

Sept. 16, 2001 — Study #462

◆◆◆◆ LOS ANGELES TIMES® POLL ALERT ◆◆◆◆

HOW THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED

The Times Poll contacted 1,561 Americans nationwide by telephone Thursday and Friday. Telephone numbers were chosen from a list of all exchanges in the nation. Random-digit dialing techniques were used so that listed and unlisted numbers could be contacted. The entire sample was weighted slightly to conform with census figures for sex, race, age, education and region. The margin of sampling error for the entire sample is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For certain subgroups the error margin may be somewhat higher. Poll results can also be affected by other factors such as question wording and the order in which questions are presented.

NOTES

All answer frequencies are given in percentages. Totals may exceed 100% in questions where more than one response was accepted. Totals may be less than 100% where some answer categories are not shown. The wording of some questions has been abridged.

SELECTED RESULTS FROM THE TIMES POLL NATIONAL SURVEY September 13–14, 2001

(A full summary of results will be available at a later date through the Los Angeles Times Poll)

Results shown are for ALL U.S. ADULTS unless otherwise indicated.

Q1: Do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction or are they seriously off on the wrong track?

Right direction	60
Wrong track	28
Don't know	12

Q2: Do you think we are in an economic recession, or not? (IF YES) Do you think we are in a mild recession, or a moderate recession or a serious recession?

No recession	41
Recession (Net)	51
Mild	23
Moderate	19
Serious	9
Don't know	8

Q3: Generally speaking, do you think the nation's economy these days is doing very well, or fairly well, or fairly badly, or very badly?

Well (Net)	71
Very well	6
Fairly well	65
Badly (Net)	25
Fairly badly	19
Very badly	6
Don't know	4

Q4: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/ disapprove) somewhat?

Approve (Net)	77
Approve strongly	49
Approve somewhat	28
Disapprove (Net)	17
Disapprove somewhat	8
Disapprove strongly	9
Don't know	6

Q5: Do you approve or disapprove of the United States' attempt to bring peace to the Middle East by serving as mediator between Israel and the Palestinians? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

Approve (Net)	62
Approve strongly	36
Approve somewhat	26
Disapprove (Net)	26
Disapprove somewhat	13
Disapprove strongly	13
Don't know	12

Thinking now about recent events...

Q6: How serious a problem is terrorism in the United States today—very serious, only somewhat serious or hardly serious at all?

Serious (Net)	99
Very serious	87
Somewhat serious	11
Hardly serious	1

Q7: How closely have you been following the news about the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center buildings in New York and at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., last Tuesday? Have you been following it very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely or not closely at all?

Closely (Net)	<u>97</u>
Very closely	83
Somewhat closely	15
Not closely (Net)	<u>3</u>
Not too closely	2
Not closely at all	-

Q8: Now thinking back to how you felt before the terrorist attack on Tuesday, would you say that you felt that the United States was immune to a terrorist attack of this magnitude, or did you feel it was just a matter of time before something like this happened?

U.S. immune	21
Matter of time	66
Never thought about it (Vol.)	10
Don't know	3

Q9: Do you think that the terrorist attack last Tuesday will result in a fundamental change in the way Americans live their daily lives, or do you think that Americans will soon go back to business as usual?

Fundamental change	57
Business as usual	39
Don't know	4

Q10: Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling the terrorist attack and its aftermath? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

Approve (Net)	<u>86</u>
Approve strongly	64
Approve somewhat	22
Disapprove (Net)	<u>8</u>
Disapprove somewhat	5
Disapprove strongly	3
Don't know	<u>6</u>

Q10A: Some top White House officials argued that President Bush should have returned to Washington, D.C., immediately after the attack on Tuesday to reassure the American people, while others urged him to follow the advice of the Secret Service to stay away from Washington and possible danger. What do you think? Should Bush have returned to Washington, D.C., immediately after the attack or was it appropriate for him to follow the advice of the Secret Service to stay away?

Return immediately	12
Follow Secret Service's advice	85
Don't know	3

Q11: In your opinion, is the United States now in a state of war, or not?

Yes	68
No	25
Don't know	7

Q12: In the aftermath of the attack on Tuesday, stock markets around the world declined. Do you think the decline in the stock markets will have a long-term negative effect on the world's economy, including that of the United States, or do you think this a temporary setback and the economy will stabilize?

Long-term effect	16
Temporary setback	73
Don't know	11

Q13: How much—if any—has the attack on the World Trade Center buildings and the Pentagon shaken your own personal sense of safety and security? Has it shaken it a great deal, a good amount, not too much or not at all?

Great deal/Good amount (Net)	<u>63</u>
Great deal	31
A good amount	32
Not much/Not at all (Net)	<u>36</u>
Not too much	26
Not at all	10
Don't know	<u>1</u>

Q14: Do you personally worry about terrorism when you are in public places? (IF YES) Is this the result of the recent attack or did you feel this way before?

Yes (Net)	<u>35</u>
Result of recent attack	23
Felt this way before	12
No, don't worry	<u>64</u>
Don't know	<u>1</u>

Q15: In the future, do you expect attempts at terrorist acts like the ones we just experienced in New York and Washington, D.C., will be very common, somewhat common, not too common or not at all common in this country?

Common (Net)	<u>39</u>
Very common	8
Somewhat common	31
Not common (Net)	<u>53</u>
Not too common	39
Not at all common	14
Don't know	<u>8</u>

Q16: Do you think it is possible to prevent all future terrorist attacks here in the United States, or most of them, or only a few of them, or is it not possible to prevent attacks in the United States?

All/Most (Net)	<u>52</u>
All	7
Most	45
Few/None (Net)	<u>45</u>
Few	26
None	19
Don't know	<u>3</u>

Q17: When it comes to the American intelligence agencies' ability to protect the United States, how much confidence do you have? Would you say you have a lot of confidence, some confidence, not too much confidence or no confidence at all?

A lot/Some (Net)	<u>80</u>
A lot	35
Some	45
Not much/None (Net)	<u>19</u>
Not much	15
None	4
Don't know	<u>1</u>

Q18: Some people have said that this attack represents the biggest failure by American intelligence operations since Pearl Harbor. Do you think that this attack was something that government intelligence agencies should have been able to discover in advance or not?

Yes	51
No	38
Don't know	11

Q19: How concerned are you that new measures enacted to fight terrorism in this country could end up restricting some of our civil liberties? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not concerned at all about that?

Concerned (Net)	<u>56</u>
Very concerned	20
Somewhat concerned	36
Not concerned (Net)	<u>42</u>
Not too concerned	26
Not concerned at all	17
Don't know	<u>2</u>

Q20: In order to curb terrorism in this country, do you think it will be necessary for the average person to give up some civil liberties, or not?

Necessary	61
Not necessary	33
Don't know	6

Q21: Some people say that in order to fight terrorism, government agencies should be given broader powers to tap telephone lines and monitor cell phones and other wireless communications. Would you approve or disapprove of such a move? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Would you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/disapprove) only somewhat?

Approve (Net)	<u>54</u>
Approve strongly	27
Approve somewhat	27
Disapprove (Net)	<u>40</u>
Disapprove somewhat	18
Disapprove strongly	22
Don't know	<u>6</u>

Q22: Some people say that in order to fight terrorism, government agencies should be given broader powers to monitor Internet communications and be given the legal authority to read all private e-mails. Would you approve or disapprove of such a move? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Would you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/disapprove) only somewhat?

Approve (Net)	<u>50</u>
Approve strongly	26
Approve somewhat	24
Disapprove (Net)	<u>45</u>
Disapprove somewhat	20
Disapprove strongly	25
Don't know	<u>5</u>

Q23: Some people say that in order to fight terrorism, law enforcement should be allowed to randomly stop people who may fit the profile of suspected terrorists. Would you approve or disapprove of such a move? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Would you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/disapprove) only somewhat?

Approve (Net)	<u>68</u>
Approve strongly	41
Approve somewhat	27
Disapprove (Net)	<u>29</u>
Disapprove somewhat	12
Disapprove strongly	17
Don't know	<u>3</u>

Turning your attention now to airport security...

Q24: In your opinion, do you feel that United States airports are doing enough to secure the safety of passengers or are they doing too little?

Enough	14
Too little	82
Don't know	4

Q25: Have you cancelled or postponed any plans to travel by plane in the United States or abroad due to the terrorist attack this past Tuesday, or not?

Didn't cancel/postpone	64
Cancelled or postponed	10
Didn't have plans (Vol.)	25
Don't know	1

Q26: Transportation, airline and airport officials have taken measures to tighten airport security in the United States due to the terrorist attack last Tuesday. Some of the procedures are thorough searches of all planes and airports; no curbside check-ins or check-in from hotels; allowing only passengers to pass through security checkpoints; a ban on all knives; uniformed police patrols of airports; no more use of electronic tickets; checks of passengers using hand-held metal detectors, and armed marshals aboard airplanes. These measures may result in longer check-in times. Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of these security measures? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Would you (approve/disapprove) strongly or (approve/disapprove) only somewhat?

Approve (Net)	95
Approve strongly	83
Approve somewhat	12
Disapprove (Net)	4
Disapprove somewhat	2
Disapprove strongly	2
Don't know	1

Q27: Will having more airport security procedures help you feel safer about flying or will you feel less safe, or won't it make a difference to your feeling of safety one way or another? (IF SAFER) Will that make you feel much safer or only somewhat safer?

Safer (Net)	74
Much safer	51
Somewhat safer	23
Less safe	2
No difference	23
Don't know	1

Q28: Senator McCain and others have alleged that the country's intelligence operations have become less effective over the past decade. They say this is the result of fewer covert operations abroad and lack of expertise to analyze intelligence data here in the United States. Do you think support of American intelligence operations should be a higher national budget priority than it is now, a lower budget priority or is it about the right level of priority now?

Higher	71
Lower	2
Right level	19
Don't know	8

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO SAID HIGHER PRIORITY)

Q29: Would you support funding intelligence operations at a higher level even if that means higher taxes for all Americans, or not?

Yes	85
No	9
Depends (Vol.)	3
Don't know	3

Q30: Would you support funding intelligence operations at a higher level even if that means reduced government benefits, such as health care, farm aid or dipping into the Social Security fund, or not?

Yes	36
No	52
Depends (Vol.)	6
Don't know	6

(ASKED OF EVERYONE)

Q31: Which statement comes closer to your view: "The United States has a responsibility to fight violations of international law and aggression around the world even without the cooperation of its allies," or "The United States should work only in a coordinated effort with its allies to fight violations of international law and aggression around the world"?

(STATEMENTS ROTATED)

Fight alone	34
Fight with allies	59
Shouldn't be involved at all (Vol.)	1
Don't know	6

Q32: Do you think the terrorist attack last Tuesday was a direct result of United States' policy of intervention around the world or not?

Yes	47
No	36
Partially (Vol.)	6
Don't know	11

Q33: Specifically, do you think the terrorist attack last Tuesday was a direct result of United States' policy in the Middle East or not?

Yes	58
No	23
Partially (Vol.)	7
Don't know	12

Q34: From what you know about the situation in the Middle East, do your sympathies lie more with Israel or more with the Palestinians?

Israel	51
Palestinians	8
Neither (Vol.)	24
Haven't heard enough (Vol.)	1
Don't know	16

Q35: Did the terrorist attack on the United States change your sympathies in the Middle East, or not?

Yes	20
No	73
Don't know	7

The United States is saying that it is fairly certain that Osama bin Laden was responsible for the attack on the World Trade Center buildings and the Pentagon last Tuesday. Bin Laden is an exiled Saudi militant with extreme anti-American views who is allegedly being protected by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

Q36: If it is determined that Osama bin Laden was responsible for the terrorist attack, do you think he and his organization will be caught and brought to justice or not?

Yes	70
No	19
Don't know	11

Q37: If it is also determined that the Taliban ruling party in Afghanistan is harboring Osama bin Laden, would you support the United States and its allies retaliating with military action against Afghanistan, even if it could result in civilian casualties, or would you oppose that? (IF SUPPORT OR OPPOSE) Would you (support/oppose) that strongly, or (support/oppose) it somewhat?

Support (Net)	82
Support strongly	67
Support somewhat	14
Oppose (Net)	11
Oppose somewhat	6
Oppose strongly	6
Don't know	7

Q38: What about Osama bin Laden's organization itself? Do you think the United States should retaliate against Bin Laden's group through military action, or should the United States pursue justice by bringing him to trial in the United States?

Military action	69
Bring him to trial	25
Don't know	6

Now turning to the subject of safety...

Q39: Thinking about the day of the attack and how it affected your life: Would you say your daily routine was extremely disrupted, or somewhat disrupted, or not disrupted at all?

Disrupted (Net)	86
Extremely	50
Somewhat	36
Not disrupted	14

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO SAID EXTREMELY/SOMEWHAT DISRUPTED)

Q40: You said that your daily routine was (mentioned above). How was it disrupted? Anything else? (ACCEPTED UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP FOUR RESPONSES SHOWN)

Very emotional/Distraught	40
Watched/Listened to news all day	37
Cancelled all daily plans	14
Couldn't go to work	12

(ASKED OF EVERYONE)

Q41: Now that it has been a few days after the terrorist attack in New York and Washington, D.C., what one word best describes how you are feeling about the situation? (TOP SIX RESPONSES SHOWN)

Anger/Frustration	26
Sorrow/Sadness	21
Devastated/Horrified	11
Shocked/Stunned	9
Fear/Anxiety	7
Bad feelings in general	6

Q42: In light of Tuesday's attack, should the United States toughen restrictions on visas for foreign students and other visitors to the United States?

Yes	84
No	12
Don't know	4

Now, turning your attention to another subject...

Q43: Would you describe the state of your own personal finances these days as very secure, fairly secure, fairly shaky or very shaky?

Secure (Net)	76
Very secure	19
Fairly secure	57
Shaky (Net)	22
Fairly shaky	15
Very shaky	7
Don't know	2

Q44: Compared to last year, would you say that this holiday season you will spend more, less or about the same on presents for friends and family?

More	11
Less	26
Same	59
Don't give presents (Vol.)	1
Don't know	3

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO SAID THEY WILL SPEND LESS)

Q45: Why do you think you will be spending less money on presents during the holiday season? (TOP SEVEN RESPONSES SHOWN)

Being frugal	17
Earning less money this year	13
We're in/going into a recession	11
Higher prices	10
Debt	6
Lost my job	5
Recent terrorist attacks	5

(ASKED OF EVERYONE)

Q46: Have you lost your job or been laid off within the last six months, or not? (IF NOT) Are you concerned about losing your job or being laid off within the next six months because of economic conditions, or not?

Lost job in last 6 months	8
Concerned about job in next 6 months	5
Not concerned	59
Don't have a job (Vol.)	26
Don't know	2

Tables compiled by RAY ENSLOW