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**Times Mirror News Interest Index
May 1991**

**Public Interest and
Awareness of the News**

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President's Health, Kurds' Plight -- Top Stories Of Month **PRESS 'UNFAIR' TO QUAYLE; KENNEDY COVERAGE BLASTED**

The American public is highly critical of the press for its coverage of the alleged rape at the Kennedy family estate in Palm Beach, Florida and because of the way it has portrayed Vice President Dan Quayle in the aftermath of the President's hospitalization.

According to the latest *Times Mirror monthly News Interest Index*, most Americans (55%) think that the press is unfair in the way it covers the Vice President. Only one in three Americans (33%) regard coverage of him as fair. Republicans and Independents were more likely than Democrats to be critical of the way the press covers Quayle, but even Democrats divided sharply on the issue (43% fair, 44% unfair). Feeling that the media is unfair to Dan Quayle is as prevalent today as it was at the high point of the controversy over his candidacy in 1988. An August 1988 Times Mirror poll also found 55% believing that the press was covering Quayle unfairly.

Almost half (45%) of the public believes that the Kennedy rape allegation received too much coverage and a huge 70% majority of the public disapproved of the release of the name of the victim in that case. Disapproval was equally apparent when the question informed respondents that the young woman had returned to the Kennedy Palm Beach estate after a night of drinking and dancing and when the question gave no information about the context of the allegations.

In addition to disapproving of the release of the young woman's name, the public believed the worst about the media's motives. Only 9% thought that news organizations released the woman's name to show that society does not attach shame to the victim of rape, while 80% saw it as a commercially motivated decision.

Views about the Kennedy coverage and other sensational stories are reflected in the public's intense criticism of press practices. The Times Mirror News Interest Index finds that only 12% of the public believes that the press acts "very responsibly" in covering the personal and ethical behavior of politicians. And, 72% of the public believes the press often invades the privacy of those it covers. Criticism of press performance in these areas is as sharp as it has been in any past Times Mirror survey.

President Bush's heart problems and the plight of the Kurds were the news stories that attracted the most public attention over the past month.

However, there was little evidence that the public had any strong news focus during this period. No individual event was named as the most important news of the month by more than 15% of Americans and the most widely expressed view of the news was that there was too much coverage of the Palm Beach story - volunteered by 45% of respondents.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents polled by the *Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press* said they followed news of George Bush's heart problems very closely, while a statistically equal 36% said they followed the situation of the Kurds and efforts to help them very closely. In a follow-up question the two stories were cited equally often as the news followed *most* closely during the preceding four weeks (by 22% and 23% respectively).

The level of interest expressed in the Kurds is half as great as was interest in Gulf news during both the Desert Shield and Desert Storm phases of the conflict. However, interest in the condition of the Kurds and efforts to help them far exceeds the level of interest accorded most overseas stories and equals the March 1991 level of public attentiveness to the civil war in southern Iraq.

Interest in President Bush's heart troubles was nearly rivaled by the amount of interest in the companion story, concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President. Twenty-six percent of the public followed the Quayle controversy very closely. Interest in this story and the President's health problems were equally apparent among Republicans and among Democrats.

News about the condition of the economy was the number three story of the Times Mirror News Interest Index with 33% saying they followed such news very closely. Economic news has achieved about this level of public attentiveness in each survey since the onset of the recession in the Fall.

White House Chief of Staff John Sununu's transportation troubles reached a larger audience than do most comparable "Washington stories". Twenty-four percent of the public followed the Sununu travel news very closely. By way of comparison, only 15% were following Attorney General Ed Meese's conflict of interest problems very closely in May, 1988, and the findings of the Senate committee investigating the "Keating Five" drew the close attention of just 12% of the public a few months ago.

News about the devastating cyclone in Bangladesh was followed closely by 23% of the public, which is about as many Americans as were attentive to the major earthquake that struck Iran last summer. While a relatively small segment of the public paid close attention to this story, most people were aware of the magnitude of the disaster. Fifty-three percent of those sampled correctly estimated the number of casualties caused by the earthquake when given four possible answers from which to choose.

The Kennedy rape allegation was followed very closely by only 21% of Times Mirror respondents, less than half the percentage volunteering that the story was over-covered. However, curiously the Kennedy rape allegation ranked third in the follow-up question that asked respondents to name the single news story they had followed most closely this month (by 15%). This suggests that while the audience for this story may be limited in size, it is an intensely interested one.

President Bush's educational reform plan attracted far less public attention than did his heart fibrillations - just 14% followed news of the President's ideas about educational reform very closely. However, the poll showed that the public is aware of the Bush position on key elements in the plan. Seventy-two percent believed that Bush favored requiring students to take nationwide competency tests and 54% felt the President favored a voucher plan that would enable parents to pick their children's schools.

The public was less well-informed about many other Bush administration policy positions. Only a bare majority (50%) believed that the President favored a reduction in long-term capital gains. A very solid 63% majority thought Bush favored a seven day waiting period for the purchase of handguns and about the same proportion (65%) believed the President favored strong conservation measures to reduce dependence on foreign oil. Only 40% thought the Bush administration would be opposed to increasing import taxes on goods coming into the country from Mexico.

Interest in the political and economic problems of the Soviet Union has not increased with the end of the war in the Gulf. In fact, fewer Americans said they followed news about the Soviet Union very closely (14%) in the current survey than made such reports back in mid-March (20%), when the Gulf was still dominating public consciousness. Interest in the political and economic problems of the Soviet Union is roughly half what it was in the late spring/early summer of 1990.

Tellingly, the 34% who could identify Boris Yeltsin (up from 20% in June, 1990) was dwarfed by the 75% who knew the identity of William Kennedy Smith.

The Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan attracted the close attention of 8% of the public, but as many as 30% of the public cited the Nancy Reagan, Frank Sinatra relationship as the reason why the singer had been in the news recently.

CNN Continues to Win Praise for Coverage

The public accolades given CNN for its war coverage appear to have carried over to general news coverage. CNN was named by 41% as the network doing the best job in covering the news lately, followed by ABC at 18%, NBC 14% and CBS 13%. Earlier this year when the question was

asked about coverage of the war, CNN led its closest rival, ABC, by a larger margin - 61% to 12%, but the cable network led ABC by a thin 27% to 21% margin in the early phases of the Gulf crisis (September, 1990).

Other Matters

Just one in four Americans (24%) could name a Democrat who has been mentioned as a possible Presidential candidate for 1992. Among rank and file Democrats in the sample, recollection of candidates for '92 was only marginally higher (28%). Cuomo (9%) and Tsongas (7%) were the names most often recalled by people in the survey.

Times Mirror respondents were cognitively challenged by the term "politically correct" - 48% said they had heard of it, but just 14% could define it correctly.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	The Situation of the Kurds In Northern Iraq	Charges that White House Chief of Staff Used Military Airplanes for Personal Trips	Reports About the Condition of the U.S. Economy	President Bush's Educational Reform Plan	Political Unrest in Soviet Union	N
Total	36	24	33	14	14	(1206)
<u>Sex</u>						
Male	36	25	37	12	17	(604)
Female	35	22	28	15	10	(602)
<u>Race</u>						
White	36	24	32	13	14	(1011)
*Non-white	33	22	36	18	9	(187)
Black	33	24	39	18	10	(105)
<u>Age</u>						
Under 30	25	11	24	8	10	(294)
30-49	36	21	31	15	10	(495)
50+	43	34	40	16	20	(401)
<u>Education</u>						
College graduate	40	20	45	19	20	(306)
Other college	38	24	32	14	14	(341)
High school grad.	33	23	29	11	10	(396)
Less than h.s. grad.	33	26	27	12	12	(153)
<u>Region</u>						
East	38	23	38	11	16	(284)
Midwest	32	26	28	11	12	(317)
South	35	22	33	16	10	(389)
West	39	23	31	17	16	(216)
<u>Party ID</u>						
Republican	40	23	32	13	14	(355)
Democrat	39	27	36	15	14	(353)
Independent	30	22	30	13	14	(439)

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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	Alleged Rape of a Young Woman at the Kennedy Family's Palm Beach Estate	Release of the Kitty Kelley bio- graphy of Nancy Reagan	President Bush's Heart Problem	Cyclone that Devastated Bangladesh	Concerns About Dan Quayle's Ability to Serve as President
Total	21	8	38	23	26
<u>Sex</u>					
Male	19	6	34	22	27
Female	23	10	42	25	25
<u>Race</u>					
White	20	8	38	23	26
*Non-white	27	10	37	23	25
Black	30	10	39	24	26
<u>Age</u>					
Under 30	18	6	23	13	16
30-49	17	5	35	19	24
50+	27	13	51	35	34
<u>Education</u>					
College graduate	15	8	42	26	28
Other college	21	6	32	25	26
High school grad.	22	10	38	23	25
Less than h.s. grad.	26	7	41	19	25
<u>Region</u>					
East	21	8	39	22	24
Midwest	19	7	35	23	23
South	21	9	42	24	28
West	24	7	34	24	28
<u>Party ID</u>					
Republican	21	9	44	26	30
Democrat	26	10	42	26	32
Independent	17	5	31	19	19

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

	Situation of the Kurds in Northern Iraq	Reports About the Condition of the U.S. Economy	Alleged Rape of a Young Woman at the Kennedy Family's Palm Beach Estate	President Bush's Heart Problem	Cyclone that Devastated Bangladesh
Excellent	27	6	7	39	23
Good	51	43	48	48	49
Only Fair	17	35	27	11	24
Poor	3	13	14	1	2
Don't know	2	3	4	1	2
	----	----	----	----	----
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

PRESS PERFORMANCE

	JAN <u>1990</u>	FEB <u>1990</u>	MAR <u>1990</u>	APR <u>1990</u>	MAY <u>1990</u>	JUNE <u>1990</u>
Excellent	33	23	26	23	28	25
Good	48	50	48	54	49	51
Only Fair	14	19	20	16	17	18
Poor	3	5	4	4	5	4
Don't Know	2	3	2	3	1	2
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	JULY <u>1990</u>	AUG <u>1990</u>	SEPT <u>1990</u>	OCT. <u>1990</u>	NOV. <u>1990</u>
Excellent	21	30	33	24	23
Good	50	48	46	48	47
Only Fair	21	14	13	18	20
Poor	6	6	5	8	7
Don't Know	2	2	3	2	3
	---	---	---	---	---
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

CONTINUED...

...CONTINUED

	JAN <u>1991</u>	MAY <u>1991</u>
Excellent	27	23
Good	48	47
Only Fair	18	21
Poor	5	7
Don't Know	2	2
	---	---
	100%	100%

Question: *In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.11); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?*

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted among 1,206 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period May 16 - 19, 1991. 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. The sample was divided into two random halves (Form I - 603 interviews; Form II - 603 interviews). The sampling error for results of questions based on Form I *or* Form II *only* is plus or minus 4 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 1991
May 16 - 19, 1991
N=1,206

Q. 2 Do you happen to read any daily newspaper or newspapers regularly?

70 Yes

30 No

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

Q. 3 Do you happen to watch any TV news programs regularly, or not?

84 Yes

16 No

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

Q. 4 Do you listen to the news on the radio regularly or not?

53 Yes

47 No

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

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.5 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)**

- 11 OTHER (SPECIFY)
- 24 DON'T KNOW
- * REFUSED
- 4 NONE

<u>International Stories</u>	47
The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them	15
Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union	*
The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh	10
Earthquake in El Salvador	1
Tension between U.S. and Iraq	6
Baker's Mideast trip	5
Mexican free trade talks	*
Troops coming home/End of war	10
<u>Domestic Stories</u>	14
Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips	*
Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	2
President Bush's educational reform plan	1
The alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate	1
The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan	0
President Bush's heart problems	9
Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President	$\frac{1}{100}$

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

Q.6 Do you happen to know who Boris Yeltsin is?

1	Yes ----->	(IF "YES" ASK:) Who is he? (DO NOT READ)	<u>6/90</u>
2	No	34 President of Russia, Soviet leader, etc	<u>20</u>
9	Don't know	66 Incorrect answer	80
		<u>0</u> Don't know	<u>0</u>
		100	100

Q.7 Do you happen to know who William Kennedy Smith is?

1	Yes ----->	(IF "YES" ASK:) Who is he? (DO NOT READ)	
2	No	75 Kennedy nephew, accused of rape,	
9	Don't know	25 Incorrect answer	
		<u>0</u> Don't know	
		100	

Q.8 Frank Sinatra has been in the news a lot recently do you happen to know why?

1	Yes ----->	(IF "YES" ASK:) Why? (DO NOT READ)	
2	No	30 Relationship with Nancy Reagan	
9	Don't know	70 Incorrect answer	
		<u>0</u> Don't know	
		100	

Q. 9 Can you recall the names of any Democrats who have been mentioned lately as possible presidential candidates for 1992?

30 Yes

65 No S)))))))))
/Q GO TO Q. 10

5
100 Don't know S-

IF ANSWERED '1' YES, TO Q. 9 ASK:

Q. 9a Who?

7 Paul Tsongas

9 Mario Cuomo

5 Albert Gore

3 Douglas Wilder

2 Richard Gephardt

1 Jay Rockefeller

1 Jesse Jackson

1 Ted Kennedy

1 Lloyd Bentsen

7 Other (SPECIFY _____)

24 Net - Could name a candidate

Q.10 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. The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them	36	43	13	7	1=100
b. Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips	24	33	23	19	1=100
c. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	33	37	18	11	1=100
d. President Bush's educational reform plan	14	25	33	27	1=100
e. Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union	14	34	29	21	2=100
f. The alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate	21	42	25	11	1=100
g. The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan	8	22	32	37	1=100
h. President Bush's heart problems	38	42	14	5	1=100
i. The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh	23	36	23	17	1=100
j. Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President	26	32	25	16	1=100

Q.11 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. The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them	24
b. Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips	2
c. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	8
d. President Bush's educational reform plan	3
e. Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union	2
f. The alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate	15
g. The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan	2
h. President Bush's heart problems	22
i. The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh	9
j. Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President	3
CAN'T SAY	<u>10</u> 100

Q.12 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. The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them	4
b. Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips	3
c. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	1
d. President Bush's educational reform plan	1
e. Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union	1
f. The alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate	45
g. The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan	30
h. President Bush's heart problems	13
i. The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh	2
j. Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President	12
None	8
CAN'T SAY	15

IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q. 11, SKIP TO Q. 14

Q. 13 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q. 11); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

STORIES FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY:

		<u>Situation of the Kurds in Northern Iraq</u>	<u>Reports About the Condition of the U.S. Economy</u>	<u>Alleged Rape of a Young Woman at the Kennedy Family's Palm Beach Estate</u>	<u>President Bush's Heart Problem</u>	<u>Cyclone that Devastated Bangladesh</u>
23	Excellent	27	6	7	39	23
47	Good	51	43	48	48	49
21	Only Fair	17	35	27	11	24
7	Poor	3	13	14	1	2
$\frac{2}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{2}{100}$	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{1}{100}$	$\frac{2}{100}$
	SAMPLE SIZE	(279)	(106)	(164)	(268)	(112)

ASK ALL:

Q. 14 In your opinion, which TV network has been doing the best job of covering the news lately - ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN?

- 18 ABC
- 13 CBS
- 14 NBC
- 41 CNN
- $\frac{14}{100}$ Don't know

Q. 15 In general, do you think news organizations pay too much attention to good news, too much attention to bad news, or do they mostly report the kinds of stories they should be covering?

2	News organizations pay too much attention to good news	$\frac{8}{89}$ 3	$\frac{6}{85}$ 1
54	News organizations pay too much attention to bad news	64	60
37	Mostly report the kinds of stories they should be covering	30	35
$\frac{7}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$

Q. 16 Do you feel news organizations often invade people's privacy or do they generally respect people's privacy?

72	Invade people's privacy	$\frac{8}{89}$ 73	$\frac{6}{85}$ 73
22	Respect people's privacy	23	21
$\frac{6}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{4}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$

Q. 17 How responsibly do you think news organizations cover stories about the personal and ethical behavior of politicians? Do you think they cover them very responsibly, fairly responsibly, not very responsibly, or not at all responsibly?

12	Very responsibly	$\frac{8}{89}$ 12
52	Fairly responsibly	56
23	Not very responsibly	23
8	Not at all responsibly	7
$\frac{5}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{2}{100}$

On another subject....

Q. 18a Have you ever heard of the phrase "politically correct"?

48 Yes

49 No S)))))))))
/Q GO TO Q. 19

$\frac{3}{100}$ Don't knowS))-

IF ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q. 18A ASK:

Q. 18b Can you tell me what it means?

14 Being sensitive to political and social conventions,
controversy about free speech on college campuses

50 Other answers

$\frac{36}{100}$ Don't know

Q. 19 What's your impression of how many people were killed by the cyclone that struck Bangladesh? Was it... (READ CHOICES 1-4)

5 Around 1,500

16 Around 15,000

53 Around 150,000

6 Around 1,500,000

$\frac{20}{100}$ Don't know

Q. 20 Do you think that news organizations have been fair or unfair to Dan Quayle in their coverage of him?

33 Fair $\frac{9}{88}$
39

55 Unfair 55

$\frac{12}{100}$ Don't Know $\frac{6}{100}$

FORM 1

Q. 21a A number of news organizations revealed the name of a young woman who said that she had been raped by a Kennedy family member at the family's Palm Beach estate, after returning there following a night of dancing and drinking at local night spots. Do you approve or disapprove of news organization's revealing this woman's name in their accounts of the story?

25 Approve

70 Disapprove

$\frac{5}{100}$ Don't know

FORM 2

Q. 21b A number of news organizations revealed the name of a young woman who said that she had been raped by a Kennedy family member at the family's Palm Beach estate. Do you approve or disapprove of news organization's revealing this woman's name in their accounts of the story?

24 Approve

68 Disapprove

$\frac{8}{100}$ Don't know

Q. 22a Do you think news organizations revealed this woman's name to show that society does not attach shame to the victim of rape OR because they thought by revealing her name they would attract more readers or a larger audience?

9 Show society does not attach shame

80 Attract audience - **GO TO Q. 22b**

$\frac{11}{100}$ Don't know

IF ANSWERED '2' ATTRACT AUDIENCE IN Q.22A ASK:

Q.22b Do you think that these news organizations had any interest in showing that society does not attach shame to the victim of rape or do you think they were only interested in attracting a large audience?

BASED ON TOTAL SAMPLE

6 Had some interest in showing
 71 Only interested in audience
3 Don't Know
 100

Q.25 I'd like your impression about some positions that the Bush Administration has taken on issues... As I read from a list tell me if you think President Bush favors or opposes this position...
(AFTER EACH PHRASE REPEAT ... DO YOU THINK PRESIDENT BUSH FAVORS OR OPPOSES THIS POSITION) (ROTATE)

		PRESIDENT BUSH...		
		<u>Favors</u>	<u>Opposes</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a.	Reducing the tax on gains made from long term investments	50	27	23 = 100
b.	Requiring that students take nation wide competency tests	72	9	19 = 100
c.	Allowing parents to choose the schools their children attend through a voucher system	54	22	24 = 100
d.	Increasing import taxes on goods coming into the country from Mexico	38	40	22 = 100
e.	Making mandatory a seven day waiting period for a hand gun purchase	63	28	9 = 100
f.	Supporting strong energy conservation measures	65	19	16 = 100

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES (1986 - 1991)

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)
- 67 War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)
- 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)
- 59 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)
- 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 The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)
- 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 Videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an auto chase (March 91)
- 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 PRESIDENT BUSH'S HEART PROBLEM (MAY 91)**
- 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 SITUATION OF THE KURDS IN NORTHERN IRAQ AND ALLIED ATTEMPTS TO HELP THEM (MAY 91)**

- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (March 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 91)
- 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 Civil war in Iraq between Shiite Iraqis and forces loyal to Saddam Hussein (March 91)
- 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 REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (MAY 91)**
- 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)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

- 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 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 CONCERNS ABOUT DAN QUAYLE'S ABILITY TO SERVE AS PRESIDENT (MAY 91)**
- 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 CHARGES THAT WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF USED MILITARY AIRPLANES FOR PERSONAL TRIPS (MAY 91)**
- 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 CYCLONE THAT DEVASTATED BANGLADESH (MAY 91)**
- 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 Congressional hearings about U.S. Persian Gulf policy (Jan 91)
- 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)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
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- 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 **ALLEGED RAPE OF A YOUNG WOMAN AT THE KENNEDY FAMILY'S PALM BEACH ESTATE (MAY 91)**
- 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)
- 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 Mikhail Gorbachev's political problems in the Soviet Union (March 91)
- 20 Resignation of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the election of her successor (Jan 91)
- 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)

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- 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 Resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (Jan 91)
- 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 **PRESIDENT BUSH'S EDUCATIONAL REFORM PLAN (MAY 91)**
- 14 **POLITICAL UNREST AND THE WORSENING ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE SOVIET UNION (MAY 91)**
- 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 U.S. Department of Education prohibition of racially based college scholarships (Jan 91)
- 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 The findings of the committee that investigated five senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (March 91)
- 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 Purchase of entertainment giant, MCA by the Japanese consumer electronics company, Matsushita (Jan 91)
- 9 The investigation of five U.S. Senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (Jan 91)
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)

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- 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 RELEASE OF THE KITTY KELLEY BIOGRAPHY OF NANCY REAGAN (MAY 91)**
- 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 William Bennett's change of mind about heading the Republican National Committee (Jan 91)
- 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)