

For the Record...

PUBLIC OPINION *Misses* **ON RUSSIA...**

BUT *Scores* **ON WORLD ORGANIZATION**



NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

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10 cents

Public Opinion Misses . . .

RUSSIA DID FIGHT JAPAN

The entrance of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan came as a surprise to many but by no means all Americans. A trend on the fluctuating percentage of the public expecting a Russian declaration of war was accumulated by the National Opinion Research Center, which studied national attitudes on the issue over a period of more than two years. On each of six nation-wide surveys, NORC asked a representative cross-section of civilian adults:

"If Germany is knocked out of the war first, do you think Russia will continue fighting and help us beat Japan, or not?"

	June 1943	Sept. 1943	Nov. 1943	Feb. 1944	March 1945	August* 1945
Russia will fight Japan.....	48%	35%	49%	44%	64%	47%
Russia will not.....	28	40	31	33	19	37
Don't know.....	24	25	20	23	17	16
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

It will be noticed that the percentage of "Don't know" responses—always high on questions regarding Russia—declined significantly toward the end of the war. On each separate NORC survey most of the differences of opinion among population groups were too small to be at all significant, and changes in opinion **between surveys** held constant for all groups.

A comparable question asked by the American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Poll)—"Do you think Russia will join us in the war against Japan?"—drew results very similar to NORC's, particularly just after the Crimea Conference, when the March '45 results showed a 64 (NORC) or 65 (AIPO) per cent majority of the public anticipating Russia's entrance into the Pacific war. In July '45, however, Gallup found only 39 per cent expecting Russia to fight Japan. Even the 47 per cent figure reported by NORC in August indicated that, the very week before the actual Soviet declaration of war, on August 8, 1945, **less than half of the people in the United States were correct in their appraisal of Russian policy.**

In spite of the wide fluctuation in opinion regarding the **probability** of Russia's joining the war against Japan, a large majority of Americans believed that the Soviet Union **was obligated** to enter the war in the Far East.

In March, 1945, just after the Crimea Conference, NORC asked:

"Do you think Russia owes it to the United States to continue fighting and help us beat Japan?"

Yes.....85% No.....11% Don't know.....4% = 100%

NORC found that majorities in all population groups believed that Russia owed it to the United States to fight Japan. The smallest majority (75%) was among the college-educated, with the largest among residents of the Midwest (89%), manual workers (88%) and persons with no more than a grade school education (88%).

A Gallup Poll question, released in mid-July, 1945, found majorities of all population groups responding similarly to this question:

"Do you want to see Russia join us in the war against Japan, or would you rather not see her join us?"

Want Russia to join.....77% Do not.....14% Don't know.....9% = 100%

*First week.

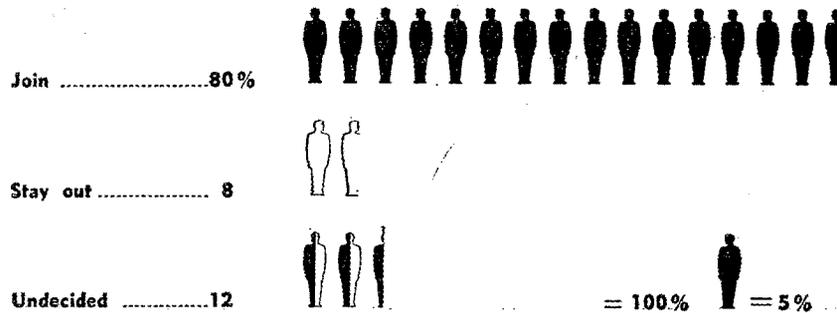
Public Opinion Scores a Bullseye . . .

THE UNITED STATES IS A MEMBER OF THE WORLD SECURITY ORGANIZATION

The American public foresaw with extreme accuracy that the United States Senate would approve the Charter of the World Security Organization which grew out of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals and the San Francisco Conference. Early in July, 1945, while the conference was still in session, the National Opinion Research Center studied public opinion on the issue by asking a nation-wide cross-section these two questions:

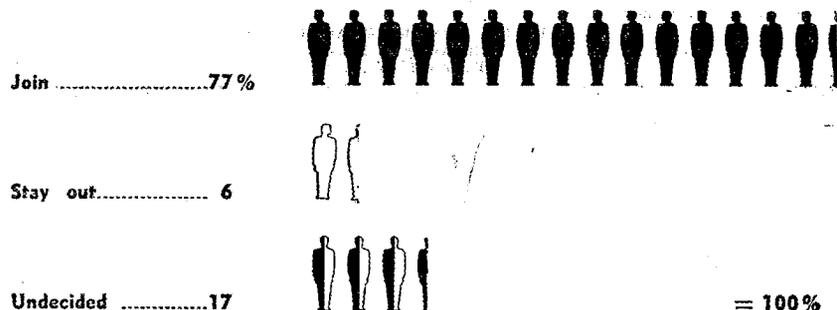
"Would you like to see the United States join the world organization set up at San Francisco, or would you like to see us stay out?"

Public wanted to see the United States . . .



"As you know, before the United States can join the world organization, two-thirds of the Senators have to approve it. Do you expect two-thirds of the Senators to vote to join, or not?"

Public thought the Senate would vote to . . .



On both questions the "Stay out" response was markedly smaller than the "Undecided."

Since Pearl Harbor, whenever a public opinion poll has asked a question regarding a possible post-war world organization, a majority of the American public have expressed approval of the idea in principle. The strength and stability of public opinion in favor of United States participation in a world organization was tested by NORC in the spring of 1945. Two questions, one stating arguments **against** a world organization, the other stating arguments in **favor** of it, were asked separate but comparable cross-sections in the United States. Apparently, a strong majority favored United States membership **no matter how the question was worded**. The comparison:

This question states arguments **against** membership:

"Some people say that there will ALWAYS be wars and that getting this country into some kind of world organization would only get us mixed up into somebody else's business. After the war, would you like to see the United States stay out of a world organization, or belong to it?"

Belong to.....74% Stay out of.....18% Undecided.....8% = 100%

This question-wording includes arguments **in favor** of membership:

"Some people say that future wars CAN be prevented if all nations will only get together in some kind of world organization with enough power to stop any invaders. After the war, would you like to see the United States belong to a world organization, or stay out of it?"

Belong to.....81% Stay out of.....12% Undecided.....7% = 100%

This report is based on several nation-wide surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, University of Denver. The scientifically determined cross-sections consisted of typical miniatures of the population of the United States with the proper proportion, in each geographical section, of men and women, young and old, rich and poor, various minority groups, and residents of cities, towns, and rural areas. Well-established laws of probable error due to size of sample prove that the cross-sections used in the NORC and AIPO surveys reported should be within 4 per cent of true opinion in 997 surveys out of any 1,000 conducted under comparable conditions.

Write to NORC for a complete list of publications or for additional information regarding the national cross-section and survey methods used.

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