

ON IRAQ, THE NUMBERS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

Americans, Iraqis Believe Surge Has Not Worked, Agree With Democrats on Need for Timetable

Following last week's sobering reports by the GAO and General James Jones, three polls released today by *New York Times/CBS News*, *USA Today/Gallup*, and *ABC News/Washington Post* show that Americans question whether the Iraqi government can or will make the political gains necessary to create a stable Iraq, and agree with Democrats on the need for a timetable to redeploy U.S. troops. Another poll conducted by *ABC News/BBC/NHK* also found that Iraqis believe that the surge has not worked, that security has worsened, and want U.S. troops to withdraw.

Americans Doubt Iraqi Government's Efforts to Create Stability, Support Withdrawal of US Troops

"The poll showed how difficult the White House's task of sustaining support for an unpopular war had become. There is a deepening disillusion over the war's course and its purpose."

[NY Times, 9/10/07]

Findings from the NY Times/CBS News poll, conducted September 4-8, as reported by the New York Times:

- "53 percent said they did not think that Iraq would ever become a stable democracy."
- "70 percent said they did not think the Iraqi government, led by Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, was doing all it could to bring stability."
- "Nearly two-thirds of Americans said the United States should reduce its troops in Iraq now or withdraw them."
- "Asked if a timetable should be established for a 2008 withdrawal, a position many Democrats in Congress have advocated, 64 percent favored doing so."

Americans Support Timetables, Question Administration Influence in New Report

"A USA TODAY/Gallup Poll taken Friday and Saturday finds that a White House push to spotlight progress in Iraq, including President Bush's surprise stop in Anbar province last week, hasn't fundamentally changed attitudes toward the war." [USA TODAY, 9/10/07]

Findings from the USA TODAY/Gallup Poll, conducted September 7-8, as reported by USA TODAY:

- "A record 60% say the United States should set a timetable to withdraw forces 'and stick to that timetable regardless of what is going on in Iraq.'"
- "Asked about Petraeus' testimony, 53% of those surveyed say the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq will deliver 'a biased report that reflects what the Bush administration wants the public to believe.'"
- "57% say the Iraqi government isn't capable of reaching political benchmarks; 54% say the government isn't sincerely pursuing them."

Americans See Little Progress in Iraq, Support Timetables

Findings from the ABC News/Washington Post poll, conducted September 4-7:

- 60% of Americans think the U.S. is not making significant progress toward restoring civil order in Iraq, 36% do.
- 58% of Americans think the surge hasn't made much difference in Iraq; only 28% of Americans think the surge has made the situation in Iraq better.
- 58% of Americans think the number of U.S. military forces in Iraq should be decreased, while only 27% think the number should be kept the same.
- 55% of Americans support legislation that would set a deadline for withdrawing U.S. combat forces from Iraq by next spring.
- Only 39% of Americans think that General Petraeus' progress report will honestly reflect the situation in Iraq; 53% think the report will try to make things look better than they are.

Iraqis Want Troops to Leave, Say Surge Has Made Security Worse

“Overwhelming numbers of Iraqis say the U.S. troop buildup has worsened security and the prospects for economic and political progress in their country, according to a poll released Monday that provides a strikingly bleak appraisal of the war.” [AP, 9/10/07]

Findings from the ABC News/BBC/NHK poll, conducted August 17-24, as reported by the Associated Press:

- “47 percent want American forces and their coalition allies to leave the country immediately... 12 percent more than said so in a March poll as the troop increase was beginning.”
- “57 percent -- including nearly all Sunnis and half of Shiites -- said they consider attacks on coalition forces acceptable, a slight increase over the past half year.”
- “70 percent in the survey said they believe security has worsened where the added forces were sent, with another 11 percent saying the buildup has had no effect.”
- “Only a quarter said their communities have become safer in the past half year.”
- “Every person interviewed in Baghdad and Anbar province, a Sunni-dominated area where Bush recently visited and cited progress, said the troop increase has worsened security.”