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Interviews: 1,003 adults  
Margin of error:  $\pm 3.1$   
Interview dates: June 14-16, 2004

**PBS FLASHPOINTS: JUNE 2004 IRAQ STUDY  
CONDUCTED BY IPSOS-PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

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## ***Was It Worth It? Americans Debate the Consequences of the Iraq War***

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*Between June 14-16, 2004, Ipsos-Public Affairs conducted a poll of 1,003 adults nationwide for Flashpoints USA with Bryant Gumbel and Gwen Ifill. The margin of error is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points.*

**Washington, DC, June 30, 2004** — In the days leading up to the handover of power to the interim Iraqi government, many Americans express ambivalence on the conduct and consequences of the war, according to an exclusive poll conducted by **Ipsos-Public Affairs** for the PBS program **Flashpoints USA with Bryant Gumbel and Gwen Ifill**.

### **Many Question If Iraqis Or Americans Are Any Safer Now**

Four in ten Americans (44%) say people in Iraq are safer now than before the war, although more say Iraqis are either less safe (27%) now, or that there has been no change (27%) in their situation. Furthermore, opinion is divided on whether people in the U.S. are more (30%) or less (31%) safe now than before the war (38% no change).

Two-thirds (65%) think there should be fewer troops in Iraq six months from now, but only 25% believe this will be the case. Seven-in-ten say there will be as many (33%) or more (38%) U.S. troops in Iraq at year's end.

### **Majorities Back Measures To Preserve Professional Military**

Half say their confidence in the U.S. military is unchanged (52%) as a result of what has gone on in Iraq (34% more confident, 13% less). Maintaining a professional military received widespread support: 80% support increasing pay and benefits to attract volunteers into active service.

Some feel that these military operations should not have had to rely so heavily on reserves; the public is split between those who agree (46%) and disagree (51%) that it was a mistake to have National Guard troops patrolling streets and guarding prisoners in



Iraq. More than two-thirds (68%) reject the institution of a draft to ensure sufficient numbers are in uniform in the future.

For many, questions about the role of the U.S. military in Iraq strike close to home – nearly half those interviewed (46%) say they personally know someone who has served in Iraq as part of the full-time armed forces or the National Guard, and one in ten (9%) report that they know someone who was injured or killed.

Having a personal connection to Iraq does appear to affect attitudes toward the military and the war. Those who know someone who has served in Iraq (58%) are somewhat more likely than those who have not (48%) to say it was “worth it” to go to war in Iraq. Those who have been personally affected are also:

- Less likely to say sending in the National Guard was a mistake (42%); and
- More likely to say their confidence in the military has gone up (40%).

Overall, half (54%) say the handling of the war will influence how they vote in the Presidential race; 31% say it will not. At present, more say Bush (50%) than Kerry (37%) would best handle the situation in Iraq from this point forward.

### **Seven Presidents For The Next War: Choose One**

If the U.S. were to be involved in a war next year, a quarter (25%) would pick George W. Bush from a list of seven wartime presidents as their preferred Commander-in-Chief. As many would like to see Franklin Delano Roosevelt (24%) in charge, followed by Lincoln (18%) and Truman (14%). Few would choose to put George H. W. Bush (6%), Lyndon B. Johnson (3%) or Woodrow Wilson (1%) at the helm.

As an historical event, the second Iraq war pales in comparison to the successful transition from the Cold War. By two-to-one, increased U.S. cooperation with former Cold War enemies like Russia and China (45%) outstrips the overthrow of Saddam Hussein (19%) as the United States’ most important foreign policy success of the past 15 years, and each of these represents a more popular foreign policy success than the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan (10%), NAFTA (8%), the first Gulf War (7%) or the intervention in Kosovo (4%).



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