



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Adam Clymer at 202-879-6757 or 202 549-7161 (cell)

VISIT: www.naes04.org

**Post-Election Polling Shows Public Coming to Believe United States Is
“Generally Going in Right Direction,” Annenberg Data Indicates**

After the re-election of President George W. Bush, the American public has become more optimistic about the general direction of the country and more supportive of him personally and as president, the University of Pennsylvania’s National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

Interviews with 1,307 registered voters, conducted from November 3 through 11, showed that 47 percent of the public said the country was “generally going in the right direction,” while 46 percent said “things are seriously off on the wrong track.” The margin of sampling error was plus or minus three percentage points.

In polling of registered voters conducted just before the election, from October 25 through 31, just 40 percent had said right direction, while 53 percent said “wrong track.” Throughout the presidential campaign, the balance on this question was consistently negative, a finding that was widely believed to menace the president’s chances of re-election.

Approval of Bush’s handling of his job as president also turned upwards. In the October 25-31 polling, 49 percent approved and 49 percent disapproved. The post-election data showed 53 percent approving and 45 percent disapproving.

Moreover, while the pre-election data showed 49 percent with a favorable opinion of Bush and 42 percent with an unfavorable opinion, the post-election finding was a much more robust 55 percent favorable, 33 percent unfavorable.

Most of the change appeared to come from non-voters, although 30 percent of Kerry voters said they agreed, at least somewhat, with the idea that “George Bush will probably be a good president in his second term.”

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But just 10 percent of Kerry voters in the November 3-11 polling said they thought the country was going in the right direction, compared to 9 percent of those in the October 25-31 polling who said they were certain or all but certain to vote for Kerry. Nine percent of Kerry voters in the post-election interviewing said they approved of Bush's handling of his job as president, compared to 6 percent of the solid Kerry backers in the pre-election survey.

One other major shift from pre-election data came in voters' confidence about vote counting. In the October 25-31 polling, just 62 percent said they felt "very confident" that their votes would be counted accurately. Afterwards, 73 percent said they were very confident their votes had been properly counted. Eighty-six percent of Bush voters and 53 percent of Kerry voters said they were "very confident."

Adam Clymer, political director of the survey, said "The higher level of confidence reflects the lack of intense controversy over voting almost everywhere in the country, and the fact that John Kerry conceded defeat the day after the election. Even so, 73 percent is not a great number, and government at all levels should work a lot harder to give people confidence that their votes will be counted."

On the question to Kerry voters about whether Bush would probably be a good second-term president, 5 percent said they strongly agreed that he would and 25 percent said they agreed somewhat. Thirteen percent said they disagreed somewhat, and a majority, 53 percent, said they disagreed strongly.

One singular exception to the upbeat picture came on a question about the economic future. In the October 25-31 polling, 62 percent of the public said they expected the economy to be better in a year, and 11 percent said it would be worse. In the post-election polling, 52 percent said better and 24 percent said it would be worse

The public's view of Kerry changed little after his defeat. Before the election, 47 percent had a favorable opinion of him and 40 percent an unfavorable view. In the post-election polling, the favorable opinions had dropped to 44 percent while the unfavorable ones slid to 37 percent. But his standing did improve among Bush voters, from 6 percent favorable before the election, up to 12 percent favorable -- after he was no longer their candidate's opponent.

The National Annenberg Election Survey is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania (www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org). Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is FactCheck.org, a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at www.FactCheck.Org.

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Pre- and Post- Election Opinions

Questions were asked only of those registered to vote.

%	Pre-Election Total	Post- Election Total	Voted for Bush	Voted for Kerry	Voted for other/ Did not vote
Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction, or do you think things are seriously off on the wrong track?					
Right direction	40%	47%	80%	10%	49%
Wrong track	53%	46%	13%	83%	42%
*Are you confident that your vote has been counted accurately or are you doubtful that it has been counted accurately?					
Very confident	62%	73%	86%	56%	79%
Somewhat confident	22%	16%	11%	24%	12%
Somewhat doubtful	9%	5%	1%	9%	3%
Very doubtful	4%	3%	*	6%	1%
*Do you think George W. Bush will do a better job as commander in chief of the military in his second term than John Kerry would have done if he were elected?					
Yes	49%	57%	96%	11%	66%
No	45%	35%	1%	77%	22%
*Do you think George W. Bush will do a better job handling the war on terrorism in his second term than John Kerry would have done if he were elected?					
Yes	51%	57%	95%	16%	66%
No	42%	35%	2%	70%	23%
*Do you think George W. Bush will do a better job handling the economy in his second term than John Kerry would have done if he were elected?					
Yes	43%	49%	86%	9%	43%
No	50%	40%	6%	80%	43%
*Do you think George W. Bush will do a better job of preventing U.S. corporations from outsourcing jobs to other countries in his second term than John Kerry would have done if he were elected?					
Yes	29%	36%	61%	7%	29%
No	56%	47%	18%	81%	51%
Thinking about one year from now, do you think economic conditions in the country will be much better than they are right now, better, the same, or worse?					
Better	62%	52%	80%	24%	41%
Worse	11%	24%	5%	43%	35%
Same	27%	24%	15%	33%	25%
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?					
Approve	49%	53%	94%	9%	46%
Disapprove	49%	45%	5%	90%	49%
Please tell me if your opinion of George W. Bush is favorable or unfavorable.					
Favorable	47%	56%	95%	13%	50%
Unfavorable	43%	31%	2%	66%	39%
Please tell me if your opinion of John Kerry is favorable or unfavorable.					
Favorable	50%	43%	14%	78%	28%
Unfavorable	37%	37%	68%	2%	36%
†*Who do you think Osama Bin Laden wanted to see win the presidential election, Bush or Kerry or Don't you think he cared who won?					
Bush	9%	13%	5%	22%	10%
Kerry	39%	37%	55%	19%	29%
He didn't care	45%	43%	34%	52%	45%

* These questions reflect the post-election version. Before the election they were asked in present or future tense.

†Pre-election interviewing conducted October 30-November 1.

Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue until later this month.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with two interviewing periods. From October 25 through 31, 2004, 2,757 registered voters were interviewed. In theory, in 19 out of 20 cases, results on the question of whether they have already voted for all registered voters will differ by less than two percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults over the same time periods. From November 3 through November 11, 2004, 1,307 registered voters were interviewed, and the margin of sampling error would be plus or minus three percentage points. For smaller subgroups, such as Bush voters or Kerry voters, the margin of sampling error would be higher. Moreover, some questions were not asked of all respondents, which would also lead to higher potential sampling error.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

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