

# **A COUNTRY DIVIDED ON WAR IN IRAQ**

## **REGIONAL DIFFERENCES OFFER SHARP CONTRASTS**

*Now That War Has Started Majority (59%) of Canadians Glad  
Country Decided To Stay Out – But 45% Say Canada Should  
Now Join Military Effort*

*While Two-Thirds (67%) Say That Not Siding with United States  
Shows Canada as Independent on the World Stage, Half (47%)  
Feel We've Turned Our Back on Closest Friend, and Six in Ten  
(61%) Say Decision Will Have Serious Economic Consequences  
For Canada*

*Approval (56%) of Prime Minister's Handling of Iraq Situation  
Declines 10 Points In Week*



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*Now That War Has Started Majority (59%) of Canadians Glad Country Decided To Stay Out – But 45% Say Canada Should Now Join Military Effort*

*While Two-Thirds (67%) Say That Not Siding with United States Shows Canada as Independent on the World Stage, Half (47%) Feel We've Turned Our Back on Closest Friend, and Six in Ten (61%) Say Decision Will Have Serious Economic Consequences For Canada Approval (56%) of Prime Minister's Handling of Iraq Situation Declines 10 Points In Week*

Toronto, ONTARIO (Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003) – After a week of non-stop live real-time war coverage from Iraq and where the United States Ambassador to Canada expressed the American government's disappointment over Canada's position of not being a part of the 'coalition of the willing', a full majority (59%) of Canadians say that now that they see what's happening in the war they're glad that Canada has decided to stay out of the military action. Just under half (45%) of Canadians hold the view that even though Canada did not initially join the U.S.-led coalition, now is the time for us to come aboard and offer our military support. This is according to the latest Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail poll released this evening.

Regionally, there are sharp contrasts between the views of Quebecers and those in the rest of the country. Eight in ten (83% - 64% strongly) Quebecers agree that they are glad Canada has



stayed out of the conflict, while just a bare majority (52%) in the rest of the country share this position. As for the view that Canada should now step in and offer military support for the U.S. coalition, half (49%) of Canadians outside of Quebec agree with this proposition, while just 34% of Quebecers do. In fact, one in two (49%) of Quebecers strongly disagree with this position.

Two-thirds (67%) of Canadians express the view that by not going along with the United States, Canada has shown that it is an independent player on the world stage. But half (47%) of Canadians feel that by not participating in the U.S.-led coalition that we have turned our backs on Canada's closest friend at a time of need. In addition, six in ten (61%) feel that the government's decision not to participate as a member of the U.S.-led coalition will have serious, negative economic consequences for Canada.

As for what role Canada should now play in the Iraq situation, nine in ten (91%) agree that Canada should be involved in efforts to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Iraq.

And finally, while Canadians in general may be supportive of the position that the Canadian government has taken, approval (56%) of the Prime Minister's handling of the Iraq situation has declined a significant 10 points since last week's polling.

Many of the results concerning support or opposition to the conflict, or attitudes concerning the United States, are sharply different depending on which region of the country is examined.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail poll conducted between March 25<sup>th</sup> and March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,000 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data*

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*were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.*

## ***Majority (59%) of Canadians Glad Canada Decided To Stay Out of Iraq Conflict***

After a week of non-stop real-time war coverage live from Iraq, a full majority (59%) of Canadians say that now that they see what's happening in the War, they are glad that Canada decided to stay out of it. In contrast four in ten (38%) disagree with this position.

- Regionally, there are sharp contrasts between the views of Quebecers and those in the rest of the country. Eight in ten (83% - 64% strongly) Quebecers agree that they are glad Canada has stayed out of the conflict, while just 52% in the rest of the country share this position.
- After Quebec, those most likely to hold the position that they are glad Canada has stayed out of the conflict are residents of Atlantic Canada (60%), British Columbia (57%) Saskatchewan/Manitoba (56%), and Ontario (50%). Albertans (40%) are the least likely to hold this position.
- Women (66%) are more likely to agree with this position than are men (52%).
- Younger (71%) Canadians are more likely than either their older (55%) or middle aged (54%) counterparts to agree with this viewpoint.
- Canadians in lower income households (70%) are more likely than those in middle (60%) and upper (51%) income households to say they are glad the Canada has stayed out of the conflict.

However, just under half (45%) of Canadians hold the view that even though Canada did not initially join the U.S.-led coalition, now is the time for us to come aboard and offer our military support. This compares to a slim majority (53%) who disagrees that Canada should follow this path.

- Half (49%) of Canadians outside of Quebec agree with this proposition, while just 34% of Quebecers hold this viewpoint. In fact, one in two (49%) of Quebecers strongly disagree with this position.
- Agreement with this position, is strongest in Atlantic Canada (58%) and Alberta (56%) where full majorities express agreement, followed by Saskatchewan/Manitoba (51%), Ontario (47%) and British Columbia (43%).
- Middle aged (48%) and older (48%) Canadians are more likely to say that Canada should now join the coalition than are younger (41%) Canadians.

### ***Two-Thirds (67%) Believe Canada Has Show It Is An Independent Player on World Stage***

Two-thirds (67%) of Canadians express the view that by not going along with the United States, Canada has shown that it is an independent player on the world state. One in three (30%) disagree with this position.

- Quebecers (80%) lead the pack in agreement with this position, followed by Atlantic Canada (68%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (68%), British Columbia (68%), Ontario (61%) and Alberta (58%).
- Women (71% versus 63% of men), younger (73% versus 66% of middle aged and 63% of older) Canadians and those from lower income households (74% versus 65% from middle



income households and 63% from upper income households) are more likely to believe this to be the case.

***Half (47%) Feel Canada Has Turned Back on Closest Friend in Time of Need and Six in Ten (61%) Say Decision Will Have Serious Economic Consequences For Canada***

Half (47%) of Canadians feel that by not participating in the U.S.-led coalition that we have turned our backs on Canada's closest friend at a time of need, while slightly more (51%) disagree with this view.

- Albertans (66%) are the most likely to feel that this is the case, compared to the views of residents of Atlantic Canada (51%), Ontario (49%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (49%), British Columbia (45%) and Quebec (36%).
- Middle aged (51%) Canadians are more likely than their younger (43%) counterparts to hold this view.
- Agreement with this view is higher among Canadians from upper income households (53%) than among those from lower income households (41%).

During a week in which U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci criticized Canada's position on the U.S. war in Iraq, six in ten (61%) feel that the Canadian government's decision not to participate as a member of the U.S.-led coalition will have serious, negative economic consequences for Canada. However, four in ten (37%) do not believe that this will occur.

- Canadians outside of Quebec (64%) are more likely than those in Quebec (50%) to feel that this will occur.



- Older (67%) and middle aged (62%) Canadians are more likely than are younger (53%) Canadians to say that Canada will suffer serious economic consequences for deciding not to participate in the U.S.-led coalition.
- There is no difference between household income groups regarding this position.

### ***Most Canadians (91%) Believe Canada Should Be Involved in Providing Humanitarian Aid***

As for what role Canada should now play in the Iraq situation, nine in ten (91%) agree that Canada should be involved in efforts to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Iraq, while eight percent disagrees.

- Ninety-two percent of Canadians outside of Quebec agree with this position compared to 87% of Quebecers.
- Canadians from upper income households (94%) are more likely than Canadians in lower (88%) income households to agree with this viewpoint.

### ***Approval (56%) of Prime Minister's Handling of Iraq Situation Declines 10 Points In Week***

And finally, while Canadians in general may be supportive of the position that the government has taken, approval (56%) of the Prime Minister's handling of the Iraq situation has declined a significant 10 points since last week's polling. Four in ten (42%) disapprove of Prime Minister Chretien's performance on this issue.

- Quebecers (73%) are the most likely to approve of the Prime Minister's handling of the situation. This compares to the position of residents of British Columbia (57%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (56%), Atlantic Canada (54%) and Ontario (50%). Albertans



(33%) are the least likely to approve of the Prime Ministers performance on this issue. In fact, two-thirds (64%) of Albertans disapprove of the Prime Ministers handling of the situation.

- Younger (65%) Canadians are more likely to express approval than are middle aged (52%) or older (51%) Canadians.
- Women (61%) are more likely to approve of the Prime Ministers performance than are men (50%).
- Canadians from lower income households (61%) are more likely than their counterparts in upper income households (51%) to express approval.

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

*John Wright  
Senior Vice-President  
Ipsos-Reid Public Affairs  
(416) 324-2900*

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