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October 27, 1983

TO: Democratic Senators
FROM: Lloyd Bentsen *LB*
SUBJECT: Survey of the "Political Climate in America"

The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee is pleased to make available to you a copy of the recently completed research survey entitled "A Survey of the Political Climate in America", commissioned by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and conducted jointly by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc. and Lynch Research, Inc.

This survey, conducted over the period of August 12 through August 17, 1983, was designed to provide "in depth public opinion data about the current political climate in America, voters' attitudes toward key issues facing the nation, and the opportunities and challenges confronting Democrats in the United States Congress". (See p. iii of the Introduction to the survey report.) I would expect that this survey will be interesting and useful to Senate Democrats in the current session.

The survey was commissioned by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the use in this session in assessing and developing the party's legislative program. As your review of the Executive Summary and supporting tables will indicate, the survey is not an "election year poll". Nor can or should it be publicly presented as such. As a tool for your own legislative analysis and planning, however, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee is confident that this study will prove most valuable.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DETERMINED TO BE
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect. 3.3(c)
BY NARA RW DATE 4-22-11

A SURVEY OF THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN AMERICA

September 1983

Conducted for the

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

By

Lynch Research, Inc.
2828 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20007

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.
1724 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20009

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.

Introduction

This report presents the findings of a survey conducted for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee among a representative national sample of registered voters. The survey was undertaken by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., and Lynch Research, Inc., to provide in-depth public opinion data about the current political climate in America, the public's attitudes toward key issues facing the nation, and the opportunities and challenges confronting Democrats in the U.S. Congress.

The interviewing for this survey was conducted by trained members of the Hart Research field staff between August 12 and August 17, 1983, with a national cross section of 1032 registered voters. The interviews were administered by telephone; the average length of each interview was 30 minutes.

Respondents were selected by scientific random sampling techniques in a way that gave every registered voter living in a telephone-equipped household an equal chance of being interviewed. The sample was drawn on the basis of voting data from the 1980 election for president and 1980 U.S. Census data.

MONITION

This report is strictly confidential and is intended as a working document for the use of its sponsors. It is for strategic purposes only and not for release to the public or the press. In the event of any public release that distorts or misrepresents the survey findings, the survey research organizations contracted to undertake the study reserve the right to take appropriate corrective action.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF
KEY STRATEGIC FINDINGS

(1) More than at any other time in the past six years, the Democratic Party can look ahead to the next two years with confidence about its prospects for convincing the American people that the Democratic approach is the right one for the nation's future. In this regard, a number of key findings from the national survey conducted for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee are particularly relevant.

o The issues highest on the public's agenda all tend to be ones on which Americans perceive the Democrats to have more to offer than the Republicans: dealing with unemployment and the need for jobs, keeping world peace and limiting the nuclear arms race, helping the elderly and protecting programs essential to financial security in retirement years, and protecting the environment. It is clearly in the Democrats' best interests to keep the focus squarely on this set of issue concerns for the rest of this Congress.

o The Republican Party's perceived advantage on key fiscal policy issues has declined substantially in the past two years. While in 1981 the Republicans were seen as superior on the issue of balancing the federal budget by a margin of 55% to 13%, the G.O.P. edge on this issue now stands at just 33% to 22%. On the issue of taxes, the Republican advantage has eroded from a 43% to 23% margin in 1981 to a much narrower 36% to 32% margin today.

o When Americans voice their current preferences in the 1984 congressional elections, 43% favor the Democrats, 29% favor the Republicans, and 28% are undecided. This matches the thrust of the findings in the public polls.

(2) Americans do not necessarily reject the leadership Ronald Reagan has provided, but 1984 will be a decision about America's future rather than solely or simply a referendum on Mr. Reagan. And while the Democrats still have much to prove to the American people in this regard, the public is by no means ready to harness the country's future to the Reagan approach. By a margin of 55% to 37%, they concur that "Ronald Reagan may have been a logical choice for what we needed in 1980, but we need a different approach for the future." Indeed, Americans have a long list of concerns about the substance of the Reagan approach to America's future—including doubts about his defense spending policies and ability to protect the peace; doubts about his stewardship of the economy and commitment to getting the unemployed back to work; doubts about the effect of his social program cuts on the poor, the elderly, and education; and doubts about his commitment to equity and fair play. Moreover, the public has a largely positive view of the role congressional Democrats play in dealing with the shortcomings of the Reagan approach: by a margin of 56% to 25%, Americans say Democrats play a helpful role by acting as a balance to the Reagan Administration and keeping Ronald Reagan from going too far with his policy, rather than a harmful role by opposing the Reagan Administration too often and keeping Ronald Reagan from doing what he thinks is necessary.

The Democrats have made some headway in establishing theirs as the party of the future (when it comes to which party has leaders who look toward the future, Americans choose the Democrats by a 33% to 25% margin, reversing a narrow G.O.P. edge on this dimension from 1981). Congressional Democrats must keep their sights squarely fixed on the future and continue proving that they have the ideas, principles, and sound management ability

to put America on the road to a secure future.

(3) In approaching the rest of this Congress, Democrats have the potential to build their case on several themes that the public finds credible and attractive. These themes—relating to fairness and the party's commitment to opportunity for the average person, financial security and affordable health care for older Americans, and environmental protection—are the basic sources of appeal that Democrats should work hardest to reinforce. Let us take a closer look at the themes the survey results show to be most effective in rallying the public to the Democratic Party.

- o "The Democrats fight for the average working person and really have the goal of helping to see that the average person has a chance to get ahead." The Democrats must make 1984 about the well-being and future of middle-class America; by a margin of fully 56% to 21%, Americans see the Democrats as the better party when it comes to helping the middle class. Along these same lines, the equity-oriented theme that "the Republicans are tied to big business and the wealthy, while the Democrats care about working people and the needy," continues to have substantial appeal.

- o "The Democrats will do more to protect programs like Medicare from harmful budget cuts." Indeed, we see in the survey results the potential to make Medicare the same sort of cutting issue that Social Security was in 1982. There is widespread anxiety among Americans that "government programs like Medicare will not do enough to help the elderly afford decent health care."

- o "While James Watt is selling off our wilderness and the Reagan Administration is reducing regulations on pollution, the Democrats are committed to protecting the environment." A great many Americans voice high levels of concern that the government will not do enough to protect the environment and deal with hazardous wastes.

- o Finally, both women's issues and the Democratic

Party's commitment to civil rights emerge as helpful elements at a time when the Republican administration is thought to be ignoring these concerns. The "gender gap" shows up in these survey results as an ongoing fact of American political life—built primarily on perceptions of the administration's insensitivity to social needs, lack of equity, and lack of restraint in dealing with international conflicts.

(4) While the survey results indicate the Democrats can and should be on the offensive for the rest of this Congress, simply reinforcing the traditional strengths of the party's image will not be sufficient. The party still has much work to do to prove to the public that Democrats can provide the leadership and direction America needs. By a 53% to 37% margin, for example, Americans agree with the basic premise that "even though there may be some problems with the Reagan approach, the Democrats do not have responsible alternatives." Based on the public's own volunteered responses, three items stand out as most important for an aggressive effort to build confidence in the Democratic approach.

- o First and foremost, the Democrats must show the public that they have the ideas and the know-how to rebuild the American economy for the long-term—not just to provide help for the unemployed today, but to lead the country to a secure and sound economic future. Despite its edge on the jobs issue, the party has not yet convinced the public of its superiority in managing the economy overall (36% Republicans better, 34% Democrats better). As we shall see, the economic issue remains a wide open one for the Democrats.

- o Second, the Democrats have more work to do in proving their own fiscal responsibility and their own ability to manage government with discipline and balance. Just 31% of the public give congressional Democrats credit for representing sound budget policies and being fiscally responsible.

recovery is reaching far down into the mainstream of American life; by a margin of 65% to 30%, they agree that "the current economic recovery may be benefiting big business and the wealthy, but it doesn't really help the average working person." The key here is not to debate whether things are better than they were at the depths of the Reagan recession, but rather, to keep the focus on the future and whether the Reagan approach is going to mean a better economy over the long run for the average American.

The survey results indicate some consensus among the public about the type of policies needed to help the economy grow. It is a future-oriented agenda. First and foremost, the public wants to strengthen research and development programs to make America the leader in new technologies. Next, they want to get the budget in balance, because there is widespread fear that the huge deficits will cause a sharp increase in interest rates. Second, there is broad support for reestablishing America's trade position in the world—both by promoting U.S. exports and making America more competitive in world markets, and by restricting unfair imports that take away American jobs. Moreover, Americans see the need for more emphasis on job training. For the short run, there is a fair degree of support for creating new jobs now by funding needed public works projects.

The public's emphasis for a working economic policy is growth rather than simple equity. Having a fairer sharing of the economic sacrifices and benefits ranks relatively low among the policies Americans think will help ensure a strong economy. If the Democrats only represent the distribution side of the equation and not the growth side, they will risk giving the

economic issue to the Republicans. We also note that the public is not especially eager for an industrial policy that makes government an intrusive force in running the private sector economy.

On every specific economic policy tested in this survey, Americans tend to see Ronald Reagan as falling short.

(6) If the Democrats can improve their reputation for fiscal responsibility, there is a good opportunity to make the Reagan deficits a major point of attack against the Republicans. There is more educational work to be done in informing the public about the size of the Reagan deficits and about how they compare to the deficits of previous administrations. If this is done, the hallmark of Reagan's one claim to sound economic management can be destroyed. We recommend using the deficits issue as an economic issue—building the case that Ronald Reagan has not been able to make his own program work. We note that the public gives Reagan very little credit for lowering their taxes, suggesting that they have little sense of investment in this part of the Reagan program. The big Reagan defense budgets, rather than tax cuts that went too far, are seen as the real cause of the large Reagan deficits.

(7) In terms of defense and foreign policy, the central objective for the Democrats in Congress must be to keep the focus on the Reagan/Republican failure to do enough to ensure a safer world and to resolve conflicts before they become more serious. In short, the goal should be to put the spotlight more on what Reagan is failing to do than on preventing him from

casting the debate more affirmatively around his own initiatives.

Americans fear that the U.S. is drifting toward war in Central America, and there also is considerable concern that not enough is being done to eliminate the possibility of nuclear war.

While the public wants an affirmative policy to prevent war before it happens and to secure peace, they by no means want "peace at any price"—and the Democrats will be in trouble if they are seen in this context. On Central America, for example, opinion is extremely divided: 38% say the top goal of our policy should be doing whatever is necessary to prevent a communist takeover, and 42% say the top priority should be avoiding U.S. military involvement. At this stage, 42% support the Reagan Administration's Central American policy and 42% oppose it. We note that this poll was taken before the Soviets shot down the Korean airliner. The key point for the Democrats here is that they must hold the middle on the defense issue and show that Reagan is the one whose views about what should be done to ensure a safe, secure world for America are not balanced enough. The Democratic Party should be extremely careful about conceding the middle ground here by becoming perceived as risky in its own right because of a failure to show its commitment to meeting America's legitimate interests.

As a budget issue, the Democrats are on strong ground with defense. By a margin of 55% to 32%, Americans are more concerned that the United States will spend too much on defense and waste a lot of money that could be better used in other areas than they are about the risk of spending too little on national defense and not doing enough to deter the Russians.

Summary

Four years ago the political tides turned against the Democratic Party because the voters saw the Democrats as ineffective stewards of the nation's affairs, whose underlying agenda related to the past rather than the present or the future, and whose approach lacked the balance necessary to keep America on an even keel. For the rest of this Congress, Democrats have the opportunity to retake the offensive and reassert their leadership for the average American—to prove that they, rather than the Republicans, have the ideas, know-how, and commitment to deal with the challenges facing the nation and to move the country forward toward its fundamental goals.

In making their case to the public, congressional Democrats must demonstrate that their agenda is America's agenda—jobs and a strategy for long-term economic growth, a safe and secure world, a government that both recognizes the realities of its limits and understands its responsibilities in meeting the basic needs of the American people. There obviously is more than enough to criticize in the Reagan/Republican approach, but merely complaining about the status quo under the Republican Administration will not be sufficient to carry the day. The fundamental objective must be to speak to the public's fears and hopes for the future, and to identify the Democratic Party as the one that can provide the leadership to deal with them.

TABLES

A KEY TO THE SYMBOLS USED IN THESE TABLES

- (m) Multiple responses accepted; totals may be greater than 100%.
- * Less than one-half of one percent.
- @ Percentages calculated only on the basis of those respondents who expressed an opinion; "not sure" responses excluded from calculations.
- + Base too small to be statistically reliable.
- ++ Base too small to be statistically analyzed.
- (VOL) Volunteered response.
- NA Not applicable.

ATTITUDES TOWARD REELECTING RONALD REAGAN

	<u>Would Vote To Reelect</u> %	<u>Would Consider Someone Else</u> %	<u>Would Vote To Replace</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>13</u>
East	26	28	33	13
Midwest	26	25	35	14
South	32	30	26	12
West	30	23	36	11
Strong Democrats	6	25	57	12
Weak Democrats	14	33	42	11
Independents	23	28	27	22
Weak Republicans	48	29	10	13
Strong Republicans	73	12	9	6
Vote Democratic for Congress	10	30	51	9
Vote Republican for Congress	57	24	11	8
Undecided on vote for Congress	26	25	25	24
Men	32	27	29	12
Women	25	26	35	14
Working women	20	25	39	16
Age 18-24	22	44	25	9
Age 25-34	27	27	32	14
Age 35-49	29	23	38	10
Age 50-64	28	28	31	13
Age 65 and over	34	18	29	19

(cont'd)

ATTITUDES TOWARD REELECTING RONALD REAGAN

	Would Vote To Reelect <u>%</u>	Would Consider Someone Else <u>%</u>	Would Vote To Replace <u>%</u>	Not Sure <u>%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>13</u>
Professionals/executives	39	22	29	10
White collar/sales workers	30	27	30	13
Upper income				
blue collar workers	29	31	28	12
Lower income				
blue collar workers	16	31	37	16
Union households	18	25	45	12
Blacks	3	32	52	13
Hispanics +	23	26	40	11
Upper income workers	36	24	29	11
Upper middle income workers	30	30	31	9
Lower middle income workers	25	27	34	14
Lower income workers	18	29	36	17
Liberals	12	29	49	10
Moderates	25	29	30	16
Conservatives	45	22	21	12
<u>Attitudes toward Reagan's performance *</u>				
Strongly approve	73	15	4	8
Just somewhat approve	34	34	11	21
Strongly disapprove	1	18	77	4
Just somewhat disapprove	6	34	48	12
Not sure	6	46	24	24

* Cross-tabulated with Q.3.

REACTIONS TO A SELECTED STATEMENT

"Ronald Reagan may have been a logical choice for what we needed in 1980, but we need a different approach for the future."

	<u>Agree</u> %	<u>Disagree</u> %	<u>Not-Sure</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>8</u>
Strong Democrats	81	12	7
Weak Democrats	71	23	6
Independents	50	35	15
Weak Republicans	33	59	8
Strong Republicans	19	76	5
Vote Democratic for Congress	76	18	6
Vote Republican for Congress	29	65	6
Undecided on vote for Congress	50	39	11
Swing on Reagan	62	24	14
Men	52	42	6
Women	59	32	9
Working women	61	31	8
Professionals/executives	44	46	10
White collar/sales workers	53	40	7
Upper income blue collar workers	52	36	12
Lower income blue collar workers	68	29	3
Retired	52	41	7
Union households	66	27	7
Blacks	78	18	4
Hispanics +	68	25	7

REACTIONS TO A SELECTED STATEMENT

"Even though there may be some problems with the Reagan approach, the Democrats do not have responsible alternatives."

	<u>Agree</u> %	<u>Disagree</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>10</u>
Strong Democrats	36	55	9
Weak Democrats	43	48	9
Independents	53	29	18
Weak Republicans	70	22	8
Strong Republicans	78	15	7
Vote Democratic for Congress	40	52	8
Vote Republican for Congress	73	20	7
Undecided on vote for Congress	54	32	14
Swing on Reagan	52	36	12
Men	58	34	8
Women	48	40	12
Age 18-24	43	52	5
Age 25-34	60	32	8
Age 35-49	57	34	9
Age 50-64	53	35	12
Age 65 and over	48	38	14
Professionals/executives	62	29	9
White collar/sales workers	54	39	7
Upper income blue collar workers	63	29	8
Lower income blue collar workers	46	42	12
Union households	50	43	7

KEY GROUP ANALYSIS: PREFERENCE IN A 1984 ELECTION FOR CONGRESS
BETWEEN A DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE AND A REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

	<u>Proportion of Total</u> %	<u>Democratic Candidate</u> %	<u>Republican Candidate</u> %	<u>Undecid</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Region</u>				
East	26	44	27	29
Midwest	29	40	27	33
South	26	42	35	23
West	19	49	28	23
Industrial Frostbelt	36	38	29	33
<u>Area</u>				
New England +	7	45	22	33
Industrial East	16	40	31	29
Industrial Midwest	20	37	27	36
Farm Belt	9	48	26	26
Southeast	18	43	34	23
Oil South	8	40	37	23
Pacific Coast	15	52	24	24
<u>Party Identification</u>				
Strong Democrats	22	82	5	13
Weak Democrats	27	62	13	25
Independents	16	27	20	53
Weak Republicans	22	13	55	32
Strong Republicans	13	6	75	19
<u>Ideology</u>				
Very liberal	8	70	10	20
Somewhat liberal	21	58	21	21
Moderate	33	42	27	31
Somewhat conservative	25	29	41	30
Very conservative	9	22	48	30

(cont'

KEY GROUP ANALYSIS: PREFERENCE IN A 1984 ELECTION FOR CONGRESS
BETWEEN A DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE AND A REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

	<u>Proportion of Total</u> %	<u>Democratic Candidate</u> %	<u>Republican Candidate</u> %	<u>Undec</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Race</u>				
Whites	85	39	32	29
Blacks	9	74	11	15
Hispanics +	5	57	16	27
<u>Sex</u>				
Men	50	42	31	27
Women	50	45	27	28
Working women	25	47	27	26
<u>Age</u>				
18-24	12	42	31	27
25-34	21	44	25	31
35-49	25	41	32	27
50-64	25	50	26	24
65 and over	17	38	34	28
<u>Non-Retired Income</u>				
Upper	18	38	36	26
Upper middle	17	41	32	27
Lower middle	21	47	27	26
Lower	17	51	19	30

(cont'

KEY GROUP ANALYSIS: PREFERENCE IN A 1984 ELECTION FOR CONGRESS
BETWEEN A DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE AND A REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

	Proportion Of Total Electorate %	Democratic Candidate %	Republican Candidate %	Undeci %
<u>All Voters</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Occupation</u>				
Professionals/executives	17	34	38	28
White collar/sales workers	23	41	29	30
Upper income blue collar workers	10	44	24	32
Lower income blue collar workers	18	52	26	22
Retired	18	43	31	26
<u>Labor Union Membership</u>				
Union households	28	55	20	25
Non-union households	72	39	33	28
<u>Religion</u>				
Protestants	53	43	33	24
Catholics	29	45	27	28
White Catholics	23	42	31	27
<u>Marital Status</u>				
Married	69	41	30	29
Single	31	47	28	25
<u>Reported Party of Current Congressional Representation In Respondent's District</u>				
Democratic	47	56	20	24
Republican	30	27	47	26
Not sure	23	38	26	36

(cont)

KEY GROUP ANALYSIS: PREFERENCE IN A 1984 ELECTION FOR CONGRESS
BETWEEN A DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE AND A REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

	<u>Proportion of Total</u> %	<u>Democratic Candidate</u> %	<u>Republican Candidate</u> %	<u>Undecid</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Issues Concern</u>				
Jobs	46	52	24	24
War	48	52	22	26
Environment	31	49	26	25
<u>Attitude Toward Reelecting Ronald Reagan</u>				
Would vote to reelect	28	16	59	25
Would consider someone else	27	48	26	26
Would vote to replace	32	68	10	22
Not sure	13	30	19	51
<u>Other Variables</u>				
Swing on Reagan	39	42	24	34
Doubts about both parties	33	46	22	32
Mixed on economy	38	46	27	27
Deficit target	30	49	25	26
Potential Democratic voters	30	-	47	53

DEGREE OF CONCERN THAT SELECTED EVENTS MIGHT OCCUR @

	Worry A Great Deal						Do Not Worry Much
	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	
Government programs like Medicare will not do enough to help the elderly afford decent health care	35	21	13	9	10	7	5
The U.S. is heading toward military involvement and war in Central America	29	22	18	10	9	6	6
The big government budget deficits will cause sharp increases in interest rates	24	22	21	15	11	4	3
The government will not do enough to protect the environment and deal with hazardous wastes	25	16	21	12	12	8	6
America is losing the economic competitive edge that made it number one in the world	21	21	20	13	12	8	5
Children growing up today will not be as well off economically as their parents	23	15	17	13	12	10	10
The cost of living in the next year will be higher than you and your family can afford	25	14	14	11	13	11	12
The arms race will get out of control and cause a nuclear war	23	15	13	12	12	12	13
There will be another bad recession and economic slowdown in the next year or so	15	15	20	13	15	11	11
America will not be strong enough to deal with the Russians and communist aggression	15	14	17	12	13	14	15
You or someone in your family will be unemployed in the next year	25	11	10	6	8	12	28

VOLUNTEERED MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FACING THE NATION (m)

	<u>Total</u> %
Jobs, unemployment, new industry	33
War, keep peace, nuclear arms race	18
Economy generally	17
Elderly	16
Environment, pollution, wilderness	12
Education, schools	11
Social Security	11
Health care, cost of health care	10
Budget deficit, balance budget	9
Foreign policy	9
Government spending, waste	7
Inflation, prices	7
Poverty, the poor	7
Taxes	7
Crime, drug abuse	6
Interest rates	6
Welfare abuse	6
Central America	5
Defense, need for a strong defense	5
Defense spending, <u>cut</u> defense budget	5
Women's rights	3
Abortion	2
Energy	2
Government corruption, scandals	2
Immigration, aliens	2
Race relations, civil rights	2
Housing costs	1
Morality	1
Farmers' problems	1
Other	4
None/not sure	3

COMPARATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF WHICH PARTY WOULD DO
A BETTER JOB ON SELECTED ISSUES @

	- - - August 1983 - - -			- - - November 1981 - - -		
	<u>Demo-</u> <u>crats</u> %	<u>Repub-</u> <u>licans</u> %	<u>Both/</u> <u>Neither</u> %	<u>Demo-</u> <u>crats</u> %	<u>Repub-</u> <u>licans</u> %	<u>Both/</u> <u>Neither</u> %
Helping the elderly *	63	12	25	63	11	26
Protecting the environment	51	11	38	51	11	38
Helping the middle class	56	21	23	NA	NA	NA
Making sure women are treated fairly in the job market	46	12	42	NA	NA	NA
Reducing unemployment	53	29	27	45	22	33
Putting a limit on the nuclear arms race	50	18	32	35	25	40
Strengthening our edu- cational system	32	14	54	47	14	39
Keeping world peace	35	23	42	31	22	47
Having leaders who look toward the future	33	25	42	30	32	38
Dealing with the situation in Central America	33	31	36	NA	NA	NA
Dealing with the economy	34	36	30	NA	NA	NA
Dealing with taxes *	32	36	32	23	43	34
Balancing the federal budget	22	33	45	13	55	32
Controlling inflation	27	46	27	19	44	37
Ensuring a strong * national defense	24	48	28	16	62	22

* Note difference in wording between 1983 and 1981 questions.

PERCEPTIONS OF WHICH PARTY WOULD DO A BETTER JOB ON A SELECTED ISSUE @

Reducing unemployment

	Democ- ratic Party <u>%</u>	Repub- lican Party <u>%</u>	Both About The Same <u>%</u>	Neither <u>%</u>	(Not Sure) <u>%</u>
<u>Total November 1981</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>(8)</u>
<u>Total August 1983</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>(7)</u>
Strong Democrats	84	2	11	3	(5)
Weak Democrats	66	8	15	11	(7)
Independents	44	15	21	20	(11)
Weak Republicans	28	37	20	15	(7)
Strong Republicans	25	55	15	5	(6)
Undecided on vote for Congress	46	18	19	17	(12)
Swing on Reagan	54	15	18	13	(9)
Age 18-24	48	18	25	9	(6)
Age 25-34	49	20	20	11	(7)
Age 35-49	51	24	14	11	(6)
Age 50-64	60	17	11	12	(7)
Age 65 and over	55	21	15	9	(10)
Professionals/executives	51	23	17	9	(6)
White collar/sales workers	49	24	16	11	(8)
Upper income blue collar workers	49	20	18	13	(6)
Lower income blue collar workers	54	16	17	13	(5)
Union households	62	10	16	12	(4)
Mixed on economy	52	16	19	13	(8)
Jobs concern	58	12	19	11	(6)
Potential Democratic voters	50	22	18	10	(7)

PERCEPTIONS OF WHICH PARTY WOULD DO A BETTER JOB ON A SELECTED ISSUE @

Dealing with the economy

	<u>Democ- ratic Party</u> <small>%</small>	<u>Repub- lican Party</u> <small>%</small>	<u>Both About The Same</u> <small>%</small>	<u>Neither</u> <small>%</small>	<u>(Not Sure)</u> <small>%</small>
<u>Total</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>(8)</u>
East	31	30	29	10	(8)
Midwest	37	34	15	14	(10)
South	36	42	16	6	(7)
West	31	39	20	10	(4)
Industrial Frostbelt	33	31	23	13	(8)
Strong Democrats	70	7	16	7	(5)
Weak Democrats	45	19	27	9	(9)
Independents	24	36	18	22	(13)
Weak Republicans	8	61	22	9	(7)
Strong Republicans	5	78	12	5	(4)
Undecided on vote for Congress	22	36	26	16	(16)
Swing on Reagan	32	29	27	12	(11)
Men	31	41	18	10	(4)
Women	38	30	22	10	(11)
Working women	36	29	23	12	(9)
Age 18-24	31	41	20	8	(4)
Age 25-34	27	39	23	11	(7)
Age 35-49	32	41	17	10	(7)
Age 50-64	44	28	18	10	(9)
Age 65 and over	38	31	23	8	(9)

(cont'd)

PERCEPTIONS OF WHICH PARTY WOULD DO A BETTER JOB ON A SELECTED ISSUE @

	<u>Democ- ratic Party</u> %	<u>Repub- lican Party</u> %	<u>Both About The Same</u> %	<u>Neither</u> %	<u>(Not Sure)</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>(8)</u>
Professionals/executives	23	56	14	7	(4)
White collar/sales workers	27	38	23	12	(8)
Upper income blue collar workers	34	36	18	12	(6)
Lower income blue collar workers	40	27	24	9	(8)
Retired	40	30	22	8	(9)
Union households	48	19	21	12	(5)
Blacks +	67	6	17	10	(10)
Hispanics +	52	17	24	7	(5)
Upper income workers	23	49	17	11	(4)
Upper middle income workers	30	44	16	10	(8)
Lower middle income workers	31	32	26	11	(4)
Lower income workers	48	24	20	8	(15)
Mixed on economy	34	33	22	11	(9)
Jobs concern	43	26	21	10	(8)

INDICATIONS OF WHETHER RESPONDENT IS SATISFIED
WITH THE CONDITION OF THE ECONOMY TODAY

	<u>Satisfied</u> %	<u>Not Satisfied</u> %	<u>Some Of Both (VOL)</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
East	29	63	8	-
Midwest	31	61	7	1
South	33	55	9	3
West	29	58	13	-
Industrial Frostbelt	29	61	9	1
Strong Democrats	14	79	5	2
Weak Democrats	24	65	10	1
Independents	29	58	11	2
Weak Republicans	45	45	9	1
Strong Republicans	51	37	11	1
Undecided on vote for Congress	28	60	11	1
Men	35	54	10	1
Women	26	64	8	2
Working women	25	66	9	-
Professionals/executives	49	42	9	-
White collar/sales workers	33	55	11	1
Upper income blue collar workers	25	65	10	-
Lower income blue collar workers	23	69	7	1
Retired	25	58	12	5
Upper income workers	42	45	12	1
Upper middle income workers	38	53	9	-
Lower middle income workers	26	65	8	1
Lower income workers	21	72	6	1

Q.15a.

STATEMENT ON THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION - SELECTED
AS CLOSEST TO RESPONDENT'S VIEW

Statement A: The current economic recovery is the start of a long-term period of growth leading to good economic times.

Statement B: The current economic recovery is just a temporary upturn that won't really solve our economic problems over the long run.

Statement C: There is no economic recovery taking place now and the economy is not getting any better.

	Statement	Statement	Statement	Depends	Not Sure
	--A-- %	--B-- %	--C-- %	(VOL) %	%
<u>Total</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
East	33	43	21	2	1
Midwest	41	37	18	3	1
South	39	33	21	3	4
West	39	41	15	2	3
Strong Democrats	15	42	38	2	3
Weak Democrats	28	50	19	1	2
Independents	37	42	15	3	3
Weak Republicans	59	27	9	2	3
Strong Republicans	70	24	4	2	-
Undecided on vote for Congress	39	38	18	3	2
Swing on Reagan	33	41	20	3	3
Men	42	38	15	3	2
Women	35	38	22	2	3
Professionals/executives	57	30	10	2	1
White collar/sales workers	44	41	12	2	1
Upper income blue collar workers	39	43	16	1	1
Lower income blue collar workers	26	39	30	2	3

(cont'd)

STATEMENT ON THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION SELECTED
AS CLOSEST TO RESPONDENT'S VIEW

	Statement <u>--A--</u> <u>%</u>	Statement <u>--B--</u> <u>%</u>	Statement <u>--C--</u> <u>%</u>	Depends (VOL) <u>%</u>	Not Sure <u>%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Blacks	19	30	46	1	4
Hispanics +	23	43	30	2	2
Upper income workers	55	32	10	2	1
Upper middle income workers	41	47	9	2	1
Lower middle income workers	32	43	22	2	1
Lower income workers	29	36	32	2	1
Jobs concern	28	44	24	2	2
Deficit target	31	42	24	1	2

PERCEPTIONS OF HOW MUCH CREDIT RONALD REAGAN DESERVES
FOR THE CURRENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY

	<u>Almost All</u> %	<u>A Major Share</u> %	<u>Just Part</u> %	<u>Very Little</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
<u>Total</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>2</u>
Strong Democrats	2	11	38	45	4
Weak Democrats	3	15	52	27	3
Independents	6	28	43	21	2
Weak Republicans	6	46	39	8	1
Strong Republicans	9	55	31	5	-
Vote Democratic for Congress	2	14	46	35	3
Vote Republican for Congress	7	49	36	8	-
Undecided on vote for Congress	5	29	41	22	3
Swing on Reagan	4	23	50	20	3
Men	6	32	39	22	1
Women	4	24	43	25	4
Professionals/executives	4	40	37	18	1
White collar/sales workers	4	32	41	22	1
Upper income blue collar workers	4	28	47	20	1
Lower income blue collar workers	3	19	49	26	3
Blacks	1	13	32	48	6
Hispanics +	2	19	50	25	4
Upper income workers	4	37	41	17	1
Upper middle income workers	3	34	40	22	1
Lower middle income workers	3	27	45	23	2
Lower income workers	5	17	50	25	3
Mixed on economy	4	26	51	17	2
Jobs concern	5	21	45	27	2

(cont'd)

PERCEPTIONS OF HOW MUCH CREDIT RONALD REAGAN DESERVES
FOR THE CURRENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY

	Almost <u>All</u> <u>%</u>	A Major <u>Share</u> <u>%</u>	Just <u>Part</u> <u>%</u>	Very <u>Little</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Not-Sure</u> <u>%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Attitudes toward current</u>					
<u>economic recovery *</u>					
Start of long-term growth	10	49	35	6	-
Temporary upturn	2	19	49	29	1
No recovery taking place	-	7	37	49	7

*Cross-tabulated with Q.15a.

PERCEPTIONS OF WHETHER SELECTED PROPOSALS WOULD HELP ENSURE A STRONG
ECONOMY, OR WOULD BE A STEP IN THE WRONG DIRECTION

	<u>Help A Lot</u> %	<u>Help Some</u> %	<u>No Difference</u> %	<u>Wrong Step</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
Strengthen research and development programs to make America the leader in new technologies	57	33	6	1	3
Balancing the federal budget	53	29	9	2	7
Promote U.S. exports and make America more competitive in the world market	49	39	5	3	4
Put restrictions on foreign imports that are taking away U.S. jobs	48	26	7	14	5
Create new jobs now by funding needed public works projects like repairing roads and bridges	48	36	8	6	2
Increase funding for job training	45	37	8	8	2
Have a fairer sharing of the economic sacrifices and benefits	35	38	10	4	13
Get government more involved in a working partnership with business and labor	28	28	11	27	6
Reduce taxes and regulations on business	23	39	12	19	7

INDICATIONS OF WHETHER FEDERAL TAXES PAID BY RESPONDENT AND HIS OR HER FAMILY
SINCE RONALD REAGAN BECAME PRESIDENT HAVE BEEN REDUCED AND, IF SO,
WHETHER REDUCTIONS HAVE HELPED RESPONDENT

	Stayed		- - -Reduced - - -		Not Sure %
	Increased %	The Same %	Helped A Lot %	Did Not Help Much %	
<u>Total</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>5</u>
Strong Democrats	52	27	4	10	7
Weak Democrats	43	36	4	13	4
Independents	36	35	5	17	7
Weak Republicans	35	39	7	14	5
Strong Republicans	33	33	13	17	4
Men	35	37	7	17	4
Women	48	32	4	10	6
Working women	46	36	2	12	4
Professionals/executives	34	36	10	17	3
White collar/sales workers	43	37	4	13	3
Upper income blue collar workers	50	31	4	13	2
Lower income blue collar workers	41	37	5	11	6
Upper income workers	37	34	9	17	3
Upper middle income workers	44	33	7	14	2
Lower middle income workers	43	36	4	13	4
Lower income workers	42	34	6	11	7

PREFERRED POLICY ON U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA ¹

	Stop Communism				Avoid U.S. Involvement	(Not Sure)
	<u>1</u> %	<u>2</u> %	<u>3</u> %	<u>4</u> %	<u>5</u> %	<u>%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>(13)</u>
Strong Democrats	21	7	18	13	41	(17)
Weak Democrats	16	12	21	18	33	(8)
Independents	24	14	19	17	26	(17)
Weak Republicans	28	24	22	15	11	(11)
Strong Republicans	34	22	19	9	16	(9)
Vote Democratic for Congress	17	11	20	17	35	(13)
Vote Republican for Congress	32	21	20	14	13	(9)
Undecided on vote for Congress	24	15	20	11	30	(16)
Men	29	18	17	15	21	(9)
Women	16	13	23	15	33	(16)
Age 18-24	22	14	18	23	23	(6)
Age 25-34	17	15	26	18	24	(8)
Age 35-49	25	17	20	11	27	(9)
Age 50-64	29	14	19	8	30	(16)
Age 65 and over	22	15	15	20	28	(23)
Professionals/executives	17	24	25	13	21	(9)
White collar/sales workers	22	14	20	16	28	(7)
Upper income blue collar workers	28	13	20	15	24	(10)
Lower income blue collar workers	30	11	18	13	28	(11)
Hispanics +	33	9	21	9	28	(9)

¹Based on a five-part scale on which "1" means doing whatever is necessary to prevent communists from taking over in Central America and "5" means avoiding U.S. military involvement in Central America.

INDICATIONS OF HOW CONVINCING RESPONDENT FINDS SELECTED
ARGUMENTS FOR HAVING A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN CONGRESS @

	<u>Very</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>Fairly</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>Not Too</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>Not At All</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>(Not</u> <u>Sure)</u> %
The Democrats will do more to protect programs like Medicare from harmful budget cuts	41	34	12	13	(4)
The Democrats are the party that will live up to our nation's commitment to civil rights and fair treatment for minorities	32	36	17	15	(5)
The Democrats fight for the average working person and really have the goal of helping to see that the average person has a chance to get ahead	34	33	18	15	(4)
While James Watt is selling off our wilderness and the Reagan Administration is reducing regulations on pollution, the Democrats are committed to protecting the environment	29	38	20	13	(7)
The Republicans are tied to big business and the wealthy, while the Democrats care about working people and the needy	38	27	17	18	(3)
The Democrats are more committed than the Republicans to programs for infant nutrition and child care	31	33	19	17	(12)
The Democrats are willing to make the investments we need to ensure a sound economic future for America—better schools, more research and development, and making America more competitive in the world economy	27	37	19	17	(5)

(cont'd)

INDICATIONS OF HOW CONVINCING RESPONDENT FINDS SELECTED
ARGUMENTS FOR HAVING A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN CONGRESS @

	<u>Very</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>Fairly</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>Not Too</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>Not At All</u> <u>Convincing</u> %	<u>(Not</u> <u>Sure)</u> %
The Republicans are not doing enough to deal with unemployment, and the Democrats are committed to getting people back to work	29	30	24	17	(3)
The Democrats stand for equal rights for women and, unlike the Reagan Republicans, will work to see that women get equal pay and equal job opportunities	23	36	25	16	(3)
The Reagan Republicans have gone too far with many of their policies and the Democrats provide the kind of balance we need in government	27	31	22	20	(5)
The Republican Party has proven it cannot get the budget deficits down; the Democrats have the right approach by reducing extravagant defense spending and stopping tax giveaways to the rich	28	28	22	22	(5)
At a time when the Reagan Administration is going overboard with its defense spending and arms build-up policy, the Democrats are working to control the arms race and making the world safer	22	33	23	22	(4)
The Democrats have a program for reducing the amount of money organized political action groups can contribute to candidates	19	36	25	20	(20)