



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Public Believes Prison Guards Were Not Following Orders,
But Pentagon Tried To Cover Up Abuse, Annenberg Data Show**

The American public does not believe the soldiers who mistreated Iraqi prisoners were following orders, but a narrow majority thinks the Pentagon tried to cover up the abuse, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

Polling of 1,030 adults from Thursday through Sunday also showed that a large majority of the public does not feel that Donald H. Rumsfeld, the secretary of defense, should resign because of the issue.

Forty-seven percent of the public said the soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad acted on their own. Thirty-one percent said they were following orders, and six percent said they were both acting on their own and following orders. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus three percentage points.

But 52 percent said they thought the Pentagon tried to cover up the abuse, compared to 32 percent who said the Pentagon acted properly.

On the issue of whether Rumsfeld should resign, as many prominent Democrats including John F. Kerry have demanded, 66 percent of the public said he should not. Only 24 percent said he should go. Even the Democrats divided narrowly, with 40 percent saying he should quit and 47 percent saying he should stay; the seven point difference was not statistically significant.

Polling began on Thursday evening, after President Bush told King Abdullah of Jordan that he was "sorry" about the abuse. It continued as Rumsfeld testified Friday before Congress and said "I take full responsibility" for what happened and extended his "deepest apology." But the data did not indicate any significant shifts of opinion as the polling proceeded over four days.

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There was no indication of any immediate political impact from the issue. Respondents from battleground states and persuadable voters everywhere responded in much the same way as did the public at large. Nor was there any statistically significant change in the public's view of how President Bush was handling the situation in Iraq; 42 percent approved and 54 percent disapproved in the latest polling. From April 15 through May 2, the results were almost the same; 45 percent approved and 52 percent disapproved.

But there was a strong partisan tone to the replies. On the issue of whether the prison guards acted on their own or followed orders, 58 percent of Republicans said the soldiers acted on their own and 18 percent said they followed orders. But just 38 percent of Democrats said the guards acted on their own while 45 percent said they followed orders. Independents fell in between, with 51 percent saying they acted on their own and 26 percent saying they followed orders.

On the cover-up question, 70 percent of Democrats, 47 percent of independents and 35 percent of Republicans said the Pentagon had tried to "cover up the abuse."

As to whether Rumsfeld should resign, 84 percent of Republicans, 75 percent of independents and 47 percent of Democrats said he should not.

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). 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 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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Questions

A. Recently, photographs were made public that appeared to show U.S. soldiers abusing Iraqi prisoners. Do you think the soldiers mistreated these prisoners on their own, or do you think they were following orders from their commanders?

%	On their own	Followed orders
Total	47%	31%
Republicans	58%	18%
Democrats	38%	45%
Independents	51%	26%
Men	49%	31%
Women	45%	32%
Whites	48%	29%
African-Americans	38%	51%
Latinos	64%	20%
High school graduate or less	46%	32%
Some college	45%	30%
College degree or more	51%	29%
18-29 years old	61%	23%
30-44	50%	29%
45-64	40%	33%
65 and over	37%	42%
Household income below \$35,000	47%	37%
\$35,000 to less than \$75,000	46%	30%
\$75,000 and over	55%	26%
Union household	43%	38%
Conservatives	54%	22%
Moderates	42%	34%
Liberals	47%	39%
Northeast	41%	34%
Midwest	50%	28%
South	48%	34%
West	50%	27%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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B. Do you think the Pentagon acted properly in dealing with this matter, or do you think it tried to cover up the abuse?

%	Acted properly	Tried to Cover it Up
Total	32%	52%
Republicans	50%	35%
Democrats	17%	70%
Independents	36%	47%
Men	33%	52%
Women	30%	53%
Whites	37%	47%
African-Americans	9%	78%
Latinos	21%	67%
High school graduate or less	27%	58%
Some college	38%	45%
College degree or more	34%	50%
18-29 years old	26%	59%
30-44	33%	51%
45-64	37%	48%
65 and over	28%	55%
Household income below \$35,000	25%	62%
\$35,000 to less than \$75,000	34%	52%
\$75,000 and over	38%	44%
Union household	24%	61%
Conservatives	47%	37%
Moderates	25%	60%
Liberals	22%	65%
Northeast	32%	52%
Midwest	33%	51%
South	34%	51%
West	28%	56%

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C. Do you think Donald Rumsfeld should resign as secretary of defense because of this matter, or not?

%	Yes	NO
Total	24%	66%
Republicans	10%	84%
Democrats	40%	47%
Independents	18%	75%
Men	25%	68%
Women	24%	64%
Whites	21%	70%
African-Americans	46%	40%
Latinos	29%	59%
High school graduate or less	24%	62%
Some college	20%	74%
College degree or more	28%	64%
18-29 years old	18%	75%
30-44	23%	67%
45-64	25%	65%
65 and over	33%	55%
Household income below \$35,000	32%	55%
\$35,000 to less than \$75,000	18%	75%
\$75,000 and over	23%	72%
Union household	33%	59%
Conservatives	12%	80%
Moderates	30%	61%
Liberals	35%	54%
Northeast	25%	64%
Midwest	23%	69%
South	23%	68%
West	26%	62%

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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 interviewing conducted from May 6 through May 9. In that period 1,030 adults were interviewed.

In theory, in 19 cases out of 20 the results for these interviews 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 the margin of sampling error would be higher. For example, for Democrats it would be plus or minus five percentage points and for Republicans plus or minus six percentage points.

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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