

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**FEBRUARY 2009 POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SURVEY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**FEBRUARY 4-8, 2009**  
**N=1,303**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

		----- Gallup -----				
		<b>Bush</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Reagan</b>	<b>Carter</b>
		<u>Feb 2001</u>	<u>Feb 1993</u>	<u>Feb 1989</u>	<u>Feb 1981</u>	<u>Feb 1977</u>
64	Approve	53	56	63	55	71
17	Disapprove	21	25	13	18	9
<u>19</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>26</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>20</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

**QUESTIONS 2 AND 3 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**ASK ALL:**

Thinking about some issues...

Q.4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE]**  
 How about **[NEXT ITEM]**?

		<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) Don't <u>know</u>
a.	The economy	56	24	20=100
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON G.W Bush Feb 2001</b>		50	22	28=100
b.	The threat of terrorism	50	21	29=100
c.	The nation's foreign policy	52	17	31=100

**QUESTIONS 5 AND 6 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 7-8**

**QUESTIONS 9 AND 10 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.11 Do you approve or disapprove of Barack Obama's decision to close the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay within a year?

46	Approve
39	Disapprove
<u>15</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**NO QUESTIONS 12 AND 13**

**QUESTIONS 14 THROUGH 40 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

Thinking about the issue of terrorism for a moment...

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=660]:**

Q.41F1 Overall, do you think the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack on the U.S. is greater, the same, or less than it was at the time of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks?

		Mid- Sept <u>2008</u>	Late- Feb <u>2008</u>	Dec <u>2006</u>	Aug <u>2006</u>	Jan <u>2006</u>	July <u>2005</u>	July <u>2004</u>	Late Aug <u>2002</u>
17	Greater	18	16	23	25	17	28	24	22
44	The same	43	41	41	37	39	40	39	39
35	Less	36	39	31	33	39	29	34	34
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=660]:**

Q.42F1 All in all, which do you think would have a greater effect in reducing the threat of terrorist attacks on the United States? [READ AND ROTATE]

		Sept <u>2008</u>	Aug <u>2006</u>	Late Aug <u>2002</u>
31	Increasing America's military presence overseas [OR]	33	32	48
50	Decreasing America's military presence overseas		48	45 29
10	Neither/Keep things as they are now (VOL. DO NOT READ)	8	10	8
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL. DO NOT READ)	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>
100		100	100	100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=660]:**

Q.43F1 Overall, do you think the Obama administration's policies will make the chance of another major terrorist attack on the U.S. more likely or less likely?

25	More likely
59	Less likely
5	No change/Neither (VOL.)
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=643]:**

Q.44F2 In general, how well do you think the U.S. government is doing in reducing the threat of terrorism? [READ]

	Very well <u>well</u>	Fairly well <u>well</u>	Not too well <u>well</u>	Not at all well <u>well</u>	(VOL.) Don't know <u>know</u>
February, 2009	22	49	16	6	7=100
Late February, 2008	21	45	19	12	3=100
January, 2007	17	37	27	17	2=100
December, 2006	17	48	21	11	3=100
August, 2006	22	52	16	8	2=100
February, 2006	16	52	20	10	2=100
January, 2006	16	50	20	9	5=100
July, 2005	17	53	19	8	3=100
July, 2004	18	53	17	8	4=100
August, 2003	19	56	16	7	2=100
Early Nov, 2002 (RVs)	15	54	19	8	4=100
June, 2002	16	60	16	4	4=100
Early Nov, 2001	35	46	9	5	5=100

**Q,44F2 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>well</u>	Not Fairly <u>well</u>	Not too <u>well</u>	(VOL.) at all <u>well</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
Oct 15-21, 2001	38	46	9	4	3=100
Oct 10-14, 2001	48	40	6	2	4=100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=643]:**

Q.45F2 Which do you think would have a greater effect in reducing the threat of terrorist attacks on the United States? **[READ AND ROTATE]**

41	Increasing military operations against terrorist networks <b>[OR]</b>
41	Increasing diplomatic efforts in Muslim countries
7	Both <b>[VOL. DO NOT READ]</b>
2	Neither <b>[VOL. DO NOT READ]</b>
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused <b>[VOL. DO NOT READ]</b>
100	

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=643]:**

Q.46F2 What concerns you more about the government's anti-terrorism policies? **[READ AND ROTATE] [IF NECESSARY, CLARIFY: "The government's CURRENT anti-terrorism policies".]**

		Late <sup>1</sup>				Late		
		Feb <u>2008</u>	Aug <u>2006</u>	Feb <u>2006</u>	Jan <u>2006</u>	Oct <u>2005</u>	July <u>2005</u>	July <u>2004</u>
36	That they go too far in restricting the average person's civil liberties <b>[OR]</b>	36	26	33	33	34	31	29
42	That they do not go far enough to adequately protect the country	47	55	50	46	48	52	49
9	Both/Neither/Approve of policies <b>(VOL.)</b>	9	11	10	12	10	10	11
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=660]:**

Q.47F1 Do you think it is generally right or generally wrong for the government to monitor telephone and e-mail communications of Americans suspected of having terrorist ties without first obtaining permission from the courts?

		Late Feb <u>2008</u>	Nov <u>2007</u>	Early Oct <u>2006</u>	Early Sept <u>2006</u>	Feb <u>2006</u>	Jan <u>2006</u>
50	Generally right	52	52	53	54	54	48
45	Generally wrong	44	44	42	41	43	47
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

<sup>1</sup> In Late February 2008 and earlier, the question asked whether the respondent was more concerned that the government's anti-terrorism policies "have gone too far in restricting the average person's civil liberties" or that they "have not gone far enough to adequately protect the country."

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=660]:**

Q.48F1 Do you think the use of torture against suspected terrorists in order to gain important information can often be justified, sometimes be justified, rarely be justified, or never be justified?

		Late Feb 2008	Nov 2007	Jan 2007	Early Oct 2006	Late Oct 2005	Late March 2005	July 2004
16	Often justified	17	18	12	18	15	15	15
28	Sometimes justified	31	30	31	28	31	30	28
20	Rarely justified	20	21	25	19	17	24	21
31	Never justified	30	27	29	32	32	27	32
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

**IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY, ASK:**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	(VOL.)		(VOL.)		(VOL.)		Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No Preference	Other Party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
February, 2009	24	36	34	3	1	2=100	13	17
January, 2009	25	37	33	3	*	2=100	11	16
December, 2008	26	39	30	2	*	3=100	8	15
Late October, 2008	24	39	32	2	*	3=100	11	15
Mid-October, 2008	27	35	31	4	*	3=100	9	16
Early October, 2008	26	36	31	4	*	3=100	11	15
Late September, 2008	25	35	34	3	1	2=100	13	15
Mid-September, 2008	28	35	32	3	*	2=100	12	14
August, 2008	26	34	34	4	*	2=100	12	17
July, 2008	24	36	34	3	*	3=100	12	15
June, 2008	26	37	32	3	*	2=100	11	16
Late May, 2008	25	35	35	2	*	3=100	13	15
April, 2008	24	37	31	5	1	2=100	11	15
March, 2008	24	38	29	5	*	4=100	9	14
Late February, 2008	24	38	32	3	*	3=100	10	17
Early February, 2008	26	35	31	5	*	3=100	11	14
January, 2008	24	33	37	4	*	2=100	12	18
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
2008	25.3	35.8	31.7	3.8	.3	3.1=100	10.5	15.4
2007	25.4	32.9	33.7	4.6	.4	3.1=100	10.7	16.7
2006	27.6	32.8	30.3	5.0	.4	3.9=100	10.2	14.5
2005	29.2	32.8	30.3	4.5	.3	2.8=100	10.2	14.9
2004	29.7	33.4	29.8	3.9	.4	2.9=100	11.7	13.4
2003	29.8	31.4	31.2	4.7	.5	2.5=100	12.1	13.0
2002	30.3	31.2	30.1	5.1	.7	2.7=100	12.6	11.6
2001	29.2	33.6	28.9	5.1	.5	2.7=100	11.7	11.4
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6=100	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28.2	34.6	29.5	5.0	.5	2.1=100	11.7	12.5
2000	27.5	32.5	29.5	5.9	.5	4.0=100	11.6	11.6
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9=100	13.0	14.5
1998	27.5	33.2	31.9	4.6	.4	2.4=100	11.8	13.5
1997	28.2	33.3	31.9	4.0	.4	2.3=100	12.3	13.8
1996	29.2	32.7	33.0	5.2=100			12.7	15.6
1995	31.4	29.7	33.4	5.4=100			14.4	12.9
1994	29.8	31.8	33.8	4.6=100			14.3	12.6

**PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...**

				(VOL.) No	(VOL.) Other	(VOL.) DK/ Ref	<i>Lean</i> <i>Rep</i>	<i>Lean</i> <i>Dem</i>
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Party</u>			
1993	27.4	33.8	34.0	4.8=100			11.8	14.7
1992	27.7	32.7	35.7	3.9=100			13.8	15.8
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	4.5=100			14.6	10.8
1990	31.0	33.1	29.1	6.8=100			12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34=100					
1987	26	35	39=100					

**CLASS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

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