

POLITICS DA

A new program of space exploration and development would be extremely controversial right now. Public support for past space programs, like during the Apollo project to the moon, has waned as people have focused increasingly on solving our problems down on earth. While the public might support the current space program, they are against any new expansion. This is in part due to the public's tendency to overestimate the amount of money spent on the space program and because they see the benefits as a long time away and intangible.

NASA's future role has become politically controversial because of competing interests in where and how the money will be spent. Some people advocate NASA focus on glamorous missions like sending humans to Mars or back to the moon, while others feel that more sustainable support can be built if we have more modest, less spectacular goals. Neither political party has a strong interest in NASA. Most of the support for the space program is located in space towns like Orlando, Florida and Houston, Texas.

Especially at a time like today, when the economy is poor, spending on space exploration is seen as a luxury we cannot afford. Overall, the public feels that the government should be focused on domestic issues and they don't see the space program as a domestic program.

Specific space missions are also seen as controversial. People who feel that China is a competitor that cannot be trusted oppose cooperation with China in space. Proposals to put solar power satellites up in space are opposed by those who fear the laser or microwaves that would be sent back to earth. Proposed missions to Mars are also not very popular because they are not seen as essential.

Structuring the Politics Disadvantage

There are many kinds of Politics DAs, but mostly all hinge on the affirmative plan being viewed as controversial or unpopular. The general idea is that because the affirmative plan is so unpopular or controversial, it will require a lot of effort by the President and/or Congress to get it passed. That effort – often referred to as 'political capital' – could be put to better purposes on other projects.

Here are some guidelines for how to organize and structure your Politics DA.

Uniqueness – Because your DA impact will be that the plan prevents sufficient attention to be focused on a particular issue, you will need uniqueness evidence to support the claim that in the status quo, sufficient attention will be paid. For example, if you argue that the plan will distract the U.S. from doing something about the crisis of global warming, you would need to have evidence proving that enough attention will be paid to that issue otherwise. You'll also want evidence proving there will be no new NASA programs in the near future.

Link – You need to prove that the affirmative plan is unpopular or controversial. You can approach this either by arguing that in general new space exploration is unpopular, or you could use evidence that the specific affirmative plan, say cooperation with China, is unpopular. Or you could try to prove both of those things. You could also make general arguments about how the public wants to focus on domestic issues, not pie-in-the-sky luxury items.

Impact – Your final subpoint would be about the program that would be adversely affected by the fighting that would result from passing the affirmative plan. In the example of global warming, you would want to read evidence that proved the impact of how global warming would affect the planet if we didn't have sufficient public policies to prevent or moderate it.

UNIQUENESS

CURRENT BUDGET PLANS FOR REDUCED NASA SPENDING

National Journal February 14, 2011

[<http://www.nationaljournal.com/nationalsecurity/nasa-largely-spared-big-cuts-in-obama-budget-20110214>]

President Obama's controversial vision for America's space program may have already come face to face with fiscal reality. NASA largely dodged major cuts under his proposed budget released today, but the plan reveals some significant reallocation of funds and doesn't appear to include any of the \$6 billion boost that he promised to provide over five years. The total amount budgeted for NASA matches 2010's funding of \$18.7 billion, but the plan strips nearly \$2 billion from the Space Operations program, which is responsible for operating the space shuttle and International Space Station. This reduction is based largely on the shuttle program drawing to an end (the last flight is scheduled this year), as well as a planned merger of the two directorates.

NASA HAS NO GRAND DESTINATION NOW

Orlando Sentinel June 17, 2011

[http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-06-17/news/os-nasa-rocket-competition-20110616_1_constellation-moon-program-new-rocket-big-rocket]

NASA's long-term goal is Mars, but the agency acknowledges that sending a human to the Red Planet won't happen for decades. It hasn't settled on an interim destination — the moon and a nearby asteroid are mentioned — and the estimated \$14 billion set aside over the next five years may not be enough to build the rocket, let alone the related equipment needed to actually land somewhere.

NASA HAS NO MISSION, NO SUPPORT

Matt Gurney, The National Post, June 10, 2011

[<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/06/10/matt-gurney-nasa-gets-its-ships-now-it-needs-a-mission/>]

Right now, with no plan on how to use the new rockets and ships, and no consensus that they should be used at all, NASA's vehicle plans will remain a very tempting piece of low-hanging fruit for budgetary hawks looking for ways to avoid making much harder, less popular cuts to America's federal budget.

UNIQUENESS

NASA HAS NO MISSION

Matt Gurney, The National Post, June 10, 2011

[<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/06/10/matt-gurney-nasa-gets-its-ships-now-it-needs-a-mission/>]

When he cancelled the program, President Obama reprioritized NASA's objectives. Rather than the moon and Mars program, NASA would instead work with the private sector to develop the technology and procedures to allow NASA to contract out the firing of cargo and astronauts into low Earth orbit, where the International Space Station resides, to private firms. He also tasked NASA with developing advanced propulsion technologies, something more efficient and less costly than the current generation of chemically propelled rockets, and also put emphasis on the design of a modern heavy lift rocket, necessary to carry large payloads into low Earth orbit and beyond. But he did not order the construction of a new generation of space ships that could carry astronauts into space. With the shuttles at the end of their lives, it would have left the United States without a space fleet with which to conduct missions of exploration. Essentially, it meant the end of American manned exploration of our solar system.

OBAMA BUDGET FREEZES NASA FOR FIVE YEARS

Agence France Presse February 14, 2011

[<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/global-filipino/world/02/14/11/obama-five-year-freeze-nasa-budget>]

President Barack Obama on Monday proposed reining in expenses at NASA, sending his 2012 budget blueprint to Congress calling for a five-year freeze on new spending at the US space agency. The president would restrict NASA's budget to last year's levels, \$18.7 billion annually through fiscal 2016. The figure represents a 1.6-percent decrease from the spending total the agency had sought for fiscal 2011, which ends in September. "This budget reflects the overall fiscal reality of the US government. There is not a lot of money available," said John Logsdon, a former director of the Space Policy Institute in Washington.

UNIQUENESS

NO GREAT POLICY CHANGES IN STORE FOR NASA

Yahoo News February 14, 2011

[http://old.news.yahoo.com/s/ac/20110214/pl_ac/7856368_obamas_nasa_budget_proposal_for_fy2012__business_as_usual]

Unlike last year, President Barack Obama's proposed budget for NASA in the coming fiscal year includes no great policy changes. In keeping with the President's propose to freeze domestic spending it comes out to \$18.7 billion dollars for fiscal year 2012. The outline of the budget proposal pretty much accepts the priorities set down in the bipartisan NASA authorization act passed last year.

GENERAL LINKS

PLURALITY OPPOSE MORE SPACE EXPLORATION

Rasmussen Public Opinion Reports July 21, 2009

[http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/lifestyle/general_lifestyle/july_2009/51_oppose_u_s_manned_mission_to_mars]

As the nation celebrates the 40th anniversary of landing men on the moon, 44% of all Americans also believe the United States should cut back on space exploration because of the state of the economy. Thirty-four percent (34%) oppose cuts in space exploration, and 22% are undecided.

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR PAST SPACE PROGRAMS IS EXAGGERATED

Jeremy Hsu, SPACE.Com Senior Writer, January 13, 2011

[<http://www.space.com/10601-apollo-moon-program-public-support-myth.html>]
An enduring American legend holds that the U.S. space program enjoyed broad enthusiastic support during the race to land a man on the moon. In reality, polls show that levels of public support look remarkably similar today as they did 50 years ago. Public opinion in favor of continuing human lunar exploration almost never rose above 50 percent during NASA's Apollo program – but the lone exception was in October 1965. Americans often ranked spaceflight near the top of programs to be cut in the federal budget during the 1960s buildup toward the first moon landing. "It's contrary to what the space community wants to believe," said Roger Launius, space history curator at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. The only time when more than half of the public believed Apollo was worth the expense came at the time of the Apollo 11 lunar landing in 1969, when Neil Armstrong took humanity's first steps on alien soil. Even then, only a lukewarm 53 percent of the public believed such a momentous historical occasion had been worth the cost.

GENERAL LINKS

PUBLIC MAY SUPPORT CURRENT SPACE PROGRAM BUT NOT EXPANSION

Jeremy Hsu, SPACE.Com Senior Writer, January 13, 2011

[<http://www.space.com/10601-apollo-moon-program-public-support-myth.html>]

The good news for space exploration in general is that public opinion favors it – but only when not taking economic costs and budgetary spending into consideration. "When you divorce it from the numbers and you ask people if they like NASA and spaceflight, people say yes," Launius told SPACE.com. "75 to 80 percent are in favor." The space historian examined nationally representative polls done by industry people and Gallup that asked the same consistent questions year after year. He also looked at polls conducted by the New York Times and others. Public support for overall space funding has hovered around 80 percent in favor of the status quo since 1965, except for a major dip in support during the early 1970s. That may bode well for NASA's continued existence, but it also suggests that few people are clamoring to throw even more money at the space agency.

THE PUBLIC EXAGGERATES THE COSTS OF SPACE EXPLORATION

Jeremy Hsu, SPACE.Com Senior Writer, January 13, 2011

[<http://www.space.com/10601-apollo-moon-program-public-support-myth.html>]

Still, polls also show a huge misconception regarding the cost of the U.S. space program. Public opinion has wrongly put NASA's budget at about 22 percent of the government's spending over the years, when in fact NASA's budget only reached 4.3 percent of the federal budget at its peak in 1965. Since the 1970s, the U.S. space agency's budget has hovered below 1 percent of government spending. "My suggestion is that NASA is so visible and the space shuttle is such a powerful icon that people believe this stuff must cost an enormous amount of money," Launius said.

GENERAL LINKS

PUBLIC OPINION IS BECOMING MORE POLARIZED AND MOVING AWAY FROM STRONG SUPPORT

Space Politics June 18, 2008

[www.spacepolitics.com/2008/06/18/how-strong-is-public-support-for-space-exploration/]

While 71 percent believe that the US is doing a good or very good job in space exploration, there has been a shift from “very good” to simply “good” in the latest poll, compared to the previous one performed by Gallup in August 2006: the number of people in the “very good” category dropped from 17 to 11 percent, while the “good” category rose from 52 to 60 percent. Does that indicate that public support for space is getting a little weaker? Also, while 52 percent supported a budget increase for NASA, 45 percent opposed or strongly opposed such an increase: not a lot of neutral ground. (In addition, the text of that question claimed that since 2004, “the budget for NASA has been held at one-sixth of one percent of the total federal budget, lower than the 1% NASA originally requested in 2006.” I can’t recall NASA requesting one percent of the federal budget, which would amount to a substantial increase, in 2006 or any other recent year.)

PUBLIC DOES NOT SEE PERSONAL BENEFIT FROM SPACE EXPLORATION

P. Ehrenfreund, Space Policy Institute, GWU, September 2010

[Acta Astronautica, vol 67, p. 502]

Space exploration is a multifaceted endeavor and will be a “grand challenge” of the 21st century. It has already become an element of the political agenda of a growing number of countries worldwide. However, the public is largely unaware of space exploration activities and in particular does not perceive any personal benefit.

GENERAL LINKS

NEW SPACE SPENDING WILL FACE STRONG POLITICAL OPPOSITION

Houston Chronicle, September 13, 2009

[<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/nation/6615751.html>]

NASA supporters are bracing for an uphill battle to get the extra funding needed to take on missions more ambitious than visits to the international space station. A high-level panel told President Barack Obama last week that the space program needs an infusion of about \$3 billion more a year by 2014. That may be a tough sell, even though the amount could be considered spare change in a fast-spending capital where the White House and Congress are on track to dole out nearly \$4 trillion this year to finance federal operations, including bailouts for Wall Street firms, banks and automakers. "The congressional agenda over the next year is going to be focused on cutting programs, not adding to them," said Scott Lilly, a scholar at the Center for American Progress. Adding resources to the nation's \$18.7 billion-a-year space program would require cuts in other areas, said Lilly, who doesn't think lawmakers are willing to make those trades.

NASA IS POLITICALLY CONTROVERSIAL

Walter Cunningham, former Apollo astronaut, Houston Chronicle February 6, 2010

[<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/editorial/outlook/6854790.html>]

NASA has always been a political football. The agency's lifeblood is federal funding, and it has been losing blood for several decades. The only hope now for a lifesaving transfusion to stop the hemorrhaging is Congress.

NO STRONG SUPPORT FOR SPACE IN EITHER POLITICAL PARTY

Loren Thompson, Chief Financial Officer, The Lexington Institute, April 2011

[www.lexingtoninstitute.org/library/resources/documents/Defense/HumanSpaceflight-Mars.pdf]

Although NASA consumes less than one-percent of the federal budget, it does not connect well with the current economic or social agendas of either major political party. The broad support for the human spaceflight program early in its history was traceable largely to the ideological rivalry between America and Russia that produced

the Moon race. Today, no such external driver exists to sustain support of human spaceflight across the political spectrum.

GENERAL LINKS

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS GROWING INCREASINGLY UNINTERESTED IN SPACE EXPLORATION

P. Ehrenfreund, Space Policy Institute, GWU, September 2010

[Acta Astronautica, vol 67, p. 502]

Today, governments and societies consider environment, the economy, the fast growing population and climate change as higher priorities than human activities in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and the exploration of the solar system. This is due to the evolution of perception from a “need to know” to a “nice to know” approach, as well as the necessity to have standard observations of our home planet to monitor its changes. Space probes and satellites are launched all over the world nearly every week but their purpose is often obscure and they remain far removed from the public’s everyday consciousness. In particular, the younger generation (between 18 and 25), as evidenced from recent US marketing studies, is least interested in space endeavors.

SUPPORT FOR SPACE EXPLORATION IN THE ABSTRACT DOES NOT MEAN THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS INCREASED SPENDING ON IT

P. Ehrenfreund, Space Policy Institute, GWU, September 2010

[Acta Astronautica, vol 67, p. 502]

The lack of support from the public for space programs is a complex issue. Despite many efforts and initiatives in the 21st century of NASA’s previous Office of Communication Planning (OCP), public information policy surveys, marketing and advertising studies [4] resulted in similar conclusions concerning the public awareness of space activities. An important finding is that the part of society that supports the space program and believes that space exploration is a noble endeavor does not necessarily agree that governments should allocate substantial financial resources to achieve those exciting space missions. Even during the Apollo era, polls showed that the public did not approve the large governmental spending.

GENERAL LINKS

PUBLIC OPPOSES INCREASED SPENDING ON SPACE EVEN IF THEY SUPPORT THE GOALS

Howard E. McCurdy, professor public affairs, American University, 2011

[Space and the American Imagination, 2nd Edition, 2011, p. 66]

This is not to say the public accepted the grand vision of human space travel unconditionally. Public opinion in the United States is notoriously ambivalent, a quality that affects many government activities including civilian space travel. By the mid-1950s, most Americans believed that ventures such as a trip to the Moon would occur soon; at the same time most believed the government should not lay out large sums of money to accomplish the task. When asked in 1960 whether the United States should spend upwards of \$40 billion “to send a man to the moon,” 58 percent of the respondents to a Gallup poll responded no. Fifty-two percent of the same respondents nevertheless agreed that the venture would be accomplished within ten years. This pattern persisted throughout the formative decades of the U.S. space program. Public expectations remained high while the willingness to spend money remained low. Even by the mid-1980s, when interest in space stations and expeditions to Mars rebounded, the number of people who wanted to undertake these projects exceeded by a factor of two the number of people willing to increase the space budget to pay for them.

SPACE EXPLORATION HAS THE LOWEST SUPPORT OF ANY GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

Space Politics April 17, 2007

[<http://www.spacepolitics.com/2007/04/17/more-evidence-of-the-low-public-opinion-of-space-funding/>]

Some interesting, if not necessarily surprising, results regarding how the public ranks funding for civil space versus other programs: A Harris Interactive poll released last week asked people which programs they would cut first to reduce federal spending and close the budget deficit. On top, by a wide margin, was “space program”, with 51% of respondents selecting it as a program funding should be cut from. (Respondents were asked to pick two programs.) Space came out well ahead of welfare and defense, which tied for second at 28%. Space was first among Democrats and Independents by large margins, but in a statistical dead heat (44-43%) with welfare among Republicans. This is not the first time that space has fared poorly in comparison with other federal

programs in opinion polls: back in January “space exploration” ranked next to last in a survey of funding priorities by the University of Chicago, beating out only foreign aid.

GENERAL LINKS

AMERICANS SUPPORT SPACE EXPLORATION LESS WHEN ECONOMY IS POOR

Jeffrey M. Jones, Gallup Polling Inc., July 17, 2009

[www.gallup.com/poll/121736/Majority-Americans-Say-Space-Program-Costs-Justified.aspx]

The two lowest readings of 46% and 53% were found in a pair of 1993 polls. In 1993, as now, Americans had highly negative evaluations of the economy, and the results suggest that when Americans have a negative outlook on the economy, they are apparently less willing to spend money for space exploration. In addition to a struggling economy, the lower 1993 NASA ratings are due to a number of problems that plagued the agency, including losing contact with the Mars Observer and several last-minute cancellations of planned space shuttle missions.

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE APOLLO MISSION IS EXAGGERATED

Roger Launius, Division of Space History, Smithsonian Institution, 2003

[Space Policy, Volume 19, Issue 3, August 2003, pp. 163-175]

The polling data discussed here offer several insights about Apollo, the signature program of NASA in its first decade and a half, and the potential for human trips to Mars. Apollo never enjoyed the strong public support that many have romantically projected into the project. JFK's Apollo decision was based on political opportunism as much as anything else, and was much more complex and involved than most have generally believed. Because of its success, Apollo left a divided legacy for NASA and the aerospace community. The Apollo decision created for the space agency an expectation that the direction of any major space goal from the president would always bring NASA a broad consensus of support and provide it with the resources and license to dispense them as it saw fit. Something NASA officials have been slow to understand is that Apollo had not been conducted under normal political circumstances and would not be repeated.²⁰ Those who wish to send a human expedition to Mars are still wrestling with this legacy.

GENERAL LINKS

AMERICANS OVER-ESTIMATE THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THAT NASA HAS

Roger Launius, Division of Space History, Smithsonian Institution, 2003

[Space Policy, Volume 19, Issue 3, August 2003, pp. 163-175]

It seems obvious that most Americans have little conception of the amount of funding available to NASA. At a fundamental level, all federal programs face this challenge as Americans are notoriously uninformed about how much and what the federal government spends on its programs.¹⁹ As a result there is a general lack of understanding that NASA has less than one percent of the Federal budget each year, and that its share of the budget has been shrinking since the early 1990s. Most Americans seem to believe that NASA has a lot of money, much more than it annually receives.

THE APOLLO MOON LANDING WAS NOT OVERWHELMINGLY POPULAR

Roger Launius, Division of Space History, Smithsonian Institution, 2003

[Space Policy, Volume 19, Issue 3, August 2003, pp. 163-175]

The only point at which the opinion surveys demonstrate that more than 50 percent of the public believed Apollo was worth its expense came in 1969 at the time of the Apollo 11 lunar landing, as shown in Fig. 6. And even then only a measly 53 percent agreed that the result justified the expense, despite the fact that the landing was perhaps the most momentous event in human history since it became the first instance in which the human race became bi-planetary. These statistics do not demonstrate an unqualified support for NASA's effort to reach the Moon in the 1960s. They suggest, instead, that the political crisis that brought public support to the initial lunar landing decision was fleeting and within a short period the coalition that announced it had to reconsider their decision. It also suggests that the public was never enthusiastic about human lunar exploration, and especially about the costs associated with it. What enthusiasm it may have enjoyed waned over time, until by the end of the Apollo program in December 1972 one has the image of the program as something akin to a limping marathoner straining with every muscle to reach the finish line before collapsing.

GENERAL LINKS

GENERAL SUPPORT FOR SPACE EXPLORATION DOESN'T TRANSLATE INTO POPULARITY OF INCREASED FUNDING FOR NASA

Roger Launius, senior curator, Division of Space History, Smithsonian, July 21, 2010

[<http://www.spacenews.com/commentaries/100721-blog-human-spaceflight-brink-extinction.html>]

If those who care deeply about the future of human spaceflight cannot reach agreement as to a path, why should those tangentially involved, at best, care either? Public opinion polling has long stated that the general public likes space exploration, but that its support is like the Platte River — a mile wide and an inch deep. Hence the difficulty of obtaining even modest increases in the NASA budget every year. This is especially apparent in a context in which the U.S. during the last few years has expanded significantly the national debt even as the nation is unwilling to make funding available for NASA to see its Constellation program through to fruition. What is the problem with \$3 billion more per year for NASA when the deficit is so large already?

MOST AMERICANS SUPPORT NO INCREASES IN SPACE PROGRAM FUNDING

Zogby International, April 29, 2010

[<http://www.zogby.com/blog/2010/04/29/is-nasa-worth-it/>]

A recent Zogby Interactive survey of adults nationwide shows that more than four-fifths (82%) of the respondents consider having a space program very/somewhat important to our country's international prestige. About 15% think that it is not important and 2% are not sure. When asked about the amount of tax dollars spent on the U.S. space program, 30% feel that it should be increased while 23% believe that it should be decreased or eliminated. Two-fifths (40%) think that it should be kept at present level.

REPUBLICANS

LEADING REPUBLICANS JUST AREN'T THAT INTO THE SPACE PROGRAM

Lee Roop, The Huntsville Times June 19, 2011

[http://blog.al.com/breaking/2011/06/nasa_supporters_find_no_white.html]

To the contrary, space enthusiasts in Huntsville and other NASA cities were swapping emails last week about the cold shoulder shown the space program by the GOP presidential candidates in a debate in New Hampshire last Monday night. A collective newspaper headline might have read: "NASA, they're just not that into you." For example, reporter Richard Dunham of the Houston Chronicle opened his report by writing, "The Republican presidential field sent a clear message to NASA workers in Texas and Florida: They don't see a federal role in funding human space flight."

LEADING REPUBLICANS FAVOR SHRINKING ROLE FOR NASA

Lee Roop, The Huntsville Times June 19, 2011

[http://blog.al.com/breaking/2011/06/nasa_supporters_find_no_white.html]

So, for those keeping score, the only Republican candidates talking about space Monday night did so while using phrases such as "scale it back," "get it out of Washington" and "cut out the bureaucracy." Dr. Jess Brown, a political science professor at Athens State University, said he watched the debate and saw little indication of support for NASA. "The best you can say is we're going to do more with the private sector, and the public sector - NASA - is going to have a shrinking role and shrinking scope of responsibilities," Brown said Friday. "And in general policy terms, that's exactly what people here locally criticized Obama for."

PUBLIC SUPPORTS SPACE GENERALLY

STEADY SUPPORT FOR SPACE EVEN DURING THE DOWNTURN IS PROOF AMERICANS STILL FAVOR IT

Jeffrey M. Jones, Gallup Polling Inc., July 17, 2009

[www.gallup.com/poll/121736/Majority-Americans-Say-Space-Program-Costs-Justified.aspx]

Americans remain broadly supportive of space exploration and government funding of it. In fact, Americans are somewhat more likely to believe the benefits of the space program justify its costs at the 40th anniversary of the moon landing than they were at the 10th, 25th, and 30th anniversaries. Although support for keeping NASA funding at its present level or increasing it is lower now than it has been in the past, the fact that 6 in 10 Americans hold this view in the midst of a recession suggests the public is firmly committed to the space program.

POLLS SHOW PUBLIC STRONGLY SUPPORTS SPACE EXPLORATION INCLUDING BUDGET INCREASES

Coalition for Space Exploration, June 17, 2008

[<http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewpr.html?pid=25666>]

As America prepares to celebrate the 50th anniversary of NASA later this year, a new Gallup Poll released today shows strong support for the U.S. Space Exploration Program. The most recent poll, conducted in May 2008, is the latest in a series of four polls commissioned by the Coalition for Space Exploration in an effort to better understand the extent of support and public attitudes toward America's space program. The first three polls were conducted in June 2005, March 2006 and August 2006. "These latest results -- as well as poll data from the last several years -- reveal that even in the midst of varying world and national circumstances, Americans still strongly support space exploration, and are willing to support its funding at current levels or even slightly increased levels," said Mary Engola, chairwoman of the Coalition for Space Exploration's Public Affairs Team. The 2008 Gallup Poll shows more than 52 percent of those surveyed would support an increase in space exploration funding.

PUBLIC SUPPORTS SPACE GENERALLY

THE PUBLIC RATES NASA POSITIVELY

Gallup Survey, Gallup Organization, October 31, 2007

[<http://www.gallup.com/poll/102466/Americans-Continue-Rate-NASA-Positively.aspx>]

NASA astronauts are currently in space for a two-week mission to continue work on the International Space Station. The mission is historic from the standpoint that women are the commanders of the two crews in space. A recent Gallup Poll finds the majority of Americans giving NASA positive marks for the job it is doing. The current ratings are little changed from recent years, and from a longer-term perspective the public has generally rated NASA positively. According to the Sept. 14-16 poll, 56% of Americans rate the job NASA is doing in positive terms, with 16% saying it is doing an “excellent” job and 40% a “good” job. Meanwhile, just 8% say it is doing a poor job, with most of the rest describing NASA’s performance as “only fair.”

MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SAY SPACE PROGRAM IS WORTH THE COSTS

Gallup Survey, Gallup Organization, July 17, 2009

[<http://www.gallup.com/poll/121736/Majority-Americans-Say-Space-Program-Costs-Justified.aspx>]

On the eve of the 40th anniversary of the U.S. moon landing, a majority of Americans say the space program has brought enough benefits to justify its costs. The percentage holding this view is now at 58% and has increased over time. Notably, those old enough to remember the historic moon landing are actually somewhat less likely than those who are younger to think the space program's costs are justified. Among Americans aged 50 and older (who were at least 10 years old when the moon landing occurred), 54% think the space program's benefits justify its costs, compared with 63% of those aged 18-49.

PUBLIC SUPPORTS SPACE GENERALLY

OVERALL THE PUBLIC IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE SPACE PROGRAM

Gallup Survey, Gallup Organization, July 17, 2009

[<http://www.gallup.com/poll/121736/Majority-Americans-Say-Space-Program-Costs-Justified.aspx>]

Americans remain broadly supportive of space exploration and government funding of it. In fact, Americans are somewhat more likely to believe the benefits of the space program justify its costs at the 40th anniversary of the moon landing than they were at the 10th, 25th, and 30th anniversaries. Although support for keeping NASA funding at its present level or increasing it is lower now than it has been in the past, the fact that 6 in 10 Americans hold this view in the midst of a recession suggests the public is firmly committed to the space program.

LINKS: COOPERATION WITH CHINA

CONSERVATIVES OPPOSE INCREASED COOPERATION WITH CHINA

James Clay Moltz, professor national security, Naval Postgraduate School, January 2011

[Journal of Contemporary China, Issue 68, pp. 69-87, vol. 20]

Opponents of US-Chinese space cooperation, however, continue to fight such changes vehemently. Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (Rep., Calif.) warns that there would be military risks from such cooperation, drawing a linkage between alleged transfers of know-how between the Hughes and the Loral corporations and the Chinese Long March company in the 1990s to the current missile programs in Iran and North Korea. As Rohrabacher stated in a recent opinion piece, 'Make no mistake, China's eager pupils are making the most of this partnership'. Other conservative analysts make the case that China's increasingly militaristic direction in space is inevitable and that cooperation by the United States will only strengthen China's hand.

REPUBLICAN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS OPPOSE COOPERATION WITH CHINA

Reuters January 2, 2011

[<http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/2011/01/03/china-usa-space-2/>]

The idea of joint ventures in space, including spacewalks, explorations and symbolic "feel good" projects, have been floated from time to time by leaders on both sides. Efforts have gone nowhere over the past decade, swamped by economic, diplomatic and security tensions, despite a 2009 attempt by President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart, Hu Jintao, to kick-start the bureaucracies. US domestic politics make the issue unlikely to advance when Obama hosts Hu at the White House on Jan. 19. Washington is at odds with Beijing over its currency policies and huge trade surplus but needs China's help to deter North Korea and Iran's nuclear ambitions and advance global climate and trade talks, among other matters. Hu's state visit will highlight the importance of expanding cooperation on "bilateral, regional and global issues," the White House said. But space appears to be a frontier too far for now, partly due to US fears of an inadvertent technology transfer. China may no longer be much interested in any event, reckoning it does not need US expertise for its space program. New obstacles to cooperation have come from the Republicans capturing control of the US House of Representatives in the Nov. 2 congressional elections from Obama's Democrats. Representative Frank Wolf, for instance, is set to take over as chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds the US space agency in the House. A

China critic and human rights firebrand, the Republican congressman has faulted NASA's chief for meeting leaders of China's Manned Space Engineering Office in October.

LINKS: COOPERATION WITH CHINA

WIDE OPPOSITION FROM BOTH PARTIES TO SPACE COOPERATION WITH CHINA

Peter Brown, journalist, Asia Times, July 16, 2010

[http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/LG16Df02.html]

Political infighting aside, it is not just US conservatives who do not want the US to embrace China in space. "Many members of the Obama administration and a large majority of the members of Congress are opposed to cooperation with China in space. They want to deny China status as a member in good standing of the international community of space-faring nations," said Gregory Kulacki, senior analyst and China Project Manager for the Global Security Program at the Massachusetts-based Union of Concerned Scientists. "Many believe they have not earned that right. At the same time, however, they have not specified what China must do to earn it. Some tie cooperation in space to human rights. Others connect cooperation in space it to other troublesome issues in the bilateral relationship."

LINKS: SPACE BASED SOLAR POWER

THE PUBLIC WOULD FEAR AND OPPOSE SBSP

Txchnologist, General Electric (online magazine), April 4, 2011

[<http://www.txchnologist.com/volumes/solar-power/solar-in-space>]

Whatever the means of transmission, critics argue that an energy-rich beam from outer space would be subject to endless conspiracy theories and withering scrutiny – despite a 2009 NASA study that concluded microwaves from space would be slightly less intense than the sun’s rays and would pose no danger to people. “I have great confidence that the public will have a problem with it,” said Dr. Joseph Romm, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and writer of the popular Climate Progress blog. “People have a problem with noise from wind turbines and carbon dioxide bubbling up from carbon capture and storage near their homes.”

THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS LARGE PUBLIC-FUNDED SOLAR PROGRAMS

Shannon Eddy, executive director, Large-Scale Solar Association, May 29, 2011

[Sacramento Bee, <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/05/29/3660040/viewpoints-solar-power-plants.html>]

Dozens of public opinion polls repeatedly draw the same conclusions: The American people want solar, and they support it being built on public lands. In 2010, Kelton Research independently reported that 94 percent of Americans feel it's important for the U.S. to develop and use more solar energy. And three out of four Americans specifically support development of solar power plants on public lands, according to an independent 2010 poll by Gotham Research Group.

THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS SOLAR ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

Solar Town April 27, 2010

[<http://www.solartown.com/community/news/view/public-opinion-polls-show-strong-support-for-solar-energy>]

Two recent polls show strong public support for renewable energy technologies and, in particular, solar energy technologies. A poll released on Earth Day by the wind energy industry suggests that 52 percent of American voters believe the US economy would be stronger if the country depended more on renewable energy resources. Thirty

percent said the economy would be unchanged, and only 15 percent voted that the economy would be in worse shape.

LINKS: SPACE BASED SOLAR POWER

THE PUBLIC VIEWS SPENDING MONEY ON RENEWABLE ENERGY AS HELPING THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Solar Town April 27, 2010

[<http://www.solartown.com/community/news/view/public-opinion-polls-show-strong-support-for-solar-energy>]

According to a Northwestern University report, the poll reflects a general perception that investing in renewable energy can be a driving force in reviving the country's struggling manufacturing sector. Additionally, the poll found that 56 percent of Americans believe Congress is doing too little to bolster renewable energy in the United States. Only 29% of those surveyed said that the government's current involvement is adequate. The poll sampled 600 likely voters and was conducted through a bipartisan effort by Public Opinion Strategies and Bennett, Petts & Normington.

PUBLIC SUPPORTS SPENDING ON SOLAR ENERGY

Solar Town April 27, 2010

[<http://www.solartown.com/community/news/view/public-opinion-polls-show-strong-support-for-solar-energy>]

Industry experts, like Rhone Resch, president and CEO of SEIA, believe that this new polling information calls congress to pass legislation to promote renewable energy systems. "The polling data confirms what we already knew. The American public overwhelming supports the development of solar energy. It is time for our elected officials to respond to this high public demand and enact policies that allow solar to compete with other energy sources on a level playing field."

LINKS: LEADERSHIP

THE PUBLIC DOES NOT SUPPORT A MISSION TO MARS

Roger Launius, Division of Space History, Smithsonian Institution, 2003

[Space Policy, Volume 19, Issue 3, August 2003, pp. 163-175]

A human Mars mission also has never enjoyed much support from the American public. Consistently, as shown in Fig. 13, more people polled have opposed the mission than supported it. With that lukewarm support the nation's elected leaders will certainly not proceed down this policy path unless something else—probably some crisis—requires it. Accordingly, the advocates of human exploration of Mars must appreciate the historical issues at play with the JFK decision to move forward with Apollo. And using Apollo as a model—addressed as it was to a very specific political crisis relating to US/Soviet competition—one question for those seeking a decision to mount a human expedition to Mars is quite simple.

THE PUBLIC IS OPPOSED TO A MARS MISSION

Rasmussen Public Opinion Reports July 21, 2009

[http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/lifestyle/general_lifestyle/july_2009/51_oppose_u_s_manned_mission_to_mars]

Buzz Aldrin, one of the three U.S. astronauts who first walked on the moon in 1969, says America's next goal should be sending a manned mission to Mars, but just 29% of Americans agree. Fifty-one percent (51%) of adults are opposed to sending someone to Mars as one of the current goals of the U.S. space program, according to a new Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey. Twenty-one percent (21%) are not sure.

LINKS: LEADERSHIP

FEAR OF CHINA'S SPACE PROGRAM WON'T INCREASE POPULARITY

Space Politics June 18, 2008

[www.spacepolitics.com/2008/06/18/how-strong-is-public-support-for-space-exploration/]

The poll also shows that two of the key issues that space advocates have tried to use to win increased funding for NASA—the rise of China's space program and the impending Shuttle-Constellation gap—are having a mixed effect, at best. The poll found that only 32 percent were very or somewhat concerned that "China would become the new leader in space exploration or take the lead over the U.S.", compared to 28 percent in August 2006 and 33 percent in March 2006. The poll also found that 47 percent were very or somewhat concerned about the gap, compared to 52 percent who are not very or not at all concerned. Not surprisingly, then, 43 percent would be willing to some degree to raise taxes to try and close the gap, compared to 57 percent who were not.

LONG TERM ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS WON'T HELP POPULARITY

The Politico June 24, 2011

[http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0611/57676_Page2.html]

Obama's "win the future" message is a dose of Ronald Reagan optimism, but some Democrats worry it doesn't speak enough to the immediate concerns of struggling Americans. "He is in a box," said Douglas Schoen, a pollster to President Bill Clinton when he was running for a second term. "There is no consistent course of action they are pursuing, so there is no strategy. Ronald Reagan said, 'Stay the course,' but there is nothing to stay the course for."

LINKS: LEADERSHIP

“WINNING THE FUTURE” ISN’T A POPULAR ECONOMIC MESSAGE

Jim McTague, Barron’s Magazine, June 11, 2011

[http://online.barrons.com/article/SB50001424053111903425204576373451448216690.html?mod=BOL_twm_col]

Obama's economic pronouncements have done little to assuage the public's fears about the country's massive debt and a fragile economy that has been pummeled this spring by a tornado-tossing, flood-flinging Mother Nature. The public may well be overreacting. The biblical catastrophes may be the reason why the payroll numbers for May, which showed a gain of 54,000, were so anemic, compared with an average of 220,000 for the prior three months. Nevertheless, Obama and his economic team come across as being overly sanguine in the face of the ubiquitous misery caused by high unemployment, high gasoline prices and Depression-level foreclosures. Obama talks loftily about "winning the future" when millions of workers need opportunities today.

OBAMA MUST FOCUS ON DOMESTIC PRIORITIES

OBAMA MUST SHOW HIS PRIORITIES ARE DOWN TO EARTH

Jim Kouri, National Reporter, The Examiner, June 26, 2011

[<http://www.examiner.com/public-safety-in-national/half-of-americans-unlikely-to-vote-for-president-obama-according-to-poll>]

Granted it is over one year until the actual election and, at the moment, there is no clear front-runner among Republican challengers. There is much that will happen in the next 16 months and these numbers will go up and down many times. But, as the distress of the economy lingers and as the unemployment rate stays high, one thing is clear to the re-election campaign leadership -- they need to show that their candidate understands the priorities are here at home.

AMERICAN PUBLIC WANTS A REDUCED ROLE IN THE WORLD

Steven Kull, Program on International Policy Attitudes, June 2, 2010

[<http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brunitedstatescanadara/662.php?lb=brusc&pnt=662&nid=&id=>]

Stated briefly I think there are some signs that the public is feeling overextended and would like to lighten the burden of America's role in the world. This has actually been true for sometime, but it has been significantly exacerbated by the economic crisis and the effect of conducting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They feel the pressure of the budget deficit--something that concerns them.

OBAMA MUST FOCUS ON DOMESTIC PRIORITIES

AMERICAN ATTITUDES ARE GROWING INCREASINGLY AGAINST INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Steven Kull, Program on International Policy Attitudes, June 2, 2010

[<http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brunitedstatescanadara/662.php?lb=brusc&pnt=662&nid=&id=>]

Asked by Pew whether they agreed or disagreed that "The U.S. should mind its own business internationally and let other countries get along the best they can on their own," for the first time in more than 40 years of polling, a plurality of 49% agreed with this position. Questions that ask people to prioritize problems at home over problems abroad have always found majorities putting a higher priority on problems at home. But this majority has become larger. A new high of 76% agreed that "We should not think so much in international terms but concentrate more on our own national problems and building up our strength and prosperity here at home." Seventy-three percent want the president to focus on domestic policy more than on foreign policy. Again, this is commonly a majority preference, but 73% is the largest such majority since 1997. At this point there are no data showing a desire to cut US defense spending. However there are reasons to believe that as the problem of the deficit gains greater prominence over the next few years, that we will see greater pressure to reduce defense spending.

POLITICAL CAPITAL

SPACE BASED SOLAR POWER WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF PRESIDENTIAL POLITICAL CAPITAL

Azocleantech.com May 15, 2008

[<http://www.azocleantech.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=69>]

Overall, pushing forward on SBSP "is a complex problem and one that lends itself to a wide variety of competing solutions," said John Mankins, President of Artemis Innovation Management Solutions, LLC, in Ashburn, Virginia. "There's a whole range of science and technology challenges to be pursued. New knowledge and new systems concepts are needed in order to enable space based solar power. But there does not appear, at least at present, that there are any fundamental physical barriers," Mankins explained. Peter Teets, Distinguished Chair of the Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies, said that SBSP must be economically viable with those economics probably not there today. "But if we can find a way with continued technology development ... and smart moves in terms of development cycles to bring clean energy from space to the Earth, it's a home run kind of situation," he told attendees of the meeting. "It's a noble effort," Teets told Space News. There remain uncertainties in SBSP, including closure on a business case for the idea, he added. "I think the Air Force has a legitimate stake in starting it. But the scale of this project is going to be enormous. This could create a new agency ... who knows? It's going to take the President and a lot of political will to go forward with this," Teets said.

NEW SPACE PROGRAM WILL REQUIRE USE OF OBAMA'S POLITICAL CAPITAL

Houston Chronicle, September 13, 2009

[<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/nation/6615751.html>]

Presidential leadership will be essential to gaining an increase, emphasized John Logsdon, a space policy expert who served on the Shuttle Columbia Accident Investigation Board. "The president has to use some portion of his political capital to put forward an Obama space program."

GENERAL INTERNAL LINKS

ECONOMY IS THE KEY ISSUE

Reuters June 24, 2011

[<http://blogs.reuters.com/chrystia-freeland/2011/06/24/americas-economy-glass-half-full/>]

Is it morning in America? Or is now a time for blood, sweat, toil and tears? As the United States warms up for the presidential elections, the choice between those two narratives will be the most important decision each party makes and may determine who wins in 2012. Both are ways of talking about the economy — the issue that polls show overwhelmingly preoccupies U.S. voters. The morning-in-America storyline is that the financial crisis is over, the economy is healing and the country's innate powers of renewal, reinvention and innovation are already asserting themselves. The blood, sweat, toil and tears view is that the U.S. economy is still sick and that it will take a significant, arduous and collective effort to nurse it back to health.

POSITIVE BUMP FROM BIN LADEN KILLING IS OVER

Jim Kouri, National Reporter, The Examiner, June 26, 2011

[<http://www.examiner.com/public-safety-in-national/half-of-americans-unlikely-to-vote-for-president-obama-according-to-poll>]

In May, after announcing the death of Osama bin Laden, President Barack Obama's approval rating went up 8 points from the previous month, according to a Harris Interactive poll. One month later his ratings are back to what they were in April – 38% of Americans give him positive ratings for the job he is doing and 62% give President Obama negative marks. While it is probably not surprising that over nine in ten Republicans (93%) give the President negative ratings, two-thirds of Independents (65%) and one-third of Democrats (32%) also do.

GENERAL INTERNAL LINKS

BIN LADEN'S DEATH WON'T HELP PRESIDENT OBAMA

Elizabeth Bonner, New Statesman June 28, 2011

[<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/star-spangled-staggers/2011/06/bin-laden-2012-election-obama>]

The reason for this dramatic change in opinion is obvious: people forget. In the midst of economic hardship, people will forget a leader's accomplishments and the positive ways in which he has impacted the country. What people remember is losing their job months ago and having no prospects of reversing their unemployed status. People remember inflation that makes it impossible to provide for their family. People remember the foreclosure of their house. People remember their taxes are at an all time high and getting higher every day. This is why bin Laden's death will not determine the results of the 2012 election.

THE ELECTION WILL BE BASED ON EVERYDAY ISSUES

Elizabeth Bonner, New Statesman June 28, 2011

[<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/star-spangled-staggers/2011/06/bin-laden-2012-election-obama>]

Yes, following the news that American forces had killed the wanted terrorist, Obama's approval rating increased from 47 per cent to 56 per cent in a Pew Research Center poll, a number still much lower than the response to Bush Sr.'s Operation Desert Storm. A recent Gallup poll regarding the 2012 election, however, revealed that 39 per cent of US voters plan to vote for Obama, while 44 per cent are already willing to commit their vote to any GOP candidate - and this is still in the wake of bin Laden's death. It seems the hype has already begun its decline. Gallup's most recent poll of Obama's job approval revealed the figure has fallen to 43 per cent. This suggests the 2012 election will not be ruled by foreign policy, and will instead be fought on domestic issues that affect voters everyday.

GENERAL INTERNAL LINKS

OBAMA'S RE-ELECTION CHANCES ARE FADING

Ed Morrissey, Hot Air, political blog, June 28, 2011

[<http://hotair.com/archives/2011/06/28/obama-gets-lowest-scores-yet-on-economy-deficit-in-marist-poll/>]

Barack Obama's chances of winning a second term seem to be fading, according to McClatchy's report on their poll conducted in partnership with Marist. His approval ratings on the economy and on the federal budget deficit have hit new lows in the poll, usually a big indicator on re-election prospects.

OBAMA HAS SUCCESSFULLY DEFLECTED BLAME ON THE ECONOMY

Ed Morrissey, Hot Air, political blog, June 28, 2011

[<http://hotair.com/archives/2011/06/28/obama-gets-lowest-scores-yet-on-economy-deficit-in-marist-poll/>]

Even with these poor results, Obama manages to get a 50/44 on personal favorability. His job approval rating is slightly underwater at 45/47, which Marist's analyst claims will make the presidential election "competitive" in 2012. One reason those numbers have mainly held in place in Marist's poll series is the fact that a large majority still believe that Obama inherited the economic problems rather than caused them, almost 2-1 at 61/31. Obama has successfully reserved that as a way to keep voters from personally blaming him for their woes.

SLOWING ECONOMY WILL SINK PRESIDENT OBAMA

Ed Morrissey, Hot Air, political blog, June 28, 2011

[<http://hotair.com/archives/2011/06/28/obama-gets-lowest-scores-yet-on-economy-deficit-in-marist-poll/>]

However, that won't keep them from changing horses if they don't see his policies working, and majorities almost as large do not. On the economy, Obama is 21 points underwater at 37/58. His numbers on managing the federal deficit are the exact opposite of the "inherited" question, 31/61. Whatever the cause of the economic problems we face now, voters don't see Obama as the solution. Even the "don't blame me" strategy has its limits. If the economy tips over into recession again this summer, as indicators are starting to suggest, Obama won't be able to blame that on George W.

Bush. He'll own that one all by himself, and the last fig leaf for Obama on the economy will finally drop.

GENERAL INTERNAL LINKS

MOST AMERICANS WON'T VOTE FOR OBAMA

Jim Kouri, National Reporter, The Examiner, June 26, 2011

[<http://www.examiner.com/public-safety-in-national/half-of-americans-unlikely-to-vote-for-president-obama-according-to-poll>]

Early in May 46% of Americans said, if the election for President were to be held today, they would be likely to vote for President Obama and 47% said they would be unlikely. Later in May that number dropped a little and 43% said they would be likely to vote for the current president and 49% said they would be unlikely to do so. Currently, over half of Americans (52%) say they would be unlikely to vote for President Obama if the election were to be held today and 41% say they would be likely to vote for him.

OBAMA WILL BE ABLE TO CAPTURE THE ECONOMIC ISSUE

Alex Slater, The Guardian, June 13, 2011

[<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/jun/13/barack-obama-us-elections-2012>]

Yet ... the economy remains the most vexing issue and, very likely, the major battleground for the 2012 elections. As things now stand, the chances of unemployment decreasing to below 8% by election day are, we are told by economists, relatively small. This prognostication has Republicans crowing that no president – at least, a modern president – has ever been reelected with an unemployment rate above 7.2%. This is technically true. But as Cooke notes, Ronald Reagan was the president who was re-elected when unemployment was at 7.2%, and he won in a 49-state landslide. Part of this is a question of empathy: do voters believe that a president genuinely shares their pain (the answer for Bush Sr, for example, was a resounding no). For Obama, the great communicator, it is quite clear he shares the pain of the American people.

GENERAL INTERNAL LINKS

OBAMA HAS NO PLAN TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMY

Peter Goodman, business editor, The Huffington Post June 3, 2011

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/03/obama-jobs-leadership-fail_n_870946.html]

That said, this White House has aided and abetted its adversaries through a strategically foolish attempt to carve out a position of seeming responsibility on the federal budget deficit. Back in 2009, just as he stepped into office, Obama could have told us that all options were bad (not to mention inherited from his predecessor): We could add to our debts, accepting the long-term risks, while investing in a meaningful future that holds the promise of putting Americans back to work; or we could obsess about the deficits, listen to Republicans who delivered it (via wars, reckless tax cuts, and the Great Recession) and start hacking away at spending. Instead, Obama began talking like a deficit hawk, even as he unleashed the stimulus spending package, thereby handing the Republicans the club they have been using to beat him with (along with the national interest) ever since. This is why all the talk in Washington these days is about what to cut, what program to cancel, what aid not to deliver to strapped states, and which layoffs to accept as the unavoidable cost of so-called fiscal responsibility. This is how we got to this moment of permanently diminished expectations and tacit acceptance of the current state of American life: broken to the core and supposedly no will, no money, no political capital to direct at fixing it.

OBAMA NARROWLY FOCUSING ON IMPROVING THE ECONOMY

Washington Post January 30, 2011

[www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2011/01/29/AR2011012904319.html]

Less than three months since his party's major election losses, President Obama has presided over a West Wing makeover designed to help him keep a sharp focus on economic issues heading into his 2012 reelection campaign, while drawing clear lines of distinction with newly empowered Republicans. The full rollout of Obama 2.0 began last week with a State of the Union address that called for more spending to spur jobs and keep up with global competitors, followed by a string of key staffing changes in the senior ranks of a White House that has been criticized as too insular and slow to grasp the economic anxiety being felt by many Americans. Several Democrats who have advised the administration in recent weeks said Obama appears to have embraced the

idea that his White House needs a more focused domestic policy mission after two years spent battling over health care and reacting to crises such as the financial system collapse and the gulf oil spill.

GENERAL INTERNAL LINKS

**OBAMA MUST FOLLOW A BIPARTISAN, CENTRIST PATH TO MAINTAIN
POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Doug Schoen, political strategist, Wall Street Journal 11.4.10

[<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703506904575592192122802022.html>]

Overall, the president should make it clear that his administration has gotten the message of this election by demonstrating a commitment to economic revitalization, job creation, fiscal discipline and broad-based engagement economically and politically with our allies overseas. Mr. Obama faces a historic choice. He can become marginalized and largely irrelevant—as was Jimmy Carter in much of his last two years in office. Or he can return to the promise of his campaign when he offered to eschew partisanship and pursue the centrist agenda that the American people elected him to advance.

LINKS OUTWEIGH THE TURNS

NEGATIVES STAND OUT MORE THAN POSITIVES

Elizabeth Bonner, New Statesman June 28, 2011

[<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/star-spangled-staggers/2011/06/bin-laden-2012-election-obama>]

Back in May, with the 2012 election still over a year away, many were ready to cancel it and hand Obama another four years. People believed the assassination of Osama bin Laden sealed his already likely victory. There was one big problem with this conclusion: when election time rolls around and people review a politician's time in office, the negatives stand out while the positives seems to disappear.

EXAMPLE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENT BUSH PROVES NEGATIVES OUTWEIGH POSITIVES

Elizabeth Bonner, New Statesman June 28, 2011

[<http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/star-spangled-staggers/2011/06/bin-laden-2012-election-obama>]

Look at George H.W. Bush's short and sweet term. In March of 1991, following the successful Gulf War, Bush Sr.'s approval rating reached an all time high of 87 per cent and remained relatively high for the rest of the year, according to a Roper Center Public Opinion Archive. Many of the most qualified Democratic nominees felt their efforts would be wasted against the popular president and opted out of the race, as Nate Silver pointed out in a New York Times blog. By the 1992 election, however, recession had crept in and Bush Sr.'s approval rating had fallen to 30 per cent. Bill Clinton won decisively.