

January 12, 2007

Americans Skeptical About Reduced Violence in Iraq This Year

Most do not think troop withdrawal, stability in the world, will happen

by Joseph Carroll

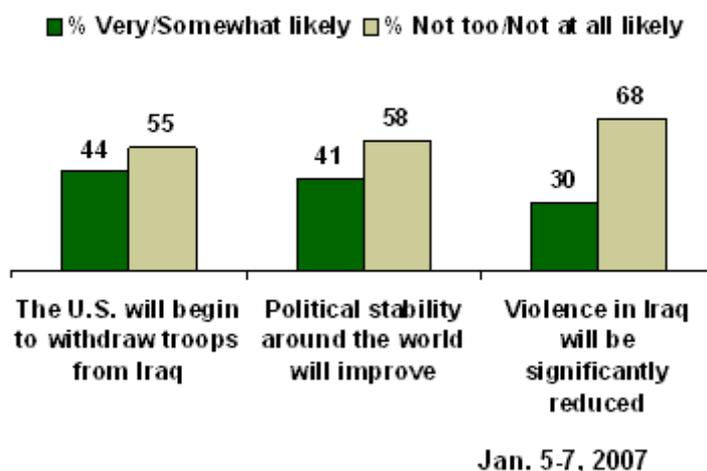
GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

PRINCETON, NJ -- A recent *USA Today*/Gallup poll asked Americans to predict the likelihood that seven different events would occur in 2007. Americans are not particularly optimistic about foreign policy issues in the coming year, with a majority saying it is not likely that violence in Iraq will decrease, that the United States will begin to remove troops from there, or that political stability will improve worldwide. But, Americans think it is highly likely that the nation's economy will improve and that Congress will raise the minimum wage. Republicans are generally more positive than Democrats in their predictions. Republicans are much more likely than Democrats to say the violence in Iraq will diminish, the economic situation at home and political stability around the world will improve, and the president and Democrats will work together more closely.

Foreign Policy Issues

The Jan. 5-7 poll finds that just 30% of Americans say it is "very" or "somewhat" likely that the violence in Iraq will be significantly reduced in 2007; two in three Americans say this is "not too" or "not at all" likely. Only about 4 in 10 Americans say it is at least somewhat likely that the government will begin to withdraw troops from Iraq and that political stability around the world will improve, while a majority say these are not likely to occur in 2007. The poll was conducted before George W. Bush addressed the nation to outline his new policy on handling the situation in Iraq.

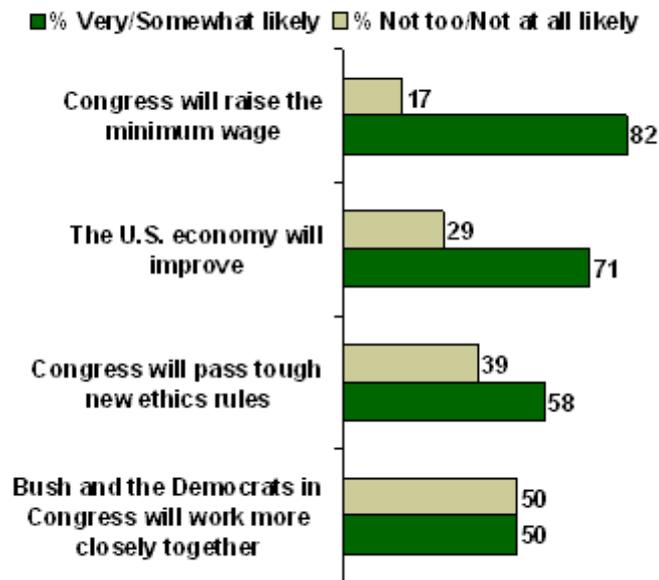
Likelihood That Each of the Following Will Occur in 2007



Domestic Issues

Americans are much more positive about domestic issues, particularly relating to the economy. Eighty-two percent of Americans say it is at least somewhat likely that Congress will raise the minimum wage this year (which the House of Representatives passed after the poll was conducted), while 71% say it is likely that the nation's economy will improve. Fifty-eight percent of Americans say it is likely that Congress will pass tough new ethics rules, and half say Bush and the Democrats in Congress will likely work more closely together.

Likelihood That Each of the Following Will Occur in 2007



Jan. 5-7, 2007

Partisan Predictions

Even though Republicans and Democrats have similar views about what is, and what is not, likely to happen this year, the poll finds Republicans generally more positive in most of their predictions.

Likelihood That Each of the Following Will Occur in 2007

Results by Party Affiliation

(percentage say very or somewhat likely)

Jan. 5-7, 2007

	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
	%	%	%
Congress will raise the minimum wage	81	81	83
The U.S. economy will improve	81	71	60
Bush and the Democrats in Congress will work more closely together	56	47	47
Congress will pass tough new ethics rules	53	55	68
The U.S. will begin to withdraw troops from Iraq	48	41	47
Political stability around the world will improve	47	39	37
Violence in Iraq will be significantly reduced	43	28	21

Republicans are much more inclined than Democrats to say it is likely that the violence in Iraq will be significantly reduced (43% vs. 21%), that the U.S. economy will improve (81% vs. 60%), that political stability throughout the world will improve (47% vs. 37%), and that the president and the Democrats in Congress will work more closely (56% vs. 47%).

Democrats, meanwhile, are only more inclined than Republicans to say Congress will pass new ethics rules this year, 68% to 53%. This is perhaps not too surprising because Democrats now control both houses of Congress for the first time in 12 years.

The two party groups are equally likely to say Congress will raise the minimum wage and that the government will begin to withdraw troops from Iraq.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with 1,004 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Jan. 5-7, 2007. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

A. The U.S. will begin to withdraw troops from Iraq

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	11%	33	30	25	1

B. Violence in Iraq will be significantly reduced

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	8%	22	33	35	1

C. Congress will raise the minimum wage

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	46%	36	12	5	1

D. Congress will pass tough new ethics rules

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	18%	40	25	14	3

E. The U.S. economy will improve

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	18%	53	21	8	1

F. President Bush and the Democrats in Congress will work more closely together

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	12%	38	31	19	1

G. Political stability around the world will improve

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not too likely	Not likely at all	No opinion
2007 Jan 5-7	9%	32	38	20	1