

Most Oppose Bombing Serbia, But Half Back a Peacekeeping Role

Most Americans rule out bombing Serbia, but half do endorse sending U.S. troops to help enforce a peace treaty in its embattled Kosovo region.

Sixty-two percent in an ABC News/Washington Post poll say the United States should not bomb Serbia if it refuses to go along with a peace plan for Kosovo. Only 26 percent say they would support that kind of attack, which NATO has threatened.

At the same time, if there were a peace treaty to enforce, 50 percent say they'd support sending U.S. ground forces, along with troops from the European allies, to try to make it stick. Forty-two percent would oppose the use of U.S. troops.

These results, taken together, indicate that Americans are more interested in helping to keep the peace once it's occurred, than in stepping into a fight while it's still going on.

	Yes	No
Bomb Serbia?	26%	62
Join a peacekeeping force?	50	42

More broadly, most Americans seem dubious about the justification for military involvement in Kosovo. Fifty-seven percent say U.S. vital interests are not at stake in the situation there, while barely over a quarter say the opposite.

Ethnic Albanians from Kosovo said Monday they would sign the peace plan. NATO has warned it may launch air strikes against Serbia if it does not sign, as well.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone March 11-14, 1999, among a random national sample of 1,515 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Field work by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:
<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Results on Kosovo follow:

23. Now I'd like to ask you a question about Kosovo, the region of Serbia where many civilians have been killed in fighting between Serbian forces and Kosovo rebels. Do you think America's vital interests are at stake in the situation involving Kosovo, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
3/14/99	27	57	15

Compare To:

Do you think America's vital interests are at stake in the situation involving Bosnia, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
7/17/95	36	59	5
6/26/94	31	58	11

24. The United States has said it may bomb Serbia unless Serbia agrees to a peace plan for Kosovo. If Serbia does not agree to the peace plan, should the United States bomb Serbia or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
3/14/99	26	62	12

25. Would you support or oppose the United States, along with its allies in Europe, sending in ground forces to try to enforce a peace treaty in Kosovo?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
3/14/99	50	42	9

Compare To:

Would you support or oppose the United States, along with its allies in Europe, sending in ground forces to try to stop the fighting in Bosnia?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
7/17/95	40	58	3
2/7/94	47	50	3
5/6/93	40	58	2