



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: January 17, 2005

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

VISIT: www.naes04.org

**Bush Inauguration Comes With Nation Still Deeply Divided,
Dubious On Iraq, Social Security, Annenberg Data Show**

George W. Bush will be sworn in this week to lead a nation giving him a lukewarm approval rating, unenthusiastic about his ideas on Social Security, impatient to get out of Iraq and showing no signs of post-election reconciliation, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

In a survey of 1,202 adults conducted from Tuesday through Sunday, 53 percent said they approved of his handling of the presidency, and 65 percent said his victory in November did not mean public support for his ideas about Social Security. Asked their own opinion, 32 percent said they supported his ideas and 50 percent said they did not.

On Iraq, 54 percent said the situation had not been worth going to war over, only 29 percent said the election January 30 would produce a stable government, and the public was about evenly split over whether the United States should bring troops home as soon as possible or wait until a stable government was established. Sixty-seven percent of all respondents, and 46 percent of Bush voters, said they agreed with the statement: "Democracy and freedom in Iraq are important, but the war has cost the United States too much in lives and money already to stay much longer."

On question after question, the divisions between Bush voters and Kerry voters were very deep. Seventy percent of Bush voters said the country was "generally going in the right direction," but only 14 percent of Kerry voters agreed. On whether the war had been worth undertaking, 74 percent of Bush voters but just 8 percent if Kerry voters said it had.

Fifty-eight percent of Bush voters but just 11 percent of Kerry voters said the economy was excellent or good. And 72 percent of Kerry voters but only 20 percent of Bush voters said Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld should leave the cabinet.

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Adam Clymer, political director of the survey, said “In many past elections, the losing side had begun to reconcile itself to the elected President by Inauguration Day. That is not happening this year. The split we saw in 2004 now amounts to a chasm. On questions that mention Bush’s name, the Kerry supporters are anywhere from 60 to 80 percentage points less positive than the Bush voters. Asked to evaluate the idea that Bush could probably be a good president in his second term, 72 percent of Kerry voters disagree and 63 percent disagree strongly.”

The survey also showed some important deteriorations in public opinion about Iraq since the immediate post-election period. A November 3-11 Annenberg survey showed that 54 percent wanted to keep troops in Iraq until a stable government was in power, while 40 percent wanted to leave as soon as possible. Now just 46 percent favor staying and 50 percent want to leave. (With the poll’s margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points, the difference between 46 and 50 percent is not statistically significant.)

In the latest polling, only a third of respondents said Bush had a clear plan for bringing the situation in Iraq to a successful conclusion. And if the elections did not lead to a stable government, only 39 percent said the United States should stay as long as necessary. Thirty-one percent said the United States should start pulling out promptly anyhow, and another 25 percent said the United States should pull out sometime later this year.

On Social Security, 57 percent of the public (and 78 percent of those 18 to 29) said they expected there would not be enough money in the social security system to pay their benefits on retirement. Fifty-seven percent said the system needed major changes, while 33 percent said it needed only minor changes.

They were then asked about a series of proposed changes proposed by various figures. One proposal, raising the current \$90,000 per year earnings ceiling on which Social Security taxes are imposed, won strong approval. Sixty-eight percent favored that idea, including 69 percent of those likely to be affected by any such change, those with incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Another suggestion, reducing the benefits promised current workers on retirement, drew overwhelming disapproval, with 86 percent opposing it and only 11 percent in favor. A downward recalculation of the starting benefits for workers under 55 has been widely touted by Bush Administration officials as an element of the President’s ultimate plan, but 87 percent of Bush voters were opposed.

In all age groups, less than a third of respondents favored the idea of raising the current 12.4 percent Social Security tax paid by workers and employers combined.

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The cornerstone of President Bush's plans, allowing workers to divert some of those taxes into the stock market, produced about an even split, favored by 47 percent and opposed by 48 percent. Younger respondents and Bush supporters liked the idea; older workers and Kerry backers did not.

But the percentage of supporters dropped precipitously, to only 18 percent, when backers were asked if they would still be in favor of the plan if \$2 trillion had to be borrowed. That figure is the widely used estimate of how much money would be needed to make up the loss in tax receipts caused by the stock market option and needed to pay benefits for older workers.

Moreover, when respondents were told that benefits could go up if the stock market rose and go down if it fell, there was no great enthusiasm for putting money in such a plan, 39 percent of the 18 to 29 year-olds said they would invest under those conditions, as did 48 percent of those 30 to 44 but just 33 percent of those 45 to 64. In all, about two thirds of those who initially said they favored a stock market plan said they would invest in it considering that risk.

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.

Table A

	Total	Bush Voters	Kerry Voters
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 Track	41	71	14
Wrong Direction	50	22	79
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?			
Approve	53	94	11
Disapprove	43	4	88
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the nation's economy?			
Approve	43	82	5
Disapprove	51	13	91
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the war on terrorism?			
Approve	48	88	11
Disapprove	48	11	86
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?			
Approve	42	79	5
Disapprove	54	18	93
All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?			
Yes	40	74	8
No	54	21	90
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?			
Keep troops in Iraq	46	71	27
Bring troops home	50	26	68
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?			
Has a clear plan	32	63	3
Doesn't have a clear plan	62	30	94
Do you think that election will be held on January 30, or don't you think so?			
Will be held on January 30	62	70	58
Will not be held on January 30	27	22	33
Do you think the election will show what the Iraqi people really want, or don't you think so?			
Yes	41	64	19
No	49	29	68
Do you think Iraqi insurgents will disrupt the elections so much that the results will not show what the Iraqi people want, or do you think that despite the terrorism, the election will show what the Iraqi people want?			
Results will not show what the Iraqi people want	50	40	66
Results will show what the Iraqi people want	41	52	24
Do you think the election in Iraq will produce a stable government, or don't you think so?			
Yes	29	46	11
No	60	45	78
If the election in Iraq produces a stable government, should the United States start pulling out its troops in Iraq right after the election?			
Yes	68	56	78
No	29	42	21
Suppose the election does not produce a stable government, which of the following do you think			

the United States should do:			
Start pulling out its troops anyway	31	13	43
Set a date for later this year when troop pullouts will start	25	26	27
Stay as long as it takes to provide stability	39	58	24
A stable government will never happen	1	1	1
Agree or Disagree: Democracy and freedom in Iraq are important, but the war has cost the United States too much in lives and money already to stay much longer.			
Agree	67	46	85
Disagree	32	52	11

Table B

	Total	Bush Voter	Kerry Voter
What do you think about the condition of the Social Security system? Do you think that by the time you retire, there will be enough money in the system to pay you the benefits you had earned, or do you think there will not be enough money left to pay your full benefits?			
Yes, there will be enough	23	29	20
No, there will not be enough	57	50	59
Would you say the Social Security system needs major changes to keep it financially sound, or would you say it needs minor changes?			
Major	57	64	51
Minor	33	29	40
Social Security Solutions			
Raising the current rate of Social Security taxes from the total of 12 point 4 percent Now paid by workers and employers.			
Favor	30	28	38
Oppose	62	67	53
Imposing Social Security taxes on income above ninety thousand dollars, which is the current limit.			
Favor	68	66	75
Oppose	23	24	18
When current workers retire, giving them lower benefits than what they are now promised.			
Favor	11	9	9
Oppose	86	87	88
Reducing both promised benefits and current taxes by allowing workers to invest some Of their Social Security contributions in the stock market?			
Favor	47	61	29
Oppose	48	34	67
*What if allowing workers to invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market meant that the government would have to borrow as much as two trillion dollars to cover benefits for people who have paid into the current system? If this was the case, would you favor or oppose a stock market option for Social Security?			
Favor	39	44	37
Oppose	53	46	56
People who put some of their Social Security contributions into the stock market could earn higher benefits if the market had gone up by the time they retired, but lower benefits if it had gone down. Knowing that, would you put some of your Social Security contributions in the stock market, or not?			
Yes	36	50	24
No	57	43	69
Do you think that George W. Bush's victory in November means that the American people support his ideas about changing Social Security, or don't you think it means that?			
Yes	23	35	10
No	65	52	84
(To those who said no) Well, do you think it means that the people who voted for him support his ideas about Social Security, or don't you think so?			
Yes	19	24	15
No	68	62	72
What about you? Do you support his ideas about Social Security, or don't you?			
Yes	32	58	6
No	50	23	83

*Question asked of those favoring letting workers put some of their Social Security taxes in stock market.

Table C

	Total	18-29years	30-44years	45-64years	65 +
What do you think about the condition of the Social Security system? Do you think that by the time you retire, there will be enough money in the system to pay you the benefits you had earned, or do you think there will not be enough money left to pay your full benefits?					
Yes, there will be enough	23	15	13	39	17
No, there will not be enough	57	78	80	47	11
Not covered or already retired	15	0	2	8	69
Would you say the Social Security system needs major changes to keep it financially sound, or would you say it needs minor changes?					
Major	57	58	66	61	35
Minor	33	36	27	32	44
Social Security Solutions					
Raise the current rate of Social Security taxes from the total of 12 point 4 percent now paid by workers and employers.					
Favor	30	25	30	33	33
Oppose	62	67	66	61	50
Impose Social Security taxes on income above ninety thousand dollars, which is the current limit.					
Favor	68	62	66	73	71
Oppose	23	31	26	20	14
When current workers retire, give them lower benefits than what they are now promised.					
Favor	11	11	13	10	9
Oppose	86	88	85	87	84
Reduce both promised benefits and current taxes by allowing workers to invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market?					
Favor	47	51	60	43	25
Oppose	48	46	35	51	68
* What if allowing workers to invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market meant that the government would have to borrow as much as two trillion dollars to cover benefits for people who have paid into the current system? If this was the case, would you favor or oppose a stock market option for Social Security?					
Favor	39	37	42	37	31
Oppose	53	62	50	53	47
People who put some of their Social Security contributions into the stock market could earn higher benefits if the market had gone up by the time they retire, but lower benefits if it had gone down. Knowing that, would you put some of your Social Security contributions in the stock market, or not?					
Yes	36	39	48	33	14
No	57	57	47	62	66
Do you think that George W. Bush's victory in November means that the American people support his ideas about changing Social Security, or don't you think it means that?					
Yes	23	29	26	21	14
No	65	58	62	70	70
(To those who said no) Well, do you think it means that the people who voted for him support his ideas about Social Security, or don't you think so?					
Yes	19	26	24	14	15
No	68	61	63	74	69
What about you? Do you support his ideas about Social Security, or don't you?					
Yes	32	33	38	31	22
No	50	44	44	52	66

*Question asked of those favoring letting workers put some of their Social Security taxes in stock market.

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 81,422 telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and nightly polling concluded on November 16, 2004.

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 interviews with 1,202 adults conducted between January 11 and 16, 2005. In theory, in 19 out of 20 cases, results for the entire group would differ by three percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all adults. For smaller subgroups the margin of sampling error would be higher; for Bush voters it would be plus or minus four percentage points, for Kerry voters it would be plus or minus five percentage points, and for respondents 65 and older it would be plus or minus seven 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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