Table 2.3

Attitudes toward important issues for the government to address

United States, 1993-97

Question: "What do you think are the two most important issues for the government to address?"

Issue	October 1993	November 1994	October 1995	April 1996	June 1997
Federal deficit	11%	11%	18%	22%	19%
Health care	55	30	16	16	9
Crime/violence	12	37	16	16	17
The economy[a]	13	12	10	14	6
Education	8	10	9	14	14
Welfare	3	9	12	13	12
Taxes	11	14	11	11	11
Employment/jobs	14	10	6	9	6
Programs for the elderly	3	4	7	6	2
Domestic/social issues[a]	8	5	5	4	3
Drugs	3	3	5	4	8
Abortion	2	2	2	4	3
Medicare[b]	X	X	14	3	4
Foreign policy[a]	3	4	4	3	4
Peace/world peace/nuclear arms	3	1	2	3	2
Homelessness[c]	X	X	4	3	4
(Programs for) the poor	3	7	3	2	2

Note: The issues mentioned are spontaneous, unprompted replies by the respondents. The numbers indicate the percent of respondents who mentioned the item as one of the top two issues for the government to address. Some issues mentioned by a relatively small percentage of respondents have been omitted. For a discussion of public opinion survey sampling procedures, see Appendix 6.

[a]Non-specific.
[b]Previously coded under "programs for the elderly."
[c]Previously coded under "programs for the poor."

Source: Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., **The Harris Poll**, Apr. 10, 1996, p. 3; June 16, 1997, p. 6 (Los Angeles: Creators Syndicate, Inc.). Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff. Reprinted by permission.