

NPR/Kaiser Kennedy School Poll

Civil Liberties Update

August 2002

Combined Results

Methodology

The NPR/Kaiser/Kennedy School 2002 Civil Liberties Update is part of an ongoing project of National Public Radio, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Representatives of the three sponsors worked together to develop the survey questionnaires and to analyze the results, with NPR maintaining sole editorial control over its broadcast reports on the surveys.

The results of this project are based on two nationwide telephone surveys conducted in English and Spanish. The first, Series A, was conducted between August 7 and 11, 2002, among a random representative sample of 1,006 respondents 18 years of age or older. The second, Series B, was conducted between August 9 and 13 among a random representative sample of 1,002 respondents 18 years of age or older. Data analysis is based mainly on a sample of approximately 1,000 adult Americans. However, four questions were asked as part of both surveys, and analysis of these items is based on a total sample of 2,008. ICR/International Communications Research conducted the fieldwork for both surveys. The margin of sampling error for each survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points for total respondents. For results based on subsets of respondents the margin of error is higher.

These are the combined results from Series A and Series B. The original question numbering has been maintained, with the series indicated before each question number. To see the individual results of each survey, click here on the appropriate link: Series A, Series B. Trends are from the November 2001 NPR/Kaiser/Kennedy School Poll on Civil Liberties and the June 2000 NPR/Kaiser/Kennedy School Poll on Attitudes toward Government.

- (A) 1. Are you satisfied with the way the government is pursuing its anti-terrorism program in the U.S., or not? (GET ANSWER, THEN ASK: Is that very satisfied/dissatisfied or somewhat satisfied/dissatisfied?)

	-----SATISFIED-----			-----DISSATISFIED-----			Don't know
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	
8/11/02	65	20	45	30	18	13	4

(Both) 2/2a (Series A) + 1/1a (Series B) Do you think the federal government threatens your own personal rights and freedoms, or not? (IF YES, ASK: Is this a major threat or a minor threat?)

Combo Table (Combined)

	Government threatens rights and personal freedoms			Government does not threaten rights and personal freedoms	Don t know
	NET	Major threat	Minor threat		
8/02 Combined A and B	32	13	18	63	5
November 2001	30	14	14	67	3
June 2000	46	23	23	52	2

(B) 2. Earlier this year an American citizen was arrested in Chicago and accused of plotting to explode a radioactive bomb in the U.S. He is being held at a military prison as an enemy combatant and has not been allowed to see a lawyer or take his case to court. The government says its actions are necessary to pursue its war on terrorism. Others say all Americans, regardless of circumstances, are entitled to be represented by a lawyer and to have their day in court. Which view comes closer to yours?

	Government actions are necessary to pursue its war on terrorism	All American citizens are entitled to be represented by a lawyer and have their day in court	Don t know
8/13/02	35	58	7

(A) 3. In general, do you think the federal government is or is not telling you everything you need to know about the war on terrorism and the threat to America today?

	Is telling you everything	Is not telling you everything	Don t know
8/11/02	23	73	4
November 2001	33	65	2

(Asked of respondents who think government is not telling you everything; n = 725)

(A) 3a. Is this something that concerns you, or not?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/11/02	62	37	1

(A) 3/3a. Combo Table

	-----Government is not telling you everything-----			Government is telling you everything	Don t know
	NET	Concerns you	Does not concern you		
8/11/02	73	45	27	23	4

(A) 4. When it comes to protecting the country from terrorism, some people say (it s more important to ensure people s constitutional rights, even if it means that some suspected terrorists are never found). Others say (it s more important to find every potential terrorist, even if some innocent people are seriously hurt). Which is closer to your view?

	More important to ensure people s constitutional rights	More important to find every potential terrorist	Don t know
8/11/02	44	47	10

(Both) (A) 5 and (B) 3. Since September 11th, some law enforcement agencies have stopped and searched people who are Arab or of Middle Eastern descent to see if they may be involved in potential terrorist activities. Do you approve or disapprove of this kind of profiling?

	Approve	Disapprove	Don t know
8/02 Combined A and B	59	33	7
November 2001	66	30	4

(Asked of one half of total respondents; n = 498)

(A) 6a. If an Arab or Muslim who is not a U.S. citizen is arrested as a suspected terrorist in this country, should that person be given the same legal rights as a US citizen, or should he have fewer legal rights than a US citizen?

	Should be given same legal rights	Should have fewer legal rights	Don t know
8/11/02	42	54	4
November 2001	37	59	4

(Asked of respondents who feel person should be given same legal rights; n = 198)

(A) 6a1. Would you still feel that way if the person was in the country illegally?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/11/02	43	52	5

(Asked of respondents who feel that person should have fewer legal rights; n = 272)

(A) 6a2. Would you still feel that way if the person was in the country legally?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/11/02	52	44	5

(Asked of one half of total respondents; n = 502)

(B) 4a. If an Arab or Muslim who is not a U.S. citizen is arrested for stealing a car, should that person be given the same legal rights as a US citizen, or should he have fewer legal rights than a US citizen?

	Should be given same legal rights	Should have fewer legal rights	Don t know
8/13/02	45	46	9

(Asked of respondents who feel person should be given same legal rights; n = 219)

(B) 4a1. Would you still feel that way if the person was in the country illegally?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/13/02	43	54	3

(Asked of respondents who feel person should have fewer legal rights; n = 233)

(B) 4a2. Would you still feel that way if the person was in the country legally?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/13/02	48	47	4

(A) 6a/6a1/6a2 & (B) 4a/4a1/4a2 Combo Table # 1

	Person should be given same legal rights			Person should have fewer legal rights			Don t know
	NET	Still feel that way if they were in the country illegally	Would not still feel that way if they were in the country illegally	NET	Would still feel this way if the person was in the country legally	Would not still feel this way if the person was in the country legally	
8/11/02 Terrorism	42	18	21	54	28	24	4
8/13/02 Car theft	45	19	24	46	22	22	9

(A) 6a/6a1/6a2. & (B) 4a/4a1/4a2 Combo Table # 2

	Person should be given same legal rights				Person should have fewer legal rights				Don t know
	NET	Even if in country illegally	Only if in country legally	Don t know if in country illegally	NET	Even if in country legally	Only if in country illegally	Don t know if in country legally	
8/11/02 Terrorism	43	18	24	2	52	28	21	3	4
8/13/02 Car theft	42	19	22	1	48	22	24	2	9

(Asked of one half of total respondents; n = 508)

(A) 6b. If an Arab or Muslim immigrant to the US who has become a US citizen is arrested as a suspected terrorist in this country, should that person be given the same legal rights as someone born in the US, or should he have fewer legal rights than someone born in the US?

	Should be given same legal rights	Should have fewer legal rights	Don t know
8/11/02	75	19	6

(Asked of one half of total respondents; n = 500)

(B) 4b. If an Arab or Muslim immigrant to the US who has become a US citizen is arrested for stealing a car, should that person be given the same legal rights as someone born in the US, or should he have fewer legal rights than someone born in the US?

	Should be given same legal rights	Should have fewer legal rights	Don t know
8/13/02	89	9	2

(A) 6a/6b. Citizen/non-citizen arrested as suspected terrorist.

8/11/02		Not a citizen	Citizen
	Should be given same rights	42	75
	Should have fewer rights	54	19
	Don t know	4	6

(B) 4a/4b. Citizen/non-citizen arrested for selling a car.

8/13/02		Not a citizen	Citizen
	Should be given same rights	45	89
	Should have fewer rights	46	9
	Don t know	9	2

(Both) (A) 7 and (B) 5. How much confidence do you have in the US government to protect its citizens from future terrorist attacks a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?

	---A great deal/Quite a lot---			-----Some/Very little-----			Don t know
	NET	A great deal	Quite a lot	NET	Some	Very little	
8/02 Combined A and B	44	19	25	54	39	15	2
November 2001	58	24	34	41	31	10	1

(A) 8. In order to curb terrorism in this country, has it been necessary for the average person to give up some rights and liberties, or hasn t it been necessary?

	Necessary	Not necessary	Don t know
8/11/02	56	39	5
November 2001*	51	46	3

* 11/01 question: In order to curb terrorism in this country, do you think it will be necessary for the average person to give up some rights and liberties, or do you think we can curb terrorism without the average person giving up rights and liberties?

(A) 9. Have you had to give up some of your OWN rights and liberties in order to curb terrorism, or not?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/11/02	21	78	1
November 2001	58	39	3

(Asked of respondents who have had to give up some of their own rights and liberties; n = 232)

(A) 9a. Have you had to give up some rights and liberties you consider very important to you, or not?

	Yes	No	Don t know
8/11/02	36	63	*

11/01 question: Do you think you will have to give up some of your OWN rights and liberties in order to curb terrorism, or not?

(A) 9/9a. Combo Table

	Had to give up some of your own rights and liberties		Have not had to give up some of your own rights and liberties		Don't know
	NET	Consider them very important	Do not consider them very important		
8/11/02	21	7	13	78	1

(A) 10. In the search for those in the U.S. who may have been involved in the terrorist attacks, a number of people have been detained by the FBI and other police agencies. Do you think the basic rights of these individuals have been protected or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know
8/11/02	56	26	18
November 2001	64	22	13

The NPR/Kaiser/Kennedy School Project Team

From NPR: Marcus D. Rosenbaum, Senior Editor/Special Projects; and Jeanne Naujeck, Assistant Editor.

From the Kaiser Family Foundation: Drew Altman, President and Chief Executive Officer; Matt James, Senior Vice President of Media and Public Education and Executive Director of kaisernetwork.org; Mollyann Brodie, Vice President, Director of Public Opinion and Media Research; and Jaime A. Valdez, Research Assistant.

From the Kennedy School: Robert J. Blendon, a Harvard University professor who holds joint appointments in the School of Public Health and the Kennedy School of Government; Stephen R. Pelletier, Research Coordinator for the Harvard Opinion Research Program; and John M. Benson, Managing Director of the Harvard Opinion Research Program.

Go back to analysis page.