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**Times Mirror News Interest Index  
November 1990**

**Public Interest and  
Awareness of the News**

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## **GULF STILL TOP STORY; INTEREST IN FALTERING ECONOMY SURGES**

Interest in news about the economy and the election campaigns increased markedly in the past month, but the crisis in the Gulf continued to be the story most closely followed by the American public.

For the fourth consecutive month, approximately two-thirds of Times Mirror's nationwide sample (62%) reported that it was following the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the presence of American military forces in the Gulf very closely. And despite the significance of the budget deficit agreement and the outcome of the mid-term elections, a vast majority of the public (66%) continued to think that news about the Gulf crisis was the most important news of the past month. Just 10% felt that way about election news.

Interest in the plight of the hostages was the second most closely followed story of the month (49% followed very closely) but attentiveness to news about the hostages continues to be below the levels recorded in the first few months of the crisis when over half said they were following such stories very closely (57% in August).

Domestically, interest in the condition of the economy has reached a high point for the year and rivals the level of interest expressed by the public in the October 1987 stock market crash. Forty percent of the public followed news of that financial calamity very closely.

News about the condition of the economy in the past four weeks attracted the close attention of 39% of Americans. This is significantly higher than the level of interest found in September (29%), which was significantly higher than had been found in a comparable measure in May of this year (18%).

As in previous surveys, younger people were far less interested in economic news than older people (27% among 18-29 year olds vs. 47% among those 50 & older) and interest among men and college graduates surpassed interest among women and those with less education.

Thirty-eight percent of the public followed news about the elections and the campaigns in their states, which is close to the estimated percentage of the voting age population that actually cast a ballot (36%). The Times Mirror surveys provide evidence as to how late in the game much of the public turns its attention to election news. A month ago, as the campaigns hit full stride, only 18% were paying close attention to election news.

Like voter turnout itself, interest in election news was much greater among older people than among younger Americans. Fifty-two percent of those 50 years of age and older paid close attention to the campaigns in their state while only 27% among those under 30 years of age did so.

The public paid closer attention to campaign news in states that had the most dramatic elections. Forty-six percent of voters followed election news very closely in North Carolina, Texas, Massachusetts, California and Minnesota, all of which had hotly contested elections that drew national media attention.

Although the budget deficit negotiations reached a crescendo and conclusion in late October, public interest in this story remained at the level recorded a month earlier (34%), and a majority of the American public failed to take notice that the much debated agreement was eventually reached.

Only 46% knew that Congress adjourned having achieved an agreement, while 30% thought it adjourned without one and 24% had no idea! Age and education were closely related to the public's lack of knowledge in this area - only 31% of Americans under 30 years of age knew that an agreement was reached, while 65% of college graduates were aware of it.

Those aware of the agreement opposed it by a 12 percentage point margin (35% favor, 47% oppose). This is about the same level of disfavor found a month ago with regard to the initial agreement proposed by the Administration and the Congressional leadership.

However the public was less able to recall most specific tax hikes called for by the actual agreement than it had been about the leadership agreement. Thirty-seven percent recalled an increase in gasoline taxes compared to 45% four weeks ago. In the current survey 31% cited an increase in excise taxes on alcohol and 30% on cigarettes - a month ago a proposed tax increase on these items was recalled by 40% and 38% respectively.

While awareness of most product taxes decreased over the one month period, there was an increase in the percentage of the public recalling higher income taxes, especially tax hikes for the wealthy. Spontaneous mentions of increased income taxes rose from 5% to 14%, and mentions of higher income taxes for the wealthy rose from 5% to 18%. Awareness of higher taxes on the wealthy was the only item that was meaningfully greater among those who favored the budget deficit agreement than among those opposed to it (34% to 24%).

Criticisms of President Bush for changes of heart on taxes and for being seemingly inconsistent on Persian Gulf policy attracted about as much public attention as did the budget deficit agreement itself, with 32% of Times Mirror respondents saying they paid very close attention to this matter. Democrats expressed more interest in criticisms (38%) than Republicans (28%).

With the crisis in the Gulf and a full plate of domestic news, unfolding events in the Soviet Union are for the most part being ignored by the American public. Only 6% said they were very closely following news about continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and other Soviet republics. Another 22% said they were following these stories *fairly* closely.

The murder of militant Rabbi Meir Kahane in New York City attracted a comparable level of public attention - 8% very interested and 21% fairly interested.

***Evaluations of Press Coverage***

The public continues to rate the coverage of the Gulf crisis better than most major news stories and this month better than the budget deficit and election coverage, specifically. However, over the past four months as breaking news represents a smaller portion of Gulf coverage, public ratings tend to be less laudatory than they were at the outset of the crisis. As shown in the table below, the percentage rating Gulf coverage as only fair or poor is nearly twice as great in the current survey (22%) as it was in the August survey (12%).

**RATINGS OF PRESS COVERAGE**

***IRAQ'S OCCUPATION OF KUWAIT***

	<u>Aug.</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>Sept.</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>Oct.</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>Nov.</u> <u>1990</u>
<b><i>Press Coverage:</i></b>				
Excellent	36	39	30	28
Good	50	47	51	47
Only Fair	10	9	13	18
Poor	2	3	4	4
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100

### ***Washington Achievements***

That a majority of the public is unaware that a budget deficit agreement was reached before adjournment should be considered in light of the fact that only one piece of signed legislation penetrated the public's consciousness. Sixty-four percent knew that smoking had been banned on all domestic airline flights. However, fewer than half the public knew that the minimum wage had been increased (46%) and only 43% thought that new environmental laws to reduce air pollution were passed.

Other pieces of legislation were even more invisible to the public. Twenty-five percent thought that new anti-crime legislation was passed into law, and only about one in five Americans knew of the change in farm subsidies (22%), a low income housing bill (21%), and a change in immigration laws (19%).

The public was also poorly informed about vetoed legislation. Almost as many believed a family leave bill was passed and signed into law as knew it had not (19% vs. 23%). Twenty-seven percent believed a new civil rights law was signed and passed, while 29% knew that it had not. For all the controversy surrounding these vetoes, there was not much more awareness of them among groups in the population who are most directly affected by the legislation. Only 29% of non-whites knew that an anti-discrimination bill failed to make it and 20% of women under 40 years of age knew that the family leave bill failed to pass.

Some groups however are more attentive to their special interests - 47% of people over 50 years of age knew there had *not* been a cut in social security taxes versus 29% among those under 50 years of age!

## PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Iraq's Occupation of Kuwait	American Hostages and Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait	Budget Deficit Agreement	Reports About U.S. Economy	Election Campaigns	N
Total	62	49	34	39	38	(1208)
<u>Sex</u>						
Male	70	51	38	42	38	(603)
Female	54	46	30	36	38	(605)
<u>Race</u>						
White	62	49	34	40	38	(1025)
*Non-white	62	45	34	34	40	(175)
Black	64	48	37	34	43	(94)
<u>Age</u>						
Under 30	57	39	21	27	27	(332)
30-49	61	49	34	40	33	(472)
50+	66	55	43	47	52	(387)
<u>Education</u>						
College graduate	66	47	42	48	45	(324)
Other college	67	50	36	41	39	(324)
High school grad.	59	49	31	38	36	(420)
Less than h.s. grad.	55	46	28	29	34	(135)
<u>Region</u>						
East	62	50	35	44	35	(272)
Midwest	59	43	31	32	34	(330)
South	67	54	36	43	45	(383)
West	58	46	34	36	37	(223)
<u>Party ID</u>						
Republican	64	51	31	38	37	(345)
Democrat	62	50	36	40	47	(371)
Independent	61	47	34	40	33	(435)

*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.*

\*Non-white include blacks

CONTINUED...

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	Political Unrest in the Soviet Union	Murder of Rabbi Meir Kahane	Criticisms of George Bush
Total	6	8	32
<u>Sex</u>			
Male	7	8	35
Female	6	7	29
<u>Race</u>			
White	6	6	32
*Non-white	7	17	34
Black	6	18	36
<u>Age</u>			
Under 30	5	5	25
30-49	5	8	30
50+	8	10	39
<u>Education</u>			
College graduate	6	10	37
Other college	6	7	31
High school grad.	6	7	31
Less than h.s. grad.	7	8	29
<u>Region</u>			
East	7	12	32
Midwest	4	5	31
South	7	9	34
West	6	5	30
<u>Party ID</u>			
Republican	8	6	28
Democrat	4	8	38
Independent	7	9	31

*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.*

*\*Non-white include blacks*

# PRESS COVERAGE RATINGS OF NEWS STORIES

## STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY

	Iraq's Occupation of Kuwait	Reports About U.S. Economy	Election Campaigns
Excellent	28	13	15
Good	47	40	52
Only Fair	18	30	21
Poor	4	13	10
Don't know	3	4	2
	----	----	----
	100	100	100

### PRESS PERFORMANCE

	<u>MAY</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>JUL</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>AUG</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>SEP</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>OCT</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>NOV</u> <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
	----	----	----	----	----	----
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	<u>DEC</u> <u>1989</u>	<u>JAN</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>FEB</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>MAR</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>APR</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>MAY</u> <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
	----	----	----	----	----	----
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	<u>JUNE</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>JULY</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>AUG</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>SEPT</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>OCT.</u> <u>1990</u>	<u>NOV.</u> <u>1990</u>
Excellent	25	21	30	33	24	23
Good	51	50	48	46	48	47
Only Fair	18	21	14	13	18	20
Poor	4	6	6	5	8	7
Don't Know	2	2	2	3	2	3
	----	----	----	----	----	----
	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.6); 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 1,208 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period of November 8-11, 1990. 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**  
**NOVEMBER 1990**  
**November 8-11, 1990**  
**n=1,208**

Q.1 Do you happen to read any daily newspaper or newspapers regularly?

74 Yes

26 No

$\frac{0}{100}$  Don't know

Q.2 Do you happen to watch any TV news programs regularly, or not?

80 Yes

20 No

$\frac{*}{100}$  Don't know

Q.3 Do you listen to the news on the radio regularly or not?

55 Yes

45 No

$\frac{*}{100}$  Don't know

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

Q.4 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? **(DO NOT READ)**

<u>International Stories</u>	68	
Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf/General mentions of the Gulf crisis	66	
The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait	2	
Political changes taking place in Eastern Europe	1	
Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and other republics of the Soviet Union	0	
Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union	*	
<u>Domestic Stories</u>		14
Congressional and Administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement	2	
Reports about the condition of the U. S. economy	1	
News about the candidates and election campaigns	10	
Veto of civil rights legislation	*	
Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy *		
OTHER (SPECIFY)	4	
DON'T KNOW		13
REFUSED	*	
NONE		<u>1</u>
	100	

Q.5 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. Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf	62	28	7	2	1=100
b. The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait	49	33	13	4	1=100
c. Congressional and Administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement	34	33	20	11	2=100
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	39	36	18	6	1=100
e. News about the candidates and elections in your state	38	34	17	11	*=100
f. Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and in other republics of the Soviet Union	6	22	37	32	3=100
g. The murder in New York City of Jewish militant Rabbi Meir Kahane <b>(PRONUNCIATION MIRE KA-HAHN-EE)</b>	8	21	30	37	4=100
h. Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy	32	35	21	10	2=100

Q.6 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. Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf	59
b. The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait	7
c. Congressional and Administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement	6
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	8
e. News about the candidates and elections in your state	10
f. Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and other republics of the Soviet Union	*
g. The murder in New York City of Jewish militant Rabbi Meir Kahane <b>(PRONUNCIATION MIRE KA-HAHN-EE)</b>	1
h. Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy	2
CAN'T SAY	$\frac{7}{100}$

Q.7 Of all the stories mentioned, which of them, if any, received too much coverage? **(DO NOT READ LIST, ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES, BE SURE TO PROMPT FOR "ANY OTHERS")**

	<u>Received Too Much Coverage</u>
a. Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf	12
b. The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait	2
c. Congressional and Administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement	7
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	3
e. News about the candidates and elections in your state	13
f. Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and other republics of the Soviet Union	2
g. The murder in New York City of Jewish militant Rabbi Meir Kahane <b>(PRONUNCIATION MIRE KA-HAHN-EE)</b>	4
h. Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy	6
None	38
CAN'T SAY	22

**IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.6, SKIP TO Q.9**

Q.8 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.6); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		<u>STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY:</u>		
		<u>Iraq's Occupation of Kuwait</u>	<u>Reports About U.S. Economy</u>	<u>Election Campaigns</u>
23	Excellent	28	13	15
47	Good	47	40	52
20	Only Fair	18	30	21
7	Poor	4	13	10
$\frac{3}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{2}{100}$
Sample Size		(720)	(98)	(126)

Q.9 To the best of your knowledge did Congress reach an agreement on a plan to cut the budget deficit or did Congress adjourn without passing an agreement?

46	Agreement reached
30	No agreement S), /) <b>GO TO Q.11</b>
$\frac{24}{100}$	Don't know S))) -

\*Q.10 From what you have heard or read, do you favor or oppose the deficit reduction agreement that was passed by Congress and signed by the President in the last week of October?

35	Favor
47	Oppose
$\frac{18}{100}$	Don't know

(\*Based on those who knew an agreement was reached)

**ASK EVERYONE:**

Q.11 The budget deficit reduction agreement calls for tax increases in a number of areas. Do you happen to recall what types of taxes will be increased? (**DO NOT READ. ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES.**)

- 37 Gasoline taxes
- 30 Taxes on cigarettes
- 31 Taxes on alcohol
- 1 Taxes on plane tickets
- 14 Increased income taxes (**NO MENTION OF WEALTHY OR UPPER INCOME**)
- 18 Increased income taxes for wealthy Americans
- 8 Increased Medicare taxes
- 16 Other taxes
- 37 Can't recall

Q.12 Besides the agreement to cut the deficit the current Congress considered a lot of other legislation. As I read from a list, tell me if you happen to know whether this is a something that was passed by Congress and signed by the President or not? If you don't know just tell me that. **(ROTATE)**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Banning smoking on all domestic airline flights	64	8	28=100
b. New civil rights laws aimed at reducing job discrimination	27	29	44=100
c. New environmental laws to reduce air pollution	43	12	45=100
d. An increase in the minimum wage	46	20	34=100
e. A law requiring business to grant workers family leaves	19	23	58=100
f. A law reducing farm subsidies	22	11	67=100
g. A law easing restrictions on immigration	19	16	65=100
h. New anti-crime legislation	25	9	66=100
i. A cut in social security taxes	21	36	43=100
j. A new law increasing subsidies for low income housing	21	13	66=100

# 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)
- 66 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)
- 62 IRAQ'S OCCUPATION OF KUWAIT AND THE PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES IN THE PERSIAN GULF (NOV 90)**
- 62 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 57 The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)
- 57 Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)
- 56 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)
- 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 THE PLIGHT OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES AND OTHER WESTERNERS DETAINED IN IRAQ AND KUWAIT (NOV 90)**
- 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 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Oct 90)
- 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 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)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 39 **REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (NOV 90)**  
39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 **NEWS ABOUT THE CANDIDATES AND ELECTIONS IN YOUR STATE (NOV 90)**  
38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit meeting (June 90)
- 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)
- 36 The murder of five people by a serial killer around the University of Florida campus in Gainesville (Sept 90)
- 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 **CONGRESSIONAL AND ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS TO REACH A BUDGET DEFICIT AGREEMENT (NOV 90)**  
34 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Oct 90)
- 34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)
- 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)
- 32 **CRITICISMS OF GEORGE BUSH FOR BEING INCONSISTENT IN WHAT HE SAID ABOUT TAXES AND WHAT HE SAID ABOUT PERSIAN GULF POLICY (NOV 90)**  
31 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 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Aug 90)
- 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)
- 30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)
- 29 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 90)
- 29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
- 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)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 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 Deployment of U.S. marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war (Aug 90)
- 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 Bush/Gorbachev summit meeting in Helsinki (Sept 90)
- 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 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in Congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
- 24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
- 24 Deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
- 24 Difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
- 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
- 24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
- 23 Attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
- 23 Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
- 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
- 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
- 22 Reunification of Germany (Oct 90)
- 22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
- 22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
- 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
- 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 Controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game (Aug 90)
- 21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 Scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 The murder on a New York subway platform of a Utah man attempting to protect his family from attack by teenage muggers (Sept 90)
- 20 Earthquake in Iran (July 90)
- 20 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 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Aug 90)
- 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 News about the candidates and election campaigns in your state (Oct 90)
- 18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
- 18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
- 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 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
- 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 Nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan (Aug 90)
- 16 Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial (Aug 90)
- 16 Financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)
- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justice David Souter (Oct 90)
- 15 Controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played (Aug 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 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)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 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 Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union (Sept 90)
- 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 Major League Baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees (Aug 90)
- 12 Pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa (Aug 90)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
- 11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)
- 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 Academy Awards (April 90)
  
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 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)
- 8 THE MURDER IN NEW YORK CITY OF JEWISH MILITANT RABBI MEIR KAHANE (NOV 90)**
- 7 First reports from the 1990 U.S. census (Sept 90)
- 6 CONTINUING POLITICAL UNREST IN THE UKRAINE AND IN OTHER REPUBLICS OF THE SOVIET UNION (NOV 90)**
- 6 United Nations Children's Summit held in New York (Oct 90)
- 6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of Czechoslovakia (March 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 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 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)