

## HOSTAGE RELEASE TOP STORY OF MONTH

News about the release of American hostages in the Middle East has attracted more public attention than any other single story in 1990 so far. Close to half the public (46%) report that they have paid very close attention to stories about the release of Robert Polhill and Frank Reed. This is the first time this year that more than a third of the public has focused such intense interest on an individual news event.

Times Mirror respondents also cited the Polhill - Reed releases as the most important news event of the month, making this the first time this year that some aspect of political change in Eastern and Central Europe has not been seen as the most significant story of the month by a plurality of Americans.

The number two story in April attracted a smaller, but nonetheless sizable following. Thirty-one percent paid close attention to news about Earth Day. The audience for Earth Day news differed in kind and size from the audience for news about the hostage releases. Younger people, those under thirty, paid much more attention to Earth Day than older people, and they paid less attention than older Americans (those over 50) to news about Polhill and Reed gaining their freedom. In fact, as many young people reported they followed news about Earth Day very closely (40%) as said they followed news of the hostage releases very closely (38%). Older people were less likely to be engaged by news about Earth Day (24%) and more interested in the freeing of Polhill and Reed (56%). Middle-aged people, those in their thirties and forties, fell between the extremes of younger and older people on both stories.

Attentiveness to news about the Lithuanian revolt remained at the level observed in the previous month. Twenty-seven percent said they followed this story very closely compared to 29% last month. Public interest in the political changes occurring in the Communist world continues to hold steady. Since September, Times Mirror has found about 30% of the public in each month reporting they are paying very close attention to the top story out of Eastern or Central Europe. The only exception was in November when the fall of the Berlin Wall produced a surge of interest that reached 50%; however, by December the percentage following the changes in Eastern Europe very closely fell back to the thirty percent level, where it has remained ever since.

Americans are relatively well-informed about the major story lines in the conflict between Moscow and Vilnius. Six in ten Americans knew that the Soviets cut off the fuel supply in an attempt to pressure Lithuania into withdrawing its declaration of independence. Only 11% thought that combat troops had been sent in to arrest Lithuanian leaders. No fewer than 79% knew that the Bush administration has taken a "mild" position with regard to the conflict. Only 6% percent thought that Bush took a "tough" stand by threatening the Soviets with economic or diplomatic reprisals.

Although news about Lithuania engaged many Americans, the Moscow May Day protests attracted the close attention of only nine percent of the public. However, interest in this story ran as high as 18% among serious news consumers (those who represent the regular audience for MacNeil Lehrer, NPR and readers of quality magazines such as The New Yorker and The Atlantic). The civil war in Cambodia attracts less attention from the public at large (4%) and also fails to register much among serious news consumers (5%). It should be noted that no prime time television news program carried a single news story on Cambodia during this period.

The deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope attracted substantial public interest. Twenty-four percent followed news about the launch very closely. This is somewhat more than were attentive to the discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager II in August of last year. However, like Voyager, interest in Hubble was sharply higher among men with college training. As many as 40% of college-educated males followed news about the space telescope very closely. News of this scientific achievement attracted as much attention as did Lithuania (43%) and the hostage release (42%) among

this audience segment. In contrast, 23% of college-trained females followed news about the Hubble Space Telescope very closely, while among those without college training, 21% of men and 17% of women were highly attentive to news about the space telescope.

Americans who closely followed news about this scientific achievement gave the press good grades for its coverage of this story. Thirty percent rated news coverage as excellent compared to the typical 25% excellent rating. Earth Day coverage also received very high marks from the public (38% excellent).

Reports about the difficulties in conducting the Census attracted about as much interest from Americans as news about the Hubble deployment (24%). But, interest in this story was more uniform across demographic and regional groups.

News of renewed inflation and rising interest rates was followed very closely by fewer than one in five Americans (18%). In the East, where signs of economic difficulties are more prevalent, interest was somewhat higher (24%).

There was also a strong regional pattern to the political fallout from the Lincoln Savings and Loan episode. As much as 17% of the public could **volunteer** the name of one of the so called "Keating Five" Senators. John Glenn (11%) and Alan Cranston (8%) were the two senators most often cited as being involved. Virtually no one in the Times Mirror nationwide sample was able to recall Donald Riegle (1%), Dennis DeConcini (2%) or John McCain (1%). Association of Cranston and Glenn with the scandal is sharply higher in their home regions. In the West, 19% recalled Alan Cranston and in the Midwest, 15% John Glenn.

#### ***OTHER PUBLIC REGISTRATIONS***

Virtually all Americans (88%) had heard of the death of teenage AIDS victim, Ryan White. About three in four (74%) had heard about the decision by major tuna fish canners to change the way they catch fish so as to avoid catching dolphins. A similar proportion (76%) had heard about reports of abuse of the elderly. (Awareness reached 90% among those 50 years of age and older).

Six in ten Americans (59%) had heard about British Prime Minister Thatcher's popularity tumble, while almost as many (56%) had heard of the faddish popularity of liquid diets and were aware of the controversy in Cincinnati over the Mapplethorpe exhibition (50%).

## PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Lithuania	Freeing of American Hostages	Earth Day	Difficulties with the Census Forms	Hubble Space Telescope	N
Total	27	46	31	24	24	(1,218)
<u>Sex</u>						
Male	32	42	27	22	30	(608)
Female	23	50	34	26	19	(610)
<u>Race</u>						
White	28	47	31	23	26	(1,040)
Non-white	25	45	29	34	13	(159)
<u>Age</u>						
Under 30	22	38	40	22	18	(284)
30-49	26	44	30	21	26	(485)
50+	32	56	24	30	26	(429)
<u>Education</u>						
College graduate	40	49	38	25	34	(331)
Other college	32	49	34	27	29	(294)
High school grad.	24	47	28	24	23	(432)
Less than h.s. grad.	15	40	23	21	10	(143)
<u>Region</u>						
East	34	54	37	28	28	(282)
Midwest	26	46	31	22	22	(316)
South	21	41	24	19	19	(368)
West	29	44	32	29	30	(249)
<u>Party ID</u>						
Republican	30	51	31	23	28	(373)
Democrat	26	48	30	28	21	(417)
Independent	30	43	34	22	26	(343)
<u>Serious News</u>						
Consumers	49	56	46	35	39	(176)
All Others	24	45	28	23	22	(1,042)

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

CONTINUED...

... CONTINUED

	Civil War in Cambodia	Reports of Renewed Inflation and Rising Interest Rates	May Day Protests in the Soviet Union
Total	4	18	9
<u>Sex</u>			
Male	4	22	9
Female	3	16	8
<u>Race</u>			
White	4	18	9
Non-white	5	20	11
<u>Age</u>			
Under 30	3	12	7
30-49	2	16	10
50+	5	25	10
<u>Education</u>			
College graduate	4	21	14
Other college grad.	4	18	11
High school grad.	4	18	7
Less than h.s. grad.	4	18	4
<u>Region</u>			
East	6	24	13
Midwest	2	16	9
South	3	16	6
West	3	18	8
<u>Party ID</u>			
Republican	4	19	9
Democrat	2	18	8
Independent	4	21	11
<u>Serious News</u>			
Consumers	5	35	18
All Others	4	16	8

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

# PRESS COVERAGE RATINGS OF NEWS STORIES

## STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY

	Lithuania	Freeing of American Hostages	Earth Day	Hubble Space Telescope
Excellent	26	29	38	30
Good	53	49	45	53
Only Fair	17	18	10	13
Poor	3	3	6	2
Don't know	1	1	1	2
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	100	100	100	100

## PRESS PERFORMANCE

	MAY <u>1989</u>	JUL <u>1989</u>	AUG <u>1989</u>	SEP <u>1989</u>	OCT <u>1989</u>	NOV <u>1989</u>
Excellent	19	26	25	19	32	41
Good	43	42	45	50	45	41
Only Fair	24	21	21	22	18	13
Poor	10	10	8	7	3	3
Don't Know	4	1	1	2	2	2
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	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	DEC <u>1989</u>	JAN <u>1990</u>	FEB <u>1990</u>	MAR <u>1990</u>	APR <u>1990</u>	MAY <u>1990</u>
Excellent	22	33	23	26	23	28
Good	45	48	50	48	54	49
Only Fair	25	14	19	20	16	17
Poor	6	3	5	4	4	5
Don't Know	2	2	3	2	3	1
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	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Question: *In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.4); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?*

## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among 1,218 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period of May 3-7, 1990. Interviewing services were provided by The Gallup Organization. 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. 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.

# **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

TIMES MIRROR NEWS INTEREST INDEX

MAY 1990

May 3-7, 1990

n = 1,218

**INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES**

Q.1 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world last month - in March? (DO NOT READ)

<u>International Stories</u>	54
Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's actions in response	11
The freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast	34
Developments in Germany, including discussion of German reunification	1
Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (NOT including mentions of Lithuanian independence)	3
Other mentions of political changes taking place in Eastern and Central Europe (NOT including mentions of German reunification)	3
The fall of the coalition government in Israel	*
The trial of Imelda Marcos of the Philippines	0
Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues	*
The celebration of Earth Day	2
The civil war in Cambodia	*
May Day protests in Moscow	*
<u>Domestic stories</u>	3
Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates	*
The environment - any mention of environmental disasters (tornadoes, oil spills, floods etc.)	1
The difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms	0
The deployment of the Hubble space telescope	2
OTHER (SPECIFY)	8
DON' T KNOW	31
REFUSED	*
CAN' T SAY/NONE	4
	<u>100</u>



**NOW I WANT TO ASK YOU JUST A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE IN THE NEWS - NOT EVERYONE WILL HAVE HEARD OF THEM.**

Q.2 Can you name any of the five U.S. Senators who are being investigated in the Savings & Loan scandal, the so called, "Keating Five".

17 Named any of the five Senators

8 Cranston

1 Riegle

11 Glenn

2 DeConcini

1 McCain

3 Never Heard Of

83 Could not name any of the five

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

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response	27	38	17	17	1=100
b. The freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast	46	39	9	5	1=100
c. The celebration of Earth Day	31	37	20	12	*=100
d. The difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms	24	36	23	17	*=100
e. The deployment of the Hubble space telescope	24	29	21	25	1=100
f. The civil war in Cambodia	4	15	32	48	1=100
g. Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates	18	29	26	26	1=100
h. May Day protests in Moscow	9	24	27	39	1=100

Q.4 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely?  
 (DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

	<u>Story Followed Most Closely</u>
a. Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response	17
b. The freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast	34
c. The celebration of Earth Day	15
d. The difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms	4
e. The deployment of the Hubble space telescope	12
f. The civil war in Cambodia	1
g. Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates	4
h. May Day protests in Moscow	*
CAN'T SAY	6
NONE	<u>7</u>
	100

Q.5 Of all the stories mentioned, which of them, if any, received too much coverage? (DO NOT READ LIST, ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES, BE SURE TO FOR "ANY OTHERS") PROMPT

	<u>Received Too Much Coverage</u>
a. Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response	8
b. The freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast	5
c. The celebration of Earth Day	12
d. The difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms	3
e. The deployment of the Hubble space telescope	4
f. The civil war in Cambodia	2
g. Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates	1
h. May Day protests in Moscow	2
NONE	42
CAN'T SAY	24

**IF RESPONDENT SAID '0' CAN'T SAY IN Q.4, SKIP TO Q.7**

Q.6 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.4); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		<u>STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY</u>			
		<u>Lithuania</u>	<u>Freeing of American Hostages</u>	<u>Earth Day</u>	<u>Hubble Space Telescope</u>
28	Excellent	26	29	38	30
49	Good	53	49	45	53
17	Only Fair	17	18	10	13
5	Poor	3	3	6	2
$\frac{1}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{2}{100}$
		(228)	(400)	(177)	(154)

**NOW I WANT TO ASK YOU JUST A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT SOME THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN IN THE NEWS - NOT EVERYONE WILL HAVE HEARD OF THEM.**

Q.7 As I read from a list tell me if you have heard about each item that I mention. First, did you happen to hear about...

		<u>Heard of</u>	<u>Have not</u>	<u>DK</u>
a.	Changes in the way commercial tuna fishing is done to prevent the accidental capture of dolphins	74	26	*=100
b.	The recent controversies about the rating system for motion pictures	35	65	*=100
c.	The popularity of liquid diets	56	44	*=100
d.	Reports about abuse of the elderly	76	24	*=100
e.	Discontent in Great Britain with Prime Minister Thatcher	59	41	*=100
f.	The indictment of a Cincinnati Museum director on obscenity charges for the exhibition of the works of Robert Mapplethorpe	50	49	1=100
h.	The death of Ryan White, an 18 year old AIDS victim from Indiana	88	12	*=100

- Q.8 In which of the following ways has Moscow tried to pressure Lithuania into withdrawing its declaration of independence: **(READ AND ROTATE)**
- 11 By sending in combat troops to arrest Lithuanian leaders
  - 63 By cutting off Lithuania's fuel supply
  - 13 By calling for talks between Soviet and Lithuanian leaders
  - 23 Don't know
- Q.9 From what you have heard or read, what has been President Bush's position on Lithuania? Has he taken a tough stand with Moscow by threatening economic and diplomatic measures or has he shown only mild opposition by not putting too much pressure on Moscow?
- 6 Strong position
  - 79 Mild position
  - $\frac{15}{100}$  Don't know

# TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

## PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES (1986 - 1990)

### PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
- 52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
- 51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
- 49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages in the mideast (Aug 89)
- 49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
- 47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
- 46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
- 46 THE FREEING OF TWO AMERICANS WHO HAD BEEN HELD HOSTAGE IN THE MIDEAST (MAY 90)**
- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
- 42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
- 40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
- 40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)
- 39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
- 38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
- 37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
- 37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
- 37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)
- 35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
- 35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
- 35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)
- 33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
- 33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
- 31 **THE CELEBRATION OF EARTH DAY (MAY 90)**
- 31 The World Series (Oct 88)
- 31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
- 31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
- 30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
- 30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
- 30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
- 29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and  
Moscow's response (April 90)
- 29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a  
black man (Feb 90)
- 29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
- 29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
- 29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a  
group of youths (May 89)
- 29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
- 28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
- 28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
- 28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
- 28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
- 28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)
- 27 **LITHUANIA'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND  
MOSCOW'S RESPONSE (MAY 90)**
- 27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged with  
sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
- 27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
- 27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)
- 26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
- 26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and  
East Germany (Feb 90)
- 26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
- 25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
- 24 **THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE (MAY 90)**
- 24 **THE DIFFICULTIES THE GOVERNMENT IS HAVING IN GETTING PEOPLE TO FILL OUT  
CENSUS FORMS (MAY 90)**
- 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
- 23 The attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
- 23 The Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
- 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
- 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
- 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)



**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
- 22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
- 22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
- 22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
- 22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)
- 22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
- 22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
- 22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 The scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 The Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
- 20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
- 20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)
  
- 19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
- 19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
- 19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
- 19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
- 19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)
- 18 REPORTS ABOUT RENEWED INFLATION AND RISING INTEREST RATES (MAY 90)**
- 18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
- 18 The stock market crash (May 88)
- 18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied territories (May 88)
- 17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)
- 17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
- 17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
- 15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
- 15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
- 15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
- 15 The scandal involving HUD (July 89)
- 14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
- 14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
- 14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
- 14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
- 13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
- 13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
- 13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)
- 10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
- 10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit (April 90)
- 10 The Academy Awards (April 90)
- 9 MAY DAY PROTESTS IN MOSCOW (MAY 90)**
- 9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (March 90)
- 9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
- 9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of Czechoslovakia (Mar 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 The scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
- 6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
- 4 THE CIVIL WAR IN CAMBODIA (MAY 90)**
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)