

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 1992, A.M.

**The People, The Press & Politics**

**Campaign '92**

**THE CAMPAIGN AND THE PRESS AT HALFTIME**

**Survey VI**

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**Washington** -- While George Bush, Bill Clinton, and Ross Perot have all criticized 1992 campaign press coverage, the three candidates might be surprised to learn that many members of the press community share their negative views.

A new Times Mirror survey of the American press community found it sharply divided on its own performance in *Campaign '92*. The majority of the American press believes that the barriers between mainstream and tabloid press have broken down and the most common complaint is that campaign coverage has been focused on irrelevant or trivial issues.

But at the same time, almost half the press corps (49%) believes that 1992 campaign coverage is superior to that of the 1988 campaign.

*The Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press* surveyed more than 400 members of the press community, from national print and television journalists to their local counterparts around the country. In addition, the sample also included members of the media elite, the principal media decision makers -- national newspaper editors and reporters, network anchors and correspondents, and senior news management -- who Times Mirror, with a nod to author David Halberstram, calls "*The Powers that Be.*"

The full Times Mirror report is attached. Among the highlights of the press survey are:

\*Forty-six percent of the press cite questions surrounding Bill Clinton's character as the major campaign development thus far; 20% say the Gennifer Flowers press conference is the campaign's most important moment; 17% cited Ross Perot's candidacy as the campaign's major development.

\*Fifty-six percent of the press believes that it has "*about the right amount*" of influence in determining who the Democratic presidential nominee will be; an earlier Times Mirror survey of the general public found that 58% of that group believes the press has "*too much*" influence in the process.

\*A majority of the press cited "*being too quick to judge a candidate's electability*" and "*inadequately covering candidate positions on issues*" as major problems in this year's coverage.

\*Majorities of the press say that Pat Buchanan and Paul Tsongas were helped by campaign press coverage and Bill Clinton and David Duke were hurt.

\*Fifty-five percent of the press believe that news organizations handled the controversy of Bill Clinton's personal character "*fairly responsibly*"; only 7% said "*very responsibly*", while 36% said news organizations handled it "*not too responsibly*" or "*not at all responsibly*".

\*Sixty-seven percent of the press said Clinton has only himself to blame for his problems thus far in the campaign, while 12% said press coverage was more to blame; in contrast, a Times Mirror survey of the general public found that 48% of this group believes that press coverage is the leading cause of Clinton's problems.

\*Seventy-three percent of the press believes that if the Clinton character stories continue, news organizations will be obligated to follow up rumors concerning President Bush's personal life.

\*Despite the Clinton coverage, the press has an overall favorable view of the Arkansas Governor, 55%-36% Favorable/Unfavorable; President Bush rated 46%-46%, and Dan Quayle 17%-73%.

\*While "*The Powers that Be*" are slightly more favorable towards Bill Clinton than journalists as a whole, they are much more negative towards George Bush; among all journalists, Bush receives a dead even 46%-46% favorable/unfavorable rating, but among "*The Powers that Be*", Bush receives a 58%-37% *unfavorable* rating.

\*National newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* are the principal source of outside information on the campaign for most journalists; 40% cited these newspapers, while 14% said the Associated Press, and 7% cited the evening network news broadcasts.

\*National newspapers, are far more influential among "*The Powers that Be*" than among all journalists; 88% of this elite group "*pay great attention to*" the national newspapers compared to 63% among all journalists; Sunday morning talk shows were also disproportionately influential among "*The Powers that Be*"; 38% also "*pay great attention to*" Sunday morning talk shows compared to only 21% of all journalists.

\*Among journalists under 35, national newspapers are far less influential; only 23% of this group cited them as a principal source of information, versus 40% for all respondents.

\*While 46% of the national press say their news organization is putting fewer resources into campaign coverage, only 15% said this fact alone has hurt the quality of the coverage.

The full text of the Times Mirror report is attached.

## **Overview**

The American press community is sharply divided as to whether it has covered the 1992 presidential campaign adequately or responsibly. Press ambivalence about its own performance in the first half of the campaign is exemplified by the dominant view that the barriers between the mainstream and tabloid press have broken down and the common complaint that campaign coverage has focused on the irrelevant and trivialized the issues (57%). But, at the same time, almost half the press (49%) believes that coverage of the current presidential contest is superior to the press performance during the Bush - Dukakis campaign in 1988 and that most problems relating to campaign press coverage are minor in nature.

The national and local press identifies two campaign events as triggering the most significant developments in the presidential contest thus far. The Gennifer Flowers press conference is cited by 20% as the campaign's most important moment. Forty-six percent of the press corps call the coverage of the Clinton character issue the most important aspect of the campaign to date followed by the 17% who believe that the Ross Perot announcement of a potential presidential candidacy has been the campaign's breakthrough event. It should also be noted that among "*The Powers That Be*", the principal media decision makers, one out of three of the survey respondents see the Perot entry as the most significant campaign event. One respondent called it "*a new element in politics.*"

## **JUDGING THE COVERAGE**

The press is divided as to whether its campaign coverage is better, the same, or worse than it was in 1988. A majority (51%) of the local press thinks the '92 campaign has received superior coverage to the last presidential run between George Bush and Michael Dukakis. The national press is slightly less sanguine, with 46% believing the press is doing a better job. "*We're still failing to get at the core issues involving the economy and the budget...*"; "*there's insufficient analytical coverage of Bush and issues like ecology, education, defense...*"; "*we focus on the sleaze issues. They're less complex and easily digested.*"

Comments such as these reflect a pattern of responses across the full range of survey respondents. 47% of the full sample believe that the '92 press corps is either working at the same level as it did the last time or is not doing as well as in 1988. A gender gap emerges in the assessment of campaign coverage with a majority of male newspeople (51%) seeing the 1992 coverage as better than the last presidential run. Only 39% of the women agree with that assessment. Among the group we call "*The Powers That Be*" there is also a substantial contingent of press people who think that the 1992 coverage is "*worse*" than in 1988 (24%).

Substantial differences in the assessment of press performance between print and broadcast journalists across a variety of themes and issues is exemplified by the sharp split between them in the ranks of "*The Powers That Be*" as to the quality of the 1992 campaign coverage to date. *One in four of the nation's senior print journalists and senior executives think that coverage is better than it was in the 1988 campaign while two out of three of the nation's senior broadcast executives and television news figures give higher marks to this year's presidential campaign coverage. Fully half of the print sector of "The Powers That Be" think the current coverage is worse than in 1988. Only two of the broadcasters in the sample offered the same view.*

Although the differences are not nearly as sharp in the broader media community both national and local television news people are more likely than the print press to believe that campaign coverage has improved since the last go round in 1988. *"There's a lot more willingness of the press to be issue oriented..."; "...contrary to the general view the mainline press is dealing extensively with issues..."; "...coverage of the early debates on C-Span and CNN has had a profound effect on the nature of the campaign..."*. These more positive assessments of campaign coverage are shared across a broad cross section of the survey participants, particularly among members of the television press contingent.

**TABLE 1**  
**1992 VS. 1988 PRESS COVERAGE RATING BY MEDIA**

<u>1992 Coverage</u>	<u>National</u>		<u>Local</u>	
	<u>TV</u>	<u>Print/Wires</u>	<u>TV</u>	<u>Print</u>
Better	51	43	54	48
Worse	15	23	19	16
Same	30	30	21	33
Can't Say	$\frac{5}{100}$ (103)	$\frac{5}{100}$ (110)	$\frac{6}{100}$ (100)	$\frac{3}{100}$ (100)

The survey's findings reflect sharp differences between the press' assessment of its own impact on the campaign and the views of the general public. Two questions illustrate the point. Asked how much influence news organizations have on the choice of the Democratic presidential nominee, well over half of the press respondents answered *"about the right amount"* (56%). But the general public has quite another view. In a Times Mirror survey completed in February 1992 almost three out of five Americans (58%) said that the press has *"too much"* influence on the selection of the nominee.

**TABLE 2**  
**PRESS INFLUENCE ON CHOICE OF DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE**

	Press Opinion		General Public		
	Survey May/1992	Feb. 1992	Jan. 1992	Jan. 1988	Oct. 1987
Too much	31	58	53	51	59
Too little	5	5	4	4	5
About the right amount	56	33	40	37	31
Don't know	<u>8</u> 100 (206)	<u>4</u> 100 (1227)	<u>3</u> 100 (1220)	<u>8</u> 100 (2109)	<u>5</u> 100 (1501)

### **THE CLINTON CHARACTER ISSUE**

The relationship between press coverage and the fortunes of the Clinton presidential effort offers a snapshot of the ambivalence the press expresses about the way it has covered the campaign. Bill Clinton is seen by all segments of the press community as being responsible for the difficulties he has encountered during his run (67%). Only 12% of the media -- national, local, print or broadcast -- believe the press is principally responsible for Clinton's difficulties with the "*character issue*" but almost half (46%) regard the coverage of the character issue as the most significant element of the campaign thus far and just under a third (31%) believe that the character shadow over Clinton is the result of a combination of Clinton's own actions and the manner in which the press has responded to them.

The press as a whole believes it has covered the Clinton character issue fairly responsibly (55%). But very few would go so far as to call the coverage "*very responsible*" (7%). One respondent's view that "*the issues getting most attention are not what is most important in making a choice for president*", reflected a significant cross section of press response. There is, moreover, a dramatic division in opinion between the most senior print journalists and their broadcast equivalents. Using author David Halberstram's notable phrase, we call these top executives and opinion moulders "*The Powers That Be.*" Few newspaper and magazine journalists in this group think that the Clinton issue has been handled responsibly. But most major broadcasters match and even surpass the rest of the press community in their assessment that the coverage has been responsible.

The public offers a significantly different assessment of the press' impact on the problems that have confronted the Clinton campaign. Nearly half of the general public (48%) said that Gov. Clinton's problems were related principally to the way the press had covered him.

**TABLE 3**  
**EXPLANATION FOR CLINTON CAMPAIGN PROBLEMS**

	Press Opinion Survey <u>May/1992</u>	Public Feb. <u>1992</u>
Press coverage	12	48
Clinton himself	67	40
Both/Neither	19	5
Don't know	<u>2</u> 100 (413)	<u>7</u> 100 (655)

*The nature of press coverage in the general election may be foreshadowed by the view (80% of all respondents) that the allegations about Clinton will trail him all the way to election day. Seventy-three per cent of our respondents believe that if Clinton becomes the nominee and these stories persist, the press will feel obligated to look into rumors about President Bush's personal life.*

The focus on the "*character issue*" throughout most of the first half of the campaign is particularly ironic since the press as a whole regards Bill Clinton with a good deal more favor than it does President George Bush. The putative Democratic candidate is rated favorably by 55% of the Times Mirror sample. George Bush runs substantially behind at 46%. There are, however, interesting and perhaps significant gender and age differences in this response. Male and female journalists under 35 divide almost evenly in rating Clinton favorably (47%) or unfavorably (44%), while George Bush pulls ahead in this group with a majority (53%) expressing a favorable view and 38% unfavorable.

In another example of campaign cross currents of feeling and professional assessment, only 12 percent of the press believes that the Democratic candidate has a good chance to win the presidency. Eighty-four percent of the press community across all media believes that the Democrats' presidential chances are either "*only fair*" or "*poor.*"



**TABLE 4**  
**CHANCE A DEMOCRAT WILL WIN WHITE HOUSE IN NOVEMBER**

	<u>Total</u> <u>Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Excellent	1	*	1
Good	12	16	9
Only fair	52	51	54
Poor	32	29	35
Can't say	<u>3</u> 100 (413)	<u>4</u> 100 (213)	<u>1</u> 100 (200)

**PRESS IMPACT**

The level of dissatisfaction with campaign coverage is closely linked to the individual's assessment of the press' impact on the selection of the nominee. Forty-eight percent of those who think the press is doing a "*worse*" job than in the past also believe that the press has had too much of an effect on campaign results. Only one out of four (26%) of those who feel the coverage is better or the same as the past is troubled by press impact on the campaign's course.

A similar pattern emerges in the context of the way the issues are covered. Those who feel that the campaign coverage has been worse than in 1988 feel the issues have been given short shrift and are much more likely to believe that the level of press influence on the campaign has been inappropriate or has helped distort the coverage. Women journalists 39% and journalists under 35 years of age 47% are much more critical of the press role in shaping the campaign than are the men and the older age groups as a whole.

These linkages are particularly pertinent to the reporting on the Clinton campaign. A majority of the respondents who believe that press performance in 1992 is superior or equal to the 1988 performance level think that the nature of the attention paid to Bill Clinton has been responsible. Among those who believe that the press coverage is worse than in 1988 a majority believes that the press has been irresponsible in the way it has covered the Clinton story (63%).

**TABLE 5**  
**PRESS INFLUENCE ON DEM. NOMINEE SELECTION AND**  
**COVERAGE OF CLINTON CHARACTER CONTROVERSY**  
**BY OPINION OF 1992 VS. 1988 CAMPAIGN COVERAGE**

<u>Press Influence</u>	1992 Coverage		
	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Same</u>
Too much	27	48	25
Too little	6	5	6
About right	59	43	61
Don't know	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$
<u>Press Coverage of Clinton Controversy</u>			
Very Responsibly	8	*	9
Fairly Responsibly	65	37	49
Not Too Responsibly	23	47	33
Not At All Responsibly	4	16	5
Don't know	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{*}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$

It is also interesting to note that women members of the press corps aged 18 to 34 regard the Clinton character issue as having had more impact on the campaign (52%) than do their male counterparts (34%). But no matter what the respondents view of how the press has handled the story, all elements of the reporting community believe that the Clinton character issue is relevant to his presidential aspirations.

***COVERAGE QUANDARIES***

The press corps in substantial numbers believes that there have been several major problems in the way the campaign has been covered. Although only one out of five (22%) say they're generally dissatisfied with the quality of the press product there is considerable dissatisfaction even among those who feel the general performance level is adequate. Most say that there have been major problems with the coverage to date. Fully two-thirds (67%) believe that there has been insufficient focus on the real issues at stake in this contest. The newspaper and TV cohorts differ sharply in this assessment with fully 65% of the daily print media taking the critical view while the television people (51%) are significantly less dissatisfied with the focus of the campaign coverage. Sixty-five percent of the news magazine representatives agree with their newspaper colleagues that the coverage has tended to emphasize the trivial aspects of the campaign action or to focus too frequently on irrelevancies.

### ***THREE STORIES***

In that regard, survey press respondents were asked to assess three press accounts dealing with Bill Clinton's front runner status, a George Bush campaign appearance and one aspect of the Clinton record as Governor of Arkansas. The stories were referenced because each of them had stirred some controversy in the wake of their publication. The respondents replies were emblematic of the generalized concerns that had been expressed about the campaign's coverage problems.

The first story appeared in a national magazine in January of this year, some weeks before the New Hampshire primary. It essentially declared Bill Clinton to be the front runner before a single vote had been cast any place in the nation. Although the story had aroused considerable discussion, 39% of the press sample did not recall it. Of those who did recall the piece, twice as many had a negative reaction as a positive (25% negative vs. 13% positive). The reasons offered for disapproval suggested the story was too speculative, unsubstantiated, or suggested media endorsement of the candidate.

The second, a story that appeared in a number of newspapers in the aftermath of President Bush's February meeting of the National Grocers Association, reported that Mister Bush seemed unfamiliar with automated check out equipment. Survey respondents split evenly (35% vs. 35%) as to whether, from a journalistic viewpoint, they had a positive or negative reaction to the grocery checkout story. 17% of national press respondents said the story was inaccurate or the facts were wrong, and 18% believed the account was blown out of proportion, subjective in its portrayal of the event or unfair to George Bush.

The third, a newspaper investigative piece, appeared in March. The story analyzed dealings between Bill and Hillary Clinton and a business partner who some years later was caught up in the Savings and Loan debacle.

Fifty-three per cent of the national press had a negative reaction to the story. Among the national press respondents, 19% believed that the allegations were tenuous or untrue and 37% believed that the issue was either exaggerated, inadequately investigated or irrelevant. It may be noteworthy that the negative reaction to the Grocery and Savings and Loan scandal stories was considerably greater among the "*The Powers That Be*" group than within the rank and file people in the field. There was also a gender gap in the response to the account of Hillary and Bill Clinton's business association. Women were much more likely to be critical (59%) than were men (37%).

### ***LINKAGES***

Although nearly half of the national press corps believe that their organizations are putting fewer resources into covering the election campaign than they did in 1988 (46%) only 15% of our respondents in this group think that the reduced emphasis itself has resulted in poorer coverage than in the past. Slightly more than a third of the local media sense a reduction in commitment (38%) and more than a third of those who do believe that the coverage has suffered as a result (12%). But no matter the quantity of resources allocated to the campaign, over seven out of ten respondents believe that their own organizations are giving the campaign the right amount of coverage and only 14% of the entire survey sample believe that a reduction in resources has resulted in lower quality media coverage.

### ***PROBLEMS BIG AND SMALL***

Nearly three quarters of the press community believes that a cross section of the issues raised as to press coverage are either "*minor*" problems or not problems at all. But

over one out of four express concern about these issues as "*major problems*" and there is considerable difference between national and local, and print press and TV journalists across a wide range of press issues.

### *Electability*

Majorities of all segments of the press believe that a tendency to judge a candidate's electability too quickly has been a major problem in this year's campaign coverage. However, relatively small percentages of the press community see other aspects of this issue as a major problem. Just 18% describe being "*too critical of front running candidates*" as a "*major problem.*" Only one in four felt that way about the often mentioned criticism that the press gives too much emphasis to "*electability.*" A similar proportion (27%) feels that "*building up expectations about a candidate's performance*" has been a major coverage problem in this year's Democratic primaries.

However, more than 60% of the press as a whole believes the electability factor has been overplayed to some degree. Print press people are more likely to regard the issue as significant than TV, and mid-level print press people across all media (reporters, editors, etc.) are among the most critical of the emphasis given to electability.

### *Candidate Views*

Inadequate coverage of the candidates' positions on issues is considered to be a major problem of the campaign's coverage during the primary season. But there are sharp differences between the national TV and national print media on the question. The print people consider the issue to be a major problem in much greater numbers. Fifty-five percent of the print people as a whole think the press is doing an inadequate job at presenting the candidates' positions, with only 39% of the national TV community in agreement. The difference in perspective is even more sharply illustrated when we look at "*The Powers That Be*" group.

Among the senior national newspaper and magazine executives and among the most influential of the print news gathering establishment nearly three out of four regard inadequate coverage of candidates' positions as a major problem. Only one out of four of their opposite numbers in broadcasting agree while four out of ten of the top broadcasters think it is a minor problem. Interestingly, there are no such divisions among the local television and print press. There, across the board, majorities regard the inadequate presentation of candidates' positions as a major problem.

### *Public Opinion Polls*

About one out of three respondents believe that too much reliance on public opinion polls during this presidential run has been a major problem in trying for good campaign coverage. Almost half (48%) of local TV's top management look on the polling as a major problem, but only 20 percent of the people they have in the field share that view. The numbers flip flop in the local newspaper community. There, only 15% of senior management regard poll reliance as a problem. But 40% of reporters, bureau chiefs and mid-level editors think it's a major factor in faulty campaign coverage. The national TV community is almost a doppelganger reflection of the local print divisions. While only 20% of national television's top management people see the concern with polling as troublesome, fully 45% of national TV's mid-level producers and correspondents look at the polling factor as a major coverage problem.

### ***NEW HAMPSHIRE SETS THE TONE***

The New Hampshire primary, first in the nation, this year set the tone for press coverage and candidate drama to an even greater degree than any New Hampshire primary since 1972. In six weeks of intense media focus Paul Tsongas emerged as a press favorite (57% of survey respondents said the nature of the press coverage helped his candidacy). Pat Buchanan's strong showing in the Republican primary against an incumbent president came at the conclusion of media attention at a level denied almost completely to David Duke, the only other insurgent Republican candidate for president. Fully sixty-two percent of the participants in the Times Mirror survey said that press coverage had helped the Buchanan run and an equivalent 63% believe that press coverage had hurt David Duke's candidacy. Jerry Brown was also seen, albeit to a somewhat lesser degree, as the recipient of favorable and helpful coverage (47%). Press response to the other candidates in the Democratic contest (except for Gov. Clinton) is seen by two thirds of the press community as having had a neutral impact on their prospects.

**TABLE 6**  
**EFFECT OF PRESS COVERAGE ON CANDIDATES**  
*(Based on Total Sample)*

	<u>Helped</u>	<u>Hurt</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	(Vol) <u>Both Helped &amp; Hurt</u>	<u>DK</u>
George Bush	22	24	50	2	2=100
Pat Buchanan	62	18	17	2	1=100
Paul Tsongas	57	19	19	5	*=100
Bill Clinton	13	64	12	10	1=100
Bob Kerrey	8	26	63	1	2=100
Jerry Brown	47	27	17	9	*=100
Tom Harkin	8	22	65	1	4=100
David Duke	13	63	21	2	1=100

**ONE OF THEIR OWN**

The Buchanan candidacy emerges as a kind of litmus test as to press assessment of its own relationship to the story and to its impact on events. A majority of the national press (53%) said that Pat Buchanan benefitted from the fact that he had been a member of the media club, and an overwhelming 85% of the national press feel that the Buchanan run made the campaign more interesting for them as individuals. One newsman put it this way. ***"He gives good soundbites. He's very quotable. Whether you're a print journalist or a broadcast reporter, he's a joy to cover."***

One out of three respondents (36%) said Buchanan's media background helped because he knows how to manipulate the press (18%) or he is treated better and has influential friends (18%). The local press had a somewhat more complex assessment of the Buchanan candidacy. Over 2 out of three members of local media said that the Pat Buchanan run had made the campaign more interesting for them. But only 38% said that his press credentials had helped his campaign.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Buchanan campaign in New Hampshire came when the exit polls indicated a much closer race than was actually true when the final count was in. Half of the press respondents believe that the inaccurate exit polls produced an inflated press view (50%) of the Buchanan candidacy that continued even after the dimensions of the Bush victory had become apparent.

New Hampshire was also the scene of the Gennifer Flowers press conference. Ms. Flowers, who ranks alongside Ross Perot as the most important campaign influence in the first half of the contest, focused press attention on the relationship between the mainstream and tabloid press.

A majority of the press community (54%) believe that the barriers between tabloid journalism and the traditional press have broken down. But there are sharp divisions within each of the press communities that may reflect the difference in perspective between the most senior executives and those who are active participants in the daily action. Within ***"The Powers That Be"*** group an impressive eight of ten broadcasters think that the barrier has broken down. The print journalists reverse the order. Eight out of ten believe the barrier still stands. The split in view between TV and print is diminished but still significant among reporters, producers and editors in direct contact with daily campaign coverage.

### ***WHAT ARE WE DOING RIGHT?***

A number of significant changes have emerged in the pattern of coverage of the 1992 presidential campaign. Most of them receive warm approval from the press community. Ranking at the top of the list are the frequent debates between the Democratic candidates during the primary season. 89% of the national press and 85% of the locals think the debates have had a positive effect on campaign coverage.

Press coverage of campaign commercials also receive high marks from the press. 85% of respondents think that describing and analyzing the campaign's television efforts have improved coverage. But some elements of the television community are less enthusiastic than others. 22% of local TV news management thinks the commercials coverage has had a negative effect.

The advent of C-Span as a major source of campaign coverage also receives high marks. 91% think that C-Span has had a good effect on the campaign thus far and the CNN effort is approved at the same level. CNN is even more popular among the local press than it is among its competitors and colleagues at the national level. Locals give the Cable News Network approval at a rate of 94% with the national press at 88%.

Reduced coverage of the national political conventions and the decision by the four networks to use a single source for reporting on exit polls draws the only substantial criticism of changes in the pattern of coverage. 50% of local media think cutting back on convention coverage will have a negative effect and 38% of their national colleagues agree. While only 29% of the press as a whole believes that a single polling source will have a negative effect there are sharp divergences within the community. 40% of the top field people in national TV news disapprove of the change and 44% of print press reporters and editors are also unhappy about the new limits.

**TABLE 7**  
**EFFECT OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON CAMPAIGN COVERAGE**  
*(Based on Total Sample)*

	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Not Neg- ative or Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Not Much Effect</u>	<u>DK</u>
Press coverage of commercials	85	2	11	1	1=100
One exit poll for all 4 networks	57	4	29	6	4=100
Reduced television coverage of the conventions	38	4	44	4	10=100
C-Span	91	1	1	6	1=100
Frequent debates between nomination contenders	87	3	7	2	1=100
Increased local TV coverage of presidential election campaigns	77	4	10	4	5=100
CNN	91	2	3	3	1=100

### ***SOURCES OF THE NEWS***

Members of the press are, of course, also part of the general public. Their information about the campaign comes in part out of their own efforts and as the product of the organizations to which they belong. But they also reach out to a number of other sources to inform them about the campaign and its context. ***The leading national newspapers (The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal) are the principal outside source of campaign news for all sections of the press including the principal arbiters and decision makers as to what appears on the evening newscasts and front pages all around the country.*** Associated Press finishes in a distant second place with 14% followed by the evening network news broadcasts (7%), CNN (4%) and the weekly newsmagazines (3%).

But even in a press community at the heart of a complex national campaign for the presidency, the electronic media casts a shadow over the future primacy of the national newspapers in setting the news agenda. ***Among members of the press aged 18 to 34 only 23% of the survey respondents cited the national newspapers as their principal source of outside information about the campaign. All of the older age groups, from 35 through the 60s, look to the national newspapers at nearly twice the rate of the under 35s in the press contingent.***

The press, in the nature of its duties, looks to a number of news outlets in addition to the principal source described above. Here, the weight of the national newspapers is even more impressive and the role of other media as well comes into sharper focus. Eighty-two percent of the national press told Times Mirror that they pay a great deal of attention to the national newspapers. Half that number (42%) among the local media also read those



publications with great care. AP is in second place, with 47% paying "**great attention**", followed by the evening network news shows at 35%. CNN runs close behind with 30%.

*Here, too, the under 35s show dramatically different media usage than their elders. More than half (63%) put Associated Press in first place as a source to which they pay great attention. The network evening news shows (52%) follow in second place and national newspapers such as The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal, drop into third place along the "great attention" spectrum (36%).*

**TABLE 8**  
**PRINCIPAL MEDIA SOURCE**

	<u>National Newspapers<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>AP/ Wire Services</u>	<u>Network News/ CNN</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>DK</u>
<u>National</u>					
Top level	57	11	13	17	2=100
Middle level	57	11	5	22	5=100
<u>National</u>					
TV	52	10	11	22	5=100
Print/Wires	61	12	5	18	4=100
<b><u>NATIONAL &amp; LOCAL BY:</u></b>					
<u>Sex</u>					
Men	42	22	11	20	5=100
Women	37	24	10	25	4=100
<u>Age</u>					
18-34	25	28	17	30	0=100
35-49	43	22	10	20	5=100
50-59	49	18	12	15	6=100
60+	47	20	9	18	6=100
<u>Education</u>					
Post college	47	17	10	18	8=100
College graduate	41	24	10	22	3=100
Less than college	13	25	29	29	4=100
<u>Based in:</u>					
New York	52	11	11	21	5=100
Washington DC	62	8	3	23	4=100

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<sup>1</sup> Includes people who mentioned The Wall Street Journal.

***THE PRESS AND THE PEOPLE THEY COVER***

Like the general public it serves the American press has its favorites and its "*unfavorites.*" As noted above, Bill Clinton receives a significantly higher favorability rating from the press than does President George Bush. But the most popular national political figures in the press community are Jack Kemp, a member of the Bush cabinet and Senator Lloyd Bentsen. Kemp enjoys a 70% favorability rating with only 19% holding an unfavorable view. Democrat Lloyd Bentsen is equally well regarded with 69% and Vice President Dan Quayle has an unusually high unfavorability rating at 73%.

Below is a table recording press response to a cross section of national political leaders.

**TABLE 9**  
**FAVORABILITY RATINGS OF CANDIDATES**

	<u>George Bush</u>			<u>Bill Clinton</u>		
	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>DK</u>
<u>Total</u>	46	46	8=100	55	36	9=100
<u>National</u>						
Top level	43	<b>48</b>	9=100	55	33	12=100
Middle level	35	<b>53</b>	12=100	55	33	12=100
<u>National</u>						
TV	42	<b>46</b>	12=100	56	33	11=100
Print/Wires	34	<b>55</b>	11=100	54	34	12=100
<b><u>NATIONAL &amp; LOCAL BY:</u></b>						
<u>Sex</u>						
Men	45	49	6=100	56	<b>38</b>	6=100
Women	46	36	18=100	54	<b>26</b>	20=100
<u>Age</u>						
18-34	53	38	9=100	<b>47</b>	44	9=100
35-49	43	47	10=100	<b>52</b>	36	12=100
50-59	53	44	3=100	<b>75</b>	22	3=100
60+	31	69	0=100	<b>62</b>	38	0=100
<u>Education</u>						
Post college	47	41	12=100	<b>61</b>	27	12=100
College graduate	45	49	6=100	<b>55</b>	37	8=100
Less than college	38	62	0=100	<b>25</b>	75	0=100
<u>Based in:</u>						
New York	44	51	5=100	54	39	7=100
Washington DC	32	52	16=100	59	25	16=100

RATING THE DEMOCRATS\*

	<u>Dick Gephardt</u>			<u>Jerry Brown</u>			<u>Al Gore</u>		
	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>DK</u>
<u>Total</u>	61	27	12=100	24	67	9=100	69	18	13=100
<u>National</u>									
Top level	<b>48</b>	43	9=100	19	71	10=100	71	17	12=100
Middle level	<b>65</b>	21	14=100	24	64	12=100	65	20	15=100
<u>National</u>									
TV	<b>52</b>	35	13=100	25	64	11=100	62	23	15=100
Print/Wires	<b>64</b>	25	11=100	20	69	11=100	73	14	13=100
<b><u>NATIONAL &amp; LOCAL BY:</u></b>									
<u>Sex</u>									
Men	<b>64</b>	26	10=100	20	<b>73</b>	7=100	68	20	12=100
Women	<b>51</b>	28	21=100	38	<b>44</b>	18=100	72	8	20=100
<u>Age</u>									
18-34	56	31	13=100	34	56	10=100	75	12	13=100
35-49	<b>62</b>	24	14=100	22	68	10=100	68	17	15=100
50-59	<b>72</b>	25	3=100	25	69	6=100	72	19	9=100
60+	39	46	15=100	15	85	0=100	46	39	15=100
<u>Education</u>									
Post college	54	32	14=100	17	71	12=100	61	20	19=100
College grad.	64	24	12=100	28	65	7=100	73	16	11=100
Less than college	62	38	0=100	12	88	0=100	50	38	12=100
<u>Based in:</u>									
New York	<b>41</b>	54	5=100	12	83	5=100	68	22	10=100
Washington DC	<b>67</b>	16	17=100	19	65	16=100	65	18	17=100

\*(It must be noted with regret that a prominent Democrat, Senator Bill Bradley, was inadvertently omitted from the listings.)

RATING THE DEMOCRATS

	<u>Mario Cuomo</u>			<u>Lloyd Bentsen</u>		
	<u>Favor- able</u> 60	<u>Unfavor- able</u> 30	<u>DK</u> 10=100	<u>Favor- able</u> 69	<u>Unfavor- able</u> 19	<u>DK</u> 12=100
<u>Total</u>						
<u>National</u>						
Top level	60	31	9=100	71	17	12=100
Middle level	62	24	14=100	71	15	14=100
<u>National</u>						
TV	56	31	13=100	73	14	13=100
Print/Wires	66	23	11=100	70	18	12=100
<b><u>NATIONAL &amp; LOCAL BY:</u></b>						
<u>Sex</u>						
Men	<b>62</b>	30	8=100	71	19	10=100
Women	<b>51</b>	31	18=100	56	18	26=100
<u>Age</u>						
18-34	<b>50</b>	41	9=100	62	25	13=100
35-49	<b>57</b>	32	11=100	67	18	15=100
50-59	<b>75</b>	19	6=100	72	22	6=100
60+	<b>85</b>	15	0=100	92	0	8=100
<u>Education</u>						
Post college	54	31	15=100	68	17	15=100
College graduate	64	29	7=100	69	20	11=100
Less than college	50	50	0=100	75	12	13=100
<u>Based in:</u>						
New York	58	37	5=100	66	24	10=100
Washington DC	57	25	18=100	73	11	16=100

RATING THE REPUBLICANS

	<u>Dan Quayle</u>			<u>Jack Kemp</u>			<u>Jim Baker</u>		
	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Favor- able</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>Favor- DK</u>	<u>Unfavor- able</u>	<u>able</u>	<u>DK</u>
<u>Total</u>	17	73	10=100	70	19	11=100	61	28	11=100
<u>National</u>									
Top level	21	72	7=100	71	19	10=100	<b>55</b>	36	9=100
Middle level	17	68	15=100	67	21	12=100	<b>68</b>	18	14=100
<u>National</u>									
TV	19	67	14=100	60	27	13=100	64	25	11=100
Print/Wires	18	71	11=100	77	14	9=100	62	25	13=100
<b><u>NATIONAL &amp; LOCAL BY:</u></b>									
<u>Sex</u>									
Men	17	75	8=100	<b>72</b>	20	8=100	<b>64</b>	26	10=100
Women	20	62	18=100	<b>59</b>	18	23=100	<b>46</b>	36	18=100
<u>Age</u>									
18-34	28	63	9=100	59	28	13=100	69	22	9=100
35-49	13	75	12=100	67	20	13=100	54	30	16=100
50-59	25	69	6=100	<b>81</b>	16	3=100	78	19	3=100
60+	15	77	8=100	<b>85</b>	8	7=100	62	38	0=100
<u>Education</u>									
Post college	8	78	14=100	69	17	14=100	58	27	15=100
College graduate	22	69	9=100	70	20	10=100	62	28	10=100
Less than college	0	100	0=100	62	38	0=100	62	38	0=100
<u>Based in:</u>									
New York	15	<b>80</b>	5=100	61	34	5=100	61	32	7=100
Washington DC	21	<b>62</b>	17=100	72	14	14=100	65	19	16=100

## **WHO'S WHO?**

The cross section of the American press represented in this survey is a reflection of the print and electronic press as a whole. Ninety-one percent of "*The Powers That Be*", (they look down through the glass ceiling) are men. Only 9 percent of women of the press operate at the most senior level. Substantial majorities in every segment of the industry are between 35 and 49 years of age.

More than a third of the press corps have done at least some graduate work, substantial majorities are college graduates and less than 10% have had no college training at all. Only 4% of top and mid-level press people are Afro-Americans and only 3% are with national television news or at the most senior level of a national print or television news organization. Although only 12% of television news' top slots are filled by women they hold 30% of the mid-level positions. In the national print press the gender gap is even more obvious. Eleven percent of women print journalists hold top positions and 18% operate at the middle levels of their organizations.

The local press covering this presidential campaign is almost identical in demographic breakdown with the national press corps with two notable exceptions. There is a much larger proportion of news men and news women aged 18 to 34 working in the local press, and women operate at the middle levels of television and the upper management levels of newspaper organizations in significantly greater numbers than they do in the national press.



**TABLE 10**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NATIONAL VS. LOCAL MEDIA**  
*The National Media*

	<u>Top level</u> %	<u>Mid level</u> %	<u>Powers That Be</u> %	<u>Natio- nal TV</u> %	<u>Print/ Wires</u> %
<u>Sex</u>					
Men	88	76	91	77	84
Women	12	24	9	23	16
<u>Age</u>					
18-34	5	8	-	13	2
35-49	64	60	44	59	64
50-59	25	17	24	16	24
60+	6	13	32	12	9
<u>Education</u>					
Post college	39	34	38	36	36
College graduate	56	61	53	59	58
Less than college	4	5	9	4	6
<u>Based in:</u>					
New York	42	25	47	40	24
Washington DC	29	66	44	44	58
<u>Race</u>					
White	95	91	97	94	91
Black	4	4	3	3	4
Other/ refused	1	5	-	3	5
	(84)	(129)	(34)	(103)	110

***A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE LOCAL MEDIA***

	<u>Top</u> <u>level</u> %	<u>Mid</u> <u>level</u> %	<u>TV</u> %	<u>News</u> <u>paper</u> %
<u>Sex</u>				
Men	84	78	78	84
Women	16	22	22	16
<u>Age</u>				
18-34	14	35	44	5
35-49	64	51	47	68
50-59	13	10	7	16
60+	9	4	1	11
<u>Education</u>				
Post college	28	22	19	31
College graduate	65	70	73	62
Less than college	6	8	8	6
<u>Race</u>				
White	95	91	89	97
Black	-	4	3	1
Other/ refused	5	5	8	2
<u>Based in:</u>				
New York	5	3	6	2
Washington DC	-	16	-	16
	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)

***A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE NATIONAL MEDIA - PART II***

	<u>TELEVISION</u>		<u>PRINT/WIRE</u>	
	<u>Top</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Top</u>	<u>Middle</u>
	%	%	%	%
<u>Sex</u>				
Men	88	70	89	82
Women	12	30	11	18
 <u>Age</u>				
18-34	8	16	2	2
35-49	70	52	59	68
50-59	15	18	34	17
60+	8	14	4	12
 <u>Education</u>				
Post college	40	33	38	35
College graduate	57	60	54	61
Less than college	-	6	7	4
 <u>Race</u>				
White	98	92	93	89
Black	2	3	5	5
Other/ refused	-	5	2	6
	(40)	(63)	(44)	(66)

***A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE LOCAL MEDIA - PART II***

	<u>TELEVISION</u>		<u>NEWSPAPERS</u>	
	<u>Top</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Top</u>	<u>Middle</u>
	%	%	%	%
<u>Sex</u>				
Men	88	68	80	88
Women	12	32	20	12
<u>Age</u>				
18-34	26	62	2	8
35-49	64	30	64	72
50-59	8	6	18	14
60+	2	-	16	6
<u>Education</u>				
Post college	20	18	36	36
College graduate	72	74	58	66
Less than college	8	8	4	8
<u>Race</u>				
White	92	86	98	96
Black	-	6	-	2
Other/ refused	8	8	2	2
	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)

# SURVEY METHODOLOGY

## *In Brief*

This survey is based on 413 telephone interviews with journalists and news executives conducted during the period April 20 - May 8, 1992. The survey was designed to represent the opinions of members of the national news organizations, mostly headquartered in New York and Washington, as well as the opinions of journalists in local media organizations around the country. 213 interviews were conducted with members of the national press corps and 200 with local media.

Within each of these segments half of the interviews were conducted with news management executives - top level editors, news division senior executives, executive producers. The other half of the interviews were with middle level people in organizational terms whose principal or sole responsibilities include political coverage - DC Bureau chiefs, political reporters, columnists, correspondents.

The interview included a mix of open-ended and close-ended questions and on average took 10 to 15 minutes to administer. So as to avoid placing an excessive burden on busy respondents, two forms of the questionnaire were employed to minimize the time required for many of the "list" and multiple item questions.

To encourage participation all potential respondents were mailed an advance letter explaining the nature and purpose of the survey. Multiple call backs, both day and evening were made to complete interviews with respondents over the three week field period.

Response to the survey was quite positive. For the national survey only 19 potential respondents refused to be interviewed and in local markets 56 refusals were recorded. Given the high rate of response among the national press corps, we were able to identify a subset of respondents as "*The Powers That Be*". These included the very top editors or news executives of national newspapers and magazines, top networks news executives, executive producers of the most widely viewed news broadcasts, and nationally known columnists, anchors and political correspondents. In total 34 respondents fell into this media elite category - 22 from broadcasting and 12 from print.

## *Design of the Sample*

The sample for the Times Mirror Press Survey was designed to represent both national and local media organizations and various levels of responsibility within news organization. First, media organizations at the national and local level were selected and then, within selected organizations, persons holding specific professional titles were selected. The specific sampling procedures are outlined below.

The sample design for this survey involved measurement of three dimensions of the media:

1. Importance of medium in terms of audience size of market/influence upon populace or other media
2. Type of medium, e.g., television, newspaper, radio, wires
3. Level of responsibility of the individual sample member

The three dimensions were sub-defined as follows:

1. Audience size/market
  - a. National audience
  - b. Local audience

2. Type of medium
  - a. Newspapers
  - b. Television stations and networks
  - c. Cable networks
  - d. Wire services
  - e. Radio stations and networks
  - f. Magazines
  
3. Level of responsibility
  - a. **"Top"** - broadly defined as executive editors, senior broadcast executives.
  - b. **"Middle"** - broadly defined as correspondents and reporters

The specific sampling frames employed to select organizations were *Editor and Publisher International Yearbook 1990*, *Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook 1990*, *Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media 1990*.

Examination of the sampling frames and other sources suggested a two stage sampling strategy. Media organizations were first selected as described.

### **MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS SAMPLED**

#### **NATIONAL SAMPLE**

##### Network Television Stations

ABC	NBC
CBS	CSPAN
CNN	

##### Television Chains with Washington, D.C. Bureaus

Gannett	Conus
Cox	Hearst
Group W	King

##### Top Circulation/Influence Newspapers

Wall Street Journal	Detroit Free Press
USA Today	Boston Globe
Los Angeles Times	Philadelphia Inquirer
New York Times	New York Post
New York Daily News	Miami Herald
Washington Post	Atlanta Constitution
Chicago Tribune	

##### Wire Services

Associated Press International  
 United Press International  
 Reuters

##### News Services

Knight-Ridder	Hart Hanks
Copley	Hearst
Gannet	McClatchy Newspapers

##### News Magazines

Newsweek  
 Time  
 US News and World Report

Radio Stations and Networks	
Capital Cities/ABC Inc.	CBS
NBC	United Radio Network
National Public Radio	American Public Radio
Mutual News Radio	UPI
Sheridan Broadcasting	National Black Network
Associated Press Broadcast	

### ***LOCAL SAMPLE***

#### Television Stations

Random sample of all stations listed in the top 100 markets

#### Newspapers

Top 100 newspapers by circulation (excluding those already selected for the national sample)

Within each sampled organization, individuals holding certain professional titles (outlined below) were selected. More than one individual was selected in each organization. Given the variable nature of professional titles in different organizations it was sometimes necessary to select people with titles different than those listed but a title with a comparable level of responsibility was identified in these cases. The names of individuals currently in these professional positions at each sampled organization were obtained from the directories/yearbooks used to select the organizations, from the mastheads of the sampled publications, or from telephone calls made to the sampled organization.

***PROFESSIONAL TITLES SAMPLED AT EACH SAMPLED ORGANIZATION***

***NATIONAL SAMPLE - "TOP" LEVEL***

Television/Radio Stations  
News division executives, executive producers

Newspapers/Wire Services/Magazines  
Managing Editor  
Executive Editor  
Senior Editor

***NATIONAL SAMPLE - "MIDDLE" LEVEL***

Television/Radio Stations  
Washington D.C. Bureau Chief, Senior Producers, Correspondents, Anchors

Newspapers/Wires and News Services/Magazines  
Political Editor  
Political Correspondent  
Political Reporter  
D.C. Bureau Chief

***LOCAL SAMPLE - "TOP" LEVEL***

Television/Radio Stations  
News Directors

Newspapers/Wire Services/Magazines  
Managing Editor  
Executive Editor  
Senior Editor  
National Editor

***LOCAL SAMPLE - "MIDDLE" LEVEL***

Television/Radio Stations  
Political Producers  
Political Correspondents

Newspapers/Wires and News Services/Magazines  
Political Editor  
Political Reporter

The final selected sample was divided into eight subsamples. Each subsample was split into replicates and quotas were set for number of completed interviews from each subsample. These quotas were set because the sampling frame for "*Top*" level respondents and respondents representing the national media organizations was somewhat smaller than for the other groups represented in the sample. In order to ensure adequate representation of these smaller groups in



the final sample of complete interviews it was necessary to set quotas. The subsamples and quotas for each are listed below:

<i><b>SUBSAMPLE</b></i>	<i><b>QUOTA</b></i>
National TV Top Level	20
National TV Middle Level	30
National Newspapers/Wire and News Services/Magazines/ Radio Top Level	20
National Newspapers/Wire and News Services/Magazines/ Radio Middle Level	<u>30</u>
TOTAL NATIONAL SAMPLE	100
Local TV Top Level	25
Local TV Middle Level	25
Local Newspapers Top Level	25
Local Newspapers Middle Level	<u>25</u>
TOTAL LOCAL SAMPLE	100

Each person sampled for this survey was mailed an advance letter on the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press letterhead and signed by Don Kellermann, Director of the Center. These letters were intended to introduce the survey to prospective respondents, describe the nature and purpose of the survey and encourage participation in the survey. Approximately one week after the letter was mailed interviewers began calling the individual sample members and conducting the survey or setting up appointments to conduct the survey at a later date.

# **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

TIMES MIRROR CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS  
 PRESS OPINION SURVEY  
 FORM A & B COMBINED  
 APRIL 20 - MAY 8, 1992  
 N=413 - TOTAL RESPONDENTS  
 N=213 - NATIONAL  
 N=200 - LOCAL  
 N=34 - THE POWERS THAT BE

INTRODUCTION: Hello, I am \_\_\_\_\_ calling on behalf of the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press in Washington, DC. May I speak with (Name of Respondent). Is now a convenient time to conduct the interview that Don Kellermann wrote to you about? **(IF NO - ASK TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT?)**

Q.1 All in all, what campaign event has had the greatest impact on the presidential election campaign, so far?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
<b>NET:</b> Clinton character mentions	46	47	45	38
Coverage of Clinton character issues	23	21	25	18
Gennifer Flowers press conference	20	22	18	21
Perot's candidacy	17	15	20	29
Clinton's strength/Viability	8	11	4	3
New York primary	7	8	6	3
Tsongas dropping out of the race	6	6	7	0
Los Angeles/Rodney King	6	10	2	12
Problems with the economy	6	6	6	6
No single event has significant impact	4	3	5	6
Super Tuesday	4	5	3	6
New Hampshire primary	4	4	4	6
Decline of Bush's strength/Popularity	3	2	4	6
Other	14	12	16	6
Don't know/No answer	3	3	3	0

Q2.1 In this campaign, what, if anything is the press doing particularly well?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
More thorough coverage of important issues	22	20	24	21
Dissatisfied with coverage/ Nothing	22	19	25	15
Not just image and sound bites	14	16	12	18
Exposing of campaign advertising	9	12	5	12
Covering voter reactions/ Attitudes	6	11	2	6
Covering all aspects of candidates	6	4	8	9
Covering all candidates even underdogs	5	3	7	0
Covering candidates past records on issues	5	7	2	9
Day to day coverage/ Keep voters up	5	6	4	6
Covering primaries/ Who's ahead	3	3	2	0
Other	14	12	15	12
Don't know/No answer	4	5	2	15

Q2.2 What are your biggest complaints about press coverage of the 1992 campaign?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
<b>NET: Wrong focus</b>	57	53	61	47
Too much focus on irrelevant issues	36	35	36	32
Trivializing issues/Focus on real issues	21	17	26	18
Not targeted enough on candidates positions	10	10	10	6
Too much emphasis on horserace coverage	8	8	8	6
No complaints	7	9	5	15
Mainstream coverage driven by tabloids	7	8	6	12
Superficial coverage	6	6	8	6
<b>NET: Press manipulated</b>	6	4	8	3
Coverage is copycat/Pack Journalism	5	5	5	3
Event/Reactive focus vs issue focus	5	5	6	3
Predictions instead of coverage	4	4	4	3
Press manipulated by candidates	3	1	6	3
Not enough challenge of Bush/Bush record	3	4	2	6
Other	10	11	10	6
Don't know/No answer	2	3	1	6

Q. 3 All in all, do you think press coverage of the presidential campaign has been better or worse than it was in 1988?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Better	49	46	51	50
Worse	18	19	18	23
Same (VOL)	29	30	27	21
Can't say	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 4A How much influence do you think news organizations have on which candidate becomes the Democratic presidential nominee? (READ CATEGORIES 1-3)

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Too much	31	31	31
Too little	5	3	8
About the right amount	56	58	54
Don't know (DON'T READ)	$\frac{8}{100}$ (206)	$\frac{8}{100}$ (108)	$\frac{7}{100}$ (98)

**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 4B How much influence do you think news organizations have on which candidate becomes the Democratic presidential nominee? (READ CATEGORIES 1-4)

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
A Great deal	30	23	36
A Fair Amount	37	38	36
Only some	26	30	22
Little or none	6	7	5
Don't know (DON'T READ)	$\frac{1}{100}$ (207)	$\frac{2}{100}$ (105)	$\frac{1}{100}$ (102)

Q. 5 Compared to 1988, has your news organization put more resources, fewer resources, or the same amount of resources into covering the presidential campaign?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
More	21	24	19	15
Less - GO TO Q. 6	42	46	38	38
Same	30	25	35	44
Don' t know	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$

Q. 6 On balance has this resulted in poorer quality coverage of the campaign or not?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Yes, poorer	14	15	12	9
No	26	30	22	29
Can' t say	3	2	4	0
Not less coverage	$\frac{57}{100}$	$\frac{53}{100}$	$\frac{62}{100}$	$\frac{62}{100}$

Q. 7 So far, do you think your news organization is giving too much coverage to the 1992 presidential campaign, too little coverage to the campaign, or the right amount of coverage?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Too much	4	5	3	9
Too little	23	23	22	18
Right amount	72	71	74	70
Don' t know	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 8A As I read from a list tell me if you think the item I mention has been a major problem, a minor problem or not a problem with this year's campaign coverage so far?

	<u>Major Problem</u>	<u>Minor Problem</u>	<u>Not a Problem</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Building up expectations about how well a candidate should perform in a primary				
Total Respondents	27	39	33	1=100
National	27	40	32	1=100
Local	27	39	34	0=100
b. Being too quick to judge a candidate's electability				
Total Respondents	53	32	15	0=100
National	55	29	16	0=100
Local	50	36	14	0=100
c. Giving too little coverage to trailing candidates				
Total Respondents	18	43	38	1=100
National	18	39	42	1=100
Local	18	47	35	0=100
d. Inadequately covering candidate positions on issues				
Total Respondents	50	33	17	0=100
National	47	33	20	0=100
Local	52	35	13	0=100
e. Not covering campaign commercials adequately				
Total Respondents	6	27	65	2=100
National	4	25	68	3=100
Local	9	29	60	2=100



**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 8B As I read from a list tell me if you think the item I mention has been a major problem, a minor problem or not a problem with this year's campaign coverage so far?

	<u>Major Problem</u>	<u>Minor Problem</u>	<u>Not a Problem</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Putting too much emphasis on a candidate's electability				
Total Respondents	27	40	32	1=100
National	22	43	34	1=100
Local	32	37	31	0=100
b. Being too critical of front running candidates				
Total Respondents	18	33	47	2=100
National	18	33	48	1=100
Local	18	33	47	2=100
c. Relying too much on opinion polls				
Total Respondents	33	37	30	0=100
National	35	34	31	0=100
Local	30	40	30	0=100
d. Devoting too much coverage to the inside baseball aspects of the campaign				
Total Respondents	20	44	33	3=100
National	18	47	33	2=100
Local	22	41	32	5=100

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 8A1 In general, to what extent has press coverage of campaign commercials helped to make them more honest and truthful? Would you say it has helped to make them... (READ CATEGORIES 1-3)

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Much more truthful and honest	4	6	3
Somewhat more truthful and honest	53	51	54
OR			
Hasn't it made them more truthful and honest	39	38	40
(DO NOT READ) Can't say	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$

Q. 10 As I read the name of a Presidential candidate please tell me if you think the way the press covered this candidate helped, hurt or had a neutral effect on his candidacy?

First ( ) was/has his candidacy been helped or hurt by the way the press covered him or was (has) the press coverage had a neutral effect on his candidacy?

		(VOL)				
		Both				
		<u>Helped</u>	<u>Hurt</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Helped &amp; Hurt</u>	<u>DK</u>
a.	George Bush					
	Total Respondents	22	24	50	2	2=100
	National	21	25	49	3	2=100
	Local	23	23	51	2	1=100
	Powers That Be	26	21	47	0	6=100
b.	Pat Buchanan					
	Total Respondents	62	18	17	2	1=100
	National	66	12	19	3	*=100
	Local	59	25	16	0	*=100
	Powers That Be	56	26	15	0	3=100
c.	Paul Tsongas					
	Total Respondents	57	19	19	5	*=100
	National	65	12	17	6	*=100
	Local	48	26	22	4	*=100
	Powers That Be	82	3	9	3	3=100
d.	Bill Clinton					
	Total Respondents	13	64	12	10	1=100
	National	11	64	11	13	1=100
	Local	15	65	14	6	*=100
	Powers That Be	17	65	9	6	3=100
e.	Bob Kerrey					
	Total Respondents	8	26	63	1	2=100
	National	8	23	65	2	2=100
	Local	8	28	60	1	3=100
	Powers That Be	3	18	73	3	3=100
f.	Jerry Brown					
	Total Respondents	47	27	17	9	*=100
	National	43	28	17	11	1=100
	Local	51	26	16	6	1=100
	Powers That Be	41	18	29	9	3=100
g.	Tom Harkin					
	Total Respondents	8	22	65	1	4=100
	National	9	21	64	1	5=100
	Local	8	22	66	1	3=100
	Powers That Be	9	29	53	3	6=100
h.	David Duke					
	Total Respondents	13	63	21	2	1=100
	National	13	62	21	3	1=100
	Local	13	64	22	*	1=100
	Powers That Be	6	79	9	3	3=100

**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

**I'd like to get your reaction to some specific stories...**

Q.11B Do you happen to recall a February newspaper story about President Bush's appearance at a National Grocer's Association meeting, where it was reported that he seemed unfamiliar with automated check out equipment?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q.11B ASK:**

Q.11B1 From a journalistic point of view do you have a positive or negative reaction to that story or don't you have reactions one way or the other?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '3' NEGATIVE IN Q.11B1 ASK:**

Q.11B2 Why do you feel this way?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Don't recall	16	10	22
No reaction	14	16	13
Positive reaction	35	40	29
Negative reaction	35	34	36

**REASONS:**

Story was inaccurate/Facts were wrong	16	17	16
Blown out of proportion	7	5	9
Press reported their impressions	6	8	4
Shows Bush not in touch with the people	4	3	5
No context/Explanation/Perspective shown	4	3	5
Unfair portrayal of Bush	3	5	1
Issue was not important	2	1	4
Other	0	0	0
Don't know/No answer	0	0	0

**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

Q.12B Do you happen to recall a newsmagazine cover story in January that headlined Bill Clinton as the Democratic frontrunner?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q.12B ASK:**

Q.12B1 Think back to your reaction to when you first read that story - from a journalistic point of view did you have a positive or negative reaction to that story or didn't it strike you one way or the other?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '3' NEGATIVE IN Q.12B1 ASK:**

Q.12B2 Why do you feel this way?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Don't recall	39	37	40
No reaction	23	18	28
Positive reaction	13	17	10
Negative reaction	25	28	22
<b><u>REASONS:</u></b>			
Too early	12	12	12
Too speculative/No substantiated	10	12	7
Biased/Suggested media endorsement	7	7	8
Inaccurate/Other candidates viable	5	4	7
Other	1	2	1
Don't know/No answer	1	0	1

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 13A Do you happen to recall a Sunday newspaper story back in March about business dealings between Bill and Hillary Clinton and a man involved in a savings and loan scandal?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q. 13A ASK:**

Q. 13A1 Think back to your reaction to when you first read that story - from a journalistic point of view did you have a positive or negative reaction to that story or didn't it strike you one way or the other?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '3' NEGATIVE IN Q. 13A1 ASK:**

Q. 13A2 Why do you feel this way?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Don't recall	13	5	22
No reaction	30	25	36
Positive reaction	16	17	13
Negative reaction	41	53	29

**REASONS:**

Allegations tenuous/ Possibly untrue	13	19	6
Issue exaggerated/Not big deal	13	16	9
Not well investigated or covered	8	11	5
Irrelevant/Trying to ammo vs Clinton	7	10	4
Showed Clinton dishonest/ Unethical	5	4	7
Point of story was unclear	5	8	1
Other	1	1	0
Don't know/No answer	1	1	1

Q. 14 How responsibly have news organizations handled the controversy surrounding Bill Clinton's personal character? (READ CATEGORIES 1-4)

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Very responsibly	7	7	8	6
Fairly responsibly	55	55	54	44
Not too responsibly	30	30	30	35
Not at all responsibly	6	5	7	6
(DO NOT READ) Don't know	$\frac{2}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{9}{100}$

Q. 15 In your opinion, which is a better explanation for the problems Bill Clinton has had in his campaign so far: the way the press has covered him or Bill Clinton's personal actions and views, themselves?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Press coverage	12	12	12	12
Clinton himself	67	63	71	50
Both/Neither (VOL)	19	24	14	38
Don't know	$\frac{2}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{0}{100}$

Q. 16 Generally, do you think the character questions raised about Bill Clinton are relevant considerations for voters, or do you think they have little to do with Clinton's ability to handle the job of President?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Relevant	70	75	65	73
Little to do	25	20	30	21
Can't say	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$

Q. 17 Some people think the press has pushed the Gennifer Flowers story as hard as it should, while others think it has not. Which comes closer to your opinion?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Pushed as hard	87	89	85	85
Has not	7	6	8	6
Can't say	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{9}{100}$

Q. 19 Do you think allegations about his personal life will trail Bill Clinton throughout the campaign or do you think this has pretty much run its course?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Yes, will trail	80	77	82	76
No	17	17	16	15
Don't know	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{2}{100}$	$\frac{9}{100}$

Q. 20 If Bill Clinton becomes the nominee and these stories persist, do you think the press will feel obligated to follow up on rumors about President Bush's personal life?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Yes	73	70	76	65
No	21	21	21	20
Don't know	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{9}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{15}{100}$

Q. 21 Do you think Bill Clinton has been basically candid or not in the way he has handled allegations about his personal life?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Candid	34	32	34	44
Not candid	59	59	60	44
Can't say	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{9}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{12}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 22A In your opinion did the New Hampshire exit poll that erroneously showed a close margin between Bush and Buchanan continue to inflate the press' view of Buchanan's candidacy, even after the error was revealed?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Yes	50	52	48
No	43	44	42
Don't know	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 22B Some feel that there were once barriers between the tabloid press and the mainstream press that have broken down. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Agree	54	54	53
Disagree	40	39	42
Don't know	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$



**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 23B Has Pat Buchanan's candidacy made this a more interesting campaign for you?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Yes	75	85	66
No	25	15	34
Don't know	$\frac{0}{100}$	$\frac{0}{100}$	$\frac{0}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 24A Do you think that Pat Buchanan's candidacy has benefitted from the fact that he has been a member of the media?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q. 24A ASK:**

Q. 25A In what way?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Yes	46	53	38
<b><u>REASONS:</u></b>			
Knows how to manipulate press	17	18	15
Has influential friends/ Treated better	15	18	12
Recognized/Known/ Celebrity	14	14	14
Knows how to present sound bites	8	7	8
Articulate/Good talker	4	6	2
It's enjoyable/Fun to cover him	1	2	0
Other	1	2	0
No	51	45	58
Don't know/No answer	3	2	4

Q. 26 How do you rate the chances of a Democrat winning the White House in November? Do you think there is an excellent chance, good chance, only fair chance or poor chance that the Democrats will win in November?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
Excellent	1	*	1	0
Good	12	16	9	18
Only fair S))) /Q GO TO Q. 27A	52	51	54	47
Poor S)))))))-	32	29	35	32
Can't say	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '3' ONLY FAIR OR '4' POOR IN Q. 26 ASK:**

Q. 27A In your opinion could one of the Democrats who chose not to run defeat George Bush, if that Democrat became the nominee as a consequence of a brokered convention?

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q. 27A ASK:**

Q. 28A Which Democrat did you have in mind?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Yes - GO TO Q. 28A	34	33	34
Cuomo	15	13	18
Tsongas	5	3	8
Bentsen	3	5	1
Bradley	2	3	1
Gephardt	2	1	2
Rockefeller	2	3	0
Gore	1	1	1
Nunn	1	1	1
Other	0	0	0
Can't name specific Democrat	3	3	2
No	46	41	51
Not sure	5	6	5
Not fair/Poor	15	20	10

**BASED ON FORM B RESPONDENTS:**

Q.27B I am going to read you a list of some things that are new, or relatively recent developments in campaign coverage. For each tell me if you think this is having a negative or positive effect on campaign coverage?

	<u>Posi tive</u>	<u>Not Neg- ative or Posi tive</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Not Much Effect</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Press coverage of commercials					
Total Respondents	85	2	11	1	1=100
National	87	3	7	2	1=100
Local	81	1	15	1	2=100
b. One exit poll for all 4 networks					
Total Respondents	57	4	29	6	4=100
National	51	5	30	10	4=100
Local	63	3	28	1	5=100
c. Reduced television coverage of the conventions					
Total Respondents	38	4	44	4	10=100
National	36	2	38	6	18=100
Local	39	7	50	2	2=100
d. C-Span					
Total Respondents	91	1	1	6	1=100
National	90	1	0	8	1=100
Local	91	2	1	4	2=100
e. Frequent debates between nomination contenders					
Total Respondents	87	3	7	2	1=100
National	89	5	5	1	0=100
Local	85	1	10	3	1=100
f. Increased local TV coverage of presidential election campaigns					
Total Respondents	77	4	10	4	5=100
National	73	5	9	4	9=100
Local	81	2	10	5	2=100
g. CNN					
Total Respondents	91	2	3	3	1=100
National	88	3	4	4	1=100
Local	94	1	2	2	1=100

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q.29A In your opinion how much of a chance is there that a brokered Democratic Convention will nominate someone other than Bill Clinton? Do you think there is an excellent chance, good chance, only some chance or no chance of that?

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>
Excellent	1	0	1
Good	2	2	3
Only some	39	39	40
No	56	56	55
Can't say	$\frac{2}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$

Q. 30 As I read from a list please tell me how much attention you give to the following for news and information about the campaign... A great deal of attention, some attention, hardly any attention or no attention?

	<u>Great Deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Hardly Any</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>DK</u>
HOW MUCH ATTENTION DO YOU PAY TO:					
a. National newspapers such as: the NYT, WP, LAT					
Total Respondents	63	30	5	2	0=100
National	82	18	*	0	0=100
Local	42	44	10	4	0=100
Powers That Be	88	12	0	0	0=100
b. The evening network news broadcasts					
Total Respondents	35	38	21	6	0=100
National	38	39	19	4	0=100
Local	32	37	23	8	0=100
Powers That Be	44	35	15	6	0=100
c. CNN					
Total Respondents	30	53	13	4	0=100
National	33	47	18	2	0=100
Local	28	59	7	6	0=100
Powers That Be	21	50	29	0	0=100
d. The newsmagazines					
Total Respondents	26	48	21	5	0=100
National	30	46	21	3	0=100
Local	23	50	20	7	0=100
Powers That Be	29	47	21	3	0=100
e. NPR					
Total Respondents	18	36	24	22	*=100
National	22	35	23	19	1=100
Local	14	36	26	24	0=100
Powers That Be	32	29	12	24	3=100
f. The morning network talk shows					
Total Respondents	7	33	31	29	*=100
National	7	34	33	26	*=100
Local	8	32	28	32	0=100
Powers That Be	6	35	44	15	0=100
g. The Sunday morning talk shows					
Total Respondents	21	41	20	18	0=100
National	25	42	19	14	0=100
Local	16	40	20	24	0=100
Powers That Be	38	44	12	6	0=100
h. AP (Associated Press)					
Total Respondents	47	36	8	6	3=100
National	37	36	12	9	6=100
Local	57	36	4	3	0=100
Powers That Be	12	30	31	9	18=100

Q.31 All in all what is your one principal outside source of information about the campaign? **(DO NOT READ)**

	<u>Total Respondents</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>The Powers That Be</u>
National newspapers such as: the NYT, WP, LAT	40	56	23	56
The evening network news broadcasts	7	4	11	6
CNN	4	4	4	0
The newsmagazines	3	1	6	0
NPR	2	4	0	9
The morning network talk shows	1	0	1	0
The Sunday morning talk shows	0	0	0	0
Associated Press	14	8	20	6
Wire services (general)	8	3	14	3
Correspondents and other people	7	8	5	9
Hotline	3	6	0	11
Local papers	2	0	4	0
Wall Street Journal	1	1	1	0
C-Span	1	*	2	0
Other <b>(SPECIFY)</b>	3	1	4	0
Can't say	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$	$\frac{0}{100}$

**BASED ON FORM A RESPONDENTS:**

Q. 32A As I read from a list tell me if you have a very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of each person that I name?

		<u>Very Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Unfavorable</u>	<u>Very Unfavorable</u>	<u>Never Heard of</u>	<u>Can't Rate</u>
a.	Bill Clinton						
	Total Resp.	1	54	33	3	0	9=100
	National	1	54	29	4	0	12=100
	Local	1	55	36	2	0	6=100
b.	George Bush						
	Total Resp.	1	45	40	6	0	8=100
	National	0	38	43	8	0	11=100
	Local	1	52	38	4	0	5=100
c.	Jerry Brown						
	Total Resp.	2	22	47	20	0	9=100
	National	1	21	44	23	0	11=100
	Local	2	24	51	17	0	6=100
d.	Jim Baker						
	Total Resp.	8	53	23	5	0	11=100
	National	5	58	20	5	0	12=100
	Local	11	47	26	5	0	11=100
e.	Dan Quayle						
	Total Resp.	0	17	46	27	0	10=100
	National	0	18	44	26	0	12=100
	Local	0	16	48	28	0	8=100
f.	Jack Kemp						
	Total Resp.	7	63	17	2	0	11=100
	National	6	62	17	4	0	11=100
	Local	7	63	19	1	0	10=100
g.	Dick Gephardt						
	Total Resp.	2	59	25	2	0	12=100
	National	2	56	28	2	0	12=100
	Local	2	62	23	1	0	12=100

CONTINUED . . .

		<u>Very Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Unfavorable</u>	<u>Very Unfavorable</u>	<u>Never Heard of</u>	<u>Can't Rate</u>
h.	Mario Cuomo						
	Total Resp.	4	56	24	6	0	10=100
	National	4	58	19	7	0	12=100
	Local	5	54	29	5	0	7=100
i.	Lloyd Bentsen						
	Total Resp.	7	62	18	1	0	12=100
	National	6	65	14	2	0	13=100
	Local	7	58	22	1	0	12=100
j.	Al Gore						
	Total Resp.	5	64	17	1	0	13=100
	National	5	63	17	1	0	14=100
	Local	5	64	16	1	0	14=100