

Poll suggests world hostile to US

Nearly two-thirds of respondents to an international poll for the BBC say they have an unfavourable opinion of George W Bush.

The survey of 11 countries - for the television programme What The World Thinks of America, to be aired this week in the UK - revealed that 57% of the sample had a very unfavourable, or fairly unfavourable attitude towards the American President.

The figure rose to 60% when discounting the views of the American respondents.

The survey - conducted for the BBC by ICM and other international pollsters - gauged opinion towards US military, economic, cultural and political influence.

COUNTRIES POLLED

Australia
Canada
Brazil
France
Indonesia
Israel
Jordan
Russia
South Korea
United Kingdom
United States

Over half the sample felt that the US was wrong to invade Iraq - this included 81% of Russian respondents, and 63% of the French response.

Thirty-seven per cent thought it right to invade - including 54% of the UK response, 74% of the US response and 79% of the Israeli sample.

Asked who is the more dangerous to world peace and stability, the United States was rated higher than al-Qaeda by respondents in both Jordan (71%) and Indonesia (66%).

America was also rated more dangerous than two countries considered as "rogue states" by Washington.

It was rated more dangerous than Iran, by people in Jordan, Indonesia, Russia, South Korea and Brazil, and more dangerous than Syria by respondents all the

countries, except for Australia, Israel and the United States.

Unloved?

The survey groups were also asked whether they felt that the American military did enough to avoid civilian casualties during conflicts.

Seventy per cent of the group as a whole thought the US could do more - with the majority in each country bar the United States saying that more could be done, including 73% of respondents in the UK, 74% in France and 57% in Israel.

However 70% of the American respondents said other countries did not appreciate how much America does to avoid civilian casualties.

The sample of over 11,000 respondents also showed negative attitudes about American initiatives, such as the war on terrorism and US efforts in the Middle-East.

Attitudes towards America as a whole, however, were a lot more favourable, with 50% expressing fairly or very favourable views, as opposed to 40% of unfavourable views.

That figure excludes Americans polled.

All interviews were carried out during May and June 2003.

What The World Thinks of America was shown on Tuesday 17 June, BBC TWO, 2100 BST (2000 GMT).

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