

LOS ANGELES TIMES POLL ALERT

Midwest Battleground States: The Campaign Heats Up

George W. Bush has moved into the lead in three Midwestern states, according to the latest Times poll. While the leads are within the margin of error in each of those states, and widespread doubts about the president's policies remain in voters' minds, there are signs that Kerry may have lost some momentum while having to focus on refuting attack ads run in Wisconsin and Ohio by a Bush-backing veterans group.

The states of Missouri, Wisconsin and Ohio were selected for separate sampling as part of the Los Angeles Times' ongoing series of surveys among the eighteen "battleground" states across the nation. Each has a margin of error of plus or minus four percentage points. These states have been receiving particular attention because of the closeness of their vote in the 2000 presidential election. Ohio chose Bush over Gore by four points four years ago while Missourians handed Bush a slight three point lead and in Wisconsin, Gore edged Bush by the tiniest of margins - .02 percentage points. Pre-election surveys have found the race to be close in these three states, but this latest survey finds Bush gaining ground or at least holding steady as he heads for the Republican convention in New York next week and its anticipated Republican bounce.

As everywhere, voter loyalties are hardening in these battleground states. In June, about eight in 10 voters in each state said they were certain of their vote. Two months later, that number is about nine in 10. There isn't much mystery left... most voters in these three states indicated they feel that they know quite a bit about the policies that Kerry or Bush would pursue once in office, even if there was less certainty when it comes to what the candidates, particularly Kerry, would do to turn the economy around. With few undecided voters left and certainty of vote solidifying, the outcome of these races may well come down to grass-roots efforts to get out the vote on either side.

Hard-Hitting Campaign Advertisements

The George W. Bush and John Kerry campaigns are pouring millions of dollars into advertising and fundraising in the battleground states. In addition to the official campaign, there have also been a spate of "527" ads (so called because they are governed under section 527 of the federal tax laws) running on behalf of both candidates. These ads are funded by organizations which cannot be officially affiliated with the campaigns. Recently, Benjamin Ginsberg, a lawyer for Bush's reelection campaign resigned after revealing that he had advised a group who have been running ads attacking Kerry's war record.

The campaign has heated up even further since a group of veterans calling themselves *The Swift Boat Veterans For Truth* began airing ads attacking Kerry's service record in several key states. The ads accuse him of lying about the circumstances surrounding the medals of honor he was awarded during his tour of duty in Vietnam. Other ads funded by this group attack the anti-Vietnam-war activities Kerry undertook

when he returned home to the United States. The ads have generated a storm of media attention and have dominated the campaigns in recent weeks, including the four days (August 21st to 24th) that this survey was in the field. The ads have put Kerry on the defensive on a subject that his campaign once considered a major strength for their candidate. In these states, as in the country, barely over half (51% in Ohio, 55% in Wisconsin and 54% in Missouri) of voters now say they believe Kerry served honorably in Vietnam. Fewer than two in 10 in each state said they believed he was lying outright about his record, with the rest not sure, or not aware of the situation.

As an indication of how well known these ads have become, 56% of the respondents in Wisconsin and 58% in Ohio, two states where the ads have been aired, said they'd seen the one attacking Kerry's service record. About another one in 10 in each state said they'd heard about it. Just under half (47%) of Missourians, in a state where the ad was not aired, also said they'd seen the ad and another 13% said they'd heard about it. Interestingly, people who have actually seen the ad (in Wisconsin and Ohio) are more inclined to believe Kerry than those who have either just heard about it, or who don't know anything about it. In Missouri, the difference between these categories is minimal, possibly because voters are more likely to have seen the ad on news reports rather than experienced it first hand.

Missouri

A state like many others in the Midwest hard-hit by an economy moving from manufacturing to service industry, Missouri lost 51,800 jobs in July, a drop of about 2% according to the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics Report. The state has seen no growth in jobs this year overall. However, Missourians are no more pessimistic about the economy than the rest of the country, and the three point gap between those who think the country is off on the wrong track (47%) and those who think it is heading in the right direction (44%) is much tighter than it was in a June Times Poll when it was 52% to 37%.

In addition, at 52% approval to 43% disapproval, voters rate the job Bush has been doing more highly than they did last June, when the numbers were 49% to 45%. Similarly, he is getting slightly higher approvals for his handling of the Iraq war than he did in June (50% now vs. 44% two months ago) and also terrorism (52% vs. 52%). Missouri voters continued to give him low marks on the economy, however, with approval at 45% to 49% disapproving.

However, despite an increase in optimism and a bump upward in Bush's approval ratings, there are signs that Kerry could be closing in on the president in this state with its 11 electoral college votes enticingly up for grabs. He was behind Bush by only two points in this survey, compared to six points last June. While that change is within the survey's margin of error, it is one of several signs that Kerry may be benefiting from consolidating his base in the state. He could benefit even further if that trend continues, but he will likely need to convince more independents as well. For example, only 8% of Democrats are crossing party lines to vote for Bush, compared to 14% two months ago. However, even though a respectable 86% of Democrats are voting for Kerry, Bush has a solid 95% of Missouri Republicans in his camp, along with a nine point lead among the independents.*

* Independents include voters who say they belong to another party.

If you add Ralph Nader to the ballot (the would-be candidate is currently embroiled in a legal battle to stay on the ballot in Missouri) the race tilts slightly Bush's way – with 46% for the president, 42% for Kerry, and 3% for Nader.

Like the rest of the country, Missouri voters would most like to see the candidates discuss the issues of the Iraq war (34%) jobs / economy (38%), healthcare (21%) and terrorism (20%). These are similar proportions to those found nationwide. Some areas of concern for Bush might be lurking in the findings that Kerry is ahead among voters in three of those categories – if they named the Iraq war, they chose Kerry 50% to Bush's 41%, if they cited the economy, they put him ahead by 53% to 36%, and those with healthcare concerns chose Kerry 58% to 39%. Bush wins only among those who are most concerned about terrorism by 66% to 22%. Voters also selected Bush over Kerry as the candidate best able to protect the country from terrorism, by a not overwhelming but decisive 49% to 32%.

Wisconsin

George W. Bush took Wisconsin in 2000 by a narrow margin of 5,708 votes. Wisconsin has a rather Democratic history – it helped put Bill Clinton into office for both of his terms, and was one of the few states that went for Michael Dukakis over George H.W. Bush in 1988. That was after two elections in which it joined much of the country in handing Reagan the presidency with comfortable margins. With its 10 electoral votes quite possibly up for grabs again this year, Wisconsin has also received a lot of attention from both candidates.

Recent pre-election polling by other organizations and by the Times Poll last June have found likely voters continuing the narrow split in this state, so it is interesting to see Bush opening a four point lead (among registered voters) in this latest poll. Bush leads Kerry 48% to 44% in a two way race. With Nader in the mix (he is likely to be on the ballot here, needing only 2000 signatures to qualify) Bush's lead drops to virtually nothing - 45% to Kerry's 44%, with 3% voting for Nader.

Bush's job approval rating has risen slightly since June, from 51% to 54% while his disapproval has fallen from 45% to 42%. The other common measure of general voter satisfaction, right track/ wrong direction, is virtually unchanged. And while Bush's overall job approval is higher than it was two months ago, voters are less satisfied with how he is handling the specific areas of Iraq, terrorism, and the economy. Each of those ratings has moved slightly toward the negative since last June.

Wisconsin voters issues are the same as for voters in the other states and nationwide, although healthcare was mentioned more often here than in the other two states, and jobs less. Interestingly, the 28% who cited healthcare are split evenly between Kerry and Bush. That category of voter goes to Kerry in the other two states. The 27% who cited the Iraq war chose Kerry over Bush (by 59% to 34%), along with the 38% worried about the economy who also picked Kerry (52% to 40%.) The 17% most concerned about terrorism fell firmly into the Bush camp, giving him a huge margin of 71% to 22%.

More than half of voters in the state said they'd like to see the nation go in a new direction (52%), rather than continuing the policies of President Bush (34%). Not surprisingly, Bush wins big among those who want to continue his policies, by 97% to 1%. However, Kerry does not benefit as much from voter dissatisfaction, 77% said they'd vote for Kerry, and 14% for Bush.

Kerry's greatest opportunity in Wisconsin may rest on his ability to lure at least some of the nearly two in 10 Democrats who are crossing party lines to come back into the fold as well as increasing his already strong twelve point lead among independents. Among Democrats, Kerry garners 75% of the vote, leaving 19% for Bush. On the other hand there is little opportunity for Bush in mining his party for more votes, with 90% of the Republicans already wrapped up.

Ohio

In more recent years, Ohio has moved away from an earlier history of allowing Republican candidates to pluck its 20 juicy electoral votes at will. In the eighties, the state went for Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush by very comfortable double digit margins. However, like Wisconsin, Ohio helped put Bill Clinton into office twice, and while George W. Bush won in 2000, it was with only a four point spread.

This survey found Ohio voters giving Bush a five point edge at this time-- 49% to 44%. This lead is still within the poll's margin of error, but noteworthy nonetheless, when compared to recent surveys by other organizations which have found Kerry well ahead among registered voters and a June Times poll that had the two candidates nearly neck in neck. As in Wisconsin, Kerry's best opportunity may lie in the one in five Democrats in Ohio who said they would vote for Bush if the election were held today.

Since only 6% of Ohio registered voters are undecided at this point, with nearly nine in ten certain they will vote for the candidate they've already selected, once again, the candidates are looking to consolidate their bases and pull in the independent vote. Bush benefits from a fairly large, and growing, crossover vote – 21% of those who consider themselves Democrats would vote for Bush and 74% for Kerry. At 88%, Bush's support among Republicans, while still extremely strong, is lower than in the other two states or the nation as a whole. However, that leaves only 6% of Republicans indicating they would mark the box for the Democrats. Independents picked Bush over Kerry by six percentage points.

The good news for Kerry is that 50% of Ohio voters disapprove of Bush's job as president, a slight bump upward from the 48% who approved two months ago. In addition, the 15 point negative spread between those who think the country is going in the right direction (39%) and those who think it is on the wrong track (54%) has grown incrementally over that time. Ohio voters are more negative on this measure than either of the other two states and the nation as a whole. On the other hand, Ohio voters gave Bush higher marks for Iraq (46% vs. 43%.) and on the economy (44% vs. 40%) than they did in June as well.

Ohio has one of the weakest economies in the nation—only New York and California lead Ohio in jobs lost over the last four years by some measures. So it is not surprising that the survey found Ohioans concerned about the economy and pessimistic about the way the country is headed. More (45%) cited “the economy” and/or “jobs” as the most import issue for the candidates to address than in either of the other two states, or the nation as a whole. More than half of Ohioans (54%) said the country is on the wrong track, compared to fewer than two in five that said it is headed in the right direction.

Indeed, this survey shows that even though just over half of Ohio's voters in the poll said that Bush does not deserve to be elected for a second term, a similar number disapprove of the president's handling of the economy, and fully 55% said they'd like to see the country move away from Bush's policies, many are voting for him anyway. Virtually all (97%) of those voters who like Bush's politics plan to vote for him, along with 14% of those who would like to see the country go in a new direction. Three out of four of that group would vote for Kerry.

-Analysis by Jill Darling Richardson

Results from the Times Poll
Battleground States Poll: (Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin)

August 21-24, 2004

Guide to Column Headings

MO Registered voters in the state of Missouri
OH Registered voters in the state of Ohio
WI Registered voters in the state of Wisconsin

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

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Right direction | 44 | 39 | 41 |
| Off on the wrong track | 47 | 54 | 49 |
| Don't know | 9 | 7 | 10 |

(ASKED OF ALL REGISTERED VOTERS)

(ORDER OF TWO HORSERACE QUESTIONS AND CANDIDATES IS ROTATED)

Q5. If the November general election for president were being held today and the choices were George W. Bush and Dick Cheney on the Republican ticket, and John Kerry and John Edwards on the Democratic ticket, for whom would you vote: Bush/Cheney or Kerry/Edwards? (INCLUDES LEANERS)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Bush/Cheney | 46 | 49 | 48 |
| Kerry/Edwards | 44 | 44 | 44 |
| Some other ticket | 1 | 1 | - |
| Don't know | 9 | 6 | 8 |

(ORDER OF CANDIDATES IS ROTATED)

Q6. If the November general election for president were being held today and the choices were George W. Bush and Dick Cheney on the Republican ticket, John Kerry and John Edwards on the Democratic ticket, and Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo running on an independent ticket, for whom would you vote: Bush/Cheney, Kerry/Edwards or Nader/Camejo? (INCLUDES LEANERS)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Bush/Cheney | 46 | 46 | 45 |
| Kerry/Edwards | 42 | 43 | 44 |
| Nader/Camejo | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| Some other ticket | - | 1 | - |
| Don't know | 9 | 6 | 8 |

(IF ANY PRESIDENTIAL TICKET IS MENTIONED IN Q6)

Q7. Are you certain you're going to vote for those candidates, or is it possible that you might end up voting for somebody else?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Certain | 87 | 89 | 87 |
| Might vote for somebody else | 10 | 8 | 9 |
| Don't know | 3 | 3 | 4 |

Q10. What issue or problem would you say is most important for the next president to address? Is there another issue or problem you would like to hear addressed? (ACCEPT UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP FIVE RESPONSES ARE SHOWN)

| | <u>MO</u> |
|------------|-----------|
| Iraq war | <u>34</u> |
| Economy | <u>29</u> |
| Healthcare | <u>21</u> |
| Terrorism | <u>20</u> |
| Jobs | <u>10</u> |

| | <u>OH</u> |
|------------|-----------|
| Economy | <u>32</u> |
| Healthcare | <u>22</u> |
| Terrorism | <u>20</u> |
| Iraq war | <u>19</u> |
| Jobs | <u>15</u> |

| | <u>WI</u> |
|------------|-----------|
| Economy | <u>30</u> |
| Healthcare | <u>28</u> |
| Iraq war | <u>27</u> |
| Terrorism | <u>17</u> |
| Jobs | <u>8</u> |

Q20. 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 do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Approve (Net) | <u>52</u> | <u>47</u> | <u>54</u> |
| Approve strongly | <u>32</u> | <u>33</u> | <u>28</u> |
| Approve somewhat | <u>21</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>26</u> |
| Disapprove (Net) | <u>43</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>42</u> |
| Disapprove somewhat | <u>11</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>13</u> |
| Disapprove strongly | <u>31</u> | <u>36</u> | <u>29</u> |
| Don't know | <u>5</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> |

(ORDER OF NEXT THREE QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q21. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Approve (Net) | <u>50</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>48</u> |
| Approve strongly | <u>30</u> | <u>31</u> | <u>27</u> |
| Approve somewhat | <u>20</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>21</u> |
| Disapprove (Net) | <u>47</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>48</u> |
| Disapprove somewhat | <u>11</u> | <u>11</u> | <u>12</u> |
| Disapprove strongly | <u>36</u> | <u>40</u> | <u>36</u> |
| Don't know | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>4</u> |

Q22. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the war on terrorism? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Approve (Net) | <u>57</u> | <u>56</u> | <u>53</u> |
| Approve strongly | <u>38</u> | <u>41</u> | <u>33</u> |
| Approve somewhat | <u>19</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>20</u> |
| Disapprove (Net) | <u>40</u> | <u>38</u> | <u>42</u> |
| Disapprove somewhat | <u>10</u> | <u>11</u> | <u>14</u> |
| Disapprove strongly | <u>30</u> | <u>28</u> | <u>28</u> |
| Don't know | <u>3</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>5</u> |

Q23. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Approve (Net) | <u>45</u> | <u>44</u> | <u>47</u> |
| Approve strongly | <u>25</u> | <u>25</u> | <u>22</u> |
| Approve somewhat | <u>20</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>25</u> |
| Disapprove (Net) | <u>49</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>49</u> |
| Disapprove somewhat | <u>15</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>16</u> |
| Disapprove strongly | <u>34</u> | <u>39</u> | <u>33</u> |
| Don't know | <u>6</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>4</u> |

Q24. Generally speaking, do you think the country is better off because of George W. Bush's policies and should proceed in the direction he set out, or do you think the country is not better off and needs to move in a new direction?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Continue policies of George W. Bush | 39 | 39 | 34 |
| Needs a new direction | 53 | 55 | 52 |
| Don't know | 8 | 6 | 14 |

(ORDER OF NEXT 13 QUESTIONS AND CANDIDATE NAMES IS ROTATED)

Q25. "He cares about people like me": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 37 | 39 | 36 |
| John Kerry | 43 | 45 | 42 |
| Both equally | 7 | 5 | 5 |
| Neither | 9 | 9 | 10 |
| Don't know | 4 | 2 | 7 |

Q26. "He will be a strong leader for the country": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 46 | 43 | 42 |
| John Kerry | 43 | 44 | 42 |
| Both equally | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| Neither | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Don't know | 5 | 3 | 5 |

Q27. "He has the honesty and integrity to serve as president": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 42 | 41 | 39 |
| John Kerry | 41 | 42 | 38 |
| Both equally | 6 | 5 | 10 |
| Neither | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| Don't know | 4 | 4 | 6 |

Q28. "He flip flops on the issues": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 24 | 26 | 19 |
| John Kerry | 48 | 49 | 48 |
| Both equally | 13 | 12 | 16 |
| Neither | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| Don't know | 6 | 4 | 9 |

Q29. "He would be best at keeping the country safe from terrorism": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 49 | 51 | 47 |
| John Kerry | 32 | 30 | 34 |
| Both equally | 4 | 7 | 5 |
| Neither | 7 | 7 | 6 |
| Don't know | 8 | 5 | 8 |

Q30. "He has better ideas for strengthening the nation's economy": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 37 | 35 | 34 |
| John Kerry | 45 | 49 | 45 |
| Both equally | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Neither | 8 | 8 | 6 |
| Don't know | 8 | 6 | 11 |

Q31. "He will build respect for the United States around the world": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 36 | 39 | 35 |
| John Kerry | 47 | 47 | 45 |
| Both equally | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Neither | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| Don't know | 7 | 4 | 8 |

Q32. "He shares my moral values": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 46 | 43 | 41 |
| John Kerry | 35 | 38 | 39 |
| Both equally | 4 | 4 | 6 |
| Neither | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| Don't know | 6 | 6 | 6 |

Q33. "He does not admit his mistakes and is inflexible in changing his mind when policies don't seem to be working": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 43 | 47 | 48 |
| John Kerry | 25 | 29 | 22 |
| Both equally | 8 | 6 | 7 |
| Neither | 13 | 8 | 11 |
| Don't know | 11 | 10 | 12 |

Q34. "He is more likely to develop a plan for achieving success in Iraq": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 47 | 46 | 43 |
| John Kerry | 37 | 39 | 38 |
| Both equally | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Neither | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| Don't know | 6 | 6 | 9 |

Q35. "He would be more committed to implementing the recommendations in the 9/11 Commission report": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 35 | 42 | 35 |
| John Kerry | 36 | 39 | 38 |
| Both equally | 6 | 4 | 8 |
| Neither | 7 | 5 | 7 |
| Don't know | 16 | 10 | 12 |

Q36. "He would be more effective as Commander-in-Chief": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 46 | 48 | 45 |
| John Kerry | 42 | 40 | 40 |
| Both equally | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Neither | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| Don't know | 5 | 3 | 6 |

Q37. "He has provided a more detailed plan for the policies he would pursue in the next four years": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry? (ACCEPT "NEITHER" OR "BOTH EQUALLY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| George W. Bush | 34 | 38 | 36 |
| John Kerry | 36 | 37 | 33 |
| Both equally | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| Neither | 13 | 15 | 15 |
| Don't know | 11 | 8 | 11 |

Q38. Do you think George W. Bush is doing a better job as president than you expected, or a worse job than you expected, or is he doing about what you expected he would do? (IF BETTER OR WORSE) Is he doing a much (better/worse) job than you expected or only a somewhat (better/worse) job?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Better (Net) | 20 | 22 | 21 |
| Much better | 11 | 10 | 9 |
| Somewhat better | 10 | 12 | 12 |
| Worse (Net) | 28 | 32 | 31 |
| Somewhat worse | 11 | 14 | 14 |
| Much worse | 16 | 18 | 17 |
| As expected | 49 | 45 | 47 |
| Don't know | 3 | 1 | 1 |

(ORDER OF NEXT TWO QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q39. Generally speaking, how much do you feel you know about the policies that George W. Bush would pursue in a second term if he is reelected: a great deal, or a fair amount, or not too much or nothing at all?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Great deal/fair amount (Net) | <u>67</u> | <u>75</u> | <u>69</u> |
| Great deal | <u>19</u> | <u>20</u> | <u>18</u> |
| Fair amount | <u>48</u> | <u>55</u> | <u>51</u> |
| Not too much/at all (Net) | <u>30</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>28</u> |
| Not too much | <u>22</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>21</u> |
| Nothing at all | <u>8</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>7</u> |
| Don't know | <u>3</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>3</u> |

Q40. Generally speaking, how much do you feel you know about the policies that John Kerry would pursue if he is elected president: a great deal, or a fair amount, or not too much or nothing at all?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Great deal/fair amount (Net) | <u>61</u> | <u>67</u> | <u>59</u> |
| Great deal | <u>13</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>10</u> |
| Fair amount | <u>48</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>49</u> |
| Not too much/at all (Net) | <u>35</u> | <u>30</u> | <u>36</u> |
| Not too much | <u>28</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>28</u> |
| Nothing at all | <u>7</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>8</u> |
| Don't know | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>5</u> |

Q41. How confident are you that John Kerry would be a good Commander-in-Chief? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident or not confident at all?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Confident (Net) | <u>53</u> | <u>53</u> | <u>56</u> |
| Very confident | <u>24</u> | <u>27</u> | <u>25</u> |
| Somewhat confident | <u>29</u> | <u>26</u> | <u>31</u> |
| Not confident (Net) | <u>42</u> | <u>43</u> | <u>41</u> |
| Not very confident | <u>17</u> | <u>16</u> | <u>17</u> |
| Not confident at all | <u>25</u> | <u>27</u> | <u>24</u> |
| Don't know | <u>5</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> |

(ORDER OF NEXT TWO QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q42. Do you think John Kerry has laid out a clear plan for how he would accelerate economic growth and create more jobs, or not?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | 40 | 37 | 36 |
| No | 46 | 49 | 46 |
| Don't know | 14 | 14 | 18 |

Q43. Do you think George W. Bush has laid out a clear plan for how he would accelerate economic growth and create more jobs, or not?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | 37 | 35 | 39 |
| No | 51 | 57 | 47 |
| Don't know | 12 | 8 | 14 |

(ORDER OF NEXT TWO QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q43A. Does what you know about George W. Bush's military record make you more or less likely to vote for him for president, or doesn't his military record make a difference in the way you will vote one way or another? (IF MORE/LESS LIKELY) Does Bush's record make you much (more/less) likely or somewhat (more/less) likely to vote for him for president?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Likely (Net) | 10 | 15 | 18 |
| Much more likely | 6 | 8 | 10 |
| Somewhat more likely | 4 | 7 | 8 |
| Less likely (Net) | 21 | 16 | 20 |
| Somewhat less likely | 8 | 5 | 8 |
| Much less likely | 13 | 11 | 12 |
| No difference | 62 | 66 | 58 |
| Don't know | 7 | 3 | 4 |

Q43B. Does what you know about John Kerry's military record make you more or less likely to vote for him for president, or doesn't his military record make a difference in the way you will vote one way or the other? (IF MORE/LESS LIKELY) Does Kerry's record make you much (more/less) likely or somewhat (more/less) likely to vote for him for president?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Likely (Net) | <u>25</u> | <u>21</u> | <u>31</u> |
| Much more likely | <u>15</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>19</u> |
| Somewhat more likely | <u>9</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>12</u> |
| Less likely (Net) | <u>19</u> | <u>19</u> | <u>20</u> |
| Somewhat less likely | <u>6</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>8</u> |
| Much less likely | <u>14</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>11</u> |
| No difference | <u>51</u> | <u>56</u> | <u>46</u> |
| Don't know | <u>5</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> |

As you may know, John Kerry is a Vietnam veteran who earned several medals for combat. He also protested the war when he returned.

(ORDER OF STATEMENTS IS ROTATED)

Q44. Which statement comes closer to your view: "In his combat missions in Vietnam, John Kerry demonstrated qualities America needs in a president," or "By protesting the war in Vietnam, John Kerry demonstrated a judgment and belief that is inappropriate in a president"? (ACCEPT "BOTH" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Combat missions demonstrated qualities America needs | <u>42</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>39</u> |
| Protesting war demonstrated inappropriate judgment | <u>36</u> | <u>39</u> | <u>41</u> |
| Both | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Don't know | <u>18</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>17</u> |

Q44A. Does knowing that John Kerry protested the war in Vietnam make you more or less likely to vote for him for president, or does knowing that he protested the war not make a difference in the way you will vote one way or the other? (IF MORE/LESS LIKELY) Does that make you much (more/less) likely or somewhat (more/less) likely to vote for him for president?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Likely (Net) | <u>20</u> | <u>22</u> | <u>25</u> |
| Much more likely | <u>12</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>17</u> |
| Somewhat more likely | <u>8</u> | <u>10</u> | <u>8</u> |
| Less likely (Net) | <u>27</u> | <u>23</u> | <u>22</u> |
| Somewhat less likely | <u>8</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>7</u> |
| Much less likely | <u>19</u> | <u>18</u> | <u>15</u> |
| No difference | <u>49</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>50</u> |
| Don't know | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>3</u> |

(ORDER OF NEXT TWO QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q44B. Have you seen a television ad that disputes whether John Kerry deserves the war medals he received during the Vietnam War, or not? (IF NOT) Have you read or heard about this ad, or not?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Saw TV ad about war medals | 47 | 58 | 56 |
| Heard/read TV ad about war medals | 13 | 8 | 10 |
| Have not seen/heard/read about ad | 37 | 27 | 28 |
| Don't know | 3 | 7 | 6 |

Q44C. Have you seen a television ad about John Kerry's role protesting the war in Vietnam, or not? (IF NOT) Have you read or heard about this ad, or not?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Saw TV ad about war medals | 47 | 54 | 53 |
| Heard/read TV ad about war medals | 10 | 6 | 10 |
| Have not seen/heard/read about ad | 40 | 34 | 32 |
| Don't know | 3 | 6 | 5 |

Q44D. Do you believe that John Kerry misrepresented his war record and does not deserve his war medals, or that John Kerry fought honorably and does deserve his war medals? (ACCEPT "HAVEN'T HEARD ENOUGH ABOUT THIS TO SAY" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Misrepresented his war record/ does not deserve his medals | 17 | 20 | 16 |
| Fought honorably/deserves his medals | 54 | 51 | 55 |
| Haven't heard | 9 | 8 | 10 |
| Don't know | 20 | 21 | 19 |

Q45. Generally speaking, do you think the nation's economy these days is doing very well, or fairly well, or fairly badly, or very badly?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Well (Net) | <u>53</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>51</u> |
| Very well | <u>9</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> |
| Fairly well | <u>44</u> | <u>44</u> | <u>44</u> |
| Badly (Net) | <u>44</u> | <u>47</u> | <u>48</u> |
| Fairly badly | <u>22</u> | <u>24</u> | <u>31</u> |
| Very badly | <u>22</u> | <u>23</u> | <u>17</u> |
| Don't know | <u>3</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>1</u> |

Q46. Would you say the country is better off because of George W. Bush's economic policies than when he became president more than three years ago, or worse off, or is the country about the same as it was then? (IF BETTER OR WORSE) Is the country much (better/worse) off or only somewhat (better/worse) off?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Better (Net) | <u>30</u> | <u>28</u> | <u>27</u> |
| Much better off | <u>14</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>10</u> |
| Somewhat better off | <u>16</u> | <u>16</u> | <u>16</u> |
| Worse (Net) | <u>43</u> | <u>48</u> | <u>50</u> |
| Somewhat worse off | <u>17</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>21</u> |
| Much worse off | <u>27</u> | <u>36</u> | <u>29</u> |
| About the same | <u>23</u> | <u>21</u> | <u>22</u> |
| Don't know | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>1</u> |

Q48. All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes, worth going to war | <u>50</u> | <u>44</u> | <u>41</u> |
| No, not worth going to war | <u>44</u> | <u>48</u> | <u>51</u> |
| Don't know | <u>6</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>8</u> |

(ORDER OF STATEMENTS IS ROTATED)

Q49. Which statement comes closer to your view: "Going to war with Iraq was justified because it will make the Mideast more stable and the U.S. a safer place," or "Going to war with Iraq was a mistake because there was no evidence that Iraq was stockpiling weapons of mass destruction or that it was rebuilding its nuclear program"? (ACCEPT "HAVEN'T HEARD ENOUGH" AS A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE)

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Justified | 47 | 48 | 49 |
| Made a mistake | 43 | 42 | 42 |
| Haven't heard enough | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Don't know | 8 | 9 | 7 |

Q50. As you may know, John Kerry has said that he would significantly reduce the number of U.S. troops in Iraq by recruiting and training more Iraqi troops and increasing the number of military sent from other countries. What do you think? Do you think John Kerry's proposal to reduce the number of U.S. troops in Iraq is realistic or unrealistic? (IF REALISTIC OR UNREALISTIC) Do you think he is very (realistic/unrealistic) or only somewhat (realistic/unrealistic)?

| | <u>MO</u> | <u>OH</u> | <u>WI</u> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Realistic (Net) | 45 | 48 | 48 |
| Very realistic | 17 | 18 | 23 |
| Somewhat realistic | 28 | 30 | 24 |
| Unrealistic (Net) | 44 | 45 | 43 |
| Somewhat unrealistic | 20 | 17 | 18 |
| Very unrealistic | 24 | 28 | 26 |
| Don't know | 11 | 7 | 9 |

How the Poll Was Conducted

The Times Poll contacted 1,781 adults in three separate battleground state samples. Included were 507 registered voters in Ohio; 580 in Missouri; and 512 in Wisconsin. All interviews were conducted by telephone August 21 through 24, 2004. Telephone numbers were chosen from a list of all exchanges in the states and random digit dialing techniques were used to allow listed and unlisted numbers to be contacted. Adults in each sample were weighted slightly to conform with their respective census figures for sex, race, age, and education. The margin of sampling error for registered voters in each of the three states is plus or minus 4 percentage points in either direction. For certain subgroups in all samples, the error margin may be somewhat higher. Poll results may also be affected by factors such as question wording and the order in which questions are presented. Telephone interviews were conducted by Interviewing Services of America, Van Nuys, California.