

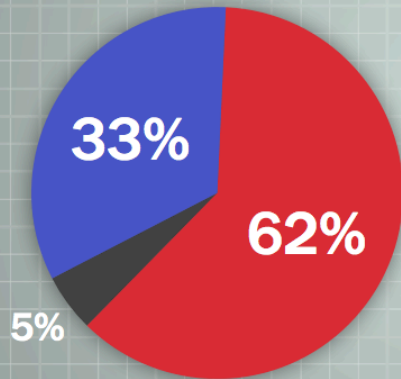
“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

Sponsored by: **Hahn, Texas**

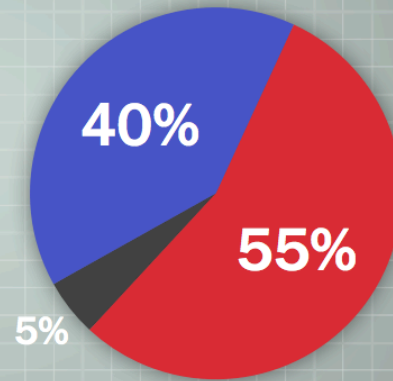
*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of October 22*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Direction of the
country?



Direction of the
state?

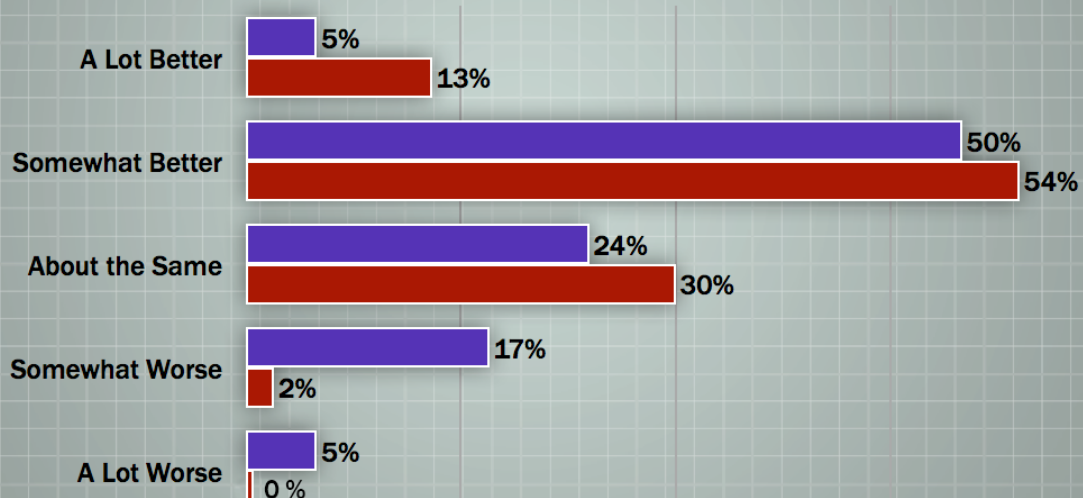


● Right Direction ● Wrong Track ● Don't Know

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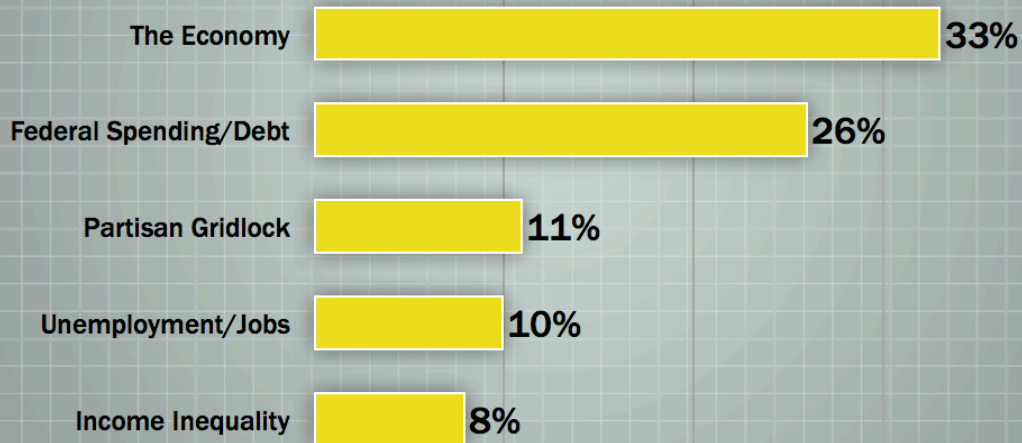
Compared with last year, how is the economy?

● The Nation ● The State



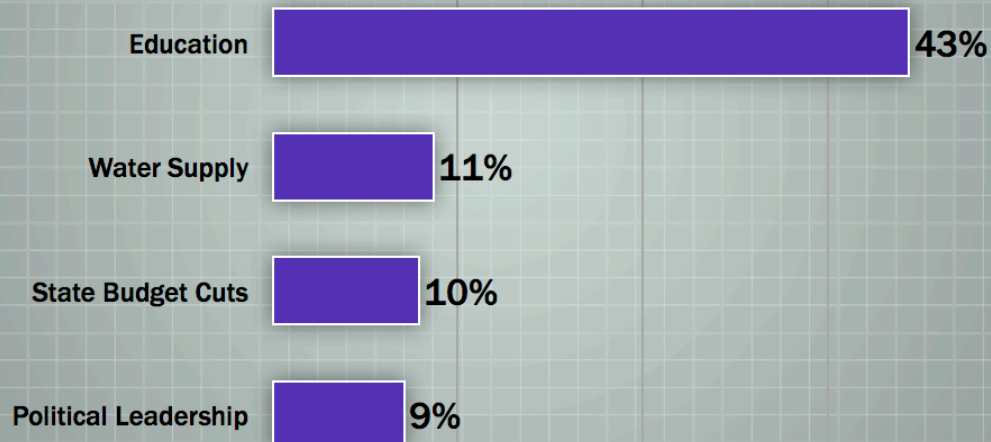
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

What's the most important problem facing the country?



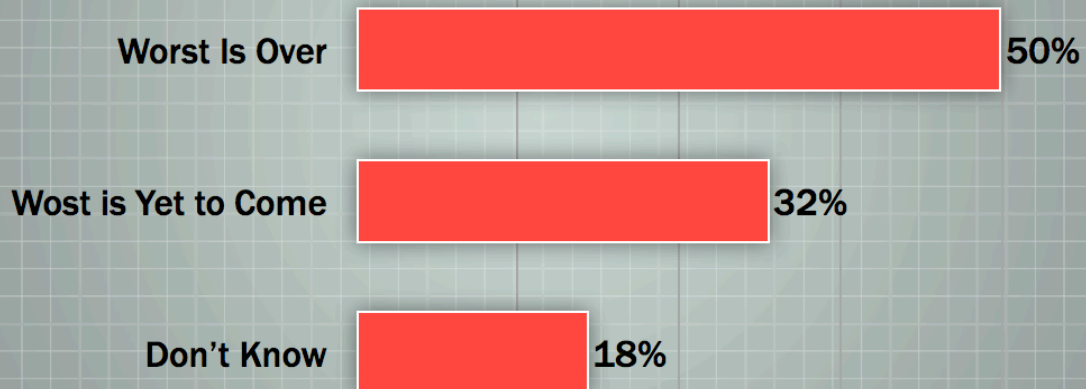
INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

What's the most important problem facing the state?



INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

Your national economic forecast?



What would you say is the most important problem facing this country today?

- "You mean there is only one?--I pick gridlock because it tests the null hypothesis--the catastrophic consequences of not doing anything w/ any of the above; next on my list would be cyber security"
- "Without improving the way the process of making sausage works, nothing else can improve meaningfully."
- "Not just income inequality, but the combination of that and the current system of political contributions/ cronyism."
- "Income inequality is a very real and growing problem that threatens not only the American economy but, more

worrying, our national unity. A just-released study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland--not exactly a radical bunch--had this to say: "Labor income has been declining as a share of total income earned in the United States for the past three decades. . . Since labor income is more evenly distributed across U.S. households than capital income, the decline made total income less evenly distributed and more concentrated at the top of the distribution, and this contributed to increase income inequality." The researchers concluded that their study "suggests that capital income will become more concentrated at the top in the coming years of the recovery, helping to raise income inequality even further""

- "Spending, debt and burdensome tax systems at all levels of government."

- "It starts and ends with the economy. If there are no jobs and no economic growth, addressing the other major issues we face as a country is just wishing because there will be no tax dollars to help pay for solutions."

- "Silly of course. Anyone with a functioning brain (helooooo) well knows that there can be no single answer that question."

- "Concentrated wealth buys concentrated power, which protects concentrated wealth, etc. History is littered with examples of great states that imploded just this way."

- "Actually lack of sleep, but it wasn't on the list."

- "The problem in the White House needs to be removed."

- "The seemingly irreversible growth of demographic elements permanently dependent on government is the primary threat to the nation's long-term survival."

- "It's the economy stupid. Always has been. Always will be."

- "I would also say the partisan legislative redistricting process is a problem that seems to prevent us from addressing any of the others in a real way."

- "The increasing divide among Americans in terms of the values held by all different sorts of demographics. Singular concerns are political

problems. Cultural divides are structural."

- "Jobs and economy are closely tied."

- "Education, because it affects everything else."

- "Unemployment, the economy and Federal spending are interwoven."

- "Every democracy is doomed to failure because the populace ultimately discovers it has the key to the treasury."

- "Tea Party insanity"

- "Other: The systematic hollowing out and harvesting of America by a corporate elite that takes and doesn't give, pledging no allegiance to our country."

- "If we get education right, our brainpower will help us solve most of the others."

- "The government needs to be trimmed back, so our national economy can regain its vitality and dynamism. The government now grows more intrusive every year.... we're not socialist yet, but we're on that path."

- "Open dialogue between parties is needed to fix any and all of the issues this country is facing. Until grown-ups start governing, we are in for a rude awakening."

- "It isn't sexy, but if we fail to get some restraint in trade we will never rebuild our manufacturing base."

- "If you solve the gridlock issue everything else will take care of itself."

- "Explore more domestic Energy, prices go down, helps the jobs. Brings in more tax revenue: Plain and simple."
- "The biggest problem facing the country is really a package of related problems. Revenues are too low, spending is too high, and the resulting deficits and debt are unsustainable except under circumstances of implausibly rapid growth."
- "The national debt will forever be a major drag until taxes are increased and spending is cut.... simple math"
- "Specifically, the widening gap between rich and poor, and decreased social mobility via access to education."
- "Jobs is not on this list. The economy is overly broad, encompassing both leveraged buyouts that usually cost jobs, and small business and corporations that employ Americans. Job creation is by far the most pressing problem facing this country."
- "Need to get federal budget under control with both cuts and new revenues -- to avoid fiscal cliff."

What would you say is the most important problem facing the state of Texas today?

- "Ensuring a business friendly climate--educated workforce, adequate water supply, affordable and plentiful electricity, infrastructure that can serve the needs of the state, and reasonable/predictable environmental regulation."
- "Cronyism, ideological blindness and inattention to the real problems facing our state cause me doubt and, at times, even despair about the state that my children will inherit."
- "Water a close second"
- "Aggressive ignorance, narcissistic self aggrandizement, and passive aggressive nihilism are a lethal combination in public policy"
- "Infrastructure funding- water & transportation are at the top."
- "Texans are not getting more smarter. A mind is a terrible thing and it must be stopped."
- "We need to completely change our thinking on education. It needs to be funded at the state level and the local districts need to be allowed to pay for the extras that their communities consider essential. We need to return to the concept of local independent school districts that can produce kids who are ready to go to college or trade school or directly into the work force, depending on what the student aspires too, not what the state thinks they should be doing."
- "I replied with "taxes," but only because I couldn't specifically reply with "school finance.""
- "A better educated adult population makes all these other issues potentially solvable."

- "The true answer is infrastructure...which includes transportation, water, energy, and education. These 4 issues will decide whether the Texas we know today will exist tomorrow."
- "Take care of things on the education front, and you take care of things on all the other fronts."
- "See above"
- "Taxes. Because we don't raise enough of them to make the investments we need in public education, transportation, and water to build a prosperous future."
- "Here, I would say lack of perspective, but again, not on the list."
- "Texas taxpayers cannot continue to foot the bill for the world's needy, especially those here illegally."
- "See previous"
- "I've have got to fix our tax structure are the whole we have dug will just keep getting deeper It's time to stop kicking the can down the road"
- "Education because it impacts so many other areas"
- "One cannot reasonably choose just one. Education and water are the biggies that need immediate attention and action!"
- "Specifically secondary education."
- "Health care spending, especially Medicaid, CHIP and Dual Eligible coverage is unsustainable and is already crowding out spending on

education, criminal justice and transportation."

- "Texas is blessed in many ways but an abundance of water is not one of them. Growing population, a semi-arid climate, and an overly zealous property rights position on water spells big problems looming."
- "Tea Party insanity"
- "We certainly have great infrastructure needs; but if we do not produce an educated workforce, we will have a 3rd world economy--with or without that infrastructure."
- "Sustained one party rule and the "leadership" of Governor Perry has led to ossification and corruption in the form of crony capitalism. If we continue down this path, given the inexorable conditions on the ground, Texas will enter the Third World -- largely unskilled, poor, diseased, and even thirsty -- in the decades to come."
- "The current political leadership is solely interested in politics and getting elected. The state requires leaders with vision, with an ability to make certain the state plans for its future."
- "There will come a time where the state can no-longer import an educated workforce and we can no-longer afford to support the uneducated."
- "Making budget cuts based on opinion/ideology rather than fact is ridiculous, but reality today."
- "Without proper infrastructure, we cannot expect to continue to attract new businesses and jobs to the state."

Along with transportation, we need to ensure that we have an educated work force and water and other utilities to continue to be competitive."

- "Education is a very close second"
- "The most important issue facing Texas is a combination of water supply and budgeting issues. Those budgeting issues include tax policy, budget cuts and revenues."
- "Texas revenues are insufficient to deal with the shortcomings in education and health care that unattended will compromise the economic vitality of the state in the coming decades."
- "Energy & Infrastructure investments (incl roads) will be critical for the state's economy to continue performing satisfactorily over the coming decades, but Education trumps all."
- "Education at the top.... cannot maintain a democracy or free enterprise system without an educated electorate that votes. Water and infrastructure are not far behind and continue to be ignored. You cannot keep asking people to come to Texas if there is not enough water and a sound financing system for highways. No Rick, more debt is not the answer!"
- "Ridiculous party safe districts leading to an unrepresentative (of the

broad middle) representative legislature."

- "Specifically, failure to educate growing Latino population to keep Texas workforce strong and productive in out years."
- "I like how you conflated political corruption with political leadership. Time saver!"
- "Fine line between balancing state budget and not investing proper amount in education and infrastructure. Use part of rainy day fund -- that's what it's for."
- "The Texas economy is fairly healthy, but our education system is WOEFULLY deficient. When we have school districts, such as Fort Bend ISD that insist on EVERY 10th grader taking the PSAT, when a great number of them will not graduate HIGH SCHOOL, there is a problem. Texas needs to go BACK to the fundamentals - three levels of study in high school - College Prep, Foundations and Vocational Ed!"
- "I'd have said state and local government spending, given that choice."
- "Education is first, but that will ultimately lead to a discussion over taxes. The two are really tied for first place."

Thinking about the country, do you think that things are headed in the right direction, or do you think that things are headed off on the wrong track?

- "The world still hates us and we're a joke to the terrorists, Russians, and Chinese; domestically we're sputtering along with no meaningful job growth. Recipe for disaster."
- "Things are not all going in one direction."
- "The last 4 years of having a national agenda directed at leading us into fiscal oblivion is appalling, but is what the elitists have been wishing for years."
- "But not because of the usual reasons. The two major parties need to stop bickering in order to win elections. There is a lack of cooperation in order to get a leg up in the next election. Log jams are great for the lobby, but not for governing."
- "No one is leading in either party."
- "See above: income inequality is undermining our democracy."
- "Obama's policies have utterly failed on his watch. He can't get by with continuing to place blame elsewhere."
- "Seriously? We've been above 8% unemployment for years, we have no leadership nationally, and the Middle East is in disarray."
- "We just saw a guy jump from 23 miles above the earth! How are we going in the wrong direction?"
- "Given national deficits, debt, unemployment and GDP figures, you should have only had one radial button to check off."
- "This is a question for post-election."
- "Americans used to be self reliant."
- "The country needs to address head on the corruptive role of money in our political system; the deterioration of an intelligent populace through the decimation of our schools, press, and families; and the rise of aggressive religious fundamentalism in what is ostensibly an open, pluralistic society. Time marches on, and at a time when we should be leading, the world is passing us by."
- "Obama has us on the wrong, wrong track."
- "As long as both parties refuse to work together and compromise, this country will continue on its course to nowhere."
- "Celebrating 7.8% unemployment as a good indicator below 8% especially in October, 2012 is not much to tell the people still out of work."
- "Right direction, but too slowly."
- "But in ways that Romney would make worse, not better."
- "As long as we're not heading into the past, we're always heading in the right direction."
- "What track? The wheels fell of years ago."

Compared to a year ago, would you say that the national economy is a lot better off, somewhat better off, about the same, somewhat worse off, or a lot worse off?

- "Fewer jobs to be had, fewer folks looking for jobs, debt continues to increase (both personal and govt), etc."
- "But a lot hinges on EU and China"
- "If there's any significant difference in the economic landscape from a year ago, I sure don't see it."
- "Government rules and regulations are bankrupting America. We must learn from the failed policies of the past that created the same abysmal failures. Obama wants more of the same, but more QEs are NOT the right direction."
- "Unemployment is only dropping because people are stopping their job search. We need a change."
- "No real policy answers to long term debt; policy initiatives are linked to budget cuts."
- "Obama is slowly digging us out of a huge hole left by the Bushies. Too bad there's not a Congress that will help."
- "It would have been much better off if the stimulus was much larger."
- "Growth is slower in 2012 than it was in 2011, and 2011 was slower than 2010. We're heading in the wrong direction, and there's no real plan from the administration except "wait it out.""
- "We are one catastrophe away from a 2008 replay."
- "1 trillion in deficits for each year of Obama's Presidency is not sustainable."
- "Partisan polarization is a big hindrance to development and passage of a coherent economic recovery and growth program."
- "Pols looking for people to blame and not solutions."
- "But economic instability in the EU is still the undraped shoe."

Thinking about the state of Texas, do you think that things are headed in the right direction, or do you think that things are headed off on the wrong track?

- "We're headed in the right direction, but could easily slip back. Especially when we have to pony up some cash to bail out California's impending bankruptcy."
- "See choice above"

- "We are delusional about the sustainability of underfunding education and basic infrastructure. It's all going to come back to bite us."
- "I chose don't know because neither of the other two options fit. Texas is doing some things really well, but closing its eyes to some real problems. Texas is handling its short-term issues very well. It is ignoring long-term issues - infrastructure for roads, water, etc."
- "We have statewide "leaders" who cater to primary voters and who think that vouchers, TSA groping and sanctuary cities are the most important issues facing the state. It's time our leaders started filtering the masses and deal with the serious issues our state faces in a serious way."
- "The state's infrastructure is broken in multiple ways and the leadership has no plan to fix it."
- "The people getting elected are libertarians...who would like to extinguish government as we know it today. Government has a place in our lives.... albeit a small part. The newly elected officials want to starve government...thus impacting the long term needs of this state; like water, energy, transportation, and education."
- "Right track economically. Wrong track on some other important issues (like education). You can have both."
- "It's all falling into disrepair - school, roads, water. Low taxes and less regulation are not the answer."
- "Regretfully the 2013 legislative session will again place all we own at risk."
- "Texas is on the right track, but for only one reason: oil & gas. Take that out of the equation, and we're no better than the rest of the country."
- "No ability to problem solve in a manner that won't worsen the divisions that will be critical"
- "Insufficient state funding in a few big areas, like water, transportation and education."
- "We can't delay addressing our infrastructure issues and public education funding issues (including higher Ed costs)."
- "The Grover Norquist mentality and nutcase social right wingers continue taking this state backward."
- "No matter who is in control, the state always seems to be heading in the right direction after a major budget shortfall. But I will say this that whatever decisions they decide in 2013 may come back to haunt us at a latter date; e.g., 2006 margins tax."
- "Talk to me in late May of 2013."
- "It is not a coincidence that the Texas economy is markedly better than the rest of the country. Generations of investments in human capital and a world-class infrastructure brought us to this place. Ironically, those who tout our prosperity the loudest are the same folks who are now hell bent on ensuring that future generations won't receive such an inheritance from us."

Shame on the shortsighted. They will be the ruin of this great state."

- "Too many people are reading the headlines from 5 years ago. Time to refocus and tackle the tough issues head on. Water, roads, health care, education."
- "Republicans need to stay out of people's bed rooms and religious preferences and Democrats need to stay out of peoples wallets."
- "Just look around."
- "We lack visionary leadership on a host of problems, including public schools, higher education, roads and highways, and water supply."
- "The spin is great, however, when one digs deep into our issues (education, infrastructure, water) it's going to get hotter-than-horseradish."
- "Gutting our public ed system while ignoring dropout rates and allowing higher ed prices to spin out of control will mean a dumber, less capable workforce."
- "Blessed with a healthy business climate. Challenge for the State and local officials will be to deal with infrastructure to support massive population increases."
- "Texas faces big problems in education, access to health care, and productivity given the rapid demographic change the state is undergoing and state leaders are doing next to nothing to address these issues."

- "Lot's of conflicting data points exist: we have several of the building blocks to succeed, but must invest in education, infrastructure, and health care or else our recent gains will slip away."

- "On social issues and education, definitely the wrong track."

- "Failure to educate our people, especially Latinos; engineered collapse of public education, accelerated by Patrick and vouchers; crushing public health challenges, esp. for Latinos."

- "Every day is, in every way, another day closer to the end of Rick Perry's reign of error."

- "Our infrastructure is falling behind; our children are not getting the education they need; too many of our citizens do not have health care; and the Governor is an ideologue who seems to care more about partisanship than the welfare of the people of our great State"

- "Without proper investments in both secondary and higher education we lose ground on human capital and without proper investments in transportation and water infrastructure we lose economic opportunities."

- "Perry's cronyism is killing us."

- "You can't cut cut cut and expect a good outcome"

Compared to a year ago, would you say that the Texas economy is a lot better off, somewhat better off, about the same, somewhat worse off, or a lot worse off?

- "Growing and importing a demographic that infrastructure cannot accommodate"
- "A big thank you to the oil and gas industry and Texas being lucky enough to have these shale deposits."
- "We are better than the rest of the country, but oil and gas money can mask a lot of problems."
- "Thanks to the luck of what is three miles underground. Otherwise we'd be Mississippi."
- "If this is what the economy looks like when Texas creates more jobs than all the other states combined, then I sure am glad to NOT live in any of them!"
- "The oil and gas boom is sustaining us for now."
- "Drill baby drill!"
- "No longer experiencing revenue shortfall, but there are big holes from the past in areas that have been insufficiently funded."
- "Thank you shale development!"
- "There is a huge difference between "jobs" and "standard of living.""
- "Low tax states are typically the first out of a recession."
- "Every elected official should thank the companies exploring the Eagle Ford."
- "But still in denial of its fiscal responsibilities."
- "Lots of people moving here, and escaping other parts of the country, tells a story inconvenient for you Texas-haters."

Thinking about the condition of the national economy, do you think the worst is over or is the worst yet to come?

- "Ask me again on Nov. 7."
- "Depends on EU, China"
- "We'll know some more on Nov 6 and a lot more on 12/31 (fiscal cliff...)"
- "And will be made far worse under the policies of a Romney administration."
- "Depends on the national election. Obama equals more bad to come. Romney is the turn around."
- "It's going to be a long slow road to rebuild to the levels that will deny opportunists the chance to score points"
- "God I hope the worst is over. Can't imagine it getting worse. By right"

now, I don't see it getting any better either."

- "Short term, the worse of over. Long term, we're toast."
- "The DEBT is killing us. We cannot continue to print money and expect the future to be bright."
- "Buy gold."
- "Depends on the election. If the President is reelected, the worst is yet to come. But I have more faith in the American people than that."
- "Should slowly continue to get better if Europe doesn't collapse."
- "Ask me on November 7th."
- "Depends on the election. Obama appears to be clueless"
- "QE3, QE4...trillions in new dollars will catch us...it will be bad."
- "Outcome in November will determine if we're headed over that Fiscal Cliff"
- "Sooner or later, the bill comes due."
- "It depends on Europe, whether Obama is re-elected, and whether he

finds the strength to use the bully pulpit to cow the House Republicans into something approaching rationality."

- "Depends on who wins the election"
- "The time will come when we eventually have to pay the piper."
- "Fiscal cliff and decline of EuroZone may combine to lead us into a world wide depression."
- "No leadership in Washington and political gridlock"
- "European and Chinese economies will be key to ensuring that the US does not slide back into recession"
- "Depends on how November 6th goes. More Obama, more malaise."
- "But Congress jacking around with the fiscal cliff is going to freak out the financial markets with increasing ferocity the closer we get to the end of the year."
- "It'll be fun to see how the Republicans answering this question root for America to fail. Go on. Correlate it."
- "Depends on who wins the Presidential election."

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