

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The People, The Press & Politics
Campaign '92:
Air Wars

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PUBLIC TUNES BUSH OUT

George Bush is losing the air wars to challengers Bill Clinton and Ross Perot. While the President may be getting as much media coverage and buying as much advertising as his rivals, voters this past week say they have heard most about Clinton and Perot.

A *Times Mirror Center* nationwide survey of 796 registered voters conducted October 2-6 found 33% reporting that they had heard most about Clinton in the media, 33% about Perot and only 18% said they had heard most about Bush on TV, radio and in the newspapers.

Bush's failure to register with the electorate this past week is underscored by the fact that even among Republicans more say they have been hearing about Perot (38%) or Clinton (27%) than Bush (21%). Perhaps more significantly, the President is also losing the air wars in the acknowledged battleground states¹. In these states, taken as a whole, 37% say they have heard most about Perot, 27% Clinton and 23% Bush.

The current findings reflect the impact of Ross Perot's re-entry into the race. A week earlier (polling Sept. 25-29) 40% of voters said they had heard most about Bill Clinton, 29% George Bush and only 19% mentioned Ross Perot at a time when a great deal of reporting focused on when and whether the billionaire businessman would rejoin the race.

Perot Adds Detractors

Although voters this past week say they have been hearing more about Ross Perot, they also say they have been liking him less. Seventeen percent of Times Mirror's sample volunteered that in the past few days they had come to have a *less favorable* opinion of Perot, 12% made these observations about Bush and 9% Clinton.

Clinton offset this percentage with 9% of voters who said they had come to have a *more favorable* opinion of the Democratic candidate in the past few days. There were not comparable offsets for either Perot or Bush. Just 1% said that they had become more positive about Perot and 3% for Bush.

Again the President does not appear to be helping himself in the battleground states -2% volunteered they had come to have a more favorable opinion of Bush in the past few days, while 12% said they had become less favorable. Clinton scored 11% more favorable and 10% less favorable in these states as a whole.

Clinton Ads Get Better Voter Reviews

Two in three American voters say they have seen ads for George Bush (68%) and Bill Clinton (64%) in the past week. Voters who report exposure to the political commercials judge Clinton's commercials to be more truthful and more convincing than do those exposed to Bush commercials. But neither camp's commercials are extolled by voters.

¹ New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Michigan, Florida, and Texas.

A majority of voters (51%) exposed to Clinton's commercials think they are basically truthful, while 35% think they are not. However, in Bush's case most (50%) feel the commercials are *not truthful* and only 38% thinks they are "all in all" telling the truth.

These findings mirror the grades voters gave the candidates' commercials a week ago. In the Sept 25-29 survey voters who said they had seen the ads graded Clinton's commercials a C and Bush's commercials a C- as to presenting convincing reasons to vote for the candidates. In that poll as many as 31% gave Bush's ads a flunking grade or "F", while 16% so graded Clinton's commercials. Conversely, relatively few voters gave "A" or "B" grades to Bush's commercials (25%) or to Clinton's (46%).

Clinton's commercials achieved higher than average penetration among men, middle aged voters, and among Midwesterners. Similarly, these same groups were more apt than others to report having seen Bush's ads in the past week.

CANDIDATE AWARENESS

(Which candidate heard most about in last week)

Oct. 2-6, 1992

	<u><i>BUSH</i></u>	<u><i>CLINTON</i></u>	<u><i>PEROT</i></u>	<u><i>N</i></u>
<i>TOTAL</i>	18	33	33	(796)
<i>SEX</i>				
Male	18	33	36	(402)
Female	19	33	30	(394)
<i>AGE</i>				
18-34	16	35	45	(256)
35-44	19	44	29	(219)
45-54	18	30	37	(130)
55-64	22	35	21	(77)
65+	21	19	22	(99)
<i>REGION</i>				
East	20	37	33	(157)
Midwest	16	32	34	(209)
South	22	36	29	(264)
West	15	25	39	(166)
Battleground States ²	23	27	37	(250)
<i>PARTY ID</i>				
Republican	21	27	38	(256)
Democrat	21	42	27	(249)
Independent	15	32	37	(259)
<i>RACE</i>				
White	18	29	36	(667)
Black	20	50	17	(82)

²New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas and Florida.

TRUTHFULNESS OF CLINTON ADS BY DEMOGRAPHICS

	<i><u>Seen Clinton Ads In Past Few Days</u></i>	<i><u>Clinton Ads</u></i>	
		<i><u>Truthful</u></i>	<i><u>Not Truthful</u></i>
TOTAL	64	51	35
SEX			
Male	70	53	37
Female	58	49	33
AGE			
18-34	55	55	40
35-44	63	51	34
45-54	71	56	32
55-64	76	44	38
65+	66	48	33
REGION			
East	71	51	33
Midwest	72	53	35
South	65	51	33
West	49	48	41
Battleground States ³	71	58	32
PARTY ID			
Republican	60	31	52
Democrat	71	68	19
Independent	62	50	40
RACE			
White	64	47	39
Black	67	70	18

³ New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas & Florida

TRUTHFULNESS OF BUSH ADS BY DEMOGRAPHICS

	<i><u>Seen Bush Ads In Past Few Days</u></i>	<i>Bush Ads</i>	
		<i><u>Truthful</u></i>	<i><u>Not Truthful</u></i>
TOTAL	68	38	50
SEX			
Male	73	39	51
Female	62	36	50
AGE			
18-34	60	46	48
35-44	65	38	52
45-54	83	36	51
55-64	75	28	58
65+	68	34	50
REGION			
East	67	43	48
Midwest	77	38	50
South	67	34	54
West	59	39	48
Battleground States ⁴	75	38	54
PARTY ID			
Republican	64	70	20
Democrat	74	18	73
Independent	65	31	57
RACE			
White	68	41	48
Black	64	21	64

⁴ New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas & Florida

Survey Methodology

The survey results are based on telephone interviews of 784 registered voters from a nationwide survey of adults 18 years and older conducted September 25-29, 1992 and of 796 registered voters from a nationwide survey of adults 18 years and older conducted October 2-6, 1992.

For results based on either sample of registered voters, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects 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 CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
 CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING SURVEY
 September 25-29, 1992 (N=784)
 October 2-6, 1992 (N=796)

INTRODUCTION: Hello, we are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and tv stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?)

MY FIRST QUESTION IS...

Q.1 Apart from whom you support, which presidential candidate have you heard the most about in the last week or so in newspapers, on television or on radio? (DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS)

<u>Oct. 2-6:</u>	<u>Sept. 25-29:</u>
18 George Bush	29
33 Bill Clinton	40
33 Ross Perot	19
6 None	6
<u>10</u> DK/NA	<u>6</u>
100 (N=796)	100 (N=784)

Q2. In the past few days have you come to have a more favorable opinion of any of the candidates or haven't your opinions of the candidates changed lately?

IF MORE FAVORABLE ASK:

Q2a. Which candidate do you have a more favorable opinion of?

<u>Oct. 2-6:</u>	
14	Yes, more favorable
3	George Bush
9	Bill Clinton
1	Ross Perot
1	DK/NA
83	Not changed
<u>3</u>	Don't know/NA
100	

Q3. In the past few days have you come to have a less favorable opinion of any of the candidates or not?

IF LESS FAVORABLE ASK:

Q3a. Which candidate do you have a less favorable opinion of?

Oct. 2-6:

40 Yes, less favorable

12 George Bush

9 Bill Clinton

17 Ross Perot

2 DK/NA

58 Not changed

$\frac{2}{100}$ Don't know/NA

Q.4 In the past few days have you seen any television commercials on behalf of **George Bush's** candidacy?...Only tell me "yes" if you have seen paid commercials for Bush on tv in the past few days?

Q4a. All in all, do you think that George Bush's commercials are truthful or not?

Oct. 2-6:

68 Yes

38 Truthful

50 Not truthful

$\frac{12}{100}$ Don't know/NA

30 No

$\frac{2}{100}$ DK

Q.5 So far, have you seen any television commercials on behalf of George Bush's candidacy, or not?

Sept. 25-29:

78 Yes, have seen tv commercials

21 No, have not seen

$\frac{1}{100}$ Don't know

Q.5a What grade would you give these commercials as being a convincing reason to vote for George Bush? Would you grade them A, B, C, D or Flunk?

Sept. 25-29:

9 A

16 B

29 C

13 D

31 F

$\frac{2}{100}$ Don't know/NA
(N=620)
(Mean of C-)

Q6. In the past few days have you seen any television commercials on behalf of **Bill Clinton's** candidacy?...Only tell me "yes" if you have seen paid commercials for Clinton on tv in the past few days?

Q6a. All in all, do you think that Bill Clinton's commercials are truthful or not

Oct. 2-6:

64 Yes

51 Truthful

35 Not truthful

$\frac{14}{100}$ Don't know/NA

34 No

$\frac{2}{100}$ DK

Q.7 So far, have you seen any television commercials on behalf of Bill Clinton's candidacy, or not?

Sept. 25-29:

75 Yes, have seen tv commercials

24 No, have not seen

$\frac{1}{100}$ Don't know

Q. 7a What grade would you give these commercials as being a convincing reason to vote for Bill Clinton? Would you grade them A, B, C, D, or Flunk?

Sept. 25-29:

16 A

30 B

27 C

8 D

16 F

$\frac{3}{100}$ Don't know/NA
(N=591)
(Mean of C)

Q. 8 Do you think there is a chance that if George Bush is re-elected that conditions in this country will get better or don't you think so?

Sept. 25-29:

29 Yes, a chance

64 No chance

$\frac{7}{100}$ Don't know/NA