Korea, Containing Communism

During the Korean War, more Americans believed that the United States was right to send troops to stop the communist invasion than believed it was wrong. In general, containing communism had strong support.

Question: As things stand now, do you think the United States was right or wrong in deciding to send American troops to stop the communist invasion in Korea?

- The United States was right to send troops to stop the communist invasion in Korea
- Wrong
- Don't know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1952</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep.</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center.

Question: As you look back on the Korean war, do you think the United States did the right thing in sending troops to stop the communist invasion, or should we have stayed out of it entirely?

1953

- United States did the right thing sending troops to stop the communist invasion in Korea
- Should have stayed out
- Don't know

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, September 1953.

Question: If communist armies attack any other countries in the world, do you think the United States should stay out of it, or should we help defend these countries, like we did in Korea?

Percent

If communist armies attack any other countries in the world, the United States should...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Help defend</th>
<th>Stay out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1950</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1951</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1952</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1953</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1955</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1956</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center.

Question: Do you think it makes much difference to our country whether China goes communist or not?

1948

- Yes, makes much difference to our country whether China goes communist

Stay out 71%

Question: Do you think the United States should send military supplies to help those countries in Asia that are threatened by communism?

1952

- U.S. should send military supplies to help Asian countries threatened by communism

Help defend 54%

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, latest that of June 1952.
Vietnam

The view that we made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam took hold after 1965. Still, Americans wanted to keep the pressure up on the North, including bombing, and saw themselves more as hawks than doves.

Question: In view of the developments since we entered the fighting in Vietnam, do you think the United States made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam?

![Graph showing percentage of people who believed the United States made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam from September 1965 to January 1973.](source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of January 12-15, 1973)

Question: Some people have said we should go all out in bombing North Vietnam until the communists are ready to negotiate. Others say we should stop bombing North Vietnam right now and call upon the communists to negotiate. What is your opinion, should we go all out or stop bombing in North Vietnam?

1965

- 16% Don't know
- 21% Continue as at present
- 52% Stop bombing

1966

- 27% Don't know
- 26% More inclined to agree with the hawks
- 47% "Doves"

1967

- 10% No opinion
- 66% United States should continue bombing North Vietnam


Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, March 24-29, 1966.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, February 16-21, 1967.
Nicaragua, Grenada, Libya, Iraq

The quick strategic actions in Grenada and Libya had wide public support, and solid majorities believed, and continue to believe, that the war to defeat Iraq was worth its costs to us. Americans were consistently skeptical, however, of U.S. involvement in Nicaragua.

Question: Ronald Reagan says the United States should help the people in Nicaragua who are trying to overthrow the pro-Soviet government there. Other people say that even if our country does not like the government in Nicaragua, we should not help overthrow it. Do you think we should help the people trying to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, or should we not help them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Help the People</th>
<th>Not Help</th>
<th>Don't Know/No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jun. 1983</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 1984</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1984</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Question: Now I want to ask you a few questions about the events in the Caribbean island of Grenada. First, would you say you approve or disapprove of the invasion of Grenada by U.S. troops?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Question: Do you approve or disapprove of United States jets bombing Libya last night (April 14, 1986)? (CBS/NYT)

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the United States having launched the military air strike against Libya on April 14, 1986? (ABC/WP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Question: Given the loss of life and the other costs of the war in the Persian Gulf, do you think the war to defeat Iraq is likely to be worth the cost (Jan.–Feb.). Given the loss of life and other costs of war in the Persian Gulf, do you think the war to defeat Iraq was worth the cost, or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Worth it</th>
<th>Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1991</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1992</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1993</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: For months when more than one survey was conducted, the latest asking is shown.
Somalia, Former Yugoslavia

Americans support U.S. humanitarian efforts in Somalia, though we worry about an open-ended commitment. We are opposed to U.S. military involvement in the former Yugoslavia, but supportive of U.N. efforts there.

Question: Now I'd like to turn to the issue of American troops in Somalia. In general, do you approve or disapprove of the presence of U.S. troops in Somalia?

1993

Approve of the presence of U.S. troops in Somalia

79%

Source: Surveys by Yankelovich Partners, Inc., for Time and CNN, January 13–14, 1993

Question: Do you think U.S. troops should stay in Somalia only as long as it takes to set up supply lines to make sure people don't starve, or do you think they should stay there as long as it takes to make sure Somalia will remain peaceful?

U.S. troops should stay in Somalia...

- Only as long as it takes to set up supply lines
- As long as it takes to keep Somalia peaceful
- Don't know

Dec. 1992

48% 44% 8%

Jan. 1993

17% 48% 5%

Note: Includes 3% who volunteered the response "shouldn't be there.

Source: Survey by CRS News/New York Times, January 12–14, 1993

Question: As you may know, violence has erupted in the city of Sarajevo and the surrounding area called Bosnia, one of the new republics that used to be part of Yugoslavia. Should the United States do more to stop the war in Sarajevo and Bosnia, or has the United States already done enough?

United States has done enough to stop the war in Sarajevo and Bosnia

- Should do more

Aug. 1992

49% 37%

Jan. 1993

59% 30%

Source: Surveys by Yankelovich Partners, Inc., for Time and CNN, January 13–14, 1993

1993

Support sending United Nations troops including some U.S. troops to help Bosnians defend themselves against the Serbs

- Favor

34%

- Not sure

12%

- Do not favor sending U.S. troops to help stop civil war there

54%

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, January 22–26, 1993

Note: In an August 1992 NBC News/Wall Street Journal survey, 33% favored sending troops and 54% opposed the measure.

Sources:
Offense and Defense

Americans who think we are losing influence in the world see it as a bad thing; those who see us gaining see it as a plus. In terms of our general involvement abroad, we prefer U.N. or allied actions but recognize that there will be times when we must act alone. We want a defensive posture that is neither too weak nor unnecessarily costly.

Question: Generally speaking, is the United States becoming more influential or less influential in world affairs?

- 56% United States is becoming more influential in world affairs
- 43% Less influential
- 1% Don't know/no opinion
- 24% considered this a good thing
- 70% a bad thing
- 78% considered this a good thing
- 18% a bad thing


Question: When it comes to foreign policy and defense issues, some people think of themselves as hawks—or people who believe the United States should be ready and willing to use military force around the world. Others see themselves as doves—or people who are very reluctant to use military force. How about you, on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is dovish and 7 is very hawkish, where are you on this scale of 1 to 7?

- 23% Dovish (points 1–3)
- 23% Mid (4)
- 51% Hawkish (5–7)


Question: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

United States should commit its troops...

- Only as part of a United Nations operation: 87%
- Only with other allies: 73%
- On its own in some cases: 62%


Question: Thinking about the United States and the United Nations, when faced with future problems involving aggression, who should take the lead?

- United Nations should take the lead: 80%
- United States should take the lead: 17%
- Neither one should take the lead: 3%


Question: When asked “if the United Nations refused to take the lead and a dictator was pursuing aggression against another country, what should the United States do?”

- 56% take the lead
- 24% wait for other nations to act
- 16% stay out of it

Question: I'm going to read you some proposals that are now being discussed nationally. As I read each, tell me if you generally favor or oppose it.

- Favor deep cuts in the military budget beyond those now planned: 6%
- Oppose: 52%
- Favor moderate cuts: 31%
- Favor major cuts: 17%
- Do not favor additional cuts in military spending: 39%
- Minor cuts: 10%
- 3% No opinion


Question: Considering the state of the world today, do you favor or oppose additional cuts in U.S. military spending? If “yes”: Would you favor major cuts, moderate cuts, or only minor cuts?

Share of tax dollars spent on...

- Too much
- Too little
- About right
- No opinion

Military and defense programs: 50% Too much, 6% Too little, 39% About right, 5% No opinion
Social security: 10% Too much, 39% Too little, 45% About right, 6% No opinion
Health: 11% Too much, 66% Too little, 18% About right, 5% No opinion
