



WHAT AMERICANS BELIEVE

ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY

AND FOREIGN POLICY

Poll of 2,000 Voters/April 30–May 8, 2007

AMERICAN SECURITY PROJECT/MARTILA COMMUNICATIONS



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Mission of the American Security Project

The American Security Project is organized around the belief that honest public discussion of national security requires a better-informed citizenry—one that understands the dangers and opportunities of the twenty-first century and the spectrum of available policy responses.

Security is a fundamental responsibility of government. In the new millennium, however, U.S. national security policy has not kept pace with rapidly changing threats to American interests. Globalization has quickened, but the United States has not built alliances or institutions to protect and advance American Security. Terrorists have expanded their reach and lethality, but the moral authority of the United States is at an all-time low. Changes in the Earth’s climate are more evident every day, but the United States has failed to act, alone or with allies, to avoid disaster.

America needs a new national security vision for this new era and a dialogue at home that is as robust as it is realistic. Yet, the quality of our discussion on national security has been diminished. Fear has trumped conversation. Artificial differences have been created and real differences have been left unexamined. The character of our national dialogue has grown increasingly shrill while the need for honest discussion has grown more urgent.

Only by developing real analysis and thoughtful answers can a genuine foreign policy consensus be rebuilt for a dangerous and decisive age. Only then will America again marshal all her resources—military, diplomatic, economic and moral—to meet the challenges of a complex world.

WHAT AMERICANS BELIEVE ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

A national telephone survey of 2,000 voters was conducted between April 30 and May 8, 2007. The findings are dramatic.

Although the American electorate remains polarized on many national security and foreign policy questions, a clear consensus has emerged on the issues of the War in Iraq, the War on Terrorism, the saliency of the nuclear threat, and the decline of America's moral authority around the world.

Methodology

The national telephone survey of 2,000 voters was conducted between April 30 and May 8, 2007 by Martilla Communications.

For those questions that were answered by all 2,000 respondents, the survey has a margin of error of +/- 2.19

For many questions, the survey used the technique of “split sampling,” a process in which the 2,000-voter sample was split into two demographically representative national samples of 1,000 respondents each. For those questions that were answered by 1,000 respondents, the margin of error is +/- 3.09 percent.

For a limited number of questions, the 1,000 person samples were also split into two representative samples of 500 respondents each. The margin of error for these questions is +/- 4.38 percent.

The purpose for split sampling in the survey was to maximize the number of questions that could be asked, to test different hypotheses about an issue, and to test the impact of different question wording.

Data and key demographic sub-groups

Poll results among key demographic sub-groups are displayed beneath the total results. On questions answered by 2,000 or 1,000 respondents, twelve sub-groups are displayed. On questions answered by 500 respondents, six sub-groups are displayed.

About Martilla Communications

For more than twenty years, Martilla Communications has surveyed American attitudes toward national security and foreign policy. The company has also conducted opinion research in many foreign countries.

SUMMARY OF POLL FINDINGS

I. PRINCIPLES

AMERICANS REJECT ISOLATIONISM AND EMBRACE WORKING WITH ALLIES AND THE UN. THEY OPPOSE INTERVENING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER NATIONS, FAVORING MORE PRACTICAL FOREIGN POLICY GOALS.

II. NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITIES

AMERICANS PLACE THE HIGHEST NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITY ON STOPPING THE SPREAD AND SMUGGLING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

III. THE WAR ON TERROR

AMERICANS ARE DEEPLY SKEPTICAL OF THE CURRENT APPROACH TO FIGHTING TERRORISM. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE WAR IN IRAQ HAS INCREASED THE THREAT OF TERRORISM. BUT MOST BELIEVE THAT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION CAN PROTECT THEM FROM ATTACK.

IV. LEADERSHIP AND MORAL AUTHORITY

AMERICANS BELIEVE OUR MORAL AUTHORITY IS IN STEEP DECLINE. THEY CONSIDER THAT DECLINE A VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM AND ATTRIBUTE IT MAINLY TO THE WAR IN IRAQ.

V. IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN

AMERICANS ARE INCREASINGLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT BOTH WARS, BELIEVE WE ARE LOSING BOTH, AND FAVOR LEAVING BOTH COUNTRIES AS SOON AS ORDER CAN BE ESTABLISHED.

VI. USE OF FORCE

AMERICANS STRONGLY REJECT THE DOCTRINE OF PREEMPTIVE WAR, BUT WOULD FAVOR USING U.S. TROOPS IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS. THEY OPPOSE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAN.

VII. ALLIES & ADVERSARIES

AMERICANS ASSIGN THE MOST POSITIVE ROLES IN WORLD AFFAIRS TO GREAT BRITAIN, CANADA, AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN. THEY ASSIGN EXTREMELY NEGATIVE ROLES TO IRAN, NORTH KOREA, SYRIA AND CUBA.

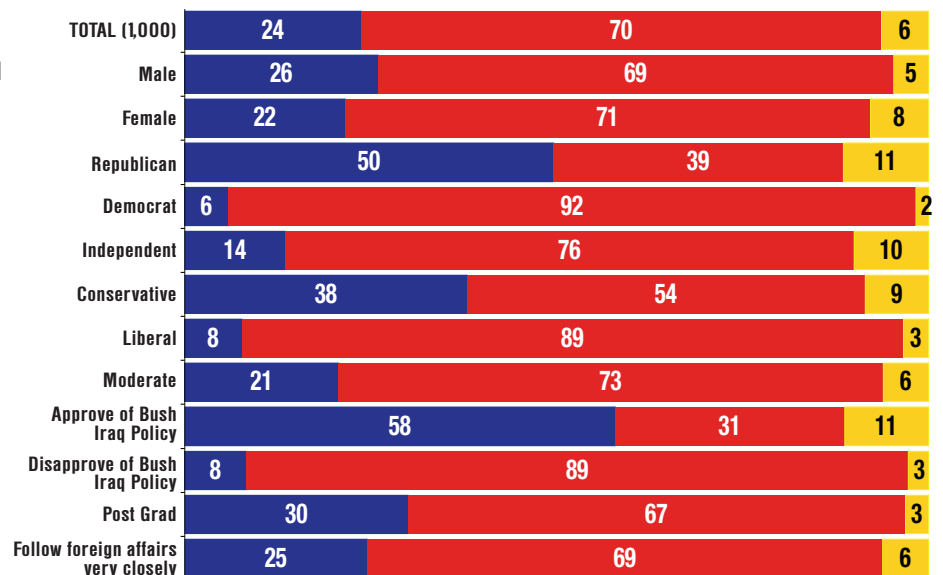
VIII. DEMOCRATIC & REPUBLICAN STRENGTHS

AMERICANS FAVOR DEMOCRATS TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ AND TO MANAGE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY. THEY FAVOR REPUBLICANS TO MANAGE THE MILITARY, FIGHT TERRORISM AND KEEP NUCLEAR WEAPONS OUT OF TERRORIST HANDS.

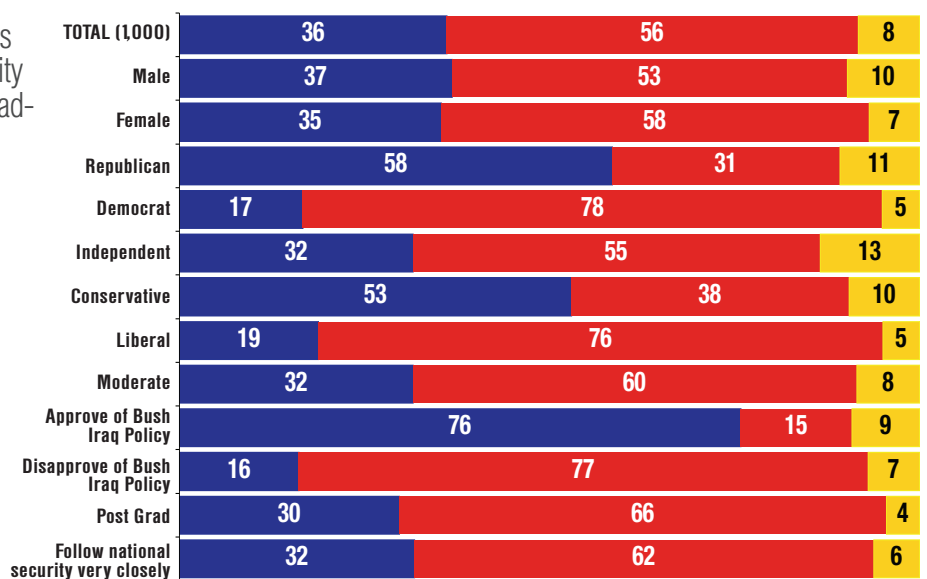
I. PRINCIPLES

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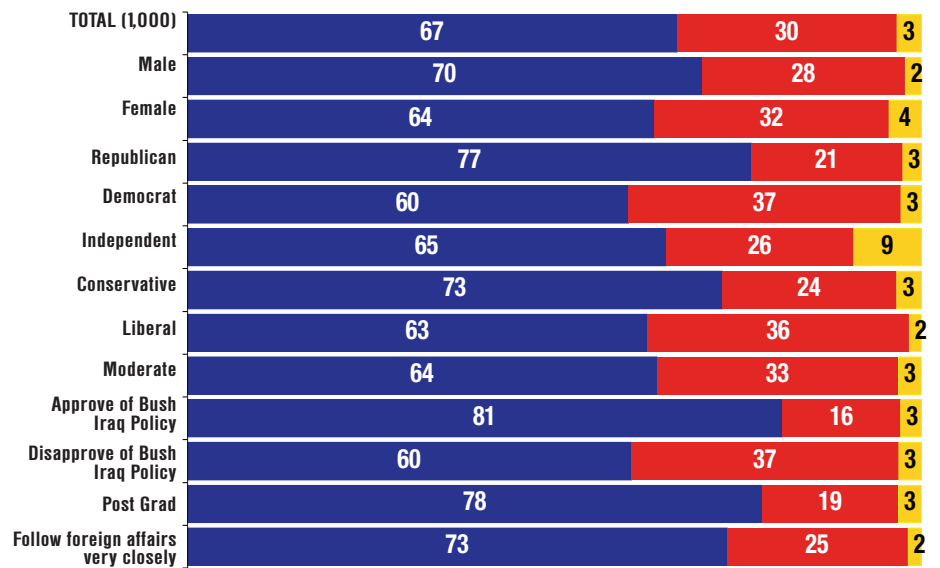
Q: When you think about America's leadership role in the world, do you feel that things are heading in the **right direction**, or do you feel that things are off on the **wrong track**? (don't know/refuse)



Q: And when you think about our efforts to advance America's national security in the world, do you feel that things are heading in the **right direction**, or do you feel that things are off on the **wrong track**?



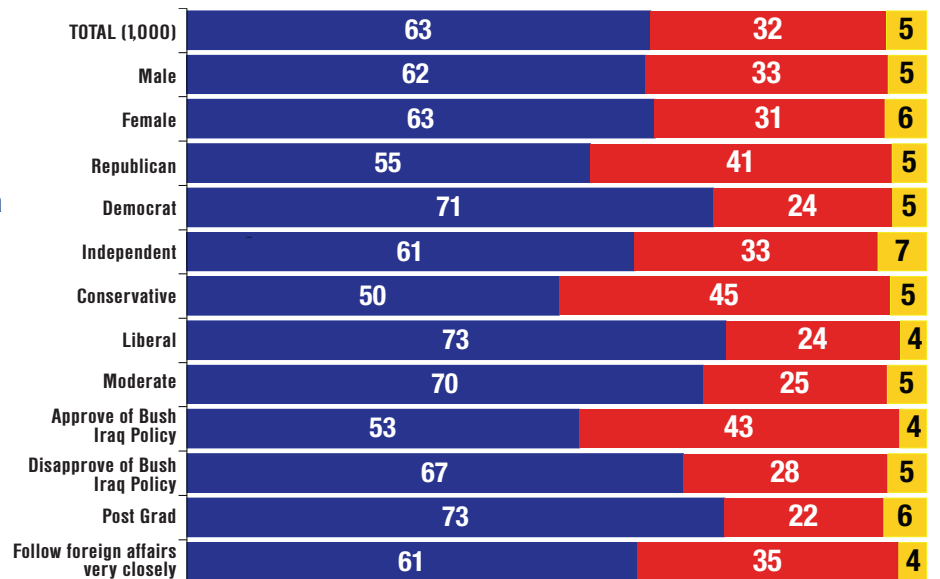
Q: Do you think it will be best for the future of the country if we take an **active role** in world affairs or play a **minimal role** in world affairs?



Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

We should cooperate with other countries as often as we can, even if this means we have to compromise on occasion. America should only act alone as a last resort.

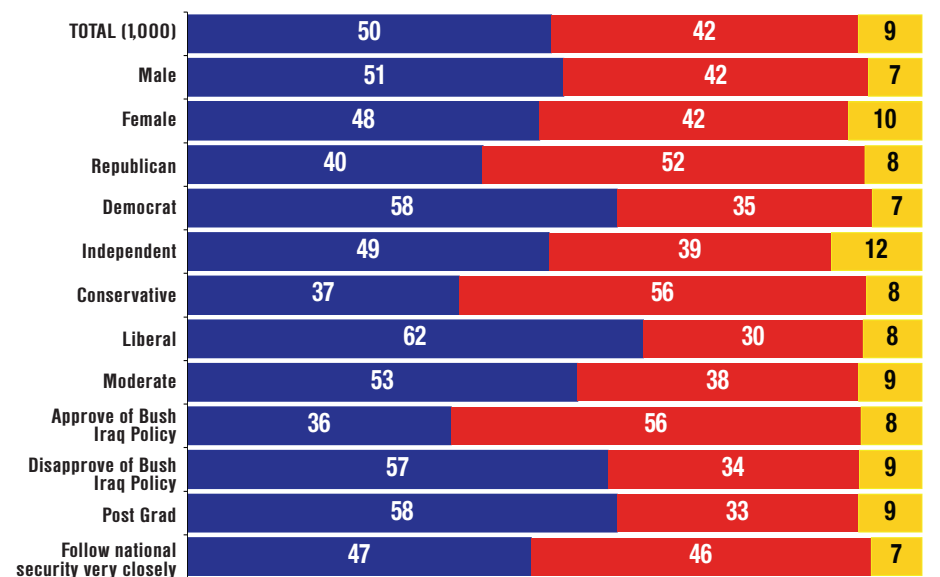
We should put American interests first at all times - even if this means pulling out of international agreements or frequently acting alone.



Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

History has proven that working closely with other nations makes us safer. The United States has a long tradition of balancing its military might with international cooperation. America was behind the founding of the United Nations, the Marshall Plan, and NATO. This helped us win the Cold War, and can help us win the War on Terror.

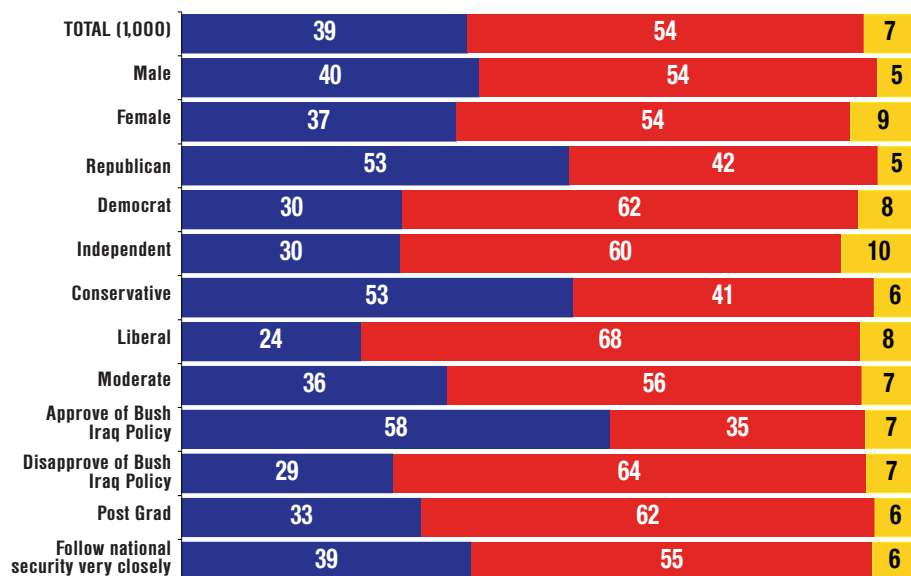
We live in unique and dangerous times. The United States cannot rely on the tactics that won the Cold War to fight the War on Terror. We must never compromise our security in order to be more respected in the world. A strong military and a strong resolve will ultimately lead us to victory, not treaties and outdated alliances.



Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

The U.S. will be safer if it intervenes to prevent dictators and hostile regimes from coming to power in foreign countries.

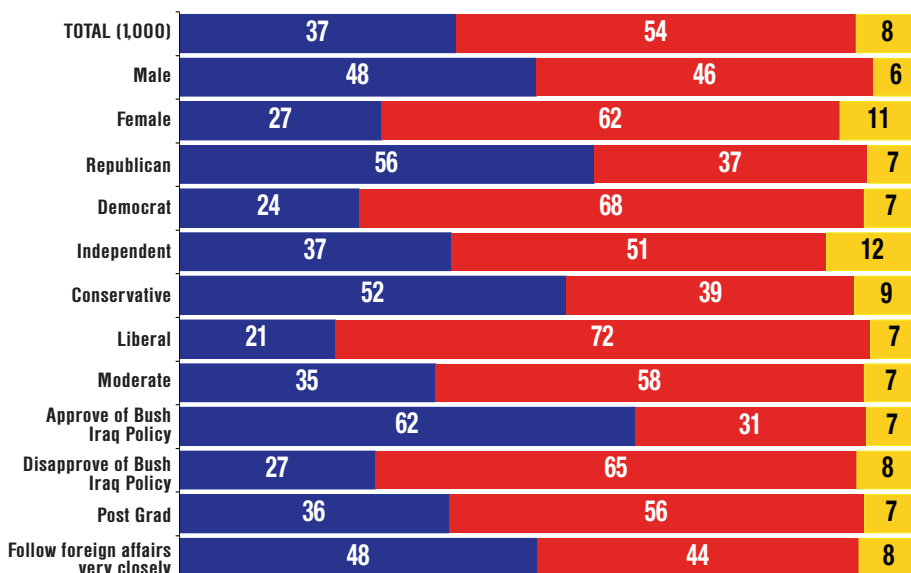
The U.S. will be safer if it plays only a minimal role in the internal business of foreign countries.



Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

The United Nations is a flawed, ineffective, and corrupt institution. Its resolutions are often ignored or circumvented, often by its own members. Its officials got rich helping Iraq cheat on the Oil for Food program in the 1990s, and it provides a platform for anti-Americanism.

The United Nations, despite its flaws, is important to American national security. The U.N. has peacekeepers in more than a dozen countries, it immunizes millions of children, and it monitors the spread of weapons of mass destruction. What's more, it is a place where nations can work out their conflicts peacefully instead of on the battlefield.



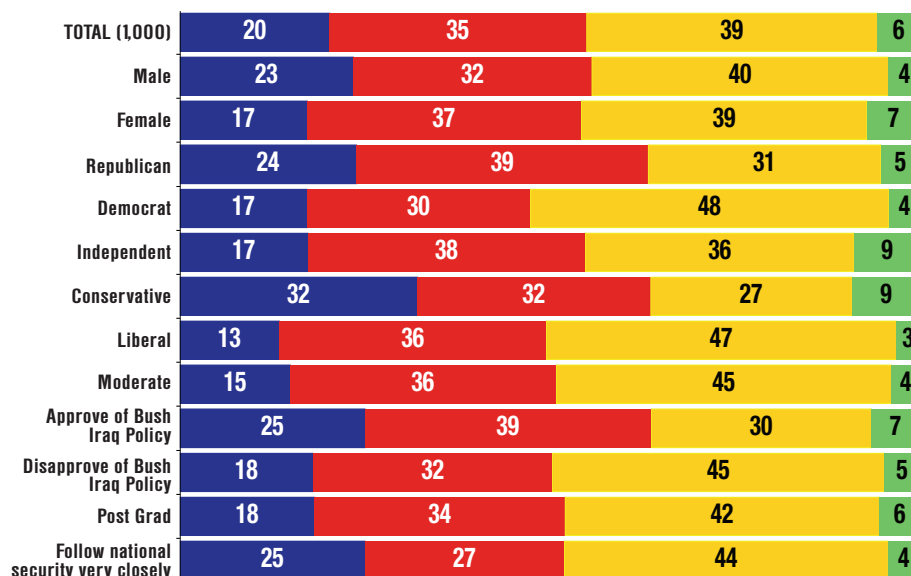
Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

The U.S. should play a much less active role in the United Nations.

The U.S. should continue to play the same role in the United Nations that it plays today.

The U.S. should play a more active role in the United Nations.

(don't know/refuse)

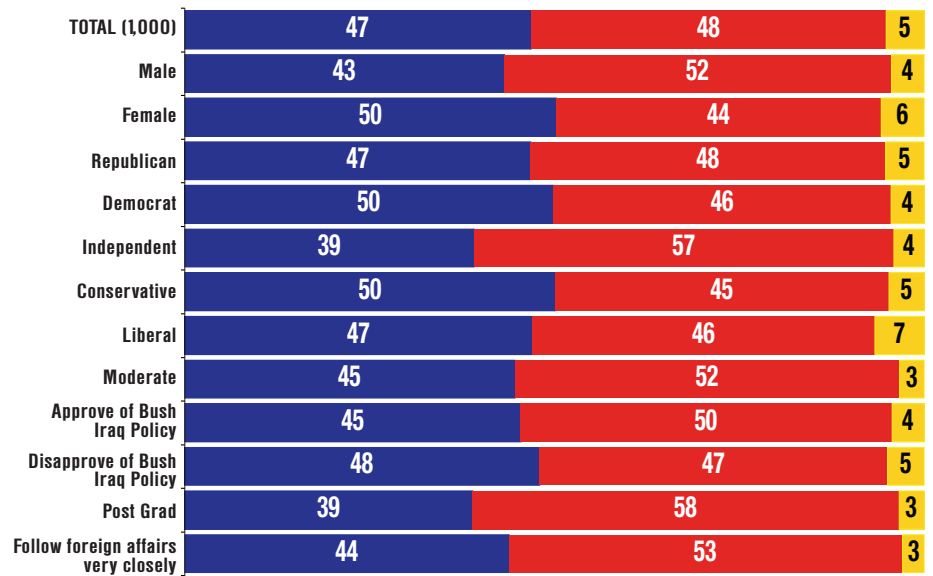


Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

The U.S. should not work with countries that violate human rights.

Our national interest requires us to work with governments with which we do not necessarily agree or approve.

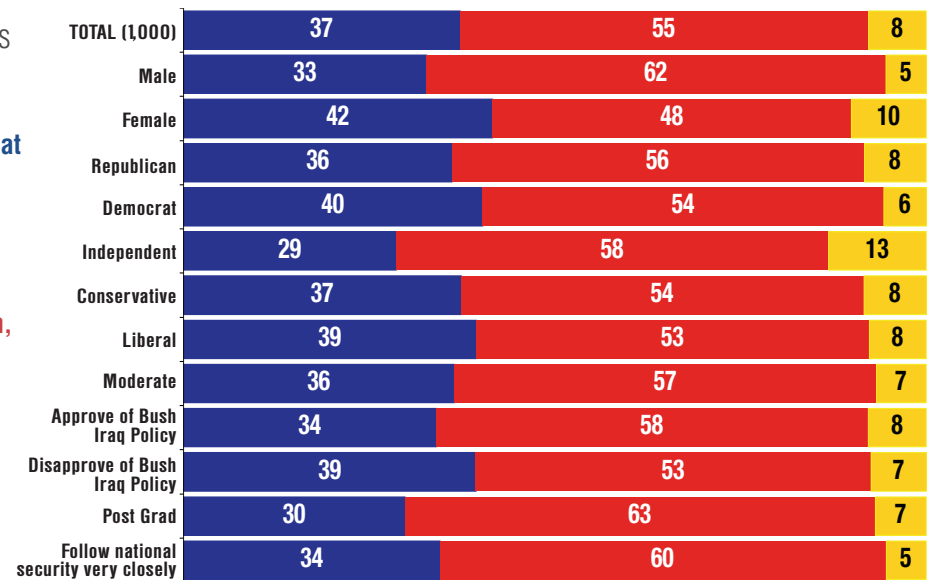
(don't know/refuse)



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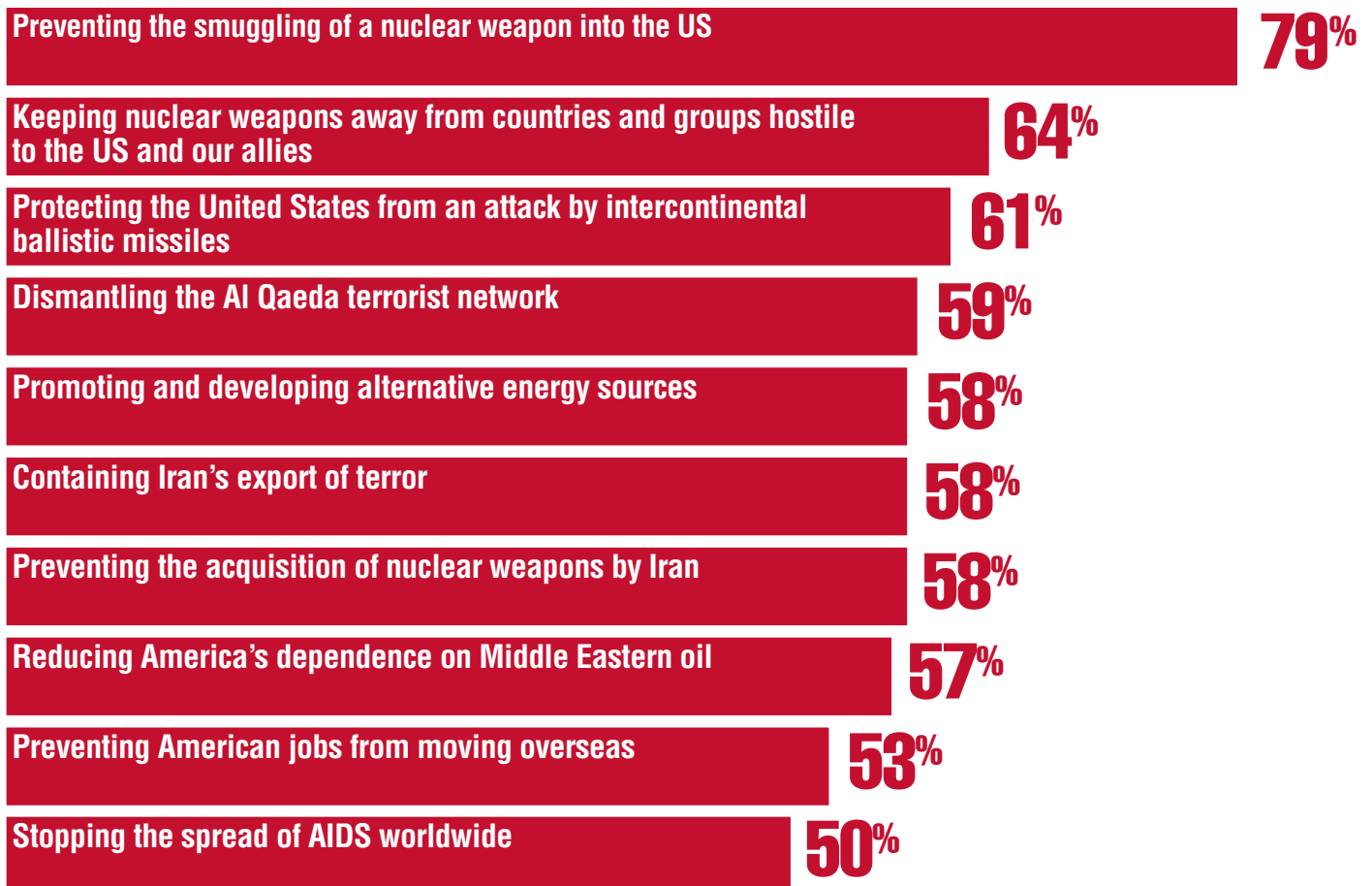
Our national interest requires us to work with governments with which we do not necessarily agree or approve — such as the governments in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and China.

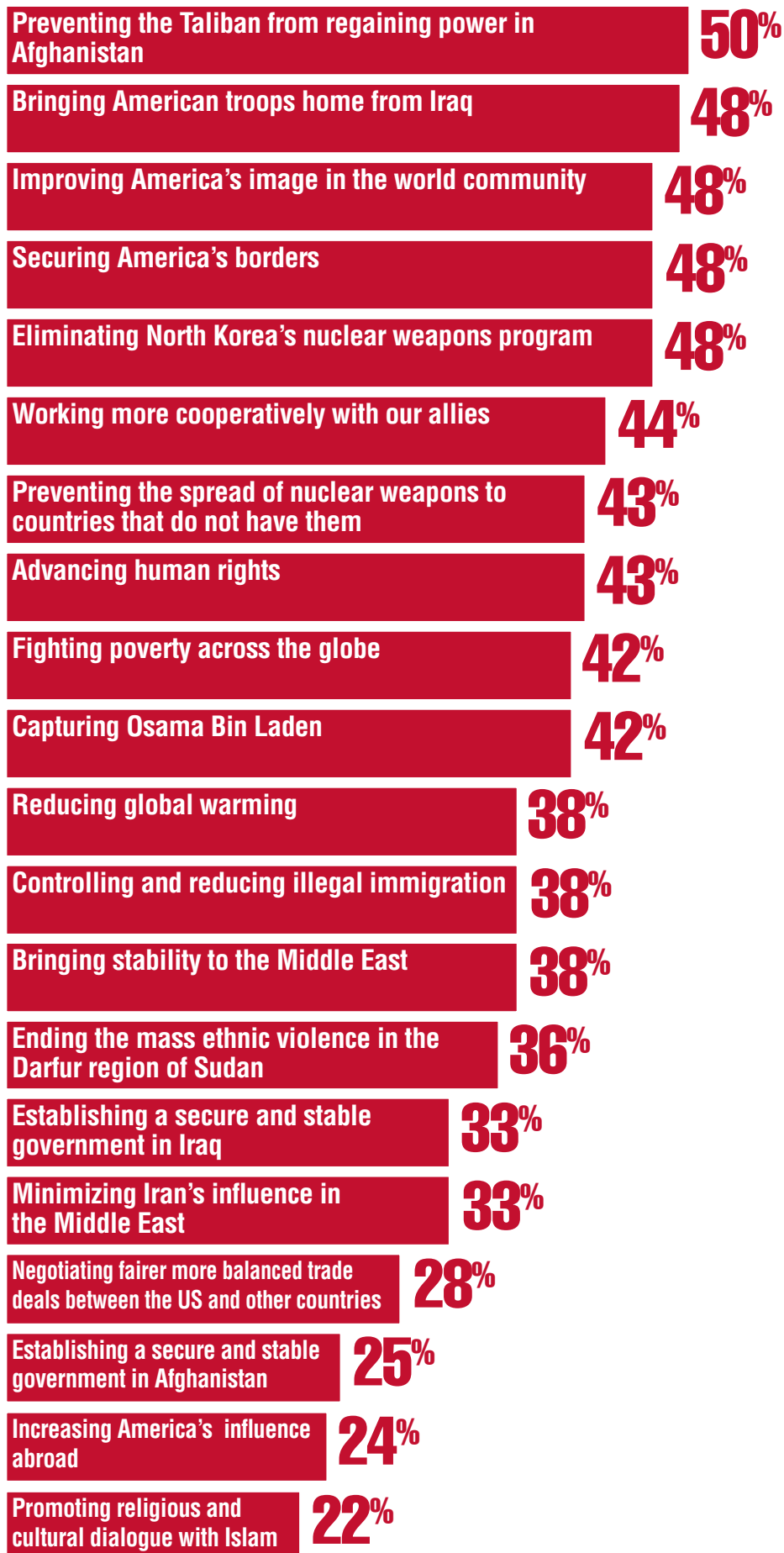


II. NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITIES

AMERICANS PLACE THE HIGHEST NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITY ON STOPPING THE SPREAD AND SMUGGLING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

Q: Which of these U.S. foreign policy and national security goals is an absolute top priority and needs maximum immediate attention during the next twelve months? (Percentage of respondents selecting “10” on a ten point scale, indicating top priority.)





Helping end the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians **22%**

Improving our relations with Latin America **20%**

Improving our relations with Mexico **19%**

Spreading Democracy throughout the world **19%**

Reducing America's commitments abroad **19%**

Preventing weak states from failing **15%**

Q: Which one of the following best describes your view of Iran today?

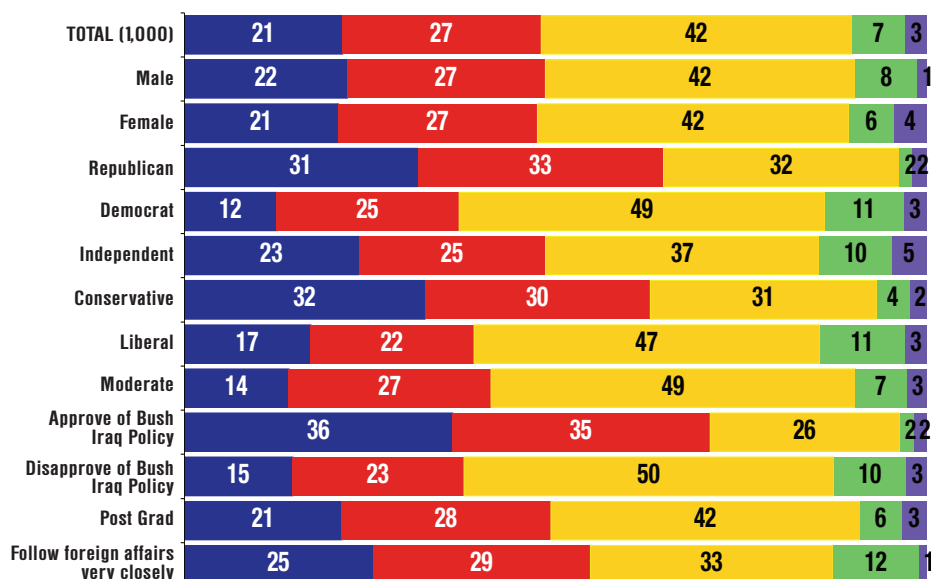
Iran is an immediate security threat to the United States

Iran is a threat in the near future

Iran is a potential threat further down the road

Iran is no threat at all

(don't know/refuse)



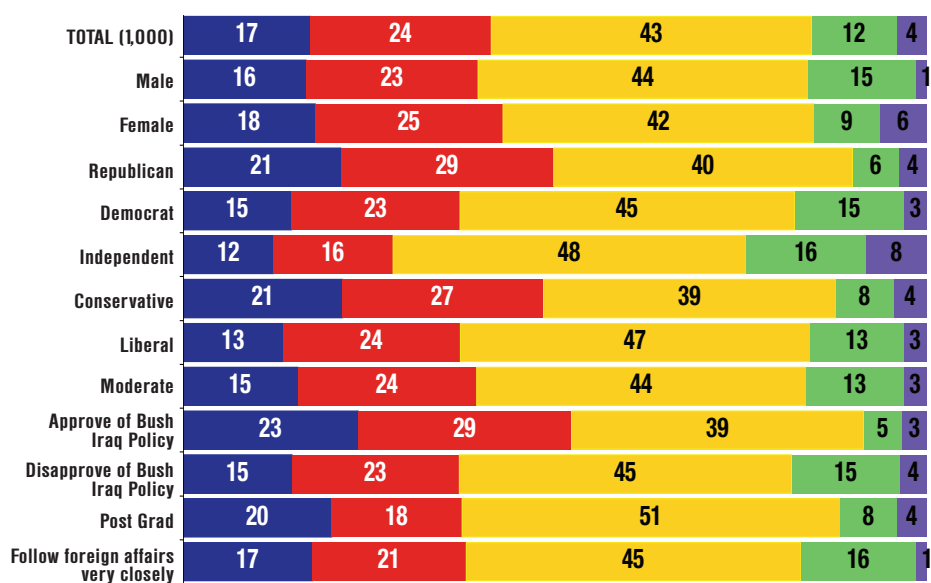
Q: Which one of the following best describes your view of North Korea today?

North Korea is an immediate security threat to the United States

North Korea is a threat in the near future

North Korea is a potential threat further down the road

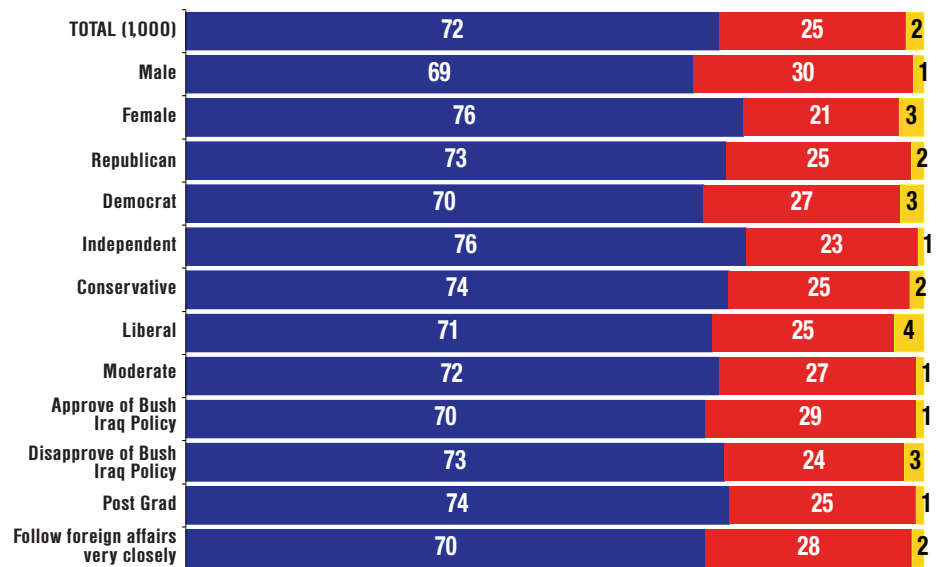
North Korea is no threat at all



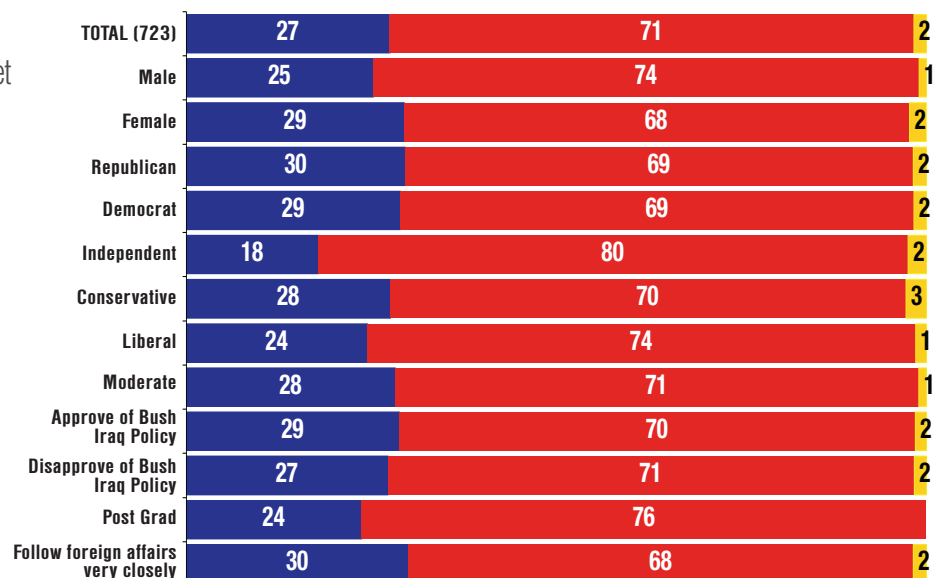
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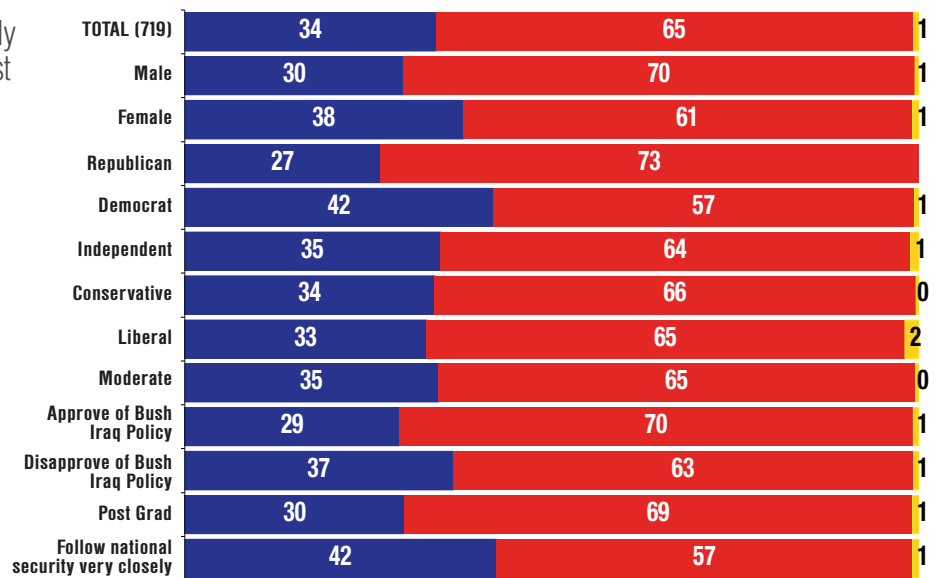
Q: In your opinion, do you believe that during the next two years a terrorist attack against the U.S. mainland is **likely**, or **unlikely**?
(don't know/refuse)



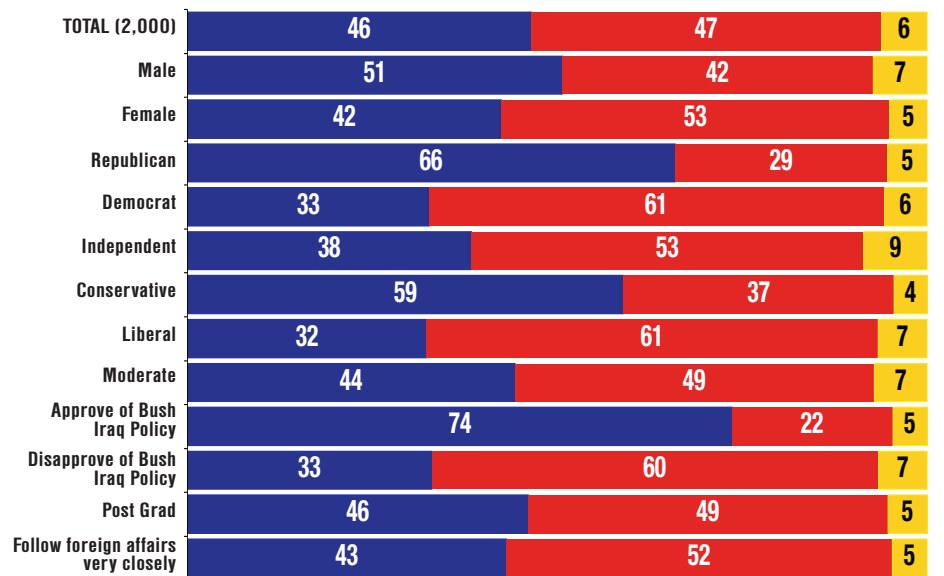
Q: Do you believe that your city or community is **likely** to be the target of a terrorist attack, or **unlikely**?



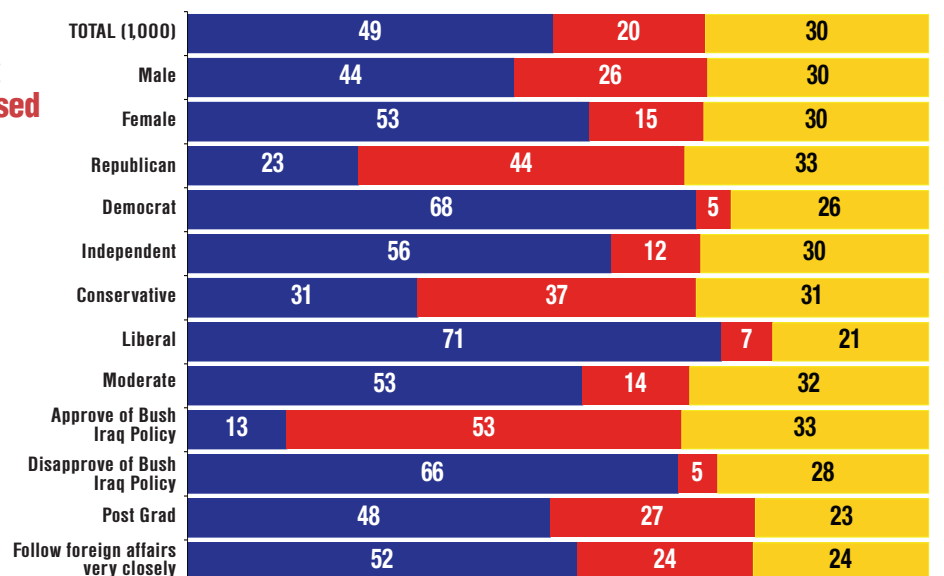
Q: Do you worry that you or your family is likely to be the victim of a terrorist attack? And would that be worry a **great deal/fair amount** or **not very much/none**?



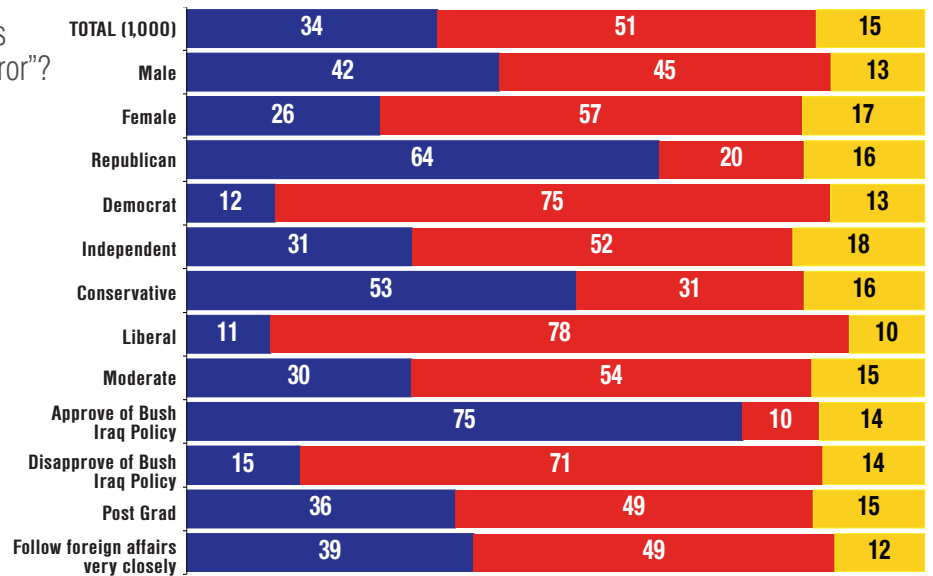
Q: In general, when thinking about terrorism and issues related to national security, do you feel safer now than you did five years ago? And would that be **more safe**, or **less safe**?



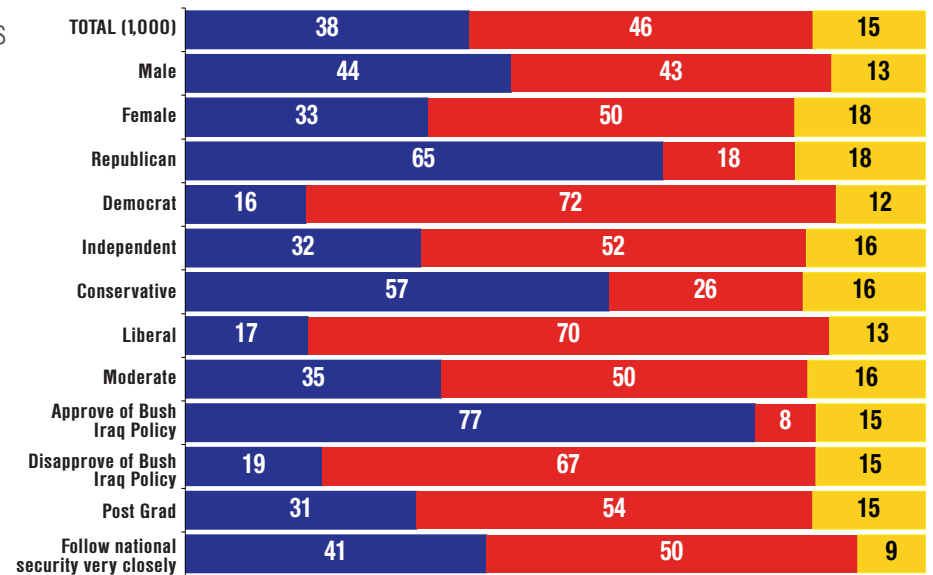
Q: Do you believe the War in Iraq has **increased the risk** of a terrorist attack against the United States, **decreased the risk**, or **made no difference**?



Q: In your opinion, is the United States **winning** or **losing** the “war on terror”? (don't know/refuse)



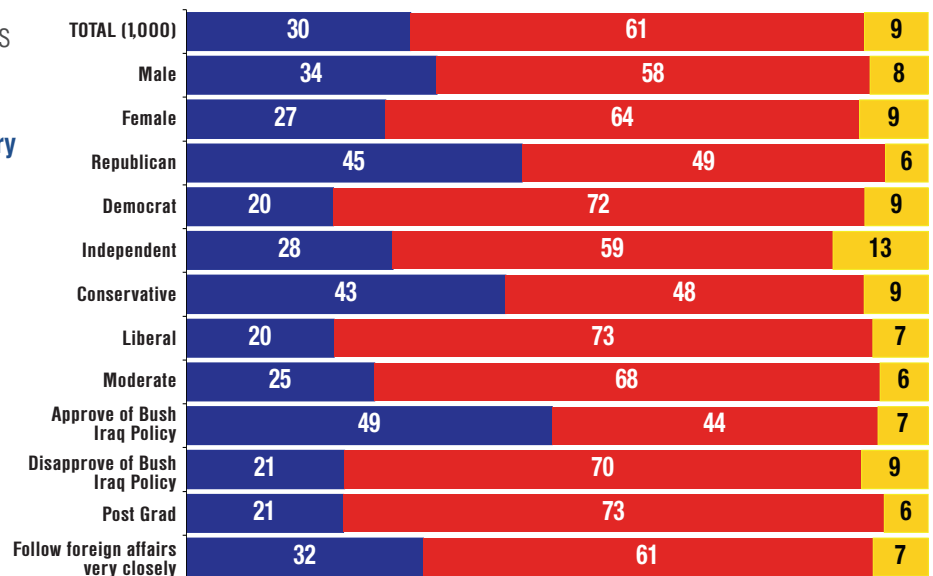
Q: In your opinion, is the United States **winning** or **losing** the “campaign against terrorism”?



Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

The war on terror requires a strong military response. It will be won primarily through the aggressive use of military force to attack and destroy the terrorists and their supporters, wherever they may be.

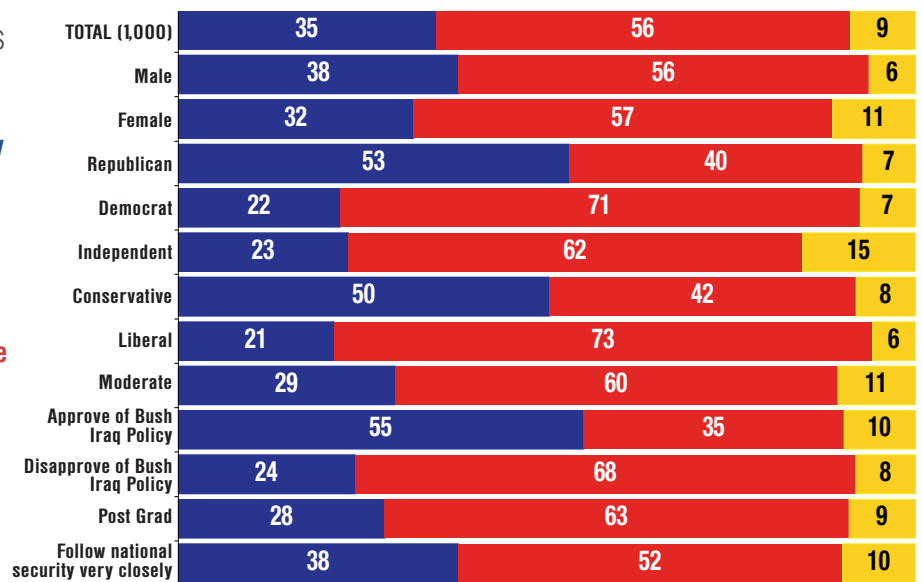
The war on terror will be won primarily through the aggressive use of intelligence and law enforcement. The use of military force should be used in a limited and precise way.



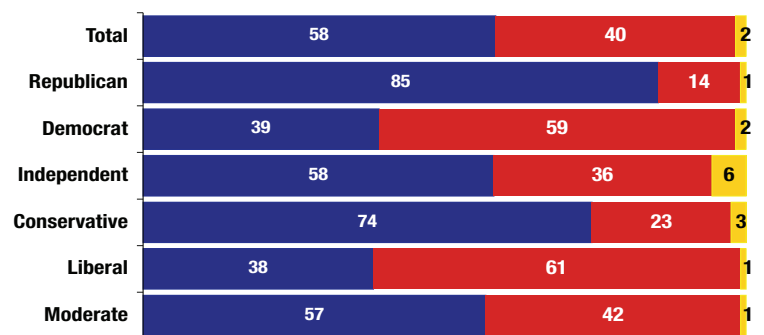
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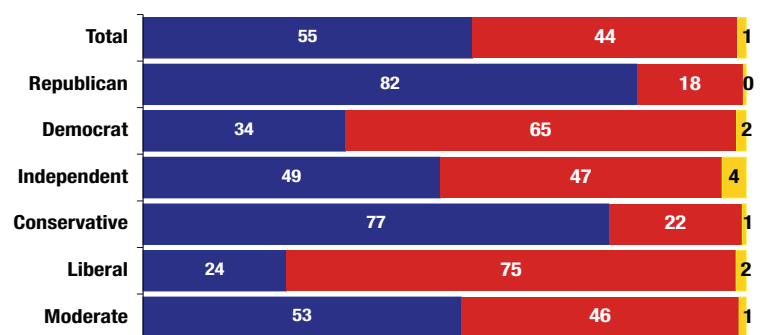
The war on terror will never be won until we win the battle for people throughout the Muslim world. The war on terror is a battle of ideas.



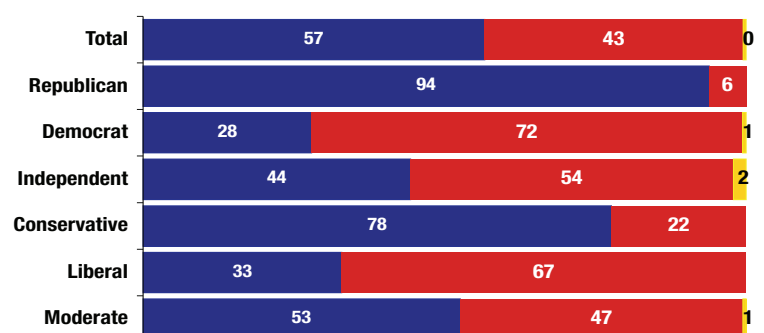
Q: How successful has the U.S. been in dismantling Osama Bin Laden's terrorist network. Would you say the US has been **successful**, or **not successful**? (500 respondents)



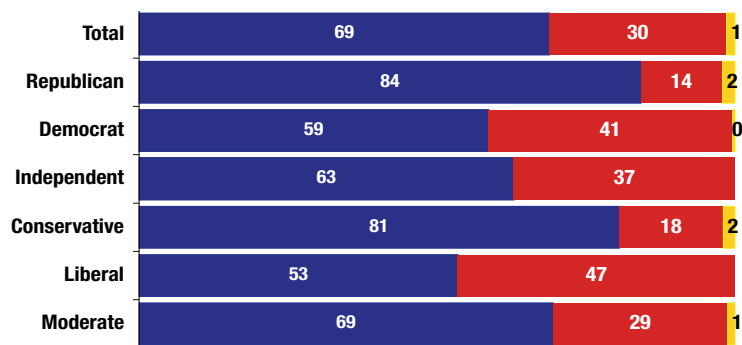
Q: How successful has the Bush Administration been in dismantling Osama Bin Laden's terrorist network. Would you say the Bush Administration has **been successful**, or **not successful**? (500 respondents)



Q: How much confidence do you have in the Bush Administration to protect America from future terrorist attacks: a **great deal/fair amount**, or not **very much/none** at all? (500 respondents)



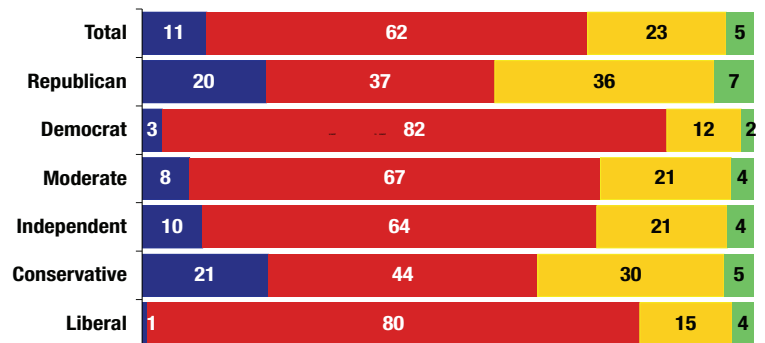
Q: How much confidence do you have in the U.S. government to protect America from future terrorist attacks: a **great deal/fair amount**, or **not very much/none** at all? (500 respondents)



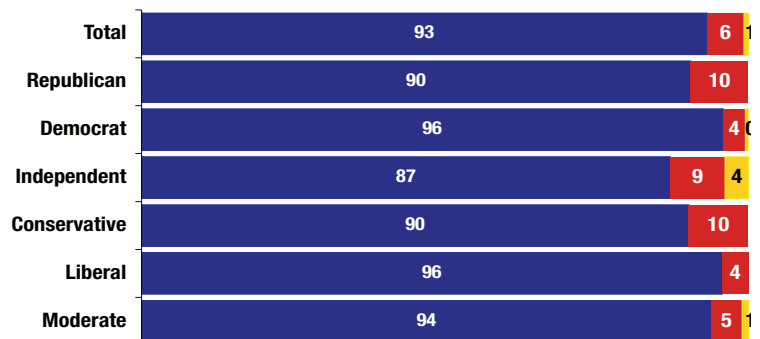
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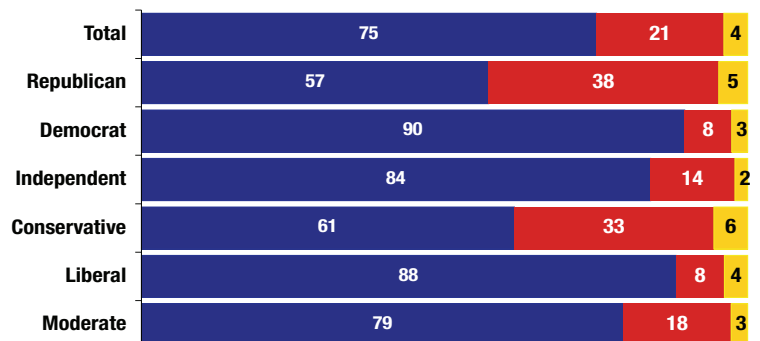
Q: In your opinion, has America's moral authority in the world generally **improved** since President Bush took office, **declined** since Bush took office, or has it mostly **stayed the same**?
(don't know/refuse)
(500 respondents)



Q: How serious a problem is the decline of America's moral authority in the world - is it **serious**, or **not serious**?
(don't know/refuse)
(500 respondents)



Q: Has the war in Iraq **damaged** America's moral authority in the world, or **not damaged** it?
(500 respondents)



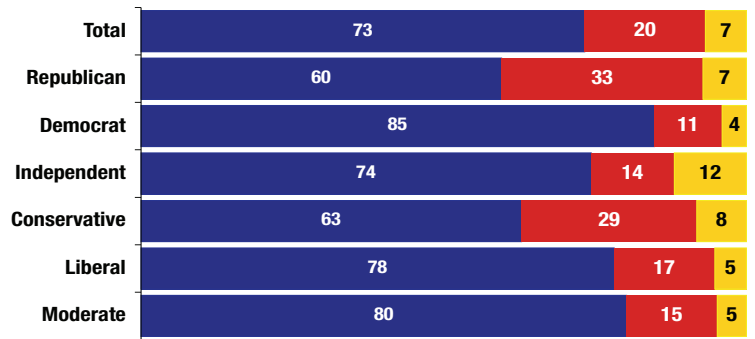
Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

America's moral authority in the world has declined significantly making it much harder to persuade our allies to work with us.

Our allies and people around the world still see America as the indispensable nation and they are more than willing to follow our lead on the key issues facing the world.

(don't know/refuse)

(500 respondents)

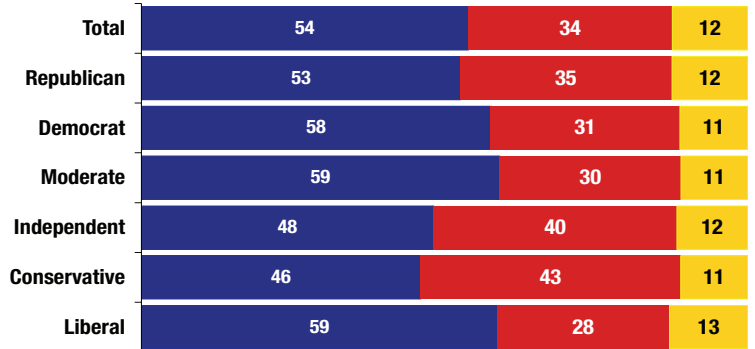


Q: Which of the following do you agree with more?

The United States should balance our military might with moral authority. During the Cold War, the U.S. was a beacon of democracy and freedom throughout the world.

America will never be more secure if we obsess about our image in the world. The U.S. is in a unique and dangerous position because our enemy is different than any we have ever faced.

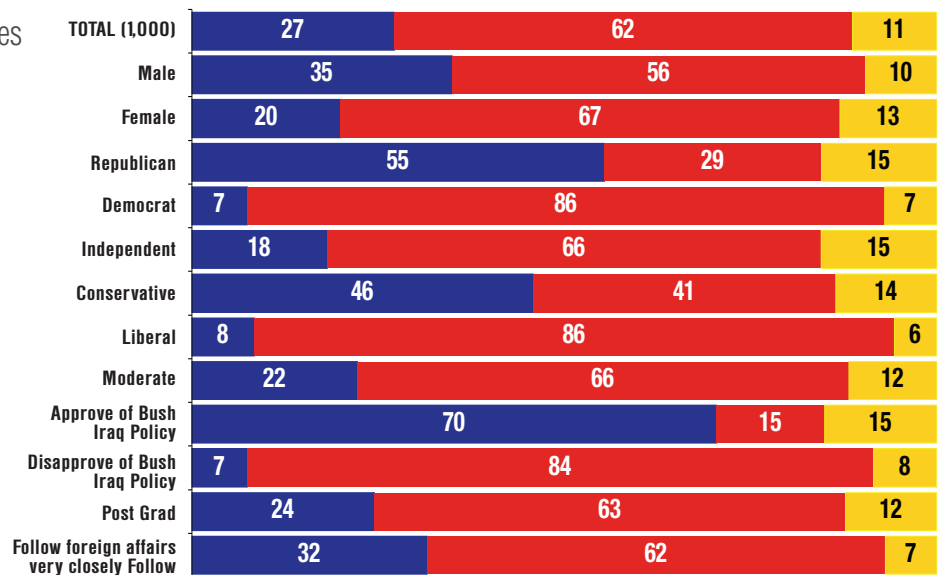
(500 respondents)



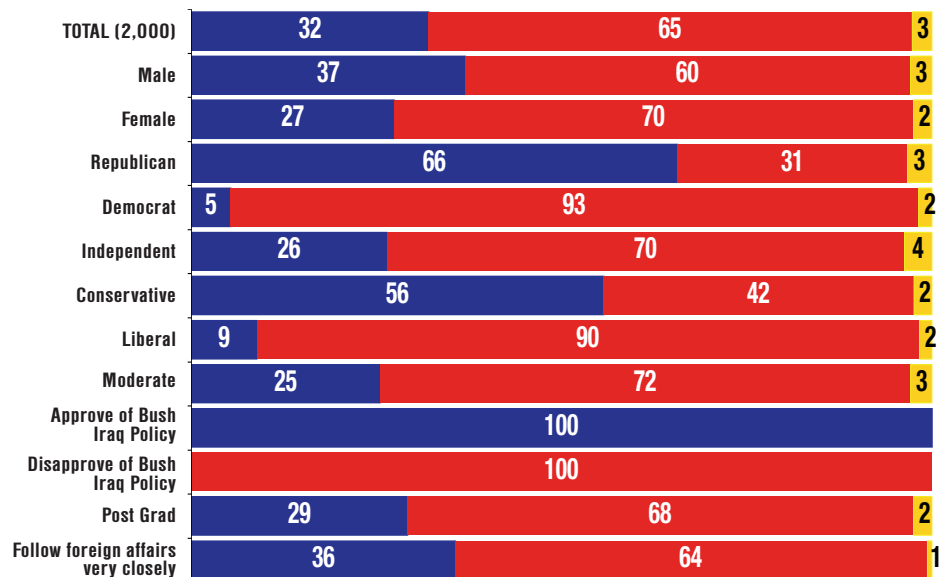
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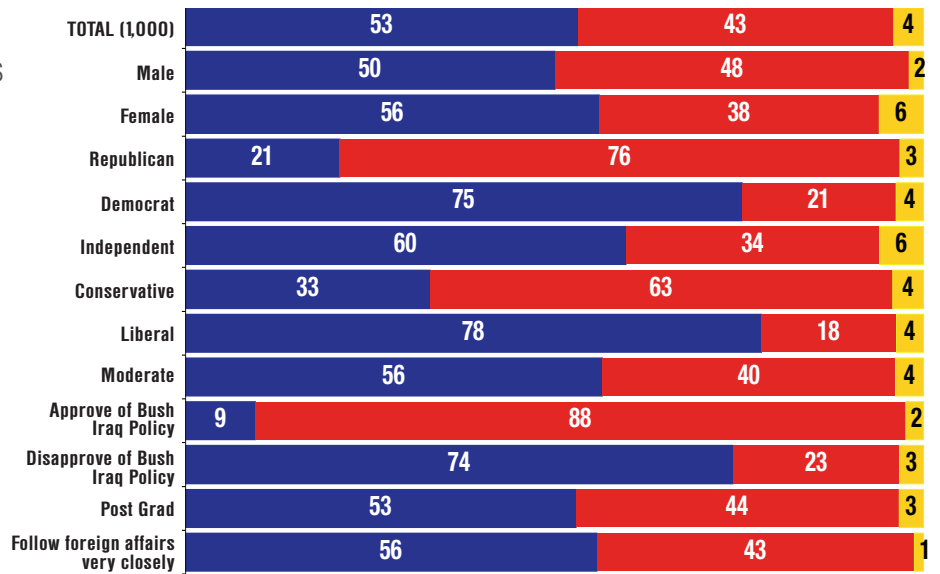
Q: In your opinion is the United States **winning** or **losing** the war in Iraq? (don't know/refuse)



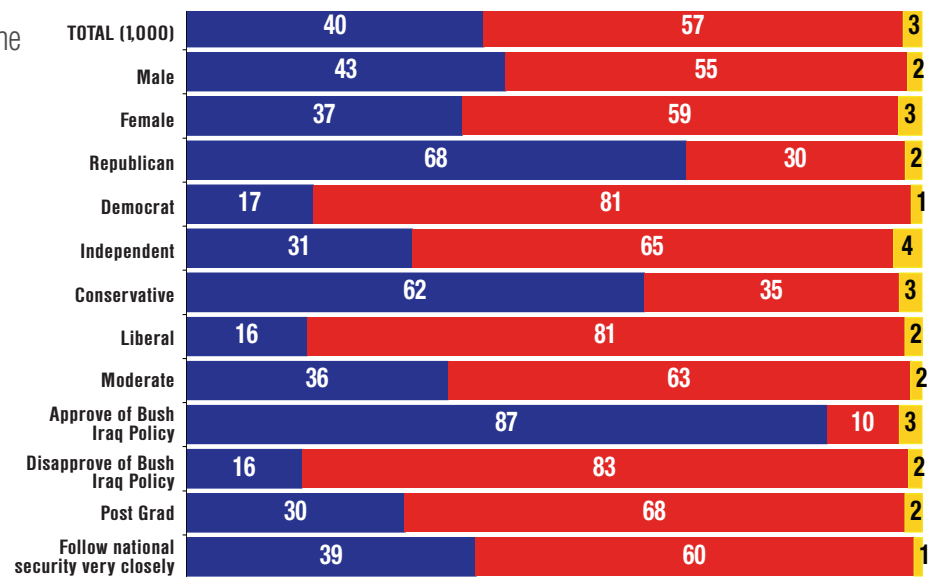
Q: Do you **approve** or **disapprove** of the way George W. Bush is handling the war in Iraq?



Q: Do you think the United States made a **mistake** in sending troops to Iraq, or **not**?



Q: All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Iraq was **worth fighting** or **not worth fighting**?



Q: Considering all of the proposals about Iraq, there appear to be four basic options. Which of the following is closest to your view?

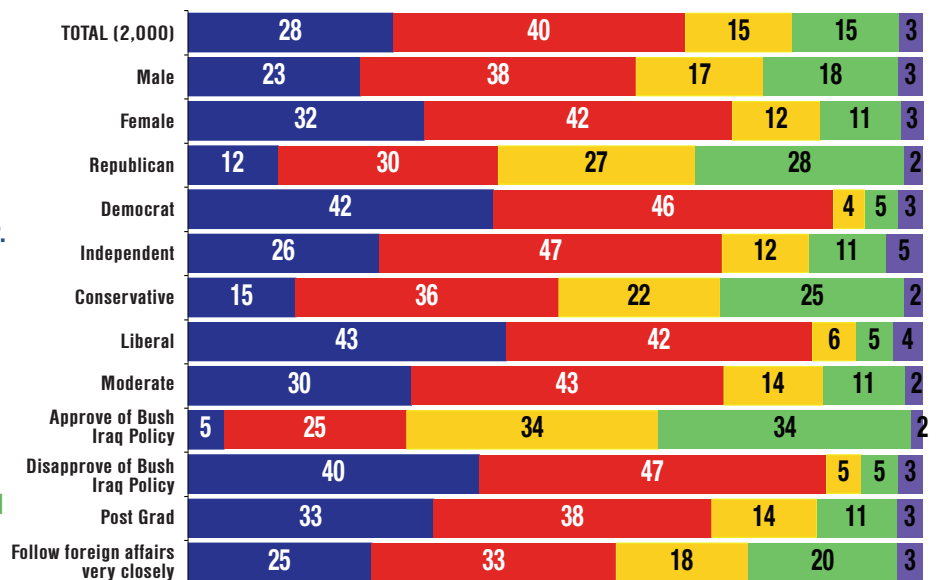
We should set a timetable to remove all American troops from Iraq within one year.

We should remove our troops as quickly as possible, but we cannot leave entirely until Iraq has achieved a basic level of security and stability.

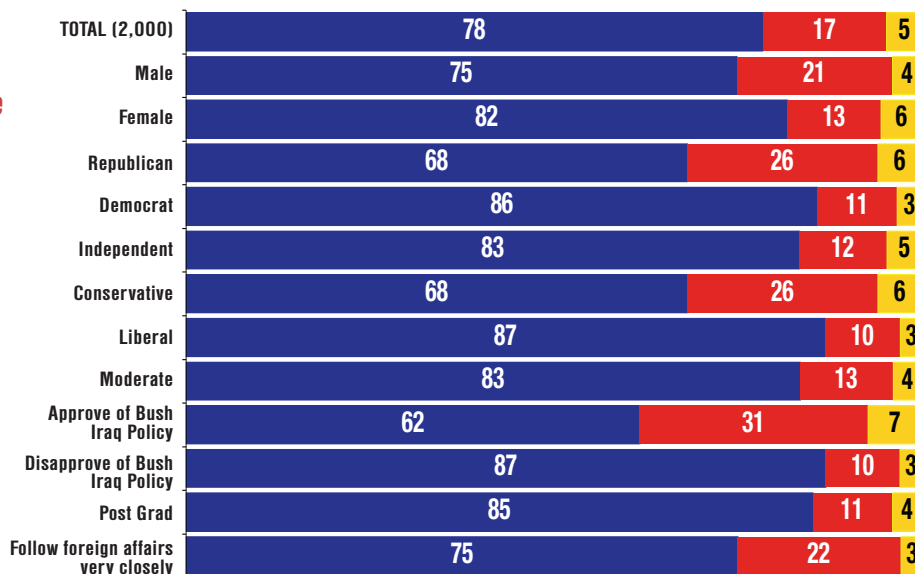
We should keep our troops in Iraq until we get the job done.

We should increase our troop level in Iraq in order to get the job done.

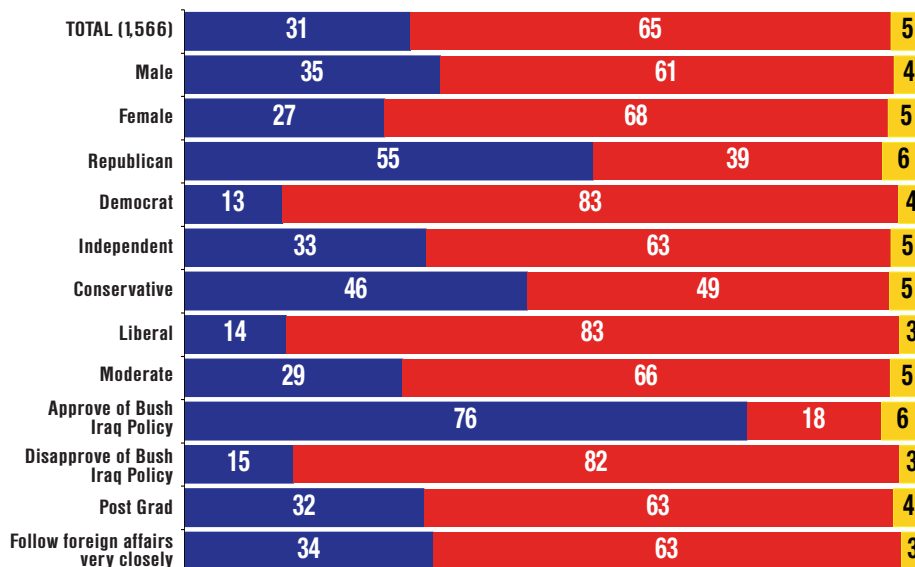
(don't know/refuse)



Q: Based on what you have heard or read, do you think Iraq is in a **state of civil war** or is **not in a state of civil war** right now? **(don't know/refuse)**



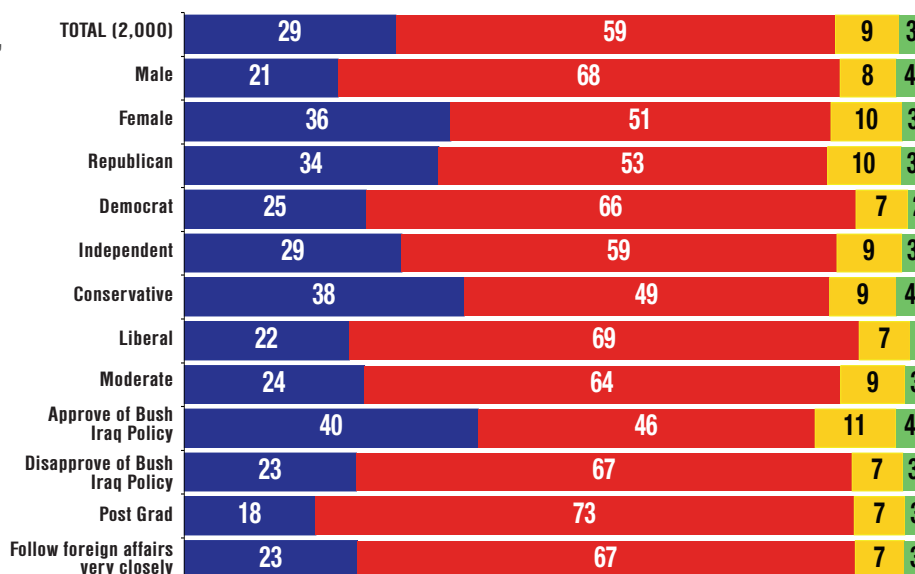
Q: Do you believe American troops should continue fighting in Iraq in the midst of a civil war, **yes** or **no**?



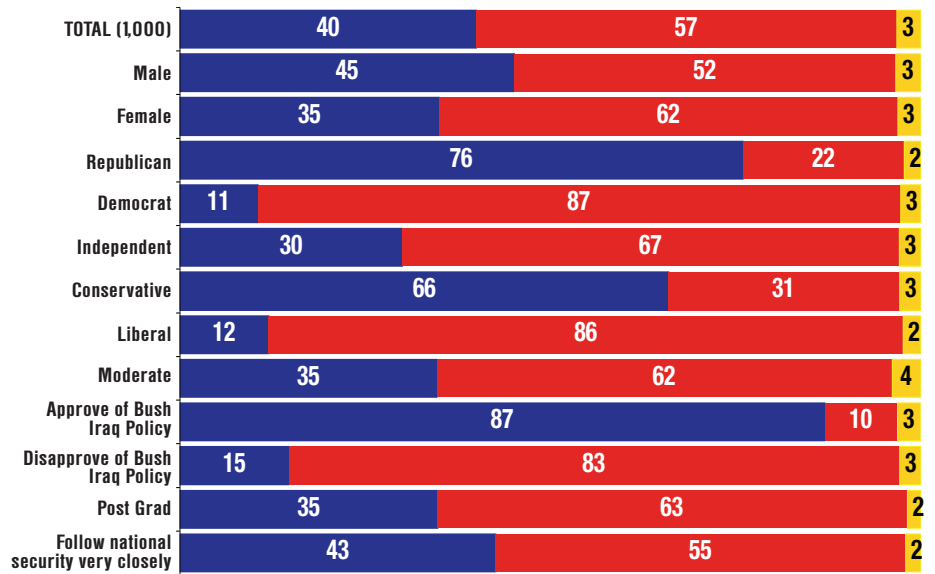
Q: Do you think that Saddam Hussein, the former Iraqi leader, **was personally involved** in the September 11th terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, **or not involved**?

Unsure

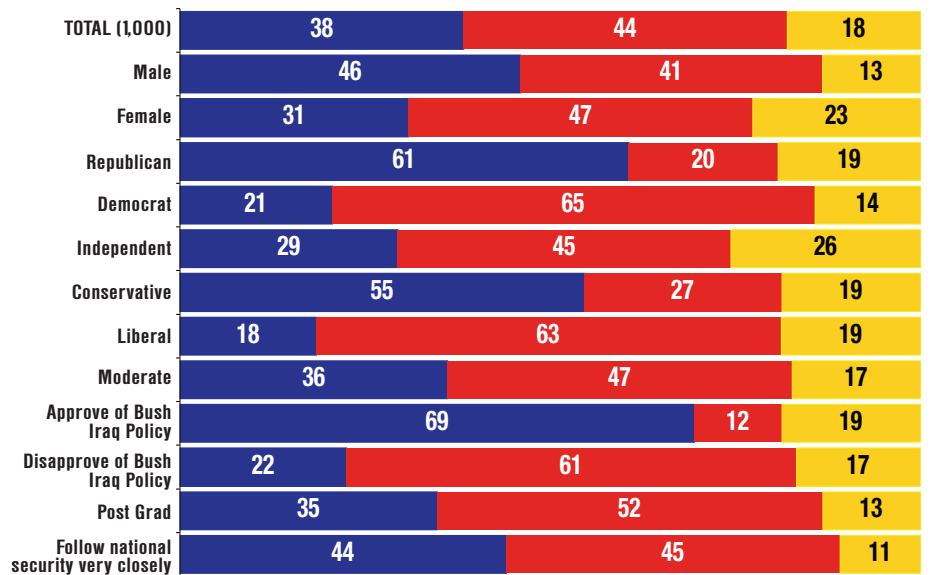
(don't know/refuse)



Q: Do you believe that President Bush is **telling the American people the truth** about the state of progress in Iraq, or **not telling the truth?** (don't know/refuse)



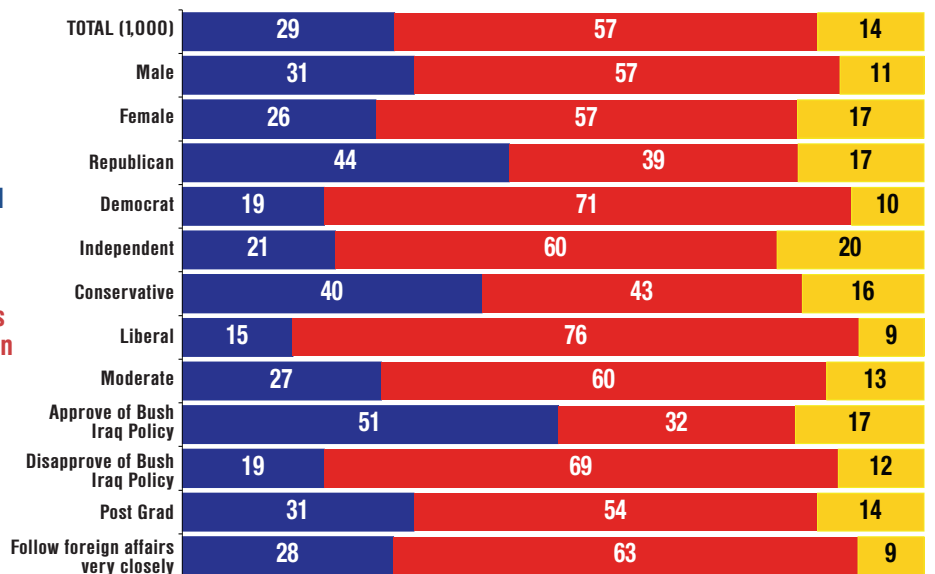
Q: In your opinion is the United States **winning** or **losing** the war in Afghanistan?



Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

We have largely succeeded in our mission in Afghanistan. Al Qaeda forces have been defeated, the Taliban are out of power and the Afghan people have more freedom.

We are slipping backward in Afghanistan. The Taliban is regaining strength, warlords rule much of the country, and Afghan heroin production is at its highest levels in a decade.



Q: If the level of violence continues to escalate in Afghanistan and threatens to spin out of control, which of the following options is closest to your view?

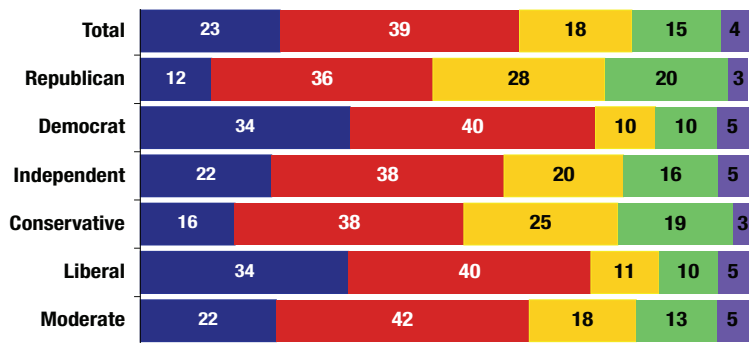
We should set a timetable to remove all American troops from Afghanistan within one year.

We should remove our troops as quickly as possible, but we cannot leave entirely until Afghanistan has achieved a basic level of security and stability.

We should keep our troops in Afghanistan until we get the job done.

We should increase our troop level in Afghanistan in order to get the job done

(don't know/refuse)
(1,000 respondents)



VI. USE OF FORCE

AMERICANS STRONGLY REJECT THE DOCTRINE OF PREEMPTIVE WAR, BUT WOULD FAVOR USING U.S. TROOPS IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS. THEY OPPOSE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAN.

Q: The so-called “preemption strategy” says that the U.S. should attack countries as soon as we perceive them to be threats. Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

Supporters of preemption say we should be willing to attack a foreign country if we believe it is a threat to U.S. national security—particularly if it seeks weapons of mass destruction—even if an attack against the U.S. is not imminent.

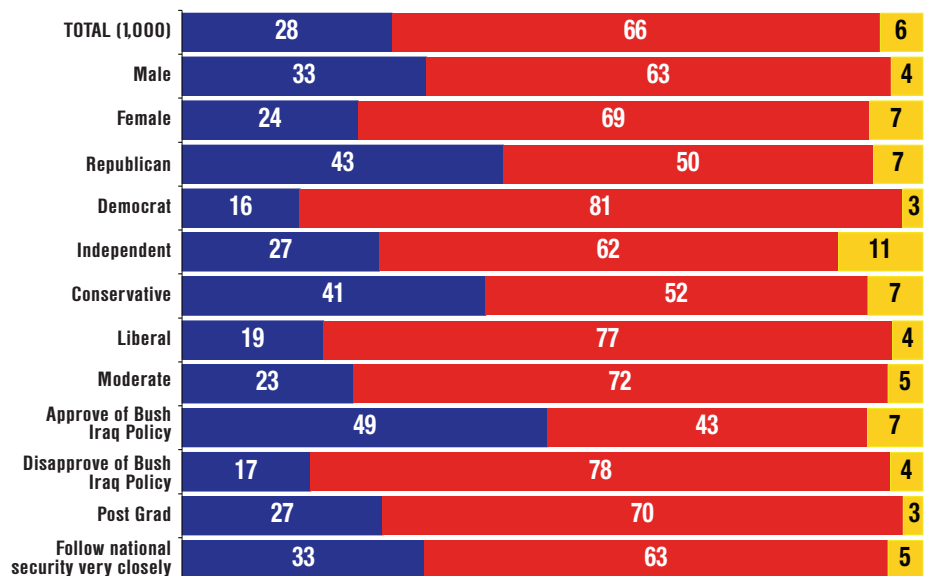
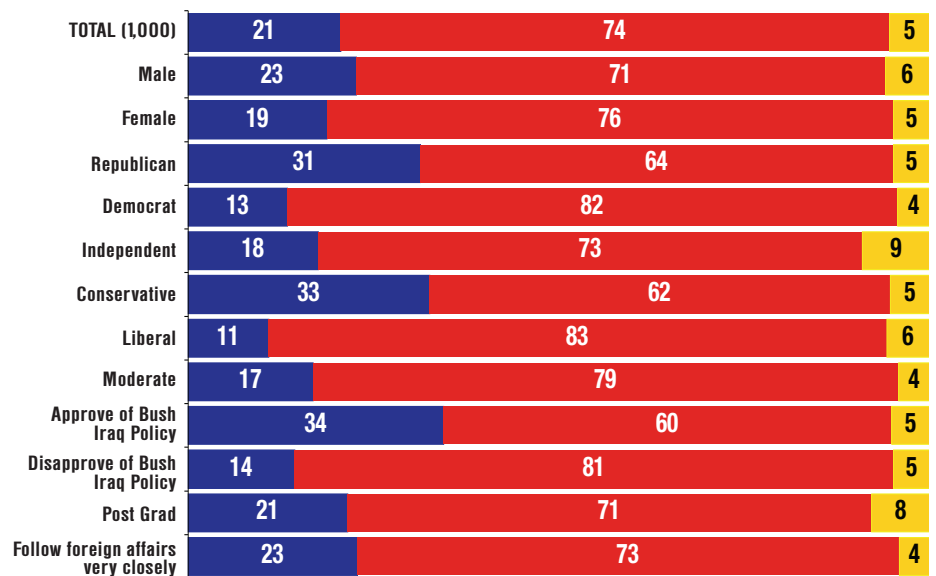
Opponents of preemption say we should only attack a foreign country if it presents a clear and immediate threat to U.S. national security. Since intelligence can be flawed, perceived threats can turn out to be overblown. It is dangerous and shortsighted to rush to war.

(don't know/refuse)

Q: Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

Supporters of preemption say we should be willing to attack a foreign country if we believe it is a threat to U.S. national security—particularly if it seeks weapons of mass destruction—even if an attack against the U.S. is not imminent. The best defense is a good offense.

Opponents of preemption say we should only attack a foreign country if it presents a clear and immediate threat to U.S. national security. Since intelligence can be flawed, perceived threats can turn out to be overblown. It is dangerous and shortsighted to rush to war. The quagmire of the Iraq War—and the false intelligence that led us into the war—is a stark reminder of the dangers of preemption.



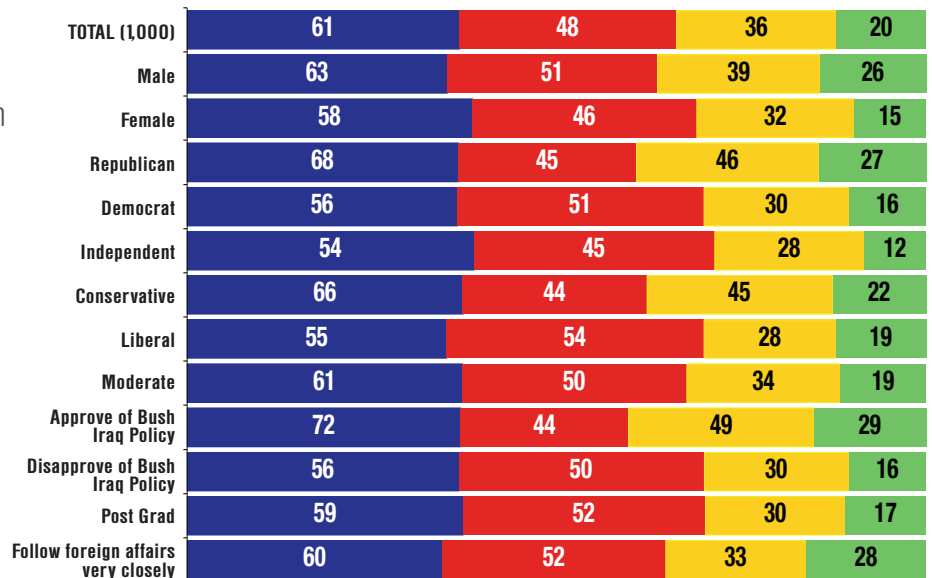
Q: Under which of the following circumstances—if they were to occur—would you favor using American troops to resolve the situation?

Terrorists are planning an attack on American embassies abroad

American troops are needed in a NATO peacekeeping mission

A hostile nation is close to developing nuclear weapons

China has invaded Taiwan



Q: Under which of the following circumstances—if they were to occur—would you favor using American troops to resolve the situation?

Pakistan, a nation with nuclear weapons, is overthrown by fundamentalists sympathetic to Al Qaeda

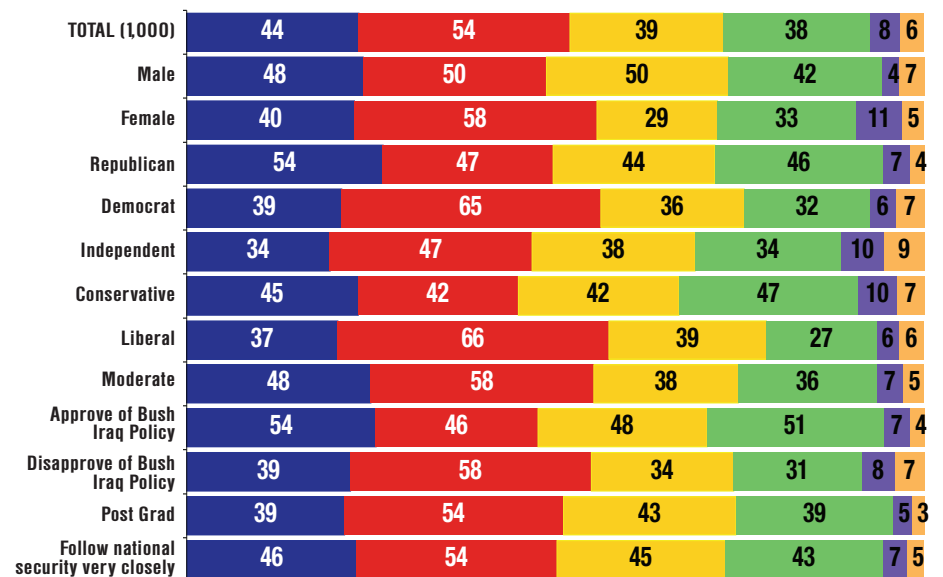
American troops are needed in a UN peacekeeping mission

North Korea attacks South Korea

Arab countries have invaded Israel

(don't know/refuse)

(none of the above)



Q: Which one of the following best describes your view of Iran today?

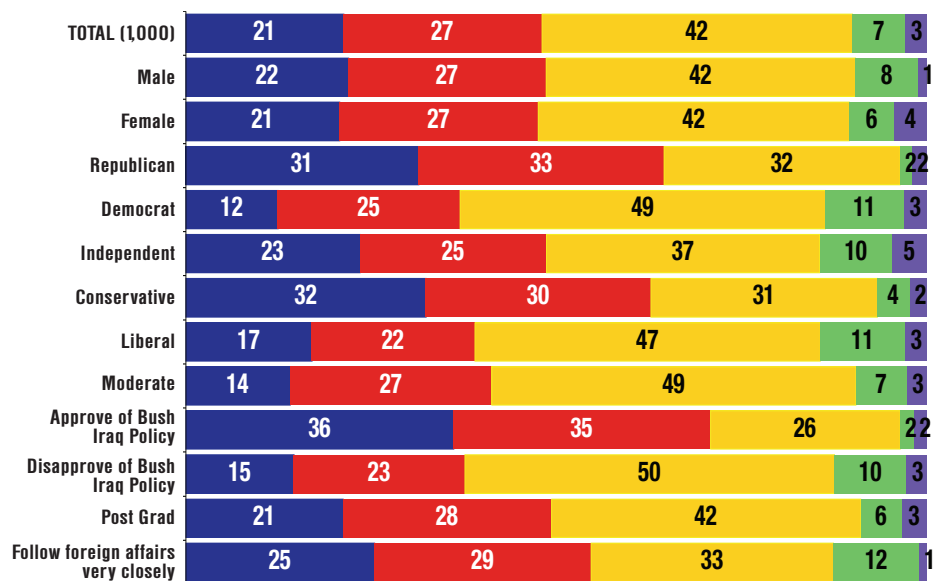
Iran is an immediate security threat to the United States

Iran is a threat in the near future

Iran is a potential threat further down the road

Iran is no threat at all

(don't know/refuse)



Q: What should the United States do to get Iran to end its uranium enrichment program?

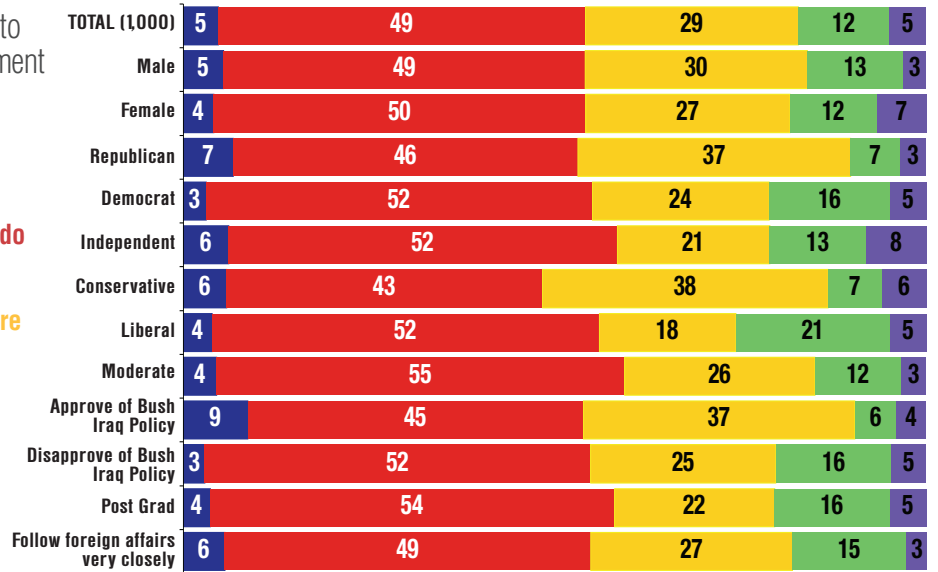
Take military action against Iran now

Use economic and diplomatic efforts but do not take military action now

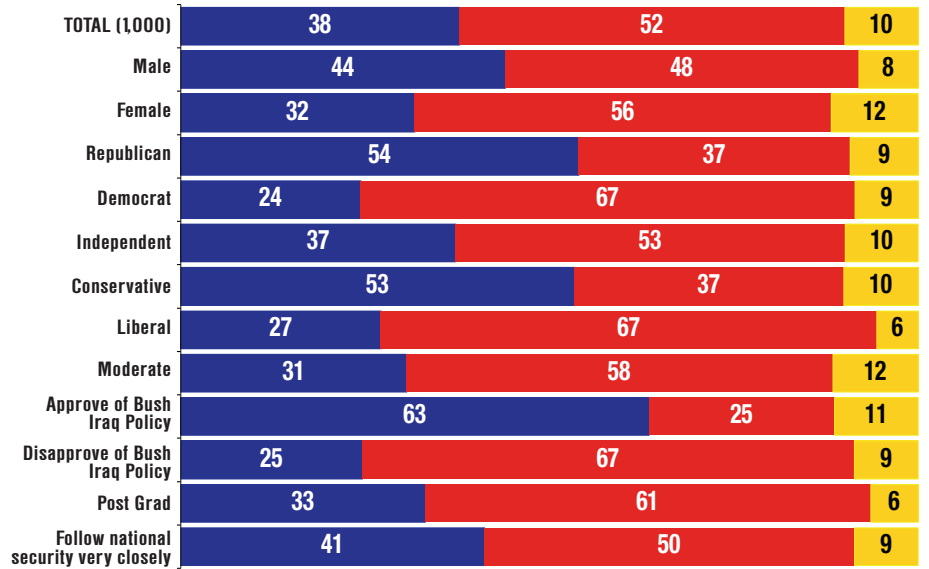
Prepare to take military action in the future should current efforts fail

Do not take military action against Iran

(don't know/refuse)



Q: Suppose all economic and diplomatic efforts fail to get Iran to shut down its nuclear enrichment program. If that happens, would you **support** or **oppose** taking military action against Iran?
(don't know/refuse)



Q: Which one of the following best describes your view of North Korea today?

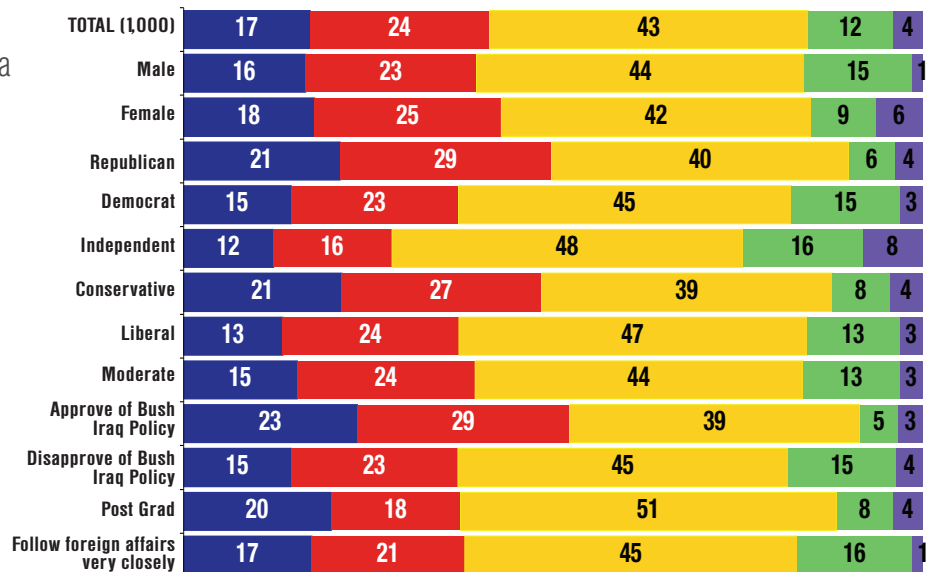
North Korea is an immediate security threat to the United States

North Korea is a threat in the near future

North Korea is a potential threat further down the road

North Korea is no threat at all

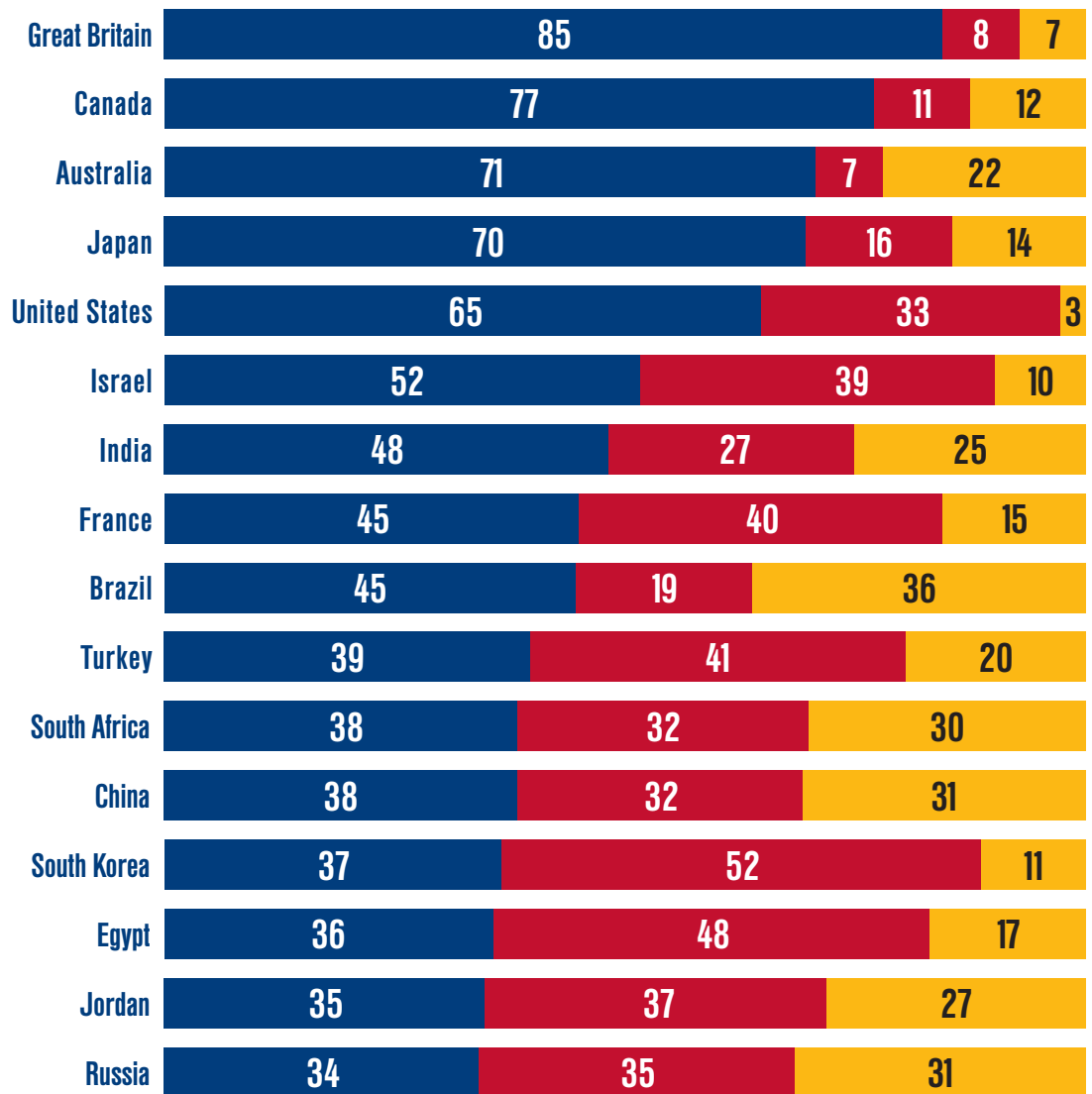
(don't know/refuse)

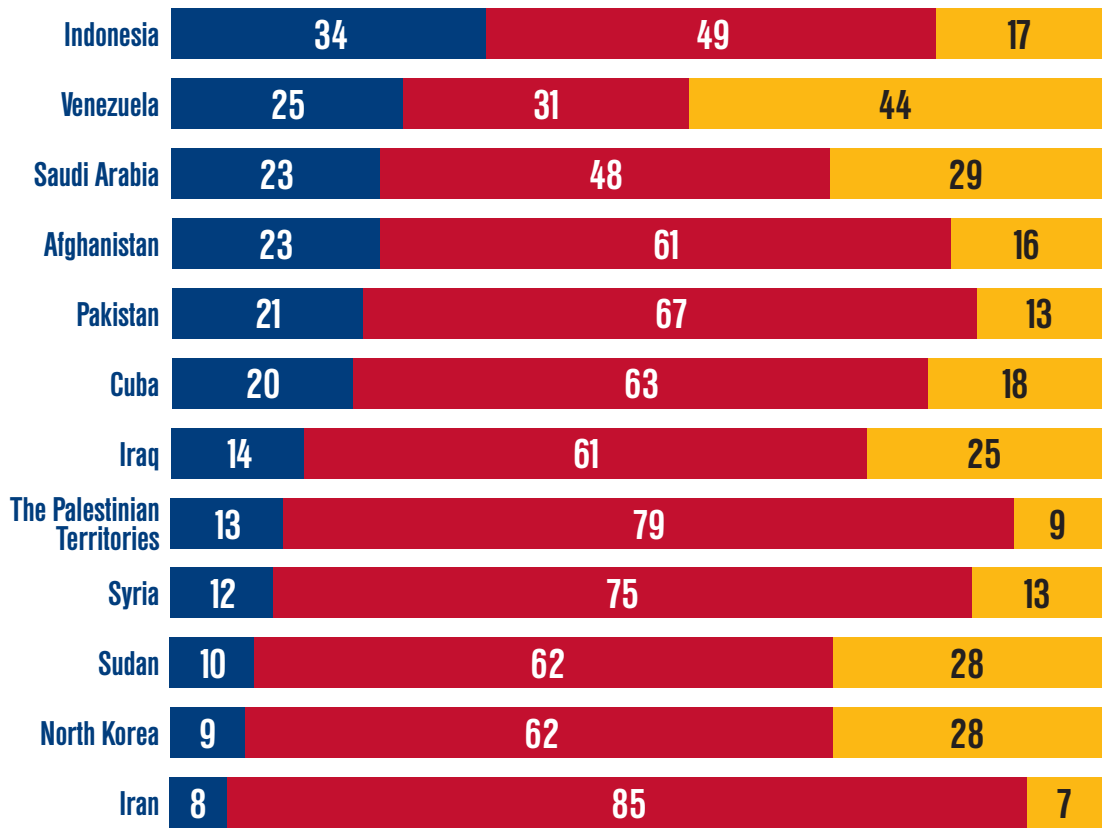


VII. ALLIES & ADVERSARIES

AMERICANS ASSIGN THE MOST POSITIVE ROLES IN WORLD AFFAIRS TO GREAT BRITAIN, CANADA, AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN. THEY ASSIGN EXTREMELY NEGATIVE ROLES TO IRAN, NORTH KOREA, SYRIA AND CUBA.

Q: Overall, do you believe that these countries are playing a **positive** role in world affairs or a **negative** role in world Affairs? (**don't know/refuse**)
(500 respondents)



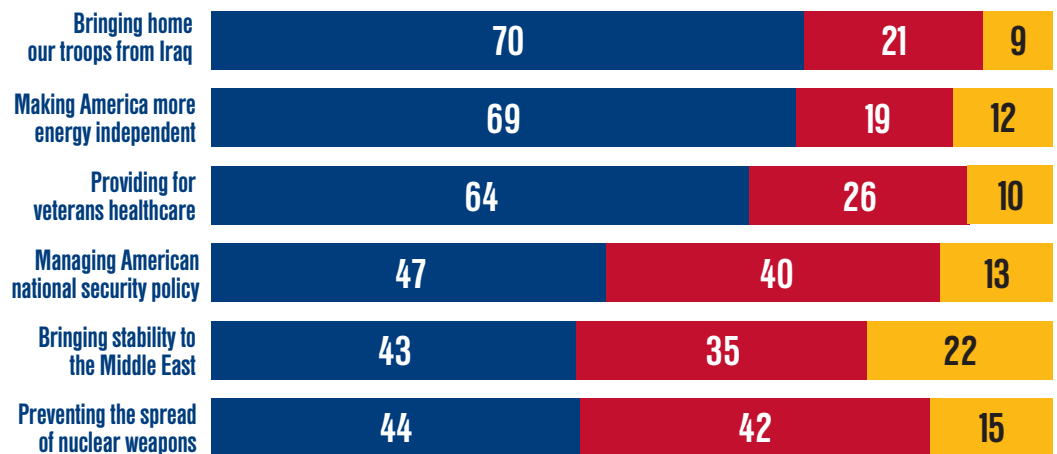


VIII. DEMOCRATIC & REPUBLICAN STRENGTHS

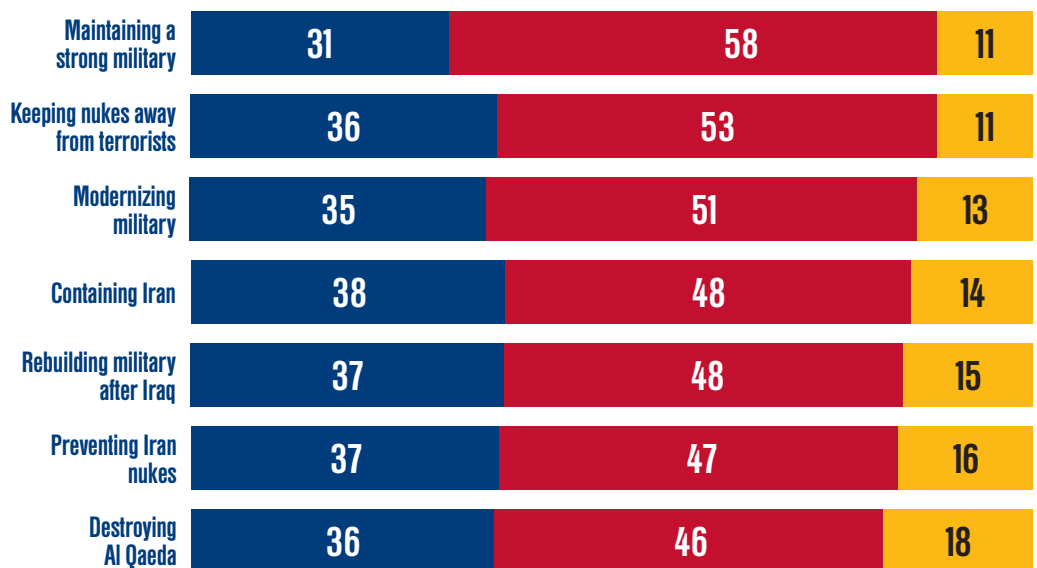
AMERICANS FAVOR DEMOCRATS TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ AND TO MANAGE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY. THEY FAVOR REPUBLICANS TO MANAGE THE MILITARY, FIGHT TERRORISM AND KEEP NUCLEAR WEAPONS OUT OF TERRORIST HANDS.

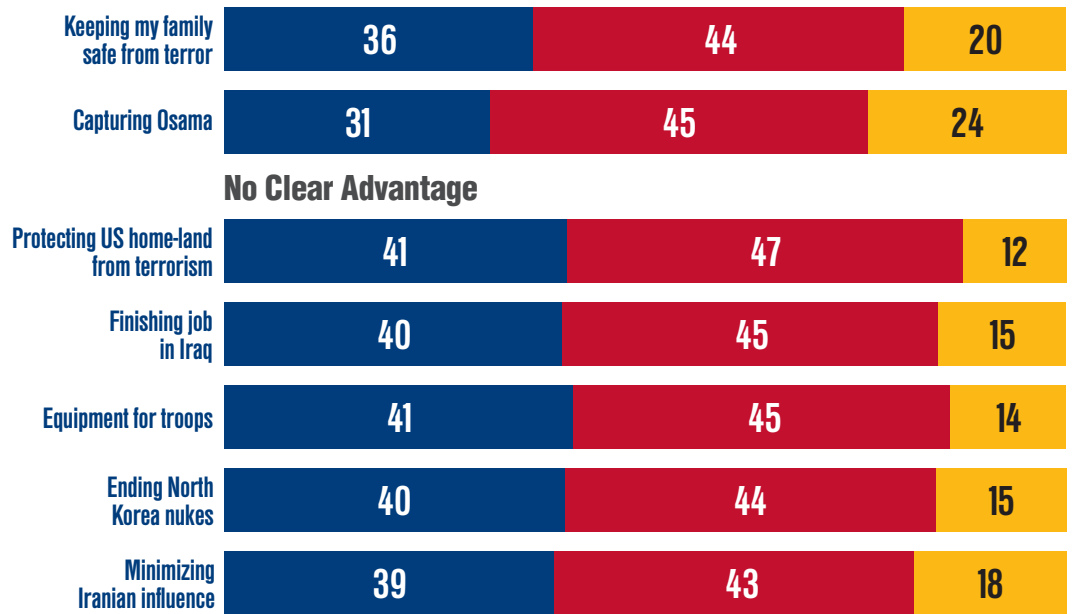
Q: Which party do you trust to do a better job in these areas, **Democrats** or **Republicans**?
(don't know/refuse)
(500 respondents)

Democratic Advantages

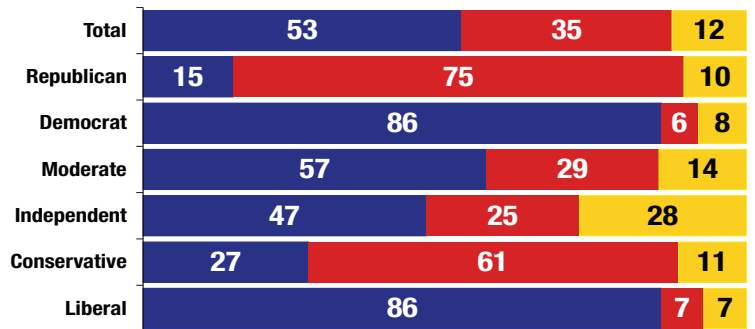


Republican Advantages

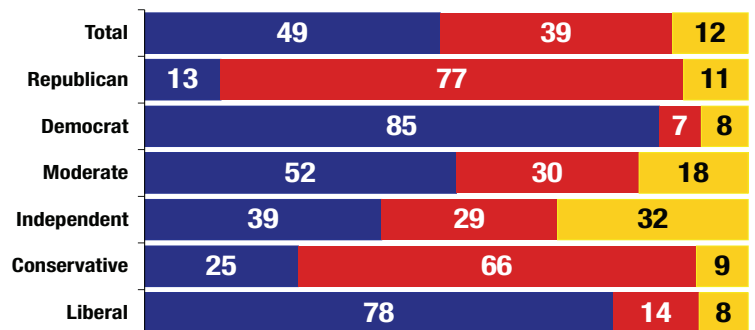




Q: Who do you want to have more influence over America's policy in Iraq: **President Bush** or the **Democrats in Congress**? (don't know/refuse)
(1,000 respondents)



Q: Who do you want to have more influence over issues related to terrorism: **President Bush** or the **Democrats in Congress**?
(1,000 respondents)





American Security Project

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