

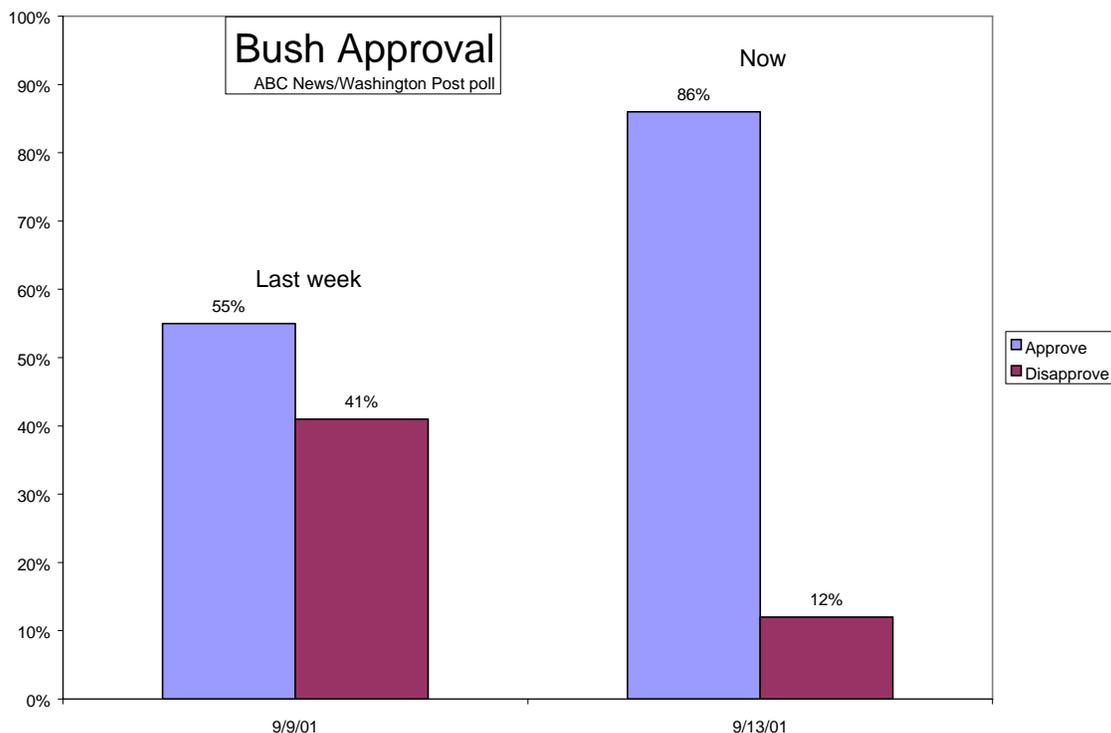
ABC NEWS/WASHINGTON POST POLL: RESPONSE TO TERROR
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 11 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 13, 2001

American Public Closes Ranks Behind Bush & Anti-Terror Measures

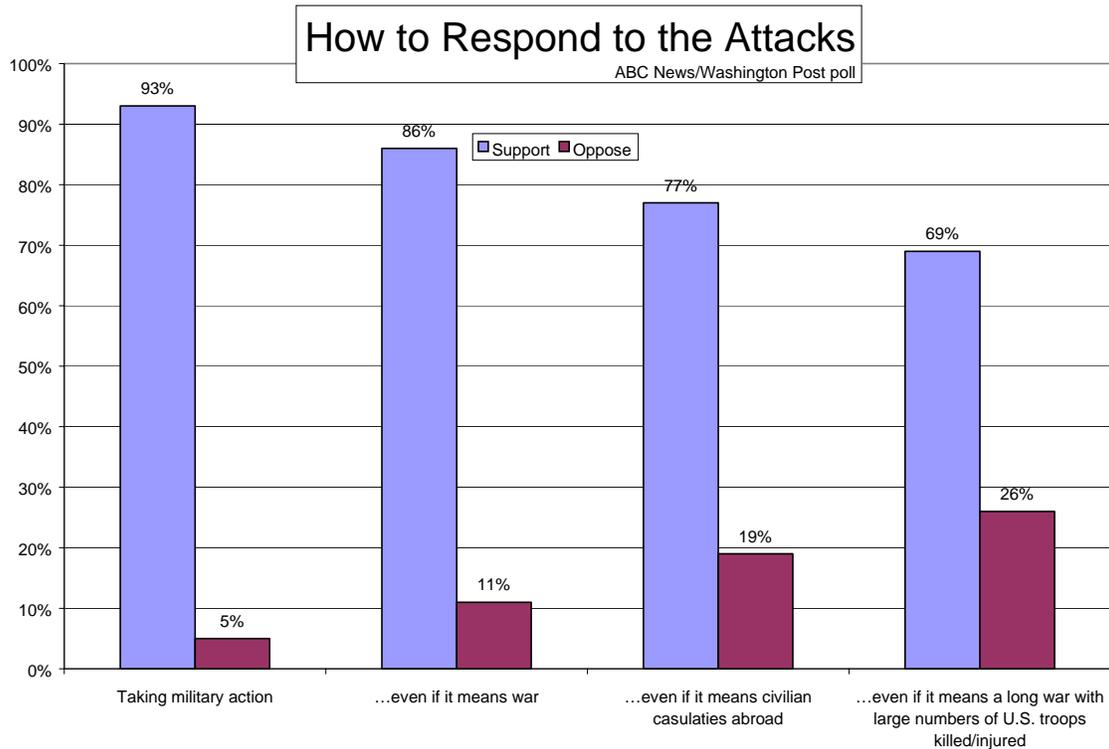
A gritty resolve is emerging from the ashes of Tuesday's terror attacks, with broad majorities of Americans expressing support for military action against the groups or nations responsible – even if it means a protracted and costly war.

The public is closing ranks in numbers unseen since the Gulf War. More than nine in 10 approve of George W. Bush's response, and 86 percent approve of his job performance in general – a 31-point leap, to a level unmatched since his father's just over a decade ago.

Two-thirds expect war, this ABC News/Washington Post poll finds, and more than that are willing to accept it. Some of the numbers approach unanimity: If the United States can identify the groups or nations responsible, more than 90 percent support military action against them. Eighty-six percent support military action even if it means war; 77 percent, even if it endangers innocent civilians abroad.



Sixty-nine percent, moreover, support military action in one of the worst-case scenarios: If it means a long war in which large numbers of U.S. troops are killed or injured. Polls are not predictive, and the public's dander clearly is up, but this result does indicate a seriousness of purpose. So do strength-of-support measures; seven in 10 say they'd "strongly" support military action, even at the risk of war.



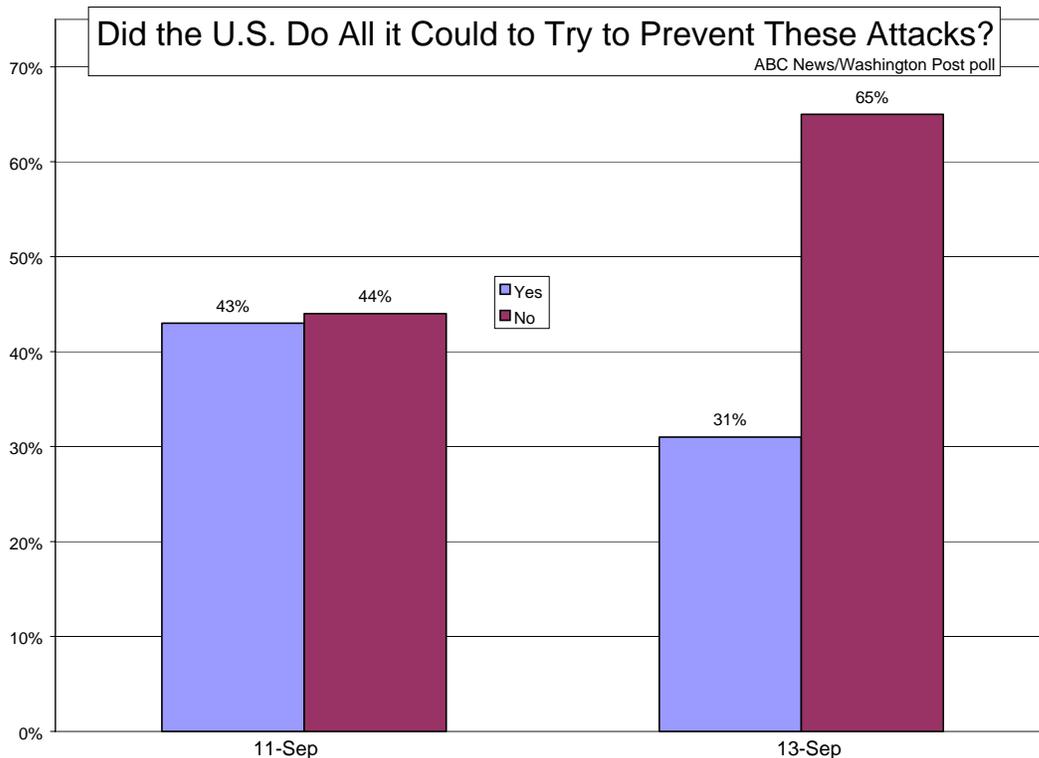
BIN LADEN – In one specific military option, 85 percent say the United States should attack Afghanistan militarily if it refuses to turn over Osama bin Laden, who was indicted last year for the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania and has been identified as a suspect in Tuesday's attacks. Again, seven in 10 feel that way strongly.

There is, as well, increasing confidence that those responsible indeed will be identified. Ninety-five percent think so, and 65 percent are "very confident" of it – up from 54 percent the night of Tuesday's attacks.

LAPSE – There is also an increased belief that avoidable security lapses were at fault in Tuesday's attacks. Sixty-five percent now say the United States could have done more to prevent those attacks, up sharply from 44 percent Tuesday night.

The public, again in very broad numbers, supports measures to prevent such lapses in the future. Ninety-two percent support new laws that would make it easier for authorities to investigate people they suspect of terrorist activity; 71 percent feel that way even "if it meant giving up some of Americans' personal liberties and privacy."

Additionally 98 percent – virtually everyone – supports new airport security measures, “even if they cause long delays in air travel.” And 87 percent “strongly” support such measures.



TRAVEL – Travel concerns are running high, and that was before broad awareness of reports that people had been taken into custody Thursday evening at New York’s Kennedy and La Guardia airports. Nearly six in 10 say they’re personally worried about traveling by air because of the risk of terrorism, although fewer, 25 percent, are “very worried.” Worries are lower among people who fly more often.

Nine percent say they have cancelled specific plans to travel in the future because of the danger of attacks; and four percent say they were thinking of doing so. While small percentages, these represent millions of individuals.

SUSPICIONS – In another area, this poll finds a broad acknowledgment of possible prejudice: Forty-three percent of Americans feel that the attacks this week will make them “personally more suspicious” of people who seem to be of Arab descent. U.S. leaders have strongly cautioned the public against anti-Arab sentiment.

ECONOMY – The poll also finds an economic outlook among Americans that is not bright, but also not markedly worse than it’s been. Fifty-eight percent think the nation is headed for a recession; it was 53 percent last week.

A last result underscores the bipartisanship that occurs when Americans close ranks in crisis. In an ABC/Post poll completed just last Sunday, Bush's job approval among Democrats was 29 percent. Today it's 79 percent – up 50 points.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 13, 2001, among a random national sample of 609 adults. The results have a four-point error margin. Field work by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results (*=less than 0.5 percent)

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

	-----Approve-----			-----Disapprove-----			No opin.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	
9/13/01	86	63	23	12	6	5	2
9/9/01	55	26	29	41	22	20	3
8/12/01	61	28	33	31	17	14	8
7/30/01	59	28	30	38	22	17	3
6/3/01	55	27	28	40	22	18	6
4/22/01	63	33	30	32	16	16	5
3/25/01	58	NA	NA	33	NA	NA	8
2/25/01	55	NA	NA	23	NA	NA	22

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bush is handling the U.S. response to this week's terrorist attacks?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opin.
9/13/01	91	7	2

3. Do you think the United States government did all it reasonably could do to try to prevent these attacks, or do you think it could have done more?

	US did all it could	US could have done more	No opin.
9/13/01	31	65	4
9/11/01	43	44	13

4. If the United States can identify the groups or nations responsible for today's attacks, would you support or oppose taking military action against them?

	Support	Oppose	No opin.
9/13/01	93	5	2
9/11/01	94	3	3

4/5. NET What if that meant getting into a war - in that case would you support or oppose taking military action?

	-----Support-----			No	
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	Oppose	opin.
9/13/01	86	71	15	11	3
9/11/01	86	NA	NA	7	4

4/6. NET What if it meant innocent civilians in other countries might be hurt or killed - in that case would you support or oppose taking military action?

	Support	Oppose	No opin.
9/13/01	77	19	4

4/7. NET What if it meant getting into a long war with large numbers of U.S. troops killed or injured - in that case would you support or oppose taking military action against the groups or nations responsible for these attacks?

	Support	Oppose	No opin.
9/13/01	69	26	5

8. As you may know, a man named Osama bin Laden, who reportedly lives in Afghanistan, has been indicted for directing previous terrorist attacks and is a suspect in Tuesday's attacks. If Afghanistan does not turn bin Laden over to the United States, would you support or oppose the United States' attacking Afghanistan militarily?

	-----Support-----			-----Oppose-----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	opin.
9/13/01	85	72	13	11	4	7	3

9. Just your best guess, do you think the United States will go to war as a result of Tuesday's attacks, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
9/13/01	66	30	4

10. How confident are you in the ability of the U.S. government to find and punish the people responsible for these attacks - are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

	-----Confident-----			-----Not confident-----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	opin.
9/13/01	95	65	30	5	4	1	*
9/11/01	91	54	37	9	8	1	1
8/5/96 (Atlanta)	86	40	46	14	10	4	*
8/5/96 (TWA 800)	61	21	40	38	25	13	1
5/14/95 (OKC)	92	52	40	8	5	3	0
4/20/95 (OKC)	89	56	33	9	7	1	2

11. Would you support or oppose new laws that would make it easier for the FBI and other authorities to investigate people they suspect of involvement in terrorism?

	Support	Oppose	No opin.
9/13/01	92	6	2

11/12. NET. What if that meant giving up some of Americans' personal liberties and privacy---in that case would you support it or not?

	Support	Oppose	No opin.
9/13/01	71	24	5

13. Would you support or oppose new airport security measures, even if they cause long delays in air travel?

	-----Support-----			-----Oppose-----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	opin.
9/13/01	98	87	11	2	1	1	*

14. Are you personally worried about traveling by commercial airplane because of the risk of terrorism, or do you think the risk is not that great?

	-----Worried-----			Not	No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	Worried	opin.
9/13/01	59	25	35	40	1

15. Have you personally cancelled any specific plans to travel by air in the future because of the danger of terrorist attacks, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
9/13/01	9	91	0

16. (If No, Q15) Do you have any personal air travel plans that you are thinking of canceling, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
9/13/01	4	96	*

17. Do you think the attacks this week will make you personally more suspicious of people who you think are of Arab descent, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
9/13/01	43	56	1

22. Just your best guess, do you think the economy is heading into a recession, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
9/13/01	58	37	5
9/9/01	53	44	4
7/30/01	52	46	2
4/22/01	45	50	5
3/25/01	58	37	5
1/15/01	55	42	3

END