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90% Doubt Tax Cut
PUBLIC DIVIDED ON MEDICARE REFORMS

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90% Doubt Tax Cut

PUBLIC DIVIDED ON MEDICARE REFORMS

Pew's latest News Interest Index finds that a little bit of news about Medicare reform travels a long way, while a lot of news about tax relief is mostly greeted with shrugs and disbelief. Fewer than four in ten Americans (38%) paid close attention to the ongoing Washington debate about how to cut taxes as part of the budget agreement. But fully 51% reported closely following news about proposed changes to the Medicare system, which received much less coverage until Senate Finance Committee recommendations were unveiled late last week.

Lack of interest in news about cutting taxes reflected a disturbingly cynical view by Americans: 90% believe the average citizen will pay more taxes in the year 2000, rather than less (7%), despite the recent bipartisan agreement on the budget. And the public is divided over who has the best ideas for cutting middle class taxes: Republican Congressional leaders (30%), Democratic Congressional leaders (23%), or President Clinton (18%).

On the other hand, the public expressed much clearer preferences about the Medicare reform proposals made last week. Nearly two in three (60%) favor increasing costs for affluent Medicare users, while just one in three support gradually raising the age of eligibility as a way of keeping the program financially sound for future generations. Surprisingly, the means-test option is, if anything, supported more strongly by people over 50 than by younger Americans.

Support for Proposed Medicare Reforms			
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>
Requiring affluent seniors to pay more	60	37	3=100
Gradually raising eligibility age	33	65	2=100

Politically, approval ratings of GOP leaders in Congress have fallen to 33% from 40% in May, in the wake of the party's perceived mishandling of the disaster relief bill. The President's approval ratings, in contrast, remain in the mid-50s, as news about Paula Jones' court victory attracted no more public interest than have other Clinton scandal stories, according to the Pew poll of 1,000 respondents June 18-22.

Medicare

Support for means-testing Medicare recipients is receiving strong support from the public. Fully 60% favor requiring persons who earn more than \$50,000 a year and couples who earn over \$75,000 annually, to pay a larger share of their doctors' bills. Support is strong among Democrats, Republicans and Independents and across age groups.

Support for Proposed Medicare Reforms				
By Age				
	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-49</u>	<u>50-65</u>	<u>65+</u>
	%	%	%	%
Means-Testing				
Favor	57	61	66	58
Oppose	42	36	31	36
Raising Eligibility Age				
Favor	35	30	26	43
Oppose	61	68	75	54

Older Americans with annual incomes of \$50,000 or more are somewhat less supportive of the means-testing proposal, likely to affect them directly. Nonetheless, a majority (56%) of this group favor requiring more affluent seniors to pay more.

The proposal to increase the eligibility age for Medicare from 65 to 67 is far less popular. Only 33% favor the idea of a gradual increase in the age at which seniors become eligible for Medicare; of them, 13% “strongly favor” this proposal. Those already 65 and over would be unaffected personally by this change and are more supportive of it than are other age groups; 43% favor the age increase. But only 26% of those 50 to 64, and thus approaching retirement age, favor the change. Better educated and wealthier Americans have a more favorable view of this proposal, as do Republicans much more so than Democrats (42% vs. 26%).

Taxes and Parties

While the current budget agreement is based on the premise that the budget can be balanced at the same time taxes are cut, the public remains skeptical. Nearly half (48%) say the government *cannot* reduce the federal budget deficit and cut taxes for the middle class at the same time, 47% say it can. Republicans are more optimistic about this budget-balancing strategy. However, even among GOP loyalists, 42% say balance cannot be reached at the same time taxes are being cut. A majority of Americans continue to give deficit reduction priority over such tax cuts (53% vs. 37%).

The historical balanced budget agreement reached between Clinton and Congress probably contributed to the increased number of Americans who believe the Republicans and Democrats in Washington have been working together more lately. One in three (34%) hold this view, up from 21% in October 1995. Nonetheless, the opposite view, that the parties are bickering more than usual, is held by almost half of the public (49%).

	<u>Oct 95</u>	<u>June 97</u>
<i>The two parties have been...</i>		
Working together more	21	34
Opposing each other more 72	49	
Same as in past	3	6
DK	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100

The public blames the GOP-controlled Congress more than the Clinton administration for things *not* getting done in Washington (41% vs. 34%). One in ten (12%) say both are equally to blame. A similar pattern was evident in September 1992 when the public narrowly blamed the Democratically-controlled Congress rather than the Bush Administration (46% vs. 40%) for the perceived gridlock in Washington.

The falloff in job approval ratings for GOP Congressional leaders is seen most markedly among party loyalists, senior citizens and Southerners. Despite this downturn, overall favorability ratings for the Republican Party are unchanged, and the recent trend in party affiliation shows no significant movement away from the GOP. Currently, the Democrats are rated favorably by a 61% to 33% margin, compared to a 51% to 42% margin for the GOP.

	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	%	%	%
June 97	27	32	35
May 97	29	32	32
April 97 30	34	30	
Late Feb 97	28	33	31
Early Feb 97	30	34	29
Jan 97	27	34	33
Nov 96	27	34	33

Fewer Americans now perceive major differences between what the Democratic and Republican Parties stand for. Only 25% say a *great deal* separates the parties, down from 34% in October 1995. A plurality (48%) say there is a fair amount of difference, another 25% see hardly any difference at all. Republicans more than Democrats and Independents see a great deal of difference between the parties: 35%, 28% and 16%, respectively.

News Interest Index

The Timothy McVeigh trial was the most closely followed news story this month. Four in ten Americans (39%) followed the trial, verdict and penalty phase very closely, another 40% followed fairly closely. Those under 30 paid closer attention than any other age group. The trial ranks in the top tier among other high profile criminal cases over the past 10 years. Only the O.J. Simpson case and the Rodney King verdict and ensuing riots drew larger audiences.

Of the two military sex stories that dominated the news this past month, the public showed significantly more interest in the discharge of First Lieut. Kelly Flinn than the withdrawal of General Joseph Ralston's name from consideration to head the Joint Chiefs of Staff (23% vs. 11% very closely). There was no gender gap in attentiveness to either story, but older Americans followed each more closely.

The Supreme Court decision to allow Paula Corbin Jones to go forward with her sexual harassment lawsuit against President Clinton was followed very closely by only 16% of the public. This number is virtually unchanged since the Jones story first broke in May 1994. Men followed the Court decision more closely than women; Republicans and Democrats followed it in nearly equal proportions. The Jones scandal is on a par with other controversies that have surrounded the Clinton presidency.

The public is paying very little

High Profile Criminal Cases*

	<u>Date</u>	<u>% Followed Closely</u>	
		<u>Very</u>	<u>Very/Fairly</u>
Rodney King I	May 92	70	92
O.J. Simpson	June 94	48	77
Rodney King II	May 93	47	81
Timothy McVeigh	June 97	39	79
Jim Bakker	Oct 89	33	72
Mike Tyson	Feb 92	32	69
Oliver North	May 89	31	71
William Kennedy Smith	Dec 91	27	66
Lorena Bobbitt	Jan 94	26	61
Marion Barry	July 90	22	53
Bensonhurst	June 90	17	43
Menendez Brothers	March 96	14	40
Leona Helmsley	Sept 89	9	29
John Gotti	March 92	7	30

* For trend items, the percentage represents the high point in news interest.

Clinton Controversies

	<u>Date</u>	<u>% Followed Closely</u>	
		<u>Very</u>	<u>Very/Fairly</u>
DNC Contributions	†	19	51
\$200 hair cut	June 93	18	40
Resignation of Dick Morris	Sept 96	17	46
Paula Jones	June 97	16	50
Clinton extra-marital affairs	Feb 92	15	43
Gathering FBI files	July 96	15	40
Whitewater	†	13	44
White House travel office	June 93	13	41
Vincent Foster suicide	July 93	13	38
ROTC/Draft	Feb 92	11	32

† For these trend items, percent represents average news interest over time.

attention to the debate over whether to renew China's most favored nation trading status. Only one in ten Americans followed this story very closely. Coverage of the 25th Anniversary of the Watergate break-in attracted even less interest. Just 7% followed this story very closely.

**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH
NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"**

	McVeigh Trial	Medicare Debate †	Flinn Discharge	Paula Jones Lawsuit	(N)
<i>Total</i>	39	24	23	16	(1000)
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	39	22	23	19	(445)
Female	39	26	24	13	(555)
<i>Race</i>					
White	38	23	23	15	(780)
Hispanic*	44	19	23	13	(73)
Black	50	37	29	15	(124)
<i>Age</i>					
Under 30	46	18	17	15	(205)
30-49	36	19	20	13	(439)
50+	38	36	32	20	(334)
<i>Education</i>					
College Grad.	39	25	26	17	(277)
Other College	39	25	23	16	(232)
High School Grad	40	22	23	13	(375)
< H. S. Grad.	36	28	19	18	(109)
<i>Region</i>					
East	44	24	25	18	(204)
Midwest	34	22	20	13	(257)
South	41	27	24	15	(351)
West	38	22	24	17	(188)
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	42	23	26	22	(263)
Democrat	44	28	28	15	(328)
Independent	37	23	19	13	(353)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

* The designation, Hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

† This item only asked of respondents Thursday through Sunday; the 'N' does not apply

CONTINUED...

**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH
NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"**

	Tax cuts Proposals	Ralston's Withdrawal	China Trading Status	Watergate Anniversary	(N)
<i>Total</i>	12	11	10	8	(1000)
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	14	11	13	10	(445)
Female	10	10	7	6	(555)
<i>Race</i>					
White	11	11	10	7	(780)
*Hispanic	14	11	8	4	(73)
Black	19	11	10	11	(124)
<i>Age</i>					
Under 30	10	6	8	7	(205)
30-49	10	10	9	4	(439)
50+	16	15	12	12	(334)
<i>Education</i>					
College Grad.	13	15	15	6	(277)
Other College	18	12	10	9	(232)
High School Grad	10	9	9	5	(375)
< H. S. Grad.	10	7	5	12	(109)
<i>Region</i>					
East	12	14	9	10	(204)
Midwest	10	9	8	7	(257)
South	15	11	10	8	(351)
West	10	10	12	5	(188)
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	14	13	13	10	(263)
Democrat	15	10	10	9	(328)
Independent	10	10	9	5	(353)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

* The designation, Hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

TABLES

Trend In GOP Congress Job Approval

May 1997 vs. June 1997

	----- May 1997 -----		----- June 1997 -----		Change in <u>Approval</u>
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	
	%	%	%	%	
Total	40	44	33	50	-7
Sex					
Male	42	44	37	52	-5
Female	38	44	30	48	-8
Race					
White	41	42	35	47	-6
Non-white	32	53	27	63	-5
Black	33	53	23	68	-10
Race and Sex					
White Men	43	44	38	50	-5
White Women	39	41	32	45	-7
Age					
Under 30	42	42	40	45	-2
30-49	40	46	35	49	-5
50-64	39	42	33	55	-6
65+	34	46	21	55	-13
Education					
College Grad.	42	48	33	54	-9
Some College	44	42	32	56	-12
High School Grad.	36	46	36	46	0
<H.S. Grad	38	36	32	46	-6
Family Income					
\$75,000+	47	47	37	54	-10
\$50,000-\$74,999	48	42	40	52	-8
\$30,000-\$49,999	45	44	37	48	-8
\$20,000-\$29,999	34	46	35	49	+1
<\$20,000	30	47	26	51	-4

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK.]**

Continued ...

	----- May 1997 -----		----- June 1997 -----		Change in <u>Approval</u>
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	
	%	%	%	%	
<i>Total</i>	40	44	33	50	-7
<i>Region</i>					
East	36	49	30	53	-6
Midwest	37	47	34	45	-3
South	45	38	30	53	-15
West	38	44	43	46	+5
<i>Community Size</i>					
Large City	40	41	35	48	-5
Suburb	45	43	33	52	-12
Small City/Town	38	45	35	50	-3
Rural Area	38	46	30	49	-8
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	68	22	55	34	-13
Democrat	23	61	18	68	-5
Independent	33	49	31	48	-2
<i>Clinton Approval</i>					
Approve	38	48	34	53	-4
Disapprove	47	43	39	53	-8
DK	22	19	18	27	-4

Support for Medicare Reform Proposals

	<i>Raising Age of Eligibility</i>		<i>Requiring Affluent Seniors to Pay More</i>	
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
	%	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	33	65	60	37
<i>Sex</i>				
Male	34	64	61	37
Female	32	66	59	36
<i>Race</i>				
White	34	64	62	34
Non-white	27	72	51	46
Black	26	73	52	46
<i>Race and Sex</i>				
White Men	35	63	64	34
White Women	33	65	61	35
<i>Age</i>				
Under 30	35	61	57	42
30-49	30	68	61	36
50-64	26	75	66	31
65+	43	54	58	36
<i>Education</i>				
College Grad.	47	52	62	36
Some College	33	64	64	33
High School Grad.	27	72	63	33
<H.S. Grad	27	71	43	51
<i>Family Income</i>				
\$75,000+	50	49	49	49
\$50,000-\$74,999	34	65	60	39
\$30,000-\$49,999	29	67	67	32
\$20,000-\$29,999	21	79	67	32
<\$20,000	31	67	57	37

Question: There has been discussion in Washington about how to keep the Medicare program financially sound for future generations. Congress is now considering several proposals to reduce the costs of the program. As I read each, tell me whether you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose it. First, **(READ AND ROTATE)**... Gradually raise the age at which one is eligible for Medicare from 65 to 67; Require individual seniors who make more than \$50,000 a year and couples who make more than \$75,000 a year to pay a larger share of their doctors' bills.

Continued ...

	<i>Raising Age of Eligibility</i>		<i>Requiring Affluent Seniors to Pay More</i>	
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
	%	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	33	65	60	37
<i>Region</i>				
East	32	68	60	37
Midwest	33	64	62	35
South	35	63	60	36
West	31	65	58	39
<i>Community Size</i>				
Large City	31	64	56	38
Suburb	41	58	59	40
Small City/Town	32	66	62	35
Rural Area	27	72	63	35
<i>Party ID</i>				
Republican	42	57	57	40
Democrat	27	71	60	37
Independent	31	67	64	33
<i>Clinton Approval</i>				
Approve	32	65	61	36
Disapprove	37	61	61	38
No opinion	25	72	51	35

Best Ideas on Middle Class Tax Cuts: Republicans, Democrats or Clinton

	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	30	23	18	10	19=100
Sex					
Male	35	21	19	12	13
Female	26	25	16	9	24
Race					
White	33	22	14	11	20
Non-white	15	31	36	8	10
Black	12	30	43	7	8
Race and Sex					
White Men	37	21	16	12	14
White Women	28	24	12	9	27
Age					
Under 30	34	23	21	8	14
30-49	27	24	17	11	21
50-64	36	21	14	14	15
65+	27	24	18	8	23
Education					
College Grad.	34	25	12	12	17
Some College	35	20	18	12	15
High School Grad.	29	25	17	11	18
<H.S. Grad	20	24	24	5	27
Family Income					
\$75,000+	45	13	15	18	9
\$50,000-\$74,999	39	20	12	16	13
\$30,000-\$49,999	32	25	19	7	18
\$20,000-\$29,999	29	27	18	12	14
<\$20,000	18	30	20	6	26

Question: On the issue of cutting taxes for the middle class, who has the best ideas — Republican Congressional leaders, Democratic Congressional leaders, or Bill Clinton?

Continued ...

	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	30	23	18	10	19=100
<i>Region</i>					
East	22	23	23	16	16
Midwest	31	21	16	11	21
South	32	27	17	7	17
West	34	20	16	10	20
<i>Community Size</i>					
Large City	28	23	22	10	17
Suburb	36	20	16	11	17
Small City/Town 27	26	18	10	19	
Rural Area	33	22	13	10	22
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	67	5	8	6	14
Democrat	4	45	27	8	16
Independent	26	20	17	14	23
<i>Clinton Approval</i>					
Approve	16	33	27	8	16
Disapprove	57	12	6	11	14
No Opinion	21	10	9	18	42

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,000 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period June 18-22,1997. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. For results based on either Form 1 (N=500) or Form 2 (N=500), the sampling error is plus or minus 5 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed). The design of the sample ensures this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone households in the U.S. Estimates of the number of telephone households within each county are derived from 1990 Census data on residential telephone incidence that have been updated with state-level information on new telephone installations and county-level projections of the number of households. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing three or more residential listings.

The sample was released for interviewing in replicates. Using replicates to control the release of sample to the field ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample.

At least four attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making a contact with a potential respondent. All interview breakoffs and refusals were re-contacted at least once in order to attempt to convert them to completed interviews. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the "youngest male 18 or older who is at home". If there is no eligible man at home, interviewers asked to speak with "the oldest woman 18 or older who lives in the household". This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

Non-response in telephone interview surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis.

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 1994). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone.

The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
RESPONSE RATE PROJECT
FINALTOPLINE
June 18 - 22, 1997
N=1,000

Hello, I am _____ calling for Princeton Survey Research Associates in Princeton, New Jersey. We are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and TV stations around the country.

INTRO FOR STANDARD SURVEY: I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home. **[IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?]**

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
June, 1997	54	34	12=100
May, 1997	57	34	9=100
April, 1997	55	34	11=100
February, 1997	60	32	8=100
Early February, 1997	57	30	13=100
January, 1997	59	31	10=100
November, 1996	57	34	9=100
July, 1996	54	38	8=100
June, 1996	54	38	8=100
April, 1996	53	39	8=100
March, 1996	55	38	7=100
February, 1996	51	39	10=100
January, 1996	50	43	7=100
October, 1995	48	42	10=100
September, 1995	45	42	13=100
August, 1995	44	44	12=100
June, 1995	50	40	10=100
April, 1995	47	43	10=100
March, 1995	44	44	12=100
February, 1995	44	44	12=100
December, 1994	41	47	12=100
November, 1994	48	40	12=100
October, 1994	41	47	12=100
Early October, 1994	38	47	15=100
September, 1994	41	52	7=100
July, 1994	45	46	9=100
June, 1994	42	44	14=100
May, 1994	46	42	12=100
March, 1994	45	42	13=100
January, 1994	51	35	14=100
Early January, 1994	48	35	17=100

Q.1 con't ...

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
December, 1993	48	36	16=100
October, 1993	44	42	14=100
September, 1993	49	35	16=100
Early September, 1993	43	43	14=100
August, 1993	39	46	15=100
May, 1993	39	43	18=100
Early May, 1993	45	37	18=100
April, 1993	49	29	22=100
February, 1993	56	25	19=100

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
June, 1997	33	50	17=100
May, 1997	40	44	16=100
April, 1997	40	44	16=100
February, 1997	44	42	14=100
January, 1997	38	47	15=100
November, 1996	40	43	17=100
July, 1996	38	48	14=100
June, 1996	36	50	14=100
April, 1996	39	46	15=100
March, 1996	35	51	14=100
February, 1996	33	53	14=100
January, 1996	36	54	10=100
October, 1995	36	51	13=100
September, 1995	36	50	14=100
August, 1995	38	45	17=100
June, 1995	41	45	14=100
April, 1995	44	43	13=100
March 1995	43	39	18=100
December, 1994	52	28	20=100

Q.3 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?
[READ AND ROTATE LIST]

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	(VOL) <u>DK</u>
a. The trial of Timothy McVeigh convicted of bombing the federal building in Oklahoma City ¹	39	40	14	6	1=100
May, 1997	30	44	18	7	1=100
April, 1997	20	38	25	16	1=100
b. The decision by the Supreme Court that Paula Corbin Jones can move forward with her sexual harassment lawsuit against President Clinton	16	34	28	21	1=100
May, 1994 ²	15	29	27	27	2=100
c. The debate over whether China should be granted the same trading status as other major nations	10	21	26	42	1=100
d. Competing proposals on ways to cut taxes as part of the recent bipartisan budget agreement	12	26	29	32	1=100
e. First Lieut. Kelly Flinn's general discharge from the Air Force for committing adultery and disobeying orders	23	35	25	16	1=100
f. The withdrawal of General Joseph Ralston's name from consideration for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because of an adulterous affair	11	23	28	37	1=100
g. The 25 th anniversary of the Watergate break-in	7	16	29	47	1=100

¹ In previous months the story was listed as "The trial of Timothy McVeigh, accused of bombing the federal building in Oklahoma City."

² In this month the story was listed as "Accusations by an Arkansas state worker, Paula Jones, that Bill Clinton sexually harassed her."

Q.3 con't ...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>(VOL) DK</u>
ITEM ONLY ASKED OF RESPONDENTS THURSDAY THROUGH SUNDAY [N=769]					
h. The debate in Washington about how to reform the Medicare system	24	27	25	23	1=100
February, 1997	20	27	23	28	2=100
January, 1996 ³	30	36	22	12	*=100
September, 1995	31	40	18	11	*=100

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about taxes...

Q.6 Thinking ahead to the year 2000, as I read the following pair of statements, please tell me which is more likely to happen. Do you think... **(READ)**?

	<u>Nov. 1996</u>
90 The average American will pay MORE in taxes OR	82
7 The average American will pay LESS in taxes	14
1 Neither/no change (VOL)	2
<u>2</u> DK/Refused	<u>2</u>
100	100

Q.7 On the issue of cutting taxes for the middle class, who has the best ideas — Republican Congressional leaders, Democratic Congressional leaders, or Bill Clinton?

	<u>Feb. 1995</u>
30 Republican Congressional leaders	30
23 Democratic Congressional leaders	15
18 Clinton	30
10 None of the above (VOL)	8
<u>19</u> DK/Refused	<u>17</u>
100	100

³

In previous months the story was listed "The debate in Washington over the future of the Medicare system."

ASK Q.8 OF FORM 1 ONLY: [N=500]

Q.8F1 What should be given a higher priority, cutting taxes for the middle class or taking steps to reduce the budget deficit?

		Feb. <u>1995</u>
37	Cutting taxes for the middle class	37
53	Taking steps to reduce the budget deficit	56
5	Both equally (VOL)	4
<u>5</u> 100	DK/Refused	<u>3</u> 100

ASK Q.8a OF FORM 2 ONLY: [N=500]

Q.8aF2 Do you think the government can reduce the federal budget deficit and cut taxes for the middle class at the same time, or not?

		--- CBS --- <u>Aug. 1996</u>
47	Yes	42
48	No	51
<u>5</u> 100	DK/Refused	<u>7</u> 100

**QUESTION ONLY ASKED OF RESPONDENTS THURSDAY THROUGH SUNDAY [N=769]
ON A DIFFERENT TOPIC . . .**

M.1 There has been discussion in Washington about how to keep the Medicare program financially sound for future generations. Congress is now considering several proposals to reduce the costs of the program. As I read each, tell me whether you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose it. First, (**READ AND ROTATE**). *{new}*

		<u>Strongly</u> <u>Favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u> <u>Ref.</u>
a.	Gradually raise the age at which one is eligible for Medicare from 65 to 67	13	20	34	31	2=100
b.	Require individual seniors who make more than \$50,000 a year and couples who make more than \$75,000 a year to pay a larger share of their doctors' bills.	26	34	25	12	3=100

Q.21 I'd like your opinion of some people and organizations. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of who or what I name. (First,) would you describe your opinion of **(INSERT ITEM: ROTATE ITEMS)** as very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? **(INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE")**

		Very Favor- <u>able</u>	Mostly Favor- <u>able</u>	Mostly Unfavor- <u>able</u>	Very Unfavor- <u>able</u>	Never Heard <u>of</u>	Can't <u>Rate</u>
a.	Congress	4	48	34	8	0	6=100
	May, 1997	5	44	32	10	*	9=100
	February, 1997	6	46	31	9	*	8=100
	January, 1997	6	50	32	8	*	4=100
	June, 1996	6	39	38	12	*	5=100
	April, 1996	6	39	37	13	0	5=100
	January, 1996	4	38	38	16	*	4=100
	October, 1995	4	38	42	13	0	3=100
	August, 1995	5	40	34	13	*	7=100
	June, 1995	8	45	31	11	*	5=100
	February, 1995	10	44	27	10	0	9=100
	July, 1994	7	46	34	9	*	4=100
	May, 1993	8	35	35	13	0	9=100
	November, 1991	7	44	34	9	0	6=100
	May, 1990	6	53	25	9	1	6=100
	May, 1988	8	56	23	5	0	8=100
	January, 1988	6	58	25	4	0	7=100
	May, 1987	10	64	16	4	*	6=100
	January, 1987	7	52	23	8	0	10=100
	June, 1985	9	58	21	5	*	7=100
i.	The Democratic Party	10	51	25	8	*	6=100
	January, 1997	13	47	28	7	*	5=100
	October, 1995	9	40	37	11	-	3=100
	July, 1994	13	49	27	7	*	4=100
	May, 1993	14	43	25	9	0	9=100
	July, 1992	17	44	24	9	*	6=100
j.	The Republican Party	8	43	31	11	1	6=100
	January, 1997	8	44	33	10	*	5=100
	October, 1995	10	42	28	16	*	4=100
	July, 1994	12	51	25	8	*	4=100
	May, 1993	12	42	25	10	0	11=100
	July, 1992	9	37	31	17	*	6=100

Q.22 In general, would you describe your political views as ... **(READ)**

		<u>June</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>April</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1994</u>
8	Very conservative	7	7	7
30	Conservative	32	31	32
40	Moderate	38	39	39
14	Liberal, OR	14	14	15
4	Very liberal?	6	5	4
<u>4</u> 100	DK/Refused (DO NOT READ)	<u>3</u> 100	<u>4</u> 100	<u>3</u> 100

Q.23 Thinking about the Democratic and Republican Parties, would you say there is a great deal of difference in what they stand for, a fair amount of difference, or hardly any difference at all?

		<u>Oct</u> <u>1995</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1994</u>	<u>May</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>May</u> <u>1987</u>
25	A great deal	34	23	24	25
48	A fair amount	46	51	45	45
25	Hardly any	18	24	27	25
<u>2</u> 100	DK/Refused	<u>2</u> 100	<u>2</u> 100	<u>4</u> 100	<u>5</u> 100

Q.24 This year, have Republicans and Democrats in Washington been working together more to solve problems, OR have they been bickering and opposing one another more than usual?

		<u>Oct</u> <u>1995</u>	<u>Aug</u> <u>1993</u>
34	Working together more	21	20
49	Opposing each other more	72	57
6	Same as in past (VOL)	3	13
<u>11</u> 100	DK/Refused	<u>4</u> 100	<u>10</u> 100

Q.25 Who would you say is more responsible for things not getting done in Washington, the Republican-controlled Congress or the Clinton Administration?

Sept 1992⁴

41	Congress	46	- Democratically controlled Congress
34	Clinton Administration	40	- Bush Administration
12	Both equally (VOL)	--	
<u>13</u>	DK/Refused	<u>14</u>	
100		100	

⁴

In 1992 the question was asked "... the Democratically controlled Congress or the Bush Administration?"