

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Donald S. Kellermann, Director
Andrew Kohut, Director of Surveys
Carol Bowman, Research Director
Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press
202/293-3126

Air Wars Score Card 3 - October 22, 1992
ONE IN THREE FLUNK BUSH ADS

A *Times Mirror Center* survey conducted October 14-18 reveals that the American electorate continues to react more negatively to George Bush's campaign commercials than to those of each of his rivals. A majority of voters who say they have seen Bush commercials in the past week rate them poorly - 34% give them an "F" grade for presenting a convincing reason to vote for the President, and another 17% grade them a "D". Only 5% give Bush's paid advertising an "A" grade, and 21% give it a "B".

Many more voters who have seen Clinton and Perot ads grade them positively. A majority (52%) give the Clinton commercials high marks. Seventeen percent say Clinton's campaign advertising rates an "A" grade and 35% rate them "B". Similarly, 19% of recent viewers of Perot's ads grade them "A", and 28% "B". Only 22% gave Clinton's commercials a "D" or "F", while 23% rated Perot's paid television "D" or "F". It should be noted that Clinton's commercials are playing particularly well to voters who have not completed high school while Perot's advertising is appealing at a somewhat higher level to better educated voters. 50% of college graduates give the Clinton advertisements an "A" or "B" grade, while 71% of voters who have not completed high school give them the same high grades. In Perot's case, 59% of college graduates give his paid messages an "A" or "B", but only 37% of those with less than a high school diploma give him those high marks.

"C" is the average grade given by voters who say they have seen Clinton and Perot commercials in the past week. On average, Bush's commercials are graded a "C-" by recent viewers.

The Bush campaign's difficulties are also underscored by Ross Perot's surge into the public consciousness. When asked which presidential candidate voters have heard most about in newspapers, television or radio during this past week, Bill Clinton was named by 39% of the public, Ross Perot by 28% and George Bush by 14%. The pattern of response has been the same since the first presidential debate.

Bush's commercials fail even to get enthusiastic grades from voters who identify with the Republican party. Just 52% of Republicans graded Bush's commercials "A" or "B". In contrast, 70% of Democrats gave Clinton commercials high grades and 60% of Independents gave Perot's ads an "A" or "B" grade.

High grades from partisan audiences notwithstanding, most voters say they are learning more about the candidates from news reports than from paid advertisements. By a 65% to 18% margin voters say they are getting a better idea of where candidates stand on issues from news reports rather than from advertisements. And by a 63% to 23% margin voters say they are learning more about what the candidates are like personally from the news than from the ads.

Survey Methodology

The survey results are based on telephone interviews of 802 registered voters from a nationwide survey of adults 18 years and older conducted October 14-18, 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
 October 14-18, 1992
 N=802

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)

| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Oct. <u>2-6</u> | Sept. <u>25-29</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| George Bush | 14 | 16 | 18 | 29 |
| Bill Clinton | 39 | 37 | 33 | 40 |
| Ross Perot | 28 | 31 | 33 | 19 |
| Other/Undecided | <u>19</u> | <u>16</u> | <u>16</u> | <u>12</u> |
| | 100 (802) | 100 (826) | 100 (796) | 100 (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?

| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Oct. <u>2-6</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Yes, more favorable | 32 | 21 | 14 |
| George Bush | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Bill Clinton | 17 | 8 | 9 |
| Ross Perot | 9 | 9 | 1 |
| DK/NA | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Not changed | 66 | 77 | 83 |
| Don't know/NA | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>3</u> 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. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Oct. <u>2-6</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Yes, less favorable | 49 | 41 | 40 |
| George Bush | 24 | 18 | 12 |
| Bill Clinton | 14 | 12 | 9 |
| Ross Perot | 9 | 9 | 17 |
| DK/NA | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Not changed | 49 | 57 | 58 |
| Don't know/NA | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 |

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?

| | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Oct. <u>2-6</u> |
| Yes | 60 | 66 | 68 |
| No | 38 | 32 | 30 |
| DK | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 |

Q. 5 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?

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Sept. <u>25-29</u> |
| A | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| B | 21 | 17 | 16 |
| C | 21 | 26 | 29 |
| D | 17 | 13 | 13 |
| F | 34 | 32 | 31 |
| Don' t know/NA | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>5</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 |
| | (510) | (563) | (620) |

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?

| | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Oct. <u>2-6</u> |
| Yes | 57 | 59 | 64 |
| No | 40 | 39 | 34 |
| DK | <u>3</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 | <u>2</u> 100 |

Q.7 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?

| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> | Oct. <u>9-13</u> | Sept. <u>25-29</u> |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| A | 17 | 15 | 16 |
| B | 35 | 25 | 30 |
| C | 24 | 25 | 27 |
| D | 8 | 12 | 8 |
| F | 14 | 19 | 16 |
| Don' t know/NA | <u>1</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | (472) | (500) | (591) |

Q.8 In the past few days have you seen any television commercials on behalf of **Ross Perot's** candidacy?...Only tell me "yes" if you have seen paid commercials for Perot on tv in the past few days?

| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> |
|-----|----------------------|
| Yes | 62 |
| No | 37 |
| DK | <u>1</u> |
| | 100 |

Q.9 What grade would you give these commercials as being a convincing reason to vote for Ross Perot? Would you grade them A, B, C, D, or Flunk?

| | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> |
| A | 19 |
| B | 28 |
| C | 26 |
| D | 11 |
| F | 12 |
| Don't know/NA | <u>4</u> |
| | 100 (504) |

Q.10 In this campaign, which is giving you a better idea of where the candidates stand on issues?

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> |
| News reports on TV | 65 |
| The candidates TV commercials | 18 |
| Neither | 13 |
| Don't know/NA | <u>4</u> |
| | 100 |

Q.11 In this campaign, which is giving you a better idea of what the candidates are like personally?

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Oct. <u>14-18</u> |
| News reports on TV | 63 |
| The candidates TV commercials | 23 |
| Neither | 9 |
| Don't know/NA | <u>5</u> |
| | 100 |