

What do Iraqis want?

Iraqi attitudes on occupation, US withdrawal, Iraqi governments, and quality of life

Project on Defense Alternatives

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(This is a free-standing version of *Appendix 1* from PDA Briefing Report #17, January 2005: *The Iraqi election "bait and switch": faulty poll will not bring peace or US withdrawal.*)

1. When Should Forces Leave?

February 2004: 33 percent want withdrawal within a year; 40 percent, withdrawal once an Iraqi government is in place; 27 percent, a longer or more open-ended stay. (Oxford Research International)

March-April 2004: 57 percent, "leave immediately"; 36 percent, "stay longer". (Gallup)

June 2004: 41 percent, "immediate withdrawal"; 45 percent, withdrawal after election of a permanent government; 10 percent, 2 years or longer. (Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society/CPA).

June 2004: 30 percent desire immediate withdrawal, 51 percent want withdrawal after a government is elected, 13 percent said that Coalition forces should remain until stability was achieved. (Iraq Centre for Research & Strategic Studies).

June 2004: 53 percent say leave now or "within a few months" or "until an Interim Government is in place" or "in six months to a year"; 33.5 percent allow "more than one year" or "until permanent government is in place"; 13.6 percent, even longer if necessary. (Oxford Research International)

January 2005: 82 percent of Sunni Arabs and 69 percent of Shiites favor US withdrawal "either immediately or after an elected government is in place." (Zogby)

2. Attitudes toward US forces

February 2004: 56.3 percent of Iraqis somewhat or strongly oppose the presence of Coalition forces in Iraq. "Strongly oppose" versus "strongly support" is 2.5-to-1. (Oxford Research International)

March-April 2004: 58 percent say US forces have behaved very or fairly badly; 34 percent say US forces have behaved very or fairly well. The ratio between those saying "very bad" and those saying "very well": 3-to-1. (Gallup/CNN/USA Today).

March-April 2004: 30 percent say that attacks on US forces were somewhat or completely justified; another 22 percent said they were sometimes justified. (Gallup/CNN/USA Today).

May 2004: 87 percent express little or no confidence in US coalition forces; 92 percent view coalition forces as occupiers, rather than liberators or peace keepers. (Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society/CPA).

June 2004: 67 percent of Iraqis strongly or somewhat oppose the presence of Coalition troops; 30 percent support. (Iraq Centre for Research & Strategic Studies).

June 2004: 58 percent of Iraqis somewhat or strongly oppose the presence of Coalition forces in Iraq. Strongly oppose versus strongly support is 3-to-1. (Oxford Research International)

June 2004: 70 percent say Coalition troops are an occupying or exploiting force; 30 percent say a liberating or peacekeeping force. (Oxford Research International)

June 2004: Invasion of Iraq was absolutely right say 13.2 percent; somewhat right, 27.6 percent; somewhat wrong, 25.7 percent; absolutely wrong, 33.5 percent. (Oxford Research International).

January 2005: 53 percent of Sunni Arabs say ongoing attacks are a legitimate form of resistance. (Zogby)

3. Attitudes toward the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi government

February 2004, Oxford: 31 percent express confidence in CPA, 69 percent do not. 43 percent express confidence in Iraqi government, 57.3 percent do not. (Oxford Research International).

March-April: 42 percent of Iraqis judge CPA behavior to be fairly or very bad; 25 percent say it was fairly or very good. The ratio between those saying “very bad” and those saying “very good” is 4-to-1. (Gallup/CNN/USA Today).

May 2004: 85 percent of Iraqis express little or no confidence in the CPA; 66 percent express little or no confidence in the Iraqi Governing Council. (Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society/CPA).

June 2004: 25.6 percent express confidence in CPA, 74.4 percent do not; 42.7 percent express confidence in IGC, 57.3 percent do not. (Oxford Research International).

October 2004: 55 percent say Interim Government does not represent the interests of people like them “very much” or “at all”. Nearly 50 percent find the government to be ineffective; 43 percent find it to be effective – a sharp decline since the government took office in June 2004. (International Republican Institute.)

4. Is life better or worse?

March-April 2004: 46 percent say the US invasion has done more harm than good; 33 percent say more good. (Gallup).

March-April 2004: 42 percent say Iraq is better off today than before the invasion, 39 percent say worse, 17 percent say the same. (Gallup).

August 2004: 46 percent of Iraqis say their situation has improved since the fall of Hussein, 31 percent say it has grown worse, and 21 percent say it is unchanged. (International Republican Institute.)

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