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**Annenberg Polling Shows Dismay Over Iraq Is Increasing;  
Public Supports Bush on Staying but Doubts He Has a Plan**

The public agrees with President Bush that American troops should be kept in Iraq until a stable government is established, but does not think he has a clear plan for achieving success there, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

Moreover, majorities now think the situation in Iraq was not worth going to war over and the war has increased, not decreased the threat of terrorism, and a bare majority disapproves of the President's handling of the situation in Iraq.

Nevertheless, Bush's overall standing with the public did not suffer and may even have improved slightly since late March. In polling from April 1 through 14, a majority, 53 percent, said they approved of his handling of his job as president, while 44 percent disapproved. Between March 16 and 31, just 50 percent approved and 48 percent disapproved.

The latest polling, involving interviews with 1,267 people, came as American casualties in Iraq increased sharply, and televised hearings investigating what led up to the September 11, 2001 terrorism attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were conducted in Washington. Bush himself held a news conference on April 13, the next to last night of interviewing. The margin of sampling error for the data is plus or minus three percentage points.

But the question about keeping troops in Iraq was asked only in the second week of interviewing, so the findings that 57 percent want to keep troops there and 36 percent want to bring them "home as soon as possible" are subject to a potential sampling error of plus or minus six percentage points.

That margin is also applicable to the question of whether Bush "has a clear plan for bringing the situation in Iraq to a successful conclusion." Thirty-four percent said he had such a plan and 56 percent said he did not.

One issue raised in the hearings on 9/11 was also examined. When respondents were asked if they thought “Bush did all that he could have done against Al Qaeda before the September 11 attacks, or not?” 40 percent said he had, and 47 percent said he had not. But his Administration was given more credit than its predecessor. Forty-three percent said that, before September 11, the Bush administration had taken the threat of terrorism more seriously than the Clinton administration, 29 percent said the Clinton administration had taken it more seriously and eight percent said each treated it equally. On the issue of how the war in Iraq related to terrorism, 57 percent said it had increased the risk of terrorism against the United States, while 29 percent said it had reduced that risk.

On the question of “All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?” -- a question the Annenberg polling has been asking since October -- the results were the most negative yet. Previous spurts of bad news have led to slight margins saying the war was not worth it, but those differences did not exceed potential sampling error.

This time 51 percent said the war was not worth it, and 43 percent said it was. In late March, 49 percent said it was worth it and 46 percent said it was not.

And 51 percent said they disapproved of Bush’s handling of the situation in Iraq, while 44 percent approved. In late March opinion was split; 47 percent approved and 48 percent disapproved.

One factor in Bush’s overall rating may be recent good economic news about job creation. The percentage of people saying the Bush Administration’s policies made the economy worse dropped from 41 percent in late March to 36 percent in April. The share saying they had made the economy better rose from 26 to 30 percent.

But on another basic question, there was no meaningful change. In late March 36 percent said they thought “things in this country are generally going in the right direction,” while 55 percent said they were “seriously off on the wrong track.” In April 36 percent still said “right track” and 54 percent said “wrong direction.”

Partisan identification was closely tied to respondents’ answers. For example, 89 percent of Republicans said they approved of Bush’s handling of his job as president, while 11 percent disapproved. Among Democrats, 23 percent approved and 74 percent disapproved. Independents were about as supportive as the nation as a whole, with 52 percent approving and 44 percent disapproving.

But on the question of whether Bush has a “clear plan for bringing the situation in Iraq to a successful conclusion,” even many Republicans were dubious. While 58 percent of them said he had such a plan, 35 percent said he did not. Ten percent of Democrats said he had a plan, while 82 percent said he did not. Among independents 30 percent said he had a clear plan, and 57 percent said he did not.

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There were no statistically significant differences in results on these questions between respondents in the 18 battleground states where both sides in the presidential race are running television ads and results from respondents elsewhere.

That National Annenberg Election Survey, the largest academic election poll, is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania ([www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org](http://www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org)). It has been tracking the presidential campaign since October 7, and interviewing will continue until after Election Day. 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](http://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](http://www.FactCheck.Org).

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## Questions

A. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

April 1-14	Approve	Disapprove
<b>Total</b>	53%	44%
<b>Republicans</b>	89%	11%
<b>Democrats</b>	23%	74%
<b>Independents</b>	52%	44%
<b>Men</b>	59%	37%
<b>Women</b>	47%	50%
<b>Whites</b>	58%	39%
<b>African-Americans</b>	23%	74%
<b>Hispanic</b>	61%	32%
<b>High School graduate or less</b>	53%	42%
<b>Some college</b>	54%	45%
<b>College degree or more</b>	50%	48%
<b>18-29 years old</b>	47%	49%
<b>30-44</b>	58%	40%
<b>45-64</b>	54%	41%
<b>65 and over</b>	46%	50%
<b>Household income below \$35,000</b>	48%	46%
<b>\$35,000 to \$75,000</b>	55%	42%
<b>\$75,000 and over</b>	59%	40%
<b>Union household</b>	44%	53%
<b>Conservatives</b>	74%	24%
<b>Moderates</b>	46%	50%
<b>Liberals</b>	31%	67%
<b>Northeast</b>	44%	54%
<b>Midwest</b>	54%	43%
<b>South</b>	56%	41%
<b>West</b>	56%	40%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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B. 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?

<b>April 1-14</b>	<b>Keep troops there</b>	<b>Bring troops home</b>
<b>Total</b>	57%	36%
<b>Republicans</b>	70%	25%
<b>Democrats</b>	50%	44%
<b>Independents</b>	50%	40%
<b>Men</b>	64%	33%
<b>Women</b>	51%	40%
<b>High School graduate or less</b>	55%	39%
<b>Some college</b>	57%	39%
<b>College degree or more</b>	63%	29%
<b>18-29 years old</b>	53%	46%
<b>30-44</b>	57%	37%
<b>45-64</b>	53%	37%
<b>65 and over</b>	72%	22%
<b>Household income below \$35,000</b>	49%	46%
<b>\$35,000 to \$75,000</b>	58%	34%
<b>\$75,000 and over</b>	69%	28%
<b>Conservatives</b>	67%	28%
<b>Moderates</b>	55%	39%
<b>Liberals</b>	42%	50%
<b>Northeast</b>	44%	51%
<b>Midwest</b>	64%	30%
<b>South</b>	56%	38%
<b>West</b>	65%	28%

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C. Do you think George W. Bush has a clear plan for bringing the situation in Iraq to a successful conclusion, or don't you think so?

<b>April 1-14</b>	<b>Has clear plan</b>	<b>Does not have clear plan</b>
<b>Total</b>	34%	56%
<b>Republicans</b>	58%	35%
<b>Democrats</b>	10%	82%
<b>Independents</b>	30%	57%
<b>Men</b>	41%	48%
<b>Women</b>	28%	63%
<b>High School graduate or less</b>	36%	49%
<b>Some college</b>	35%	59%
<b>College degree or more</b>	31%	64%
<b>18-29 years old</b>	37%	57%
<b>30-44</b>	40%	54%
<b>45-64</b>	29%	60%
<b>65 and over</b>	33%	46%
<b>Household income below \$35,000</b>	28%	57%
<b>\$35,000 to \$75,000</b>	37%	55%
<b>\$75,000 and over</b>	41%	55%
<b>Conservatives</b>	54%	36%
<b>Moderates</b>	22%	69%
<b>Liberals</b>	17%	76%
<b>Northeast</b>	23%	64%
<b>Midwest</b>	37%	57%
<b>South</b>	36%	52%
<b>West</b>	39%	50%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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D. All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?

<b>April 1-14</b>	<b>Worth it</b>	<b>Not worth it</b>
<b>Total</b>	43%	51%
<b>Republicans</b>	69%	27%
<b>Democrats</b>	21%	76%
<b>Independents</b>	43%	52%
<b>Men</b>	49%	48%
<b>Women</b>	38%	55%
<b>High School graduate or less</b>	43%	50%
<b>Some college</b>	44%	55%
<b>College degree or more</b>	42%	51%
<b>18-29 years old</b>	36%	62%
<b>30-44</b>	46%	47%
<b>45-64</b>	46%	49%
<b>65 and over</b>	39%	52%
<b>Household income below \$35,000</b>	37%	56%
<b>\$35,000 to \$75,000</b>	42%	52%
<b>\$75,000 and over</b>	52%	44%
<b>Union household</b>	33%	60%
<b>Conservatives</b>	65%	33%
<b>Moderates</b>	34%	59%
<b>Liberals</b>	23%	74%
<b>Northeast</b>	33%	61%
<b>Midwest</b>	51%	43%
<b>South</b>	46%	50%
<b>West</b>	40%	53%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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E. Has the war in Iraq reduced the risk of terrorism against the United States or increased the risk of terrorism against the United States?

April 1-14	Reduced	Increased	Made no difference (vol.)
<b>Total</b>	29%	57%	6%
<b>Republicans</b>	53%	37%	5%
<b>Democrats</b>	14%	77%	5%
<b>Independents</b>	25%	60%	8%
<b>Men</b>	34%	54%	6%
<b>Women</b>	24%	60%	7%
<b>Whites</b>	31%	54%	7%
<b>African-Americans</b>	17%	74%	5%
<b>Hispanic</b>	17%	58%	3%
<b>High School graduate or less</b>	28%	55%	6%
<b>Some college</b>	31%	59%	5%
<b>College degree or more</b>	29%	58%	8%
<b>18-29 years old</b>	29%	61%	2%
<b>30-44</b>	31%	54%	7%
<b>45-64</b>	27%	58%	8%
<b>65 and over</b>	28%	57%	6%
<b>Household income below \$35,000</b>	29%	55%	6%
<b>\$35,000 to \$75,000</b>	27%	61%	7%
<b>\$75,000 and over</b>	31%	59%	6%
<b>Union household</b>	24%	63%	7%
<b>Conservatives</b>	42%	42%	7%
<b>Moderates</b>	26%	61%	6%
<b>Liberals</b>	14%	78%	4%
<b>Northeast</b>	25%	61%	6%
<b>Midwest</b>	29%	54%	8%
<b>South</b>	32%	56%	6%
<b>West</b>	27%	59%	5%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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F. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?

<b>April 1-14</b>	<b>Approve</b>	<b>Disapprove</b>
<b>Total</b>	44%	51%
<b>Republicans</b>	76%	21%
<b>Democrats</b>	19%	76%
<b>Independents</b>	41%	53%
<b>Men</b>	49%	48%
<b>Women</b>	39%	54%
<b>Whites</b>	49%	46%
<b>African-Americans</b>	23%	76%
<b>Hispanic</b>	50%	45%
<b>High School graduate or less</b>	44%	49%
<b>Some college</b>	45%	52%
<b>College degree or more</b>	43%	54%
<b>18-29 years old</b>	40%	55%
<b>30-44</b>	49%	48%
<b>45-64</b>	43%	51%
<b>65 and over</b>	41%	52%
<b>Household income below \$35,000</b>	38%	56%
<b>\$35,000 to \$75,000</b>	46%	49%
<b>\$75,000 and over</b>	52%	45%
<b>Union household</b>	39%	54%
<b>Conservatives</b>	65%	30%
<b>Moderates</b>	36%	59%
<b>Liberals</b>	23%	75%
<b>Northeast</b>	33%	63%
<b>Midwest</b>	45%	47%
<b>South</b>	46%	50%
<b>West</b>	50%	47%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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## 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 past Election Day.

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 polling conducted between April 1 and April 14, when 1,267 people were interviewed. In theory, in 19 cases out of 20 the results will differ by no more than three percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults. For smaller subgroups, such as Republicans or Democrats, the margin of sampling error would be higher. Moreover, some questions were not asked of all respondents, which would lead to a larger 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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