

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

February 4, 2011

State of the Union 2011

During Tough Economic Times, Obama's Vision Inspires Confidence



DEMOCRACY CORPS
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Methodology

This presentation is based primarily on dial focus groups conducted with 50 swing voters (independents or weak partisans) in Denver, CO on January 25, 2011 during President Obama's State of the Union Address.

- Group was split evenly between Obama and McCain Voters**
- But also had a Republican tilt as 48 percent leaned toward the Republicans, 34 percent were straight independents and 18 percent leaned toward the Democrats**

Shifts in Measures

Measures	Pre-Speech	Post-Speech	Shift (Post – Pre-Speech)
Obama Job Approval: Total Approve	30	56	+26
Has Realistic Solutions to Country's Problems: Total Describes Well	18	52	+34
Has Good Plans for the Economy: Total Describes Well	16	52	+36
Creating New Jobs: Total Confident	24	52	+28
Tax and Spend Liberal: Total Describes Well	72	36	-36
Energy: Total Confident	46	68	+22
The Federal Budget: Total Confident	8	44	+36

Sections that worked

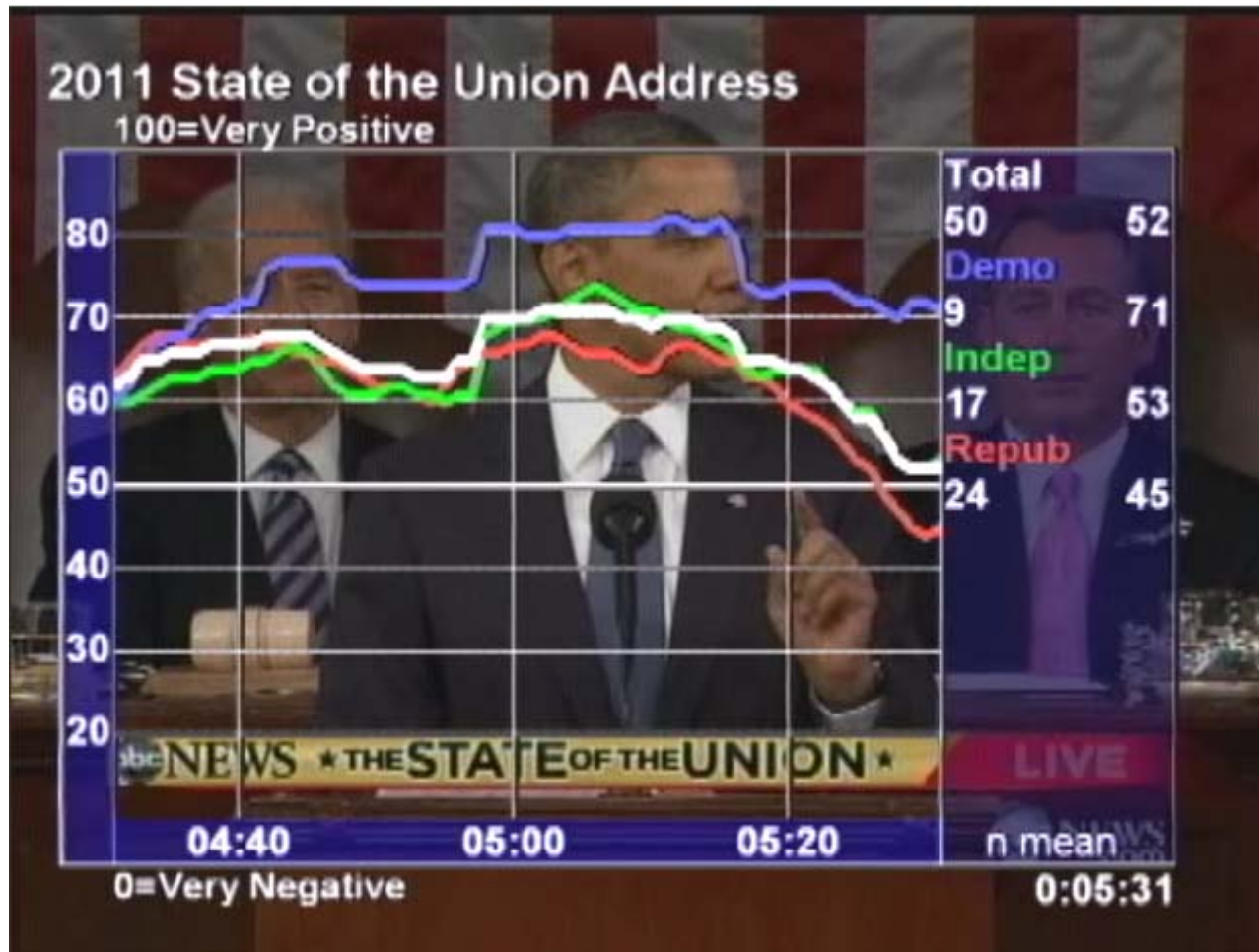
- *“Out innovate, out educate and out-build the rest of the world.”*
- *“The rules have changed.”*
- *Ending oil subsidies and moving to clean energy.*
- *The race to educate our kids: Parental involvement, high expectations and high rewards for teachers.*
- *Making college affordable.*
- *Government efficiency and accountability.*
- *Protecting reforms on pre-existing conditions and moving beyond the health care battles of the last two years.*
- *Protecting Social Security.*
- *Ending tax cuts for the wealthiest two percent*

Sections that fell somewhat flat

- *Taking credit for progress.*
- *“Winning the future” and Sputnik.*
- *Race to the Top.*
- *Trade agreements.*
- *Infrastructure.*

The Economy

Claims of progress cause dials to drop



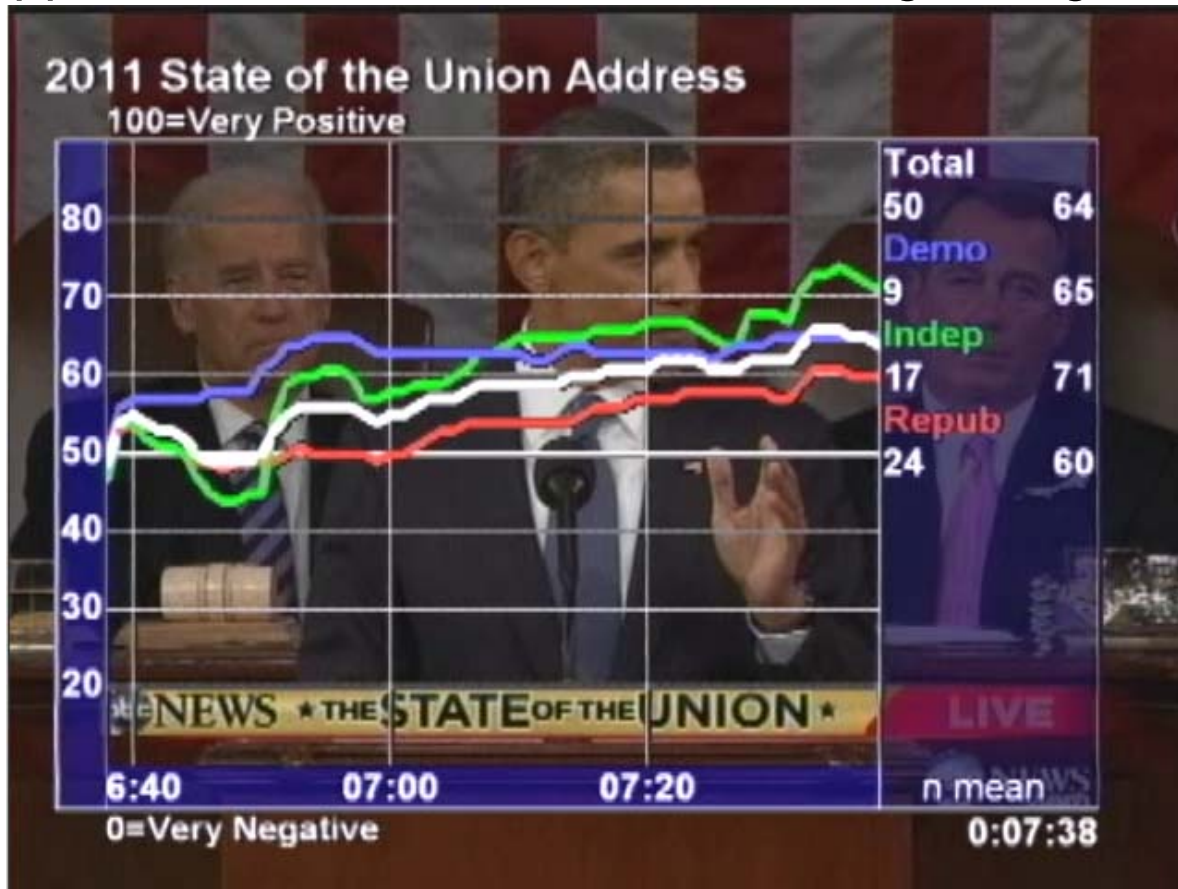
We are poised for progress. Two years after the worst recession most of us have ever known, the stock market has come roaring back. Corporate profits are up. The economy is growing again.

Focus groups show how people are still frustrated with the shrinking middle class and economy as a whole

“I mean, we are still in a deficit in terms of jobs and he didn’t say anything about the shrinking middle class and I was disappointed, but I haven’t had a raise in three years.”

--Focus group participant

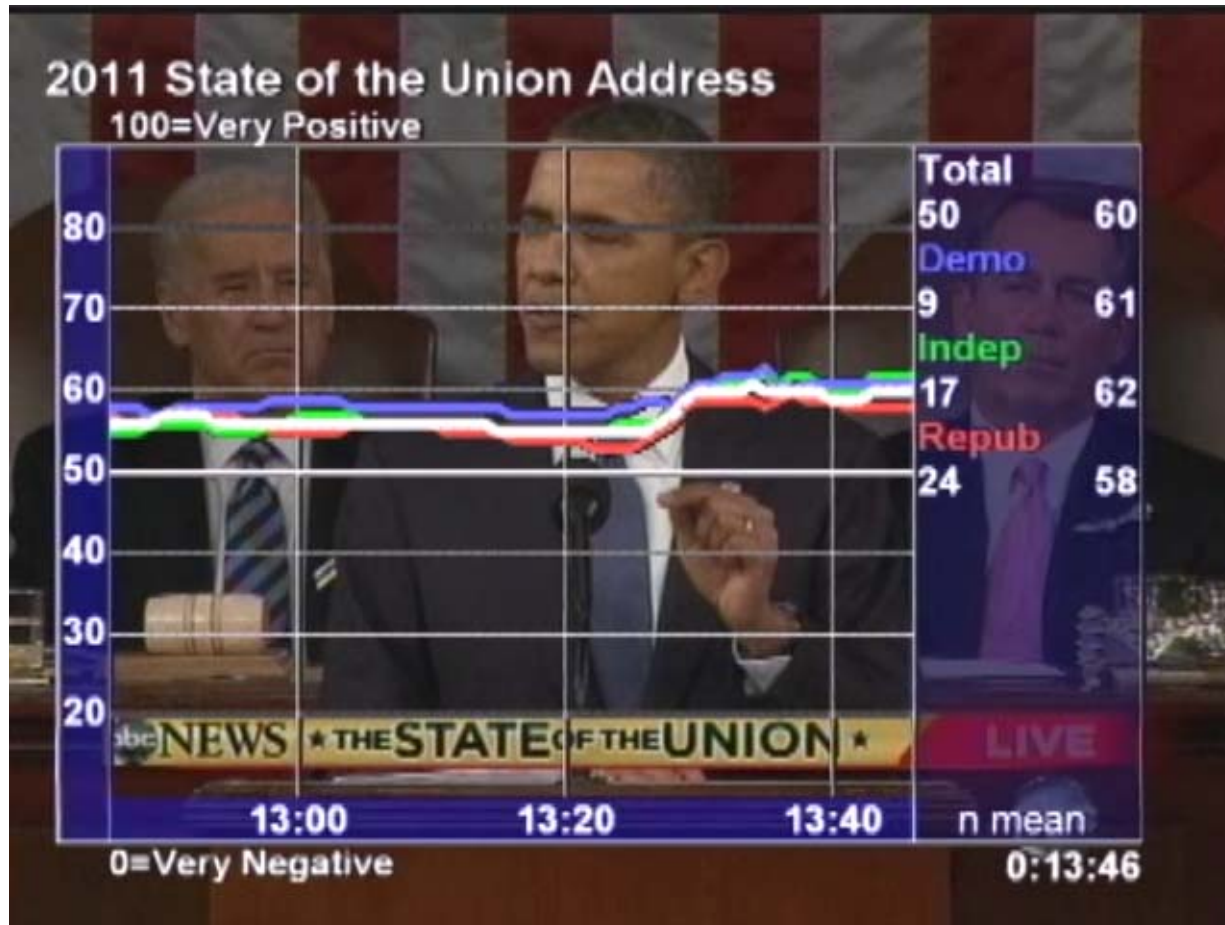
Voters appreciate section on the rules having changed



Many people watching tonight can probably remember a time when finding a good job meant showing up at a nearby factory or a business downtown. You didn't always need a degree, and your competition was pretty much limited to your neighbors. If you worked hard, chances are you'd have a job for life, with a decent paycheck and good benefits and the occasional promotion. Maybe you'd even have the pride of seeing your kids work at the same company.

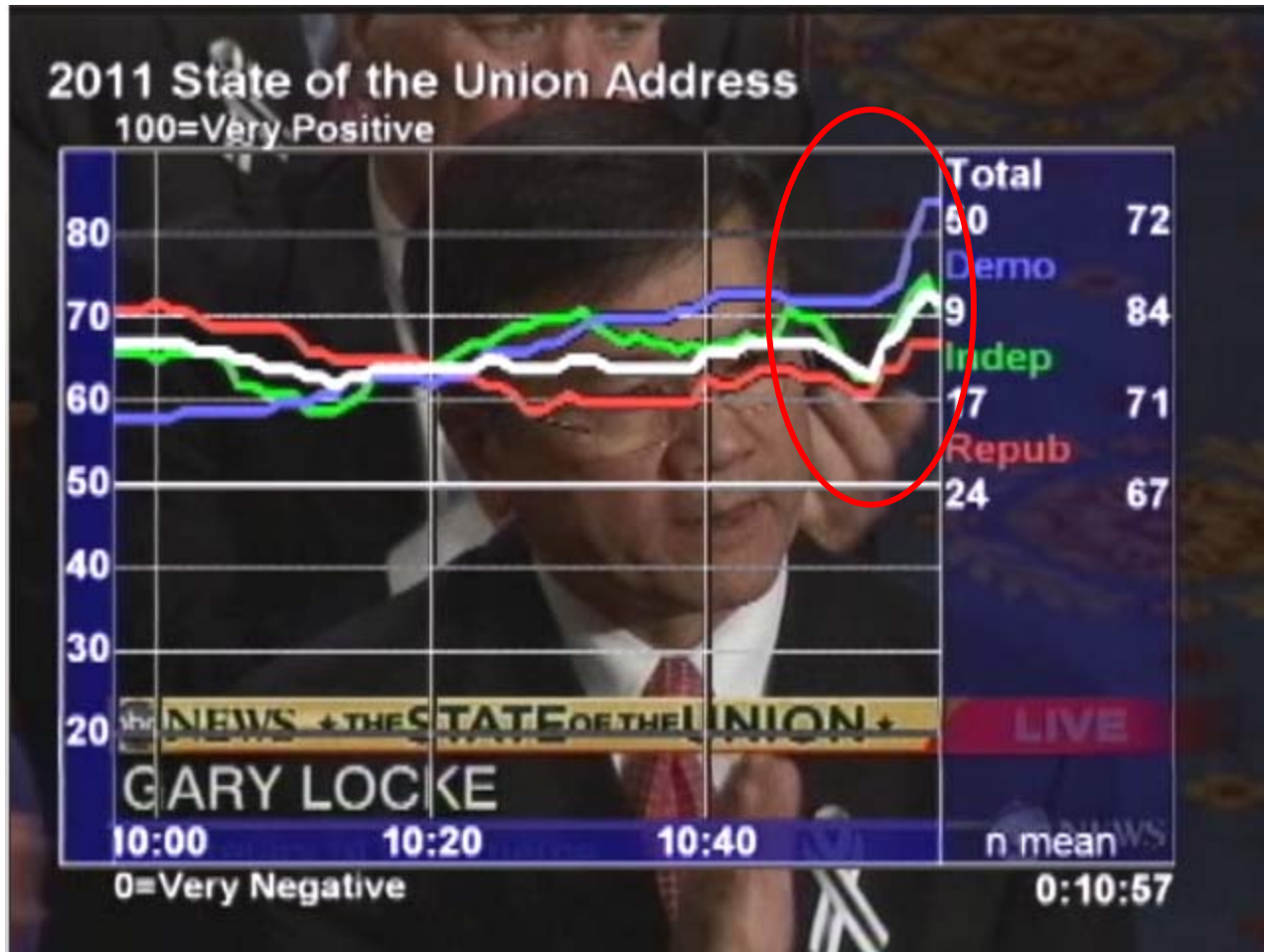
That world has changed. And for many, the change has been painful. I've seen it in the shuttered windows of once booming factories, and the vacant storefronts on once busy Main Streets. I've heard it in the frustrations of Americans who've seen their paychecks dwindle or their jobs disappear -- proud men and women who feel like the rules have been changed in the middle of the game.

Sputnik moment doesn't resonate



Half a century ago, when the Soviets beat us into space with the launch of a satellite called Sputnik, we had no idea how we would beat them to the moon. The science wasn't even there yet. NASA didn't exist. But after investing in better research and education, we didn't just surpass the Soviets; we unleashed a wave of innovation that created new industries and millions of new jobs. This is our generation's Sputnik moment. Two years ago, I said that we needed to reach a level of research and development we haven't seen since the height of the Space Race.

But “Out-innovate, out-educate and out-build” definitely does



And now it's our turn. We know what it takes to compete for the jobs and industries of our time. We need to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world.

People like what Obama has to say about the economy, but they're doubtful of his ability to get the job done

“Rhetoric aside he has an understanding of the issues at hand on the economy.”

“I didn't vote for Obama, but the more often I listen, the more I like him. I know he is a great orator, but also a good guy. I'm just doubting his ability to get it done.”

--Focus group participants

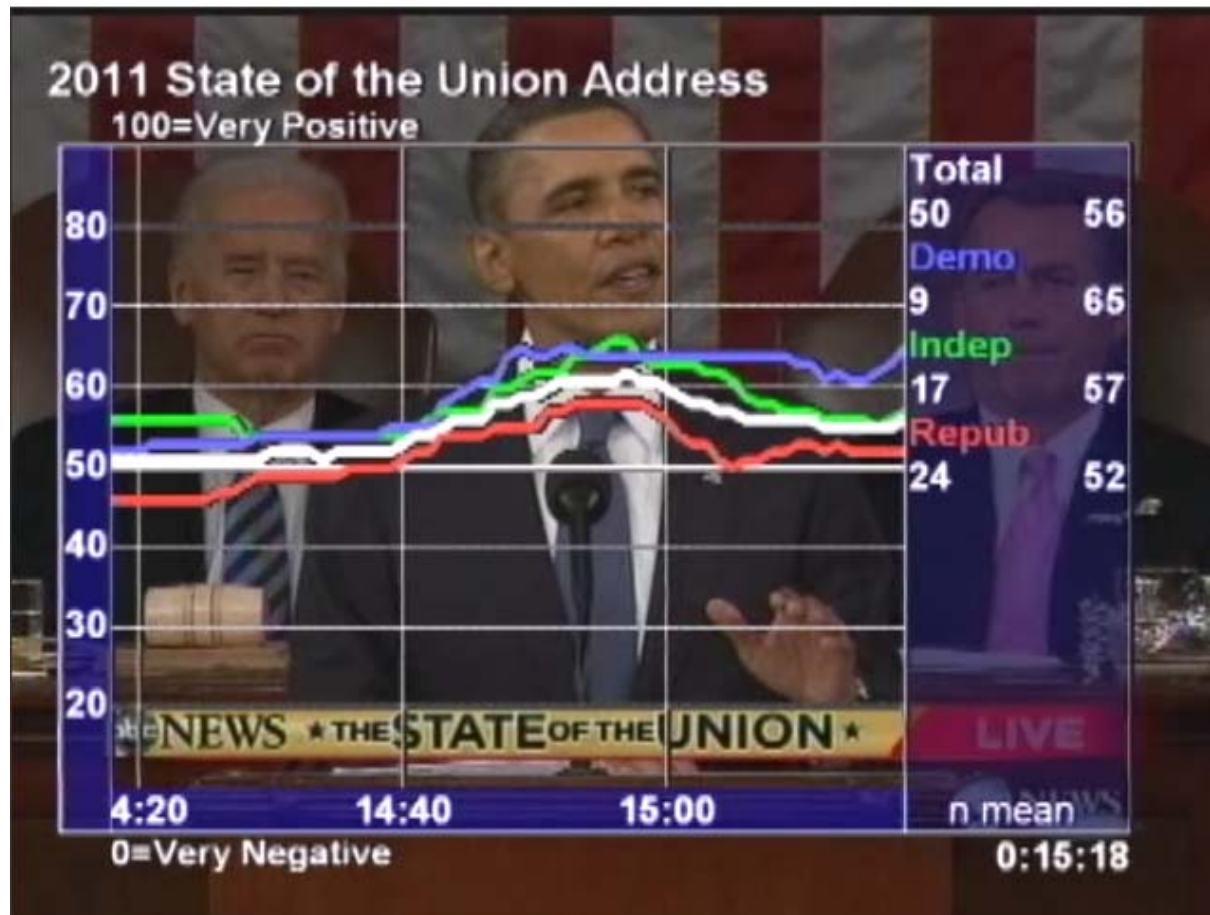
But the focus groups show how much innovation resonated

“You know, I think the thing that really impressed me was his topic of innovation. I couldn’t agree more that this country needs to be more innovative. We’ve lost it. And I think that the future belongs to those who come up with new whats and new hows.... That was one of the greatest speeches I have ever heard from a president in terms of getting back to basic values. Innovation is it in my book.”

--Focus group participant

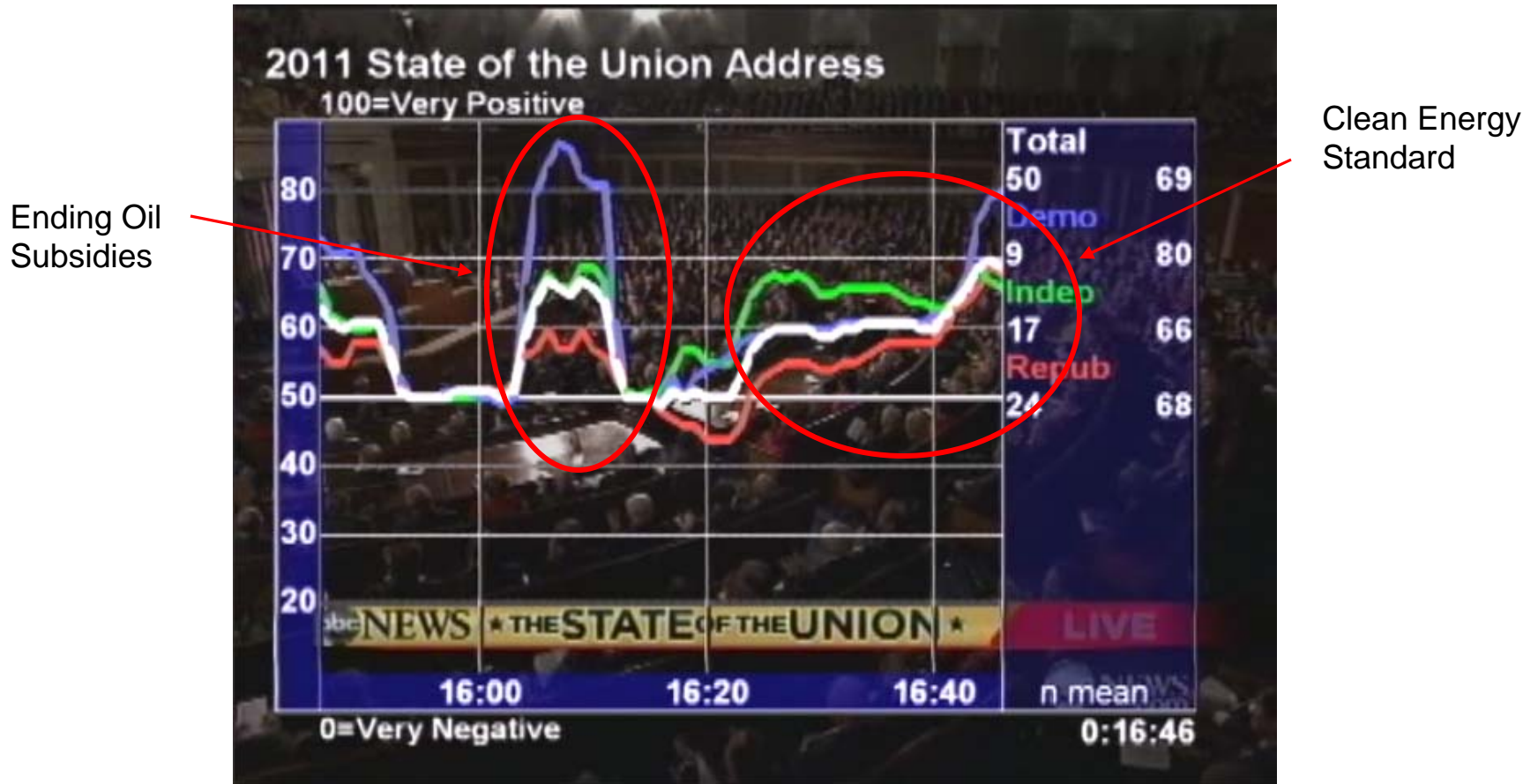
Energy

Good, but not great response, to investment in alternative energy



That's what Americans have done for over 200 years: reinvented ourselves. And to spur on more success stories like the Allen Brothers, we've begun to reinvent our energy policy. We're not just handing out money. We're issuing a challenge. We're telling America's scientists and engineers that if they assemble teams of the best minds in their fields, and focus on the hardest problems in clean energy, we'll fund the Apollo projects of our time.

Very strong response for ending oil subsidies, moving to clean energy

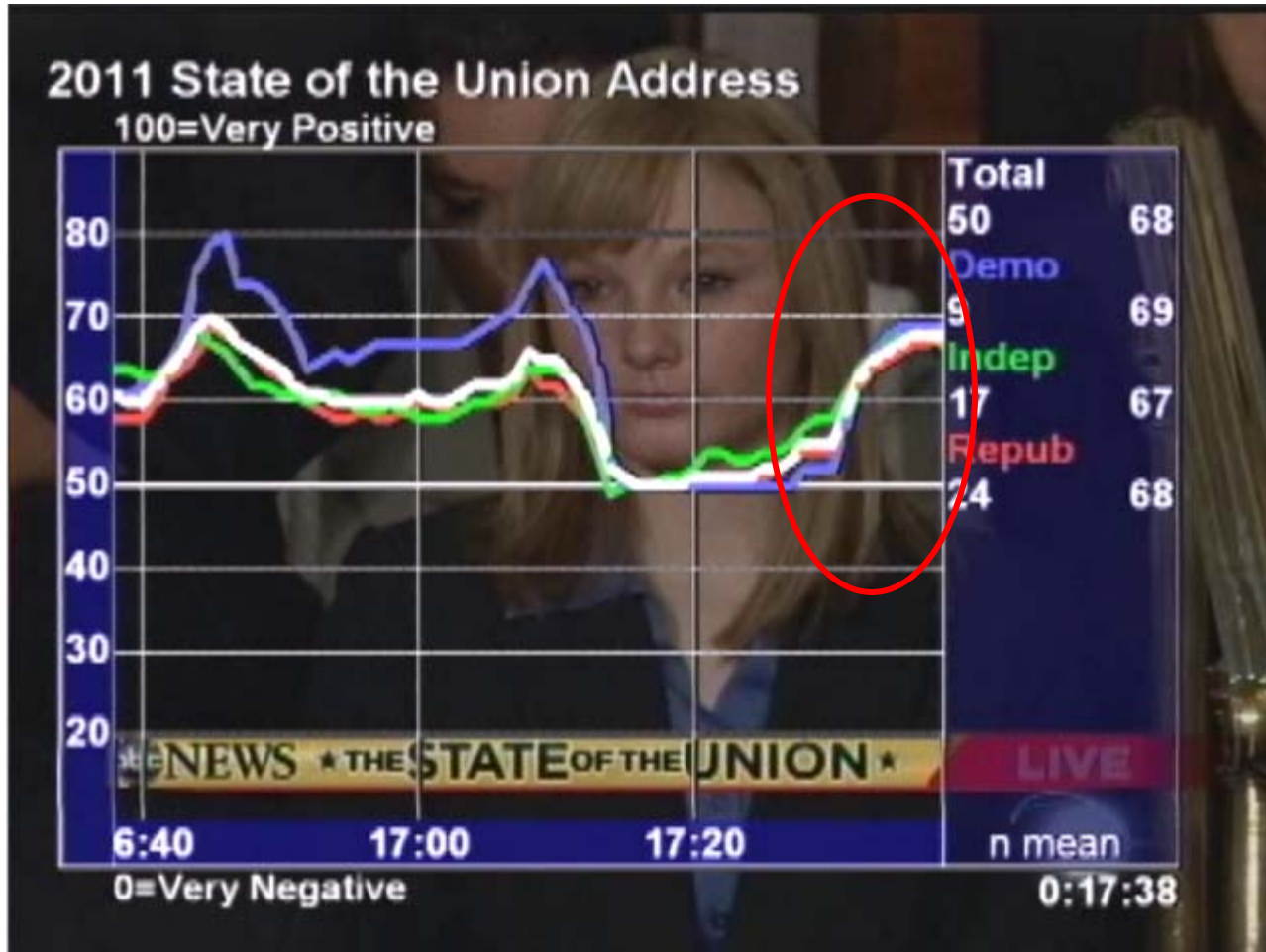


We need to get behind this innovation. And to help pay for it, I'm asking Congress to eliminate the billions in taxpayer dollars we currently give to oil companies. (Applause.) I don't know if -- I don't know if you've noticed, but they're doing just fine on their own. (Laughter.) So instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy, let's invest in tomorrow's.

Now, clean energy breakthroughs will only translate into clean energy jobs if businesses know there will be a market for what they're selling. So tonight, I challenge you to join me in setting a new goal: By 2035, 80 percent of America's electricity will come from clean energy sources.

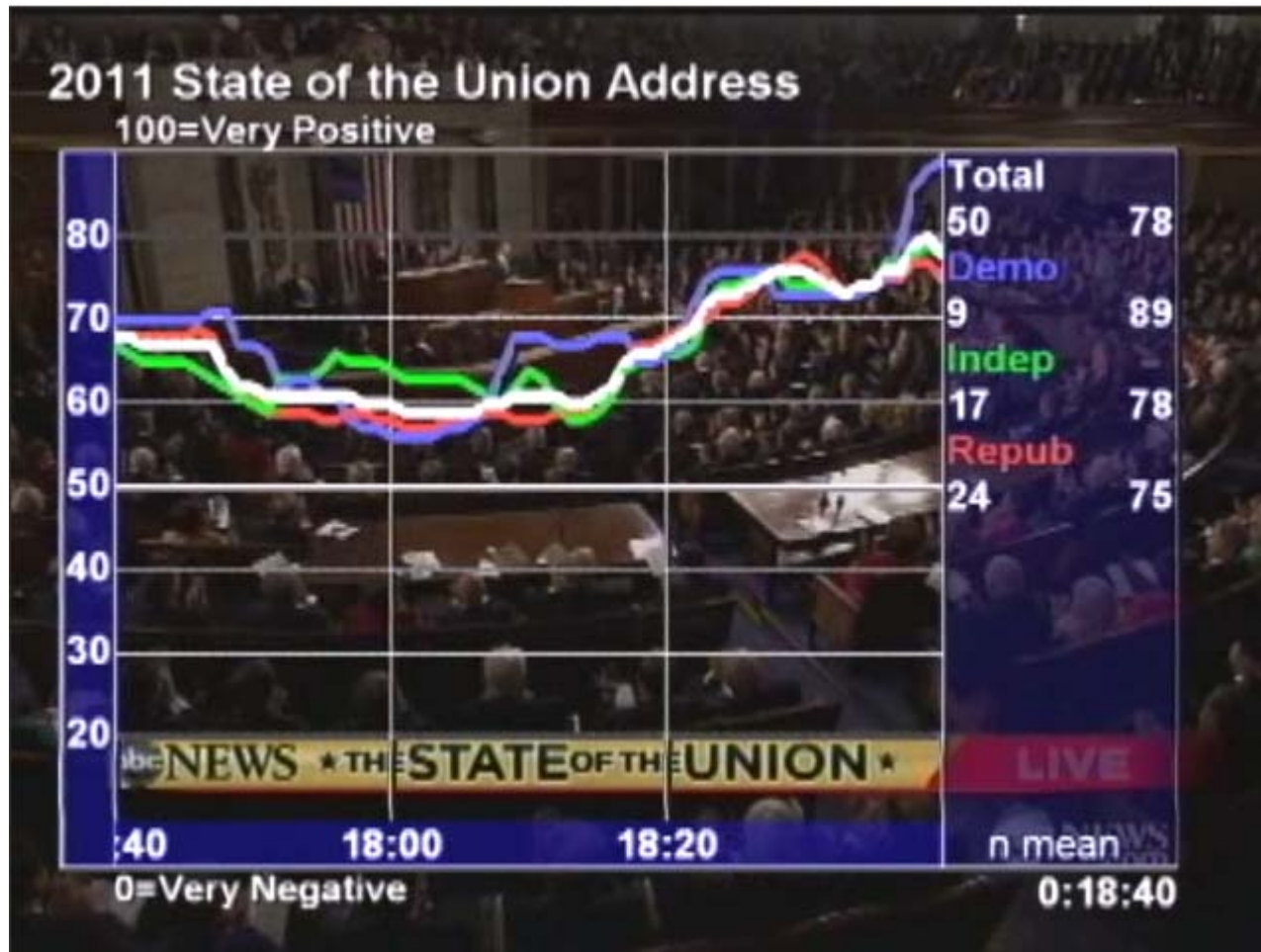
Education

The “Race to Educate our Kids”



Maintaining our leadership in research and technology is crucial to America's success. But if we want to win the future -- if we want innovation to produce jobs in America and not overseas -- then we also have to win the race to educate our kids.

Parental responsibility generates strong response



That responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but in our homes and communities. It's family that first instills the love of learning in a child. Only parents can make sure the TV is turned off and homework gets done. We need to teach our kids that it's not just the winner of the Super Bowl who deserves to be celebrated, but the winner of the science fair.

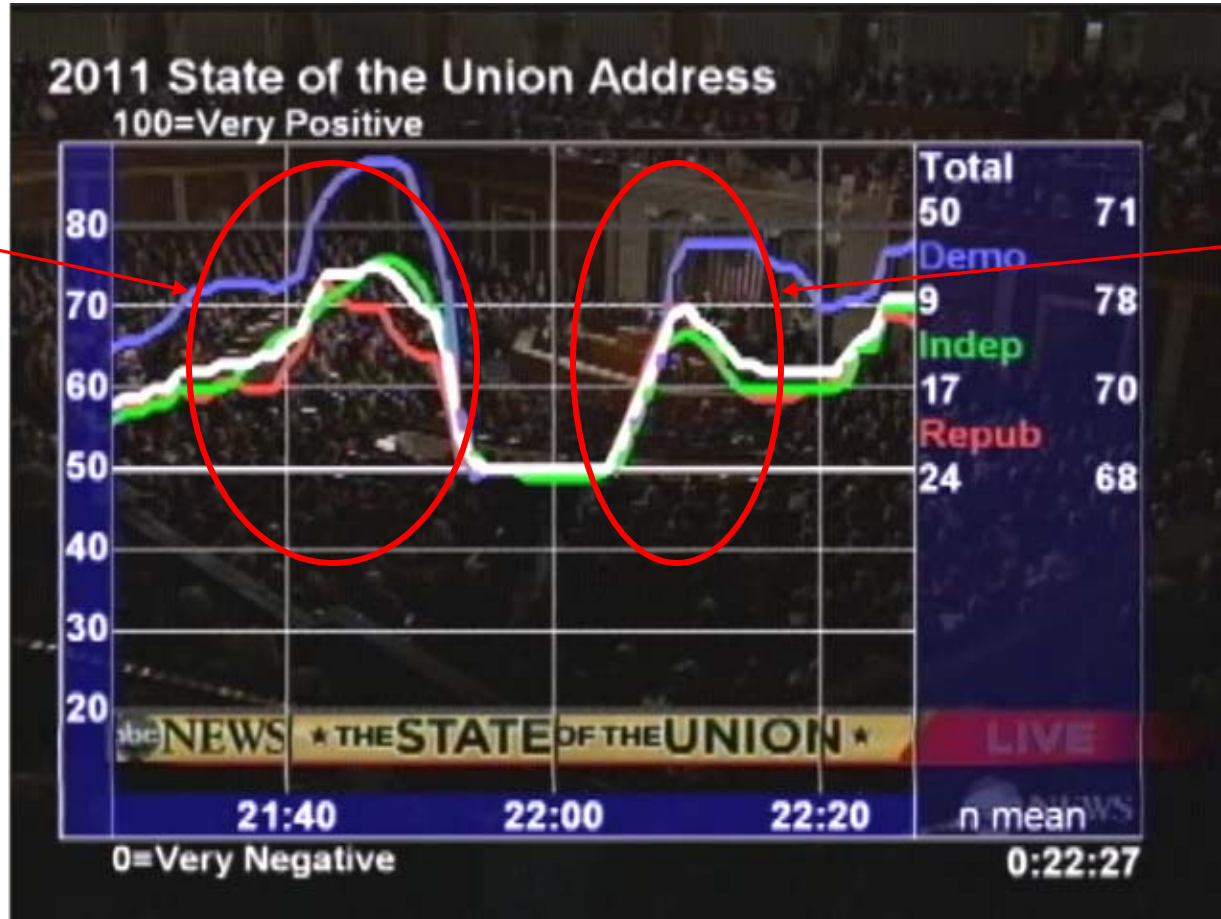
Swing voters think that parental responsibility in education is huge

“I totally agree with what he said about the education. And I was very happy to hear him put it back on the parents and responsibility. That’s a big thing for me. Parents have to take it, you know, right now”

--Focus group participant

As does call to reward teachers, hold them more accountable

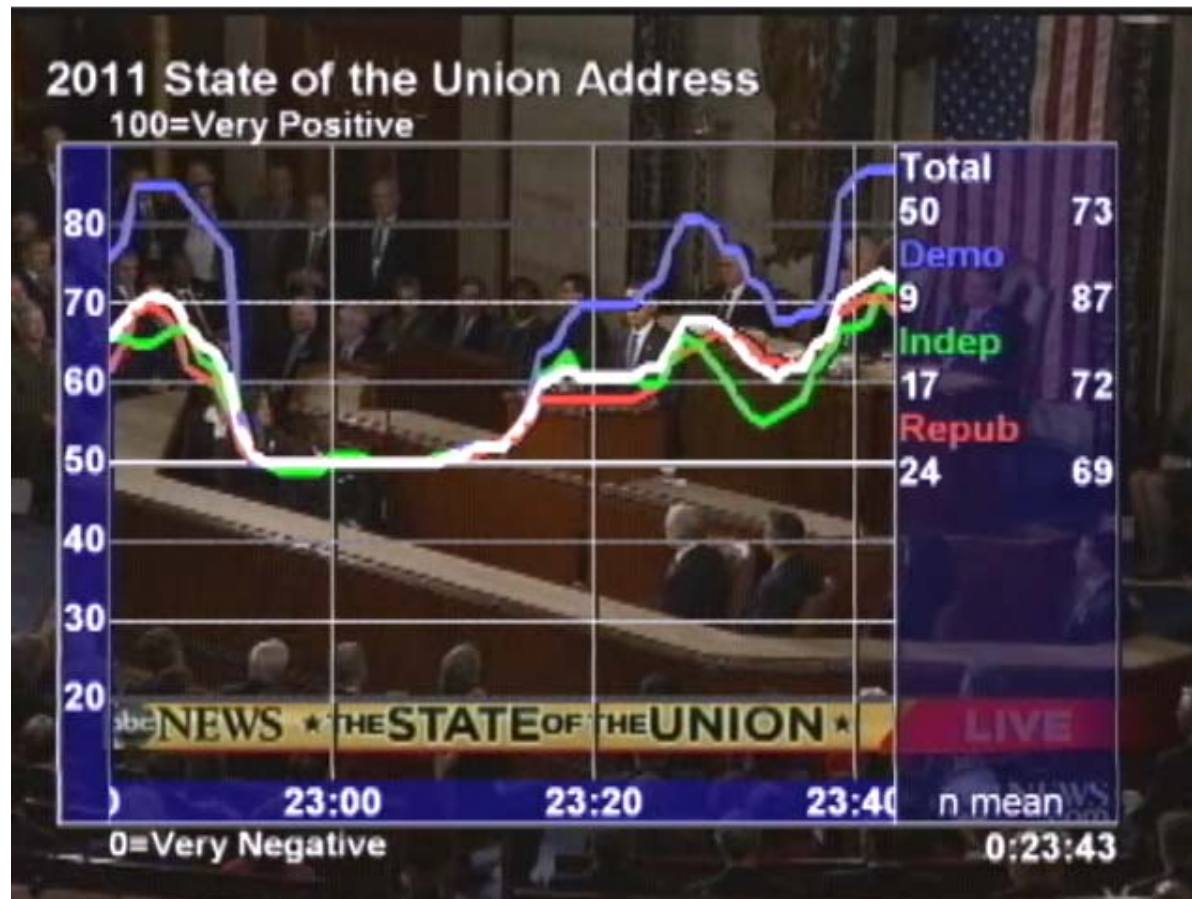
Treat
teachers
with more
respect



Reward good
teachers, stop
making
excused for
bad one

Let's also remember that after parents, the biggest impact on a child's success comes from the man or woman at the front of the classroom. In South Korea, teachers are known as "nation builders." Here in America, it's time we treated the people who educate our children with the same level of respect. We want to reward good teachers and stop making excuses for bad ones. And over the next 10 years, with so many baby boomers retiring from our classrooms, we want to prepare 100,000 new teachers in the fields of science and technology and engineering and math.

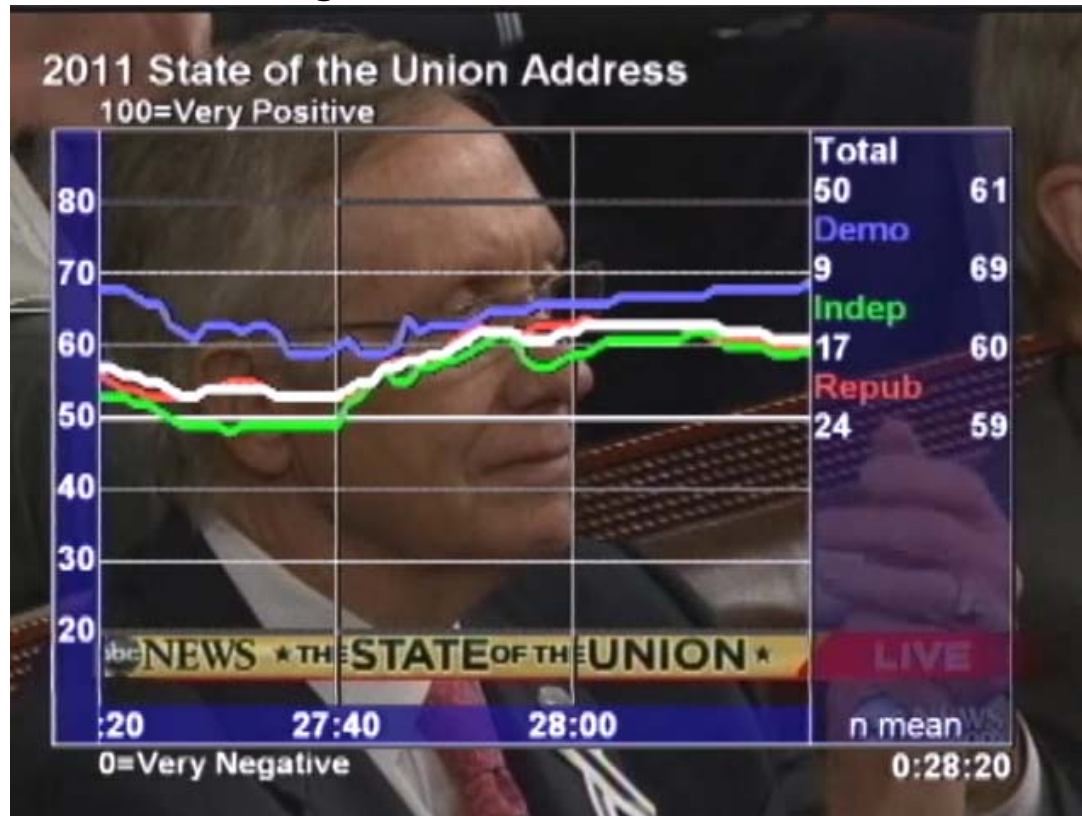
College affordability very strong



Of course, the education race doesn't end with a high school diploma. To compete, higher education must be within the reach of every American. That's why we've ended the unwarranted taxpayer subsidies that went to banks, and used the savings to make college affordable for millions of students. And this year, I ask Congress to go further, and make permanent our tuition tax credit -- worth \$10,000 for four years of college. It's the right thing to do.

Infrastructure

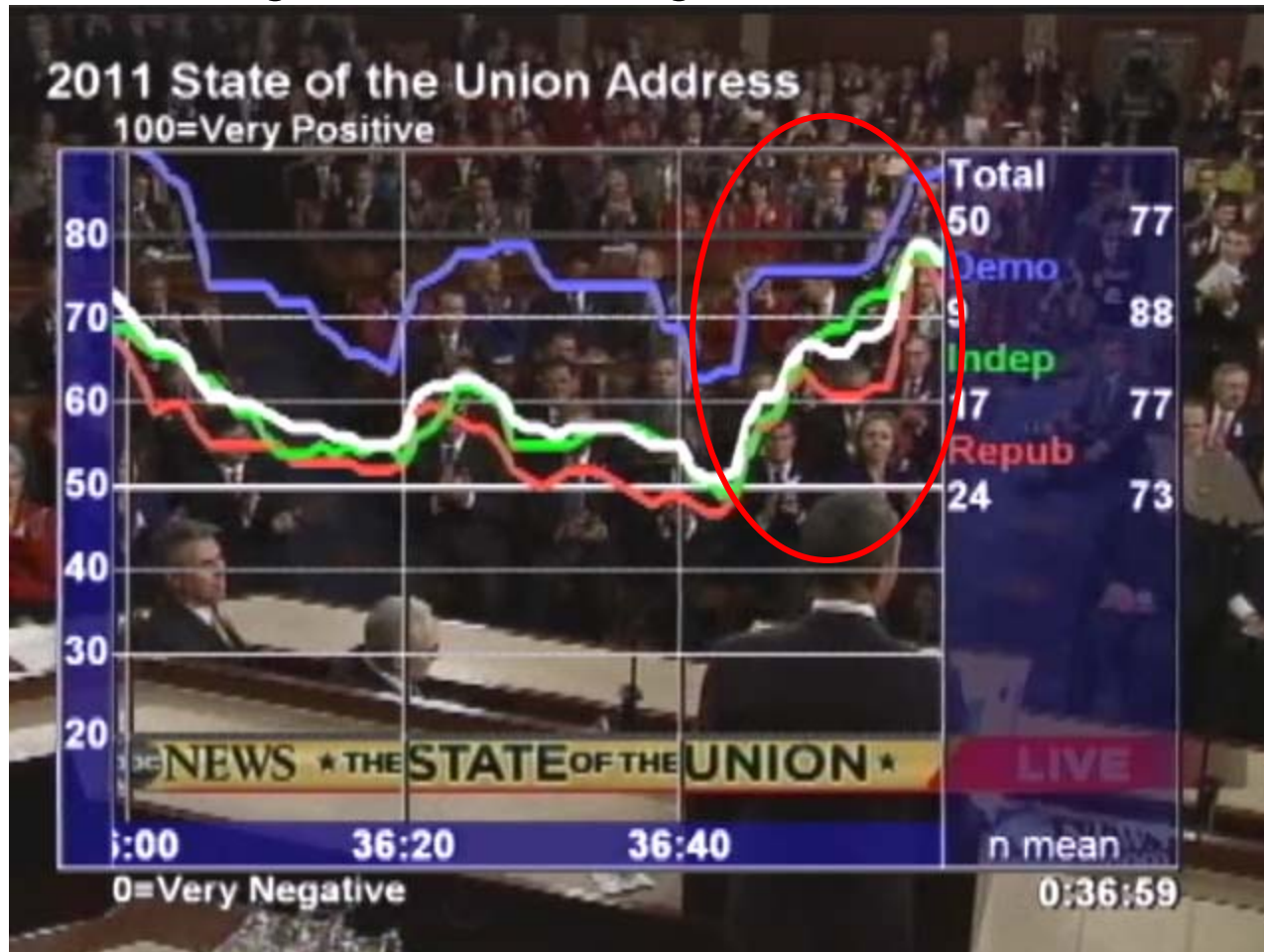
Call to build not as strong as calls to innovate, educate



Our infrastructure used to be the best, but our lead has slipped. South Korean homes now have greater Internet access than we do. Countries in Europe and Russia invest more in their roads and railways than we do. China is building faster trains and newer airports. Meanwhile, when our own engineers graded our nation's infrastructure, they gave us a "D." We have to do better. America is the nation that built the transcontinental railroad, brought electricity to rural communities, constructed the Interstate Highway System. The jobs created by these projects didn't just come from laying down track or pavement. They came from businesses that opened near a town's new train station or the new off-ramp. So over the last two years, we've begun rebuilding for the 21st century, a project that has meant thousands of good jobs for the hard-hit construction industry. And tonight, I'm proposing that we redouble those efforts.

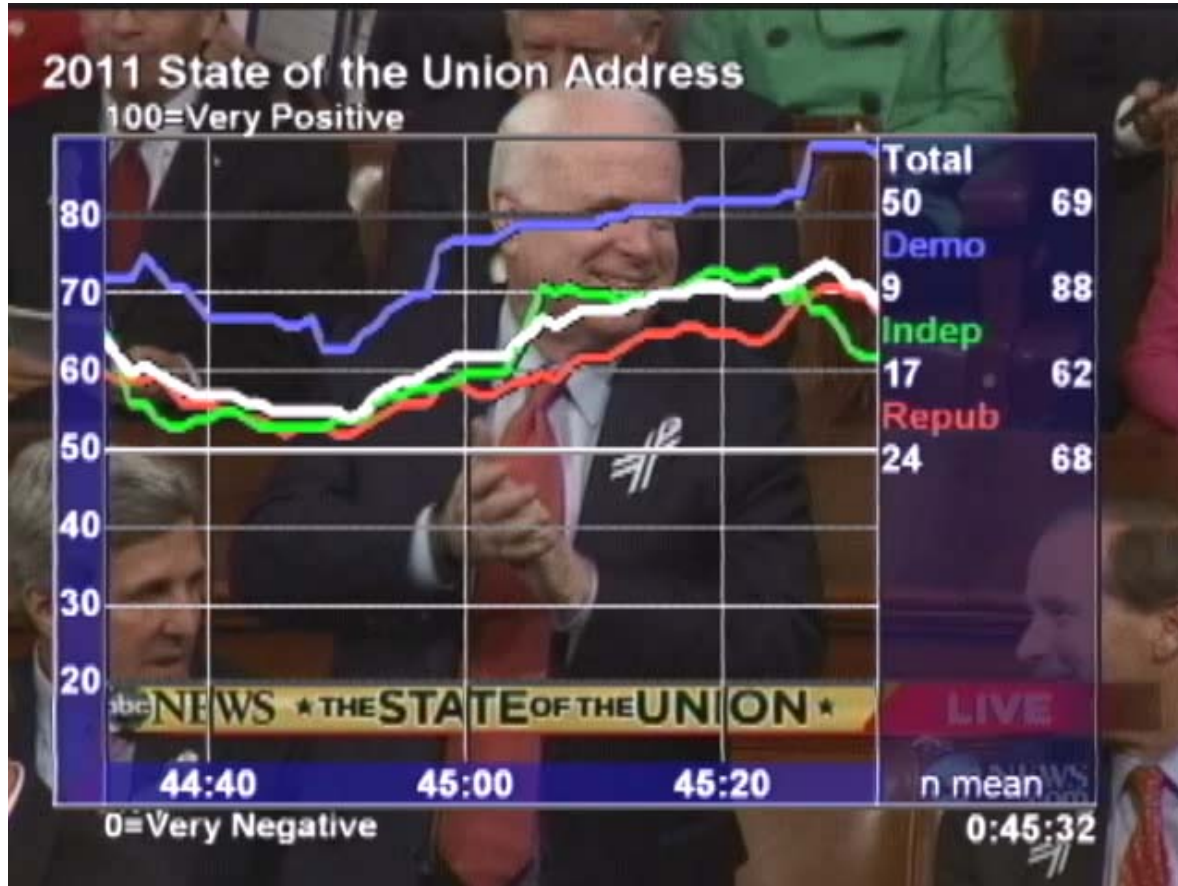
Taxes, Spending and Government

Strong reaction to government living within its means



We are living with a legacy of deficit spending that began almost a decade ago. And in the wake of the financial crisis, some of that was necessary to keep credit flowing, save jobs, and put money in people's pockets. But now that the worst of the recession is over, we have to confront the fact that our government spends more than it takes in. That is not sustainable. Every day, families sacrifice to live within their means. They deserve a government that does the same.

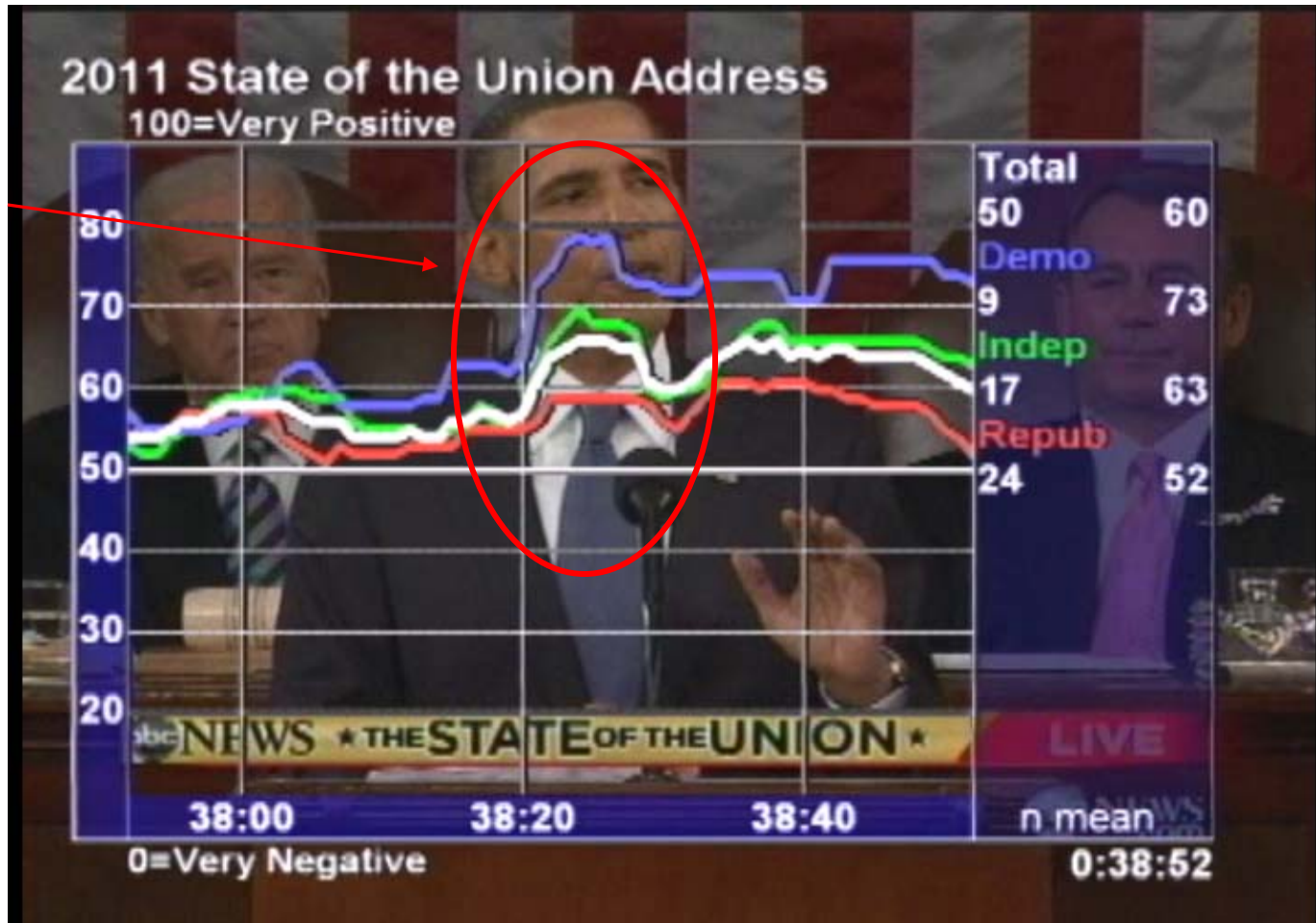
Call for more accountability resonates



In the coming year, we'll also work to rebuild people's faith in the institution of government. Because you deserve to know exactly how and where your tax dollars are being spent, you'll be able to go to a website and get that information for the very first time in history. Because you deserve to know when your elected officials are meeting with lobbyists, I ask Congress to do what the White House has already done -- put that information online. And because the American people deserve to know that special interests aren't larding up legislation with pet projects, both parties in Congress should know this: If a bill comes to my desk with earmarks inside, I will veto it. I will veto it.

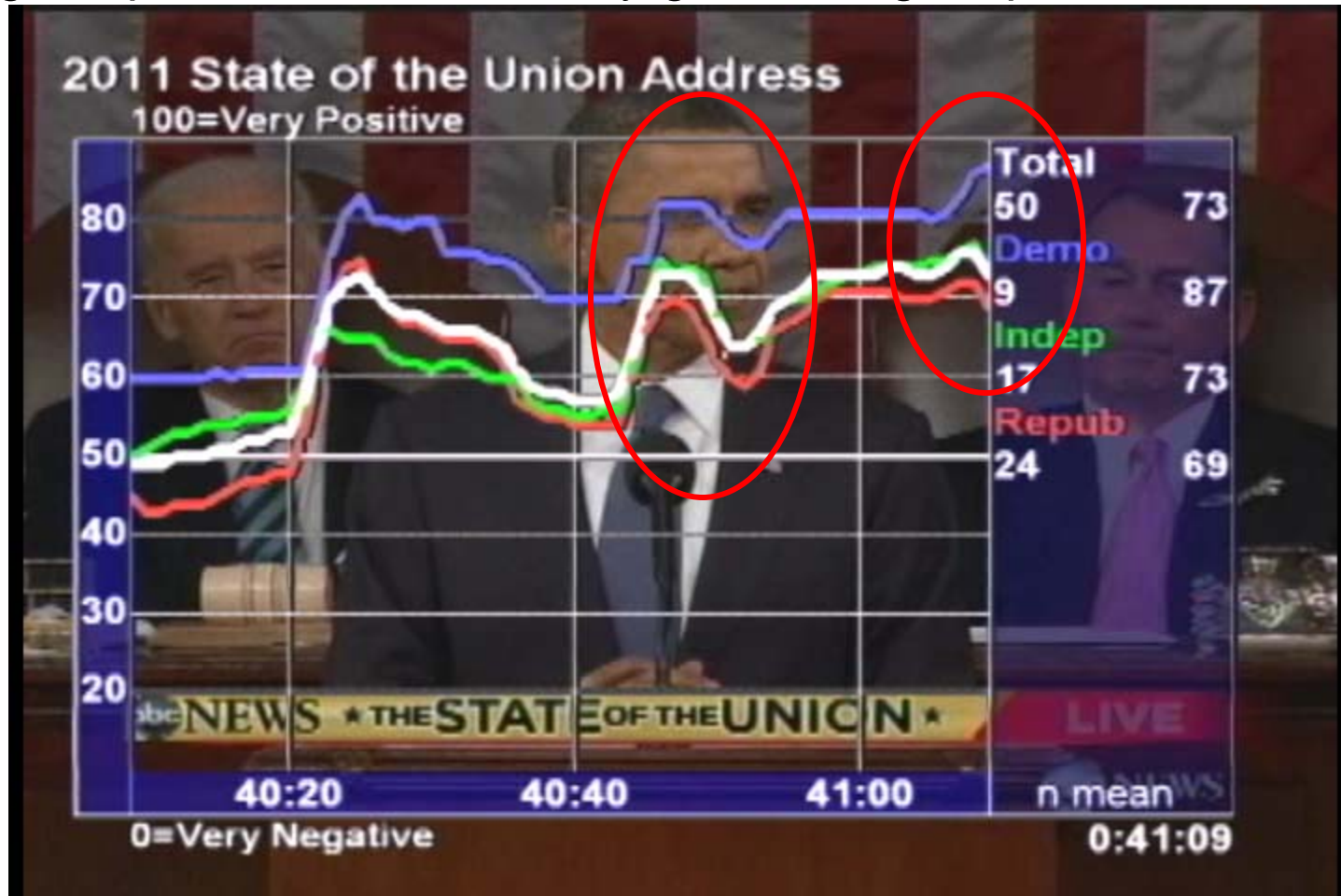
Voters don't want to balance budget on backs of most vulnerable

Not cutting
on the
backs of
our most
vulnerable
citizens



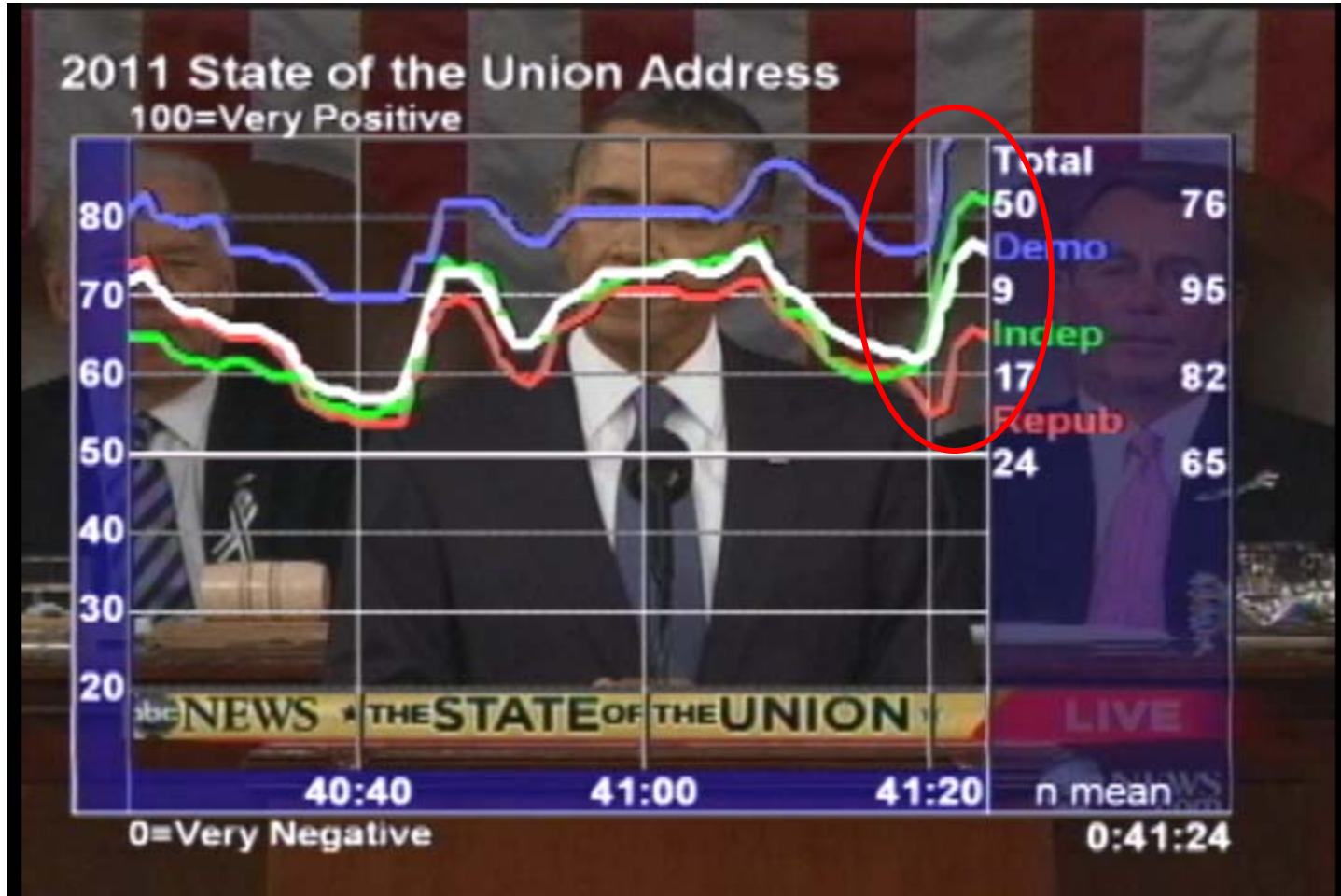
I recognize that some in this chamber have already proposed deeper cuts, and I'm willing to eliminate whatever we can honestly afford to do without. But let's make sure that we're not doing it on the backs of our most vulnerable citizens.

Pledge to protect Social Security gets strong response



To put us on solid ground, we should also find a bipartisan solution to strengthen Social Security for future generations. We must do it without putting at risk current retirees, the most vulnerable, or people with disabilities; without slashing benefits for future generations; and without subjecting Americans' guaranteed retirement income to the whims of the stock market.

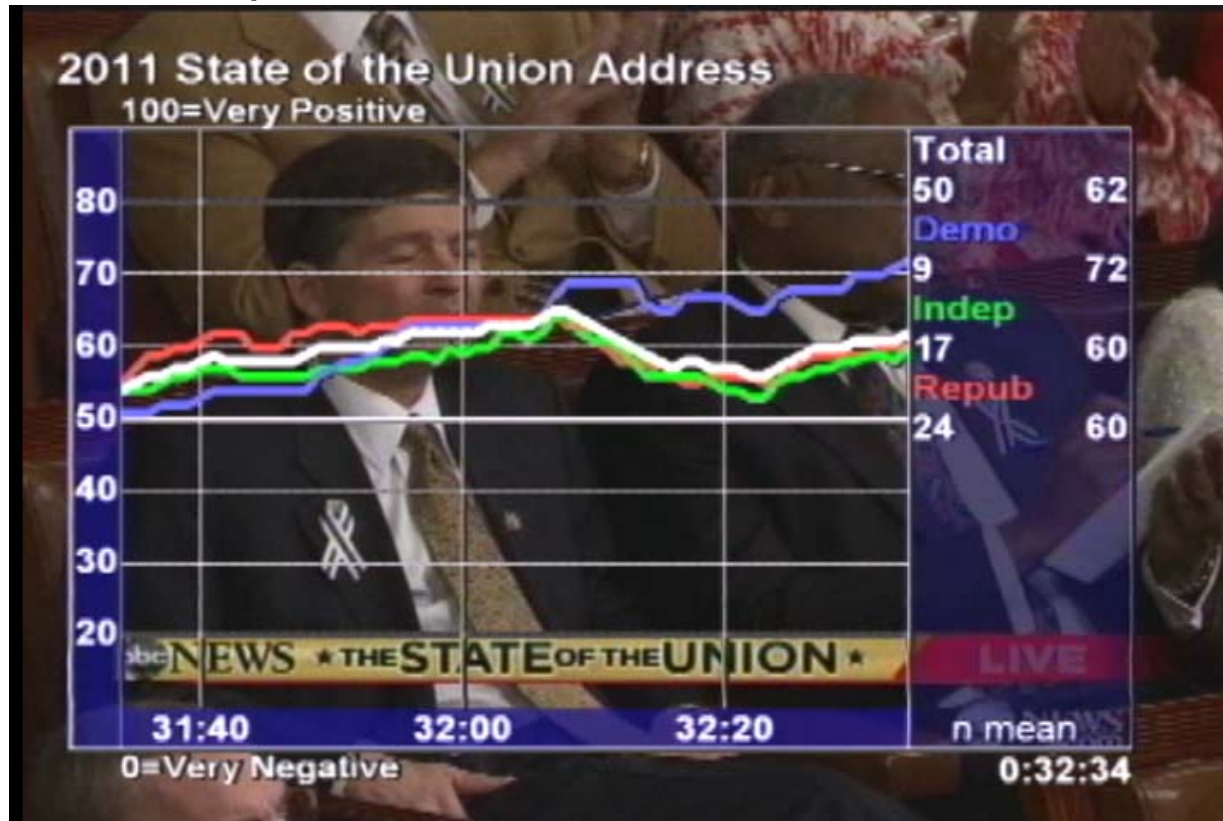
Bipartisan backing for eliminating tax cuts for wealthiest



If we truly care about our deficit, we simply can't afford a permanent extension of the tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans.

Trade

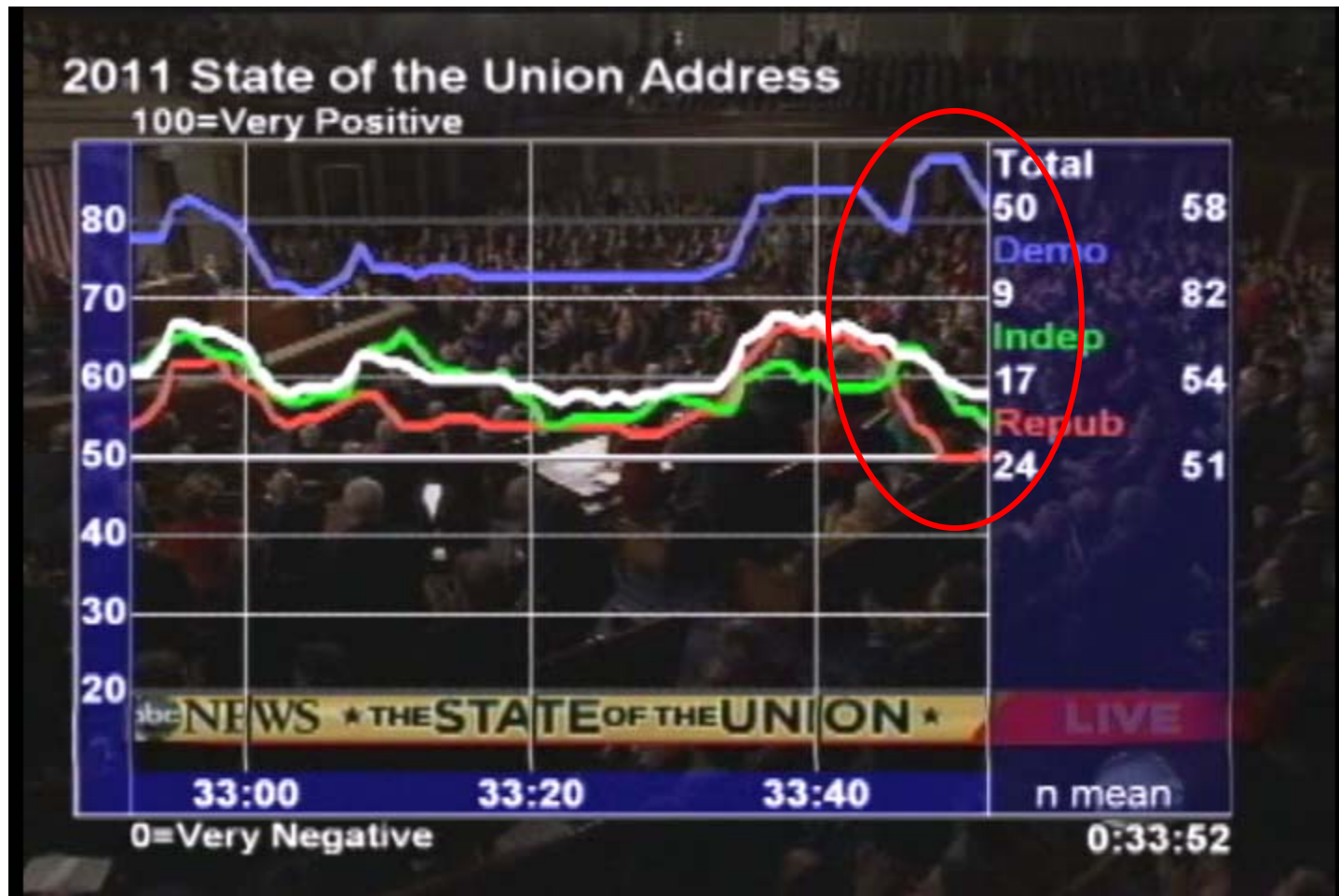
Unenthusiastic response to commitment to trade



To help businesses sell more products abroad, we set a goal of doubling our exports by 2014 -- because the more we export, the more jobs we create here at home. Already, our exports are up. Recently, we signed agreements with India and China that will support more than 250,000 jobs here in the United States. And last month, we finalized a trade agreement with South Korea that will support at least 70,000 American jobs. This agreement has unprecedented support from business and labor, Democrats and Republicans -- and I ask this Congress to pass it as soon as possible. Now, before I took office, I made it clear that we would enforce our trade agreements, and that I would only sign deals that keep faith with American workers and promote American jobs. That's what we did with Korea, and that's what I intend to do as we pursue agreements with Panama and Colombia.

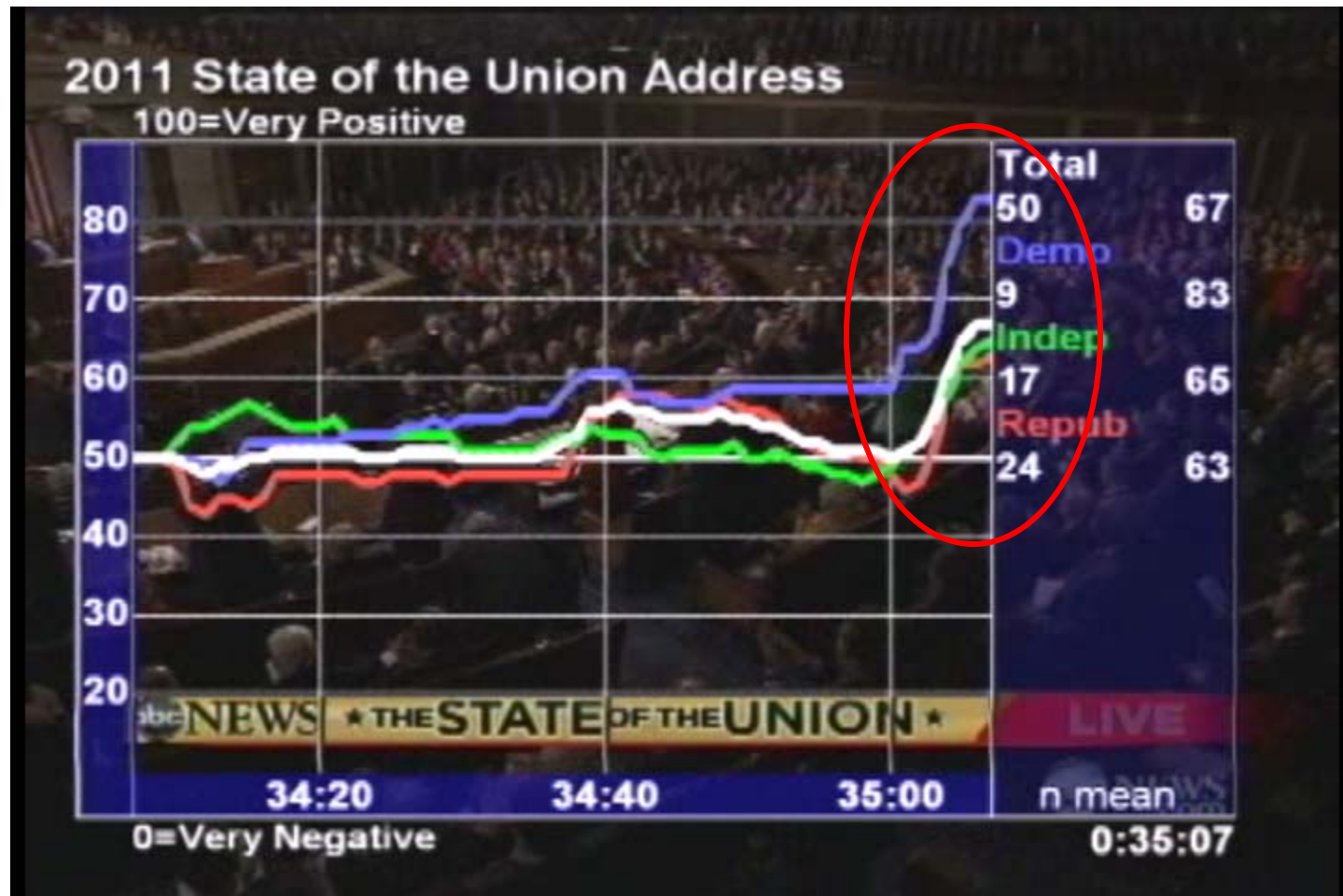
Health Care

Initial mention of health care causes deep polarization



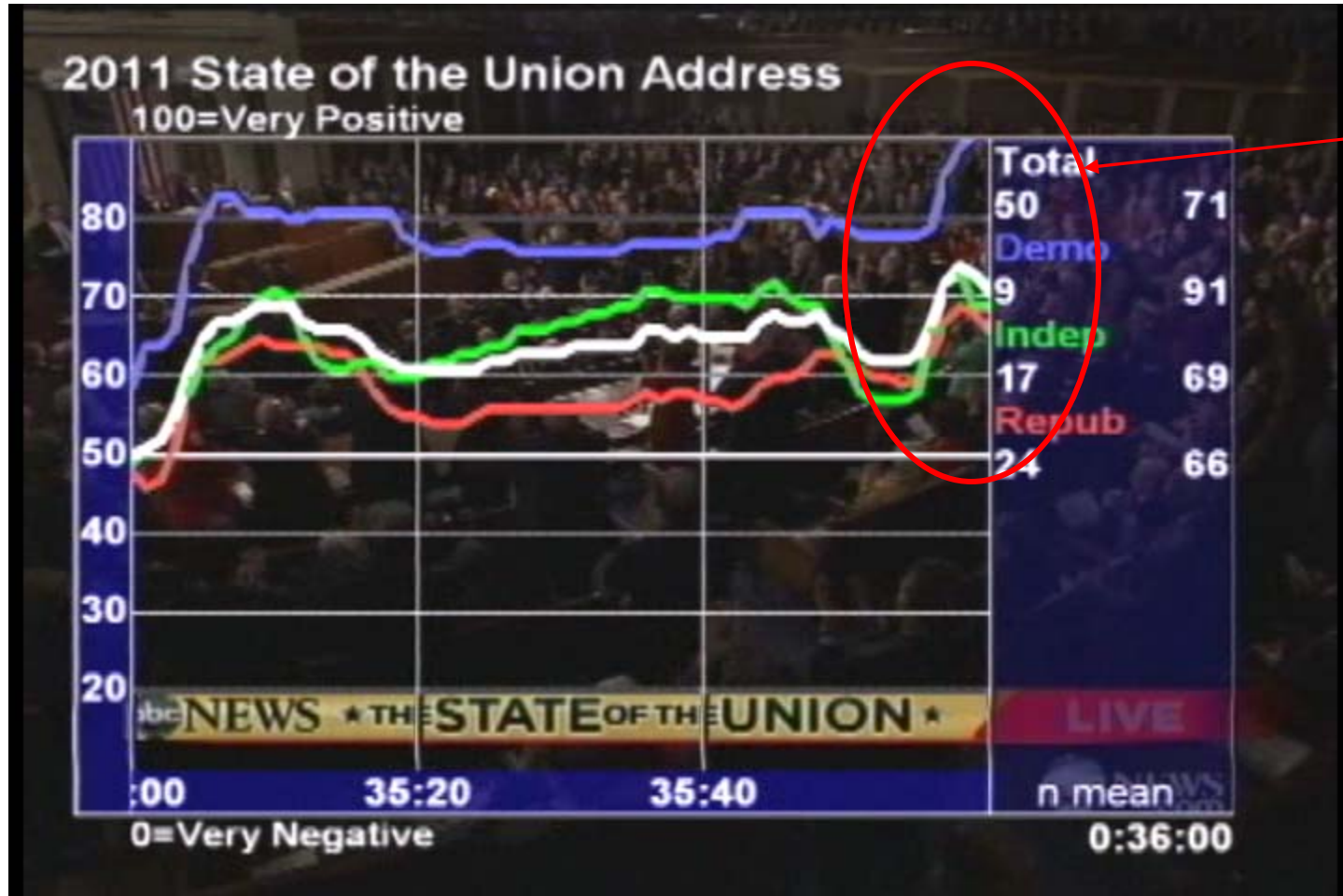
It's why we passed reform that finally prevents the health insurance industry from exploiting patients.

But moving to pre-existing conditions brings audience back



What I'm not willing to do -- what I'm not willing to do is go back to the days when insurance companies could deny someone coverage because of a preexisting condition.

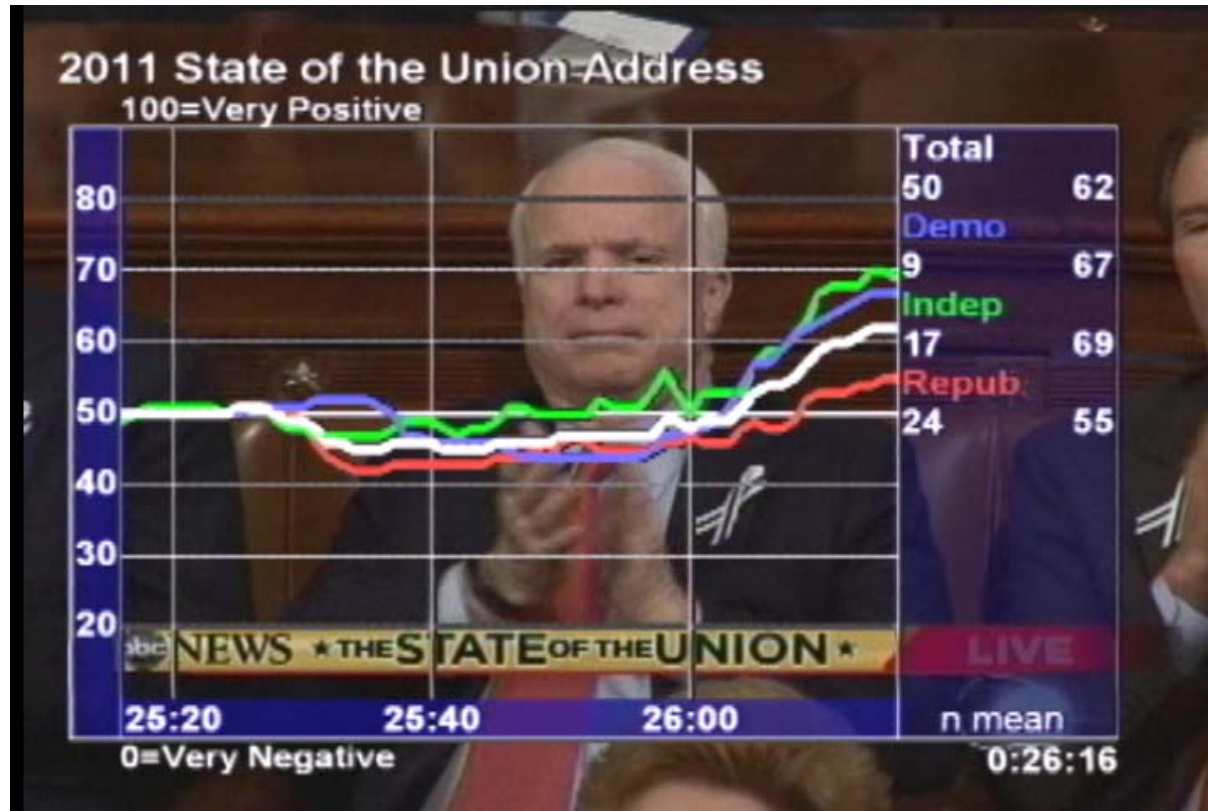
And exhortation to move beyond battle of last two years resonates



So I say to this chamber tonight, instead of re-fighting the battles of the last two years, let's fix what needs fixing and let's move forward.

Immigration

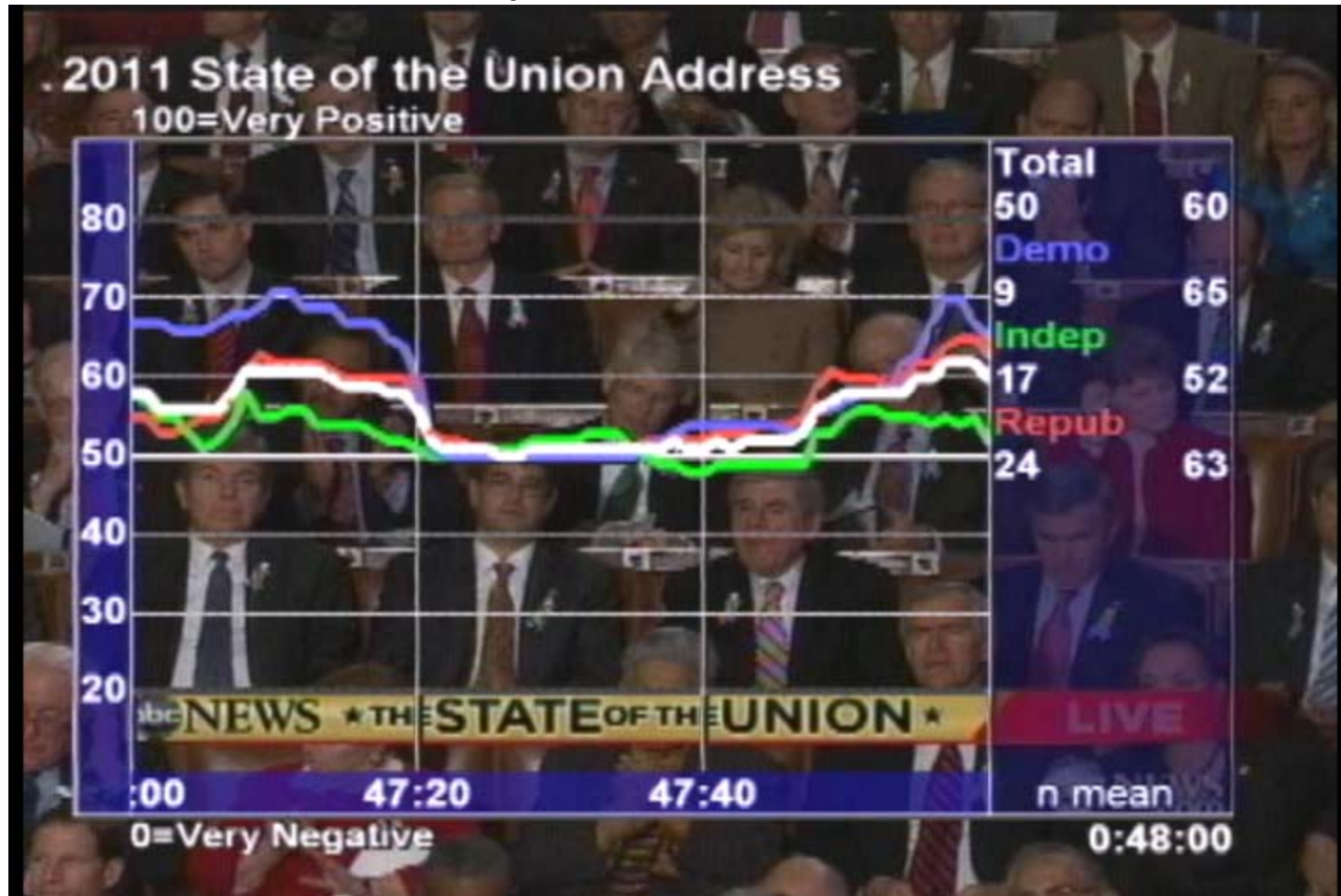
Obama gets through immigration section



One last point about education. Today, there are hundreds of thousands of students excelling in our schools who are not American citizens. Some are the children of undocumented workers, who had nothing to do with the actions of their parents. They grew up as Americans and pledge allegiance to our flag, and yet they live every day with the threat of deportation. Others come here from abroad to study in our colleges and universities. But as soon as they obtain advanced degrees, we send them back home to compete against us. It makes no sense. Now, I strongly believe that we should take on, once and for all, the issue of illegal immigration. And I am prepared to work with Republicans and Democrats to protect our borders, enforce our laws and address the millions of undocumented workers who are now living in the shadows.

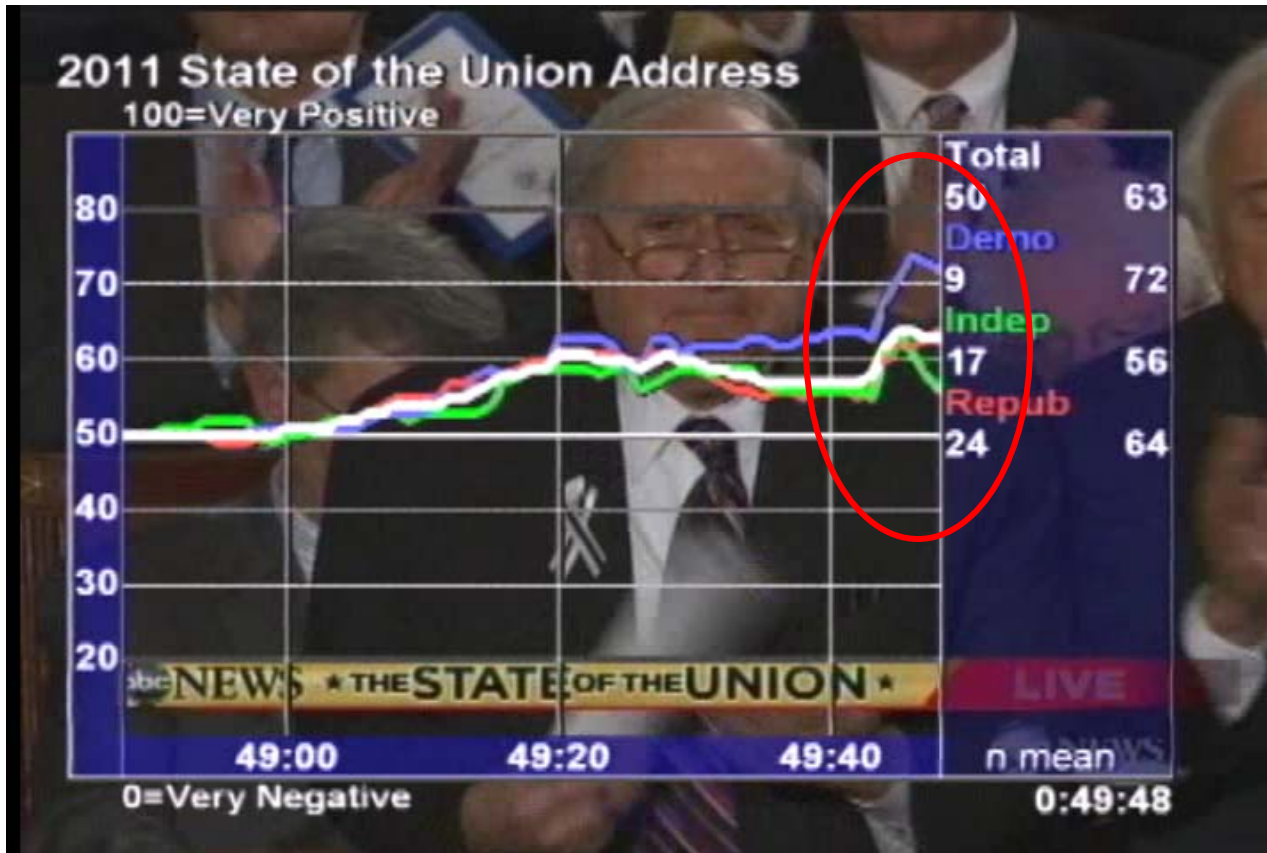
Foreign Policy

Reaction to Obama on Iraq



Look to Iraq, where nearly 100,000 of our brave men and women have left with their heads held high. American combat patrols have ended, violence is down, and a new government has been formed. This year, our civilians will forge a lasting partnership with the Iraqi people, while we finish the job of bringing our troops out of Iraq. America's commitment has been kept. The Iraq war is coming to an end.

Pledge to bring troops home from Afghanistan draws small, positive response



In Afghanistan, our troops have taken Taliban strongholds and trained Afghan security forces. Our purpose is clear: By preventing the Taliban from reestablishing a stranglehold over the Afghan people, we will deny al Qaeda the safe haven that served as a launching pad for 9/11. Thanks to our heroic troops and civilians, fewer Afghans are under the control of the insurgency. There will be tough fighting ahead, and the Afghan government will need to deliver better governance. But we are strengthening the capacity of the Afghan people and building an enduring partnership with them. This year, we will work with nearly 50 countries to begin a transition to an Afghan lead. And this July, we will begin to bring our troops home.

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

www.greenbergresearch.com

Washington, DC

10 G Street NE,
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002

Ph: +1 202 478 8300

Fax: +1 202 478 8301

London, UK

405 Carrington House,
6 Hertford Street
London, UK W1J 7SU

Ph: +44 (0) 207 499 5204

Fax: +44 (0) 207 499 5284