



CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL  
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**CONGRESS, THE WAR IN IRAQ AND TERRORISM**  
July 20-22, 2007

Most Americans want to see the troops start coming home from Iraq - and after last week's all-night Senate debate that ended without a floor vote, they disapprove of how both parties in Congress are handling Iraq. Moreover, Democrats aren't especially pleased with their party, nor Republicans with theirs. Both parties get rebukes from Independents.

However, the President's ratings on handling Iraq remain low. And Americans are divided on one of the Administration's main assertions, that Iraq is part of the broader war on terror. More think Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda are not behind the current violence in Iraq than think they are.

**CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM**

Having failed in their recent attempt to force the start of troop removal, the Democrats in Congress receive 30% approval on how they're handing the Iraq situation. Republicans in Congress - who mustered enough votes to scuttle the Democrats' plans - fare even worse, getting only a 22% approval rating.

**PARTIES IN CONGRESS: HANDLING OF IRAQ**

	Approve	Disapprove
Democrats in Congress	30%	59
Republicans in Congress	22%	65

Half of the nation's Democrats (who overwhelmingly support either troop reductions or withdrawal) approve of how their own party's representatives are doing on Iraq. Liberals - who make up a large part of the party's base and also advocate troop removal - are divided.

**APPROVAL OF DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Approve	50%	23%	15%
Disapprove	43	62	76

Republicans in Congress don't do any better with their base on Iraq, either. The nation's Republicans (around half of whom would prefer troop levels remain as they are or be increased) are similarly split on views of their party in Congress. Also, only around three in ten conservatives like the way Republicans are handing Iraq.

**APPROVAL OF REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Approve	11%	18%	46%
Disapprove	81	67	39

President Bush continues to receive low marks for his handling of the war, too -- just 25% approve, the same as last week.

**BUSH HANDLING IRAQ WAR**

Approve	25%
Disapprove	69

Overall, only 26% approve of the job the Congress is doing as a whole, down slightly from last week.

Americans continue to want the war funded - with a timetable for troop withdrawal attached to the funding. A majority (63%) say this should be Congress' approach, not much different from last week. One in four say funding should be continued without any timetable for withdrawal, but few think all war funding should be cut off, no matter what.

**WHAT SHOULD CONGRESS DO ABOUT IRAQ WAR FUNDING?**

	Now	Last Week
Fund with timetable	63%	61%
Allow all funding	24	28
Block all funding	8	8

Majorities of liberals, moderates and conservatives; Democrats and Independents all prefer funding with a timetable. So do 48% of Republicans. Republicans (43%) are the most likely group to want funding without restrictions.

**WHAT TO DO ABOUT TERRORISM**

As a general matter of strategy for reducing the terror threat, 54% now think the U.S. would be safer in the long run by simply staying out of other countries' affairs in the Middle East, while 38% say the U.S. should confront groups and states that support terrorists. This is a change from last fall when Americans were more closely divided on this question.

**THE U.S. WILL BE SAFER FROM TERRORISM IF IT..**

	Now	10/2006
Confronts terror groups in the Mideast	38%	44%
Stays out of other countries' affairs	54	49

Republicans and Democrats have very different views on this. 67% of Republicans say the U.S. should confront groups and states that support terrorists, while 72% of Democrats (and 55% of Independents)

say the U.S. would be safer if we stayed out of other countries' affairs.

News from U.S. intelligence reports that Al Qaeda is getting stronger, as well a failed terrorist plot in London last month, do not seem to have elevated Americans' concerns about a terrorist attack in the United States. Just 16% think an attack in the United States is very likely in the next few months. 41% say such an attack is somewhat likely, and another 38% say such an attack is not likely.

**LIKELIHOOD OF TERROR ATTACK IN U.S. IN NEXT FEW MONTHS**

	Now	Last week	8/2006
Very likely	16%	17%	16%
Somewhat likely	41	40	43
Not likely	38	40	39

66% have at least some confidence that the government would protect them from terrorist attacks, while about a third are not confident. The public expressed more confidence in the government in the fall of 2002 and 2001. In September 2005, after Hurricane Katrina, 59% expressed confidence that the government would protect the country from a terrorist attack, but confidence rebounded last summer.

**CONFIDENCE IN GOVT. TO PROTECT U.S. FROM ATTACK?**

	Now	8/2006	9/2005	9/2002	9/2001
A great deal	17%	18%	19%	20%	35%
Fair amount	49	52	40	56	53
Not much/none	32	29	40	22	11

**ASSESSING THE WAR**

Just over half of Americans continue to see no impact from the so-called "surge" of additional U.S. troops in Iraq. One in five thinks it has made the situation worse, and about the same number say that it has made it better.

**THE TROOP INCREASE IS MAKING THE SITUATION IN IRAQ...**

	Now	Last week	6/2007
Better	19%	20%	17%
Worse	20	22	24
No impact	53	51	52

However, Americans are slightly more positive about the current situation in Iraq than they were last week, although they continue to paint a bleak picture of progress. Two thirds think it is going badly, while 32% think it is going well. Last week 74% said it was going badly.

**HOW IS THE WAR GOING?**

	Total	Last week
Well	32%	25%
Badly	66	74

And a majority would like to see some decrease in troop levels, including 36% who advocate a complete withdrawal now.

**U.S. TROOP LEVELS IN IRAQ SHOULD...**

	Now	Last week	6/2007
Increase	12%	12%	11%
Keep the same number	15	18	17
Decrease	30	29	26
Remove all troops	36	34	40

67% say they have been paying attention to news about the war in Iraq over the last few weeks, including 28% who say they're paying a lot of attention. Those who are paying a lot of attention are more likely to be Democrats, and they say the war is going very badly.

**TERRORISM, IRAQ AND THE ADMINISTRATION**

Americans are divided about the Administration's assertions that Iraq represents a part of the war on terror; 46% think it is, but as many think it is not. But the public is a little less skeptical than it was last fall, when a majority thought of the Iraq war as separate from the war on terrorism.

**IS IRAQ PART OF WAR ON TERROR?**

	Now	10/2006	7/2005	10/2004	5/2003
Yes	46%	43%	46%	53%	65%
No	46	52	50	42	32

However, many Americans continue to worry that the war is creating more terrorists who plan to attack the U.S. at home - not eliminating them. There are partisan differences here, though: Republicans are more likely to say the war in Iraq is eliminating terrorists while Democrats think the war is creating terrorists.

**IS THE IRAQ WAR...**

	Now	6/2007
Creating terrorists	44%	51%
Eliminating terrorists	18	17
No difference	27	24

More Americans are skeptical than not when asked whether there is a direct link between the insurgents in Iraq and Al Qaeda. 36% say the people causing the violence in Iraq today are under the command of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, while more, 46%, disagree.

**IS MOST IRAQ VIOLENCE UNDER AL QAEDA'S COMMAND?**

Yes	36%
No	46

The public is divided when evaluating the Bush Administration's motivations in discussing the threat of terrorism. 39% of Americans

think the Administration brings up terrorism because it is worried about the threat of terrorism to the U.S., but 51% believe the Administration is talking about the threat of terrorism for its own political gain, as some Administration opponents have charged.

**BUSH ADMINISTRATION TALKS ABOUT TERRORISM BECAUSE...**

	Now	9/2006
Concerned about the threat of terrorism	39%	48%
For its own political gain	51	42

Republicans say the Administration is concerned; most Democrats think it is for their own political gain.

There is a positive note for the Administration in this poll: 42% of Americans say looking back, the war in Iraq was the right thing to do, up from 35% in May, when the number that said it was the right thing reached its lowest level ever. 51% now think the U.S. should have stayed out of Iraq, down from 61% in May. Current views are similar to those found in April.

**DID U.S. DO THE RIGHT THING GOING TO WAR WITH IRAQ?**

	Now	5/2007	4/2007	10/2004
Right thing	42%	35%	44%	53%
Should've stayed out	51	61	51	42

Most of those who think going to war in Iraq was the right thing to do see it as connected to the broader war against terrorism. There are the usual party differences, with Republicans more positive than independents or Democrats.

President Bush's overall job approval rating is 30% in this poll, similar to the 29% found in a CBS News/New York Times Poll released last week.

**BUSH JOB APPROVALS**

	Now	Last Week	6/2007	5/2007
Overall	30%	29%	27%	30%
Terrorism	39%	39%	39%	42%
Iraq	25%	25%	23%	23%

But when Americans look back on the Administration's handling of the war, most think it has been handled badly either from the start, or soon afterwards. 34% think the Bush Administration handled things well at the start but then handled things badly, and another 43% think the Administration handled things badly right from the start. Just one in 5 thinks the Administration handled the war as well as could be expected. Americans gave slightly more positive characterizations last September.

**BUSH ADMIN'S HANDLING OF THE WAR HAS BEEN...**

	Now	9/2006
As well as can be expected	20%	27%
Good at start, then bad	34	34
Bad from the start	43	37

President Bush's job approval rating is tied to views on his handling of the war. Those who think the war has been handled badly from the start, or handled badly lately, are much more likely to disapprove of the overall job the President is doing.

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This poll was conducted among a random sample of 889 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone July 20-22, 2007. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher.

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**Congress, The War in Iraq, and Terrorism**  
**July 20-22, 2007**

q1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				
	*** Party ID ***				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	7/9-17/2007
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	30	63	9	26	29
Disapprove	62	30	89	61	64
DK/NA	8	7	2	13	7

q2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?

Approve	25	57	5	24	25
Disapprove	69	38	93	70	70
DK/NA	6	5	2	6	5

q3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the campaign against terrorism?

Approve	39	74	16	37	39
Disapprove	53	21	78	53	53
DK/NA	8	5	6	10	8

q4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

Approve	26	28	30	21	29
Disapprove	61	61	55	66	59
DK/NA	13	11	15	13	12

q5 BLANK

q6 Looking back, do you think the United States did the right thing in taking military action against Iraq, or should the US have stayed out?

					May07a
Right thing	42	73	24	38	35
Stayed out	51	21	74	51	61
Don't know/No answer	7	6	2	11	4

q7 How would you say things are going for the U.S. in its efforts to bring stability and order to Iraq? Would you say things are going very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?

					7/9-17/2007
Very well	3	3	2	3	2
Somewhat well	29	50	16	27	23
Somewhat badly	31	31	24	35	29
Very badly	35	14	57	31	45
DK/NA	2	2	1	4	1

q8 Do you think of the war with Iraq as part of the war on terrorism, or do you think of it as separate from the war on terrorism?

IF YES, ASK: Is it a major part of the war on terrorism, or a minor part of the war on terrorism?

\*\* TOTAL RESPONDENTS \*\*

\*\*\* Party ID \*\*\*

	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %	Oct06a %
Major part	32	58	21	26	31
Minor part	14	17	11	14	12
Not part	46	20	63	49	52
DK/NA	8	5	5	11	5

q9 Thinking about the last few weeks, how much attention have you been able to pay to news about the war in Iraq? -- a lot, some, not much, or none at all?

A lot	28	25	35	26
Some	39	43	38	38
Not much	22	27	19	22
None at all	9	5	8	13
DK/NA	2	0	0	1

q10 Which comes closer to your view about the Iraq war? 1. The U.S. was right to remove Saddam Hussein and stay in Iraq to help build a new government there. or 2. The U.S. was right to remove Saddam Hussein but then should have left Iraq soon after that. OR 3. The U.S. should never have gotten involved in Iraq in the first place.

					Apr07a
Right to remove and stay	30	58	14	26	32
Remove Hussein and left	32	28	32	35	32
Never have gotten involved	34	12	52	33	34
DK/NA	4	2	2	6	2

q11 BLANK

q12 From what you have seen or heard about the situation in Iraq, what should the United States do NOW -- should the U.S. increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq, keep the same number of U.S. troops in Iraq as there are now, decrease the number of troops in Iraq, or remove all its troops from Iraq?

					7/9-17/2007
Increase	12	21	5	12	12
Keep the same	15	28	7	15	18
Decrease	30	19	34	33	29
Remove all troops	36	20	50	33	34
DK/NA	7	12	4	7	7

q13-14 BLANK

q15 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Democrats in Congress are handling the situation with Iraq?

Approve	30	15	50	23
Disapprove	59	76	43	62
DK/NA	11	9	7	15

q16 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Republicans in Congress are handling the situation with Iraq?

\*\* TOTAL RESPONDENTS \*\*

	*** Party ID ***			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Approve	22	46	11	18
Disapprove	65	39	81	67
DK/NA	13	15	8	15

q17 As you may know, the U.S. has sent more than 20,000 additional troops to Iraq. From what you have heard or read, would you say this troop increase is making the situation in Iraq better, making it worse, or is it having no impact on the situation in Iraq so far?

	7/9-17/2007				
	%				
Making it better	19	42	9	14	20
Making it worse	20	9	24	22	22
No impact	53	41	60	55	51
DK/NA	8	8	7	9	7

q18 Which of these comes closest to your opinion?... Congress should block all funding for the war in Iraq no matter what; OR Congress should allow funding, but only on the condition that the U.S. sets a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops, OR Congress should allow all funding for the war without any timetable conditions.

Block all	8	6	9	10	8
Fund with timetable	63	48	76	62	61
Allow all	24	43	12	23	28
DK/NA	5	3	3	5	3

q19 Right now, is the U.S. involvement in Iraq creating more terrorists who are planning to attack the U.S., eliminating terrorists who were planning to attack the U.S., or is the U.S. involvement in Iraq not affecting the number of terrorists planning to attack the U.S.?

	Jun07c				
Creating more terrorists	44	18	64	42	51
Eliminating terrorists	18	40	7	14	17
Not affecting the number	27	28	23	30	24
DK/NA	11	14	6	14	8

q20 BLANK

q21 Looking back on the Iraq war, which comes closer to your view? 1. The Bush Administration has handled the war as well as could be expected OR 2. The Bush Administration handled the war well at the start, but in the last couple of years has handled it badly. OR 3. The Bush Administration has handled the war badly from the start?

	Sep06a				
As well as could be expected	20	45	7	17	27
Well at start, then badly	34	39	27	35	34
Badly from the start	43	14	65	43	37
DK/NA	3	2	1	5	2

q22 As far as you know, do you think most of the people causing violence in Iraq today are under the command of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, or not?

\*\* TOTAL RESPONDENTS \*\*

	*** Party ID ***			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Yes	36	46	33	32
No	46	39	50	47
It depends/some are (Vol.)	3	1	3	5
U.S. causing it (Vol.)	0	0	0	1
DK/NA	15	14	14	15

q23 How likely do you think it is that there will be another terrorist attack in the United States within the next few months--very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?

	7/9-17/2007				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	%
Very likely	16	14	17	17	17
Somewhat likely	41	36	42	41	40
Not very likely	29	34	28	27	30
Not at all likely	9	10	10	7	10
DK/NA	5	6	3	8	3

q24 How much confidence do you have in the ability of the U.S. government to protect its citizens from future terrorist attacks -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

	Aug06b				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	%
A great deal	17	31	10	14	18
A fair amount	49	55	50	45	52
Not very much	24	12	28	28	24
None at all	8	2	10	8	5
DK/NA	2	0	2	5	1

q25 BLANK

q26 Which comes closer to your view?...In the long run, the U.S. will be safer from terrorism if it confronts the countries and groups that promote terrorism in the Middle East. OR, In the long run, the U.S. will be safer from terrorism if it stays out of other countries' affairs in the Middle East.

	Oct06a				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	%
Confronts countries	38	67	21	34	44
Stays out of affairs	54	27	72	55	49
Don't know/No answer	8	6	7	11	7

q28 These days, when members of the Bush Administration talk about the threat of terrorism, do you think they are doing it mostly because they are worried about the threat of terrorism or mostly for their own political gain?

\*\* TOTAL RESPONDENTS \*\*

\*\*\* Party ID \*\*\*

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Sep06a
	%	%	%	%	%
Worried about the threat	39	67	21	36	48
Own political gain	51	25	71	52	42
Both (Vol.)	5	4	5	6	7
DK/NA	5	4	3	6	3

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	889	
Total Republicans	232	213 (24%)
Total Democrats	282	281 (32%)
Total Independents	375	395 (44%)