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## **A Politically Weakened President Approaches Decision on War**

### **In Ipsos Public Affairs/*Cook Political Report* Poll, Bush Support Drops Dramatically**

*Between February 18-20 and March 4-6, 2003, Ipsos US Public Affairs interviewed for the Cook Political Report a representative sample of 2,009 adult Americans nationwide, including 1,545 registered voters. The margin of error for the combined surveys is  $\pm 2.2\%$  for all adults,  $\pm 2.5\%$  for registered voters.*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**, (March 10, 2003) — If the election were held today, only 39% of registered voters are sure they would vote for the reelection of President George W. Bush, and 34% would definitely vote for someone else, a five-point margin in the President's favor, in a poll conducted February 18-20 and March 4-6, 2003 among 1,545 registered voters. That is a dramatic decline in Bush's political standing domestically.

- A year ago, in the first quarter of 2002, Bush enjoyed a 34-point edge, 54%-20%.
- In January of this year, Bush enjoyed a 10-point edge, 41%-31%.
- A month ago, in the January 21-February 6 poll, Bush led by 9 points, 41%-32%.
- It does not look like this has hit bottom. In fact, among 781 registered voters interviewed March 4-6, 38% would definitely vote to re-elect Bush and 37% definitely voting for someone else—a statistical dead heat.

### ***Findings Now, Compared to January 7-23, 2003 Poll Standing***

Comparing current results from the March Ipsos/*Cook* polls with the January Ipsos/*Cook* polls shows how support for Bush's leadership has fallen among many groups of voters:

- Independent voters fell from + 7 (30% definitely Bush – 23% definitely someone else) to a 23%-23% split.
- Bush now loses in both the Northeast and the West (with a –12 drop in the West, and particularly in the Pacific Coast states, where Bush trails those voting for someone else by 29%-40% in the most recent poll)
- Not shown in the following tables, but significant: only 44% of whites would definitely vote to re-elect Bush, a figure that has trailed consistently and significantly below 50% in 2003.

## *By Gender and Age*

If the election were held today, would you...?

February 18-20 and March 4-6, 2003									
	All Voters	Male	Female	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65-74	75+
<b>Definitely vote to reelect George W. Bush for President</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Consider voting for someone else	24%	25%	23%	24%	31%	23%	25%	21%	19%
<b>Definitely vote for someone else for President</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>36%</b>
(DK/NS)	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	7%
<b>Feb/Mar MARGIN:</b>	<b>+ 5</b>	<b>+16</b>	<b>- 5</b>	<b>+/- 0</b>	<b>+ 9</b>	<b>+13</b>	<b>+ 1</b>	<b>+ 1</b>	<b>+ 2</b>

January 7-23, 2003									
	All Voters	Male	Female	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65-74	75+
<b>Definitely vote to reelect George W. Bush for President</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Consider voting for someone else	25%	25%	25%	36%	24%	26%	23%	20%	20%
<b>Definitely vote for someone else for President</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>37%</b>
(DK/NS)	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%	4%	8%
<b>Jan MARGIN:</b>	<b>+10</b>	<b>+22</b>	<b>- 1</b>	<b>+ 3</b>	<b>+16</b>	<b>+10</b>	<b>+12</b>	<b>+ 4</b>	<b>- 2</b>
<b>NET CHANGE, January to March 2003</b>	<b>- 5</b>	<b>- 6</b>	<b>- 4</b>	<b>- 3</b>	<b>- 7</b>	<b>+ 3</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>- 3</b>	<b>+ 4</b>

### *By Region and Party I.D.*

If the election were held today, would you...?

February 18-20 and March 4-6, 2003								
	All Voters	North-east	Mid-west	South	West	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
<b>Definitely vote to reelect George W. Bush for President</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Consider voting for someone else	24%	18%	30%	22%	26%	17%	24%	47%
<b>Definitely vote for someone else for President</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>23%</b>
(DK/NS)	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	7%
<b>Feb/Mar MARGIN:</b>	<b>+ 5</b>	<b>- 8</b>	<b>+18</b>	<b>+ 9</b>	<b>- 5</b>	<b>+69</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>+/-0</b>

January 7-23, 2003								
	All Voters	North-east	Mid-west	South	West	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
<b>Definitely vote to reelect George W. Bush for President</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>30%</b>
Consider voting for someone else	25%	31%	28%	22%	23%	20%	27%	39%
<b>Definitely vote for someone else for President</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>23%</b>
(DK/NS)	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	8%
<b>Jan MARGIN:</b>	<b>+10</b>	<b>+ 1</b>	<b>+11</b>	<b>+15</b>	<b>+ 7</b>	<b>+70</b>	<b>-49</b>	<b>+ 7</b>
<b>NET CHANGE, January to March 2003</b>	<b>- 5</b>	<b>- 9</b>	<b>- 7</b>	<b>- 6</b>	<b>-12</b>	<b>- 1</b>	<b>- 1</b>	<b>- 7</b>

These findings are confirmed in a separate study Ipsos Public Affairs is currently conducting on political and economic attitudes in 9 countries (the G-8 plus Spain), to be released in the next week. In the U.S. interviews in that study, when adults nationwide are asked whether they would vote for the Republican or Democratic candidate for President if the election were held today, 37% would vote Republican, 34% Democrat, with the rest saying it depends on the candidates, or they are not sure.

**For more information on this release, please contact:**

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**About Ipsos US Public Affairs**

*The survey was conducted by Ipsos US Public Affairs, the Washington, D.C.-based division of Ipsos, which is the world's fourth largest polling and market research organization, based in Paris. Ipsos US Public Affairs is a non-partisan, objective public affairs research organization made up of Democratic and Republican campaign and political polling veterans. It was established in Washington in August 2001, and it is led by Thomas Riehle, who has more than 15 years of experience as a political pollster in Washington. The Ipsos/Cook Political Report poll and the Ipsos Consumer Attitudes and Spending by Household (CASH) Index poll are usually conducted the first and third week of every month, as part of Ipsos US Public Affairs weekly omnibus polling service.*

*The political survey is designed in conjunction with Charlie Cook of the Cook Political Report. Founded in 1984, The Cook Political Report is an independent, non-partisan newsletter that analyzes elections for the U.S. House, Senate, governor and President as well as domestic American political trends. The New York Times has called the publication, "a newsletter that both parties consider authoritative" while the dean of the Washington political press corps, the Washington Post's David Broder has called Charlie Cook, its editor and publisher, "perhaps the best political handicapper in the nation." Cook also writes two weekly columns that appear in National Journal magazine and CongressDaily/AM and on nationaljournal.com, and serves as a political analyst for Cable News Network's show "Inside Politics." Researched and written by a staff of five based in Washington, D.C., the Cook Political Report's subscribers are primarily the lobbyists and managers for the political action committees of the nation's major corporations, trade associations and labor unions as well as by news organizations, foreign governments and others with an interest in detailed, impartial information and analysis of Congressional, gubernatorial and presidential elections.*