

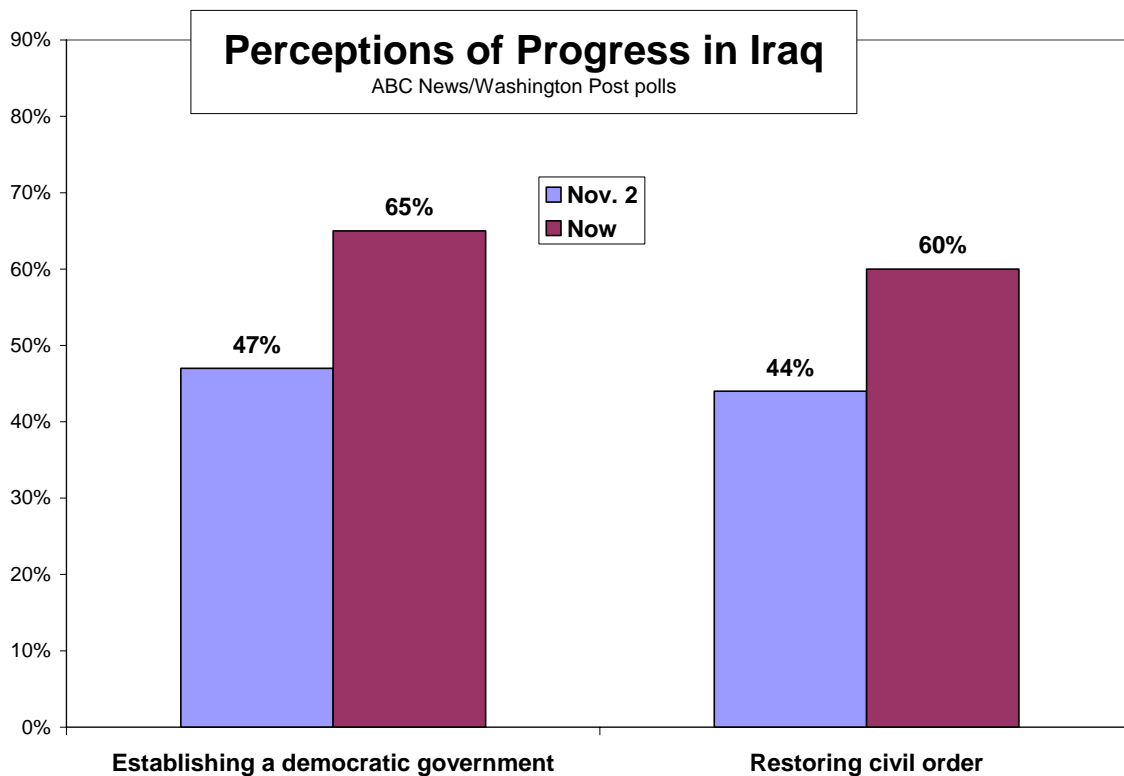
Iraqi Elections, Economic Gains Lift Bush from his Career Lows

The successful elections in Iraq and an improved economic outlook at home have shifted public support in the president's direction, lifting him from career lows in his job performance and personal ratings alike.

The president still faces significant challenges, including majority disapproval of his overall performance, substantial skepticism about the war and roughly 50-50 ratings on his personal honesty and his handling of ethics. Still, each has moved his way.

Overall 47 percent of Americans in this ABC News/Washington Post poll now approve of George W. Bush's work in office; 52 percent disapprove. While hardly robust, that is up from a career low 39-60 percent in early November to its best in nearly six months.

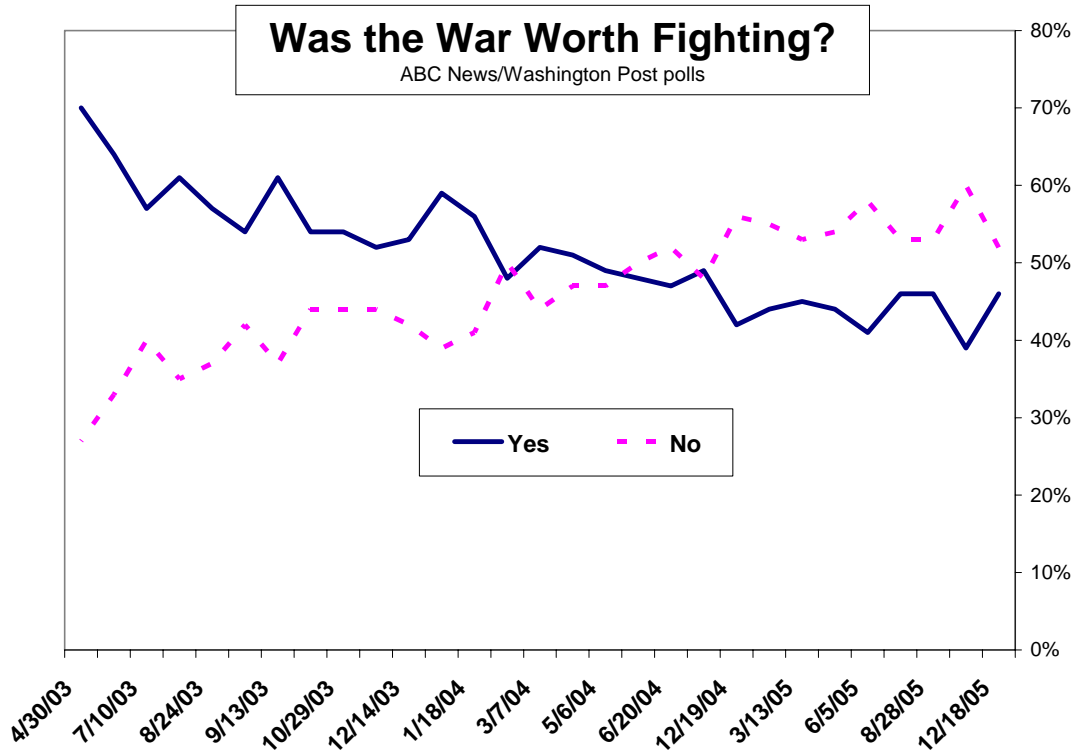
The president's recent speechmaking on Iraq may have helped him. But public opinion tends to move on the basis of facts on the ground rather than political pronouncements, and the most striking change in this poll is linked to last week's successful elections in Iraq.



Specifically, belief that the United States is making significant progress toward establishing a democratic government in Iraq has jumped dramatically, by 18 points, to 65 percent. A sense of progress in establishing civil order similarly is up, by 16 points, to 60 percent. Each is its best since these questions first were asked in spring 2004.

Moreover – in a view held by majorities across party lines – 71 percent of Americans believe the Iraqi elections have moved the United States closer to the day U.S. forces can be withdrawn. Fifty-four percent express optimism about Iraq in the year ahead, eight points more than at this time last year. And 56 percent think the United States is winning the war, a recent theme of the president’s, up slightly from 51 percent in August.

Other views follow: Approval of Bush’s handling of the situation in Iraq is up by 10 points to its best of his second term, 46 percent. (Again, though, more still disapprove, 53 percent.) Forty-six percent now say the war was worth fighting – still fewer than half, but up seven points. And 54 percent think the war has improved long-term U.S. security, the first majority since June – a critical change, since this is the war’s chief justification.

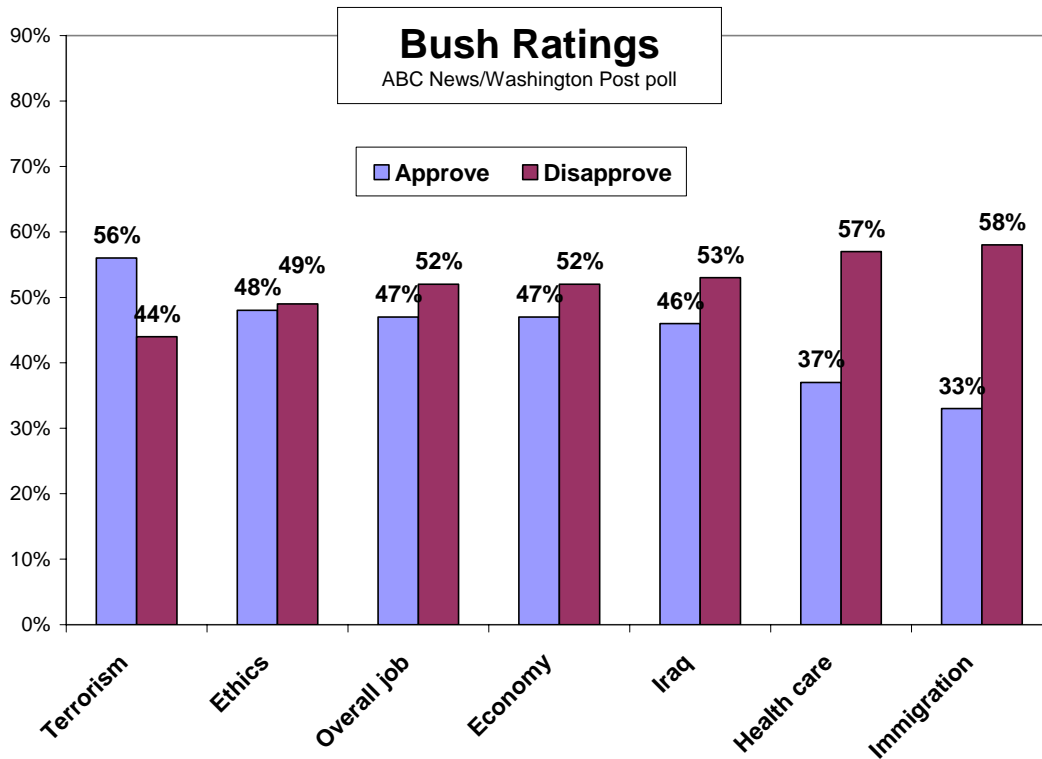


Even with his gains, the president faces considerable skepticism. Despite his recent speeches, culminating in Sunday night’s national address, 60 percent of Americans say he has not done enough to explain the reasons the United States is in Iraq and 59 percent think the administration does not have a clear plan for handling the situation there. (This poll was conducted Thursday through Sunday.) Views on the lack of a clear plan have been steady since spring 2004; what helps the president politically is that even more – 74 percent – think the Democrats in Congress don’t have a clear plan for Iraq, either.

On the issue of troop deployment, six in 10 continue to oppose setting a deadline for withdrawal of U.S. forces, given the counter-position that doing so would encourage Iraqi insurgents. Support for immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces, never high, is now just 12 percent. But support for decreasing the level of U.S. troops has reached a majority for the first time.

One final result on Iraq shows its overriding importance on the national political scene: Asked, open-ended, for the most important problem for Bush and the Congress to address in the year ahead, 32 percent cite the war in Iraq, placing it far ahead of other mentions (the economy, 15 percent; health care, 11 percent; all others, in the single digits.)

BEYOND IRAQ – Bush’s improvement extends beyond Iraq to the U.S. campaign against terrorism, where he’s back in positive territory: Fifty-six percent now approve of his work on terrorism, up eight points. This rating, the cornerstone of Bush’s support, had slipped below a majority for the first time last month.



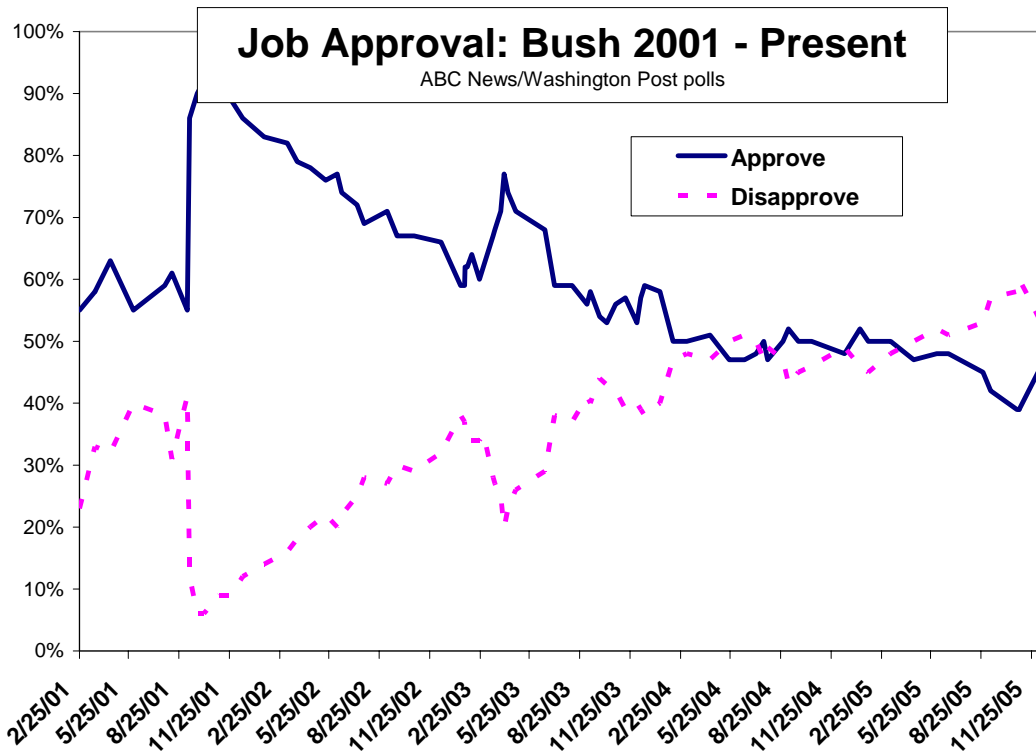
Separately, and with gasoline prices down by 86 cents a gallon from their mid-September peak, there’s been a 10-point gain in positive ratings of the economy, and a commensurate improvement in Bush’s rating for handling it. His ratings are much lower, however, and essentially unchanged, on handling health care (37 percent approve) and immigration (just 33 percent approve, despite his recent focus on the issue).

As attention on the CIA leak investigation has eased, assessments of Bush’s own honesty and trustworthiness are up by nine points, albeit just to an even split. He gets about a 50-50 split in handling ethics in government, and about the same on strong leadership – the latter little changed, and far weaker than his norm.

TORTURE – On another issue under current debate, this poll finds that 56 percent of Americans think the U.S. government has a policy of using torture as part of its campaign against terrorism. Yet 64 percent call this practice unacceptable, about the same as in a May 2004 poll. Thirty-two percent see it as acceptable, rising to a high of 41 percent of Republicans.

At the same time, more Americans, 53 percent – especially Republicans, 73 percent – say it would be acceptable for the CIA to hold people suspected of involvement in terrorism in secret prisons in foreign countries where U.S. laws don’t apply – the so-called “black site” prisons that have been reported recently.

PARTY – Some of Bush’s gains come from a rallying of the faithful: His overall approval rating is up most sharply among Republicans: Eighty-seven percent approve of his job performance, up nine points (and Republican self-identification is up five points, to 32 percent of the public). Just 15 percent of Democrats approve of Bush’s work overall, as do 38 percent of independents, compared with 33 percent of in November.



While highest among Republicans, a sense of progress in Iraq, in terms of establishing civil order and a democratic government, is up very substantially across party lines. A

sense that the war was worth fighting is up among Republicans and independents alike (by 10 and nine points, respectively) but flat among Democrats.

Bush: approve	Now	11/2	Change
All	47%	39	+8
Dem	15	11	+4
Ind	38	33	+5
Rep	87	78	+9

War worth fighting	Now	11/2	Change
All	46%	39	+7
Dem	16	16	=
Ind	43	34	+9
Rep	82	72	+10

The intensity of sentiment on Bush's performance continues to run against him: Forty percent of Americans disapprove "strongly," compared with 29 percent who strongly approve. But again that's better than in November (a record 47-20 percent split). The gain chiefly is among Republicans; their strong approval of the president is up by 16 points.

CONGRESS – The better news for Bush gives just slight aid to his party. While Americans trust the Democrats over the Republicans to handle the nation's main problems by 47-42 percent, that's up slightly for the Republicans, by five points. And the Republicans have improved by seven points in trust to handle Iraq, to a near-even 47-44 percent Democratic-Republican split.

At the same time, the Democrats have slightly increased their advantage, now 47 percent (to the Republicans' 38 percent), in trust to handle ethics in government, and have a 42-34 percent advantage in "standing up to lobbyists and special interest groups."

These shifts haven't much changed the basic equation looking ahead to 2006. By a 10-point margin, 51-41 percent, registered voters say they'd prefer the Democrat over the Republican candidate in their congressional district; it was a similar 52-37 percent in November. (That four-point gain for the Republicans is within sampling tolerances.)

At the same time, given the lightening public mood, overall approval of Congress is up by six points (to 43 percent) from what had been an eight-year low. And 65 percent of Americans approve of their own representative in Congress, up five points, to the likely delight of incumbents everywhere.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Dec. 15-18, 2005, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Fieldwork by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

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

Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

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

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opin.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
12/18/05	47	29	17	52	12	40	1
11/2/05	39	20	18	60	13	47	1
10/29/05	39	22	17	58	13	45	3
9/11/05	42	27	15	57	12	45	1
8/28/05	45	27	18	53	12	41	2
6/26/05	48	27	21	51	11	40	1
6/5/05	48	27	21	52	14	38	1
4/24/05	47	25	22	50	13	38	3
3/13/05	50	31	19	48	11	37	3
1/31/05	50	34	15	45	11	34	5
1/16/05	52	33	19	46	11	35	2
12/19/04	48	27	21	49	12	38	2
10/20/04	50	30	20	46	11	35	4
10/17/04 LV	54	35	19	45	9	36	2
10/16/04 LV	54	35	19	44	10	34	2
10/15/04 LV	54	35	19	44	10	34	2
10/3/04 LV	53	36	17	46	11	34	1
9/26/04	50	33	18	45	13	32	5
9/8/04	52	35	17	43	11	32	5
8/29/04	50	31	19	47	13	34	3
8/1/04	47	28	18	49	13	36	5
7/25/04	50	32	19	47	13	34	3
7/11/04	48	31	17	50	11	39	2
6/20/04	47	30	17	51	13	39	1
5/23/04	47	31	17	50	14	36	3
4/18/04	51	33	18	47	13	34	1
3/7/04	50	32	18	48	12	36	2
2/11/04	50	30	21	47	14	34	2
1/18/04	58	35	24	40	9	30	2
12/21/03	59	39	21	38	15	23	3
12/14/03	57	37	20	39	10	29	5
12/7/03	53	32	21	40	13	27	7
11/16/03	57	34	23	39	11	28	4
10/29/03	56	30	26	42	13	29	2
10/13/03	53	33	20	43	13	29	4
9/30/03	54	34	20	44	15	29	2
9/13/03	58	35	23	40	14	27	2
9/7/03	56	34	22	41	13	28	4
8/11/03	59	37	22	37	14	23	4
7/10/03	59	35	24	38	13	25	3
6/22/03	68	45	23	29	11	18	4
4/30/03	71	50	22	26	17	9	3
4/16/03	74	52	22	23	9	14	3
4/9/03	77	58	19	20	6	14	4
4/3/03	71	54	16	25	7	19	4
3/23/03	68	NA	NA	27	NA	NA	4
3/20/03	67	NA	NA	28	NA	NA	5
3/2/03	62	38	23	35	13	22	4
2/23/03	60	NA	NA	34	NA	NA	6
2/9/03	64	42	21	34	14	20	3
2/1/03	62	41	21	34	13	22	4
1/28/03	62	43	19	36	13	23	2
1/27/03	59	39	21	37	15	22	4

1/20/03	59	36	23	38	16	22	2
12/15/02	66	37	28	32	12	20	2
11/4/02 LV	67	45	23	31	12	20	1
11/3/02 LV	67	45	22	32	12	20	1
11/2/02 LV	67	47	20	32	9	23	1
10/27/02	67	39	28	29	13	16	4
9/26/02	67	42	25	30	12	18	3
9/8/02	71	42	28	27	12	15	3
7/28/02	69	39	31	28	14	14	3
7/15/02	72	42	31	25	12	13	2
6/17/02	74	42	32	22	9	13	4
6/9/02	77	41	36	20	9	11	3
5/19/02	76	48	28	22	8	13	3
4/21/02	78	47	31	20	9	10	2
3/28/02	79	49	30	18	8	10	3
3/10/02	82	52	30	16	9	7	2
1/27/02	83	56	27	14	7	7	3
12/19/01	86	64	22	12	6	6	2
11/27/01	89	69	21	9	4	5	1
11/6/01	89	65	24	9	5	4	2
10/9/01	92	76	16	6	3	3	1
9/27/01	90	70	20	6	3	3	4
9/13/01	86	63	23	12	5	6	2
9/9/01	55	26	29	41	20	22	3
8/12/01	61	28	33	31	14	17	8
7/30/01	59	28	30	38	17	22	3
6/3/01	55	27	28	40	18	22	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 (ITEM)?

12/18/05 - Summary Table*

	Approve	Disapprove	No op.
a. The situation in Iraq	46	53	1
b. The economy	47	52	1
c. Health care	37	57	6
d. Ethics in government	48	49	3
e. The US campaign against terrorism	56	44	1
f. Immigration issues	33	58	9

*Items a,b asked of full sample. Items c,d asked half sample, items e,f asked of other half sample.

Trend:

a. The situation in Iraq

	Approve			Disapprove			No opin.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
12/18/05	46	31	15	53	10	43	1
11/2/05	36	20	15	64	13	51	1
9/11/05	38	NA	NA	62	NA	NA	1
8/28/05	42	28	14	57	11	46	1
6/26/05	43	25	18	56	12	44	1
6/5/05	41	NA	NA	58	NA	NA	1
4/24/05	42			56			2
3/13/05	39			57			4
1/16/05	40			58			2
12/19/04	42			57			1

9/26/04	RV	47			50			3
8/29/04	RV	47			51			2
7/25/04		45			53			2
6/20/04		44			55			2
5/23/04		40			58			2
4/18/04		45			54			1
3/7/04		46			53			1
2/11/04		47			52			1
1/18/04		55			42			2
12/21/03		60			39			2
12/14/03		58			38			4
11/16/03		48			48			4
10/29/03		47			51			2
10/13/03		51			47			2
9/29/03		50			47			3
9/13/03		52			46			2
9/7/03		49			47			4
8/24/03		56			37			7
8/11/03		56			41			3
7/10/03		58			41			2
6/22/03		67			30			2
4/30/03		75	"	"	22	"	"	2
3/27/03*		69			26			5
3/23/03		71			26			3
3/20/03		65			29			5
3/17/03		64			29			7
3/9/03		55			38			8
2/23/03		55			39			6
2/9/03		61			37			2
2/5/03		61			32			7
2/1/03		61			35			3
1/28/03		58			38			4
1/27/03		57			40			3
1/20/03		50			46			4
12/15/02		58			37			5
11/4/02	LV	56			40			4
11/3/02	LV	57			40			4
11/2/02	LV	56			41			3
10/27/02		57			38			5
9/26/02		58			39			3
9/14/02		65			31			4
8/29/02		52	"	"	36	"	"	12
*3/27/03 and previous: "The situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein"								

b. The economy

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion	
12/18/05	47	52	1	
11/2/05	36	61	3	
9/11/05	40	58	2	
8/28/05	44	54	3	
6/5/05	40	58	2	
4/24/05	40	57	3	
3/13/05	43	55	2	
1/16/05	46	52	2	
12/19/04	46	51	3	
9/26/04	RV	47	50	4
8/29/04	RV	45	52	3
7/25/04		47	50	3
6/20/04		46	53	1
5/23/04		44	54	2
4/18/04		44	54	2
3/7/04		39	59	1

2/11/04	44	54	2
1/18/04	51	47	2
12/21/03	51	44	5
11/16/03	48	49	3
10/29/03	45	53	2
10/13/03	45	52	2
9/13/03	42	56	3
9/7/03	44	51	5
8/11/03	45	51	5
7/10/03	47	49	4
4/30/03	52	45	3
2/9/03	47	49	4
2/1/03	44	52	4
1/28/03	46	49	4
1/27/03	47	47	5
1/20/03	43	53	4
1/5/03	50	43	7
12/15/02	50	46	4
11/4/02 LV	53	45	2
11/3/02 LV	52	46	2
11/2/02 LV	55	43	2
10/27/02	51	43	6
9/26/02	51	47	3
9/8/02	57	40	4
7/28/02	57	39	4
7/15/02	58	38	3
4/21/02	64	33	3
1/27/02	62	34	4
12/19/01	67	27	6
11/6/01	72	23	5
9/9/01	48	48	4
7/30/01	52	45	3
6/3/01	53	41	6
4/22/01	55	38	7
3/25/01	50	42	8

c. Health care

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/18/05	37	57	6
11/2/05	34	61	5
3/13/05	44	48	8
1/16/05	42	51	6
12/19/04	37	56	7
8/29/04 RV	39	55	6
7/25/04	38	53	9
6/20/04	39	57	4
4/18/04*	33	61	5
3/7/04	32	62	6
2/11/04	32	62	6
1/18/04	37	55	8
12/21/03	34	56	10
10/29/03	28	63	9
10/13/03	30	60	10
9/13/03	32	61	7
4/30/03	34	57	9
1/28/03	40	47	13
1/20/03	36	51	13
12/15/02	33	58	9

*4/18/04 and previous: "The cost, availability and coverage of health insurance"

d. Ethics in government

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/18/05	48	49	3

e. The US campaign against terrorism

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/18/05	56	44	1
11/2/05	48	51	1
9/11/05	50	47	3
8/28/05*	56	43	2
6/5/05	50	49	1
4/24/05	56	41	3
3/13/05	59	38	3
1/16/05	61	38	2
12/19/04	53	43	3
9/26/04 RV	59	38	3
8/29/04 RV	60	37	3
7/25/04	57	40	4
6/20/04	50	48	2
5/23/04	58	39	4
4/18/04	63	35	2
3/7/04	63	34	3
2/11/04	64	34	2
1/18/04	66	33	2
12/21/03	70	28	2
10/29/03	63	35	2
10/13/03	66	30	4
9/13/03	70	27	3
9/7/03	67	28	5
4/30/03	79	19	2
2/9/03	74	23	4
2/1/03	75	21	3
1/27/03	72	26	2
1/20/03	71	25	4
12/15/02	79	20	1
11/4/02 LV	76	22	1
11/3/02 LV	77	22	3
11/2/02 LV	78	21	2
10/27/02	74	23	4
9/26/02	70	28	2
9/8/02	74	24	2
7/28/02	81	17	2
7/15/02	83	15	2
5/19/02*	79	19	3
4/21/02*	81	18	2
3/10/02*	88	10	2
1/27/02	88	10	2
12/19/01*	89	9	2
10/15/01*	92	5	3

*Asked very/somewhat follow-up

f. Immigration issues

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/18/05	33	58	9
8/28/05	33	57	10
1/16/05	33	54	13
1/18/04	34	56	10

3. Please tell me whether the following statement applies to Bush or not.

12/18/05 - Summary Table*

	Yes	No	No op.
a. He is a strong leader	51	49	*
b. He is honest and trustworthy	49	50	1

*Half sample asked item a, other half asked item b.

Trend:

a. He is a strong leader

	Yes	No	No op.
12/18/05	51	49	*
11/2/05	47	53	*
9/11/05	50	50	*
5/23/04	62	37	1
4/18/04	64	36	1
3/7/04	63	36	1
2/11/04	61	38	1
12/21/03	67	32	2
10/29/03	62	37	1
9/13/03	66	34	*
4/30/03	74	25	*
12/15/02	75	23	2
7/15/02	75	24	1
7/30/01	55	43	2
4/22/01	53	42	5
10/9/00 RV	62	33	5
9/6/00 RV	65	28	7
8/20/00 RV	65	29	5
8/10/00 RV	67	29	5
7/23/00 RV	61	33	6
7/23/00	62	32	5
6/11/00	65	30	6
4/2/00	68	27	5
3/11/00	63	31	6
2/27/00	62	32	6
2/6/00	65	30	7
1/16/00	65	28	7
12/15/99	67	26	7
10/31/99	77	18	5
9/2/99	70	18	12
3/14/99	68	13	20

b. He is honest and trustworthy

	Yes	No	No op.
12/18/05	49	50	1
11/2/05	40	58	2
5/23/04	53	45	2
4/18/04	55	44	1
3/7/04	54	45	1
2/11/04	52	45	2
10/29/03	59	40	2
9/13/03	60	39	2
12/15/02	70	26	4
7/15/02	71	26	3
7/30/01	63	34	3
4/22/01	62	32	6
11/5/00 LV	60	33	7

11/4/00 LV	61	33	7
10/24/00 LV	65	30	5
10/15/00 LV	57	34	9
10/15/00 RV	53	35	12
9/6/00 RV	62	30	7
7/23/00 RV	61	30	8
7/23/00	59	31	10
12/15/99	63	28	9
10/31/99	68	22	10
9/2/99	63	23	14
3/14/99	67	12	22

4/5. If the election for the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2006 were being held today, would you vote for (the Democratic candidate) or (the Republican candidate) in your congressional district? (IF OTHER, NEITHER, DK, REF) Would you lean toward the (Democratic candidate) or toward the (Republican candidate)?

Net Leaned Vote:

	Dem cand.	Rep cand.	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Will not vote (vol.)	No opin.
12/18/05 All	50	41	1	3	1	4
12/18/05 RV	51	41	1	3	1	4
11/2/05 All	53	36	1	3	2	5
11/2/05 RV	52	37	1	4	2	6
11/4/02 LV	48	48	1	1	0	2
11/3/02 LV	48	48	*	1	0	2
11/2/02 LV	50	49	*	1	0	2
10/27/02 LV	47	49	1	1	0	3
9/26/02 All	46	42	2	2	5	3
9/26/02 RV	47	44	2	3	2	3
9/26/02 LV	49	47	1	2	0	2
7/15/02 All	47	45	1	1	1	4
7/15/02 RV	47	46	1	1	1	4
1/27/02* RV	43	50	NA	2	1	5
9/6/00 RV	49	42		2	1	6
7/23/00 RV	46	45		3	1	5
2/27/00 RV	45	46		2	1	5
10/31/99 RV	50	43		3	1	3
9/2/99 RV	48	44		3	*	5
3/14/99 RV	50	41		2	1	6
2/14/99 RV	48	41		3	1	7
1/30/99 RV	49	39		8	1	3
11/1/98 RV	51	43		4	*	2
10/25/98 RV	48	43		3	1	4
10/18/98 RV	49	44		3	1	4
9/28/98 RV	49	44		2	*	4
8/21/98 RV	48	45		3	1	3
7/12/98 RV	47	45		2	*	6
1/31/98 RV	49	40		2	1	8
1/19/98 RV	47	44		3	1	5
10/8/96 RV	51	41		2	1	5
9/29/96 RV	48	41		3	1	7
9/22/96 RV	50	43		2	1	4
9/15/96 RV	49	45		1	1	4
9/4/96 RV	48	44		3	*	5
8/29/96 RV	53	39		3	1	5
8/28/96 RV	51	40		3	1	5
8/27/96 RV	51	41		3	0	5
8/26/96 RV	51	41		3	0	5
8/25/96 RV	48	43		3	1	6

8/24/96	RV	47	43	2	1	6
8/19/96	RV	49	42	3	0	6
8/18/96	RV	45	46	3	0	6
8/15/96	RV	46	43	4	1	5
8/14/96	RV	48	42	3	1	6
8/13/96	RV	49	43	3	0	5
8/12/96	RV	49	42	3	1	5
8/11/96	RV	49	40	4	1	6
8/10/96	RV	49	41	4	1	5
8/4/96	RV	48	45	2	1	4
6/30/96	RV	49	44	3	*	3
5/22/96	RV	52	41	3	1	3
3/10/96	RV	51	43	2	*	4
1/21/96	RV	52	43	3	1	1
10/1/95	RV	49	44	3	*	3
11/6/94	RV	47	42	5	2	5
10/31/94	RV	48	44	4	1	3
10/23/94	RV	50	45	2	1	2
10/9/94	RV	46	47	3	2	2
9/11/94	RV	50	45	1	1	4
8/7/94	RV	49	42	4	1	4
2/27/94	RV	50	40	8	1	2
10/21/91	RV	51	41	4	*	4
7/28/91	RV	49	41	6	*	3
6/2/91	RV	48	42	4	1	5
11/4/90	RV	51	41	5	*	3
10/14/90	RV	50	41	5	*	3
9/9/90	RV	47	46	3	*	3
7/24/90	RV	51	41	4	1	4
5/21/90	RV	47	45	5	1	2
9/21-10/10/88	RV	52	41	2	1	4
9/19/88	RV	51	39	3	1	6
6/22/85	RV	48	44	5	*	3
10/16/84	RV	52	44	2	NA	5
9/11/84	RV	53	45	2	NA	1
7/8/84	RV	58	40	2	NA	1
10/27/82	RV	58	39	NA	NA	3
10/11/82	RV	55	36	NA	NA	9
9/13/82	RV	58	36	NA	NA	6
11/22/81	RV	53	41	"	NA	7

*1/27/02 and previous: No "other candidate" option recorded

6. Do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is doing its job?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/18/05	43	53	4
11/2/05	37	59	4
8/28/05	37	59	4
6/5/05	41	54	4
10/29/03	40	52	9
4/30/03	57	37	6
9/26/02	51	43	6
7/15/02	57	36	7
2/21/02	57	39	4
1/27/02	58	35	7
12/19/01	59	34	7
9/9/01	45	48	7
7/30/01	48	48	4
4/22/01	58	33	8
10/31/99	42	53	6
9/2/99	46	47	7
6/6/99	48	46	6

3/14/99	44	49	7
2/14/99	46	50	4
12/20/98	44	51	5
12/19/98	45	50	5
12/13/98	49	46	5
11/7/98	41	55	4
11/1/98	49	47	5
10/25/98	45	44	11
10/18/98	46	45	8
9/28/98	52	44	4
8/21/98	55	39	6
7/12/98	46	44	11
5/12/98	45	45	9
4/4/98	47	45	8
1/31/98	55	35	10
1/30/98	55	35	10
1/25/98	56	37	8
1/24/98	55	38	7
1/19/98	47	49	5
10/13/97	36	57	7
8/27/97	39	54	7
7/8/97	40	53	6
4/24/97	40	53	7
3/9/97	35	60	5
8/5/96	42	52	7
6/30/96	35	58	7
5/22/96	35	60	5
3/10/96	30	64	6
1/7/96	31	65	5
11/19/95	27	68	5
10/1/95	32	65	3
7/17/95	34	63	3
3/19/95	39	56	5
1/29/95	42	52	6
10/31/94	21	72	8
10/23/94	18	78	4
9/11/94	24	70	5
6/26/94	34	61	5
3/27/94	35	62	3
2/27/94	32	64	4
1/23/94	29	60	11
11/14/93	28	66	6
8/8/93	33	64	3
4/26/93	30	69	2
1/17/93	29	66	6
4/9/92	17	78	5
3/18/92	19	76	5
3/8/92	22	73	6
2/2/92	32	64	4
12/15/91	35	59	6
10/21/91	45	50	5
6/2/91	49	46	5
10/14/90	34	63	3
2/4/90	41	55	4
1/16/90	39	55	6
8/21/89	42	53	5
5/23/89	54	44	2
2/14/89	53	44	3
1/23/88*	43	53	4
6/1/87	56	40	4
6/22/85	54	37	9
5/83	33	43	24
6/81	38	40	22

6/79	19	61	20
9/78	29	49	22
6/77	34	42	24
6/75	29	54	17
8/74	48	35	17

*1/23/88 and previous: Gallup

7. Do you approve or disapprove of the way your own representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in Congress is handling his or her job?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/18/05	65	29	6
11/2/05	60	33	7
6/5/05	61	32	8
9/26/02	64	27	9
7/15/02	68	23	9
11/1/98	72	20	8
11/1/98 LV	73	23	5
10/18/98	68	20	11
10/18/98 LV	67	25	9
9/28/98	70	21	10
9/28/98 LV	71	23	6
7/12/98	70	18	12
1/19/98	74	19	7
4/5/95	65	25	9
10/31/94	51	38	11
10/23/94	49	43	8
9/11/94	53	35	12
6/26/94	59	31	10
3/27/94	62	26	12
1/17/93	60	29	11
4/9/92	47	39	13
3/18/92	49	40	11
2/2/92	56	32	12
12/15/91	60	28	12
10/21/91	64	27	9
6/2/91	61	26	14
10/14/90	64	29	7
5/23/89	71	18	11

8. What would you say is the one most important problem you would like to see Bush and the Congress deal with next year?

	12/18/05
Iraq/War in Iraq	32
Economy	15
Health care	11
Immigration	6
Terrorism/War on terrorism/ Homeland security	5
Education	3
Medicare	3
Social Security	3
Jobs/Unemployment	2
Taxes	2
Gasoline prices/Energy prices	2
Federal budget deficit	1
Environment	1
Poverty/Homelessness/Hunger	1
Ethics/Honesty/Corruption in Government	1

Crime/drugs	1
Prescription drug benefits	*
Global warming/Greenhouse effect	*
None	1
Other	6
No opinion	3

9. Overall, which party, the (Democrats) or the (Republicans), do you trust to do a better job in coping with the main problems the nation faces over the next few years?

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
12/18/05	47	42	1	8	2
11/2/05	49	37	3	9	3
6/5/05	46	41	1	9	2
8/11/03	39	40	3	10	7
12/15/02	41	44	2	11	2
10/27/02 LV	39	51	2	5	2
9/26/02	39	46	3	8	4
9/26/02 LV	42	49	1	7	2
7/15/02	42	45	2	7	4
1/27/02	40	44	3	10	4
4/22/01	47	40	4	7	3
7/23/00	42	42	2	9	6
9/2/99	45	39	4	9	4
6/6/99	45	35	3	13	5
3/14/99	47	37	5	9	3
2/14/99	48	37	4	7	4
10/18/98	44	36	3	12	6
10/18/98 LV	43	42	3	10	2
9/28/98	49	38	2	8	3
9/28/98 LV	45	44	1	8	2
8/21/98	48	36	4	9	3
7/12/98	45	38	3	8	6
1/31/98	47	37	4	6	7
1/19/98	45	42	2	7	4
7/8/97	44	37	2	14	3
9/15/96 RV	45	38	3	11	3
8/5/96	43	38	3	11	3
6/30/96	46	37	3	12	3
5/22/96	47	38	3	10	3
11/6/94 RV	41	39	2	12	6
10/31/94	43	43	2	8	4
10/23/94	39	40	3	15	3
9/11/94	43	40	4	11	3
6/26/94	41	36	3	14	5
2/27/94	46	32	4	16	3
11/14/93	42	39	3	11	4
1/17/93	49	28	5	13	5
7/8/92	48	38	1	8	4
6/7/92	43	37	3	11	6
3/11/92	45	37	1	11	5
3/8/92	51	36	1	7	5
2/2/92	49	39	2	7	3
12/15/91	39	37	3	15	6
10/21/91	39	40	3	13	5

10. Which political party, the (Democrats) or the (Republicans), do you trust to do a better job (ITEM)?

12/18/05 - Summary Table*

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
a. handling the situation in Iraq	47	44	2	6	2
b. handling ethics in government	47	38	2	10	3
c. standing up to lobbyists and special interest groups	42	34	2	17	5

*Full sample asked item a; half sample asked item b, other half asked item c.

Trend where available:

a. handling the situation in Iraq

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
12/18/05	47	44	2	6	2
11/2/05	48	37	2	11	2
12/15/02*	30	56	4	7	3
10/27/02 LV	31	58	3	4	4
9/26/02 LV	30	61	3	3	2
9/26/02	33	52	6	4	6

*12/15/02 and previous: "The situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein"

b. handling ethics in government

	Democrats	Republicans	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
12/18/05	47	38	2	10	3
11/2/05	42	36	3	16	3

c. No trend.

11. Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor?

	--- Excellent/Good ----			---- Not so good/Poor ----			No op.
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not so good	Poor	
12/18/05	45	5	39	55	38	17	*
11/2/05	35	3	32	65	36	29	*
9/11/05	40	3	37	59	37	22	1
6/5/05	44	3	40	56	38	19	*
4/24/05	37	2	35	63	44	20	*
9/26/04 RV	46	3	43	53	38	15	1
8/29/04 RV	45	3	41	55	37	18	*
7/25/04	46	4	42	53	39	14	*
6/20/04	45	4	41	55	38	17	*
4/18/04	43	4	39	57	39	18	*
3/7/04	39	2	37	60	38	22	1
1/18/04	42	3	39	58	42	16	0
12/21/03	42	4	39	57	41	16	1
10/29/03	33	1	32	67	45	23	*
9/13/03	30	2	27	70	45	25	*
8/11/03	32	2	30	68	43	25	*
4/30/03	35	1	34	64	46	19	*
2/9/03	28	1	27	72	49	23	*
1/20/03	25	1	25	74	48	26	1

12/15/02	35	1	33	65	44	21	1
11/4/02 LV	28	1	27	72	55	17	1
11/3/02 LV	27	1	26	72	56	17	1
11/2/02 LV	29	1	28	71	54	17	*
9/26/02	31	2	28	69	50	19	*
7/15/02	39	3	36	61	44	17	1
2/21/02	30	1	29	69	51	18	*
1/27/02	31	1	29	69	50	19	*
9/20/01	38	3	35	60	47	14	2
9/9/01	33	1	32	66	47	19	*
7/30/01	50	3	46	50	39	12	*
4/22/01	50	3	47	50	40	9	*
1/15/01	70	10	59	29	24	6	1
10/27/00 LV	86	24	61	14	11	3	*
10/26/00 LV	86	24	61	14	11	3	*
6/11/00	74	17	57	26	19	6	*
2/27/00	80	25	55	20	14	5	*
10/31/99	74	18	56	26	18	7	1
9/2/99	76	19	57	23	16	6	1
3/14/99	80	22	58	19	15	4	1
11/1/98	73	12	61	26	21	5	1
11/1/98 LV	78	13	65	22	19	3	*
10/13/97	61	12	49	39	27	11	*

12. On another subject: All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war with Iraq was worth fighting, or not? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	--- Worth fighting ---			--- Not worth fighting ---			No op.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
12/18/05	46	33	14	52	11	42	1
11/2/05	39	25	13	60	12	48	1
8/28/05	46	33	12	53	9	44	1
6/26/05	46	33	13	53	10	43	1
6/5/05	41	29	12	58	12	46	1
4/24/05	44	31	13	54	12	42	2
3/13/05	45	34	11	53	11	42	2
1/16/05	44	32	12	55	10	45	1
12/19/04	42	31	11	56	10	47	2
10/3/04 LV	49	34	15	48	11	37	3
9/26/04 RV	46	35	12	51	8	42	3
9/8/04 RV	51	38	13	45	10	34	4
8/29/04 RV	48	34	14	50	11	39	2
7/25/04	49	36	13	48	11	37	3
6/20/04	47	32	14	52	13	39	2
5/23/04	48	35	13	50	13	37	1
5/6/04	49	NA	NA	47	NA	NA	5
4/18/04	51			47			2
3/7/04	52			44			3
2/11/04	48			50			2
1/18/04	56			41			3
12/21/03	59			39			2
12/14/03	53			42			5
11/16/03	52			44			4
10/29/03	54			44			2
10/13/03	54			44			2
9/13/03	61			37			2
9/7/03	54			42			4
8/24/03	57			37			5
8/11/03	61			35			4
7/10/03	57			40			3
6/22/03	64			33			3

4/30/03	70	"	"	27	"	"	4
2/2/92*	66	NA	NA	32	NA	NA	2
7/28/91	67			30			3
6/2/91	70			26			3
3/4/91	86	"	"	13	"	"	1

*2/2/92 and previous: "the Persian Gulf war"; 3/4/91: "this war"

13. Do you think the war with Iraq has or has not contributed to the long-term security of the United States? IF YES: Has it contributed to the long-term security of the United States a great deal or somewhat?

	NET	----- Contributed ----- Great deal	Somewhat	Has not	No opin.
12/18/05	54	32	22	44	2
11/2/05	46	25	21	52	2
8/28/05	49	29	20	49	2
6/26/05	52	31	22	46	1
6/5/05	47	24	22	52	1
3/13/05	52	29	23	46	2
1/16/05	50	30	21	47	3
12/19/04	51	27	23	46	4
10/3/04 LV	53	32	22	42	4
9/26/04 RV	54	36	18	42	4
9/8/04 RV	57	36	22	40	3
8/29/04 RV	54	33	20	42	4
7/25/04	51	32	19	45	3
6/20/04	51	28	23	46	2
5/23/04	54	30	24	43	3
4/18/04	57	33	24	40	3
3/7/04	57	29	29	40	3
2/11/04	58	32	26	38	4
1/18/04	59	34	25	38	3
12/21/03	62	34	29	34	4
7/10/03*	62	33	29	35	3

*"did or did not"

14. (HALF SAMPLE) Do you think the Bush Administration does or does not have a clear plan for handling the situation in Iraq?

	Does	Does not	No opinion
12/18/05	40	59	1
3/13/05	42	57	2
5/23/04	40	58	2
5/6/04	38	57	5
4/18/04	45	53	2
3/7/04	43	53	3
12/21/03	48	47	5
10/13/03	42	53	5
9/13/03	42	55	2
8/26/03*	44	54	2

*Gallup.

15. (HALF SAMPLE) Do you think the Democrats in Congress do or do not have a clear plan for handling the situation in Iraq?

	Do	Do not	No opinion
12/18/05	23	74	3

16. Do you think the number of U.S. military forces in Iraq should be (increased), (decreased), or kept about the same?

	Increased	Decreased	Kept about the same	No opinion
12/18/05	9	52	36	3
11/2/05	15	47	36	3
8/28/05	21	41	35	4
6/26/05	16	38	44	2
3/13/05	15	44	36	4

17. (IF DECREASED, Q16) Should all U.S. forces in Iraq be withdrawn immediately, or should they be decreased, but not all withdrawn immediately?

	Withdrawn immediately	Decreased but not withdrawn immediately	No opinion
12/18/05	23	77	0
11/2/05	38	61	*
8/28/05	33	66	1
6/26/05	34	66	1
3/13/05	27	72	1

16/17 NET:

	Increased	NET	----- Decreased ----- All/immed.	Not all/not immed.	DK	Kept about the same	No op.
12/18/05	9	52	12	40	*	36	3
11/2/05	15	47	18	29	*	36	3
8/28/05	21	41	13	27	*	35	4
6/26/05	16	38	13	25	*	44	2
3/13/05	15	44	12	31	1	37	4

18. Some people say the Bush administration should set a deadline for withdrawing U.S. military forces from Iraq in order to avoid further casualties. Others say knowing when the U.S. would pull out would only encourage the anti-government insurgents.

Do you yourself think the United States should or should not set a deadline for withdrawing U.S. forces from Iraq?

	Should set a deadline	Should not set a deadline	No opinion
12/18/05	39	60	1
8/28/05	39	59	2

19. (IF SET DEADLINE, Q18) When do you think the deadline should be for withdrawing U.S. forces from Iraq - within six months, within a year, within two years, or longer than that?

	Six months	One year	Two years	Longer than that	Other	No op.
8/28/05	45	35	12	4	2	1

18/19 NET:

	-----Should set deadline----- Six months	One year	Two years	Longer	Other	Should not set deadline	No op.
NET							

12/18/05	39	17	14	5	2	1	60	1
----------	----	----	----	---	---	---	----	---

20. If a candidate for Congress favors setting a deadline for withdrawing U.S. forces from Iraq within the next year or so, would that make you more likely to (support) that candidate for Congress, more likely to (oppose) that candidate, or wouldn't it make much difference in your vote?

	More likely to support	More likely to oppose	Wouldn't make much difference	No opinion
12/18/05	22	28	48	2

21. (HALF SAMPLE) Do you think the United States is or is not making significant progress toward restoring civil order in Iraq?

	Is making significant progress	Is not making significant progress	No opinion
12/18/05	60	37	2
11/2/05	44	55	2
8/28/05	48	50	2
6/26/05	48	51	1
12/19/04	44	49	7
6/20/04	51	48	1

22. (HALF SAMPLE) Do you think the United States is or is not making significant progress in establishing a democratic government in Iraq?

	Is making significant progress	Is not making significant progress	No opinion
12/18/05	65	31	4
11/2/05	47	48	6
12/19/04	48	44	8
6/20/04	50	48	3
5/23/04	38	57	5

23. Do you think the elections held in Iraq (this week/last week) did or did not bring the United States closer to the day U.S. forces can be withdrawn from Iraq?

	Did	Did not	No opinion
12/18/05	71	23	6

Compare to:

(HALF SAMPLE) Do you think the elections held in Iraq this past January did or did not bring the United States closer to the day U.S. forces can be withdrawn from Iraq?

	Did	Did not	No opinion
3/13/05	61	36	3
1/16/05*	57	39	4

*"Do you think holding these elections will or will not bring"

24. Do you think Bush has or has not done enough to explain the reasons the United States is in Iraq?

	Yes, he has	No, he has not	No opinion
12/18/05	39	60	1

25. Do you think the war with Iraq has or has not encouraged democracy in other Arab nations?

	----- Encouraged -----	Has	No
	NET Great deal Somewhat	not	opin.
12/18/05	47 13 34	50	4
6/26/05	49 14 35	48	2

26. (HALF SAMPLE) All told, do you think the United States is winning or losing the war in Iraq?

	Winning	Losing	Neither/It's a tie (vol.)	No opinion
12/18/05	56	34	8	2
8/28/05	51	38	8	3

27. (HALF SAMPLE) All told, do you think the United States will win or lose the war in Iraq?

	Win	Lose	Neither/It will be a tie (vol.)	No opinion
12/18/05	60	27	7	6

28-33. Held for release.

34. Thinking about the next 12 months, would you say you feel (optimistic) or (pessimistic) about (ITEM)?

*Half sample.

34a. Held for release.

b. the situation in Iraq

	Optimistic	Pessimistic	No opinion
12/18/05	54	44	2
12/19/04	46	51	2
6/20/04	52	45	3
5/23/04	55	43	2
1/18/04*	58	39	2

*"Thinking about the coming year"

34c-g. Held for release.

35-38. Held for release.

39. It's been reported that the CIA is holding people suspected of involvement with the al-Qaeda terrorist group in secret prisons in foreign countries, where U.S. laws do not apply. Would you regard this as an acceptable or unacceptable part of the U.S. campaign against terrorism?

	Acceptable	Unacceptable	No opinion
12/18/05	53	44	3

40. Just your best guess, do you think the U.S. government as a matter of policy is or is not using torture as part of the U.S. campaign against terrorism?

Is using torture	Is not using torture	No opinion
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12/18/05	56	39	5
5/23/04	51	43	6

41. Would you regard the use of torture against people suspected of involvement in terrorism as an acceptable or unacceptable part of the U.S. campaign against terrorism?

	Acceptable	Not acceptable	Depends on the the torture (vol.)	No op.
12/18/05	32	64	3	2

Compare to:

Some people say (it's acceptable to torture people suspected of terrorism, in cases where other methods have failed and the authorities believe the suspect has information that could prevent terrorist attacks and save lives.) Other people say (the use of torture is never acceptable because it's cruel, it may violate international law, it may not work, and it could be used unnecessarily or by mistake on innocent people.)

What's your view - do you think (it's acceptable to torture people suspected of terrorism in some cases), or do you think (the use of torture is never acceptable)?

	Torture is acceptable in some cases	Torture is never acceptable	No opinion
5/23/04	35	63	1

42-43. Held for release.

END