

**FOR RELEASE:  
Monday, March 29, 1999, 4:00 P.M.**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:  
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**Few See Strategic Interests, Humanitarian Concerns Cited  
SUPPORT FOR NATO AIR STRIKES WITH PLENTY OF BUTS**

Americans expressed approval of air strikes against Serbia during the first five days of the Yugoslav operation, but there are clear indications that public support for involvement there is limited. Only a minority think the situation in Kosovo is a serious problem for the United States, and there is considerable worry about American casualties. Most would disapprove of U.S. ground troops as peacekeepers, let alone as peace-makers.

The Pew Research Center's national telephone survey of 1,488 adults conducted March 24-28, 1999 found 60% approving and 30% disapproving of the NATO air strikes. An equal number (60%) say NATO has a responsibility to act there, but in a separate form of the question in which NATO is *not* referenced, only 47% say the U.S. has a responsibility to try to end the fighting.

Going along as part of a NATO effort to stop the killing in Kosovo is the principal predicate of support for American involvement. Preventing a larger war in Europe has less resonance. Fully seven-in-ten (70%) cite preventing the killing of

<b>U.S. Involvement in Kosovo</b>	
<i>Air strikes against Serbs in Kosovo</i>	<u>%</u>
Approve	60
Disapprove	30
Don't know	<u>10</u>
	100
	<u>Very Serious</u>
<i>Problems for the U.S.?</i>	<u>%</u>
Nuclear weapons in North Korea	73
Nuclear testing in India and Pakistan	68
Allegations China stole nuclear secrets	68
Drug corruption in Mexico	61
Saddam Hussein in Iraq	58
Human rights abuses in China	40
<b><i>Ethnic conflict in Kosovo</i></b>	<b>38</b>
Financial crisis in Asia	27
South American financial problems	25
	<u>Very Worried</u>
<i>Worries about Kosovo...</i>	<u>%</u>
Troop casualties	55
Cost of mission	20

innocent citizens in Kosovo as a very important reason for military action, while roughly half (57%) highly rate heading off a war that might involve other European countries.

Few Americans (38%) see the conflict in Kosovo as a very serious problem for the U.S. In contrast, nearly twice as many (58%) think the continued rule of Saddam Hussein in Iraq is a top problem. The potential build up of nuclear weapons North Korea and nuclear testing by India and Pakistan also get much bigger ratings as serious problems for the U.S. than does the current situation in the former Yugoslavia.

The survey found a 49%-44% plurality opposed to sending U.S. troops to Serbia as part of a NATO peacekeeping force, if it comes to that. Polls which questioned the public about *peace-making* found even less support.<sup>1</sup> Further, a *Newsweek* survey late last week found 60% of its respondents thinking the air war will not be enough to get Milosevic to comply and that ground forces will be required.

The Pew Research Center survey showed more than eight-in-ten are concerned about American casualties, with more than half (55%) *very* worried. Only one-in-five (20%) are very worried about the financial costs of the operation.

### ***Bipartisan support***

The U.S. and NATO air strikes generally drew bipartisan support during the first week of the bombing. Nearly 60% of Republicans (58%) and Independents (59%) and fully 68% of Democrats approve of the air strikes. But support for sending groups troops to Kosovo as peacekeepers remains much weaker. Democrats are evenly divided (47% approve, 43% disapprove) and Republicans oppose ground troops by a 52%-42% margin.

Senior citizens express the strongest reservations about U.S. operations in Kosovo, and they worry more about possible casualties. Just 55% of those 65 and older approve of the air strikes, compared to 60% among all Americans. And fewer than one-third (31%) of seniors approve of sending ground troops as peacekeepers, compared to 44% overall. More than two-thirds of seniors (68%) say they are very worried that U.S. troops might suffer casualties.

Americans express very high levels of interest in news about the air strikes, but they are generally uninformed about the conflict. Attention to stories about Kosovo has almost quadrupled since the attacks were launched: now 41% of the public is following the story very closely; just 11% paid very close attention during the peace negotiations. But in a separate question, a 57% majority could not name Kosovo as the province under attack.

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<sup>1</sup> A CBS News poll conducted March 28, 1999 found 62% of Americans oppose using troops to "try and end the fighting in Kosovo."

## PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR AIR STRIKES AND GROUND TROOPS

	----- Air Strikes -----			----- Ground Troops -----			(N)
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<b>Total</b>	60	30	10=100	44	49	7=100	(1488)
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	63	30	7	46	50	4	(750)
Female	58	30	12	42	48	10	(738)
<b>Race</b>							
White	61	29	10	45	48	7	(1189)
Non-white	55	33	12	39	53	8	(282)
Black	55	31	14	39	52	9	(169)
Hispanic*	69	24	7	51	44	5	(105)
<b>Race and Sex</b>							
White Men	64	29	7	47	49	4	(597)
White Women	59	29	12	43	48	9	(592)
<b>Age</b>							
Under 30	61	32	7	47	50	3	(290)
30-49	60	30	10	49	45	6	(637)
50-64	65	27	8	44	50	6	(316)
65+	55	30	15	31	56	13	(239)
<b>Education</b>							
College Grad.	58	36	6	51	46	3	(487)
Some College	65	29	6	45	50	5	(357)
High School Grad.	63	27	10	46	48	6	(506)
<H.S. Grad.	52	29	19	32	54	14	(131)
<b>Family Income</b>							
\$75,000+	62	33	5	49	48	3	(268)
\$50,000-\$74,999	67	31	2	47	52	1	(237)
\$30,000-\$49,999	63	29	8	46	48	6	(386)
\$20,000-\$29,999	66	26	8	48	47	5	(212)
<\$20,000	53	31	16	39	52	9	(224)

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of NATO forces, including the United States, conducting air strikes against Serbia to force the Serbs to agree to the terms of the peace agreement and end the fighting in Kosovo?<sup>2</sup>

There's been some talk about sending 4,000 U.S. troops, as part of a NATO peacekeeping force of about 30,000 troops, to help secure peace in Kosovo, Serbia. Do you approve or disapprove of sending U.S. troops to Kosovo?

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

Continued ...

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<sup>2</sup>

On Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, this question did not include a reference to the U.S. involvement. Responses to both forms of the question were identical.

	----- Air Strikes -----			----- Ground Troops -----			(N)
	Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref.	Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref.	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<b>Total</b>	60	30	10=100	44	49	7=100	(1488)
<b>Region</b>							
East	60	30	10	48	46	6	(258)
Midwest	60	31	9	44	47	9	(343)
South	60	28	12	44	50	6	(558)
West	62	31	7	41	53	6	(329)
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>							
Total White Protestant	61	29	10	42	51	7	(690)
White Prot. Evangelical	61	27	12	42	50	8	(334)
White Prot. Non-Evangel.	63	31	6	43	52	5	(327)
White Catholic	68	25	7	56	40	4	(236)
<b>Community Size</b>							
Large City	61	33	6	49	46	5	(339)
Suburb	64	27	9	44	50	6	(321)
Small City/Town	59	29	12	43	50	7	(510)
Rural Area	59	31	10	42	49	9	(300)
<b>Party ID</b>							
Republican	58	33	9	42	52	6	(438)
Democrat	68	22	10	47	43	10	(483)
Independent	59	33	8	44	52	4	(488)
<b>Clinton Approval</b>							
Approve	69	23	8	51	43	6	(908)
Disapprove	48	45	7	33	62	5	(481)
<b>GOP Congressional Approval</b>							
Approve	61	28	11	45	51	4	(563)
Disapprove	64	31	5	47	48	5	(723)
<b>1996 Presidential Vote</b>							
Clinton	71	22	7	52	42	6	(560)
Dole	50	42	8	32	61	7	(279)
<b>1998 Congressional Vote</b>							
Republican	54	38	8	36	58	6	(388)
Democrat	69	22	9	50	43	7	(345)

## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the *main survey* are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,488 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period March 24-28, 1999. 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 percentage points. For results based on either Form 1 (N=744) or Form 2 (N=744), the sampling error is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

Results for the *U.S. foreign policy survey* are based on telephone interviews among a nationwide sample of 1,008 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period March 24-28, 1999. 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.

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.

### PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS MARCH 1999 NEWS INTEREST INDEX FINAL TOPLINE March 24 - 28, 1999 N= 1,488

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>
March, 1999	61	32	7=100
February, 1999	64	30	6=100
Mid-January, 1999	66	29	5=100
January, 1999	63	30	7=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>
March, 1999	38	47	15=100
February, 1999	37	51	12=100
Mid-January, 1999	36	51	13=100
January, 1999	38	50	12=100

Q.3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling the nation's foreign policy? **[IF DON'T KNOW, ENTER AS DON'T KNOW. IF "DEPENDS", PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling the nation's foreign policy? IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS DON'T KNOW]**

		Sept	Sept	Jan	June	Oct	July	Oct	Sept	Aug	Newsweek June 30-July 1
		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1993</u>
57	Approve	61	54	52	39	50	38	39	47	52	49
33	Disapprove	30	34	39	52	42	53	46	33	25	35
<u>10</u>	DK/Refused	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>16</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.7 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?  
**[INSERT ITEM]**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<b>(VOL) DK</b>
<b>ASK A-B FORM 1 ONLY [N=744]:</b>					
a.	NATO air strikes against Serbian forces in Kosovo				
	41	33	16	9	1=100
	February, 1999 <sup>3</sup>				
	11	30	28	30	1=100
	Mid-January, 1999 <sup>4</sup>				
	9	21	24	44	2=100
	March, 1998 <sup>5</sup>				
	5	12	26	55	2=100
b.	Accusations that China stole nuclear technology from U.S. laboratories				
	19	24	23	32	2=100
<b>ASK ALL:</b>					
c.	Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market				
	18	29	22	31	*=100
	January, 1999				
	24	28	19	28	1=100
	Early September, 1998				
	32	31	20	17	*=100
	Mid-August, 1998				
	17	23	21	39	*=100
	January, 1998				
	21	25	23	31	*=100
	November, 1997 <sup>6</sup>				
	25	36	18	20	1=100
	September, 1997				
	14	22	23	40	1=100
	April, 1997				
	17	21	22	40	*=100
	February, 1996				
	12	20	25	42	1=100
d.	The death of former baseball player Joe DiMaggio				
	18	34	27	20	1=100
e.	The derailment of an Amtrak train in Illinois				
	31	39	19	11	*=100
	September, 1993 <sup>7</sup>				
	40	37	15	7	1=100
f.	Charges of corruption against members of the International Olympic Committee				
	8	28	31	32	1=100
	February, 1999				
	11	33	27	29	*=100
	January, 1999 <sup>8</sup>				
	9	28	29	33	1=100

<sup>3</sup> In February 1999, the story was listed "NATO efforts to end ethnic conflict in Kosovo, Serbia."

<sup>4</sup> In Mid-January, the story was listed as "The massacre of 45 people in Kosovo, Serbia."

<sup>5</sup> In March 1998, the story was listed as "Ethnic conflict in Kosovo, Serbia."

<sup>6</sup> In November 1997, April 1997 and February 1996, the story was listed as "Recent major ups and downs in the stock market."

<sup>7</sup> In September 1993, the story was listed as "The Amtrak train wreck in Alabama."

<sup>8</sup> In January 1999, the story was listed as "Charges that Salt Lake City used illegal practices to win the 2002 Winter Olympic games."

**Q.7 CONTINUED ...**

		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<b>(VOL) DK</b>
g.	Reports about Monica Lewinsky's book tour and TV interviews	7	16	26	50	1=100

Next, I would like to ask you a few questions about some things that have been in the news. Not everyone will have heard about them.

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=744]:**

Q.9 Do you happen to know the name of the province in Yugoslavia where there is conflict between Serbians and ethnic Albanians? **(IF YES, ASK: Which province? )**

43	Kosovo
8	All other answers
<u>49</u>	<u>Don't know/Refused</u>
100	

**ASK ALL:**

Q.11 As far as you know, does the United States currently have troops stationed in Bosnia, or not?

		November <u>1997</u>	<i>CNN/USA Today/Gallup</i> <u>June 1997</u>
68	Yes, in Bosnia	71	74
14	No, not in Bosnia	11	7
<u>18</u>	<u>Don't know/Refused</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>
100		100	100

**ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...**

**IF ANSWERED "1" (YES) IN Q.11 , ASK:**

Q.18a Do you approve or disapprove of the presence of U.S. troops in Bosnia?

**IF ANSWERED "2,9" (NO, DON'T KNOW) IN Q.11 , ASK:**

Q.18b As you may know, the United States currently has troops stationed in Bosnia. Do you approve or disapprove of the presence of U.S. troops in Bosnia?

		Jan <u>1998</u>	Nov <u>1997</u>	<i>CNN/USA Today/Gallup</i>			
				June <u>1997</u>	May <u>1996</u>	Jan <u>1996</u>	Dec <u>1995</u>
57	Approve	43	50	39	42	36	41
34	Disapprove	50	42	53	51	58	54
<u>9</u>	<u>Don't know/Refused</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

[ NO QUESTION 29 ]

[ FOR WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY RESPONDENTS, Q.32 AND Q.33 WERE ROTATED AND WERE ASKED AFTER Q.30 AND Q.31. FOR FRIDAY-SUNDAY RESPONDENTS, SERIES WAS ASKED IN THIS ORDER: Q.33a (REPLACED Q.33), Q.32, Q.30, Q.31 ]

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT,

**WED-THURS ONLY [N=737]:**

Q.33 Do you approve or disapprove of NATO air strikes against Serbia to force the Serbs to agree to the terms of the peace agreement to end the fighting in Kosovo?

**FRI-SUN ONLY [N=751]:**

Q.33a Do you approve or disapprove of NATO forces, including the United States, conducting air strikes against Serbia to force the Serbs to agree to the terms of the peace agreement to end the fighting in Kosovo?

**(COMBINED RESULTS)**

60	Approve
30	Disapprove
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.32 There's been some talk about sending 4,000 U.S. troops, as part of a NATO peacekeeping force of about 30,000 troops, to help secure peace in Kosovo, Serbia. Do you approve or disapprove of sending U.S. troops to Kosovo?

44	Approve
49	Disapprove
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=744]:**

Q.30 Do you think the United States has a responsibility to do something about the fighting between ethnic groups in Kosovo, a province of Serbia, or doesn't the United States have this responsibility?

		June
		<u>1995<sup>9</sup></u>
47	U.S. has responsibility	30
46	Doesn't have responsibility	64
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>
100		100

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<sup>9</sup> In June, 1995 this question was listed as "Do you think the United States has a responsibility to do something about the fighting between the Serbs and Bosnians in what used to be Yugoslavia, or doesn't the United States have this responsibility?"



**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=744]:**

Q.31 Do you think NATO, including the United States, has a responsibility to do something about the fighting between ethnic groups in Kosovo, a province of Serbia, or doesn't NATO have this responsibility?

60 NATO has responsibility  
 27 Doesn't have responsibility  
13 Don't know/Refused  
 100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY:**

**QUESTION 34a ASKED THURSDAY THRU SUNDAY [N=595]:**

Q.34a Here are some reasons being given for using U.S. troops to help secure peace in Kosovo, Serbia. For each one, please tell me whether, in your opinion, it is a very important reason, a somewhat important reason, a not too important reason, or not at all important reason for the use of U.S. troops. How about... **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ITEMS)** — is this a very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important reason for the use of U.S. troops?

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a. To prevent a larger war involving other countries in that part of Europe	53	29	9	6	3=100
b. To prevent the killing of innocent citizens in Kosovo	68	21	4	5	2=100
c. To prevent starvation and a major refugee problem in that region	55	30	6	6	3=100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY:**

**QUESTION 35a ASKED THURSDAY THRU SUNDAY [N=595]:**

Q.35a Here are some reasons being given for launching U.S. air strikes to help secure peace in Kosovo, Serbia. For each one, please tell me whether, in your opinion, it is a very important reason, a somewhat important reason, a not too important reason, or not at all important reason for launching U.S. air strikes. How about... **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ITEMS)** — is this a very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important reason for launching U.S. air strikes?

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a. To prevent a larger war involving other countries in that part of Europe	57	25	8	6	4=100
b. To prevent the killing of innocent citizens in Kosovo	70	19	4	5	2=100
c. To prevent starvation and a major refugee problem in that region	55	27	9	6	3=100

**ROTATE Q.36 and Q.37**

Q.36 How worried are you that U.S. troops in Kosovo might suffer casualties — very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

55 Very worried  
 32 Somewhat worried  
 9 Not too worried  
 3 Not at all worried  
 1 Don't know/Refused  
 100

Q.37 How worried are you about the financial cost of sending U.S. troops to Kosovo — very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

20 Very worried  
 34 Somewhat worried  
 26 Not too worried  
 17 Not at all worried  
 3 Don't know/Refused  
 100

**U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**  
**March 24-28, 1999**  
**N=1,008**

Q.3 Next I'm going to read a list of things that have been happening around the world. For each one, please tell me how serious a problem it is for the United States — very serious, somewhat serious, not too serious, or not at all serious. How serious a problem is/are (**INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ITEMS**) (very serious, somewhat serious, not too serious, or not at all serious?)

		<u>Very Serious</u>	<u>Somewhat Serious</u>	<u>Not too Serious</u>	<u>Not at all Serious</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=500]:</b>						
a.F1	Human rights violations in China	40	38	12	5	5=100
b.F1	Allegations that China stole nuclear technology from the United States	68	22	5	1	4=100
c.F1	The possibility that North Korea will build nuclear weapons	73	20	2	1	3=100
d.F1	The presence of Saddam Hussein in Iraq	58	28	7	4	3=100
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=508]:</b>						
e.F2	Financial problems in South America	25	44	18	5	7=100
f.F2	The financial crisis in Asia	27	44	14	5	9=100
g.F2	Ethnic conflict in Kosovo	38	35	12	6	9=100
h.F2	Drug corruption in Mexico	61	26	9	2	2=100
i.F2	The testing of nuclear weapons in India and Pakistan	68	23	4	2	4=100