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Interview dates: September 7-9, 2004  
Regular sample interviews: 1,001 adults, 837 registered voters  
Regular sample margin of error:  $\pm 3.1$  for all adults,  $\pm 3.5$  registered voters  
With additional interviews, 1,541 adults, 1,286 registered voters  
Full sample margin of error:  $\pm 2.5$  for all adults,  $\pm 2.7$  registered voters

#### THE ASSOCIATED PRESS POLL

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### *AP/Ipsos Poll: Bush Pulls Ahead on Post-Convention Surge*

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*The Associated Press Poll is conducted by Ipsos-Public Affairs. Between September 7-9, 2004, the AP/Ipsos poll interviewed a representative sample of 1,541 adults nationwide, including 1,268 registered voters. The margin of error is  $\pm 2.5$  for all adults,  $\pm 2.7$  for registered voters. Margin of error for subgroups may be higher.*

**Washington, D.C., September 13, 2004** — President George W. Bush has accomplished what challenger Senator John Kerry could not: He successfully used his party's convention to boost his standing in terms of both the public's view of his personal qualifications and total share of the vote.

<b>POLITICAL STUDY (INCLUDES ADDITIONAL SAMPLE)</b>
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#### **Bush-Cheney Break Longstanding Tie**

Since John Kerry became the Democratic Party's de facto nominee in March, the two parties' candidates have been running in a statistical tie. While Kerry was able to use the Democratic convention to improve the public's views of his personal qualities and lock in his existing supporters (see below), he did not virtually gain any additional net votes between the July and August surveys.

By contrast, this first AP/Ipsos poll conducted after the Republican convention shows that Bush and Cheney have increased their support among all registered voters by 6 percentage points, thus pulling significantly ahead of Kerry-Edwards for the first time (51%, 43% for Kerry-Edwards).

The edge gained by the Republican ticket is even wider when looking at likely voters (52% Bush-Cheney, 43% Kerry-Edwards). As noted in previous Ipsos-Public Affairs reports, if Kerry wants to pull ahead of the incumbent, he would need to mobilize his soft supporters – people who are generally the least likely to be relied upon to come out on election day – less well-educated, working class women, and especially those in the South.

Majorities of gun-owners (69%), people who attend religious services weekly (61%) and who are or live in a household with a veteran (58%) all support Bush-Cheney.

Among registered voters, “persuadables” who support neither candidate strongly or are undecided, have swung slightly from supporting Kerry last month (38% Bush, 45% Kerry) to being evenly split now (43% Bush, 39% Kerry).

**Likely voters - (73%)** Voted in 2000 AND rating of 8-10, OR; did not vote in 2000 because too young to vote AND rating of 8-10, OR; did not vote in 2000 for reason other than too young AND rating of 10.

Q. If the election for president and vice president were held today and the candidates were George W. Bush for President and Dick Cheney for Vice President, the Republicans, and John Kerry for President and John Edwards for Vice President, the Democrats, and Ralph Nader for President and Peter Camejo for Vice President, the Independents, for whom would you vote? (IF UNDECIDED/ NONE/NOT SURE, ASK:) Do you lean more toward...?

	REGISTERED VOTERS				LIKELY VOTERS
	9/7 - 9/04	8/3 - 5/04	7/6 - 7/04	6/7 - 9/04 <sup>1</sup>	9/7 - 9/04
Bush-Cheney, the Republicans .....	50	44	49	44	51
Undecided, lean Bush-Cheney .....	1	2	1	1	1
Kerry-Edwards, the Democrats .....	42	45	46	46	42
Undecided, lean Kerry-Edwards .....	1	2	-	1	1
Nader-Camejo, the Independents .....	2	3	2	6	2
Undecided, lean Nader-Camejo .....	-	1	-	-	-
(NOT READ) None/other candidate .....	2	2	1	1	2
Not sure .....	2	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Would Vote/Lean Bush-Cheney ....</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Total Would Vote/Lean Kerry-Edwards .</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Total Would Vote/Lean Nader-Camejo...</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup>In June, the question did not mention Peter Camejo.

(ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SELECT A CANDIDATE IN Q.4a.)

Q. In November, will you definitely vote for those candidates, probably vote for those candidates, or do you think you could change your mind before the election in November?

	WOULD VOTE FOR BUSH-CHENEY			WOULD VOTE FOR KERRY-EDWARDS		
	9/7 - 9/04	8/3 - 5/04	7/6 - 7/04	9/7 - 9/04	8/3 - 5/04	7/6 - 7/04
Definitely will vote for candidates .....	74	72	68	72	68	59
Probably will vote for candidates .....	19	18	20	19	22	27
Could change mind .....	7	9	11	9	9	14
Not sure .....	-	1	1	-	1	-

### Patterns of Change in Bush Support

Support for Bush-Cheney has particularly risen among:

- Those aged 50-64 (52%; from 44% in August).
- Whites (57%, from 50%); non-whites continue to favor Kerry (24% Bush, 67% Kerry).
- People with a high school education or less (52%, from 41%), especially men (55%, from 40%) – this tends to be a changeable group.
- The South (58%, from 46%), and the Oil Patch in particular (69%, from 48%).
- Rural residents (59%, from 48%).
- People with moderate household incomes.

### Security Issues Work to Bush's Favor

Compared to this time last month, Americans are slightly more likely to approve of Bush's overall job as President (52%; +3 points), his handling of the economy (50%, +4 points), and also his foreign policy and the war on terrorism (54%, +3 points).

While the public at large remains fairly divided over Bush's performance, the administration has been able to refocus voters' attention away from economic issues, where Kerry has tended to be seen as stronger, and toward national security issues where Bush has had the advantage.

- Q. Overall, do you approve, disapprove or have mixed feelings about the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President? **(IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE, ASK:)** Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? **(IF HAVE MIXED FEELINGS OR NOT SURE, ASK:)** If you had to choose, do you lean more toward approve or disapprove?

REGISTERED VOTERS							
	9/7 - 9/04	8/3 - 5/04	7/5 - 7/04	6/7 - 9/04	5/3 - 5/04	4/5 - 7/04	3/1 - 3/04
Strongly approve.....	33	30	31	27	27	28	28
Somewhat approve.....	12	10	9	12	11	9	10
Lean toward approval.....	8	9	10	9	11	11	10
Still have mixed feelings.....	1	1	1	2	2	2	3
Lean toward disapproval.....	11	13	11	13	14	13	16
Somewhat disapprove.....	4	5	5	7	5	5	4
Strongly disapprove.....	31	32	33	30	30	32	29
Not sure.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Approve.....</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Total Disapprove.....</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Mean Rating<sup>1</sup>.....</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>

- Q. And when it comes to **(READ ISSUE)** do you approve or disapprove or have mixed feelings about the way George W. Bush is handling that issue?

**(IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE, ASK: )** Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? **(IF HAVE MIXED FEELINGS OR NOT SURE, ASK:)** If you had to choose, do you lean more toward approve or disapprove?

REGISTERED VOTERS											
	Strongly Ap- prove	Some- what Ap- prove	Lean Toward Ap- proval	Still Have Mixed Feelings	Lean Toward Disap- proval	Some- what Disap- prove	Strongly Disap- prove	Not Sure	Total Ap- prove	Total Disap- prove	Mean- Rating <sup>1</sup>
Handling the economy											
9/7-9/04 .....	27	15	8	1	9	7	33	-	50	49	4.0
8/3-5/04 .....	26	14	7	1	8	10	33	1	46	52	3.8
7/5-7/04 .....	29	13	7	1	10	9	31	-	49	50	4.0
6/7-9/04 .....	23	15	9	2	11	9	30	1	47	50	3.9
5/3-5/04 .....	24	13	6	2	13	11	31	-	43	55	3.8
4/5-7/04 .....	23	12	9	2	11	9	34	-	45	53	3.7
3/1-3/04 .....	23	13	9	2	10	10	33	-	45	53	3.7

REGISTERED VOTERS

Q.3 (cont.)	Strongly Ap- prove	Some- what Ap- prove	Lean Toward Ap- proval	Still Have Mixed Feelings	Lean Toward Disap- proval	Some- what Disap- prove	Strongly Disap- prove	Not Sure	Total Ap- prove	Total Disap- prove	Mean- Rating <sup>1</sup>
<b>Handling domestic issues like health care, education, the environment and energy</b>											
9/7-9/04 .....	21	15	10	2	8	9	34	1	46	51	3.7
8/3-5/04 .....	21	15	9	1	12	8	34	-	45	54	3.7
7/5-7/04 .....	20	16	10	1	10	7	36	-	46	52	3.7
6/7-9/04 .....	16	14	11	1	13	10	34	1	41	57	3.5
5/3-5/04 .....	17	16	8	2	13	9	34	1	42	55	3.6
4/5-7/04 .....	18	16	10	2	11	7	35	1	43	53	3.6
3/1-3/04 .....	17	16	12	2	13	9	31	-	45	53	3.7

REGISTERED VOTERS

Q.3 (cont.)	Strongly Ap- prove	Some- what Ap- prove	Lean Toward Ap- proval	Still Have Mixed Feelings	Lean Toward Disap- proval	Some- what Disap- prove	Strongly Disap- prove	Not Sure	Total Ap- prove	Total Disap- prove	Mean- Rating <sup>1</sup>
<b>(ASKED OF HALF THE REGISTERED VOTERS)</b>											
<b>Handling foreign policy issues and the war on terrorism</b>											
9/7-9/04 .....	42	8	4	1	10	6	29	-	54	44	4.4
8/3-5/04 .....	38	7	6	-	12	7	30	-	51	49	4.2
7/5-7/04 .....	37	8	7	1	10	6	31	-	51	48	4.2
6/7-9/04 .....	36	8	7	1	15	6	27	-	51	48	4.2
5/3-5/04 .....	32	9	10	3	15	6	25	-	50	47	4.2
4/5-7/04 .....	38	10	7	1	13	5	26	-	55	43	4.4
<b>(PRIOR TO APRIL 5-7, 2004 - THIS ITEM WAS ASKED OF ALL THE REGISTERED VOTERS)</b>											
3/1-3/04 .....	36	12	6	1	13	7	25	-	54	45	4.4
<b>(ASKED OF THE OTHER HALF OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS)</b>											
<b>Handling the war on terrorism</b>											
9/7-9/04 .....	40	9	6	2	12	5	26	-	55	43	4.5
8/3-5/04 .....	34	11	6	1	12	7	29	-	51	48	4.2
4/5-7/04 .....	32	10	9	2	12	5	30	-	51	47	4.1

<sup>1</sup>Mean rating is calculated by assigning each response except "not sure" a value from 1 to 7, with "strongly approve" receiving a value of 7, and "strongly disapprove" a value of 1.

**CANDIDATE QUALITIES STUDY (REGULAR SAMPLE ONLY)**

**Security Issues Gain Importance as Election Issue**

In March of this year, the economy and jobs (35%) topped the list among registered voters as the issue most likely to influence how they vote in November; another 16% named health care. A third named either national security (22%) or the war in Iraq (11%) as the most important issues. Now, when presented with the same list, registered voters are evenly divided between those who emphasize national security (30%) and Iraq (17%) and those who prioritize the economy (30%) and health care (13%).

Q. I'm going to read you a list of ISSUES and I'm going to read the list twice. Please tell me which ONE issue is MOST important to you in deciding how you will vote for president in November.

	<b>REGISTERED VOTERS</b>	
	<u>9/7- 9/04</u>	<u>3/19- 21/04</u>
The economy and jobs.....	30	35
National security .....	30	22
The war in Iraq .....	17	11
Health care .....	13	16
Education.....	5	8
Taxes .....	3	5
(NOT READ) Other.....	1	2
Not sure .....	1	1

Men under 45 tend to give top priority to jobs and the economy (39%) while men over 45 stress national security (36%). In addition to the economy, security and Iraq, women under 45 place more importance on education (11%); a quarter (24%) of women 45 and over say health care will be the most important issue in deciding how they will vote.

Most (87%) of those who say national security issues will define their vote prefer Bush-Cheney. Kerry-Edward leads among those who say the economy and jobs (62%), health care (59%) and the war in Iraq (54%) are their top issues, but the Democratic team does not dominate these issues the way Bush-Cheney captures national security voters.

When deciding which presidential candidate to support, two-thirds (64%) of voters say protecting the country is a more important issue than creating jobs (31%).

Q. In general, if you had to choose, which of the following issues would be more important to you in deciding how you will vote for president...

	<b>REGISTERED VOTERS</b>
Protecting the country .....	64
Creating jobs .....	31
(NOT READ) Both equally.....	4
Not sure.....	1

Under these priorities, Bush clearly has an edge over Kerry. Six in ten (59%) say Bush would do a better job protecting the country than Kerry (36%) -- a 23 point advantage for the incumbent.

Q. Who do you trust to do a better job of protecting the country?

	REGISTERED VOTERS			
	9/7- 9/04	8/3- 5/04	4/5- 7/04	3/19- 21/04
George W. Bush .....	59	52	53	58
John Kerry .....	36	43	37	35
(NOT READ) Both would do well .....	1	1	1	1
(NOT READ) Neither .....	2	3	5	4
Not sure .....	2	1	4	2

So far in this campaign, John Kerry has had an advantage over Bush on the jobs front. While Kerry (50%) still has a lead over Bush (44%) on being better able to create jobs, this advantage has narrowed since early August (+6, down from +16).

Q. Who do you think will be BETTER at creating jobs?

	REGISTERED VOTERS		
	9/7- 9/04	8/3- 5/04	3/19- 21/04
George W. Bush .....	44	39	37
John Kerry .....	50	55	53
(NOT READ) Both would do well .....	1	1	1
(NOT READ) Neither .....	3	3	6
Not sure .....	2	2	3

### Voters Say Issues More Important than Personal Qualities

By a narrow majority, registered voters say that when choosing a presidential candidate, their positions on specific issues (55%) are more important than their personal qualities such as experience and leadership ability (43%). Senior citizens age 65 and up are most likely to place importance on personal qualities (57%), while voters under 30 say issues matter most (69%). However, an even more interesting split is that those who stress personal qualities support Bush-Cheney (65%), while people who say issues are most important favor Kerry-Edwards by a narrow majority (52%).

Q. Which is more important to you in choosing a candidate for president:

	REGISTERED VOTERS
Their personal qualities such as experience and leadership ability .....	43
Their positions on specific issues .....	55
Not sure .....	2

Voters do have ideas about the characteristics they prefer in candidates. Not surprisingly, honesty (38%) tops the list, followed by intelligence, decisiveness, and strength. Voters who want an honest candidate are give a slight lead to Bush-Cheney (53%) over Kerry-Edwards (41%), while those who prefer a decisive (74%) and strong (71%) candidate mostly back Bush-

Cheney. Kerry-Edwards lead among those who want an intelligent candidate (72%). Few respondents say it is most important that a candidate be likeable.

- Q. Now I'm going to read you a list of words that could describe the personal qualities of a candidate, and I'm going to read the list twice. Please tell me which ONE quality is MOST important as you decide how you will vote for president in November. Is it that he is...

	REGISTERED VOTERS
Honest.....	38
Intelligent.....	23
Decisive.....	21
Strong.....	13
Likeable.....	2
Stubborn.....	1
(NOT READ) Other .....	1
Not sure.....	1

However, this list isn't necessarily in synch with voters' priorities. Bush (56%) and Kerry (54%) are even in respect to their perceived honesty, and a wider majority describe Kerry (84%) as intelligent than Bush (63%). However, more say Bush (73%) is "strong" than say Kerry is (54%), and Bush (75%) has a huge advantage over Kerry (37%) on being seen as decisive.

- Q. Now I'm going to read you some words that might be used to describe a person. As I read each word, please tell me whether you think the word describes George W. Bush, or not. Now, please tell me whether you think the following words describe John Kerry, or not.

REGISTERED VOTERS			
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
<b>Honest</b>			
George W. Bush			
9/7-9/04.....	56	43	1
8/3-5/04.....	53	45	2
7/5-7/04.....	53	46	1
John Kerry			
9/7-9/04.....	54	44	2
8/3-5/04.....	60	37	3
7/5-7/04.....	53	40	7
<b>Intelligent</b>			
George W. Bush			
9/7-9/04.....	63	36	1
8/3-5/04.....	63	37	-
7/5-7/04.....	63	36	1
John Kerry			
9/7-9/04.....	84	15	1
8/3-5/04.....	86	13	1
7/5-7/04.....	83	14	3

**Decisive**

George W. Bush			
9/7-9/04.....	75	24	1
8/3-5/04.....	68	30	2
7/5-7/04.....	67	31	2
John Kerry			
9/7-9/04.....	37	61	2
8/3-5/04.....	46	50	4
7/5-7/04.....	45	49	6

**Strong**

George W. Bush			
9/7-9/04.....	73	27	-
8/3-5/04.....	70	29	1
John Kerry			
9/7-9/04.....	54	44	2
8/3-5/04.....	59	39	2

**Likeable**

George W. Bush			
9/7-9/04.....	70	30	-
8/3-5/04.....	67	32	1
7/5-7/04.....	66	33	1
John Kerry			
9/7-9/04.....	60	39	1
8/3-5/04.....	67	32	1
7/5-7/04.....	62	36	2

**Stubborn**

George W. Bush			
9/7-9/04.....	75	24	1
8/3-5/04.....	76	22	2
John Kerry			
9/7-9/04.....	39	57	4
8/3-5/04.....	43	50	7

Looking at trends over the past few months, Kerry came out of the Democratic convention with improved standings on honesty and likeability, yet lagged Bush on decisiveness and strength. A month on, Kerry has generally fallen back to July levels and is now seen as less decisive (37%; 45% in July).

Bush went into the Republican convention with strong numbers, and has held steady or gained ground, particularly on being decisive (75%, from 68%). Even on his weakest quality, a majority (56%) say Bush is honest (43% say he is not).



### Bush Leads Kerry on Values

Voters are somewhat more likely to say Bush (57%) shares their values than say Kerry does (47%). Independents (those that identify with neither party) are split on whether Bush (46% yes, 48% no) and Kerry (45%-46%) share their values; persuadable voters tend to say both do (Bush 55%; Kerry 51%)

Q. Does George W. Bush/ John Kerry share your VALUES, or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
George W. Bush.....	57	41	2
John Kerry .....	47	49	4

### REGISTERED VOTERS/PARTY IDENTIFICATION (INCLUDES ADDITIONAL SAMPLE)

### More Favorable Environment for Republicans

Americans continue to say the country is headed down the wrong track (52%), rather than in the right direction (44%). However, the gap has narrowed since last month, with optimism higher than at any point since the presidential race took shape last March. Likely voters are even more closely divided (48% right direction, 49% wrong track).

Q. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	<u>ALL ADULTS</u>						
	<u>9/7 - 9/04</u>	<u>8/3 - 5/04</u>	<u>7/5 - 7/04</u>	<u>6/7 - 9/04</u>	<u>5/3 - 5/04</u>	<u>4/5 - 7/04</u>	<u>3/1 - 3/04</u>
Right direction.....	44	39	41	40	38	38	35
Wrong track .....	52	59	56	56	58	57	60
Not sure .....	4	2	3	4	4	5	5

In recent months, there has been a narrow preference for Democratic control of Congress. Now, registered voters and likely voters both express a narrow preference for Republican control. Similarly, more registered voters now (49%) than a month ago (43%) identify themselves as Republicans, and the number of self-identified Democrats has declined (45% now, 51% in early August).

Q. And if the election for Congress were held today, would you want to see the Republicans or Democrats win control of Congress?

	<u>REGISTERED VOTERS</u>							<u>LIKELY VOTERS</u>
	<u>9/7 - 9/04</u>	<u>8/3 - 5/04</u>	<u>7/5 - 7/04</u>	<u>6/7 - 9/04</u>	<u>5/3 - 5/04</u>	<u>4/5 - 7/04</u>	<u>3/1 - 3/04</u>	<u>9/7 - 9/04</u>
Republicans .....	47	44	43	42	41	43	43	48
Democrats.....	45	48	47	47	50	46	44	44
Neither (VOL).....	5	6	6	7	6	8	8	5
Not sure.....	3	2	4	4	3	3	5	3

NOTE: Prior to May 3-5, 2004, this question was asked after Q.3 and before the Q.4 series.

<sup>1</sup>In the fourth quarter 2003, this question was asked only once in October and once in December (2,294 registered voters).

Two-thirds of Americans say they have quite a bit (31%) or a great deal of interest (36%) in the news about the campaign for President. Most strong Bush-Cheney (76%) and Kerry-Edwards (81%) supporters have interest in the campaign, as do two-thirds (65%) of weak Kerry backers and half (51%) of weak Bush supporters. Independents (52%) and undecided voters (55%) tend to be paying “only some” or less attention.

Q. How much interest do you have in following news about the campaign for President, a great deal, quite a bit, only some, very little, or no interest at all?

	<b>ALL ADULTS</b>
A great deal.....	36
Quite a bit.....	31
Only some.....	20
Very little.....	7
No interest at all.....	6
Not sure.....	-
<b>Total Great Deal/Quite a Bit</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Total Only Some or Less</b>	<b>33</b>

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