

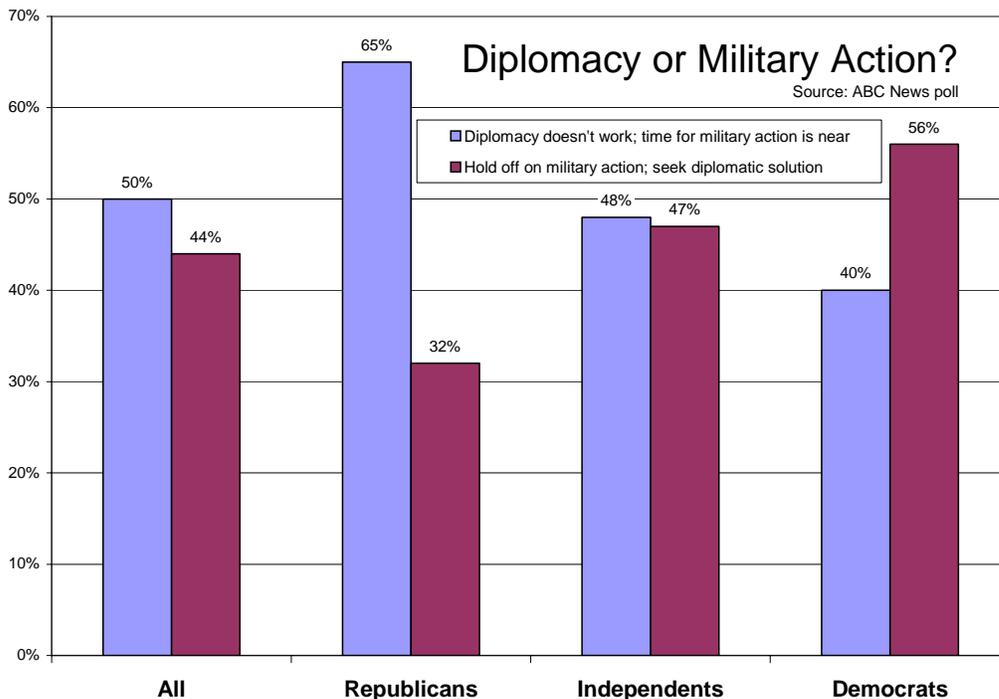
## **No Consensus for Urgency on Iraq, Though Most Support a First Strike**

In a mixed message for George W. Bush, Americans express broad preference for striking Iraq first – but no consensus for doing so quickly.

The public by 2-1 supports Bush’s view that the United States should be able to attack Iraq before it, or terrorists it supports, strike this country. But there’s no consensus on urgency: Americans divide on whether the United States should still seek a diplomatic solution, or give up on diplomacy and move toward a military strike.

This result reflects the same conditional support for striking Iraq that has marked public opinion for months. The sense of threat is great enough that most Americans support acting militarily to remove Saddam Hussein from power, but not great enough to sustain broad support for acting unilaterally, quickly, or in a costly ground war.

As with other recent polling on Iraq, there are strong partisan differences in this ABC News poll. Nearly two-thirds of Republicans say “diplomacy doesn’t work with Iraq” and the time for action is near. This falls to 48 percent of independents, and falls further among Democrats, to 40 percent.

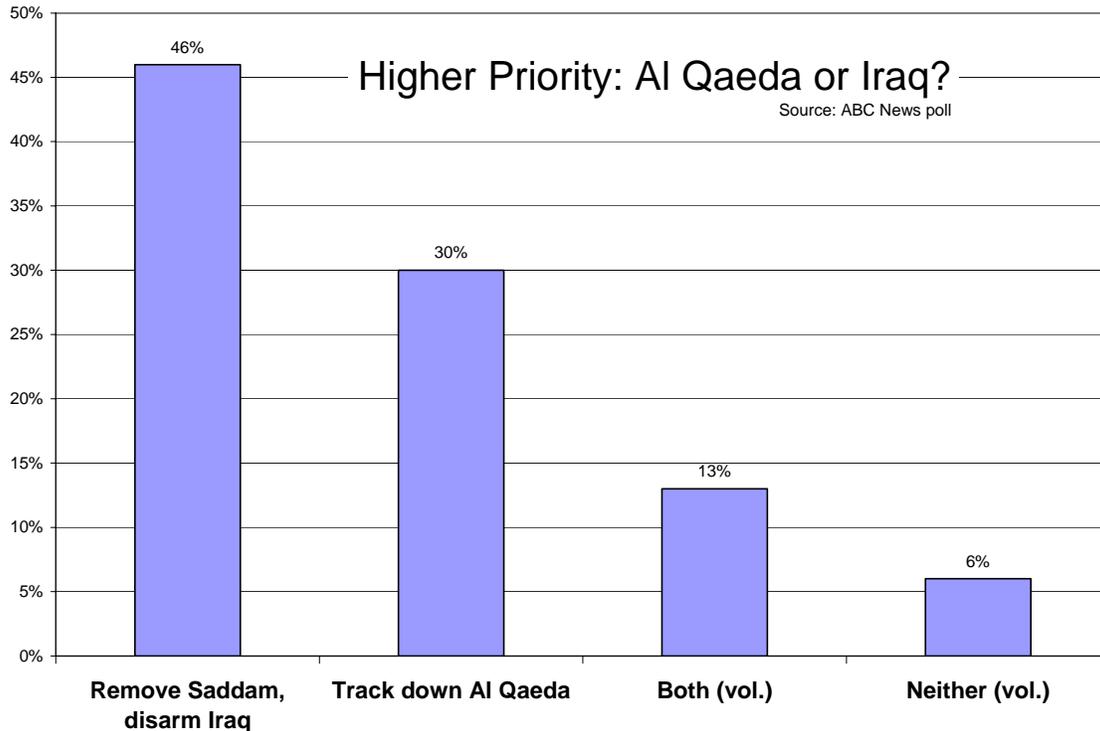


	All	Rep	Ind	Dem
Diplomacy doesn't work with Iraq; time for military action is near	50%	65	48	40
Hold off on military action; continue to seek diplomatic solution	44	32	47	56

Similarly, 74 percent of Republicans support the principle of a U.S. first strike against Iraq, compared to 57 percent of Democrats and independents. Pre-emptive action also wins more support among men (69 percent) than among women (55 percent).

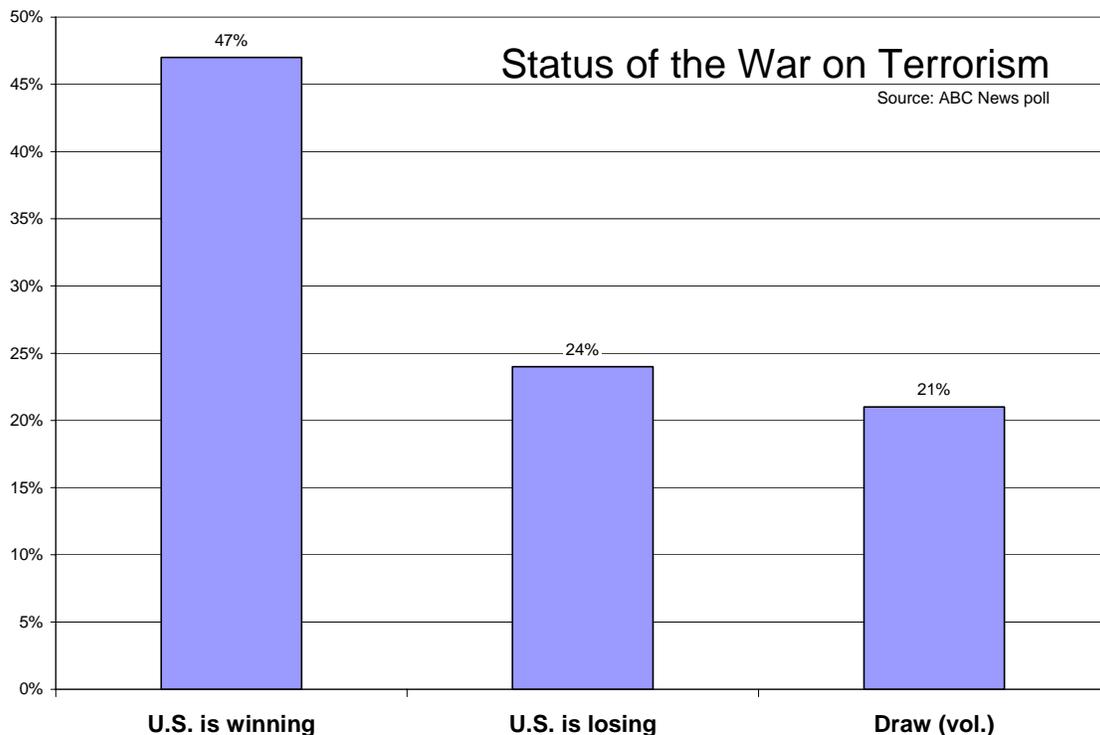
ISSUE – Whatever the compunctions, Bush, who has scheduled an address on Iraq for tonight, has impressed a substantial number of Americans with the importance of this issue. A year after the war on terrorism began, 46 percent (again, especially Republicans) say that removing Saddam and disarming Iraq is more important than tracking down and capturing members of Al Qaeda. Fewer, 30 percent, give higher priority to chasing down Al Qaeda members.

More important:	All	Rep	Ind	Dem
Removing Saddam, disarming Iraq	46%	58	41	41
Tracking down, capturing Al Qaeda	30	20	36	35



**WHO'S WINNING?** – More broadly, a year to the day after the United States opened its war on terrorism by attacking the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, Americans give a somewhat mixed report on the status of the effort.

Most striking is that fewer than half, 47 percent, say the United States is winning the war on terrorism. Far fewer, 24 percent, say the United States is losing, but a substantial 21 percent volunteer that it's a draw.



Partisanship again is strong here; nearly two-thirds of Republicans say the country is winning the war on terrorism, while just about four in 10 Democrats and independents agree. And men are 18 points more apt than women to say the United States is winning.

Specifically in terms of Afghanistan, seven in 10 Americans call the year-old U.S. campaign there a success, but most call it a partial rather than a complete success. And the public divides about evenly on whether the United States is doing enough, or should do more, to track down Al Qaeda members and Taliban leaders.

**OSAMA** – One disappointment is the apparent failure to capture or kill Osama bin Laden. Seven in 10 Americans think he's still alive, and this informs views of the broader war: Among people who think bin Laden is dead, 61 percent say the United States is winning the war on terrorism. But among those who think he's alive, fewer – 44 percent – think the United States is winning.

**TWO FRONTS** – A narrow majority, 53 percent, thinks the United States can handle the current war on terrorism, and dealing with Iraq, at the same time. People who favor quick action against Iraq are especially likely to say so, as are Republicans, men, and those who think the United States is winning the war on terrorism.

Among those who think the United States can't handle both simultaneously, the current war on terrorism gets a 2-1 priority over attacking Iraq. That's because people who hold this view are more apt to be those who favor attempting diplomacy with Iraq first.

**REBUILDING** – Finally there's the question of helping to rebuild Afghanistan. In this area just a quarter of Americans say the United States should be doing more, while a modest majority says it's doing enough now.

**GROUPS** – As noted, in addition to the partisan differences, there are very substantial differences between the sexes on some of these issues. Compared to women, men are 18 points more likely to say the United States is winning the war on terrorism; 17 points more likely to call the campaign in Afghanistan a success; 22 points more likely to think the United States can handle Iraq and terrorism at once; 14 points more likely to say the United States should be able to strike Iraq first; and 10 points more likely to say diplomacy with Iraq doesn't work.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 2-6, 2002, among a random national sample of 1,029 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation 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/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934

Full results follow. \*=less than 0.5 percent.

1. Do you think the United States is winning or losing the war on terrorism?

	Winning	Losing	Neither/It's a draw (vol.)	No opinion
10/6/02	47	24	21	9

2. Overall, do you think the U.S. military action in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al Qaeda has been successful or not successful? (IF SUCCESSFUL) Would you call it a (complete) success or a (partial) success?

	NET	Complete	Partial	Not successful	No opinion
10/6/02	70	14	56	24	6

3. (Do you think the United States should be doing more to help rebuild Afghanistan, or is it doing enough?) (Do you think the United States is doing enough to help rebuild Afghanistan, or should it be doing more?)

	Should be doing more	Is doing enough	Doing too much (vol.)	No op.
10/6/02	24	53	13	9

4. (Do you think the United States should be doing more to try to track down and capture Al Qaeda members and Taliban leaders, or is it doing enough?) (Do you think the United States is doing enough to try to track down and capture Al Qaeda members and Taliban leaders, or should it be doing more?)

	Should be doing more	Is doing enough	Doing too much (vol.)	No op.
10/6/02	48	45	2	6

5. Just your best guess, do you think Osama Bin Laden is dead or alive?

	Dead	Alive	No opinion
10/6/02	23	70	7

6. What do you think should be a higher priority for the United States right now - (tracking down and capturing Al Qaeda members), or (disarming Iraq and removing Saddam Hussein from power)?

	Tracking down and capturing Al Qaeda	Disarming Iraq and removing Saddam	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/6/02	30	46	13	6	6

7. Do you think the United States can handle (the current war on terrorism) and (a war with Iraq) at the same time, or should it deal with these problems one at a time? (IF ONE AT A TIME) Which one first?

	Can do both	NET	-----One at a time----- War on terror first	Iraq first	No opin.
10/6/02	53	40	28	12	7

8. Which of these two statements comes closer to your opinion:

a. The United States should not attack Iraq unless the United States is attacked first, either by Iraq or by terrorists supported by Iraq, or  
 b. The United States should be able to attack Iraq first, if it thinks Iraq or terrorists supported by Iraq might attack the United States.

	Should not attack Iraq unless attacked first	Should be able to attack Iraq first	No opin.
10/6/02	31	62	8

9. Which of these two statements comes closer to your opinion:

a. Diplomacy does not work with Iraq and it's about time for the United States to stop talking and take military action, or  
 b. Diplomacy with Iraq still might work and the United States should hold off on military action and keep trying for a diplomatic solution.

	Diplomacy does not work	Diplomacy still might work	No opin.
10/6/02	50	44	6
2/18/98	46	50	4
2/17/98	50	49	1

\*\*\*END\*\*\*