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ABC NEWS/MONEY CONSUMER INDEX - 11/10/96
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REPUBLICAN REACTION:
A DROP IN CONFIDENCE

Republicans smarting from last week's election have knocked consumer confidence off its seven-year high, though a brightening among Democrats mitigated the hit in the latest ABC News/Money magazine poll.

The ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index stands at -9 on its scale of +100 to -100. It started slipping in advance of the election, from a high of -5 on Oct. 20, as Republicans anticipated Bob Dole's defeat at the polls.

Republicans, who tend to have higher incomes, usually express greater consumer confidence. But the ABC/Money index among Republicans has fallen from +10 in late September to -12 today, its worst in more than a year.

In about the same time, though, the index among Democrats has improved from -13 to 0. Among independents it dipped from -9 to a low of -17 last week, but recovered this week to -12.

	ABC/Money Index	
	This week	September
All	-9	-5
Republicans	-12	+10
Democrats	0	-13
Independents	-12	-9

Since confidence customarily is higher among Republicans, they may perk up as their election wounds heal - as long as the economy cooperates. In any case, it may take a few weeks for the effects of the election to work their way out of public views of economic conditions.

ELECTION - Strong consumer confidence was the main factor in Bill Clinton's re-election, as it usually is for incumbents. The ABC/Money index today looks a lot like it did in 1988, when George Bush won as the surrogate incumbent; and it's far better than it was in 1992, when Bush lost.

	ABC/Money Index
Today	-9
1996 average	-12
1992	-44
1988	-9

In ABC's exit poll, 55 percent of voters rated the economy positively, up from 19 percent in 1992. But the age of anxiety is not yet over: The number saying their own finances have improved was still not up to its level in the 1980s; and only 29 percent said they expect life for the next generation of Americans to be better than life today.

INDICES - The index is based on ratings of personal finances, the economy and the buying climate. Fifty-seven percent now say their own finances are in good shape, down four points from its recent high on Oct. 13.

The other two gauges are, as usual, much more negative. Sixty-four percent call it a bad time to buy things, up four points since Sept. 29. And 57 percent rate the national economy negatively. (Voters, who tend to be better off than the public at large, gave better ratings to the economy.)

While these numbers include some built-in skepticism, they're much better than they've been. At the start of this year 66 percent of Americans said the economy was in bad shape; in January 1993 it was a record 93 percent; and the 1990-93 average was 85 percent negative.

	Today	1990-93	1986-90
Negative on national economy	57	85	59
Negative on buying climate	64	74	61
Positive on personal finances	57	49	57

GROUPS - Confidence still lags in economically vulnerable groups, including women, the poor and the less-educated. The index is -2 among men but -16 among women; +12 in higher-income households but -39 in the lowest; and +2 among people who have attended college but -42 among high school dropouts.

There's less of a difference than usual between blacks and whites, because the index has improved among blacks (almost all Clinton supporters) while worsening among whites (who include more Dole supporters). The index also has worsened among higher-income respondents, for the same reason; more of them are Republicans.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Money index:

NATIONAL ECONOMY- Fifty-seven percent rate the economy negatively, down one from last week. It's averaged 62 percent this year, compared to 85 percent from 1990-93 and 59 percent from 1986-1990. The worst, 93 percent, was in late 1991 and early 1992; the best, 50-50, was April 27, 1986. The average for the life of the index is 69 percent negative.

PERSONAL FINANCES - Fifty-seven percent rate their finances positively, down a point. It's averaged 57 percent this year, compared to 49 percent in the 1990-93 slump and 57 percent before the recession. The worst was 58 percent negative March 14, 1993; the best, 62 percent positive Dec. 20, 1987. The full average is 54 percent positive.

BUYING CLIMATE - Sixty-four percent call this a bad time to buy things, up one from last week. It's averaged 63 percent this year, compared to 74 percent during the 1990-93 slump and 61 percent before the recession. The worst is 80 percent negative Nov. 2 and Oct. 28, 1990; the best, 52 percent positive May 11, 1986. The full average is 66 percent negative.

	National Economy	Personal Finances	Buying Climate
This week	57% neg	57% pos	64% neg
1996 Average	62% neg	57% pos	63% neg

Recession Average (mid-1990 to 1993)	85% neg	51% neg	74% neg
Pre-Recession Avg. (1986 to mid-1990)	59% neg	57% pos	61% neg
Full Average (1986-1995)	69% neg	54% pos	66% neg
Worst	93% neg	58% neg	80% neg
Best	50% pos	62% pos	52% pos

METHODOLOGY - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. Interviewing by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa. This week's results are based on 1,032 interviews in the month ending Nov. 10 and have an error margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

The ABC/Money index is derived as follows: The negative response to each index question is subtracted from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are then added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

Analysis by Gary Langer. For details contact the ABC News Polling Unit, (212) 456-2621.

ABC polls are available in the ABC News area of America Online.

11/10/96	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
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Group

GENERAL POPULATION:

Overall Index	-9	-9	-5	-11	-19	-5	-21	-12
State of Economy	-14	-16	-14	-20	-36	-14	-38	-26
Personal Finances	14	16	22	14	10	22	8	14
Buying Climate	-28	-26	-22	-28	-32	-18	-36	-26

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Sex:

Men	-2	-4	0	-1	-11	7	-11	-1
Women	-16	-14	-8	-21	-26	-8	-33	-22

Age:

18 - 34	-9	-11	-3	-17	-19	-3	-23	-11
35 - 44	-21	-21	-12	-4	-13	-3	-23	-15
45 - 54	-11	-1	10	-8	-14	12	-36	-13
55 - 64	12	5	-3	-12	-30	12	-40	-13
65 +	-6	-5	-10	-12	-23	9	-34	-11

Income:

Under \$15K	-39	-41	-42	-52	-50	-39	-61	-50
\$15K To \$24.9K	-34	-35	-18	-31	-42	-12	-48	-32
\$25K To \$39.9K	-8	-15	-19	-15	-20	-2	-26	-13
\$40K To \$49.9K	14	11	6	9	-11	21	-31	2
Over \$50K	12	18	35	21	16	35	12	22
Region:								
Northeast	-11	-13	-16	-21	-25	-9	-34	-19
Midwest	7	2	6	6	-21	10	-21	-3
South	-14	-12	-3	-11	-22	-2	-24	-14
West	-17	-13	-9	-21	-6	6	-23	-14
Race:								
White	-9	-10	-1	-7	-15	1	-15	-8
Black	-13	-10	-28	-37	-48	-10	-56	-39
Politics:								
Republican	-12	-8	3	-3	-4	11	-12	1
Democrat	0	0	-3	-8	-25	0	-28	-15
Independent	-12	-17	-13	-16	-24	-8	-26	-17
Education:								
< High School	-42	-35	-28	-36	-43	-28	-50	-40
High Sch. Grad.	-8	-11	-9	-18	-26	-7	-30	-19
College +	2	2	7	3	-4	11	-6	3
Home:								
Own	-3	-4	0	-4	-14	2	-15	-6
Rent	-24	-21	-13	-30	-35	-13	-37	-29
Marital Status:								
Single	-8	-17	-14	-16	-9	0	-26	-13
Married	-7	-4	1	-6	-16	2	-18	-7
Sep/Wid/Div	-18	-20	-15	-25	-44	-15	-45	-31
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-5	-4	2	-3	-13	7	-14	-4
Part-Time	-24	-29	-10	-22	-21	-8	-35	-19
Not Employed	-10	-9	-11	-20	-28	-9	-33	-22