

**CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING**

# **Canadian Attitudes after the Conflict in Iraq**

## **Report**

May 2003



## 1.0 Study Highlights

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- The opinion of Canadians towards the United States has shifted.

Question: *Now that the regime of Saddam Hussein has been destroyed, do you think that military action by the US and its allies ...?*

n=1504	...was justified	...was not justified	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	46%	41%	12%

- More than half of Canadians believe that the world in which we live is even more dangerous than before.

Question: *As a result of recent military action in Afghanistan and in Iraq, do you think ...?*

n=1504	...the world is a safer place	...the world is a more dangerous place	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	29%	58%	13%

- Canadians are quite critical towards the United States.

- The world should work together in the re-construction of Iraq.

Question: *Turning now to the re-construction of Iraq, do you think the following should or should not be involved...?*

n=1504	Oui
The United Nations	79%
The US and its allies	75%
Arab countries	70%
Countries which opposed the war	58%
Don't know / Refusal	6%

- American foreign policy has a negative effect on Canada.

Question: *Generally, do you think American foreign policy has a positive effect, a negative effect or no effect at all on Canada?*

n=1504	Positive	Negative	No effect	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	20%	50%	21%	10%

## 2. Results

### 2.1 The opinion of Canadians towards the United States has shifted.

The fall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq has created a shift in Canadian public opinion in favour of the American military intervention. In fact, only 33% of Canadians felt last March that a war against Iraq was justified while 48% felt that it was not. Today, the proportion of Canadians who believe that the military intervention of the United States and its allies was justified has climbed to 46% compared to 41% who believe the contrary.

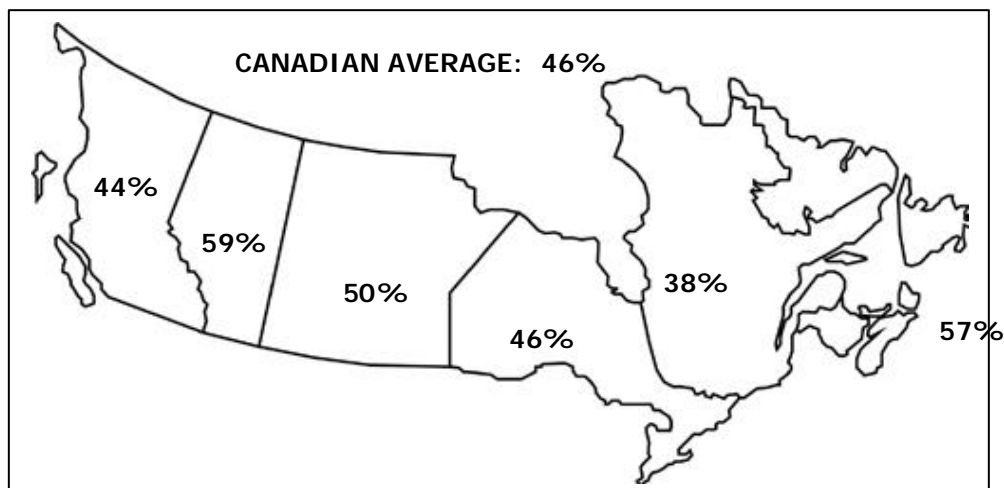
Only in Quebec, a majority of Quebecers (51%) still maintains that the war was not justified. However, here too, the proportion is much lower than it was two months ago when it stood at 72%.

Women (45%), individuals in the 18-24 age group (50%), francophones (50%) and allophones (49%) are most likely to believe that the war against Iraq was not justified.

Question: Now that the regime of Saddam Hussein has been destroyed, *do you think that military action by the US and its allies ...?*

n=1504	...was justified	...was not justified	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	57%	28%	15%
Quebec	38%	51%	11%
Ontario	46%	39%	15%
Prairies	50%	42%	8%
Alberta	59%	37%	5%
British Columbia	44%	42%	14%
Canada	46%	41%	12%

### Distribution of Canadians who believe that military action by the United States and its allies was justified



## 2.2 More than half of Canadians believe that the world in which we live is even more dangerous than before.

According to 58% of Canadians, the world in which we live is even more than dangerous than before as a result of the recent military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Inversely, 29% of the Canadian population feels that the world is safer since these events and this, particularly, in the Atlantic Provinces where a significantly higher proportion of respondents are of this opinion (42%). Anglophones (31%) and men (36%) are more likely than francophones or allophones (24%) or women (21%) to have an increased sense of security.

Question: *As a result of recent military action in Afghanistan and in Iraq, do you think ...?*

n=1504	...the world is a safer place	...the world is a more dangerous place	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	42%	46%	12%
Quebec	26%	65%	9%
Ontario	28%	59%	12%
Prairies	25%	55%	20%
Alberta	35%	46%	19%
British Columbia	24%	58%	18%
Canada	29%	58%	13%

## 2.3 Canadians are quite critical towards the United States.

Canadians tend to be quite critical towards American actions as illustrated in the following table.

Question: *Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:*  
n=1504

The US are too keen to use military force in other countries							
	Canada	Atl. Provs.	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	B.C.
Agree	61%	52%	74%	55%	56%	58%	62%
Disagree	31%	41%	22%	34%	36%	34%	25%
Don't know/Ref	9%	7%	3%	12%	8%	9%	13%
The threat of terrorism has been significantly reduced by the war							
	Canada	Atl. Provs.	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	B.C.
Agree	26%	34%	22%	27%	21%	23%	28%
Disagree	67%	64%	74%	63%	72%	68%	64%
Don't know/Ref	7%	2%	4%	10%	7%	9%	8%
There can be no peace in the region without a settlement of the Israel/Palestine issue							
	Canada	Atl. Provs.	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	B.C.
Agree	71%	69%	74%	70%	78%	69%	66%
Disagree	16%	18%	17%	16%	11%	19%	17%
Don't know/Ref	13%	13%	9%	15%	10%	12%	17%
Only the US and its allies should pay to rebuild Iraq, not the countries which opposed the war							
	Canada	Atl. Provs.	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	B.C.
Agree	39%	39%	45%	36%	37%	42%	33%
Disagree	55%	57%	51%	55%	56%	52%	59%
Don't know/Ref	7%	3%	4%	9%	6%	6%	9%

More than three in five Canadians (61%) are of the opinion that the United States are too keen to use military force in other countries; 31% believe the contrary. There are more men (37%), anglophones (33%) and Ontarians (34%) among those who do not agree with this point of view.

As far as the threat of terrorism is concerned, two thirds of Canadians (67%) consider that this threat has not been significantly reduced by the war; 26% feel that it has. Women (71%), francophones (73%) and Quebecers (74%) are more likely to say that the threat of terrorism remains despite the war.

Furthermore, 71% of the Canadian population believes that peace in that region of the world is impossible as long as the Israel-Palestine issue has not been settled, in comparison to 16% who say the contrary.

Lastly, the majority of respondents interviewed (55%) do not feel that the United States and their allies should pay for the re-construction of Iraq on their own. 39% believe that the countries who were opposed to the war should not have to finance the re-construction. This opinion is shared by 45% of Quebecers, 46% of francophones and, particularly, those in the 18-24 (46%) and the 25-34 age groups (48%).

## 2.4 The world should work together in the re-construction of Iraq.

Canadians are of the opinion that the world as a whole should be involved in the re-construction of Iraq, and this in the following order: the United Nations (79%), the United States and its allies (75%), the Arab countries (70%) and the countries opposed to the war (58%) such as France, Germany and Russia. Paradoxically, Quebecers who were least in favour of a Canadian participation in the American military intervention against Iraq are most likely to mention that countries opposed against the war should be involved in the re-construction of Iraq (64%).

Question: *Turning now to the re-construction of Iraq, do you think the following should or should not be involved...?*

n=1504	Yes
The United Nations	79%
The US and its allies	75%
Arab countries	70%
Countries which opposed the war	58%
Don't know / Refusal	6%

## 2.4 American foreign policy has a negative effect on Canada

Half of Canadians (50%) state that, in general, American foreign policy has a negative impact on Canada, 21% say that it has none, and 20% say that it has a positive one. It is worth remembering that two months ago, 65% of Canadians feared that a war against Iraq would slow down the Canadian economy.

Question: *Generally, do you think American foreign policy has a positive effect, a negative effect or no effect at all on Canada?*

n=1504	Positive	Negative	No effect	Don't know / Refusal
Men	24%	47%	22%	6%
Women	15%	52%	19%	13%
Atlantic Provinces	28%	34%	25%	13%
Quebec	19%	56%	20%	6%
Ontario	17%	48%	25%	11%
Prairies	19%	54%	18%	9%
Alberta	22%	51%	16%	12%
British Columbia	23%	50%	13%	13%
Canada	20%	50%	21%	10%

### 3.0 Methodology

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This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1504 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between April 29 and May 4, 2003. Up to ten call-backs were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to region, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1504 respondents is of  $\pm 2.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20.