China is supported by a 58% to 33% majority. In the context of a reminder of the events last June, the voters were asked to choose between two policies: "deal with the current government leaders but apply political pressure on them to introduce democratic reforms" or "don't deal with the current government leaders and support those who want to establish a democracy in China." Fifty-eight percent sided with the first policy.

On the issue of assisting the Soviet Union, over 70 percent majorities favor sending them "economic advisors" and granting the Soviets the same trading rights as our traditional trading partners, but over seventy percent oppose "direct economic aid" to the Soviet Union.

## President Bush: Job Performance

*Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?  
Would that be strongly (approve/disapprove) or just somewhat (approve/disapprove)?*

| Collapsed Responses | March<br>1990 | October<br>1989 | April<br>1989 |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Approve             | 77%           | 75%             | 70%           |
| Disapprove          | 18            | 18              | 19            |

### Full Responses

|                          |     |     |     |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Strongly approve         | 33% | 29% | 27% |
| Just somewhat approve    | 44  | 45  | 43  |
| Just somewhat disapprove | 11  | 10  | 11  |
| Strongly disapprove      | 6   | 8   | 8   |
| Don't know/NA            | 6   | 7   | 11  |

| Subgroups        | Approve | Disapprove |
|------------------|---------|------------|
| Republicans      | 94%     | 4          |
| Ticket-Splitters | 79%     | 17         |
| Democrats        | 58%     | 35         |
| Men              | 78%     | 19         |
| Women            | 76%     | 17         |
| Blacks           | 62%     | 29         |
| Right Direction  | 89%     | 8          |
| Wrong Track      | 68%     | 25         |

### Comment

The President continues to win increasing 'strong approval' marks from the public, a sign of deepening satisfaction with his performance.

American women are especially approving of the President's performance: there is no gender gap in approval despite the fact that women are significantly more Democratic in outlook than men.

## Reasons for Bush Job Approval and Disapproval<sup>1</sup>

| <b>APPROVAL</b><br>Selected Mentions |     | <b>DISAPPROVAL</b><br>Selected Mentions |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|---|-----|
| He's doing a good job                | 31% | Economic problems/policies              | 3%  |
| Foreign affairs                      | 9   | Not decisive/not strong leader          | 3   |
| Stand on drugs                       | 8   | Not doing a good job                    | 2   |
| Agree with his stands in general     | 8   | Doesn't care about people               | 2   |
| Decisive/strong leader               | 7   | Not doing enough about drugs            | 2   |
|                                      |     |   |     |
| Likes how he handled Panama          | 5   | Not taking care of U.S. needs           | 2   |
| Good man - I like him                | 5   | Not keeping his promises                | 1   |
| Hasn't done anything wrong           | 4   | Doesn't like him                        | 1   |
| He's honest and sincere              | 4   | Foreign Policy                          | 1   |
| Likes his (family/religious) values  | 3   | Stand on education                      | 1   |
| Economy                              | 3   | He's a Republican                       | 1   |
|                                      |     |   |     |
| He is intelligent/educated/smart     | 2   | Foreign aid                             | 1   |
| Education stands                     | 2   | Stands on environment                   | *   |
| Abortion stand                       | ② ✓ | Stand on abortion                       | * ✓ |
| Relations with Soviets               | 1   |   |     |
| He's Republican                      | 1   |   |     |
|                                      |     |   |     |
| Military/defense stands              | 1   |   |     |
| Stand on taxes                       | 1   |   |     |
| Environment                          | *   |   |     |
|                                      |     |   |     |
| Others                               | 4   | Others                                  | 1   |
| Don't know/NA                        | 12  | Don't know/NA                           | 3   |

### Comment

Americans tend toward general reasons for approving of the President's job: four-in-ten name either a general policy areas or else personality reasons for their approval. In October, the most often mentioned specific issue area was cited by 16% (for stand on drugs), while in this study half that number mention the specific issue of drugs as a reason for approving of Bush.

Americans name 'decisive/strong leadership' as a reason for approval at twice the rate 'indecisive/weak leadership' is named as a reason for disapproval. This is likely an improvement since October: at that time, Bush 'weakness' was mentioned more often as a reason for disapproval than 'stands up for what he believes in' was mentioned as a cause for approval.

<sup>1</sup>Percentage based on total sample (N=1200)

**President Bush: General Feelings**

| <b>Trend</b>   | <b>51-100<br/>Warm</b> | <b>50<br/>Neutral</b> | <b>0-49<br/>Cold</b> | <b>Don't Know<br/>Ref./NA</b> | <b>Avg.<sup>2</sup></b> |
|----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| March, 1990    | 67%                    | 19                    | 13                   | 1                             | 67°                     |
| October, 1989  | 62%                    | 20                    | 17                   | 1                             | 64°                     |
| April          | 63%                    | 16                    | 19                   | 2                             | 64°                     |
| Jan., 1989     | 54%                    | 17                    | 26                   | 3                             | 58°                     |
| Nov. 6-7, 1988 | 48%                    | 16                    | 34                   | 3                             | 53°                     |
| Sept. 27-28    | 47%                    | 16                    | 34                   | 3                             | 54°                     |
| Aug. 22-24     | 56%                    | 15                    | 30                   | 2                             | 57°                     |
| Aug. 3-6       | 42%                    | 17                    | 38                   | 3                             | 50°                     |
| July           | 44%                    | 17                    | 37                   | 2                             | 50°                     |
| May            | 38%                    | 22                    | 38                   | 2                             | 48°                     |
| March          | 42%                    | 16                    | 36                   | 6                             | 49°                     |

**Intense Favorability**

**90-100°**

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| March, 1990   | 13 |
| October, 1989 | 20 |
| April         | 19 |
| January, 1989 | 13 |

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<sup>2</sup> Average on a 0-to-100 scale where 0=very cold, 50=not warm or cold, and 100=very warm

## Bush Style of Leadership

*In general, do you think George Bush has been too bold, too cautious, or about right in handling his responsibilities as President?*

|               | March<br>1990 | October<br>1989 |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Too bold      | 6%            | 2%              |
| Too cautious  | 22            | 31              |
| About right   | 69            | 63              |
| Don't Know/NA | 4             | 5               |

| Subgroups        | Too<br>Bold | Too<br>Cautious | About<br>Right |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Republican       | 3%          | 13              | 82             |
| Ticket-Splitters | 5%          | 22              | 69             |
| Democrats        | 10%         | 31              | 54             |
| Bush Core        | 2%          | 13              | 84             |
| Swing            | 6%          | 20              | 72             |
| Anti-Bush        | 11%         | 41              | 40             |

### Comment

This Democratic attack theme has gained no acceptance from the American public.

## Volunteered Perceptions of President Bush's Accomplishments and Disappointments

*What has George Bush done so far that has impressed you the most?*

*What has George Bush done so far that has disappointed you the most?*

| <b>Impressive<br/>(Selected Mentions)</b> |     | <b>Disappointing<br/>(Selected Mentions)</b> |    |
|---|-----|--|----|
| Handling of Panama/Noriega                | 16% | Not doing enough about poverty               | 5% |
| Action against drugs                      | 14  | His stand on abortion                        | 4  |
| General foreign policy                    | 11  | Stand on taxes                               | 4  |
| Policy toward Eastern Europe              | 9   | Not doing enough about drugs                 | 4  |
| Doing good job                            | 7   | Not doing enough about budget                | 3  |
| Decisive/strong leader                    | 4   | How he handled Panama                        | 3  |
| Communicates well                         | 4   | Not decisive/strong leader                   | 3  |
| Stand on abortion                         | 3   | Education                                    | 3  |
| Stand on education                        | 2   | Hasn't done enough for hostages              | 2  |
| Stands on issues generally                | 2   | Foreign policy in general                    | 2  |
| Economic situation                        | 2   | Foreign aid                                  | 2  |
| His honesty/sincerity                     | 2   | Environmental issues                         | 2  |
| Stand on taxes                            | 2   | China policies                               | 2  |
| Values/religious values                   | 2   | Help for elderly                             | 2  |
| Hasn't done anything wrong                | 1   | Choice of Dan Quayle                         | 2  |
| I like him                                | 1   | Hasn't help unemployment                     | 1  |
| Stand on homelessness                     | 1   | Not doing enough for economy                 | 1  |
| He cares about people                     | 1   | Handling of South Africa                     | 1  |
| Working with the budget                   | 1   |  |    |
| Stand on Social Security                  | *   |  |    |
| Intelligent                               | *   |  |    |
| Others                                    | 5   | Others                                       | 12 |
| Nothing has impressed                     | 14  | Nothing has disappointed                     | 26 |
| Don't Know/NA                             | 22  | Don't know/NA                                | 24 |

### Comment

In October of last year, the President's messages and actions on drugs was first in peoples minds and was mentioned by 32% of the public in response to this question. Now Americans' impressions are more balanced between drug actions, Panama, and foreign policy in general.

**Vice-President Quayle: General Feelings**

| <b>Trend</b>     | <b>51-100<br/>Warm</b> | <b>50<br/>Neutral</b> | <b>0-49<br/>Cold</b> | <b>Don't Know<br/>Ref./NA</b> | <b>Avg.<sup>3</sup></b> |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| March, 1990      | 27%                    | 28                    | 40                   | 4                             | 44°                     |
| October, 1989    | 28%                    | 24                    | 40                   | 9                             | 44°                     |
| April            | 35%                    | 20                    | 38                   | 8                             | 46°                     |
| Jan., 1989       | 26%                    | 24                    | 43                   | 7                             | 41°                     |
| Nov. 6-7, 1988   | 22%                    | 21                    | 52                   | 5                             | 37°                     |
| Sept. 27-28      | 25%                    | 19                    | 46                   | 9                             | 40°                     |
| Aug. 22-24, 1988 | 38%                    | 18                    | 33                   | 11                            | 50°                     |

| <b>Subgroups (March, 1990)</b> | <b>Warm</b> | <b>Neutral</b> | <b>Cold</b> | <b>Avg.</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Republicans                    | 47%         | 27             | 22          | 57°         |
| Ticket-splitters               | 25%         | 30             | 40          | 44°         |
| Democrats                      | 14%         | 22             | 61          | 32°         |
| Men                            | 29%         | 25             | 43          | 43°         |
| Women                          | 26%         | 31             | 37          | 45°         |
| 18-29                          | 19%         | 32             | 43          | 40°         |
| 30-39                          | 28%         | 26             | 42          | 44°         |
| 40-64                          | 32%         | 28             | 37          | 46°         |
| 65+                            | 29%         | 26             | 40          | 45°         |

<sup>3</sup>Average on a 0-to-100 scale where 0=very cold, 50=not very warm or cold, and 100=very warm.

### Vice-President Quayle: Job Performance

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Dan Quayle is handling his job as Vice-President?  
Would that be strongly (approve/disapprove) or just somewhat (approve/disapprove)?

|                            | March<br>1990 | Oct<br>1989 | April<br>1989 |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>Collapsed Responses</b> |               |             |               |
| Approve                    | 49%           | 38%         | 50%           |
| Disapprove                 | 23            | 22          | 22            |
| Don't know/NA              | 28            | 41          | 22            |

Do you think Dan Quayle would or would not be able to handle the job of President if something happened to President Bush?

|                   |     |     |     |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Would be able     | 34% | 34% | 41% |
| Would not be able | 52  | 52  | 49  |
| Don't know/NA     | 14  | 14  | 10  |

| Subgroups        | Job Performance |             |            | Able to Handle Presidency |           |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------|
|                  | Approve         | Dis-approve | Don't Know | Would                     | Would not |
| Republicans      | 63%             | 14          | 23         | 46%                       | 40        |
| Ticket-Splitters | 50%             | 23          | 27         | 33%                       | 55        |
| Democrats        | 37%             | 33          | 30         | 26%                       | 60        |
| Men              | 52%             | 25          | 24         | 37%                       | 51        |
| Women            | 46%             | 22          | 32         | 31%                       | 53        |
| East North       |                 |             |            |                           |           |
| Central          | 53%             | 24          | 23         | 37%                       | 51        |
| Mid Atlantic     | 43%             | 25          | 32         | 29%                       | 55        |
| Southern Whites  | 56%             | 18          | 26         | 38%                       | 48        |

#### Comment

Nearly one in two 'Approvers' of the Vice-President's job handling fail to translate this attitude into confidence in his ability to handle the job of president. These Americans may be thought of as the first step for the Vice-President in winning the confidence of a majority of the public to handle the job of president. If only half of this group were to see that what they approve of in the job Quayle is doing demonstrates his capability to act as president, a clear plurality, and very close to an overall majority of the public would hold confidence in the Vice-President to handle the job.

## Congress: Job Performance

*Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job? Would that be strongly (approve/disapprove) or just somewhat (approve/disapprove)?*

| Collapsed Responses | March 1990 | Oct. 1989 | April 1989 | 1984 | Nov. 1983 | Early 1983 | 1982 | Oct. 1979 |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|------------|------|-----------|------------|------|-----------|
| Approve             | 48%        | 51%       | 50%        | 46%  | 34%       | 51%        | 37%  | 18%       |
| Disapprove          | 40         | 34        | 39         | 33   | 32        | 33         | 39   | 67        |
| Don't Know/<br>NA   | 12         | 15        | 11         | 21   | 34        | 16         | 42   | 15        |

### Subgroups

|                  | Approve | Disapprove |                       | Approve | Disapprove |
|------------------|---------|------------|-----------------------|---------|------------|
| Republicans      | 40%     | 49         | Men                   | 45%     | 46         |
| Ticket-splitters | 48%     | 40         | Women                 | 50%     | 34         |
| Democrats        | 57%     | 33         | Pro-life              | 40%     | 46         |
| 18-39 years      | 55%     | 32         | In-between & somewhat |         |            |
| 40-64 years      | 43%     | 46         | pro-choice            | 55%     | 34         |
| 65+ years        | 38%     | 51         | Strongly pro-choice   | 46%     | 42         |

### Comment

The increase in disapproval since October of last year comes almost entirely from Republicans. At that time they approved of Congress' job by 50% to 40%.

## Generic Congressional Ballot

*If the elections for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, would you be voting for the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate from your district?*

*Which way do you lean as of today -- toward the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate?*

|               | March<br>1990 | October<br>1989 | April<br>1989 |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Republican    | 40%           | 43%             | 38%           |
| Democrat      | 41            | 47              | 46            |
| Don't Know/NA | 18            | 10              | 16            |

### Subgroups

|                   | Rep | Dem |                     | Rep | Dem |
|-------------------|-----|-----|---------------------|-----|-----|
| Republicans       | 87% | 4   | Men                 | 43% | 39  |
| Ticket-splitters  | 35% | 39  | Women               | 38% | 43  |
| Democrats         | 3%  | 90  | Strongly pro-life   | 45% | 35  |
| 18-39 years       | 43% | 40  | Strongly pro-choice | 35% | 47  |
| 40-64 years       | 37% | 44  |                     |     |     |
| 65+ years         | 41% | 42  |                     |     |     |
| Bush Core Support | 81% | 6   |                     |     |     |
| Swing             | 21% | 56  |                     |     |     |
| Anti-Bush         | 1%  | 88  |                     |     |     |

### Comment

More Republicans were found in this study than in October, so some improvement in the generic ballot question is to be expected.

Ticket-Splitters were found in October to favor Republicans by five percentage points.

## Party Confidence

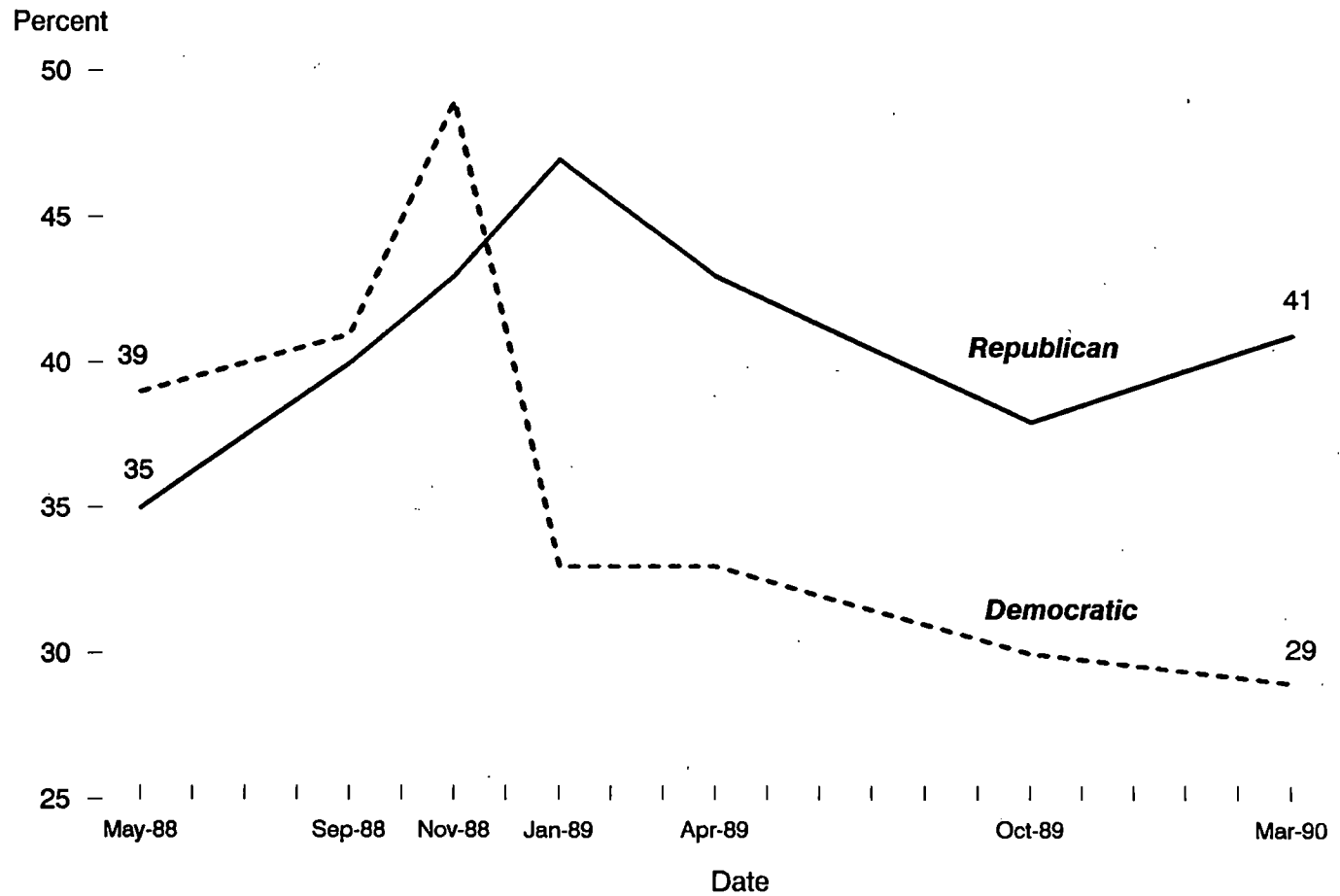
*Do you have more confidence in the policies and programs of the Republican party or the Democratic Party to solve the problems facing the country?*

|                   | 1990<br>March | Oct. | April | 1989<br>Jan. | Nov.<br>6-7 | Sept. | 1988<br>May |
|-------------------|---------------|------|-------|--------------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| Republican        | 41%           | 38%  | 43%   | 47%          | 43%         | 40%   | 35%         |
| Democratic        | 29            | 30   | 33    | 33           | 49          | 41    | 39          |
| Both/<br>Neither  | 22            | 22   | 19    | 16           | 11          | 12    | 16          |
| Don't Know/<br>NA | 9             | 10   | 5     | 4            | 8           | 7     | 10          |
| <b>GOP Margin</b> | 12            | 8    | 10    | 14           | -6          | 1     | -4          |

### Subgroups

|                                  | Rep<br>Party | Dem<br>Party | Both/Neither/<br>NA |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Republicans                      | 86%          | 3            | 11                  |
| Ticket-Splitters                 | 35%          | 22           | 44                  |
| Democrats                        | 5%           | 68           | 27                  |
| Men                              | 44%          | 25           | 31                  |
| Women                            | 38%          | 32           | 70                  |
| 18-29 years                      | 43%          | 33           | 24                  |
| 30-39 years                      | 43%          | 23           | 34                  |
| 40+                              | 39%          | 29           | 32                  |
| Blacks                           | 13%          | 55           | 30                  |
| Right Direction                  | 51%          | 34           | 26                  |
| Wrong Track                      | 35%          | 33           | 33                  |
| <i>Generic Vote for Congress</i> |              |              |                     |
| Republican                       | 82%          | 4            | 15                  |
| Democratic                       | 8%           | 60           | 31                  |

## Trend in Which Party the Public Holds Confidence In Since 1988



Source: US National Survey, March, 1990  
RNC Survey Research

## Party Issue Handling

*Here are some issues and problems. For each one, please tell me whether you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party would do a better job of handling it.*

|   | Republican<br>Party | Democratic<br>Party | Current<br>GOP<br>Margin | 1989<br>GOP<br>Margin <sup>4</sup> |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Maintaining a strong national defense                     | 61%                 | 21                  | 40                       | 39                                 |
| Reaching nuclear arms control agreements                  | 51%                 | 25                  | 26                       | 27                                 |
| Promoting growth in the national economy                  | 52%                 | 27                  | 25                       | n.a.                               |
| Making our country more competitive with Japan and Europe | 51%                 | 27                  | 24                       | 22 <sup>5</sup>                    |
| Avoiding a recession                                      | 48%                 | 28                  | 20                       | n.a.                               |
| Combatting the drug problem                               | 42%                 | 26                  | 16                       | 10                                 |
| Reduce the federal budget deficit                         | 47%                 | 32                  | 15                       | 14                                 |
| Avoiding a tax increase                                   | 47%                 | 33                  | 14                       | n.a.                               |
| Doing the right thing on the nation's abortion laws       | 33%                 | 36                  | -3                       | -7                                 |
| Improving public education                                | 37%                 | 40                  | -3                       | -10                                |
| ✓ Protecting the environment                              | 26%                 | 49                  | -23                      | -20                                |
| ✓ Making sure all Americans have basic health care        | 21%                 | 59                  | -38                      | n.a.                               |
| ✓ Providing housing for the homeless                      | 19%                 | 59                  | -40                      | -40                                |

<sup>4</sup>Results are from studies conducted in January, April, and October of 1989. Results are averaged for issues asked in more than one study.

<sup>5</sup>1989 wording was 'Improving our competitive position in world markets'.

**Party Handling Trends for Drugs, Education and Environment**

| <b>Net Republican Advantage</b>           | <b>1990 March</b> | <b>1989 Oct.</b> | <b>1989 April</b> | <b>1989 Jan.</b> |
|---|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Reducing the federal budget deficit       | +15               | +12              | +19               | +11              |
| ✓ Combatting the drug problem             | +16               | +13              | +12               | +6 <sup>6</sup>  |
| Improving the quality of public education | -3                | -8               | -6                | -15              |
| Protecting the environment                | -23               | -21              | -19               | n.a. ←           |

<sup>6</sup>January wording: 'Solving the drug problem'

## Party Identification

| Party Identification | 1990  | October | April | 1989    |
|----------------------|-------|---------|-------|---------|
|                      | March |         |       | January |
| Republican           | 48%   | 45%     | 44%   | 46%     |
| Democratic           | 43    | 46      | 47    | 47      |
| Independent          | 9     | 8       | 8     | 7       |
| Other/NA             | 1     | 1       | 1     | 2       |

### Subgroups

|                     | Party ID       |            |
|---------------------|----------------|------------|
|                     | Republican     | Democratic |
| Men                 | 52% ✓          | 38         |
| 18-34 years         | 55% <u>81%</u> | 35         |
| 35+ years           | 49%            | 41         |
| Women               | 44% ✓          | 48         |
| 18-34 years         | 48%            | 44         |
| 35+ years           | 42%            | 50         |
| New Deal Groups     |                |            |
| Northern Protestant | 61%            | 31         |
| Northern Catholic   | 52%            | 39         |
| Northern Union      | 44%            | 46         |
| Southern White      | 55%            | 36         |
| Blacks              | 10%            | 80         |
| Jews                | 19%            | 77         |

### Comment

For the first time during the Bush Presidency, a plurality of Americans identify with the Republican party over the Democratic party. This could signal a break in the GOP direction after being mired in parity with the Democrats over the past two years.

This encouraging result comes in spite of the fact that the sample demographics in all important ways match previous samples.

## National Direction

*Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?*

|                   | 1990<br>March | Oct. | April | 1989<br>Jan. | Aug. | 1988<br>March | 1987 | 1986 |
|-------------------|---------------|------|-------|--------------|------|---------------|------|------|
| Right Direction   | 39%           | 40%  | 46%   | 53%          | 48%  | 41%           | 39%  | 54%  |
| Wrong Track       | 54            | 51   | 41    | 37           | 44   | 49            | 53   | 34   |
| Don't Know/<br>NA | 7             | 9    | 13    | 10           | 8    | 10            | 8    | 12   |
| <b>Difference</b> | -15           | -11  | 5     | 16           | 4    | -8            | -14  | 20   |

### Subgroups

|                  | Right Direction | Wrong Track | Don't Know/<br>NA |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Republicans      | 47%             | 48          | 6                 |
| Ticket-Splitters | 41%             | 54          | 6                 |
| Democrats        | 31%             | 63          | 6                 |
| Men              | 42%             | 54          | 5                 |
| Women            | 38%             | 55          | 7                 |
| 18-39 years      | 42%             | 54          | 4                 |
| 40-64 years      | 40%             | 54          | 6                 |
| 65+              | 32%             | 57          | 11                |
| Blacks           | 21%             | 75          | 4                 |

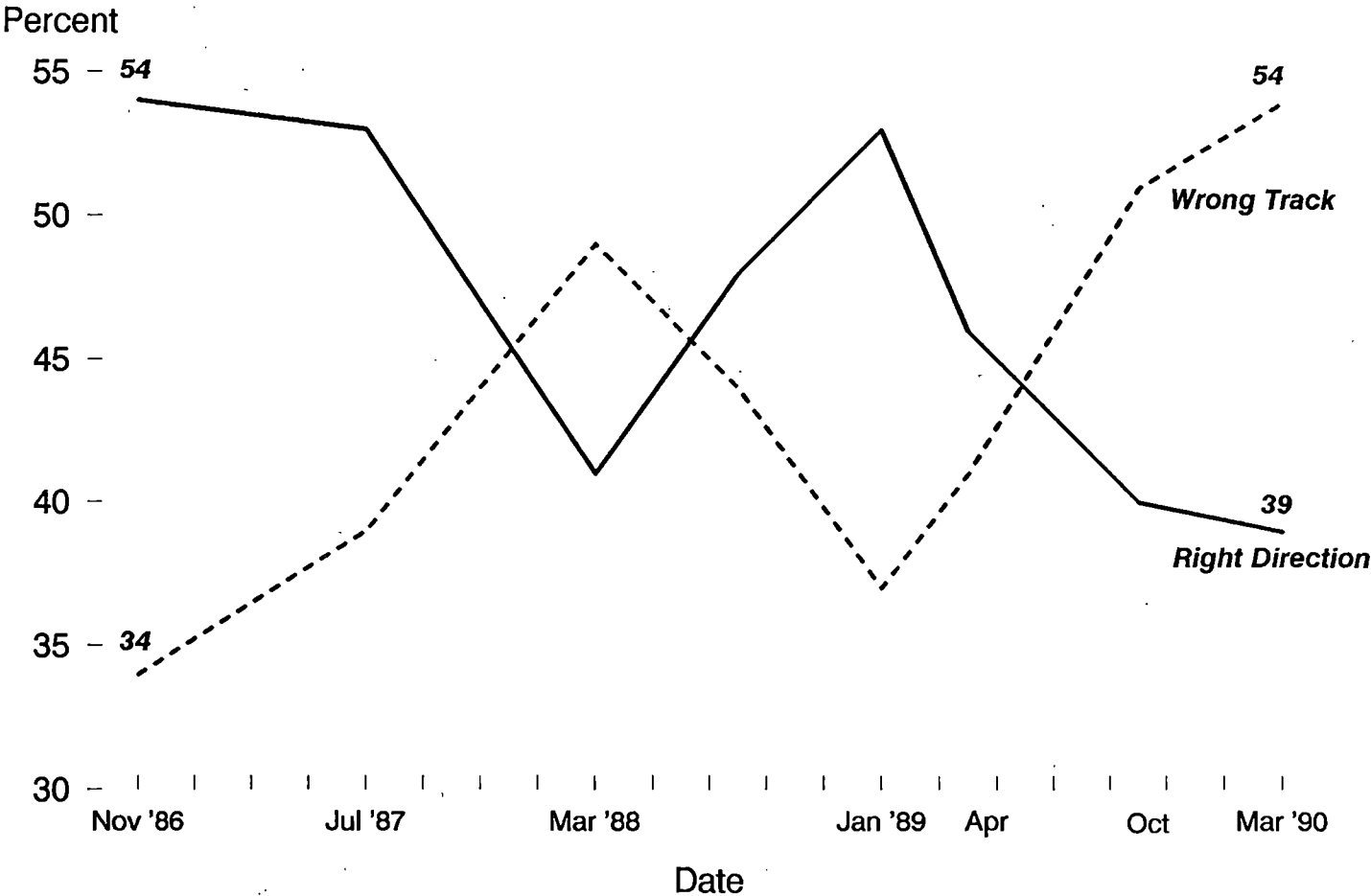
### Comment

Compared to January of 1989, partisanship no longer strongly drives Right Direction/Wrong Track attitudes. At that time, almost three-quarters of Republicans said the country was going in the right direction while Democrats held attitudes similar to what they hold today. This trend bears watching for improvement once the GOP federal and state campaigns get in gear. It should improve since in most other ways Republicans appear to be activated and hold positive attitudes towards their party.

Previous open-ended follow-up questioning and focus group findings indicate that concern for the problem of drugs is driving 'Wrong Track' attitudes.

# Right Direction or Wrong Track?

National Direction Since 1986



Source: US National Survey, March, 1990  
RNC Survey Research

## Volunteered National Problems

*What do you think are the most important problems facing the country at the present time?*

|  | 1990<br>April | 1989<br>October | April | 1989<br>January |
|--|---------------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|
| Drugs                                  | 49%           | 57%             | 31%   | 19%             |
| Homelessness                           | 23            | 18              | 16    | 15              |
| Crime                                  | 15            | 8               | 8     | 5               |
| Education                              | 12            | 16              | 11    | 7               |
| Budget deficit and national debt       | 12            | 10              | 20    | 32              |
| Economy                                | 11            | 5               | 16    | 15              |
| Pollution/Environment                  | 10            | 7               | 15    | 4               |
| Abortion                               | 7             | 4               | 5     | 2               |
| Unemployment                           | 6             | 9               | 9     | 11              |
| Foreign Relations, unspecified         | 5             | 5               | 14    | 4               |
| Poverty                                | 3             | 5               | 3     | 3               |
| Senior health care/costs/Soc. Security | 3             | 4               | 2     | 2               |
| Health care/insurance                  | 3             | 4               | 5     | 5               |
| AIDS                                   | 2             | 4               | 5     | 3               |
| Taxes                                  | 2             | 4               | 3     | 3               |
| Hunger                                 | 1             | 2               | -     | -               |
| Racism                                 | 1             | 1               | 2     | 1               |
| Don't know/NA                          | 13            | 2               | 5     | 13              |

### Comment

Four specific domestic issues dominate the public's agenda while the broad issue of prosperity has rebounded some in importance since October.

Homelessness stands out among the most mentioned issues as lacking the same broad agreement over its importance which other issues enjoy. It is ranked second by partisans of both parties, but the Democrats are more than twice as likely to mention this problem than Republicans (34% to 15%). Of all other issues, only unemployment draws such strong disagreement over its importance between partisans. Women are also significantly more concerned about homelessness than are men.

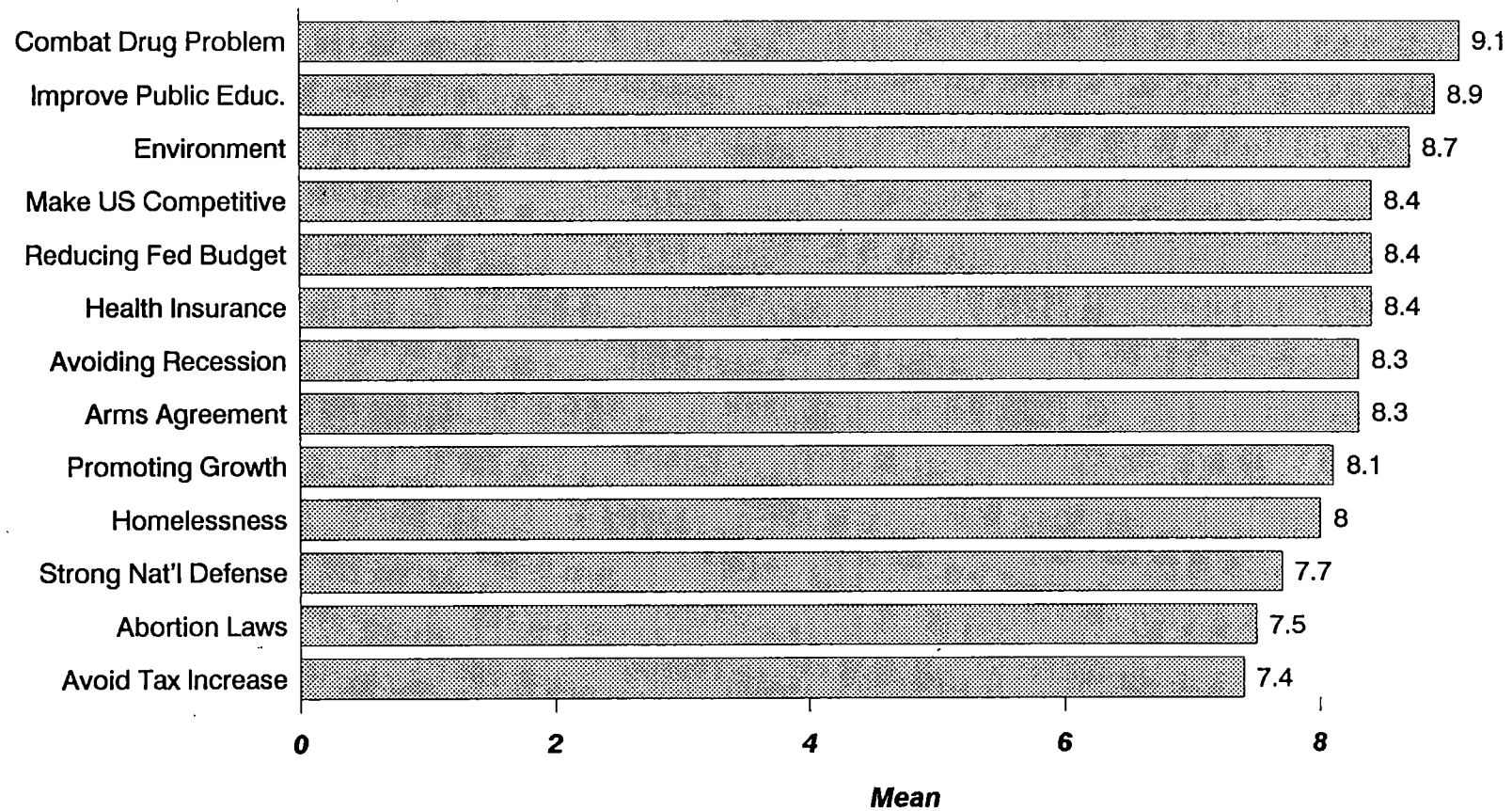
Notable in its absence is any mention of the problem of war and peace.

## Trends in Rating of Government Goals

| For each goal:<br>Average Rating <sup>7</sup> and<br>Percent Rating Issue '9' or '10' | 1990<br>March | 1989<br>October | 1989<br>April |
|---|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Combatting the drug problem</b>  | 9.1<br>78%    | 9.0<br>75%      | 8.9<br>74%    |
| <b>Improving the quality of<br/>public education</b>                                  | 8.9<br>68%    | 8.9<br>69%      | 8.6<br>65%    |
| <b>Protecting the environment</b>   | 8.7<br>68%    | 8.6<br>64%      | 8.6<br>62%    |
| <b>Making our country more economically<br/>competitive with Japan and Europe</b>     | 8.4<br>58%    |                 |               |
| <b>Reducing the federal<br/>budget deficit</b>  | 8.4<br>58%    | 8.1<br>48%      | 8.3<br>58%    |
| <b>Making sure all Americans have basic<br/>health insurance coverage</b>             | 8.4<br>59%    |                 |               |
| <b>Avoiding a recession</b>   | 8.3<br>54%    |                 |               |
| <b>Reaching nuclear arms<br/>control agreements</b>                                   | 8.3<br>54%    |                 |               |
| <b>Promoting growth in<br/>the national economy</b>                                   | 8.1<br>46%    |                 |               |
| <b>Providing housing for the homeless</b>   | 8.0<br>51%    |                 | 8.0<br>49%    |
| <b>Maintaining a strong national defense</b>  | 7.7<br>44%    |                 |               |
| <b>Doing the right thing on the<br/>nation's abortion laws</b>                        | 7.5<br>47%    | 6.7<br>37%      |               |
| <b>Avoiding a tax increase</b>  | 7.4<br>41%    |                 |               |
| <b>Making child care services<br/>more available and affordable</b>                   |               | 7.3<br>37%      |               |

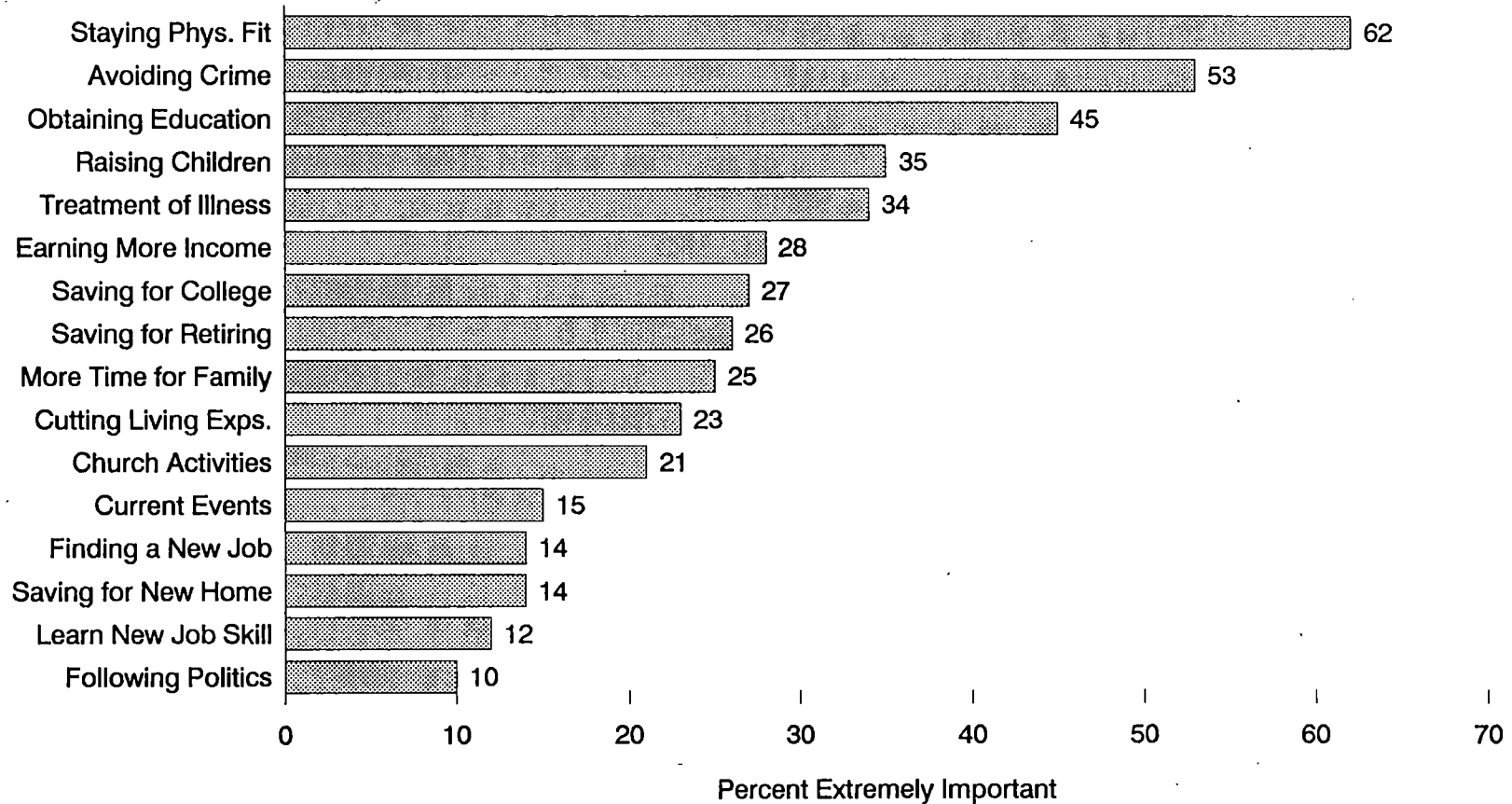
<sup>7</sup>Average on a 0-to-10 scale where 0=not at all important and 10=extremely important.

## How Important are the Following Goals (Zero to Ten Scale)



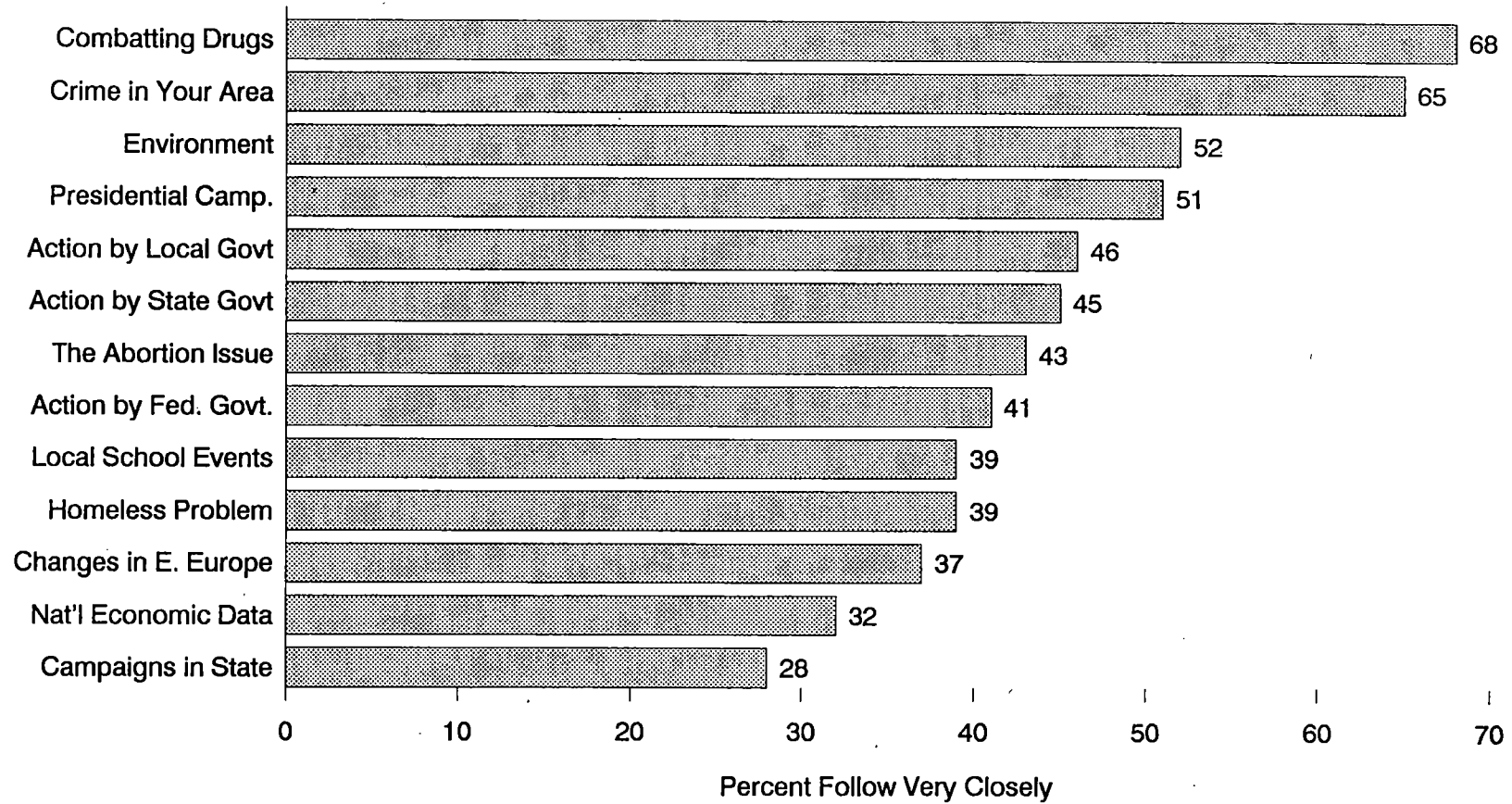
March, 1990 study of 1200 U.S. Adults  
RNC Survey Research, 4-90

## How Important are the Following Things to You and Your Family?



March, 1990 study of 1200 U.S. Adults  
RNC Survey Research, 4-90

## How Closely Do You Follow the News on...



March, 1990 study of 1200 U.S. Adults  
RNC Survey Research, 4-90

## Tax Increases and Deficit Reductions

*Would you support or oppose a tax increase as one part of an overall plan to reduce the federal budget deficit?*

|               | 1990<br>March | October <sup>8</sup> | 1989<br>April |
|---------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Support       | 41%           | 53%                  | 41%           |
| Oppose        | 55            | 41                   | 55            |
| Don't know/NA | 5             | 6                    | 4             |

*Do you think that it will or will not be necessary to have a tax increase in order to reduce the deficit?*

|               | 1990<br>March | October | April | 1989<br>January |
|---------------|---------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Will          | 52%           | 53%     | 60%   | 56%             |
| Will Not      | 43            | 41      | 35    | 40              |
| Don't know/NA | 5             | 6       | 4     | 4               |

*Do you think that it will or will not be necessary to have a tax increase IN THE NEXT YEAR to reduce the deficit?*

|               | 1990<br>March | October | April | 1989<br>January |
|---------------|---------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Will          | 38%           | 38%     | 39%   | 37%             |
| Will Not      | 55            | 56      | 55    | 57              |
| Don't know/NA | 7             | 6       | 5     | 6               |

### Comment

Republicans and Ticket-Splitters provide the margin of majority opposition to a tax increase as a part of a deficit reduction plan as Democrats are evenly divided on this issue.

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<sup>8</sup>October's responses were possibly affected by question positioning.

## The Rostenkowski Plan

Here is a plan to eliminate the deficit by 1995 that was recently proposed by a congressional leader. After I read the five parts, please tell me if you would support or oppose the total plan?

The five parts are:

1. A one year freeze in spending on most government programs,
2. No increase in social security cost of living benefits for one year,
3. A reduction in military spending,
4. An increase in the gasoline tax,
5. And, an increase in the income tax on upper income people

Would you support or oppose this TOTAL plan to eliminate the deficit?

|               | 1990<br>March |
|---------------|---------------|
| Support       | 47%           |
| Oppose        | 48            |
| Don't know/NA | 5             |

| Subgroups   | Support | Oppose |
|---|---------|--------|
| Republicans   | 49%     | 46     |
| Ticket-splitters  | 47%     | 49     |
| Democrats   | 49%     | 46     |
| 18-29   | 55%     | 44     |
| 30-64   | 44%     | 51     |
| 65+   | 44%     | 53     |
| <i>Family income in 1989</i>  |         |        |
| \$15,000 and less   | 39%     | 53     |
| \$15-\$25,000   | 57%     | 40     |
| \$25-\$50,000   | 48%     | 48     |
| \$50,000+   | 43%     | 54     |
| <i>General position on tax increase as part of deficit reduction plan</i> |         |        |
| Supports  | 60%     | 37     |
| Opposes   | 39%     | 56     |

## Gas Tax Attitudes

*Do you agree or disagree with this statement concerning an INCREASE in the GASOLINE TAX to reduce the deficit: 'It is a **good idea** because it would encourage Americans to conserve gasoline and our gasoline prices would still be lower than in most other countries'?*

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Agree         | 45% |
| Disagree      | 53  |
| Don't know/NA | 3   |

| Subgroups   | Agree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------|
| Republicans   | 46%   | 51       |
| Ticket-Splitters  | 41%   | 56       |
| Democrats   | 49%   | 48       |
| 18-29   | 50%   | 49       |
| 30-54   | 39%   | 58       |
| 55-64   | 44%   | 51       |
| 65+   | 52%   | 43       |
| <i>Family income in 1989</i>  |       |          |
| Less than \$30,000  | 47%   | 50       |
| \$30-\$50,000   | 37%   | 60       |
| \$50,000+   | 48%   | 51       |
| <i>General position on tax increase as part of deficit reduction plan</i> |       |          |
| Supports  | 57%   | 41       |
| Opposes   | 35%   | 62       |

### Comment

The \$30,000-\$50,000 income group, which stands out as so strongly disagreeing with a gas tax increase, makes up a quarter of the public.

## The United States as a World Power

Who do you think is the world's number one economic power: Japan, Western Europe, or the United States?

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Japan          | 55% |
| Western Europe | 4   |
| United States  | 37  |
| Don't know/NA  | 3   |

Which of **one** of these three statements do you most agree with?

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| It is important for the United States to be the <b>number one</b> economic power in the world | 32% |
| It is important for the United States to be <b>one of several</b> world economic powers.      | 63  |
| It is <b>not</b> important for the United States to be a world economic power.                | 3   |
| Don't know/NA   | 1   |

Which of **one** of these three statements do you most agree with?

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| It is important for the United States to be the <b>number one</b> military power in the world. | 38% |
| It is important for the United States to be <b>one of several</b> world military powers.       | 55  |
| It is <b>not</b> important for the United States to be a world military power.                 | 5   |
| Don't know   | 1   |

### Comment

There is about a 70% overlap in attitudes towards the importance of the U.S.'s economic and military positions. Overall, just over one in five think that it is important for the U.S. to be both the premier economic and military power in the world, one in four say that it is important to be number one in either of the categories (most preferring military power), while one in two Americans agree that it is important to be only one of several economic or military powers, or else think that the country's world position is unimportant.

Perceptions of the United States' position as an economic power vary significantly only across age groups: the younger the voter, the less likely the U.S. is to be called the number one world economic power.

## U.S. Foreign Policy towards China

*Last June, as you may recall, the Chinese government used force against students and others who were demonstrating on behalf of democratic reforms. Which ONE of the following two choices do you think should be our country's policy toward the current Chinese leaders?*

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Deal with the current government leaders but apply political pressure on them to introduce democratic reforms | 58% |
| Don't deal with the current government leaders and support those who want to establish a democracy in China.  | 33  |
| Don't know/NA   | 8   |

| Subgroups               | Keep contacts | Ignore current leaders |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Republicans             | 63%           | 30                     |
| Ticket-Splitters        | 61%           | 32                     |
| Democrats               | 54%           | 38                     |
| Men                     | 63%           | 31                     |
| Women                   | 54%           | 36                     |
| Conservatives           | 61%           | 32                     |
| Liberals                | 56%           | 39                     |
| <i>Selected regions</i> |               |                        |
| Great Lakes             | 66%           | 29                     |
| South                   | 49%           | 39                     |
| Pacific Coast           | 60%           | 31                     |

### Comment

The results to this question are confirmed by an *Americans Talk Security* poll conducted in March which uses this identical question. That study found 59% favoring keeping contacts open and 33% favoring no contacts with the Chinese leadership.

## U.S. Foreign Policy Towards the Soviet Union

*Because of the changes occurring in the Soviet Union, some people have suggested that we provide help to them. Here are three possible ways we could assist the Soviet Union. For each one, please tell me if you favor or oppose it.*

|   | Favor | Oppose | Don't Know/<br>Refused |
|---|-------|--------|------------------------|
| Send economic advisors to help them restructure their economy.  | 78%   | 22     | 2                      |
| Remove trade restrictions so the Soviets have the same trading rights with us as do our traditional trading partners. | 71%   | 24     | 5                      |
| Provide direct economic aid to the Soviet Union.  | 19%   | 78     | 3                      |

### Comment

All of these attitudes towards aid to the Soviet Union are broadly held.

## Awareness of the President's Goals for Education

*Have you read or heard about the national education goals announced by President Bush last January?*

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Yes           | 46% |
| No            | 51  |
| Don't know/NA | 3   |

| Subgroups                  | Heard or read | Had not heard |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Men                        | 46%           | 51            |
| Women                      | 46%           | 51            |
| Blacks                     | 35%           | 62            |
| Children under 18          | 42%           | 55            |
| Children but none under 18 | 55%           | 41            |
| No children                | 42%           | 57            |

### Comment

Awareness of the President's education goals seems high: just as many say they have heard of his goals today, as said they were aware of the Education Summit in early October.

Attitudes towards ranking the President's goals do not vary by awareness as measured by this question.

## Importance of the President's Education Goals

*I'm going to read the six goals he announced and for each one please tell if you think it is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not very important. Use extremely important only when you think that goal should have the highest priority.*

*Of the six goals I just read, which ONE do you think is the most important to achieve by the year 2000?*

|   | <b>'Extremely' and<br/>'Very Important'<br/>Minus 'Somewhat'<br/>and 'Not Very Important'</b> | <b>Single Most<br/>Important</b> |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning  | 92  | 39%                              |
| By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship             | 70  | 21                               |
| By the year 2000, we will increase the percentage of students graduating from high school to at least ninety percent  | 76  | 14                               |
| By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography | 66  | 11                               |
| By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn  | 49  | 5                                |
| By the year 2000, U.S. students will be the first in the world in science and mathematics achievement   | 42  | 5                                |

(comments continued on next page)

## Importance of the President's Education Goals

### Comment

The rank order importance of these goals generally does not vary by major demographic group, though the emphasis on individual goals changes in some instances.

For example, nearly half of respondents with children under 18 put the goal of a drug and crime free school environment as the President's most important. Blacks and other lower-end status group whites also strongly emphasize a proper learning environment as a national goal.

The goal of universal adult literacy and citizenship skills in particular is viewed differently by specific groups. Democrats overall tend to put more weight on this goal than do all voters. At the same time, blacks do not take to this goal at all, and actually rank it just below 90% graduation rates and student competency testing.

## Perceptions of Actions Towards Savings and Loan Problem

*Do you think the actions begun a year ago to meet the problems facing savings and loan institutions have or have not been successful?*

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Successful     | 22% |
| Not Successful | 52  |
| Don't know/NA  | 25  |

| Subgroups        | Successful | Not Successful |
|------------------|------------|----------------|
| Republicans      | 24%        | 46             |
| Ticket-splitters | 20%        | 56             |
| Democrats        | 23%        | 57             |
| 18-29            | 28%        | 43             |
| 30-64            | 22%        | 54             |
| 65+              | 16%        | 61             |
| Men              | 24%        | 58             |
| Women            | 21%        | 47             |

# Wall Street Journal Polls

NOV. 1989 (14.) Do you favor or oppose the United States providing economic assistance to Hungary and Poland?

|               |           |    |      |
|---------------|-----------|----|------|
| Favor.....    | <u>57</u> | -1 | (49) |
| Oppose.....   | <u>31</u> | -2 |      |
| Not sure..... | <u>12</u> | -3 |      |



Dec. 1989 (12.) Let me read you several ways in which the United States could aid the Soviet Union's economy. For each one, please tell me whether you favor or oppose this idea. (READ EACH ITEM ON LIST. REPEAT CHOICES. RECORD BELOW.)

|  | <u>Favor</u> |    | <u>Oppose</u> |    | <u>Not Sure</u> |         |
|--|--------------|----|---------------|----|-----------------|---------|
| a. Remove trade restrictions so the Soviets could sell more goods and services in the United States.....                         | <u>51</u>    | -1 | <u>41</u>     | -2 | <u>8</u>        | -3 (29) |
| b. Allow American companies to sell high technology products to the Soviet Union even if they have potential military usage..... | <u>17</u>    | -1 | <u>77</u>     | -2 | <u>6</u>        | -3 (30) |
| c. Allow the Soviet Union to join international lending institutions so they could borrow more money from the West.....          | <u>45</u>    | -1 | <u>48</u>     | -2 | <u>7</u>        | -3 (31) |
| d. Provide direct economic aid to the Soviets.....   | <u>26</u>    | -1 | <u>66</u>     | -2 | <u>8</u>        | -3 (32) |

Jan. 1990 (9a.) Do you think the United States should or should not provide substantial economic assistance to (READ LIST SLOWLY) to help rebuild its economy? (REPEAT CHOICES FOR EACH ITEM. ROTATE ORDER OF ITEMS ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

|                  | <u>Should Provide Substantial Assistance</u> |    | <u>Should Not Provide Substantial Assistance</u> |    | <u>Not Sure</u> |         |
|------------------|--|----|--|----|-----------------|---------|
| Panama.....      | <u>62</u>                                    | -1 | <u>30</u>  | -2 | <u>8</u>        | -3 (72) |
| The Soviet Union | <u>25</u>                                    | -1 | <u>66</u>  | -2 | <u>9</u>        | -3 (73) |
| East Germany.... | <u>35</u>                                    | -1 | <u>55</u>  | -2 | <u>9</u>        | -3 (74) |
| Poland.....      | <u>46</u>                                    | -1 | <u>44</u>  | -2 | <u>10</u>       | -3 (75) |
| Romania.....     | <u>39</u>                                    | -1 | <u>48</u>  | -2 | <u>13</u>       | -3 (76) |

# MARKET OPINION REPORTS

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*a monthly look at national attitudes on political and public policy issues*

**Published by:**

**MARKET OPINION RESEARCH**



**March, 1990**

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## MARKET OPINION REPORTS

**Market Opinion Reports** summarizes a few key results of the March national voter attitude survey conducted by **Market Opinion Research (MOR)**. MOR's Political and Public Affairs Group conducts national surveys on political and public policy issues each month. For more information on MOR's series of monthly surveys, contact **Richard G. Reed**, Vice President or **Dr. Jan van Lohuizen**, Group Vice President in our Political and Public Affairs Group at:



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For information on survey methodology, see last page.

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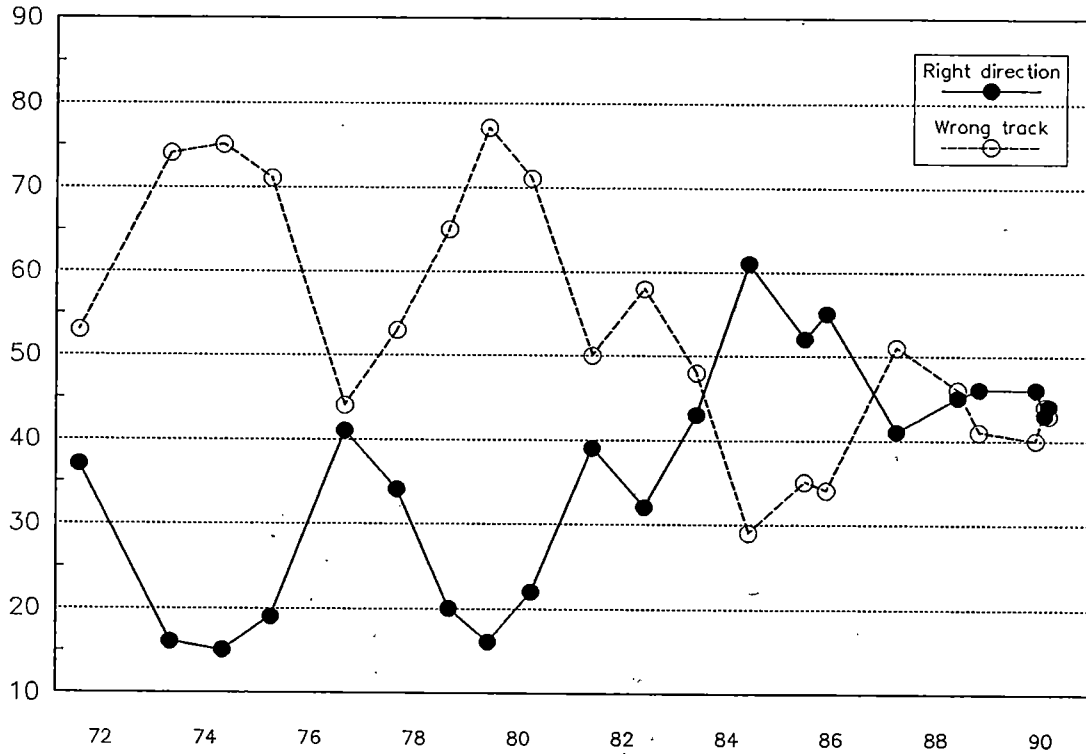
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## RIGHT DIRECTION VS. WRONG TRACK

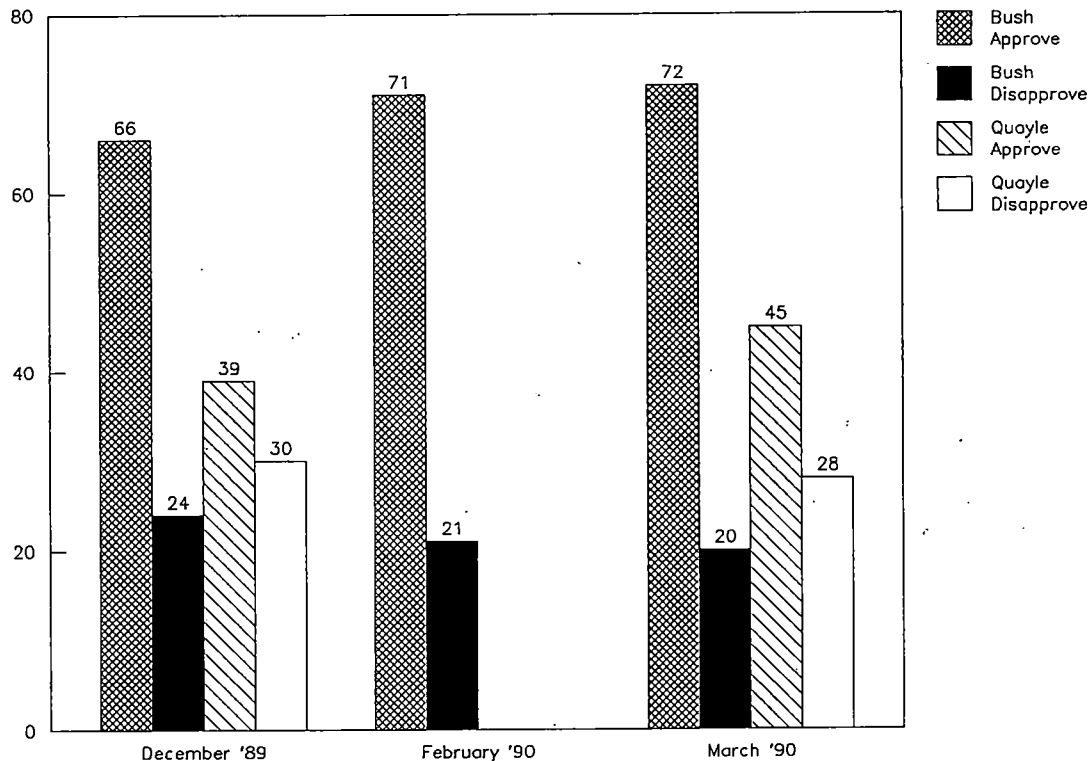
*Do you feel things in this country are going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?*



- \* Attitudes remain unchanged since late January. Currently, forty-four percent (44%) say "right direction," 43% say "wrong track."
- \* Demographic trends reported previously persist: Republicans, males, younger voters and whites are more optimistic. Democrats, women, older voters and blacks are more pessimistic.
- \* Gender differences continue to be especially pronounced. Only 36% of women say "right direction," 51% say "wrong track." Of men, 52% say "right direction," 34% say "wrong track."

## BUSH / QUAYLE JOB APPROVAL

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?  
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Dan Quayle is handling his job as Vice President?



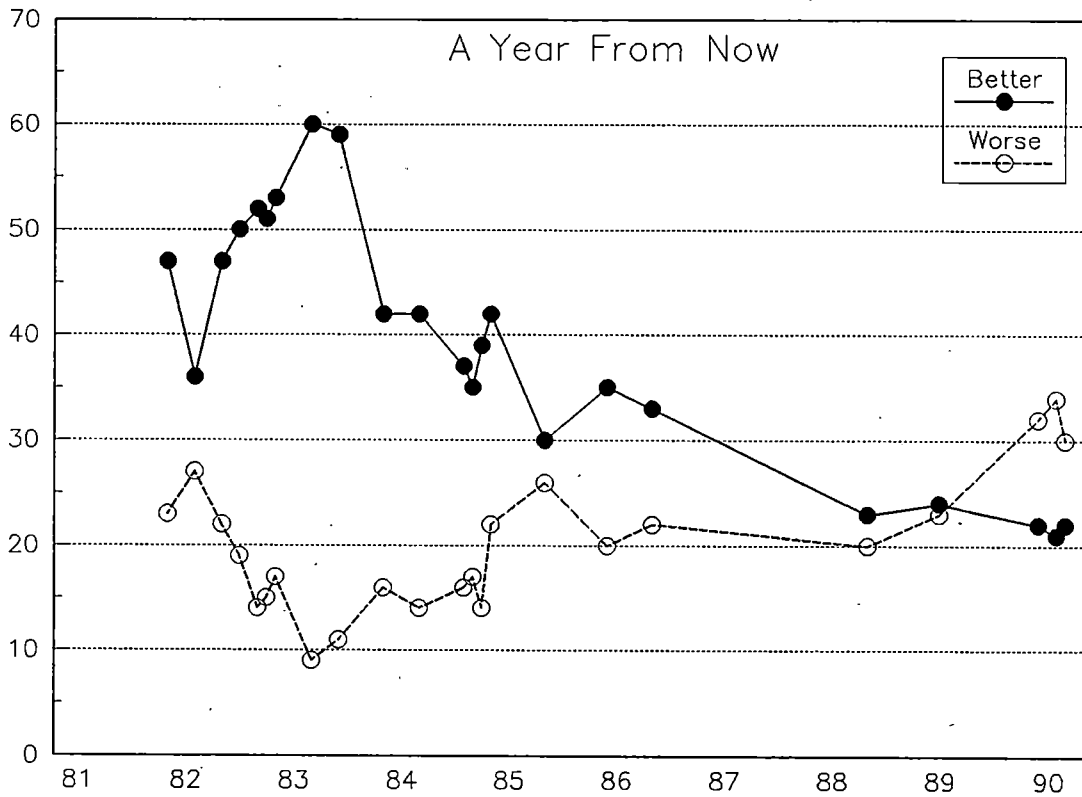
- \* The President's job approval remains unchanged at 71% "approve" and 20% "disapprove".
- \* Vice President Quayle's job approval (44% approve, 28% disapprove) is up from December (39% - 30%). Congressional job approval is low (46% approve, 43% disapprove).
- \* Quayle shows a modest pick-up in approval across the board. Quayle's highest ratings come from Republicans and conservatives. His lowest ratings come from Democrats, liberals and the youngest voter groups (18 - 24). Male/female differences are small and largely a function of partisanship.

**Comment:** So much for the 'broccoli' vote. Quayle bashing may be on its way out. Congressional critics of the Veep should perhaps redirect their attention.

## EXPECTATIONS OF THE ECONOMY

*Thinking about a year from now, do you expect the national economy will be better, worse, or about the same as it is now?*

*Compared to a year ago, do you think the economy has gotten better, gotten worse or stayed about the same?*



\* While still pessimistic, the public's views of the economy may be becoming somewhat less gloomy -- both retrospectively and prospectively.

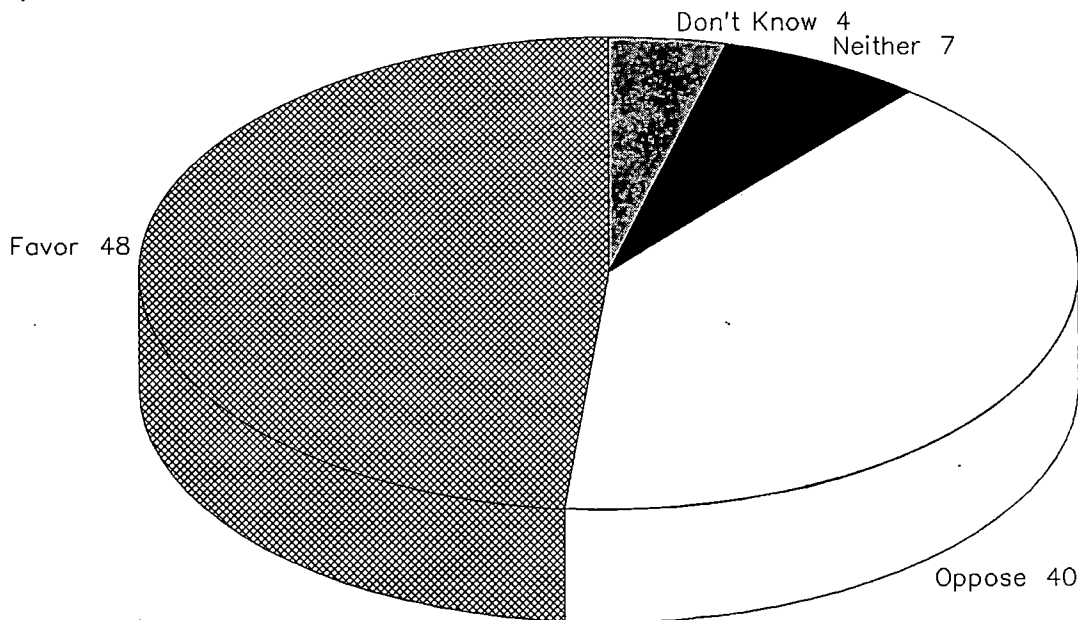
\* Specifically:

|                               | Dec '89 | Feb '90 | March '90 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------|
| <b>A Year From Now</b>        |         |         |           |
| Better                        | 22      | 21      | 22        |
| Worse                         | 32      | 34      | 30        |
| <b>Compared to A Year Ago</b> |         |         |           |
| Better                        | 14      | 10      | 11        |
| Worse                         | 27      | 36      | 32        |

**Comment:** *The changes are too small to draw definitive conclusions; stand by.*

## THE ROSTENKOWSKI PLAN

Another proposal has been made that would help balance the budget by cutting defense spending and by freezing all other federal government spending including social security cost of living increases; by increasing taxes on cigarettes, alcohol, and on gasoline and by increasing taxes for the highest income tax brackets. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

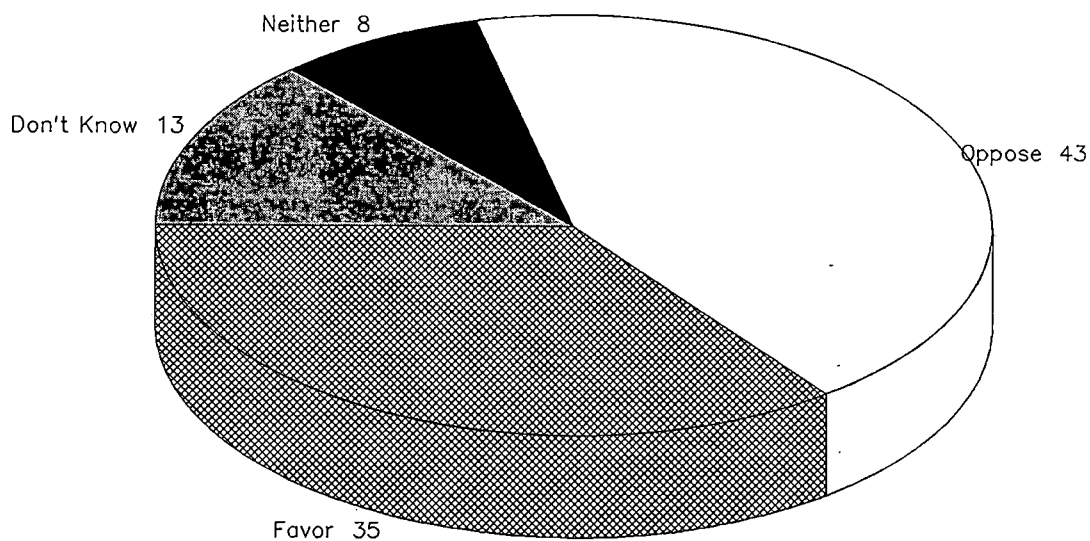


- \* Marginal support transcends political party affiliation. Receives support from 48% of Republicans, 48% of Democrats, and 49% of Independents.
- \* Strongest support comes from men under 45 (54%) and working women under 45 (also 54%) and voters between the ages of 18 and 24, and people who think of themselves as 'very liberal'!
- \* Strongest opposition comes from lower end voters (!) and women over 45.

**Comments:** *Something to make just about everyone unhappy; lots of people may be calling Rosty on this one. The second Democratic proposal in two months to upset the social security constituency.*

## SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

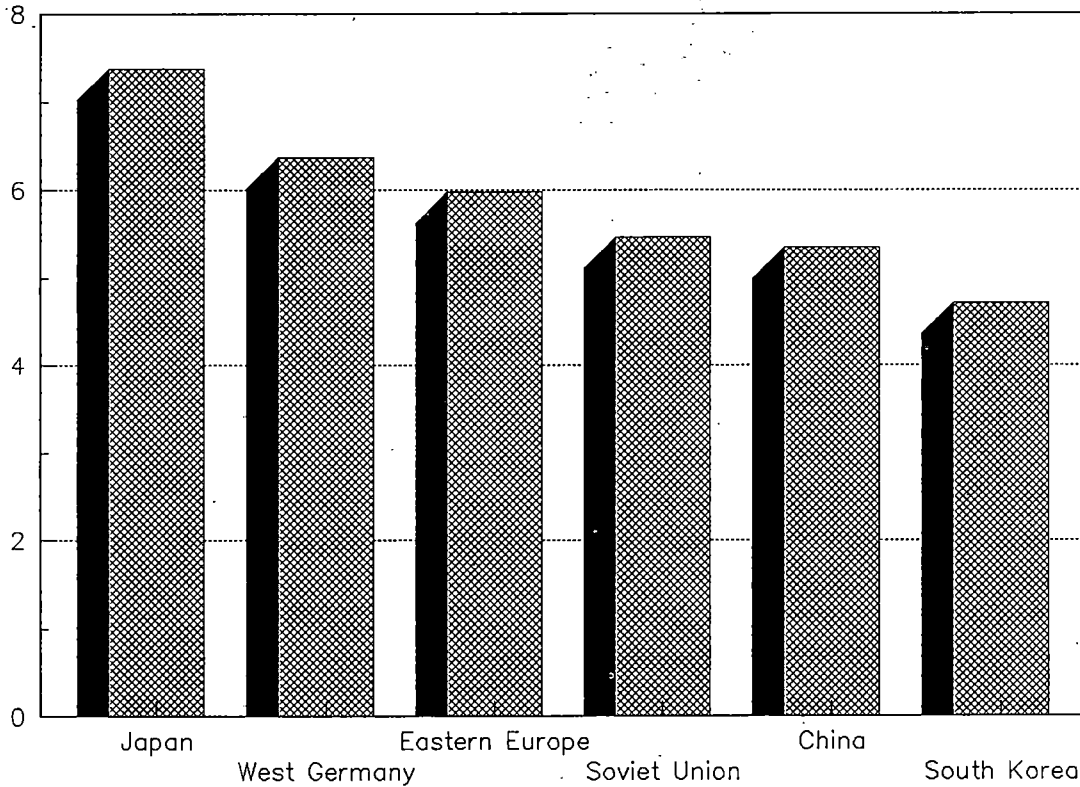
*Regarding U.S. foreign policy in South Africa, in view of Nelson Mandela's release from jail, would you favor or would you oppose lifting U.S. economic sanctions against South Africa?*



- \* By age, strongest opposition to lifting sanctions comes from those 18 to 24 years old (55% oppose, 33% favor). The older one is, the less likely he/she is to support continued sanctions. Only 31% of those 65 and over are opposed to lifting sanctions.
- \* In addition to younger voters, strongest opponents of lifting sanctions include Blacks (58%), men under age of 45 (53%), strong Democrats (53%), and those who consider themselves "very" or "somewhat" liberal (59% and 51% respectively).

## RANKING IMPORTANCE TO U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

On a zero to ten scale where zero means not at all important to the United States economic interests and ten means that the country is extremely important to the United States economic interests, how would you rate each of the following countries?



- \* Despite other perceptions of Japan that may exist, its rank of 7.4 means it is clearly established in the minds of most voters as the country of greatest economic importance to the United States. Of those tested, South Korea ranked last.
- \* Perceived importance of Japan is up from 6.8 in 1986.
- \* Perceived importance of Eastern Europe is quite high considering the fact that the question was focused on economic interests rather than national security interests.

**Comments:** *While "economic nationalism" may be politically popular, the public is quite realistic about the importance of trade relations with Japan, just as Japanese polling suggests that its public may be more realistic about relations with the U.S. than its political leadership.*

## APPROVAL OF THE CIVILIAN SPACE PROGRAM

Agree or disagree with the following.....

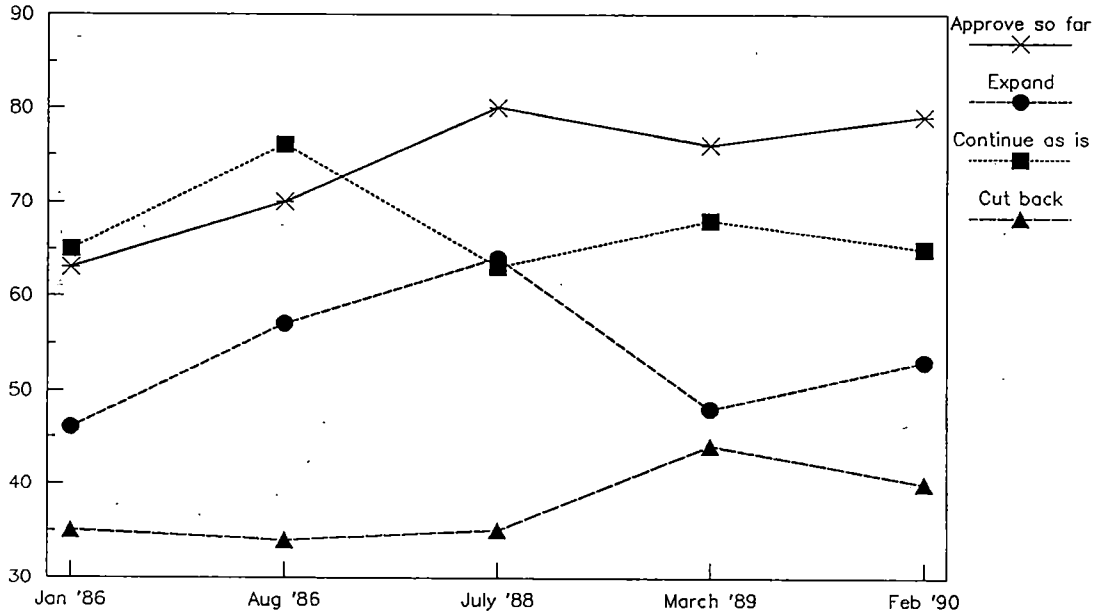
*I approve of America's civilian space program so far.*

*America's civilian space program should be expanded.*

*America's civilian space program should be continued as is.*

*Expenditures for America's civilian space program should be cut back.*

Support for Space Program  
Time Trends



Approve of program so far  
 Continue program as is  
 Expand program, Cut back program

- \* Public approval of the civilian space program is at an all time high (79%)<sup>1</sup>. Sub-groups more likely to approve of the space program include younger voters, men, high income and more educated groups.
- \* Compared to a year ago, voters are more likely to agree that the space program should be expanded.
- \* 'Technological' and 'medical' advances are mentioned most often as the important benefits of the space program. The 'high cost' of the program is viewed as the most important disadvantage of the civilian space program.

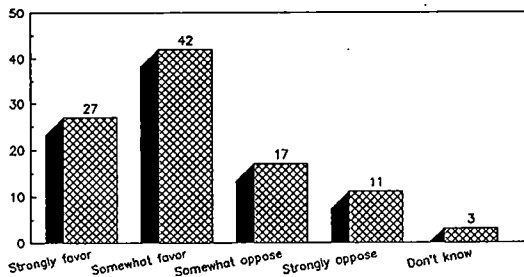
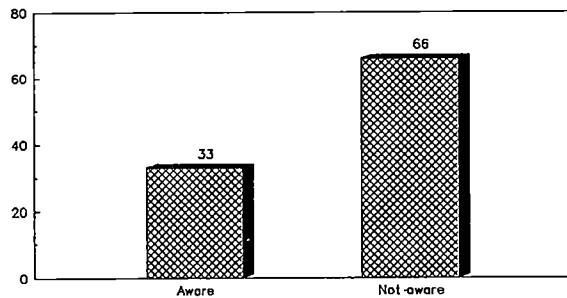
<sup>1</sup> Questions regarding the space program are from a separate national survey of 1200 registered voters conducted in February. The margin of error on this survey is +/- 2.8%. The survey was commissioned by Rockwell International.

## NEW SPACE CRAFT TECHNOLOGY

*Are you aware or not aware of a program to build a new re-usable space plane that unlike the shuttle, would take off and land from a regular airport?*

*The federal government has started the development of new technologies that may lead to the construction of a new MANNED SPACE CRAFT called the National Aerospace Plane that would fly into space and could use commercial airports to take off and land. Do you view the idea of such a program very favorably, somewhat favorably, somewhat unfavorably, or very unfavorably?*

A third of the public is aware of the new space craft proposal. Awareness tends to be higher among those groups that traditionally support the space program (younger, male and the more educated).



Seventy percent supports the space plane.

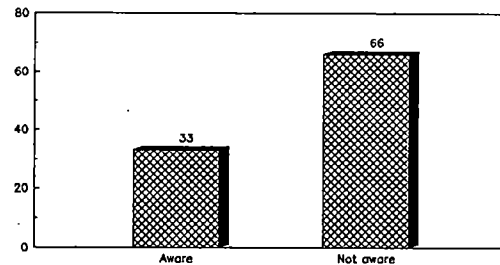
- \* 16% has 'seriously considered becoming an astronaut'; 40% would 'pay for a trip into space'; 2.5% of the population would be willing to pay \$50,000 or more for a trip into space!

## PRESIDENT BUSH'S PROPOSAL

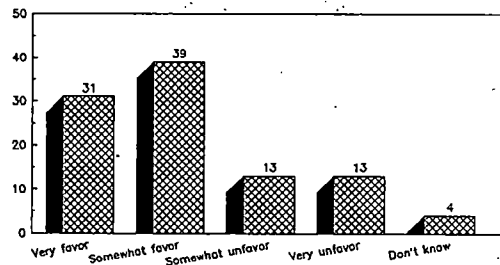
*Are you aware or not aware of recent proposals by President Bush for new space missions?*

*Last July, the President proposed a program to use space satellites to monitor the Earth's environment and begin new manned missions to the Moon, followed by manned exploration of Mars. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this proposed program?*

Thirty-three percent of the public is aware of President Bush's proposed space program. Awareness of the proposal correlates with media and news attentiveness as well as specific interest in the space program.



Once familiarized with the main points of President Bush's proposal, 70% supports it. One of the primary reasons for favoring the Bush program is the earth observation function of the program. Increased concern with environment finds an expression in support for the space program. The main reason for opposing the program is its cost.

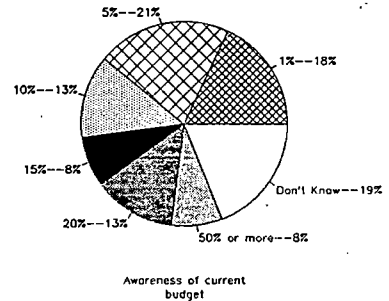


## EXPENDITURES FOR THE CIVILIAN SPACE PROGRAM

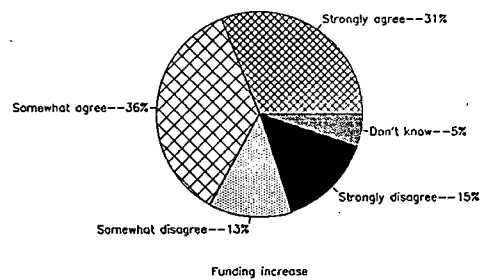
*About what percentage of the federal government's budget do you think is spent for civilian space programs like satellites and space missions?*

*Approximately 1% of the annual federal budget is currently spent on the civilian space program.. It has been estimated that the starting of new initiatives in space will require increasing NASA's budget to about 2% of the total federal budget. Do you agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that this is a reasonable amount to spend?*

Awareness of the space program's share of the federal budget is low. A majority of the public feels NASA's share is substantially higher than it actually is (Correct answer is 1%).



When told what the actual share of the space program's budget is, support for an increased budget is substantial. Sixty-seven percent of the public would support increasing NASA's budget share to about 2%.



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## Survey Methodology

The parameters of this survey were as follows:

- Based on 1200 telephone interviews
- Probability-proportionate-to-size-sample of registered voters across continental United States
- Conducted March 16-25, 1990
- Margin of error = plus or minus 2.8

**Market Opinion Research** is a diversified public opinion research company with offices in Washington, D.C. and Detroit, Michigan. **Market Opinion Reports** is published by the Political and Public Affairs Group in Washington, D.C. For further information contact **Richard G. Reed**, Vice President or **Dr. Jan van Lohuizen**, Group Vice President at:



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**Market Opinion Research**



**Washington, D.C.**

**Detroit, MI**

*Polling*

Global Changes Are Encouraging Democrats' Hope

...The Democratic Party is without an identity, message or leader. What it does have, albeit tentatively, is some new hope.

"By any fair accounting, the Democrats lost the 1980s," said Democratic pollster Geoffrey Garin. "As the 1990s begin, voters can see that we're entering a new world, not just with the Russians, but with the world economy. This gives Democrats a great opportunity to define our competition with the Republicans in different terms. If there has ever been a party that needed to declare the last game over and have the next game start, it's the Democrats now."

"In the short run, the changes in the world are going to help Bush," said Stuart Eizenstat, a party strategist who was domestic policy adviser to President Carter. "But in the long run, the Democrats should be the beneficiaries. As the neo-isolationist party, we've been at a disadvantage whenever the focus has been on international affairs. In a post-Cold War era, the issue agenda should return to areas of traditional Democratic strength, such as education and the environment, where it will be possible to make an affirmative case for activist government."

(Paul Taylor, Washington Post, A1)

Washington Post-ABC News Poll

Which political party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you trust to do a better job:

|  |            |             |
|--|------------|-------------|
| a. Handling the nation's economy       | Dems.- 33% | Repub.- 52% |
| b. Handling the crime problem          | Dems.- 31% | Repub.- 32% |
| c. Handling foreign affairs            | Dems.- 29% | Repub.- 55% |
| d. Handling the homeless problem       | Dems.- 56% | Repub.- 25% |
| e. Improving education & schools       | Dems.- 45% | Repub.- 36% |
| f. Reducing the problem of drugs       | Dems.- 28% | Repub.- 47% |
| g. Maintaining strong national defense | Dems.- 25% | Repub.- 62% |
| h. Helping the middle class            | Dems.- 53% | Repub.- 32% |
| i. Holding taxes down                  | Dems.- 37% | Repub.- 47% |
| j. Protecting the environment          | Dems.- 46% | Repub.- 31% |

Overall, which party, the Democrats or Republicans, do you trust to do a better job in coping with the main problems the nation faces over the next decade?

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Jan. 16, 1990: Democrats - 38% | Republicans - 50% |
| Aug. 21, 1989: Democrats - 42% | Republicans - 43% |

(Washington Post, A8)

BENTSEN SUGGESTS VARYING GAINS TAXES  
New Element Injected Into Debate  
Ignited By Moynihan Proposal

Sen. Bentsen (D.-Tex.) said Wednesday he is exploring the possibility of raising taxes on short-term capital gains while cutting the levy on assets held for a longer time....

While Moynihan's move "takes the edge off" President Bush's proposal to reduce capital gains taxes, Bentsen told reporters over breakfast, some form of capital gains tax cut will probably be approved this year -- although not necessarily in the form Bush seeks.

As one option, Bentsen said Congress might cut taxes on assets held for long-term gains while increasing the rate now paid on those that are purchased for quick profits, thereby discouraging "churning" of assets and encouraging long-range investment and growth....

Bentsen emphasized that he was not committed to a tax increase for short-term gains and declined to discuss details, including how he would define a short-term gain....

Asked about Bentsen's suggestion, Rep. Rostenkowski (D.-Ill.) said he opposes any cut in capital gains taxes but said a higher rate on the sale of short-term assets is "something I'd look at."

Bush has adamantly opposed any increase in taxes, but some congressional Republicans acknowledge that he may have to consider some increases as part of the price for a capital gains tax cut from the Democratic-controlled Congress. (Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A18)

TAX-CUTTING PLANS ARE LESS THAN POPULAR

This election year, Congress and the White House are vying for tax-cutting honors. But a national poll done this week for the Boston Globe shows that voters do not care for either of the two tax cuts the politicians are offering.

One of the two, President Bush's call for a cut in the capital gains tax, is more popular than the other. And if it passes, Bush's standing with the electorate may have something to do with it: This week's Boston Globe/WBZ-TV poll found his popularity and job approval ratings to be at their highest levels since he took office a year ago this week.

By a ratio of more than 7-2, voters interviewed this week disapproved of Sen. Moynihan's proposal to roll back Social Security taxes by \$52 billion. After being told Moynihan's argument for cutting the tax and President Bush's argument against it, 72 percent said the Social Security taxes should not be cut. Just 20 percent supported the cut.

By a margin of 49 percent to 37 percent, voters also disapproved of Bush's proposal to cut the capital gains tax.

(Walter Robinson, Boston Globe)

**RAISING EPA TO CABINET DEPARTMENT:  
BUSH, IN POLICY SHIFT, ENDORSES IDEA**

President Bush Wednesday endorsed the idea of elevating the EPA to Cabinet status, saying that environmental challenges are "so important that they must be addressed from the highest level of our government."

The announcement marks a shift in thinking by Bush, who initially balked at such proposals as an unnecessary bureaucratic tinkering. But creating a Cabinet-level Department of the Environment, as proposed by measures in both chambers in Congress, is a longtime goal of environmentalists, who in recent weeks have become increasingly skeptical of whether Bush will fulfill his campaign pledge to be the "environmental" president....

Announcing his support for the legislation at his news conference Wednesday, Bush said that creating a Cabinet position would "help influence the world's environmental policy."

But aside from the symbolic value of elevating the environment as an issue, making the EPA a Cabinet department would have little practical effect. EPA Administrator Reilly...already attends Cabinet meetings and goes to international meetings as the top U.S. environmental official.

(Michael Weisskopf, Washington Post, A25)

**BUSH'S BUDGET FOR HUD WILL EMPHASIZE  
HOMEOWNING BY LOW-INCOME PEOPLE**

The Bush Administration's proposed budget for HUD will emphasize home ownership for low-income and moderate-income people.

Under the proposal, the department would shift \$59.9 million currently allocated for rental programs to fund housing certificates that 2,000 low-income families could use to help purchase public-housing units, according to a government source....

But the budget's emphasis on home ownership could fuel criticism by low-income housing advocates who argue that these programs are funded at the expense of renters.

(Joe Davidson, Wall Street Journal, A16)

**ENERGY DEPT. TO DROP CONTRACTOR SHIELD  
Government Will No Longer Indemnify  
Nuclear Plants' Losses**

Energy Department officials who are fined for violating environmental laws, who damage or lose government property or lose negligence lawsuits will no longer be reimbursed by the federal government, Energy Secretary Watkins announced Wednesday.

Under rules to be published this spring, the department will abandon a practice that the government has followed for more than 40 years of indemnifying contractors for virtually any loss incurred in operation of nuclear plants....

The new rules, Watkins said, will reflect his "commitment to accountability and the safe and environmentally sound accomplishments of the DOE mission."

(Thomas Lippman, Washington Post, A25)

P-  
Polling

Text of the Boston Globe story:

"Tax-Cutting Plans Less than Popular"  
by Walter V. Robinson

This election year, Congress and the White House are vying for tax-cutting honors. But a national poll done this week for the Boston Globe shows that voters do not care for either of the two tax cuts the politicians are offering.

One of the two, President Bush's call for a cut in the capital gains tax, is more popular than the other. And, if it passes, Bush's standing with the electorate may have something to do with it: This week's Boston Globe/WBZ-TV poll found his popularity and job approval ratings to be at their highest levels since he took office a year ago this week.

By a ratio of more than 7-2, voters interviewed this week disapproved of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's proposal to roll back Social Security taxes by \$52 billion. After being told the New York Democrat's argument for cutting the tax and Bush's argument against it, 72 percent said Social Security taxes should not be cut. Just 20 percent supported the cut.

By a margin of 49 percent to 37 percent, voters also disapproved of Bush's proposal to cut the capital gains tax. That measure won support only among Republicans and among those earning the highest incomes, the group that would receive most of the benefits of such a cut.

The poll of 1,005 registered voters was conducted on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings by KRC/Communications Research, Inc. of Cambridge, Massachusetts. It has a margin of error of plus-or-minus three percentage points.

In the poll, Bush exceeded the extraordinarily high approval ratings he has been receiving over the last several weeks. This week, 84 percent of those polled expressed a favorable opinion of the President, with just 11 percent expressing an unfavorable view.

As for his job performance, 66 percent said they believe he is doing an excellent or above-average job. His previous high was 60 percent. This week, just 13 percent said his performance was below average or poor. Eighteen percent rated his performance as average.

The President also won high marks for his handling of foreign policy: 56 percent said his handling of those issues was excellent or above average; 23 percent rated him below average or poor.

On his handling of the economy, however, Bush did not fare as well. Just 38 percent gave him excellent or above average grades, while 37 percent gave him negative marks.

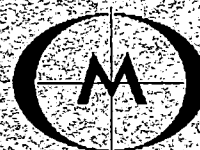
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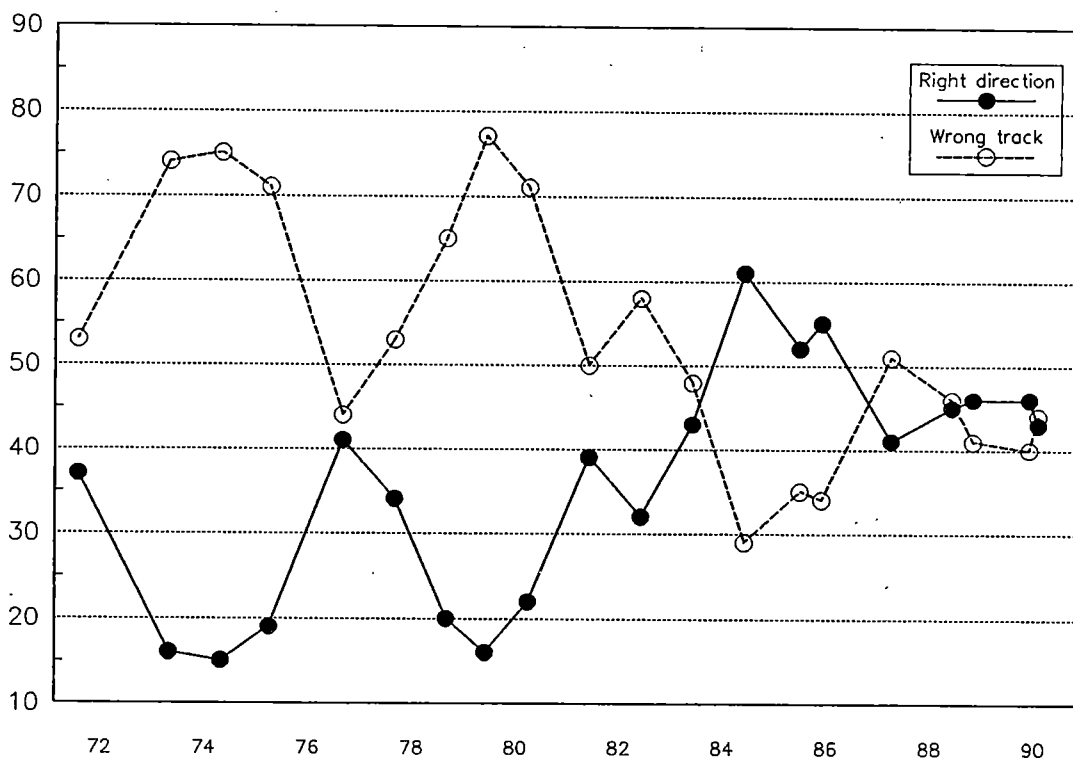
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## RIGHT DIRECTION VS. WRONG TRACK

Do you feel things in this country are going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

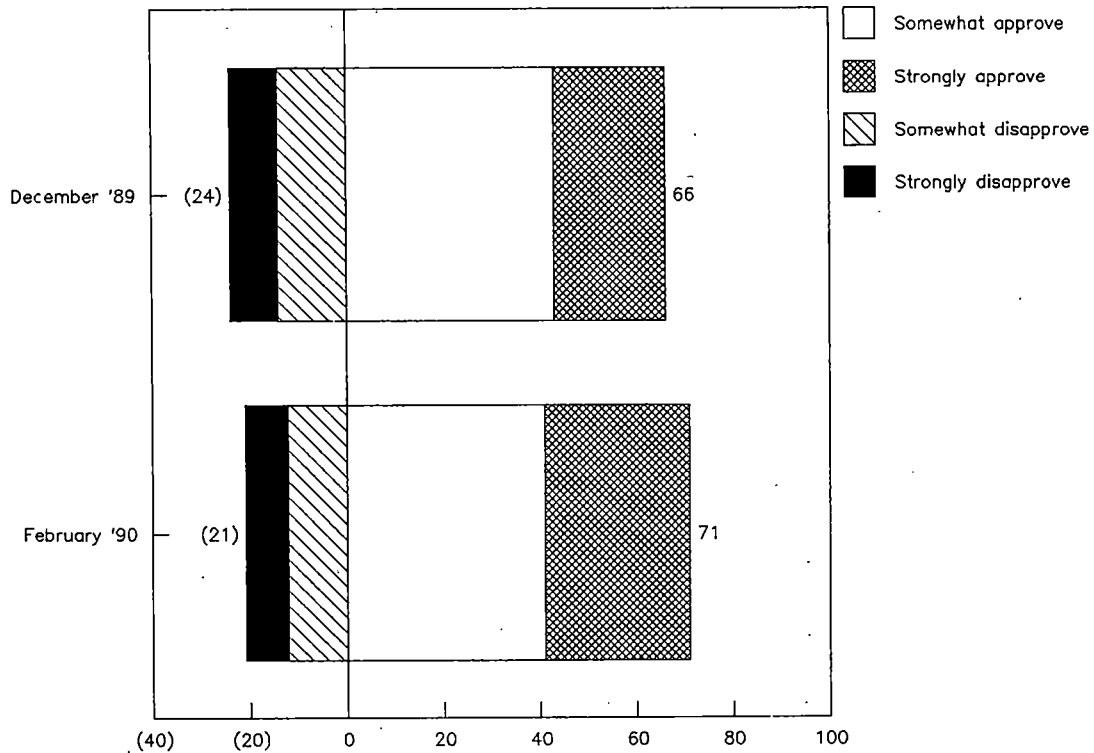


- \* Overall, voters are slightly more pessimistic than in December. Currently, 43% believe things are "going in the right direction". Forty-two percent (42%) believe things are "off on the wrong track". In December, 45% said "right direction", 40% said "wrong track".
- \* Women continue to be more pessimistic than men.
- \* Pessimism also increases with age. Of 18-24 year olds, 54% believe things are going in "right direction" while 38% believe things are "off on the wrong track". Of those age 65 and over, 36% said "right direction" while 50% said "wrong track".
- \* Partisan differences remain. 56% of Republicans believe things are going in the "right direction". Only 33% of Democrats agree.

**Comments:** Most of the increased pessimism can be traced to Republicans. While President Bush's popularity increased due to the Panama action, pessimism about the national economy appears to be spreading to Republicans.

## BUSH JOB APPROVAL

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

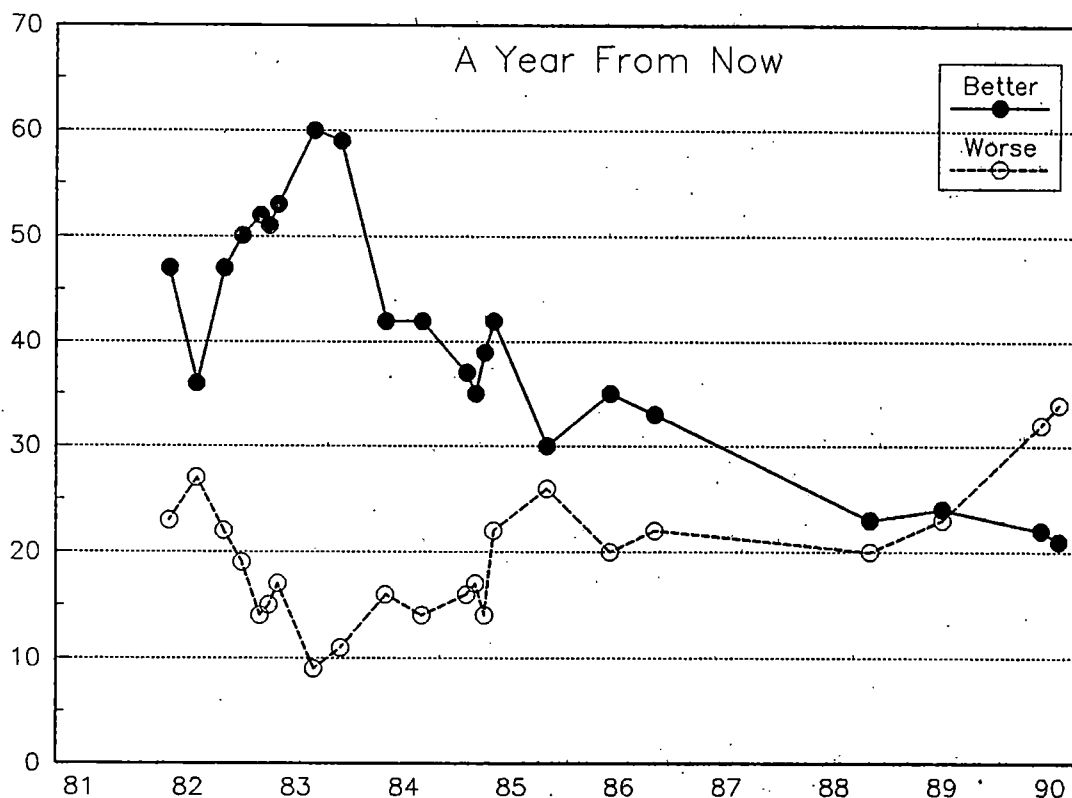


- \* The President's job approval rating improved to 71% from December's mark of 66%.
- \* Those giving the President his highest marks include Republicans (89%) and those voters between 18 and 24 years old (75%).
- \* Those most critical are still more likely to approve than disapprove of the President's performance. They include "strong Democrats" (50% approve, 39% disapprove), those who believe the economy will be worse one year from now (52%-34%), and Blacks (57%-34%).

**Comments:** At 71% President Bush's popularity is extremely high, but already lower than the 80% approval figures immediately following the Panama invasion.

## EXPECTATIONS OF THE ECONOMY

Compared to a year ago / thinking about a year from now, do you think the national economy has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

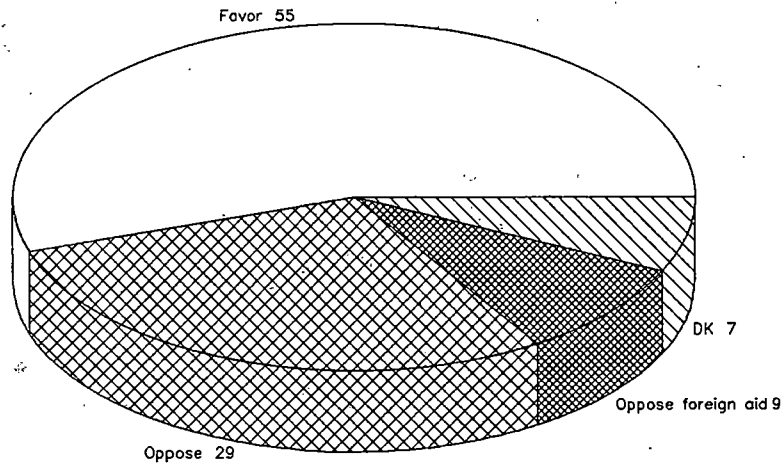


- \* Most voters continue to have a mixed-to-negative view of the economy. The percentage of those who believe the economy has gotten worse compared to a year ago is up 10 points from December. Currently, 36% believe things are worse than a year ago. Only 10% believe they are better.
- \* Expectations about the future of the economy declined as well. Thirty-four percent (34%) believe things will be worse a year from now compared to 32% last December. Only 21% believe things will be better. 40% don't expect any change.
- \* Those most pessimistic are Democrats (only 18% think things will improve), those between the ages of 25 and 39 (18%), Blacks (17%) and housewives over the age of 45 (19%).
- \* Those most optimistic include those between the ages of 18 and 24 (33% expect things to be better a year from now), and Republicans (29%).

**Comments:** *There is a notable contrast between foreign policy successes of the Bush administration and the increasing pessimism of the voters regarding the domestic economy. Nineteen-ninety could prove to be a bad year for incumbents.*

## DOLE PROPOSAL

Currently the countries that receive the most foreign aid from the U.S. are Israel, Egypt and Pakistan. A proposal has been made to reduce our foreign aid commitment to these countries so that the U.S. can send more foreign aid to the countries in Eastern Europe. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?

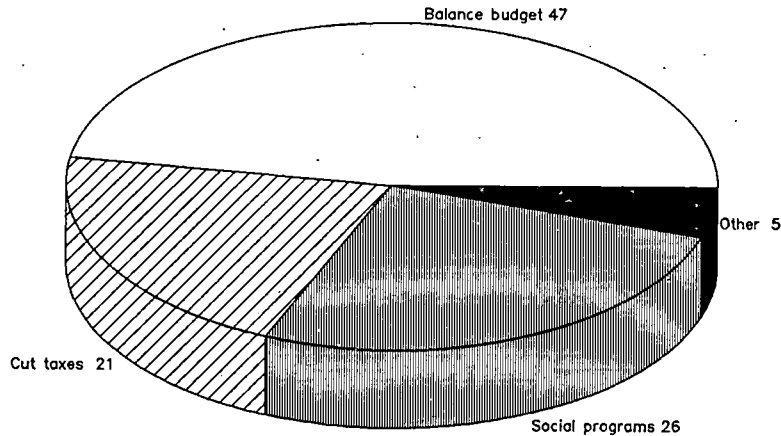


- \* Those most supportive include high income voters (68%), Catholics (66%), those between the ages of 18 and 24 (63%) and Republicans (60%).
- \* Those most likely to oppose the proposal include Blacks (54%), strong Democrats (41%) and those who consider themselves "very conservative" (44%).

**Comments:** Given the massive amount of news attention devoted to developments in Eastern Europe in the last 6 months, 55% does not seem very high. The 9% that volunteered that they oppose all foreign aid is high since this option was not read to survey respondents,

## PEACE DIVIDEND

As you may have heard the federal government is considering significant cuts in the defense budget. If this were the case, of the following three choices, what do you think should be done with the savings from the defense cuts?

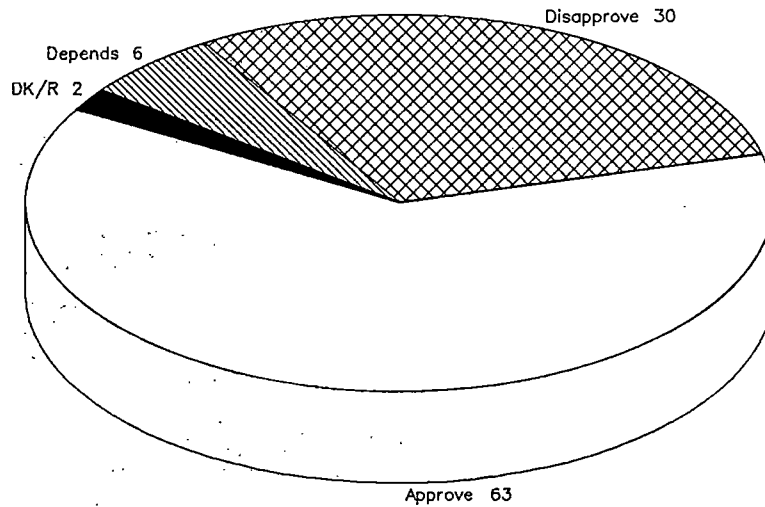


- \* Those most inclined to balance the budget with any "peace dividend" include Republicans (59%), high income voters (57%), active Protestants (57%), and men over the age of 45 (54%). Those least inclined to balance the budget include Blacks (28%), those who consider themselves "very liberal" (30%), and those between 18-24 years old (31%).
- \* Those most likely to favor more spending on social programs include those who consider themselves "very liberal" (44%), Blacks (43%), strong Democrats (39%) and those living in the Pacific region (36%). Those least likely to support spending any "peace dividend" on social programs include those who consider themselves "very conservative" (13%), strong Republicans (12%), those between the ages of 55 and 64 (20%), and lower-end voters (21%).
- \* Those most likely to support cutting taxes with any peace dividend include Blacks (28%), lower-end voters (28%), and those between the ages of 18 and 24 (28%).

**Comments:** *Balancing the budget is a higher priority than either social spending or cutting taxes. Only one percent of the sample volunteered that it did not want to see defense spending cut.*

## U.S. WOMEN IN COMBAT

On a different subject, during the invasion in Panama American women were in involved in active combat for the first time. Do you approve or disapprove of this?

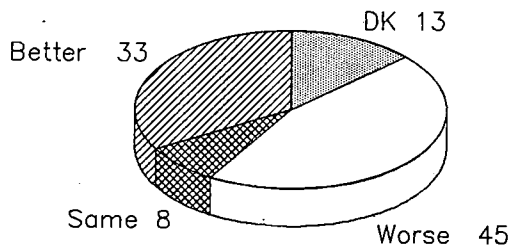


- \* Both women and men approve by margin of better than 2 - 1.
- \* 71% of working women under the age of 45 approve.
- \* 67% of housewives under the age of 45 approve; 50% of housewives over the age of 45 approve.
- \* By age, strongest approval comes from those between the ages of 18 and 24 (70%), while the highest disapproval comes from voters over 65 (48% approve, 44% disapprove).

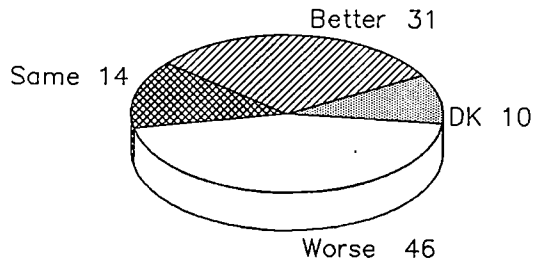
**Comments:** *Age is a much more important determinant of attitudes than gender. Differences among women are greater than between men and women. We've all come a long way.*

## SOCIAL SECURITY

*On the whole, would you say that the Social Security System / the people on the Social Security System are better off or worse off than they were five years ago?*



Social Security System



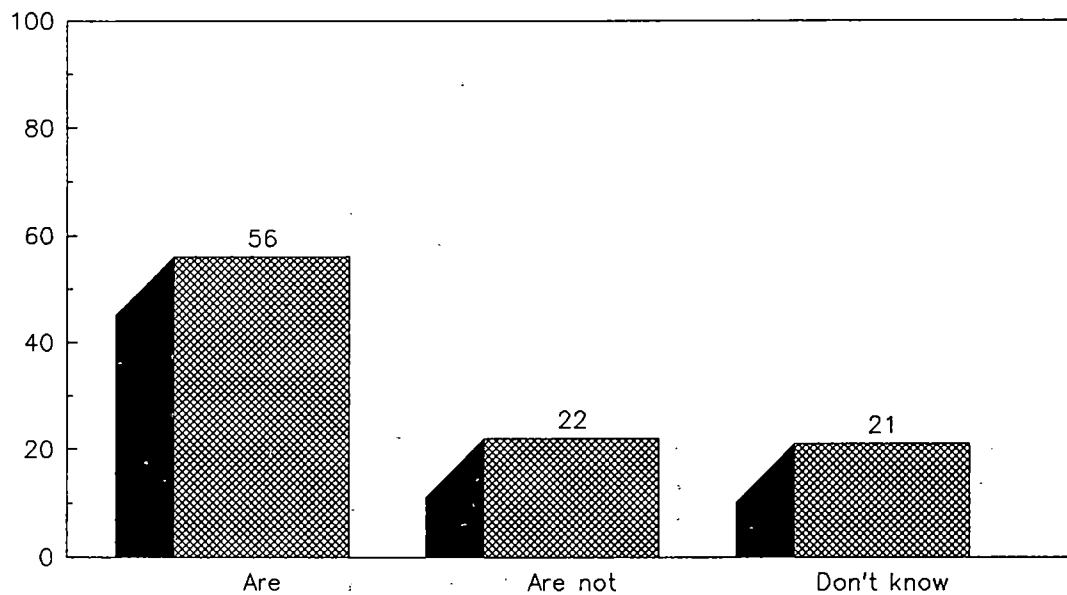
People on Social Security

- \* Overall, more voters believe the **social security system** is in "worse" shape than five years ago (45%) than think it's in "better" shape (34%).
- \* However, 45% of voters age 55 and over believe the system is in "better" shape. Only 25% of this same group believes it is in "worse" shape.
- \* By significant margins, younger voters are more likely to believe the system is in "worse" shape. For those voters between the ages of 18 and 39 years of age, 58% believe it is in "worse" shape. Only 25% think it is better.
- \* When asked if the **people on social security** were "better" off or "worse" off than they were five years ago, results were similar. Of those age 65 and over, 45% said "better", 25% said "worse". Conversely, of those between 18 and 24 years of age, only 30% said "better" and 53% said "worse". Of those between 25 and 39 years of age, 21% said "better", 56% said "worse".
- \* Compared to MOR results obtained in 1986, attitudes have changed slightly. At the time, 60% felt the **system** was in worse shape (45% now) and 58% felt **people on social security** were in worse shape (46% now).

**Comments:** *While, on balance, voters are pessimistic about the financial health of both the social security system and those who receive social security benefits, that pessimism has declined since measures taken three years ago.*

## SOCIAL SECURITY TAXES AND THE BUDGET

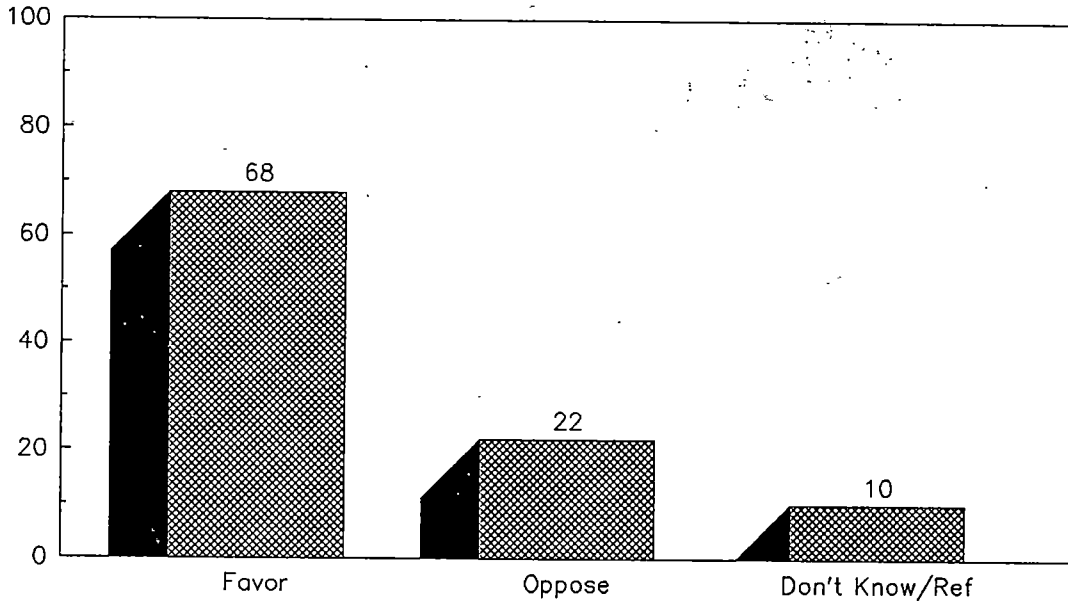
*And to the best of your knowledge are Social Security taxes being used to pay for other federal programs, or are they not being used to pay for other federal programs?*



- \* Most voters, (56%), believe their social security taxes are being used to pay for other federal programs.
- \* The older a voter is, the more likely he/she is to believe this. Of voters between the ages of 18-24, for example, 43% believe their social security taxes are being used to pay for other federal programs, 36% do not. Among those 65 years and over on the other hand, 63% do and 15% don't believe that is the case.

## PRIVATIZE SOCIAL SECURITY

*A proposal has been made to give people the choice to divert some of the Social Security taxes they pay into savings plans that are similar to IRAs where they could direct their own investments. Under this proposal, the Social Security system would continue to meet its current obligations and meet the needs of the poor. From what you have heard, would you favor or oppose this proposal?*

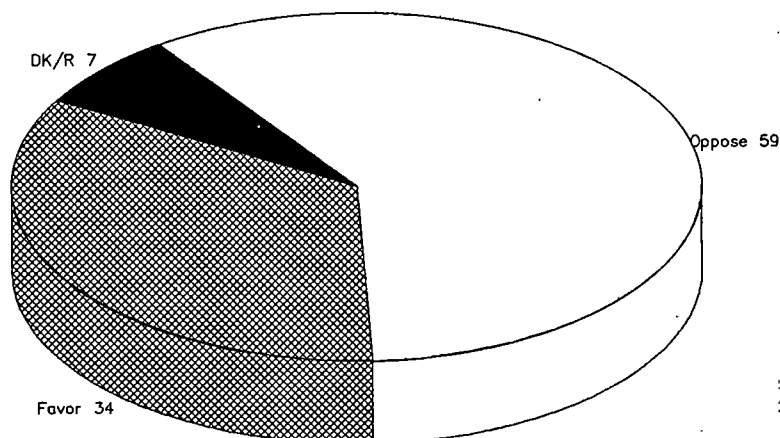


- \* Although popular in all age groups, this proposal is highly popular among younger voters (18 - 25: 87% favor; 25-39: 78% favor).
- \* The proposal is equally attractive to Republicans as it is to Democrats, to liberals as it is to conservatives.

**Comments:** *Privatizing social security is a concept with great appeal to the younger age groups concerned about getting back the money they are paying in to system now.*

## PROPOSAL TO CUT SOCIAL SECURITY TAXES

*Because the social security system is currently raising more tax money than it is spending in benefits, some people have proposed cutting social security taxes. Would you favor or oppose such a cut in social security taxes?*



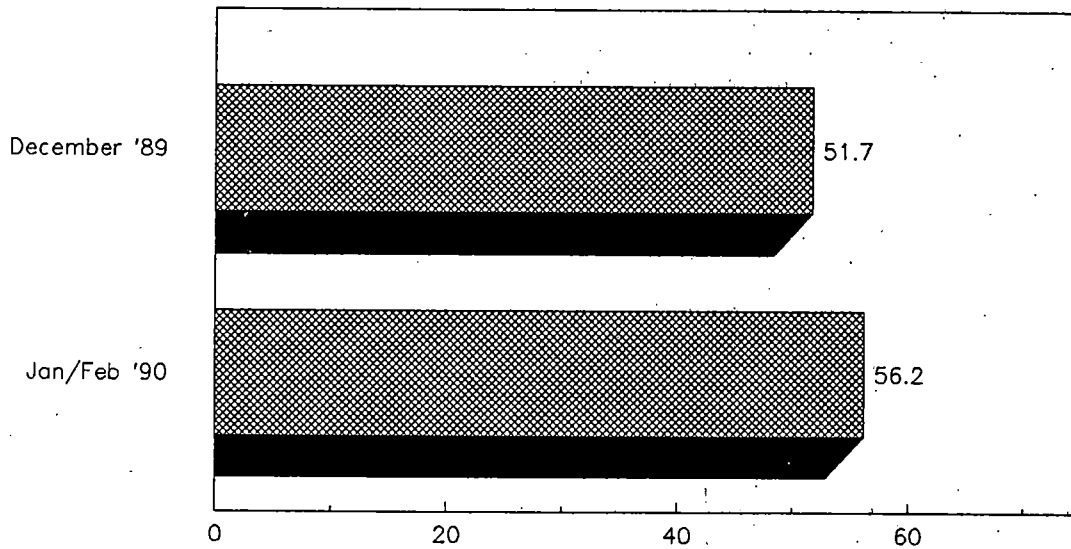
- \* All voter groups oppose the Moynihan proposal by similar margins. Age, party and ideological differences are not important.

**Comments:** *The public is fundamentally conservative on social security. Since many members of the public still believe the program is in worse shape than it was five years ago, the inclination **not** to cut taxes is understandable. Republicans, for the first time in a decade, may have an opportunity to turn the issue on the Democrats.*

## PARTISAN MOOD INDEX

The Partisan Mood Index (PMI) is gauged to measure the national climate of public opinion... "the national mood". It is a composite measure that takes into account a variety of indices, including expectations of the national economy, Presidential performance, and evaluations of political party preference.

The PMI can assume a range of values running from zero (0) to one hundred (100). The baseline measure was taken in December 1989 at the time of the Bush-Gorbachev summit in Malta, but prior to the American military action in Panama.



**Comments:** *George Bush's personal popularity drove the PMI up, in spite of increased pessimism about the national economy. Look for a downturn in the near future.*

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## Survey Methodology

The parameters of this survey were as follows:

- Based on 1200 telephone interviews
- Probability-proportionate-to-size-sample of registered voters across continental United States
- Conducted January 25-31, 1990
- Margin of error = plus or minus 2.8

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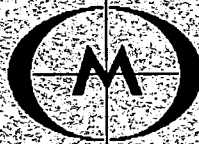
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**Market Opinion Research**



Washington, D.C.

Detroit, MI

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

DATE: 3-15-90

FROM THE PRESIDENT

TO: Brent/Bob Gates

Some interesting foreign  
policy data on this new  
Teeter poll taken for WSJ/NBC-  
bran new....

Interesting on Germany  
Interesting on who our friends are.  
Interesting on For.Aid recipients.

gb .

cc: *Sununu*

WSJ/NBC National Survey  
 March 10-13, 1990  
 N=1003

**General Attitudes**

All in all, do you think things in the nation are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that things are off on the wrong track?

|                     | <u>3/90</u> | <u>1/90</u> | <u>11/89</u> | <u>9/89</u> |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Right direction     | 44%         | 49%         | 41%          | 42%         |
| Wrong track         | 31          | 29          | 35           | 34          |
| Mixed (VOLUNTEERED) | 20          | 17          | 19           | 19          |
| Don't know          | 5           | 5           | 5            | 5           |

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing...

|                                 | <u>3/90</u> | <u>1/90</u> | <u>11/89</u> | <u>9/89</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>as President</b>             |             |             |              |             |
| Approve                         | 69%         | 71%         | 67%          | 67%         |
| Disapprove                      | 19%         | 19          | 22           | 17          |
| Don't know                      | 12          | 10          | 11           | 16          |
| <b>handling the economy</b>     |             |             |              |             |
| Approve                         | 53%         | 54          | 52           | 61          |
| Disapprove                      | 35          | 31          | 33           | 24          |
| Don't know                      | 12          | 15          | 15           | 15          |
| <b>handling foreign affairs</b> |             |             |              |             |
| Approve                         | 67%         | 69          | 59           | 58          |
| Disapprove                      | 22          | 21          | 27           | 26          |
| Don't know                      | 11          | 10          | 14           | 16          |

**Attitudes toward National Economy**

Do you think there will or will not be an economic recession during the next twelve months?

|                                   | <u>3/90</u> | <u>1/90</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Will be an economic recession     | 30%         | 31%         |
| Will not be an economic recession | 56          | 56          |
| Don't know                        | 14          | 13          |

Over the past year, do you think the national economy has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

|                | <u>3/90</u> | <u>1/90</u> | <u>11/89</u> | <u>9/89</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Better         | 13%         | 12%         | 15%          | 18%         |
| Worse          | 37          | 29          | 34           | 23          |
| About the same | 48          | 57          | 49           | 57          |
| Don't know     | 2           | 2           | 2            | 2           |

During the next year, do you think the national economy will get better, get worse, or stay about the same?

|                     | <u>3/90</u> | <u>1/90</u> | <u>11/89</u> | <u>9/89</u> |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Get better          | 21%         | 22%         | 21%          | 25%         |
| Get worse           | 30          | 28          | 33           | 23          |
| Stay about the same | 44          | 44          | 39           | 43          |
| Don't know          | 5           | 6           | 7            | 9           |

During the next year, do you think your family will be financially better off than it is today, worse off, or about the same?

|                | <u>3/90</u> | <u>1/90</u> | <u>11/89</u> | <u>9/89</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Better off     | 27%         | 30%         | 31%          | 34%         |
| Worse off      | 16          | 9           | 14           | 13          |
| About the same | 55          | 59          | 53           | 51          |
| Not sure       | 2           | 2           | 2            | 2           |

I'd like to read you a list of economic issues. As of right now, which one do you feel is the (most/second most) important issue facing the country?

|                          | <u>First/Second</u><br><u>Choice</u> |             |             |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
|                          | <u>3/90</u>                          | <u>1/90</u> | <u>9/89</u> |
| Federal budget deficit ✓ | 48%                                  | 49%         | 51%         |
| Unemployment             | 38                                   | 39          | 38          |
| U.S. trade deficit       | 34                                   | 38          | 37          |
| Inflation                | 30                                   | 28          | 26          |
| Federal taxes            | 19                                   | 18          | 21          |
| Interest rates           | 12                                   | 11          | 11          |

Foreign Policy

Do you think the most important foreign policy problems for the United States over the next few years will be dealing with the threat of war or economic competition?

Which do you think is a greater threat to the United States' future security--the threat of communist expansion or foreign economic competition?

|                             | <u>Future Problems</u> | <u>Future Threat</u> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ Threat of war/Expansion   | 8%                     | 6%                   |
| ✓ Foreign econ. competition | 87                     | 85                   |
| ✓ Both/Neither (VOL)        | 3                      | 6                    |
| ✓ Not sure                  | 2                      | 3                    |

Do you think the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union is still going on, or is it mostly over?

|                           | <u>3/90</u> | <u>12/89</u> | <u>11/89</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| ✓ Cold War still going on | 41%         | 46%          | 46%          |
| ✓ Cold War mostly over    | 51          | 40           | 46           |
| Not sure                  | 8           | 14           | 8            |

Let me read you a list of some countries around the world. For each, please tell me whether you think that country is a strong ally and friend of the United States, a basically friendly nation, a neutral country which is neither an ally nor an enemy of the U.S., or an enemy of the United States.

|                  | <u>Strong Ally/Friend</u> | <u>Basically Friendly Nation</u> | <u>Neutral/Neither Ally Nor Enemy</u> | <u>Enemy</u> | <u>Not Sure</u> |
|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Great Britain    | 66%                       | 19%                              | 11%                                   | 1%           | 3%              |
| Egypt            | 11                        | 24                               | 44                                    | 5            | 16              |
| China            | 4                         | 16                               | 50                                    | 21           | 9               |
| Japan            | 18                        | 30                               | 33                                    | 14           | 5               |
| The Soviet Union | 4                         | 18                               | 44                                    | 26           | 8               |
| West Germany     | 29                        | 31                               | 28                                    | 4            | 8               |
| Israel           | 22                        | 23                               | 30                                    | 13           | 12              |

Currently, 47% of all United States foreign aid goes to five countries, including Israel, Egypt, and the Philippines. Recently, it has been suggested that we take 5% of the money going to these five countries and use it to help emerging democracies in Eastern Europe and Panama. Would you approve or disapprove of this plan?

|   |             |    |
|---|-------------|----|
|   | <u>3/90</u> |    |
| Approve                                       | ✓ 63%       |    |
| Disapprove                                    | ✓ 24        | .. |
| Disapprove of <u>all</u> foreign aid (VOL)    | 4           |    |
| Depends on what other two countries are (VOL) | 5           |    |
| Not sure                                      | 4           |    |

German Reunification

Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about East Germany and West Germany reunifying. In general, do you think the idea of the two Germanies becoming one nation again is a good idea or a bad idea?

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
|                    | <u>3/90</u> |
| Good idea          | ✓ 72%       |
| Bad idea           | 12          |
| Some of both (VOL) | 5           |
| Not sure           | 11          |

Why do you feel this would be a (good idea/bad idea)?

| <u>Good Idea</u>  | <u>Bad Idea</u>  |
|---|--|
| It is only right; they belong together; they are all Germans; it is about time they reunited 22 | Every time they are together they start a war 5                                    |
| Good for economic reasons; their economy will improve 15  | They will become too strong 3  |
| It was inevitable; there was no reason for them to be apart; they were one nation once 11       | Bad idea for economic reasons; West Germany can't withstand the financial burden 3 |
| Good for the German people, a morale-builder for them 9   | They are too nationalistic; they discriminate 2                                    |
| Families will be reunited 8   | Don't trust them; together they spell trouble; they haven't changed 2              |

Regardless of whether you think the reunification of Germany is a good idea or a bad idea, is this something that concerns you a lot, concerns you some, or concerns you very little?

|             | <u>3/90</u> |
|-------------|-------------|
| A lot       | 22%         |
| Some        | 43          |
| Very little | 34          |
| Not sure    | 1           |

Which would concern you more about a united Germany--its military strength or its economic strength?

|                     | <u>Total</u> | <u>A lot/Some Concerned</u> |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ Military strength | 33%          | 34%                         |
| ✓ Economic strength | 51           | 50                          |
| Both equally (VOL)  | 8            | 10                          |
| Neither (VOL)       | 5            | 4                           |
| Not sure            | 3            | 2                           |

Do you think the United States should or should not demand any conditions before agreeing to a reunification of Germany--or don't you think we have any right to demand conditions?

|  | <u>3/90</u> |
|--|-------------|
| ✓ The United States should demand conditions                   | 45%         |
| The United States should not demand conditions                 | 15          |
| The United States does not have any right to demand conditions | 32          |
| Not sure   | 8           |

} 47

Here are a few conditions some Americans have suggested should be in place before they would allow East and West Germany to reunite. For each, please tell me whether you would favor or oppose this condition.

|   | <u>Total</u> |               | <u>US Demand Conditions</u> |               |
|---|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
|   | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | <u>Favor</u>                | <u>Oppose</u> |
| Have them remain a part of the European Economic Community                    | 78%          | 13            | 85%                         | 8             |
| Have them sign a pact to remain part of NATO and an ally of the United States | <u>75</u>    | <u>17</u>     | 85                          | 10            |
| Have them agree not to keep nuclear weapons                                   | <u>74</u>    | 21            | 83                          | 15            |
| Have them limit the size of their army  | 66           | 27            | 83                          | 13            |
| Have them disarm  | 34           | 58            | 40                          | 54            |

If there is a reunification between East and West Germany, do you think there would or would not be a serious risk of Germany becoming a military aggressor?

3/90

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| Would be     | 33% |
| Would not be | 53  |
| Not sure     | 14  |

European Troop Levels

Currently, the United States has about 300,000 troops in Europe. President Bush has proposed that both the United States and the Soviet Union reduce their troops to just under 200,000. Others in Congress favor reducing troops to 100,000. What is your preference--keeping troops at 300,000, reducing troops to 200,000, or reducing American forces to 100,000?

3/90

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Staying at 300,000      | 16% |
| Reducing to 200,000     | 38  |
| Reducing to 100,000     | 37  |
| Increase troops (VOL)   | 1   |
| Remove all troops (VOL) | 2   |
| Not sure                | 6   |

Do you think that over the next several years the goal of the United States should be to remove almost all its troops from Europe, or do you think it will be important that we always maintain at least some troops there?

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| ✓ U.S. should remove almost all its troops | 18% |
| ✓ U.S. should always maintain some troops  | 76  |
| Depends (VOL)                              | 4   |
| Not sure                                   | 2   |

Nicaragua

Do you think the United States should or should not provide substantial economic assistance to Nicaragua to help rebuild its economy?

|   |   |     |
|---|---|-----|
| Should provide substantial assistance     | ✓ | 44% |
| Should not provide substantial assistance | ✓ | 43  |
| Not sure                                  |   | 13  |

Not Good.

I'd like to read you several possible reasons for the results of the recent Nicaraguan election. For each reason, please tell me whether you think it was extremely important, fairly important, only somewhat important, or not important.

|  | <u>Extremely</u><br><u>Important</u> | <u>Fairly</u><br><u>Important</u> | <u>Only</u><br><u>Somewhat</u><br><u>Important</u> | <u>Not</u><br><u>Important</u> | <u>Not</u><br><u>Sure</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| The desire<br>for a change<br>in government<br>on the part<br>of the<br>Nicaraguan<br>people ✓ | 61%                                  | 19                                | 12   | 3                              | 5                         |
| The actions and<br>policies of<br>leaders of<br>other Central<br>American<br>countries         | 28                                   | 27                                | 26   | 8                              | 11                        |
| The U.S. policy<br>of funding the<br>contras   | 23                                   | 22                                | 25   | 20                             | 10                        |