

Aug. 31, 2002 — Study #473

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

HOW THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED

The Times Poll contacted 1,372 Americans nationwide, including 1,163 registered voters, by telephone August 22–25. 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 and for registered voters 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. “–” indicates less than 0.5%. The wording of some questions has been abridged.

SELECTED RESULTS FROM THE TIMES POLL NATIONAL SURVEY August 22–25, 2002

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

GUIDE TO COLUMN HEADINGS

ALL	All U.S. adults
RV	Registered voters
DEM	Self-described Democrats
IND	Self-described independents
REP	Self-described Republicans
LIB	Political liberals
MOD	Political moderates
CON	Political conservatives
MEN	Men
WOM	Women
STK	Own stock
N/STK	Do not own stock

POLITICS

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

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Right direction	45	48	33	44	61	33	42	61
Wrong track	45	44	57	45	29	59	47	29
Don't know	10	8	10	11	10	8	11	10

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO SAID WRONG TRACK)

Q2: Why do you say things in this country are seriously off on the wrong track? (ACCEPTED UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP SIX RESPONSES SHOWN)

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Economy	22	23	24	27	14	31	17	17
Bush administration	16	16	20	19	2	25	13	5
Moral values	16	17	9	18	24	6	17	29
Iraq/Threat of war	10	10	12	9	6	8	14	9
Foreign policy	8	7	11	4	4	7	12	5
War on terrorism	8	7	9	10	8	11	8	5

(ASKED OF EVERYONE)

Q3: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	68	70	49	71	93	52	65	87
Disapprove	27	27	46	26	5	44	28	11
Don't know	5	3	5	3	2	4	7	2

(Q4–Q8 ROTATED)

Q4: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	56	57	33	55	89	38	51	80
Disapprove	38	38	60	39	9	58	43	15
Don't know	6	5	7	6	2	4	6	5

Q5: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling foreign affairs?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	61	63	40	60	88	43	57	80
Disapprove	31	29	49	30	9	50	31	15
Don't know	8	8	11	10	3	7	12	5

Q6: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the threat of terrorism in the country?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	74	76	55	77	94	56	77	87
Disapprove	22	21	39	19	4	40	20	11
Don't know	4	3	6	4	2	4	3	2

Q7: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the issue of corporate fraud by large corporations?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	55	56	37	56	79	40	51	72
Disapprove	32	33	48	30	12	45	34	19
Don't know	13	11	15	14	9	15	15	9

Q8: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the federal budget?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	48	50	27	47	78	31	43	69
Disapprove	37	36	62	33	8	57	41	17
Don't know	15	14	11	20	14	12	16	14

Q9: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the United States Congress is handling its job?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	53	51	55	51	56	55	55	51
Disapprove	36	39	32	40	36	33	34	41
Don't know	11	10	13	9	8	12	11	8

Q10: Which party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you think can do a better job handling the major problems facing the country?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Democrats	38	37	73	32	6	61	42	18
Republicans	34	38	7	30	79	16	26	60
Both equally (Vol.)	9	9	7	9	6	6	10	8
Neither (Vol.)	8	7	5	15	3	11	9	4
Don't know	11	9	8	14	6	6	13	10

(Q11–Q14 ROTATED)

Q11: Which party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you think can do a better job handling Social Security?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Democrats	47	48	77	44	16	67	53	28
Republicans	30	31	6	27	69	14	22	51
Both equally (Vol.)	5	5	5	7	3	6	5	3
Neither (Vol.)	8	8	4	12	4	6	10	8
Don't know	10	8	8	10	8	7	10	10

Q12: Which party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you think can do a better job handling the nation's economy?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Democrats	44	42	76	41	8	68	46	24
Republicans	38	40	10	34	81	14	34	61
Both equally (Vol.)	6	7	6	8	4	9	5	5
Neither (Vol.)	5	4	2	9	2	4	7	3
Don't know	7	7	6	8	5	5	8	7

Q13: Which party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you think can do a better job handling the budget deficit?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Democrats	43	43	74	39	12	71	45	21
Republicans	37	39	12	36	73	15	31	60
Both equally (Vol.)	5	5	3	6	4	3	6	5
Neither (Vol.)	7	6	5	11	3	5	10	5
Don't know	8	7	6	8	8	6	8	9

Q14: Which party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you think can do a better job handling national security and the war on terrorism?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Democrats	26	25	50	19	4	42	27	12
Republicans	48	51	23	50	83	30	45	69
Both equally (Vol.)	10	10	10	12	5	10	12	6
Neither (Vol.)	5	4	5	9	1	5	6	3
Don't know	11	10	12	10	7	13	10	10

Q15: Do you think it is better for the country when one political party controls both the White House and Congress, or do you think it is better when the White House and Congress are divided between two different political parties?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
One party	30	32	27	31	40	24	25	43
Divided	60	60	66	59	51	66	67	49
Don't know	10	8	7	10	9	10	8	8

Q16: How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time, or hardly ever?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Just about always	6	6	3	2	10	3	6	7
Most of the time	33	34	26	34	43	31	32	38
Only some of time	51	50	62	51	41	56	53	47
Hardly ever	10	10	9	13	6	10	9	8

Q17: Do you think the policies of the Bush administration favor the rich, or favor the middle class, or favor the poor, or does the Bush administration treat all groups the same?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Rich	56	57	79	58	20	76	61	33
Middle class	11	10	6	12	18	10	11	14
Poor	1	1	-	-	2	2	-	1
All the same	26	27	9	26	51	7	21	46
Don't know	6	5	6	4	9	5	7	6

Q18: Do you think Bush cares more about protecting the interests of ordinary working people or protecting the interests of large business corporations?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Ordinary people	25	27	10	28	48	13	21	40
Corporations	55	53	77	54	24	77	58	33
Both (Vol.)	11	12	3	10	19	8	8	17
Don't know	9	8	10	8	9	2	13	10

Q19: Which do you think is more effective in boosting the nation's economy: an economic agenda focused on returning money to taxpayers through tax cuts, or an economic agenda focused on reducing the federal deficit and paying down the national debt?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Tax cuts	39	39	34	37	52	31	35	49
Reduce deficit/debt	51	52	58	55	39	60	57	42
Don't know	10	9	8	8	9	9	8	9

Q32: Do you approve or disapprove of George W. Bush's proposal to allow individuals to divert part of their Social Security payroll taxes into private accounts which they could personally invest in the stock market for their retirement?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve	48	49	31	47	70	35	45	63
Disapprove	44	45	64	45	22	60	46	30
Don't know	8	6	5	8	8	5	9	7

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO APPROVE OF BUSH'S PROPOSAL)

Q33: Would you still support this proposal if it meant a reduction in the guaranteed benefit retirees receive through the Social Security system, or would you be opposed to it?

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Support	51	54	27	60	64	34	40	69
Oppose	42	40	66	32	28	57	56	23
Don't know	7	6	7	8	8	9	4	8

COMBINED RESULTS OF Q32 AND Q33:

	ALL	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Approve proposal...								
Even if benefits reduced	25	26	8	28	45	12	18	43
But not if benefits reduced	20	19	21	15	20	20	25	15
Don't know, if benefits reduced	4	3	2	4	5	3	2	5
Disapprove proposal	44	46	64	45	22	60	46	30
Don't know	7	6	5	8	8	5	9	7

ELECTIONS

(Q57-Q63 ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS ONLY)

Q57: If the election for Congress were being held today, which party would you like to see win in your congressional district: the Democratic Party or the Republican Party? (INCLUDES LEANERS)

	REGISTERED VOTERS						
	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Democratic Party	47	86	40	7	71	53	23
Republican Party	39	4	40	88	18	29	68
Other party (Vol.)	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
Neither (Vol.)	4	3	4	1	3	7	1
Don't know	9	6	15	3	7	11	7

Q58: Do you think the U.S. representative in Congress who represents your district deserves to be reelected to another term, or not?

	REGISTERED VOTERS						
	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Deserves reelection	59	61	57	59	61	57	61
Doesn't deserve	20	19	22	24	19	21	21
Don't know	21	20	21	17	20	22	18

Q59: What issue will be most important to you when you decide which congressional candidate to vote for on November 5th? (ACCEPTED UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP FIVE RESPONSES SHOWN)

	REGISTERED VOTERS						
	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
Economy and jobs	28	27	31	22	28	33	22
Homeland security	11	10	10	12	7	14	10
Health care	9	10	10	6	12	7	7
Taxes	9	5	8	15	8	8	10
Education	9	11	12	6	13	10	6

Q60: If you knew that voting a particular candidate for Congress into office would help President Bush implement and pass his economic and political programs, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that particular candidate, or would it make no difference in how you would vote?

	REGISTERED VOTERS						
	RV	DEM	IND	REP	LIB	MOD	CON
More likely	37	16	35	72	17	29	61
No difference	42	45	45	25	44	49	32
Less likely	17	33	18	1	36	16	5
Don't know	4	6	2	2	3	6	2

(ASKED OF REGISTERED REPUBLICANS)

Q61: I realize that the 2004 presidential election is a long way off, but do you think George W. Bush should keep Dick Cheney on the ticket as vice president or do you think Bush should consider replacing Cheney with a different running mate? (IF ANOTHER CANDIDATE) Have you thought of who would replace Cheney? (IF SO) Who would that be?

	REGISTERED VOTERS			
	RV	REP	MOD	CON *
Keep Cheney	70	75	52	79
Replace him with...	18	14	32	9
Colin Powell	4	2	6	2
Elizabeth Dole	1	-	1	-
Rudy Giuliani	1	1	2	1
Condoleeza Rice	-	1	-	1
Other	2	1	6	-
Not sure whom	9	9	17	5
Don't know	12	11	16	12

* Base for this question is too small to break out some subgroups. "LIB/MOD" = political liberals and moderates.

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO WOULD REPLACE CHENEY)

Q62: What is the main reason you would like to see George W. Bush choose a different candidate for vice president? (ACCEPTED UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP FIVE RESPONSES SHOWN)

	RV *
Health problems	44
Don't like him	16
Dealings with Haliburton/Enron	16
Too close to big business	5
Too controversial	3

* Caution, small base: This question was asked of only 73 respondents.

(ASKED OF REGISTERED DEMOCRATS)

Q63: Thinking now about who you would like to see as the Democratic presidential nominee in 2004... If Al Gore were to run for president, would you definitely vote for Gore, probably vote for Gore, probably not vote for Gore or definitely not vote for Al Gore to be the Democratic presidential nominee in 2004?

	REGISTERED VOTERS			
	RV	DEM	LIB	MOD/CON *
For Gore (Net)	57	64	63	52
Definitely	25	29	28	22
Probably	32	35	35	29
Not for Gore (Net)	38	32	33	42
Probably not	18	19	19	18
Definitely not	20	13	14	25
Don't know	5	4	4	6

* Base for this question is too small to break out some subgroups. "Mod/Con" = political moderates and conservatives.

THE ECONOMY

(ASKED OF EVERYONE)

Q20: Generally speaking, do you think the nation's economy these days is doing well or badly?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Well	54	59	49	43	51	74	54	54
Badly	45	40	50	56	48	24	45	45
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO SAID ECONOMY IS DOING BADLY)

Q21: In general, who or what do you think should get the blame for the country's economic problems? (ACCEPTED UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP FOUR RESPONSES SHOWN)

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Corporate greed	24	30	19	21	25	21	28	17
Bush & his policies	24	21	26	39	18	-	18	31
9/11 attacks	17	20	15	13	15	24	21	11
GOPers in Congress	13	13	13	25	7	1	12	15

(ASKED OF EVERYONE)

Q22: 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?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
No recession	36	37	34	32	28	52	38	33
Recession (Net)	59	59	60	62	67	43	59	59
Mild recession	25	28	23	27	28	17	26	26
Moderate recession	23	21	24	20	26	21	25	19
Serious recession	11	9	13	15	12	5	8	15
Don't know	5	4	6	6	5	5	3	8

Q23: Six months from now, do you expect the nation's economy will be better than it is now, worse than it is now or about the same as it is now?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Better	38	45	32	25	40	54	45	29
Worse	15	13	17	21	15	9	14	18
About the same	43	39	46	50	42	33	39	47
Don't know	4	3	5	4	3	4	2	6

Q24: Would you describe the state of your own personal finances these days as secure or shaky?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Secure	65	67	63	58	69	76	75	52
Shaky	34	32	35	42	30	23	24	46
Don't know	1	1	2	-	1	1	1	2

Q25: Thinking about the major purchases people make—that I mean furniture, appliances, vacation trips, cars and things like that: In general, do you think now is an excellent time to buy such items, or a good time to buy such items, or not so good a time, or a poor time to buy such items?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Good time (Net)	56	63	50	44	59	69	64	47
Excellent	9	10	7	4	9	16	11	6
Good	47	52	43	40	50	54	53	41
Not good time (Net)	40	35	45	52	37	28	32	49
Not so good	29	25	33	37	29	21	23	36
Poor	11	10	12	15	8	7	9	14
Don't know	4	2	5	4	4	3	4	4

Q26: What is the most important action the government in Washington should take in order to help improve the nation's economy? (ACCEPTED UP TO TWO REPLIES) (TOP FIVE RESPONSES SHOWN)

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Provide jobs	16	16	16	19	17	11	14	19
Cut taxes	13	15	11	9	11	23	16	9
Reduce budget deficit	7	9	5	7	9	4	8	6
Cut waste/fraud	7	5	8	5	10	6	8	5
Clean up corporate fraud	5	7	4	3	7	6	8	2

Q27: Do you think President Bush and his administration have formulated a clear policy for dealing with the country's economic problems or do you think the Bush administration is reacting to events as they happen?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Clear policy	18	20	16	6	17	39	21	15
Reacting to events	72	72	72	88	74	51	71	73
Don't know	10	8	12	6	9	10	8	12

Q28: How closely do you follow the stock market: very closely, or somewhat closely, or not too closely, or not closely at all?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Closely (Net)	45	53	38	37	52	51	63	23
Very closely	14	18	11	10	15	20	22	5
Somewhat closely	31	35	27	27	37	31	41	18
Not closely (Net)	55	47	62	63	48	49	37	77
Not too closely	23	22	24	30	18	19	23	24
Not closely at all	32	25	38	33	30	30	14	53

Q29: Over the next 12 months, do you have a great deal of confidence that the stock market will do better, or some confidence, or very little, or no confidence at all that the stock market will do better?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Great deal/Some (Net)	66	74	58	56	69	79	74	56
A great deal	12	15	10	8	14	18	16	7
Some	54	59	48	48	55	60	58	49
Very little/None (Net)	27	23	32	35	26	17	23	33
Very little	20	17	24	23	20	15	20	21
None	7	6	8	12	6	2	3	12
Don't know	7	3	10	9	5	4	3	11

Q30: Would you say that the stock market is a relatively safe place or a relatively dangerous place to invest money?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Safe	28	30	25	25	25	38	35	18
Dangerous	58	56	59	62	59	48	47	72
Depends (Vol.)	11	12	11	9	13	12	16	6
Don't know	3	2	5	4	3	2	2	4

Q31: Do you own stock? That could be from buying stock privately through a broker, or online, or owning stock through a 401(k), or an IRA/Keogh account, or owning stock through mutual funds, or owning stock through some other way, or do you not own any stock at this time? (IF DO NOT OWN STOCK) Did you own stock but sold it in the last 12 months, or not?

	ALL	MEN	WOM	DEM	IND	REP	STK	N/STK
Own stock	56	56	56	49	57	65	100	-
Don't own (Net)	43	43	42	49	43	35	-	100
Didn't sell								
in last year	37	36	39	44	37	29	-	87
Sold in last year	6	8	3	5	6	7	-	13
Don't know	1	1	2	2	-	-	-	-

Q81: Have any of the following things happened to you, or to any member of your household, within the last 12 months: Has anyone been fired or laid off work, or lost part-time work, or was temporarily laid off, or had to accept a lower-paying position at work, or had work hours cut back, or had overtime work cut back, or have none of these things happened to you or to any member of your household? (IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE, RECORDED MOST SERIOUS)

	<u>ALL</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>WOM</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>STK</u>	<u>N/STK</u>
None	74	73	75	73	71	81	77	68
Fired/Laid off	12	14	10	10	15	9	9	16
Lost part-time work	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1
Temporarily laid off	4	2	5	6	3	1	3	5
Lower-paying position	2	2	3	2	5	1	2	3
Work hours cut back	4	4	3	5	2	3	3	5
Overtime cut back	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

(ASKED OF THOSE WHO HAD SOME LOSS OF WORK)

Q82: Was that a result of the September 11th attack or was it because of something else?

	<u>ALL</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>WOM</u>	<u>STK</u>	<u>N/STK</u> *
Result of 9/11	17	14	20	22	13
Something else	69	69	68	64	73
Combination (Vol.)	13	16	10	12	14
Don't know	1	1	2	2	-

* Base for this question is too small to break out some subgroups.

Tables compiled by RAY ENSLOW