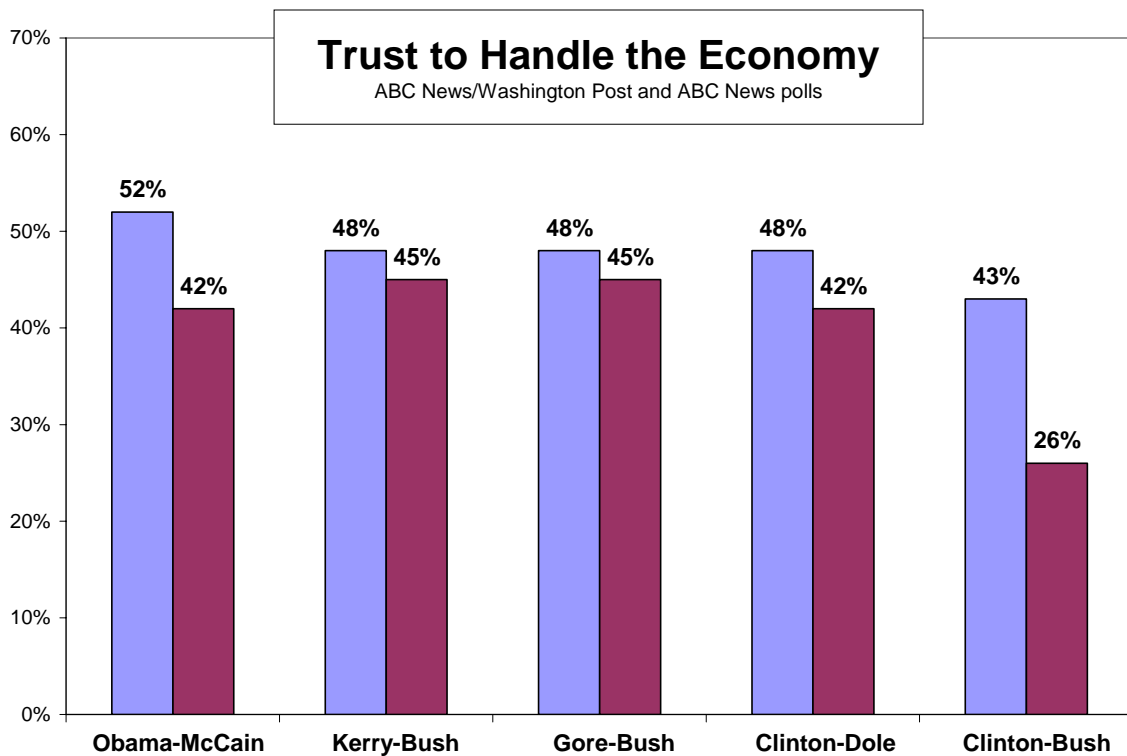


## **Obama's Support is Broadly Based; McCain Now -10 on the Economy**

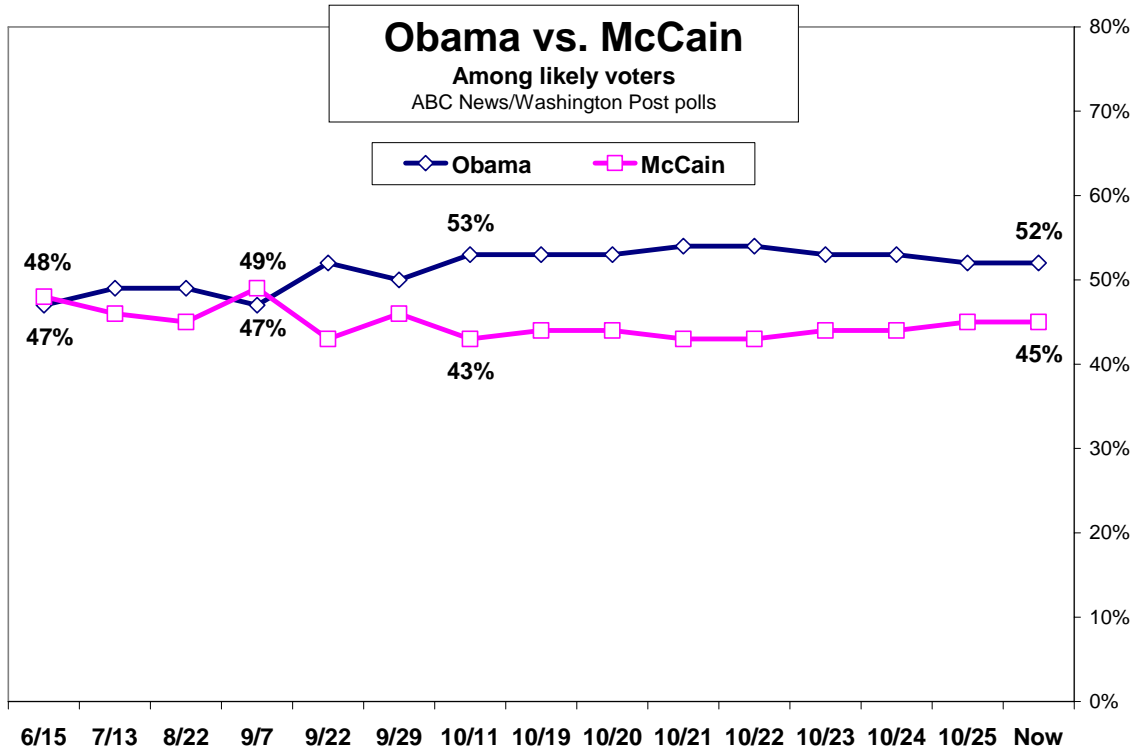
With a final full week of campaigning ahead, Barack Obama's grip on the key issue of the presidential race – the economy – has loosened slightly. Yet Obama's advantages are broadly based nonetheless, with higher support in a range of groups than either Al Gore or John Kerry mustered in 2000 or 2004.

In terms of economic distress the race most closely resembles 1992, when Bill Clinton went into Election Day with a 17-point lead in trust to handle the economy. Obama last week held an almost identical, 18-point advantage on the economy – but it's eased to 10 points in the latest ABC News/Washington Post tracking poll, its closest in a month.



That narrowing on the economy has occurred disproportionately among movable voters, the roughly one in 10 who say they haven't made up their minds for sure. But it also stands out among some of John McCain's core groups, such as married men and conservatives, reflecting more their return home than a shift in predispositions.

Indeed overall vote preferences, including among movables, have not followed, and the race remains essentially steady, with Obama leading McCain by 52-45 percent among likely voters. Obama's been at or above 50 percent, McCain no better than 46 percent, since mid-September in ABC/Post polls.



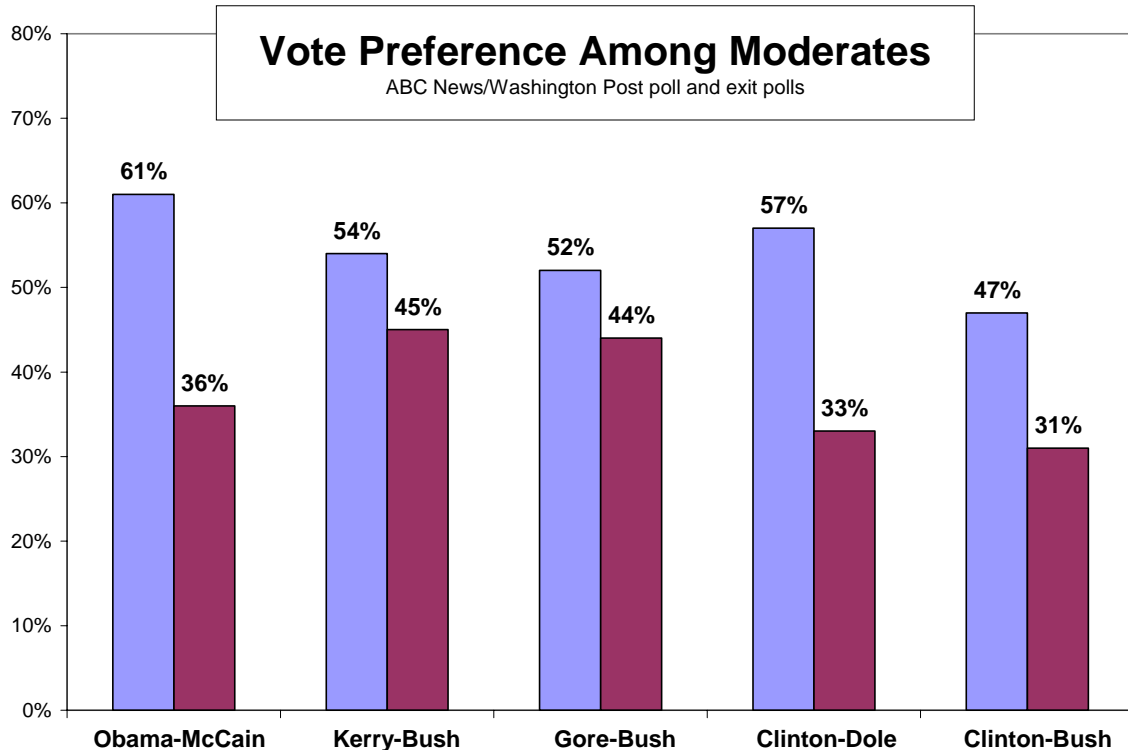
Even with a closer gap in trust to handle it, winning on the economy is a tall order for McCain: A steady majority, now 53 percent, calls it the single most important issue in their vote, and those economy voters continue to favor Obama broadly, now by 60-37 percent.

Obama likewise leads, by 71-26 percent in aggregate tracking data, among voters most concerned about the next closest issue, health care, cited by 10 percent as their greatest concern; and by 58-40 percent among the 8 percent most concerned about the Iraq war. The advantage turns to McCain among other issue voters, including, almost unanimously, those who say their top issue is the U.S. campaign against terrorism – the issue that boosted George W. Bush to re-election in 2004.

GROUPS – Obama is outperforming previous Democratic presidential candidates in a number of voter groups. His lead among young likely voters is higher than in exit polls back to 1976; among those with post-graduate degrees, its highest in data since 1988; among first-time voters and city dwellers, the biggest in exit poll results since 1996.

Obama leads McCain by 8 points among independents, matching the previous best since 1976 for a Democrat in this group, Clinton's in 1996. Ideology tells a similar tale: Obama

and McCain are at about the same levels as were Kerry and Bush among liberals and conservatives. But while Kerry won moderates by 9 points, and Gore by 8, Obama's now ahead in this group by 25 points, essentially matching the best since 1976, Clinton's 24-point margin among moderates in 1996.



Regionally, Obama has a 15-point lead in the battleground-rich Midwest and 12 points in the West, the best in both regions for a Democrat at least since 1980.

Even in groups in which he doesn't lead, Obama's more competitive than the Democratic norm. He trails by 7 points among whites, a group no Democrat has won in exit polls dating back 32 years. Closest were the party's winners, Jimmy Carter in 1976 (-5 points among whites), Clinton in 1992 (-1) and Clinton in 1996 (-3). Obama, in particular, is doing better than the recent Democratic norm among middle- and upper-income whites. And after trailing last week he's moved into a dead heat among white Catholics, like independents another usually swing-voting group. Kerry lost them by 13 points, Gore by 7. Carter and Clinton won white Catholics by 5 to 7 points.

**TURNOUT** – Obama's standings now do not predict the vote next week, and given the differential among groups turnout is critical. It's also a moving target given the number of early and absentee voters: Thirty-four percent of likely voters say they'll vote early or by absentee ballot; as reported last week, it's a group that heavily favors Obama, now by 59-39 percent. So do first-time voters, who are mainly under 30.

Contrary to some expectations, ABC/Post tracking data does not show disproportionately higher turnout this year among first-time and young voters, or for that matter among African-Americans. Their projected turnout levels instead are within a point or two of what they were in 2004.

The biggest change is in partisanship. As covered in previous tracking reports, voters in 2004 divided evenly in party allegiance, 37-37 percent, with the rest independents. In this poll 37 percent are Democrats, 32 percent Republicans – reflecting generally declining Republican allegiance over the past five years.

McCain’s challenge, then, is to overcome not just the heavy weight of the economy, but also the five-year trend in partisanship that’s followed the unpopularity of the Iraq war and the concomitant rise in George W. Bush’s disapproval rating, to the highest on record for a president in 70 years of polling.

**METHODOLOGY** – Interviews for this ABC News/Washington Post tracking poll were conducted by telephone Oct. 23-26, 2008, among a random national sample of 1,314 likely voters, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a 2.5-point error margin for the full sample. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

For details on ABC News polls including full questionnaires, methodology and sampling error information, see <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow (\*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) How closely are you following the presidential race: very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not closely at all?

	---- Closely ----			---- Not closely ----			No
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not too	At all	opinion
10/26/08 RV	90	60	30	9	5	4	*

Call for full trend.

2. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) I'd like you to rate the chances that you will vote in the presidential election in November: Are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or less than that?

	Certain	Probably	Chances	Less than	Don't think	Already	No
	to vote	vote	50/50	that	will vote	voted	op.
					(vol.)	(vol.)	
10/26/08 RV	78	6	4	1	1	10	*

Call for full trend.

2a. (ASKED IF CERTAIN IN Q2) Do you think you'll (vote in person at your polling place on Election Day), or (vote before Election Day by early voting or mail-in ballot)?

	Vote in person	Early voting/ mail-in ballot	Already voted (vol.)	No opinion
10/26/08 RV	76	21	2	2

Call for full trend.

3. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats) and (John McCain and Sarah Palin, the Republicans), for whom would you vote? (ASKED IF ALREADY VOTED) For whom did you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE - LIKELY VOTERS

	Obama	McCain	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
10/26/08	52	45	*	1	2
10/25/08	52	45	*	1	2
10/24/08	53	44	1	1	2
10/23/08	53	44	*	1	2
10/22/08	54	43	1	1	2
10/21/08	54	43	1	1	1
10/20/08	53	44	1	1	1
10/19/08	53	44	1	1	2
10/11/08	53	43	1	1	2
9/29/08	50	46	*	2	2
9/22/08	52	43	*	1	3
9/7/08	47	49	1	1	3
8/22/08	49	45	*	2	4
7/13/08	49	46	1	2	2
6/15/08	47	48	1	2	2

NET LEANED VOTE - REGISTERED VOTERS

	Obama	McCain	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
10/26/08	51	43	1	1	1	3
10/25/08	51	44	*	1	*	3
10/24/08	52	42	1	2	*	3
10/23/08	52	42	1	1	1	3
10/22/08	54	41	1	2	1	3
10/21/08	53	41	1	1	1	3
10/20/08	52	42	1	1	1	3
10/19/08	52	42	1	1	1	3
10/11/08	54	41	1	2	*	2
9/29/08	49	45	1	2	*	3
9/22/08	52	42	1	1	*	4
9/7/08	47	46	1	1	1	4
8/22/08	49	43	*	3	2	3
7/13/08	50	42	1	3	1	2
6/15/08	49	45	1	3	1	3
5/11/08	51	44	*	2	1	1
4/13/08	49	44	*	3	3	2
3/2/08	53	40	*	2	1	3
2/1/08	47	48	1	1	1	2
1/19/07	47	45	*	3	1	4

3b. (ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS IF NAMED CANDIDATE) Would you definitely vote for (CANDIDATE), or is there a chance you could change your mind and vote for someone else? (IF CHANCE CHANGE MIND) Is there a GOOD CHANCE you'll change your mind, or would you say it's PRETTY UNLIKELY?

	Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET	Good	Unlikely	No opinion
10/26/08 LV	91	9	3	6	*
10/25/08 LV	91	9	3	6	*
10/24/08 LV	91	9	4	5	1
10/23/08 LV	91	9	4	5	1
10/22/08 LV	90	9	4	5	1
10/21/08 LV	89	10	5	5	1
10/20/08 LV	89	10	4	6	1
10/19/08 LV	88	10	5	6	1
10/11/08 LV	88	11	4	7	1
9/29/08 RV	82	17	8	9	1
9/22/08 RV	83	16	8	8	1
9/7/08 RV	79	20	8	12	1
8/22/08 RV	73	24	11	13	3
7/13/08 RV	72	25	10	15	3
6/15/08 RV	72	26	11	16	2
5/11/08 RV	69	28	15	14	3
9/26/04 RV	82	16	4	12	2
9/8/04 RV	84	14	6	8	2
8/29/04 RV	81	18	7	11	1
8/1/04 RV	80	19	7	12	1
7/25/04 RV	78	20	7	13	2
7/11/04 RV	79	21	7	13	1
6/20/04 RV	73	26	12	14	*

Barack Obama:

	Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET	Good	Unlikely	No opinion
10/26/08 LV	92	8	3	5	*
10/25/08 LV	93	7	3	4	*
10/24/08 LV	92	7	3	4	*
10/23/08 LV	91	8	4	4	1
10/22/08 LV	90	8	3	5	1
10/21/08 LV	89	9	4	6	1
10/20/08 LV	90	9	3	6	1
10/19/08 LV	91	9	3	5	1
10/11/08 LV	90	9	3	6	1
9/29/08 RV	83	16	7	9	1
9/22/08 RV	85	14	8	7	1
9/7/08 RV	78	21	9	12	1
8/22/08 RV	74	23	7	15	4
7/13/08 RV	72	23	9	14	5
6/15/08 RV	71	26	7	19	3
5/11/08 RV	71	25	13	13	4

John McCain:

	Definitely vote for	-Chance change mind - NET	Good	Unlikely	No opinion
10/26/08 LV	89	11	4	7	*
10/25/08 LV	88	11	3	8	1
10/24/08 LV	89	10	4	6	1
10/23/08 LV	90	10	4	5	1
10/22/08 LV	90	9	4	5	1
10/21/08 LV	89	11	5	5	1
10/20/08 LV	89	11	5	5	1

10/19/08	LV	86	12	6	6	1
10/11/08	LV	86	14	4	9	*
9/29/08	RV	81	18	9	9	1
9/22/08	RV	81	18	9	9	2
9/7/08	RV	80	19	8	11	2
8/22/08	RV	72	25	14	11	2
7/13/08	RV	71	28	12	17	1
6/15/08	RV	72	27	14	12	1
5/11/08	RV	66	32	17	15	2

4. (ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS) Have you voted for president in any year before this 2008 election, or is this the first year you'll be voting for president?

	Voted before	First time	No opinion	
10/26/08	LV	88	12	0
10/25/08	LV	88	12	0
10/24/08	LV	88	12	0
10/23/08	LV	87	13	*
10/22/08	LV	87	13	*
10/21/08	LV	87	12	*
10/20/08	LV	88	11	*
10/19/08	LV	89	11	*
10/11/08	LV	90	10	0
9/29/08*	RV	92	8	*
9/22/08	RV	92	8	0

10/31/04 RV 90 10 \*

\*9/29/08 and previous: "(Was this/will this be) the first time you've voted in a presidential election, or have you voted in previous presidential elections?"

5. (ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS) What [was/is] the SINGLE most important issue in your choice for president: (The economy), (the war in Iraq), (terrorism), (energy policy), (health care), or something else?

	Economy	Iraq	Terrorism	Energy policy	Health care	Something else	No op.	
10/26/08	LV	53	8	5	4	10	19	1
10/25/08	LV	52	8	6	5	11	18	1
10/24/08	LV	51	8	5	4	11	19	1
10/23/08	LV	51	8	5	4	10	21	1
10/22/08	LV	51	8	5	4	10	20	1
10/21/08	LV	51	9	5	4	10	20	1
10/20/08	LV	52	8	6	5	9	19	1
10/19/08	LV	53	7	6	4	9	19	2

6. (ASKED OF LIKELY VOTERS) Regardless of who you may support, who do you trust more to handle [ITEM] - (Obama) or (McCain)?

a. The economy

	Obama	McCain	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion	
10/26/08	LV	52	42	1	3	3
10/25/08	LV	53	42	*	3	2
10/24/08	LV	55	40	1	2	2
10/23/08	LV	56	39	1	2	2
10/22/08	LV	56	38	1	3	2
10/21/08	LV	55	38	1	4	2
10/20/08	LV	55	38	1	4	2
10/19/08	LV	55	39	1	4	1

10/11/08	LV	54	37	1	6	2
9/29/08	RV	50	43	1	3	2
9/22/08	RV	53	39	1	4	3
9/7/08	RV	47	42	1	4	6
8/22/08	RV	50	39	2	5	4
7/13/08	RV	54	37	2	6	3
6/15/08	RV	52	37	2	5	4
5/11/08	RV	48	38	2	8	4
3/2/08	RV	50	37	2	6	5

Compare to:

		Kerry	Bush	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion	
10/30/04	LV	48	45	1	3	3	
		Gore	Bush	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion	
10/25/00	LV	48	45	2	3	3	
		Clinton	Dole	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion	
9/4/96	RV	48	42	2	6	3	
		Clinton	Bush	Perot	All (vol.)	None (vol.)	No opinion
10/4/92	LV	43	26	20	1	5	5
		Dukakis	Bush	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion	
11/1/88	LV	40	51	NA	NA	9	

8. (ASKED OF LIKELY LEANED OBAMA/MCCAIN SUPPORTERS) Thinking about his candidacy for president so far, how enthusiastic are you about [NAME] - very enthusiastic, fairly enthusiastic, not too enthusiastic, or not enthusiastic at all?

10/26/08 - Summary Table - Among Likely Leaned Obama/McCain Supporters

		--- Enthusiastic ---			---- Not enthusiastic ----			No
		NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	opinion
a.	Obama	96	66	30	3	2	1	1
b.	McCain	87	36	51	13	11	2	*

Trend:

a. Obama

		--- Enthusiastic ---			---- Not enthusiastic ----			No
		NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	opinion
10/26/08	LV	96	66	30	3	2	1	1
10/25/08	LV	97	68	29	3	3	1	*
10/24/08	LV	97	71	26	3	3	1	0
10/23/08	LV	95	70	25	5	4	1	0
10/22/08	LV	94	67	28	5	5	1	*
10/21/08	LV	95	64	31	5	4	1	*
10/20/08	LV	95	65	31	5	4	1	*
10/19/08	LV	96	64	32	4	3	1	*
10/11/08	LV	96	66	30	4	3	1	*
9/29/08	RV	95	61	34	4	4	*	1
9/22/08	RV	94	62	32	6	4	1	*
9/7/08	RV	96	64	32	4	3	1	0

8/22/08	RV	95	52	43	5	2	3	*
6/15/08	RV	91	52	39	9	7	2	*

b. McCain

10/26/08	LV	87	36	51	13	11	2	*
10/25/08	LV	86	38	48	14	11	3	*
10/24/08	LV	88	39	49	11	9	2	1
10/23/08	LV	89	39	50	10	8	2	1
10/22/08	LV	88	40	48	12	10	2	1
10/21/08	LV	88	37	51	11	10	1	*
10/20/08	LV	88	38	50	12	11	2	*
10/19/08	LV	87	40	47	13	11	2	*
10/11/08	LV	87	31	57	13	10	2	0
9/29/08	RV	90	38	52	10	7	2	*
9/22/08	RV	89	34	55	10	8	2	1
9/7/08	RV	92	46	46	8	6	2	0
8/22/08	RV	86	28	58	13	11	2	1
6/15/08	RV	74	19	55	25	19	6	1

Compare to:

10/26/04 - Summary Table - Among Likely Voters, Leaned Bush/Kerry Supporters

	--- Enthusiastic --			---- Not Enthusiastic ----			No
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	opinion
a. Bush	91	55	36	9	8	1	*
b. Kerry	92	46	47	7	6	1	1

4/2/00 - Summary Table - Among Likely Voters, Leaned Bush/Gore Supporters

	--- Enthusiastic --			---- Not Enthusiastic ----			No
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	opinion
a. Gore	84	41	43	17	12	5	0
b. Bush	87	44	43	14	12	2	0

\*\*\*END\*\*\*