



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

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Democrats Hold Huge Issue Advantage
AMERICANS TAKING ABRAMOFF, ALITO AND DOMESTIC SPYING
IN STRIDE

Also Inside...

- Divided over government eavesdropping
- 81% say bribery is common in Congress
- 33% approve of GOP leaders, 34% of Dems
- Continued optimism about Iraqi elections

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Democrats Hold Huge Issue Advantage

AMERICANS TAKING ABRAMOFF, ALITO AND DOMESTIC SPYING IN STRIDE

The public has been hardly stirred by the flurry of major Washington news in the early days of 2006. Jack Abramoff's admission that he bribed members of Congress has sparked little interest, with just 18% paying very close attention to news reports on the disgraced Washington lobbyist. An overwhelming majority of Americans (81%) say that lobbyists bribing lawmakers is common behavior in Congress, compared with just 11% who see it as isolated incidents.

In turn, there has been little political fallout from the disclosures. Ratings for Republican and Democratic congressional leaders remain low, and neither party has gained or lost ground as being better able to manage the federal government or to govern honestly and ethically.

Reports about President Bush authorizing wiretaps of Americans suspected of having ties to terrorists has drawn far more attention than the Abramoff case. But there is not an outcry or even consensus opinion about the government's monitoring, without court permission, the phone and email communications of Americans suspected of having terrorist ties; 48% feel this is generally right while about the same number (47%) think it is generally wrong. Public attitudes on this issue are highly partisan, with 69% of Republicans saying the government actions are generally right and nearly as many Democrats (62%) saying they are generally wrong.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Jan. 4-8 among 1,503 adults, finds that the public paid scant attention to the nomination of Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court in the days leading up to Senate confirmation hearings on Alito. Just 14% followed reports on the nomination very closely; by comparison, more than triple that number (47%) tracked the recent news of the

Little Fallout from Washington Events

<i>Following 'very closely'...</i>	%
West Virginia miners	47
Situation in Iraq	40
Bush authorizing wiretaps	32
Floods in California	20
Abramoff bribes	18
Alito nomination	14

<i>Reports of lobbyists bribing members of Congress...</i>	
Common behavior	81
Isolated incidents	11
Don't know	<u>8</u>
	100

<i>Congressional job approval</i>	Dem	Rep
	<u>leaders</u>	<u>leaders</u>
Approve	34	33
Disapprove	48	52
Don't know	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100

<i>Bush job approval</i>	Nov	Dec	Jan
	<u>05</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
Approve	36	38	38
Disapprove	55	54	54
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100

<i>Monitoring Americans suspected of terrorist ties without court permission</i>	
Generally right	48
Generally wrong	47
Don't know	<u>5</u>
	100

<i>Greater concern about anti-terrorism policies?</i>	
Not gone far enough to protect the country	46
Gone too far in restricting civil liberties	33
Both/Neither (Vol.)	12
Don't know	<u>9</u>
	100

deaths of 12 miners in West Virginia very closely. On balance, more Americans support Alito's confirmation than oppose it (by 33% to 19%), though nearly half (48%) decline to offer an opinion.

The poll shows that, as with views of congressional leaders, Washington's controversies have not had an impact on opinions of the president. Bush's approval rating has not changed since December (38% approve/54% disapprove). However, the Democratic Party holds a sizable advantage over the GOP as the party better able to handle the country's most important problem. Fully 41% believe the Democratic Party can do a better job of handling the nation's top problem, compared with 27% who say the Republican Party. This represents a major shift from a year ago, when the public split about evenly on which party could better address the most important national problem.

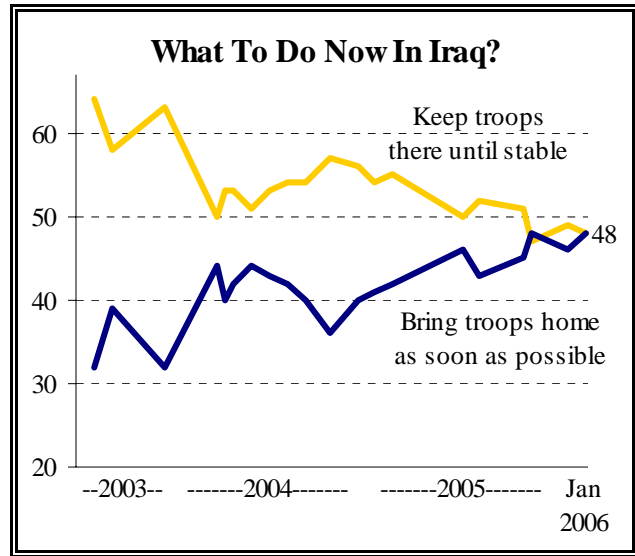
The war in Iraq is viewed as the single most important national problem, though somewhat fewer point to the war than did so a year ago (23% vs. 32% in January 2005). More broadly, about four-in-ten (37%) cite a foreign policy or security concern as the nation's most important problem – either the war, terrorism, or another foreign policy issue. That compares with 26% who mention an economic problem, including unemployment and energy prices.

Growing Democratic Advantage on Iraq, Domestic Concerns						
<i>Party best able to handle problem</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Most important problem facing the nation...</i>				
		<i>Economy</i>	<i>Social/ Domestic</i>	<i>Iraq</i>	<i>Security/ Terrorism</i>	<i>Foreign policy</i>
Jan 2006	%	%	%	%	%	%
Democrats	41	40	44	50	34	46
Republicans	27	19	22	31	52	16
No difference/DK	<u>32</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>38</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100
Jan 2005						
Democrats	35	43	33	40	19	39
Republicans	36	26	34	35	58	22
No difference/DK	<u>29</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>39</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Democratic Gain</i>	+6	-3	+11	+10	+15	+7
<i>Republican Loss</i>	-9	-7	-12	-4	-6	-6
Number of cases, 2006	(723)	(200)	(228)	(163)	(59)	(53)

The Democratic Party leads on every specific problem mentioned, with the lone exception of security and terrorism, and in most cases its advantage has grown significantly compared with a year ago. Half of those who cite the war in Iraq say the Democratic Party is better able to handle that problem while 31% cite the GOP; a year ago, the Democratic Party held a slight five-point edge on

the war in Iraq.

Public opinion toward the war itself has remained fairly stable over the past few months, in spite of last month's elections and the ongoing violence in Iraq. The public is evenly split over the decision to go to war, and divided as well over whether to withdraw U.S. forces or keep them in Iraq until the country is stabilized. As was the case in December, solid majorities believe the U.S. is making progress in several areas, including establishing democracy in Iraq, though fewer than half (46%) think the U.S. is making progress in defeating the insurgents militarily.



No Rise in Civil Liberties Concerns

The highly-publicized revelations of government eavesdropping have not altered the balance of public opinion with respect to the tradeoff between combating terrorism and protecting civil liberties. Just one-in-three say their bigger concern about the government's anti-terrorism policies is that they have gone too far in restricting the average person's civil liberties. A 46% plurality is more concerned that the government has not gone far enough to adequately protect the country. These views are comparable to measures taken in 2004 and 2005.

Bigger concern...	July 2004	July 2005	Oct 2005	Jan 2006
Not gone far enough to protect the country	49%	52%	48%	46%
Gone too far in restricting civil liberties	29	31	34	33
Both/Neither	11	10	10	12
Don't know	11	7	8	9
	100	100	100	100

Democrats express far more concern about civil liberties than do Republicans, but even Democrats are divided on how to balance security and civil liberties with 42% worrying that the government has gone too far in restricting freedoms, and 40% concerned that they have not gone far enough to protect the country from future attacks. Republicans, by 64% to 16%, say the government has not gone far enough. Among both partisans and independents, views have not changed much since 2004.

Opposed to Government Snooping

As has been the case since shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Americans overwhelmingly reject the idea of the government monitoring their phone calls, emails and credit card purchases. By about three-to-one (73%-24%) the public opposes allowing government surveillance of their personal phone calls and emails. This measure has changed very little since September 2001, just after the attacks, when 70% opposed government monitoring of private communications.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Americans were somewhat more accepting of the government monitoring their credit card purchases, but this sentiment soon receded. Currently, 68% oppose allowing the government to scrutinize their credit card records, a slight increase from August 2002 (63%).

While the public overwhelmingly supports individual privacy in these areas, there is a willingness to see the government go further in other areas. Specifically, 56% favor requiring that all citizens carry a national identity card at all times, and about the same number favor allowing airport personnel to do extra checks on passengers who appear to be of Middle Eastern descent. On these issues, too, public views are unchanged from the summer of 2002.

Growing Party Divisions

In August 2002, there was little party division over the issue of government monitoring of personal telephone calls and emails. Both Republicans and Democrats opposed the idea by similar margins. In fact, if anything, Republicans were less likely to see this kind of surveillance of American citizens as justifiable.

However, in the wake of the news that President Bush has authorized the National Security Agency (NSA) to monitor Americans suspected of having terrorist ties the issue has become

Not My Phone Calls!			
	Sept	Aug	Jan
	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2006</u>
<i>Allow govt to monitor your phone & email</i>	%	%	%
Favor	26	22	24
Oppose	70	76	73
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Allow govt to monitor your credit card records</i>			
Favor	40	32	29
Oppose	55	63	68
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Require natl ID card</i>			
Favor	70	59	56
Oppose	26	38	40
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Allow profiling at airports</i>			
Favor	--	59	57
Oppose	--	38	38
Don't know	--	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
		100	100

More Partisan Views on Phone-Tapping*			
	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	%	%	%
Aug 2002			
Favor	22	27	16
Oppose	75	71	83
Jan 2006			
Favor	37	18	20
Oppose	60	80	79
<i>Change in Favor</i>	+15	-9	+4

* Allowing government to monitor your personal calls and emails

more divisive. Today, Republicans are twice as likely as Democrats (37% vs. 18%) to say they favor allowing the government to monitor their telephone and email communications. This marks a 15-point increase in support among Republicans, and a nine-point drop among Democrats since 2002.

Eavesdropping Without a Warrant

Regarding the current domestic spying controversy, the public divides evenly over the question of the government monitoring telephone and email communications of Americans suspected of having terrorist ties without first obtaining permission from the courts. Aside from the partisan gap in attitudes on this issue, there also are wide racial and age differences.

Nearly twice as many whites as African Americans say government monitoring of communications of those suspected of having terrorist ties is generally right (52% vs. 27%). A solid majority of those ages 18-29 (56%) say the policy is generally wrong, while most of those ages 65 and older feel it is generally right (58%).

	Monitoring Terror Suspects' Calls and Emails Without a Warrant		
	Generally <u>right</u> %	Generally <u>wrong</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
Total	48	47	5=100
White	52	44	4=100
Black	27	64	9=100
18-29	41	56	3=100
30-49	50	46	4=100
50-64	44	53	3=100
65+	58	32	10=100
Republican	69	27	4=100
Democrat	33	62	5=100
Independent	46	51	3=100

The Patriot Act

The public is also divided in its view of the Patriot Act, with 39% saying it is a necessary tool that helps the government find terrorists and 38% saying it goes too far and poses a threat to civil liberties. Nearly a quarter have no view one way or the other. People who have been following news about the renewal of the Patriot Act in Congress are far more likely to take a position, but remain evenly divided with 48% saying it is a necessary tool in the fight against terrorism and 46% saying it poses a threat to civil liberties.

Terror Threats

Nearly four-in-ten Americans (39%) believe the ability of terrorists to launch another major attack in the U.S. is less today than it was at the time of the Sept. 11 attacks, while just 17% say it is greater (another 39% say the threat is the same today as then). This represents a significant improvement in public perceptions from this past summer, when just as many said the country is in greater danger today (28%) as said it is safer (29%). But public evaluations of the government’s handling terrorism remains lukewarm. Just 16% think the government is doing “very well” in reducing the threat of terrorism, while half say “fairly well.”

	Summer <u>2002</u>	July <u>2004</u>	July <u>2005</u>	Jan <u>2006</u>
<i>Threat today compared to 2001</i>	%	%	%	%
Greater	22*	24	28	17
The same	39	39	40	39
Less	34	34	29	39
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Gov't job reducing terror threat</i>				
Very well	16^	18	17	16
Fairly well	60	53	53	50
Not too well	16	17	19	20
Not at all well	4	8	8	9
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100

* August 2002
^ June 2002

Low Ratings for Both Party’s Leaders

Congressional leaders of both parties receive virtually the same low approval ratings. Only about a third of the public (34%) has a positive view of the job performance of Democratic leaders while about the same number (33%) approves of the way GOP leaders are doing their jobs. These opinions reflect little change since fall, although in both cases they represent a slight decline from last spring.

Republicans approve of the job performance of GOP leaders by roughly two-to-one (59%-29%). Democrats have somewhat less positive views of the job of their party’s congressional leaders; 52% approve, while 33% disapprove. Independents give about the same low ratings for leaders in both parties (27% approval for Republicans, 30% for Democrats).

Similarly, there has been little change recently in views of which party is more honest and ethical, and which is better able to manage the federal government well. Currently, 37%

	Mar	May	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan
<i>Approval of...</i>	<u>05</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
<i>Republican leaders</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	39	35	36	32	33	33
Disapprove	44	50	49	52	50	52
Don't know	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Democratic leaders</i>						
Approve	37	39	36	32	36	34
Disapprove	44	41	45	48	44	48
Don't know	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>18</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100

believe the phrase “governs in an honest and ethical way” better describes the Democratic Party; 30% say it better describes the GOP. The Democratic Party also holds a modest advantage (40%-34%) in perceptions of which party is able to manage the federal government well.

Opinions of how the two parties rate on these dimensions remain overwhelmingly partisan. However, by a fairly sizable margin (35%-21%) independents see the Democratic Party, rather than the Republican Party, as governing in an honest and ethical way; in October, independents selected the Democratic Party by a somewhat smaller margin (33%-26%).

Bribery Seen as Common

By more than seven-to-one (81%-11%), Americans believe that the recent reports of lobbyists bribing members of Congress represent common behavior in Congress rather than isolated instances of corruption. This opinion is widely shared, with overwhelming majorities in all groups saying bribery in Congress is commonplace. Republicans are somewhat less likely than Democrats and independents to view bribery as widespread; still, 77% of conservative Republicans, and 74% of moderate and liberal Republicans, say this kind of behavior is common in Congress.

<i>Governs in an honest ethical way</i>	July 2004	Oct 2005	Jan 2006
	%	%	%
Rep Party	34	30	30
Dem Party	37	40	37
Both (Vol.)	5	6	4
Neither (Vol.)	15	18	19
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Able to manage the government well</i>			
Rep Party	37	35	34
Dem Party	40	41	40
Both (Vol.)	4	3	4
Neither (Vol.)	9	13	12
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100

	Common Behavior	Isolated Incidents	DK
	%	%	%
All	81	11	8=100
Cons Rep	77	18	6=100
Mod/Lib Rep	74	18	8=100
Independent	84	11	5=100
Cons/Mod Dem	84	8	8=100
Lib Dem	91	6	3=100

Iraq War Continues to Divide

Perceptions and attitudes about the war in Iraq have been relatively unchanged for several months, with the public evenly divided on several key questions about the U.S. military action there. A small majority remains optimistic about the prospects for eventual success in Iraq, and a plurality believes the recent Iraqi elections will lead to a more stable situation in the country.

Public attention to news about the war remains high, with 40% saying they are following news reports on Iraq very closely and another 40% following fairly closely – about the same as over the past 18 months. Democrats and Republicans continue to be equally interested in news about the war.

Overall, the public splits on the decision to go to war: 45% say it was the right decision, while 47% say it was the wrong decision. These numbers have varied no more than five points over the past year and are virtually unchanged from a poll taken one month ago, prior to the parliamentary elections in Iraq.

Similarly, the public divides evenly on the question of what to do now: 48% say the U.S. should bring its troops home as soon as possible, while the same number say it should keep troops in Iraq until the situation has stabilized. As was the case last month, most of those who favor bringing troops home do not support immediate withdrawal. Instead, they prefer a gradual pullout over the next year or two (32% overall), while 14% favor removing all troops immediately. At the same time, most people who support keeping troops in Iraq also oppose the setting of a timetable for withdrawal – 33% of the public overall – but 10% believe a timetable should be set.

The public is also split on the question of the war’s impact on the larger war on terrorism, though slightly more say it’s helped that effort (44%) than say it’s hurt (38%). The number who believe that the conflict in Iraq has hurt the war on terrorism dropped six points over the past month (it was 44% in December).

Iraq Opinions		
	Dec	Jan
<i>Using force in Iraq</i>	<u>05</u>	<u>06</u>
	%	%
Right decision	47	45
Wrong decision	48	47
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100
<i>What to do now?</i>		
Bring troops home	46	48
<i>Immediately</i>	17	14
<i>Gradually</i>	28	32
Keep troops in Iraq	49	48
<i>No timetable</i>	30	33
<i>Should set timetable</i>	17	10
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100
<i>Iraq war effect on war on terrorism</i>		
Helped	44 [^]	44
Hurt	44	38
No effect (vol)	6	8
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100
<i>Will U.S. succeed in establishing stable democratic govt?</i>		
Definitely succeed	16	14
Probably succeed	41	42
Probably fail	28	26
Definitely fail	9	8
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100

[^] Mid-October 2005

Growing Age and Gender Gaps on the War

Although attitudes about the war have been relatively fixed for the past several months, somewhat more people today than one year ago believe that the U.S. should withdraw troops as soon as possible. Over this period, opinions on this question have become somewhat more polarized along gender and generational lines.

Overall, 48% now favor withdrawal, compared with 41% in January 2005. But the increase in support for pulling out was greater among women (up 10 points) than among men (up four points). Similarly, younger respondents are 11 percentage points more likely to favor withdrawal than they were a year ago; the oldest group of respondents (age 65 and older) are virtually unchanged (45% now, 44% last year).

Both Republicans and Democrats have shifted on this question, but among Republicans the change has been greater among those who describe themselves as moderate or liberal than among conservative Republicans. One-third (34%) of moderate and liberal Republicans today favor withdrawal, up from 22% in January 2005; by contrast, growth in support for withdrawal among conservative Republicans was smaller (up 6 points, from 12% to 18%).

	Jan 2005	Jan 2006	Change
<i>Bring troops home as soon as possible...</i>	%	%	
Total	41	48	+7
Men	36	40	+4
Women	46	56	+10
White	35	42	+7
Black	71	77	+6
Conserv Republican	12	18	+6
Mod/Lib Republican	22	34	+12
Independent	44	51	+7
Conserv/Mod Dem	63	65	+2
Liberal Democrat	57	63	+6
College graduate	30	37	+7
Some college	39	39	0
High school or less	50	59	+9
18-29	46	57	+11
30-49	41	49	+8
50-64	37	42	+5
65+	44	45	+1

Many See Progress on Key Goals

Americans continue to see progress being achieved in Iraq in several key areas. Nearly two-thirds (65%) believe progress is being made in training Iraqi forces so they can replace U.S. troops. Roughly the same number (62%) think progress is being made in the larger goal of establishing a democracy in Iraq; just 26% say we are losing ground in that effort. Both measures show a slight (four percentage point) improvement over the past month.

The public is also generally positive about the U.S. effort to rebuild the Iraqi infrastructure of roads, power plants, and other services: 59% see progress on that front. And a small majority (52%) says the U.S. is making progress in preventing terrorists from using Iraq as a base for attacks against the U.S. and other allies.

The public is less sanguine about progress in defeating the insurgents (46% say we are making progress, 38% say we are losing ground), in preventing a civil war (34% progress, 48% losing ground), and reducing civilian casualties there (32% progress, 54% losing ground). On all three measures, there has been little change since December.

	Dec 2005	Jan 2006
<i>Percent who say we are "making progress" in...</i>	%	%
Training Iraqi forces	61	65
Establishing a democracy	58	62
Rebuilding roads, power plants, etc.	--	59
Preventing terrorist base for attacks	48	52
Defeating the insurgents	44	46
Preventing a civil war	36	34
Reducing civilian casualties	35	32

Iraqi Elections Produce Guarded Optimism

Last month's Iraq elections were the third nationwide elections conducted in the country in the past year. The December parliamentary elections – while less visible to the U.S. public than the elections held in January 2005 – have produced a comparable reaction: a 43% plurality believes the elections will make the country more stable, while 42% expect no change and 8% think it will become less stable. As with most perceptions about the situation in Iraq, Republicans were far more positive than Democrats on the likely consequence of the elections – 68% of Republicans expect greater stability to result, compared with just 30% of Democrats.

<i>Effect in Iraq</i>	<i>Jan 05 elections</i>		<i>Oct 05 referendum</i>		<i>Dec 05 elections</i>	
	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
More stable	29	47	29	30	37	43
Less stable	14	7	10	6	9	8
No change	49	40	51	56	47	42
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Alito Nomination

Despite a steady stream of news about Samuel Alito’s background and record, public interest in his nomination fell decidedly over the holiday season. On the eve of Senate hearings this week, fully 36% of Americans said they were not following news about Alito’s nomination at all closely, up from 32% in December and 25% in November. Just 14% reported paying very close attention to Alito’s nomination, the lowest of all news items tested.

Confirm Alito?			
		<i>Following very/fairly closely?</i>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
	%	%	%
Yes	33	52	22
No	19	29	14
Don’t know	<u>48</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>64</u>
	100	100	100

Among those paying attention to news about Alito, 52% favor his confirmation while 29% are opposed. Among those who are following not too closely or not at all closely, nearly two-thirds have no opinion one way or the other.

Coal Mine Deaths Top News Interest

Just under half of Americans say they followed news about the death of twelve miners in a West Virginia coal mine very closely – the highest level of attention paid to any story this past month. Another 33% say they followed this news story fairly closely, and fewer than one-in-five say they paid little or no attention. Attention to the mining disaster was high across the country and among all groups. Women followed somewhat more than did men (52% very closely vs 42%), and older Americans followed more closely than did younger people, though this age difference is true for most news stories.

Nearly Half Follow Mining Disaster Very Closely	
	<u>Following very closely</u>
West Virginia miners	47
Situation in Iraq	40
Bush authorizing wiretaps	32
Floods in California	20
Abramoff confession	18
Alito nomination	14

Iraq remains a major focus of public attention. Four-in-ten say they have been following news about the current situation in Iraq very closely, which is on par with measures taken throughout 2005. When asked to volunteer the *first* news story that comes to mind when thinking about what’s been in the news lately, 31% cited the mining disaster, but 25% mentioned news about Iraq, an increase of six points since November.

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age or older, from January 4-8, 2006. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on form 1 (N=748) and form 2 (N=755) the sampling error is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of six projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JANUARY 2006 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FINAL TOPLINE
January 4-8, 2006
N= 1,503

ON FORM ONE Q.1 PRECEDES Q.2 --- ON FORM TWO, Q.2 PRECEDES Q.1

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush 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 George W. Bush is handling his job as president? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>App- rove</u>	<u>Dis- approve</u>	<u>Don't know</u>		<u>App- rove</u>	<u>Dis- approve</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
January, 2006	38	54	8=100	May, 2003	65	27	8=100
2005				<i>April 10-16, 2003</i>	72	22	6=100
December, 2005	38	54	8=100	<i>April 9, 2003</i>	74	20	6=100
Early November, 2005	36	55	9=100	<i>April 2-7, 2003</i>	69	25	6=100
Late October, 2005	40	52	8=100	<i>March 28-April 1, 2003</i>	71	23	6=100
Early October, 2005	38	56	6=100	<i>March 25-27, 2003</i>	70	24	6=100
September 8-11, 2005	40	52	8=100	<i>March 20-24, 2003</i>	67	26	7=100
September 6-7, 2005	40	52	8=100	March 13-16, 2003	55	34	11=100
July, 2005	44	48	8=100	February, 2003	54	36	10=100
June, 2005	42	49	9=100	January, 2003	58	32	10=100
Late May, 2005	42	48	10=100	2002			
Mid-May, 2005	43	50	7=100	December, 2002	61	28	11=100
Late March, 2005	49	46	5=100	Late October, 2002	59	29	12=100
Mid-March, 2005	45	46	9=100	Early October, 2002	61	30	9=100
February, 2005	46	47	7=100	Mid-September, 2002	67	22	11=100
January, 2005	50	43	7=100	Early September, 2002	63	26	11=100
2004				Late August, 2002	60	27	13=100
December, 2004	48	44	8=100	August, 2002	67	21	12=100
Mid-October, 2004	44	48	8=100	Late July, 2002	65	25	10=100
August, 2004	46	45	9=100	July, 2002	67	21	12=100
July, 2004	46	46	8=100	June, 2002	70	20	10=100
June, 2004	48	43	9=100	April, 2002	69	18	13=100
May, 2004	44	48	8=100	Early April, 2002	74	16	10=100
Late April, 2004	48	43	9=100	February, 2002	78	13	9=100
Early April, 2004	43	47	10=100	January, 2002	80	11	9=100
Late March, 2004	47	44	9=100	2001			
Mid-March, 2004	46	47	7=100	Mid-November, 2001	84	9	7=100
February, 2004	48	44	8=100	Early October, 2001	84	8	8=100
Mid-January, 2004	56	34	10=100	Late September, 2001	86	7	7=100
Early January, 2004	58	35	7=100	Mid-September, 2001	80	9	11=100
2003				Early September, 2001	51	34	15=100
December, 2003	57	34	9=100	August, 2001	50	32	18=100
November, 2003	50	40	10=100	July, 2001	51	32	17=100
October, 2003	50	42	8=100	June, 2001	50	33	17=100
September, 2003	55	36	9=100	May, 2001	53	32	15=100
Mid-August, 2003	56	32	12=100	April, 2001	56	27	17=100
Early August, 2003	53	37	10=100	March, 2001	55	25	20=100
Mid-July, 2003	58	32	10=100	February, 2001	53	21	26=100
Early July, 2003	60	29	11=100				
June, 2003	62	27	11=100				

QUESTION 2 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q.3 In the long run, do you think George W. Bush will be a successful or unsuccessful president, or do you think it is too early to tell?

		Early			Early			----- Clinton -----								
		Oct	Jan	Dec	Oct	Jan	Jan	Early	Sep	Feb	Oct	May	Jan	Oct	Sept	Aug
		<u>2005</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1993</u>	
27	Successful	26	36	39	40	26	44	38	18	14	21	21	18	22	13	
37	Unsuccessful	41	27	20	15	15	24	24	34	35	26	19	25	22	25	
32	Too early to tell	30	35	38	44	58	29	35	43	48	52	57	56	54	60	
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Ref.	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

QUESTIONS 4 THROUGH 6 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

**ASK ALL:
ROTATE Q.7 AND Q.8**

Q.7 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	Don't <u>know</u>		<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
January, 2006	33	52	15=100	Early December, 1998	38	49	13=100
Early November, 2005	33	50	17=100	November, 1998	41	48	11=100
Early October, 2005	32	52	16=100	Early September, 1998	44	37	19=100
Mid-September, 2005	36	49	15=100	Early August, 1998	43	37	20=100
Mid-May, 2005	35	50	15=100	June, 1998	42	38	20=100
Mid-March, 2005	39	44	17=100	May, 1998	40	41	19=100
Early February, 2004	41	42	17=100	April, 1998	41	40	19=100
January, 2003	48	37	15=100	March, 1998	43	39	18=100
June, 2002	50	34	16=100	January, 1998	43	41	16=100
May, 2002	49	34	17=100	November, 1997	41	43	16=100
February, 2002	56	24	20=100	August, 1997	42	44	14=100
Early September, 2001	43	39	18=100	June, 1997	33	50	17=100
June, 2001	40	40	20=100	May, 1997	40	44	16=100
May, 2001	45	36	19=100	April, 1997	40	44	16=100
April, 2001	45	30	25=100	February, 1997	44	42	14=100
January, 2001	43	36	21=100	January, 1997	38	47	15=100
July, 2000	36	46	18=100	November, 1996	40	43	17=100
May, 2000	40	42	18=100	July, 1996	38	48	14=100
March, 2000	38	43	19=100	June, 1996	36	50	14=100
February, 2000	40	43	17=100	April, 1996	39	46	15=100
January, 2000	39	41	20=100	March, 1996	35	51	14=100
December, 1999	38	42	20=100	February, 1996	33	53	14=100
October, 1999	34	50	16=100	January, 1996	36	54	10=100
Late September, 1999	34	46	20=100	October, 1995	36	51	13=100
August, 1999	40	44	16=100	September, 1995	36	50	14=100
July, 1999	36	45	19=100	August, 1995	38	45	17=100
June, 1999	37	46	17=100	June, 1995	41	45	14=100
May, 1999	38	44	18=100	April, 1995	44	43	13=100
March, 1999	38	47	15=100	March, 1995	43	39	18=100
February, 1999	37	51	12=100	December, 1994	52	28	20=100
January, 1999	38	50	12=100				

Q.8 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
January, 2006	34	48	18=100
Early November, 2005	36	44	20=100
Early October, 2005	32	48	20=100
Mid-September, 2005	36	45	19=100
Mid-May, 2005	39	41	20=100
Mid-March, 2005	37	44	19=100
Early February, 2004	38	42	20=100
June, 2002	47	36	17=100
May, 2002	42	37	21=100
February, 2002	49	30	21=100
Early September, 2001	49	30	21=100
June, 2001	50	28	22=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:

Q.9F1 What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today? **[RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR CLARITY – DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD ALL IN ORDER OF MENTION]**

		Early Nov <u>2005</u>	Mid- May <u>2005</u>	Jan <u>2005</u>	July <u>2004</u>	Mid- Jan <u>2004</u>	Apr <u>2003</u>	Feb <u>2003</u>	Mar <u>2002</u>	May <u>2001</u>	Feb <u>2001</u>
23	War/War in Iraq	29	24	32	25	16	14	34	10 [▲]	--	--
11	Economy (general)	11	15	12	14	20	28	21	8	7	7
7	Unemployment/Lack of jobs	4	7	7	8	13	10	6	4	5	6
7	Poverty/Hunger/Starvation	4	2	3	2	3	3	1	2	3	3
6	Health care/costs	5	7	5	5	5	3	2	2	6	7
6	Terrorism	6	8	10	8	14	9	16	24	1	*
5	Dissatisfaction with govt/politics	7	6	5	7	5	3	5	4	2	5
5	Energy crisis/Rising gas/heating prices	4	6	--	2	--	--	1	1	22	4
4	Morality/Ethics/Family values	3	3	5	4	3	4	5	8	6	12
	Defense issues/Military spending/ National & homeland security	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	5	1	1
3	Education	1	2	3	4	3	4	1	4	8	11
3	Immigration	2	4	1	1	3	1	--	1	1	2
3	U.S. foreign policy/Intl affairs	3	1	1	4	2	--	--	--	2	2
2	Pay more attention to problems at home	--	--	--	--	1	-	--	--	--	--
2	Inflation/Difference between wages/costs	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
2	Deficit/National debt/Balanced budget	3	2	3	1	2	2	--	1	1	1
2	Hurricanes/disaster relief	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2	Trade/Jobs moving overseas	2	1	1	2	1	--	--	--	--	--
2	Crime/Gangs/Justice system	--	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	8
2	Social Security	1	8	4	1	--	1	--	--	3	1
2	Homelessness	1	1	1	1	1	1	--	1	1	2
1	Issues related to elderly	--	--	1	1	2	1	--	1	2	2
1	Taxes	1	1	1	1	1	1	--	1	3	3
9	Other										
7	Don't know/No answer	6	5	5	6	4	9	4	8	8	7
	(NET) FOREIGN ISSUES/ INTERNATIONAL	42	36	49	41	37	29	54	39	3	5
	(NET) ECONOMIC	24	31	24	26	35	41	29	16	40	26

▲ War in Afghanistan in March 2002

IF ANSWER GIVEN IN Q.9F1 ASK [N=723]:

Q.10F1 Which political party do you think can do a better job of handling the problem you just mentioned – the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

		Mid			--- Gallup ---					(RV's)					
		Jan	Jan	Mar	Jan	April	July	April	July	June	Jan	May	May	Jan	May
		2005	2004	2002	1999 ¹	1998	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1990	1988	1988	1987
27	Republican Party	36	35	38	33	40	36	42	36	28	32	29	26	30	28
41	Democratic Party	35	35	27	43	42	35	32	33	35	41	30	38	35	38
19	No difference (VOL)	18	14	21	n/a	10	18	17	16	23	12	31	22	24	24
<u>13</u>	Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:

Thinking about the news for a moment...

Q.11F2 What is the FIRST news story that comes to mind when you think about what's been in the news lately?
[OPEN END. RECORD FIRST MENTION ONLY]

		Early Nov 2005 ²
FIRST STORY MENTIONED:		
31	Coal mine disaster	--
25	Iraq war/troop casualties	19
5	Recent Hurricanes and response	14
4	Ariel Sharon's health problems	--
4	Weather/natural disasters	1
3	Terrorism	--
2	Abramoff lobbying scandal	--
1	Crime	3
*	Other local news	2
1	Corruption (general)	--
1	Government wiretapping/spying	--
1	Gas prices	1
*	Politics (general)	1
*	Immigration/border issues	1
*	Supreme Court appointments	5
--	Libby/Cheney/Plame/White House scandal	11
--	Bird flu	1
12	All others	5
<u>10</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>36</u>
100		100

¹ In January 1999, the "no difference" and "don't know" categories are combined.

² In Early November 2005 up to three responses were accepted.

ASK ALL:

Q.12 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE. OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]

	Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/ Ref
a. News about the current situation in Iraq	40	40	12	7	1=100
December, 2005	45	38	11	5	1=100
Early November, 2005	41	40	13	6	*=100
Early October, 2005	43	36	15	6	*=100
Early September, 2005	32	40	20	7	1=100
July, 2005	43	37	13	6	1=100
June, 2005	41	39	12	7	1=100
Mid-May, 2005	42	42	11	5	*=100
Mid-March, 2005	40	39	14	5	2=100
February, 2005	38	45	13	4	*=100
January, 2005	48	37	11	4	*=100
December, 2004	34	44	15	6	1=100
Mid-October, 2004	42	38	11	8	1=100
Early September, 2004	47	37	9	6	1=100
August, 2004	39	42	12	6	1=100
July, 2004	43	40	11	6	*=100
June, 2004	39	42	12	6	1=100
April, 2004	54	33	8	5	*=100
Mid-March, 2004	47	36	12	4	1=100
Early February, 2004	47	38	10	4	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	48	39	9	4	*=100
December, 2003	44	38	11	6	1=100
November, 2003	52	33	9	5	1=100
October, 2003	38	40	14	7	1=100
September, 2003	50	33	10	6	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	45	39	10	5	1=100
Early July, 2003	37	41	13	8	1=100
June, 2003	46	35	13	6	*=100
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*=100
April 11-16, 2003 ³	47	40	10	2	1=100
April 2-7, 2003	54	34	9	2	1=100
March 20-24, 2003	57	33	7	2	1=100
March 13-16, 2003 ⁴	62	27	6	4	1=100
February, 2003	62	25	8	4	1=100
January, 2003	55	29	10	4	2=100
December, 2002	51	32	10	6	1=100
Late October, 2002	53	33	8	5	1=100
Early October, 2002	60	28	6	5	1=100
Early September, 2002	48	29	15	6	2=100

³ From March 20 to April 16, 2003 the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."

⁴ From October 2002 to March 13-16, 2003 the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq." In Early September 2002 the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."

Q.12 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
b. The nomination of Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court	14	23	25	36	2=100
December, 2005	14	20	31	32	3=100
Early November, 2005	21	28	24	25	2=100
Early October, 2005 <i>Harriet Miers</i>	22	33	21	23	1=100
Early September, 2005 <i>John Roberts</i>	18	26	25	29	2=100
August, 1993 <i>Ruth Bader Ginsburg</i>	18	30	27	24	1=100
October, 1991 <i>Clarence Thomas</i>	28	35	18	18	1=100
July, 1991 <i>Clarence Thomas</i>	33	33	19	14	1=100
August, 1990 <i>David Souter</i>	16	27	27	29	1=100
September, 1987 <i>Robert Bork</i>	17	23	29	29	2=100
c. President Bush authorizing wiretaps on Americans suspected of having terrorist ties	32	32	18	17	1=100
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:					
d.F1 Floods in California	20	31	28	20	1=100
April, 2001 <i>Floods in the Midwest</i>	20	34	24	22	*=100
August, 1993 <i>Floods in the Midwest</i>	65	27	6	2	*=100
March, 1995	37	40	18	5	*=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:					
e.F2 Washington lobbyist Jack Abramoff admitting he bribed members of Congress	18	20	26	34	2=100
ASK ALL:					
f. The death of twelve miners in a West Virginia coal mine	47	33	11	8	1=100

NO QUESTIONS 13-24

QUESTION 25 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Q.26 Please tell me if you think the phrase I read better describes the REPUBLICAN Party and its leaders or the DEMOCRATIC Party and its leaders. Which party do you think is better described by the phrase.. **(INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE)?**

		(VOL.)				
		Republican	Democratic	Both	(VOL.)	Don't
		Party	Party	Equally	Neither	Know
a.	Able to manage the federal government well	34	40	4	12	10=100
	Early October, 2005	35	41	3	13	8=100
	July, 2004	37	40	4	9	10=100
	Early September, 1998	37	32	8	12	11=100
	August, 1997	39	33	4	16	8=100
	July, 1996	45	32	4	12	7=100
	April, 1995	49	30	3	13	5=100
	July, 1994	43	31	4	17	5=100
	May, 1993	36	32	2	17	13=100
	July, 1992	30	36	1	23	10=100
	May, 1990	28	20	12	31	9=100
	May, 1988	33	30	10	17	10=100
	January, 1988	30	28	12	20	10=100
	May, 1987	24	25	13	28	10=100
b.	Governs in an honest and ethical way	30	37	4	19	10=100
	Early October, 2005	30	40	6	18	6=100
	July, 2004	34	37	5	15	9=100
	Early September, 1998	31	28	6	23	12=100
	March, 1998	28	32	7	24	9=100
	August, 1997	28	33	5	26	8=100
	July, 1996	38	37	2	18	5=100
	April, 1995	35	36	4	19	6=100
	July, 1994	32	35	6	21	6=100

Q.27 Do you think recent reports of lobbyists bribing members of Congress are isolated incidents of corruption, or do you think this kind of behavior is common in Congress?

- 11 Isolated incidents
 - 81 Common behavior
 - 8 Don't know/Refused
- 100

QUESTIONS 28 THROUGH 40 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

NO QUESTION 41

On a different subject...

Q.42 From what you've seen and heard so far, do you think the Senate should or should not confirm Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court?

		Dec <u>2005</u>	Early Nov <u>2005</u>	<i>Harriet Miers</i> Early Oct <u>2005</u>	<i>John Roberts</i> Mid-Sept <u>2005</u>	Early Sept <u>2005</u>
33	Should	32	40	33	46	35
19	Should not	19	23	27	21	19
<u>48</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>49</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>46</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

QUESTIONS 43 THROUGH 46 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Q.47 How much have you heard or read about the Patriot Act, adopted in 2001, which is now up for renewal in Congress – a lot, some, not much, or nothing at all?

		Dec <u>2004</u>	<i>CBS/NY Times</i> <u>April 2004</u>
21	A lot	15	12
30	Some	29	27
23	Not much	27	28
24	Nothing at all	26	30
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100

Q.48 Which comes closer to your view... Is the Patriot Act a necessary tool that helps the government find terrorists or does it go too far and pose a threat to civil liberties?

		Dec <u>2004</u>	<i>Based on those that heard a lot/some</i>		
			Jan <u>2006</u>	Dec <u>2004</u>	<i>CBS/NYT</i> <u>April 2004</u> ⁵
39	Necessary tool	33	48	46	52
38	Goes too far	39	46	48	42
<u>23</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>28</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100	100

(N=837)

NO QUESTIONS 49-52

⁵ In April 2004 the CBS/NYT question was proceeded with "Some people say the Patriot Act is a necessary tool that helps the government find terrorists, while others say it goes too far and is a threat to civil liberties."

ASK ALL:

Turning to the subject of Iraq ...

Q.53 Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against Iraq?

	<u>Right decision</u>	<u>Wrong decision</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
January, 2006	45	47	8=100
December, 2005	47	48	5=100
Late October, 2005	48	45	7=100
Early October, 2005	44	50	6=100
Mid-September, 2005	49	44	7=100
July, 2005	49	44	7=100
June, 2005	47	45	8=100
February, 2005	47	47	6=100
January, 2005	51	44	5=100
December, 2004	49	44	7=100
November, 2004 (<i>RVs</i>)	48	41	11=100
Mid-October, 2004	46	42	12=100
Early October, 2004	50	39	11=100
Early September, 2004	53	39	8=100
August, 2004	53	41	6=100
July, 2004	52	43	5=100
June, 2004	55	38	7=100
May, 2004	51	42	7=100
Late April, 2004	54	37	9=100
Early April, 2004	57	35	8=100
Mid-March, 2004	55	39	6=100
Late February, 2004	60	32	8=100
Early February, 2004	56	39	5=100
Mid-January, 2004	65	30	5=100
Early January, 2004	62	28	10=100
December, 2003	67	26	7=100
October, 2003	60	33	7=100
September, 2003	63	31	6=100
August, 2003	63	30	7=100
Early July, 2003	67	24	9=100
May, 2003	74	20	6=100
<i>April 10-16, 2003</i>	74	19	7=100
<i>April 8-9, 2003</i>	74	19	7=100
<i>April 2-7, 2003</i>	72	20	8=100
<i>March 28-April 1, 2003</i>	69	25	6=100
<i>March 25-27, 2003</i>	74	21	5=100
<i>March 23-24, 2003</i>	74	21	5=100
<i>March 20-22, 2003</i>	71	22	7=100
Late January, 1991	77	15	9=100

Q.54 How well is the U.S. military effort in Iraq going? **[READ IN ORDER]**

	Very <u>well</u>	Fairly <u>well</u>	Not too <u>well</u>	Not at all <u>well</u>	Don't know/ <u>Refused</u>
January, 2006	12	39	27	17	5=100
December, 2005	14	37	29	17	3=100
Early October, 2005	9	35	31	22	3=100
Mid-September, 2005	12	41	26	18	3=100
July, 2005	14	38	27	17	4=100
June, 2005	9	41	27	19	4=100
February, 2005	14	40	25	17	4=100
January, 2005	9	39	29	20	3=100
December, 2004	10	40	28	18	4=100
Mid-October, 2004	13	38	26	17	6=100
Early September, 2004	12	40	26	18	4=100
August, 2004	12	41	28	16	3=100
July, 2004	13	42	26	16	3=100
June, 2004	16	41	25	14	4=100
May, 2004	10	36	32	19	3=100
Late April, 2004	12	43	26	15	4=100
Early April, 2004	14	43	26	13	4=100
Mid-March, 2004	16	45	26	11	2=100
Early February, 2004	17	46	23	11	3=100
Mid-January, 2004	22	51	18	6	3=100
Early January, 2004	23	47	18	7	5=100
December, 2003	28	47	16	6	3=100
October, 2003	16	44	25	11	4=100
September, 2003	15	47	26	9	3=100
August, 2003	19	43	24	11	3=100
Early July, 2003	23	52	16	5	4=100
April 10-16, 2003	61	32	3	1	3=100
April 8-9, 2003	60	32	3	3	2=100
April 2-7, 2003	55	37	3	2	3=100
March 25-April 1, 2003	39	46	8	2	5=100
March 23-24, 2003	45	41	6	2	6=100
March 20-22, 2003	65	25	2	1	7=100

Q.55 Do you think the U.S. should keep military troops in Iraq until the situation has stabilized, or do you think the U.S. should bring its troops home as soon as possible?

	Keep troops <u>in Iraq</u>	Bring troops <u>home</u>	Don't know/ <u>Refused</u>
January, 2006	48	48	4=100
December, 2005	49	46	5=100
Early October, 2005	47	48	5=100
Mid-September, 2005	51	45	4=100
July, 2005	52	43	5=100
June, 2005	50	46	4=100
February, 2005	55	42	3=100
January, 2005	54	41	5=100
December, 2004	56	40	4=100
Mid-October, 2004	57	36	7=100
Early September, 2004	54	40	6=100

Q.55 CONTINUED...

	Keep troops in Iraq	Bring troops home	Don't know/ Refused
August, 2004	54	42	4=100
July, 2004	53	43	4=100
June, 2004 ⁶	51	44	5=100
May, 2004	53	42	5=100
Late April, 2004	53	40	7=100
Early April, 2004	50	44	6=100
Early January, 2004	63	32	5=100
October, 2003	58	39	3=100
September, 2003	64	32	4=100

IF "BRING TROOPS HOME" (2 IN Q.55) ASK:

Q.56 Should the U.S. remove all troops from Iraq immediately, or should the withdrawal of troops be gradual over the next year or two?

		Dec 2005
14	Remove all troops immediately	17
32	Gradual withdrawal over the next year or two	28
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>
48%		46%

ASK ALL:

Q.57 Do you think the war in Iraq has helped the war on terrorism, or has it hurt the war on terrorism?

	Helped	Hurt	(VOL) No effect	Don't know/ Refused
January, 2006	44	38	8	10=100
Late October, 2005	44	44	6	6=100
Mid-September, 2005	43	43	6	8=100
July, 2005	39	47	7	7=100
February, 2005	44	41	7	8=100
Mid-October, 2004	45	40	6	9=100
Early September, 2004	46	40	6	8=100
August, 2004	45	44	4	7=100
July, 2004	43	45	5	7=100
June, 2004	43	44	4	9=100
Mid-March, 2004	50	37	5	8=100
Late February, 2004	62	28	3	7=100
Early February, 2004	55	32	7	6=100
December, 2003	59	26	6	9=100
September, 2003	54	31	7	8=100
May, 2003	65	22	6	7=100
April, 2003 ⁷	63	22	--	15=100
Early October, 2002	52	34	--	14=100

⁶ In June 2004 and earlier, the question was worded: "Do you think the U.S. should keep military troops in Iraq until a stable government is established there, or do you think the U.S. should bring its troops home as soon as possible?"

⁷ In April 2003, the question was worded: "Do you think the war in Iraq will help the war on terrorism, or will it hurt the war on terrorism?" In Early October 2002 the question was worded: "If the U.S. uses military force in Iraq, do you think this will help the war on terrorism, or will it hurt the war on terrorism?"

Q.58 Do you think the U.S. should or should not set a timetable for when troops will be withdrawn from Iraq?

		Dec <u>2005</u>	Early Oct <u>2005</u>	Mid-Sep <u>2005</u>	July <u>2005</u>
50	Should set a timetable	56	52	57	49
42	Should not set a timetable	38	43	37	45
2	Should get out now (VOL.)	1	1	1	*
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100	100

Q.59 Regardless of your feelings about the original decision to use military force, do you now believe that the U.S. will definitely succeed, probably succeed, probably fail, or definitely fail in establishing a stable democratic government in Iraq?

		Dec <u>2005</u>	Late Oct <u>2005</u>	July <u>2005</u>
14	Definitely succeed	16	12	17
42	Probably succeed	41	44	43
26	Probably fail	28	29	25
8	Definitely fail	9	8	8
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.60 As I read a few specific things about Iraq, tell me if you think we are making progress or losing ground in each area. First, [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]?

ASK ITEMS a THRU d OF FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:

		Making <u>progress</u>	Losing <u>ground</u>	(VOL) No <u>change</u>	Don't know/ <u>Refused</u>
a.F1	Training Iraqi security forces so they can replace U.S. troops	65	22	1	12=100
	December, 2005	61	27	1	11=100
b.F1	Reducing the number of civilian casualties there	32	54	3	11=100
	December, 2005	35	53	3	9=100
c.F1	Preventing terrorists from using Iraq as a base for attacks against the U.S. and its allies	52	33	2	13=100
	December, 2005	48	41	2	9=100
d.F1	Establishing democracy in Iraq	62	26	2	10=100
	December, 2005	58	32	2	8=100

ASK ITEMS e THRU g OF FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:

e.F2	Defeating the insurgents militarily	46	38	3	13=100
	December, 2005	44	41	3	12=100
f.F2	Preventing a civil war between various religious and ethnic groups	34	48	4	14=100
	December, 2005	36	49	3	12=100
g.F2	Rebuilding roads, power plants and other services in Iraq	59	22	1	18=100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:

Q.61F2 In December, Iraq held its first nationwide election to choose officials in the new government. How much have you heard about this... A lot, a little, or nothing at all?

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>Don't know/Refused</u>
January, 2006 (<i>After election</i>)	34	53	12	1=100
December, 2005 (<i>Before election</i>)	22	57	20	1=100
Nationwide Oct 15th Vote on Constitution⁸				
Early November, 2005 (<i>After vote</i>)	22	52	25	1=100
Early October, 2005 (<i>Before vote</i>)	21	50	28	1=100
Nationwide Jan 30th Elections				
February, 2005 (<i>After elections</i>)	52	41	7	*=100
January, 2005 (<i>Before elections</i>)	46	40	13	1=100
Handover of Civilian Authority to Iraqi Leaders				
June, 2004 (<i>Before handover</i>)	42	40	17	1=100

Q.62F2 All in all, do you think the recent elections in Iraq will lead to a MORE stable situation, a LESS stable situation, or will the situation in Iraq not change much?

	<u>More Stable</u>	<u>Less Stable</u>	<u>Situation will not change much</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
January, 2006 (<i>After election</i>)	43	8	42	7=100
December, 2005 (<i>Before election</i>)	37	9	47	7=100
Nationwide Oct 15th Vote on Constitution⁹				
Early November, 2005 (<i>After Vote</i>)	30	6	56	8=100
Early October, 2005 (<i>Before Vote</i>)	29	10	51	10=100
Nationwide Jan 30th Elections				
February, 2005 (<i>After elections</i>)	47	7	40	6=100
January, 2005 (<i>Before elections</i>)	29	14	49	8=100

NO QUESTIONS 63 TO 66

⁸ In Early November 2005 the question was worded: "A few weeks ago, Iraq held a nationwide vote on the country's constitution..." In Early October 2005 the question was worded: "On October 15th, Iraq is scheduled to have a nationwide vote on the country's proposed constitution..." In February 2005 the question was worded: "Iraq recently held its first nationwide elections..." In January 2005 question was worded "On January 30th, Iraq is scheduled to have its first nationwide elections..." In June 2004 the question was worded: "On June 30th, the U.S. is planning to hand over civilian authority to Iraqi leaders..."

⁹ In Early November 2005 the question was worded: "In this election, the Iraqi people voted "yes" on the new constitution. Do you think this will lead to..." In Early October 2005 the question was worded: "If the proposed constitution is approved..." In January and February 2005 the question was worded "All in all, do you think the January elections in Iraq will lead to a MORE stable situation, a LESS stable situation, or will the situation in Iraq not change much?"

ASK ALL:

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

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:

Q.67F1 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 11th terrorist attacks?

		July <u>2005</u>	July <u>2004</u>	Late Aug <u>2002</u>
17	Greater	28	24	22
39	The same	40	39	39
39	Less	29	34	34
<u>5</u>	Don't know/refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:

Q.68F2 In general, how well do you think the U.S. government is doing in reducing the threat of terrorism?
[READ]

		July <u>2005</u>	July <u>2004</u>	Aug <u>2003</u>	(RVs) Early Nov <u>2002</u>	June <u>2002</u>	Early Nov <u>2001</u>	Oct 15-21 <u>2001</u>	Oct 10-14 <u>2001</u>
16	Very well	17	18	19	15	16	35	38	48
50	Fairly well	53	53	56	54	60	46	46	40
20	Not too well, OR	19	17	16	19	16	9	9	6
9	Not at all well	8	8	7	8	4	5	4	2
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.69F2 What concerns you more about the government's anti-terrorism policies? [READ AND ROTATE]

		Late Oct <u>2005</u>	July <u>2005</u>	July <u>2004</u>
46	That they have not gone far enough to adequately protect the country	48	52	49
	--OR--			
33	That they have gone too far in restricting the average person's civil liberties	34	31	29
12	Both/Neither / Approve of policies (VOL. DO NOT READ)	10	10	11
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused (DO NOT READ)	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:

Q.70F1 Would you favor or oppose the following measures to curb terrorism: **[INSERT ITEM; ROTATE]**

		<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.F1	Requiring that all citizens carry a national identity card at all times to show to a police officer on request	57	38	5=100
	August, 2003 ¹⁰	56	40	4=100
	August, 2002	59	38	3=100
	September, 2001	70	26	4=100
b.F1	Allowing the U.S. government to monitor your personal telephone calls and e-mails	24	73	3=100
	August, 2002	22	76	2=100
	Mid-September, 2001	26	70	4=100
c.F1	Allowing the U.S. government to monitor your credit card purchases	29	68	3=100
	August, 2002	32	63	5=100
	Mid-September, 2001	40	55	5=100
d.F1	Allowing airport personnel to do extra checks on passengers who appear to be of Middle-Eastern descent	57	38	5=100
	August, 2002	59	38	3=100

ASK ALL:

Q.71 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?

48 Generally right
 47 Generally wrong
 5 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
 100

QUESTIONS 72 THROUGH 75 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

¹⁰ In August 2003, the item was asked as stand alone question.

ASK ALL:

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

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL) No <u>Preference</u>	(VOL) Other <u>Party</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
January, 2006	28	32	32	5	*	3=100
December, 2005	29	34	31	4	*	2=100
Late November, 2005	27	34	29	5	1	4=100
Early November, 2005	28	34	31	5	*	2=100
Late October, 2005	29	33	31	5	*	2=100
Early October, 2005	26	34	34	4	*	2=100
September 8-11, 2005	31	32	33	3	*	1=100
September 6-7, 2005	27	33	33	4	*	3=100
July, 2005	31	34	29	4	*	2=100
June, 2005	30	32	32	4	*	2=100
Mid-May, 2005	30	34	29	4	*	3=100
Late March, 2005	29	32	36	2	*	1=100
Mid-March, 2005	30	34	29	4	*	3=100
February, 2005	31	32	30	4	1	2=100
January, 2005	32	33	30	4	*	1=100
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL) No <u>Preference</u>	(VOL) Other <u>Party</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
Yearly Totals						
2005	30	33	31	4	*	2=100
2004	30	33	30	4	*	3=100
2003	30	31	31	5	*	3=100
2002	30	31	30	5	1	3=100
2001	29	34	29	5	*	3=100
2001 Post-Sept 11	31	32	28	5	1	3=100
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28	35	30	5	*	2=100
2000	28	33	29	6	*	4=100
1999	27	33	34	4	*	2=100
1998	28	33	32	5	*	2=100
1997	28	33	32	4	1	2=100
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No Preference/ <u>Other/DK</u>		
1996	29	33	33	5=100		
1995	32	30	34	4=100		
1994	30	32	34	4=100		
1993	27	34	34	5=100		
1992	28	33	35	4=100		
1991	31	32	33	4=100		
1990	31	33	30	6=100		
	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Independent/ No Pref/Oth/DK</u>			
1989	33	33	34=100			
1987	26	35	39=100			

IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY [N=562] ASK:

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

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Refused to lean</u>
January, 2006	10	16	14=40%
December, 2005	10	16	11=37%
Late November, 2005	9	13	17=39%
Early November, 2005	11	14	13=38%
Late October, 2005	11	15	12=38%
Early October, 2005	11	18	11=40%
September 8-11, 2005	10	18	9=37%
September 6-7, 2005	10	15	15=40%
July, 2005	9	15	11=35%
June, 2005	10	16	12=38%
Mid-May, 2005	9	13	14=36%
Late March, 2005	13	17	9=39%
December, 2004	14	12	9=35%
August, 2003	12	16	14=42%
August, 2002	12	13	13=38%
September, 2000	11	13	15=39%
Late September, 1999	14	15	16=45%
August, 1999	15	15	12=42%