

# THE MARTTILA COMMUNICATIONS GROUP



## AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

### AN ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE SURVEY

1600 INTERVIEWS - MARCH, 2005

Two demographically representative split samples of 800 interviews



# METHODOLOGY

For over a decade, the Marttila Communications Group -- a Boston-based public opinion research firm -- has conducted four national surveys (1992, 1998, 2002, and 2005) for the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to measure anti-Semitic propensities in the United States. The company has also conducted numerous national surveys measuring American attitudes toward the Middle East.

In this latest survey 1,600 Americans age 18 and older were interviewed on the evenings of March 18-25, 2005, by trained professionals working from a central, monitored location.

Respondents were selected from all American households using a random probability sampling procedure which included unlisted telephone numbers.

Some questions were asked to all 1,600 respondents. For these questions, the margin of error is +/- 2.8%. Other questions were asked to demographically proportional "split samples" or 800 adults. For these questions, the margin of error is +/- 3.4%.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Americans remain more sympathetic to Israelis than to either Palestinians or Arab states**

**Both Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and new Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas are viewed favorably. Sharon enjoys higher ratings than in ADL's 2003 survey.**

**Americans are hopeful about improved prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Both Israel and the Palestinians receive credit for this improved environment. On balance, however, Americans give Israel much greater credit for working for peace in the Middle East.**

**Americans are overwhelmingly supportive of Israel's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza Strip as an important step in the peace process.**

**For the most part, Americans bring very positive views to a consideration of the U.S.-Israeli relationship. Approval for the Israeli government is at the highest levels in over a decade. However, a plurality of Americans continue to believe the U.S. may have to work more closely with moderate Arab nations in the future -- even if it means weakening our relationship with Israel.**

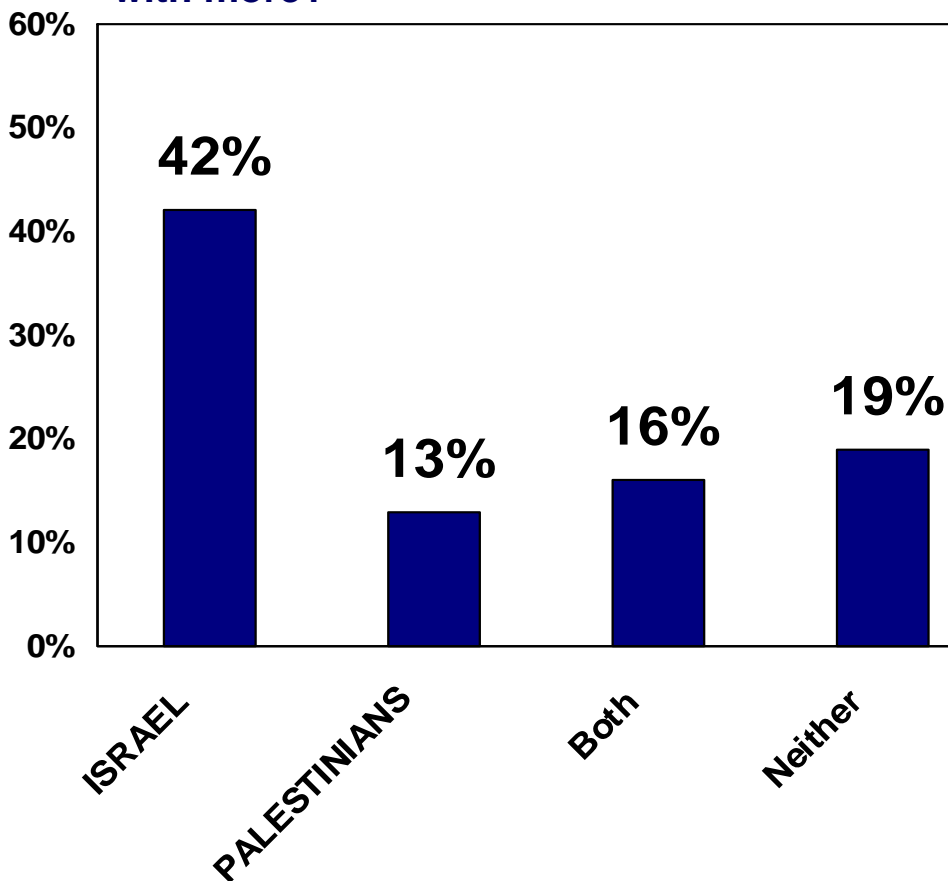
**Even though most Americans believe the U.S. is more likely to be targeted for terrorist attacks because of our support for Israel, a clear majority believes we should continue to support Israel in spite of this risk.**

# **The Peace Process and the Middle East**

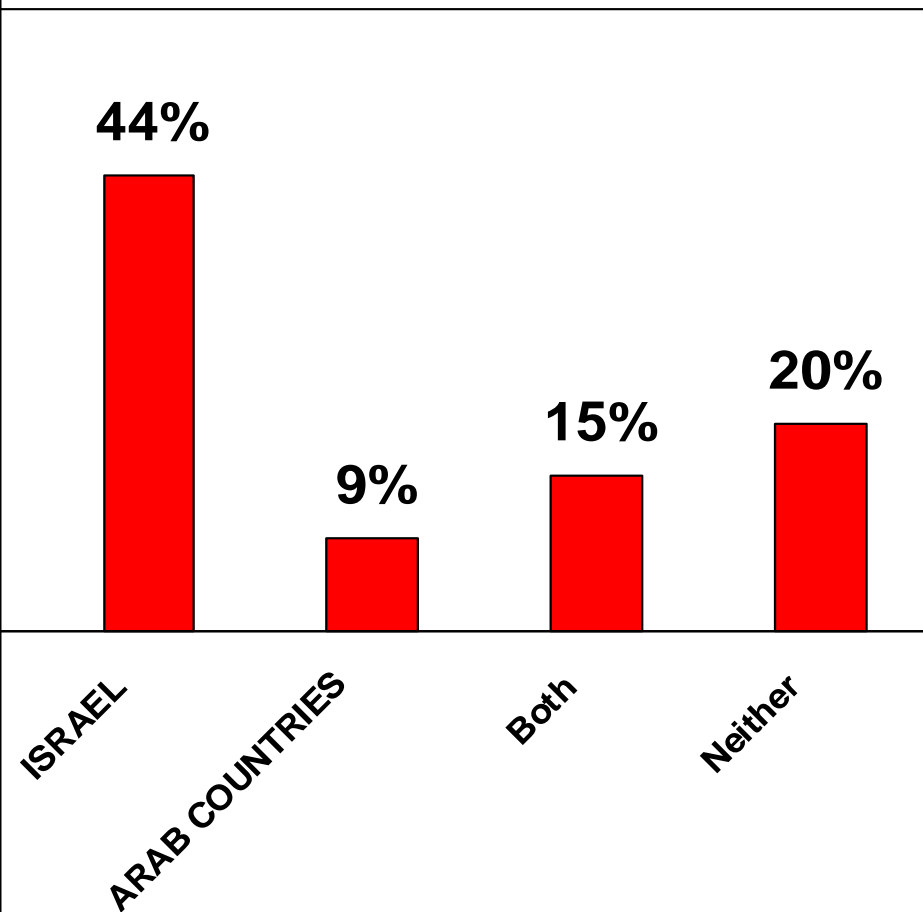


When they think about the conflict in the Middle East, Americans continue to sympathize more with Israel than with the Palestinians or with the Arab nations of the region. Virtually unchanged from 2003

**In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, which side do you sympathize with more?**



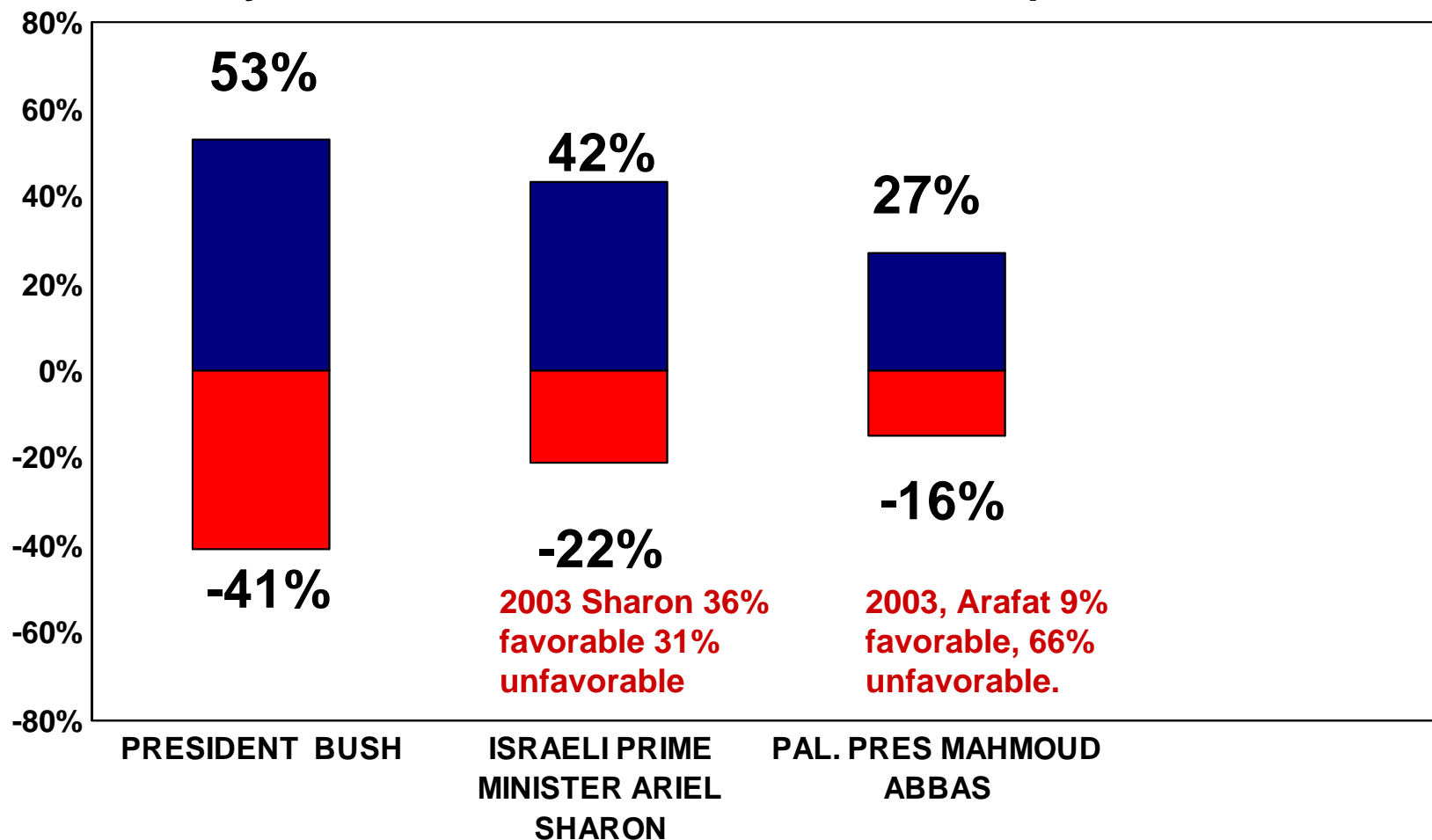
**Thinking about the Arab-Israeli conflict, are your sympathies more with Israel or the Arab countries?**





## Favorable/Unfavorable Ratings: Bush, Sharon and Abbas.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of him?

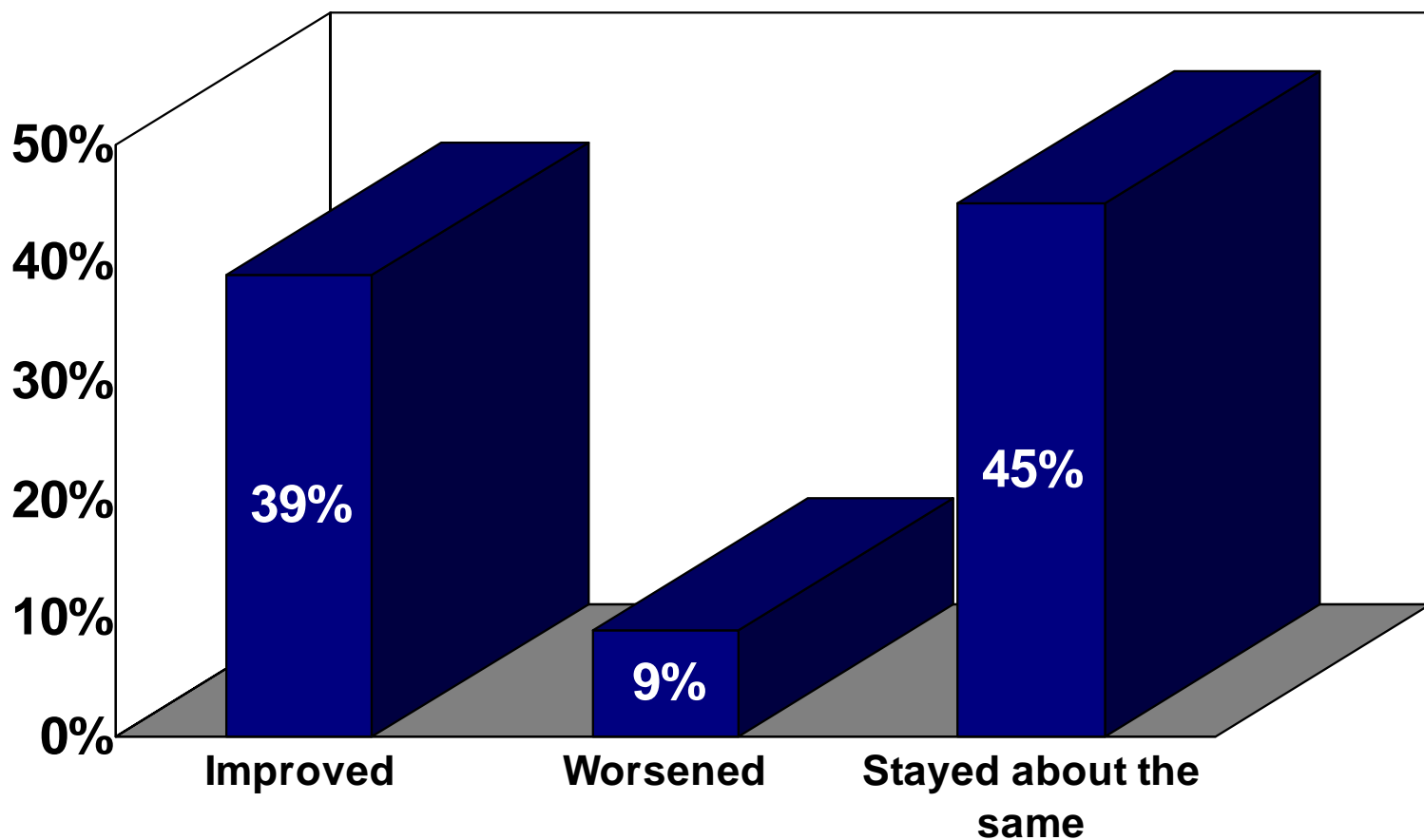


■ Favorable ■ Unfavorable



A near plurality of Americans believe the prospects for peace between the Israelis and Palestinians have recently improved.

Do you think the prospects for peace have improved, worsened or stayed the same?

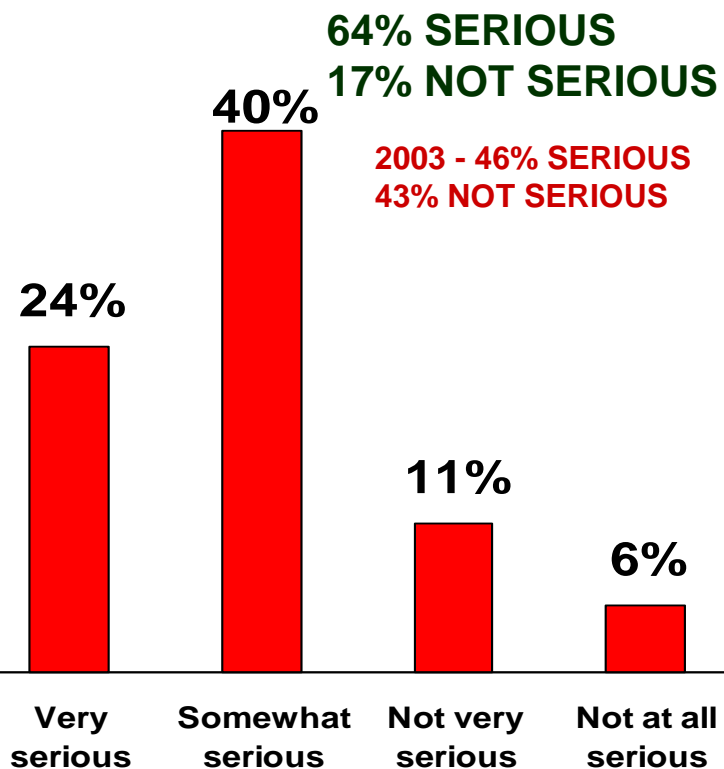
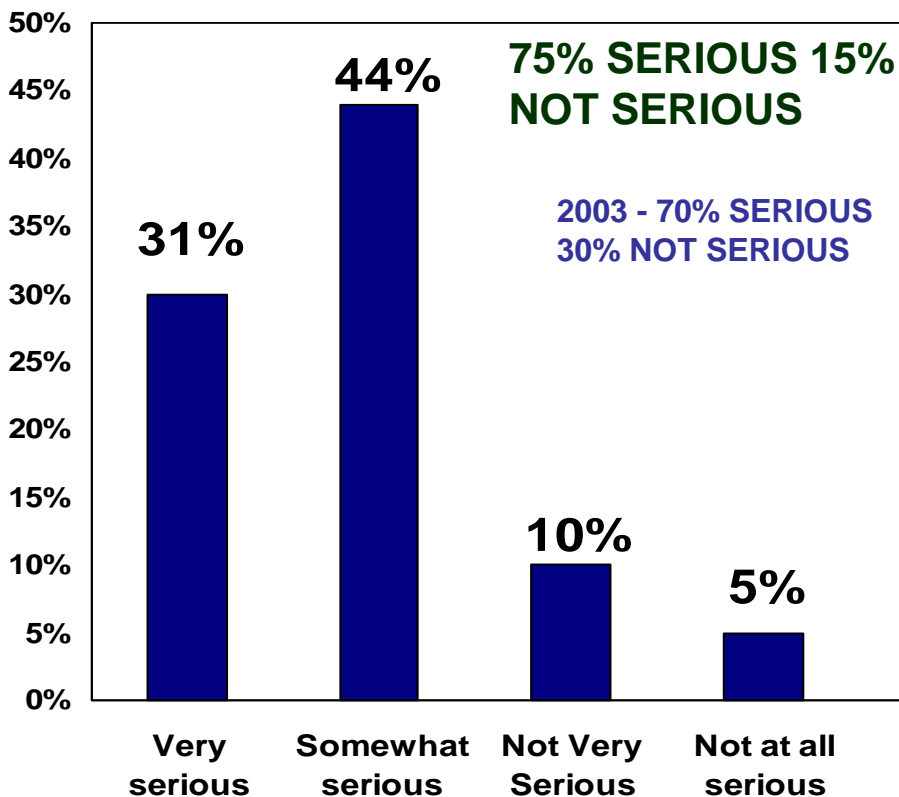




By several different measures, Americans believe leadership on both sides is serious about seeking peace.

In your opinion, how serious are the leaders of Israel about wanting to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians -- very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious.

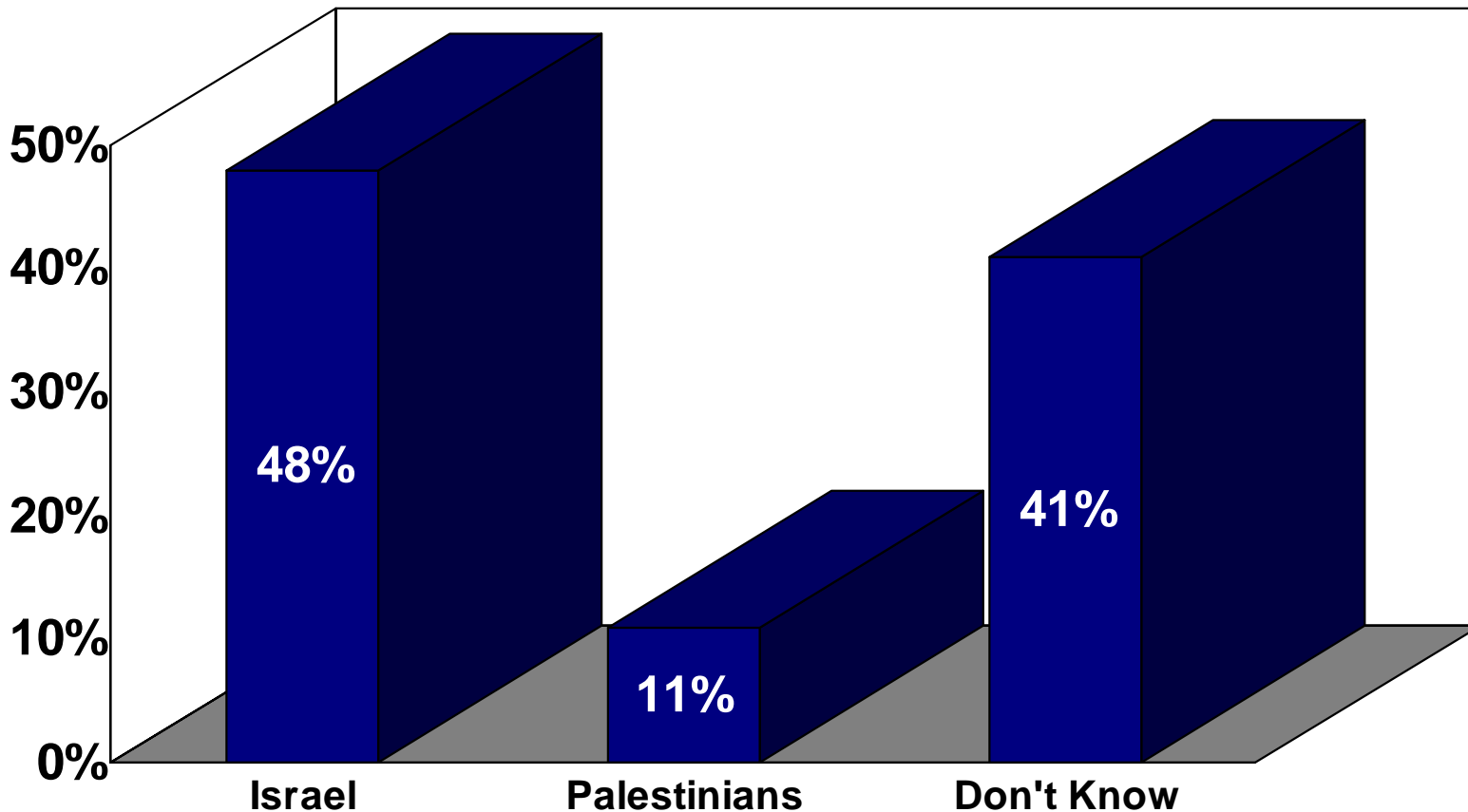
In your opinion, how serious is new Palestinian leader Mahmaud Abbas about wanting to reach a peace agreement with the Israelis -- very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious.





While Americans credit both Israelis and Palestinians for the improved climate, most believe Israel is currently working harder for peace

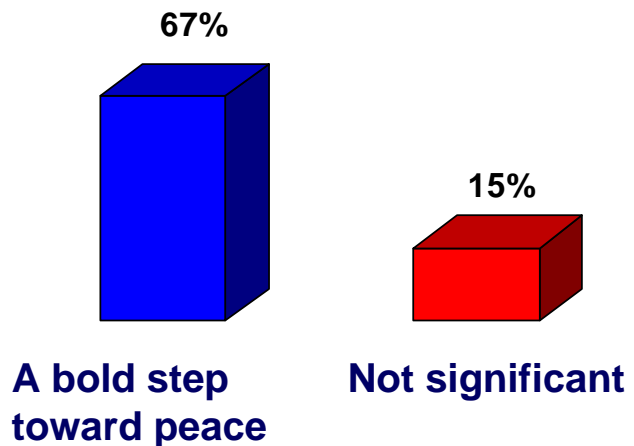
Who do you currently think is doing more to bring peace to the region: Israel or the Palestinians?





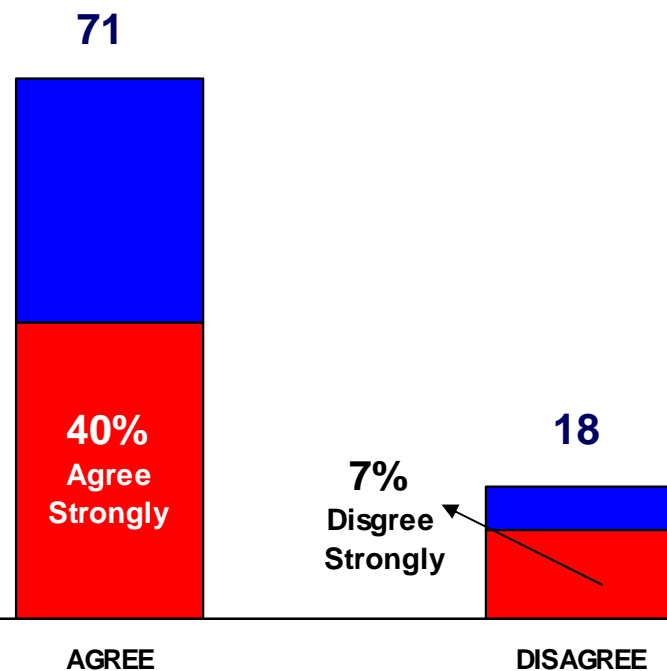
For the most part, Americans bring very positive views to a consideration of the U.S.-Israeli relationship. Sharon's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza is also met with widespread approval.

### Bold step toward peace or Not?



Israeli decision to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza strip without formal peace agreement

### AGREE or DISAGREE?

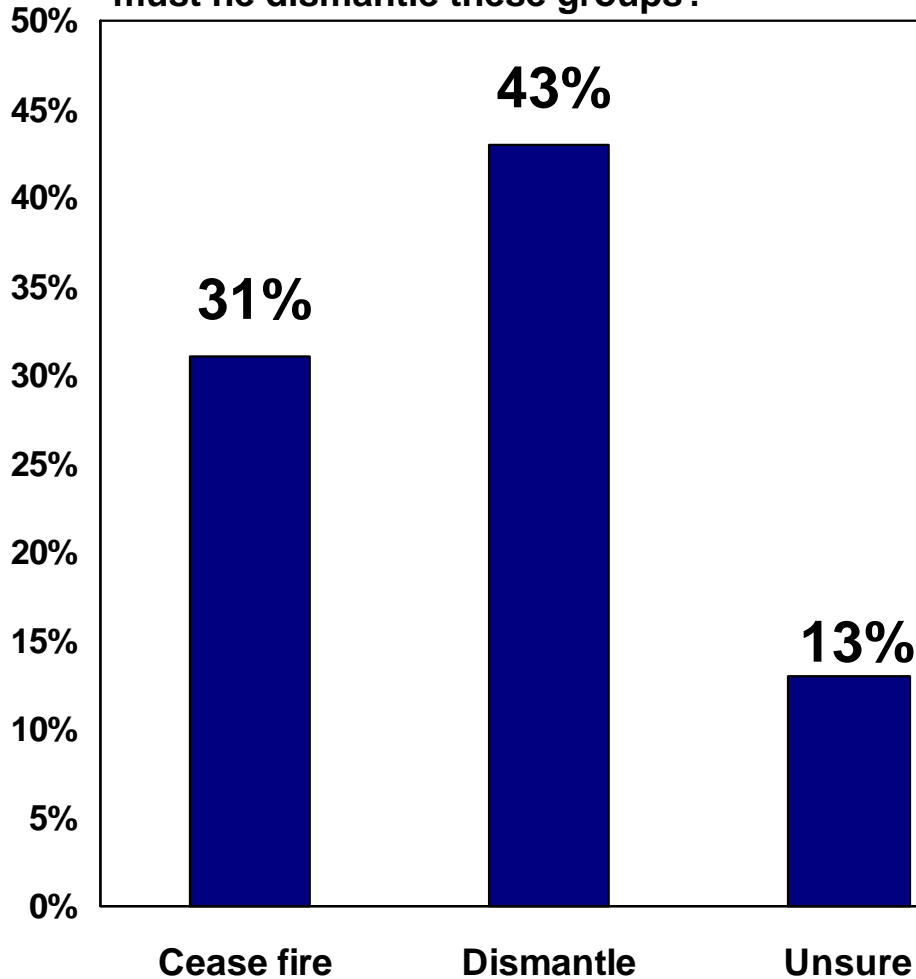


Israel can be counted on as a strong, loyal U.S. ally

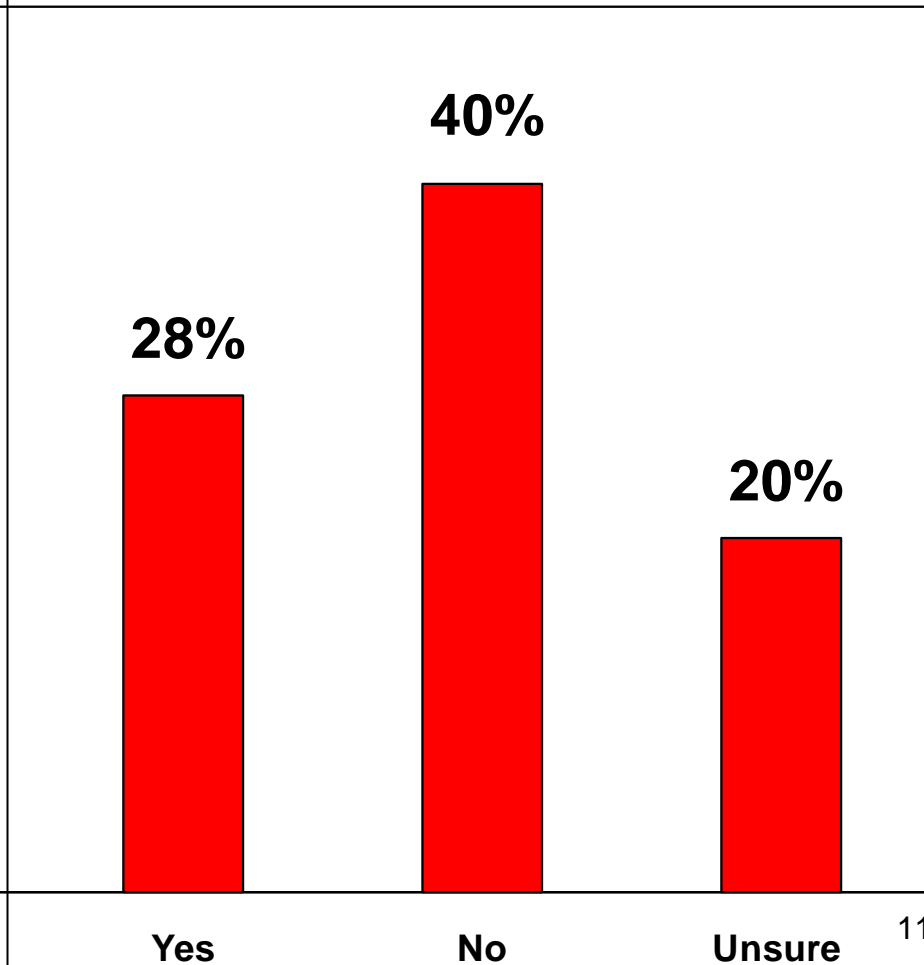


Prior to reaching a long term peace agreement with the Israelis, Americans believe Abbas must first take on militant organizations. Americans appear uncertain as to the success of this endeavor.

Do you think it is enough that Abbas reach a cease fire with organizations like Hamas, or must he dismantle these groups?



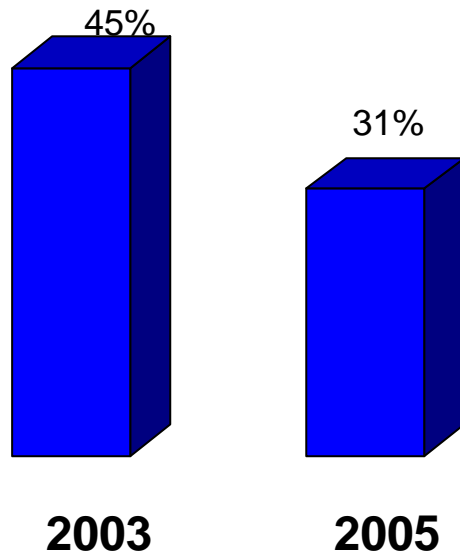
Do you think Abbas will be able to persuade organizations like Hamas to renounce violence and enter into the peace process with Israel?



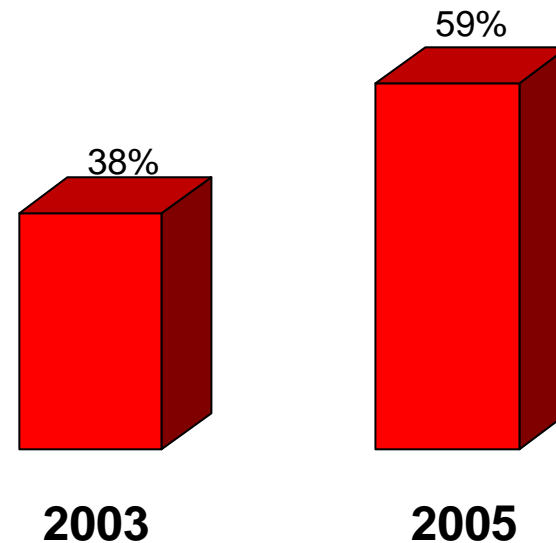


While Americans continue to support the creation of a Palestinian state, they increasingly want the Palestinians to crack down on terror.

**Which of the following statements is closest to your own view?**



**Palestinians deserve their own homeland -- an independent state. Peace in the Middle East will be strengthened by the creation of this state as soon as possible.**

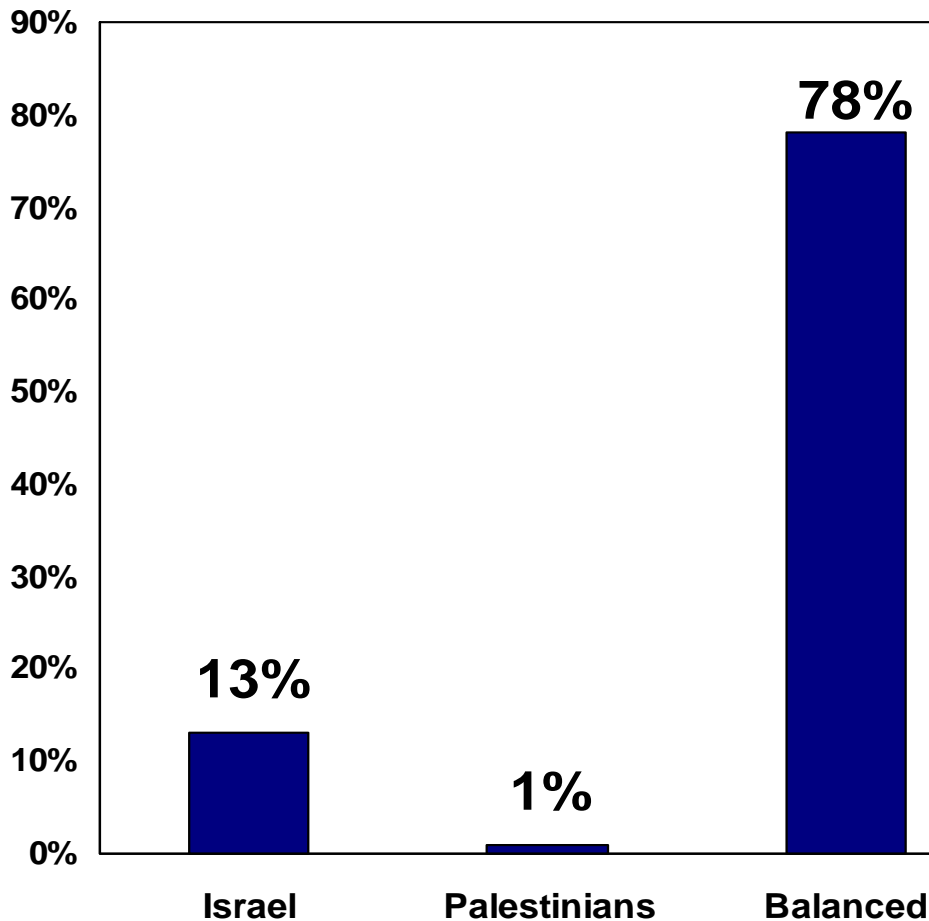


**A Palestinian state should only be established after Palestinians end the terrorist violence and accept Israel's legitimacy.**

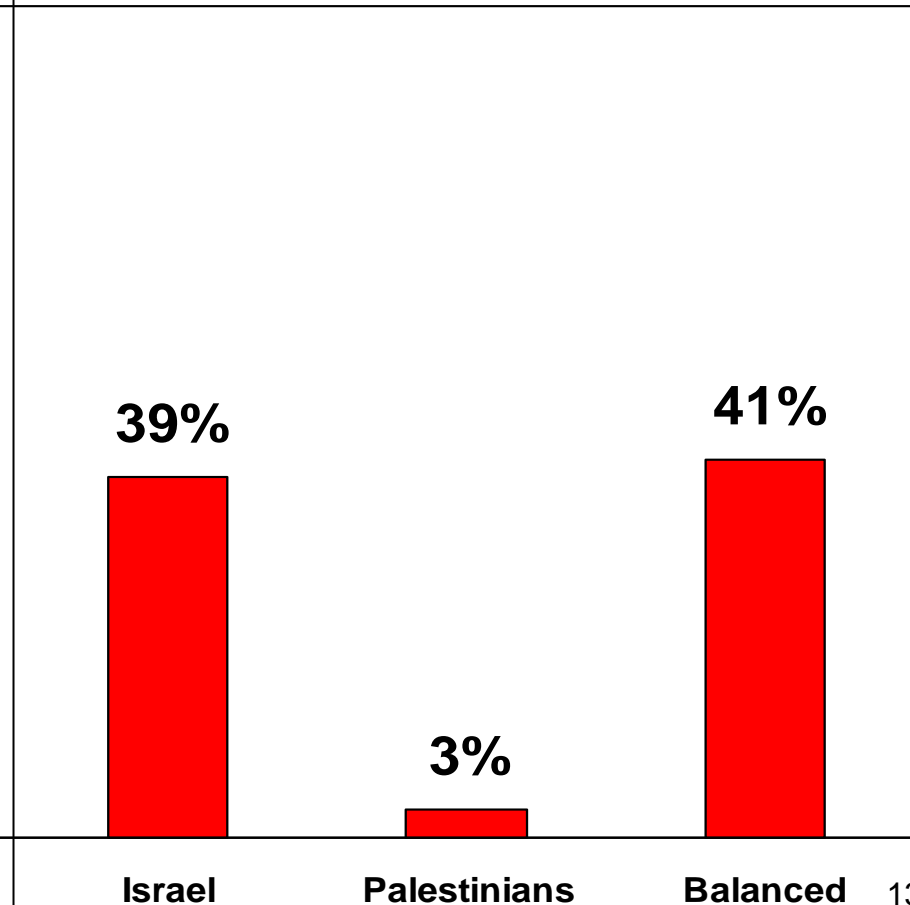


Many Americans believe the Bush administration tilts towards Israel -- and when asked whether the U.S. should take sides, as in 2003 a decisive margin says we should not take either side.

Do you think the United States should take Israel's side, take the Palestinians' side, or not take either side?



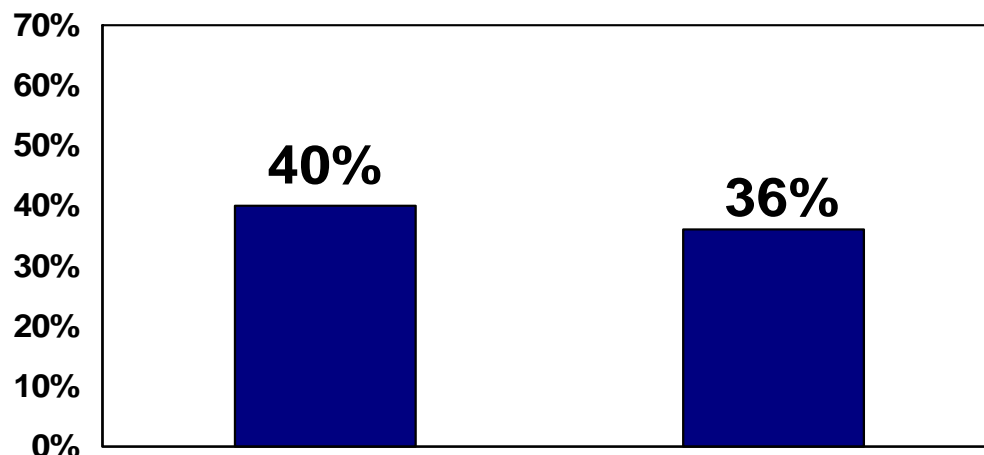
In your opinion, does the Bush administration tilt toward Israel, the Palestinians, or is it generally balanced?



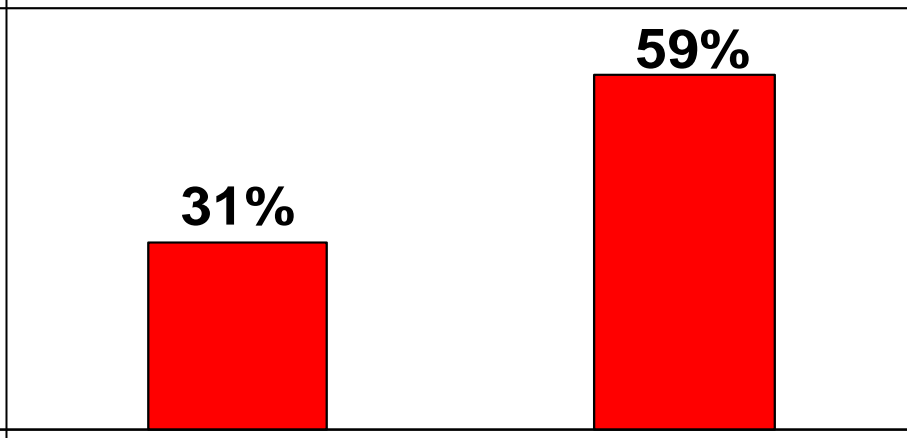


While Americans bring very positive views to a consideration of the U.S.-Israeli relationship, a plurality believe the U.S. may have to work more closely with moderate Arab nations in the future -- even if it means weakening our relationship with Israel.

Which statement is closest to your own view ...?



Which statement is closest to your own view ...?



As a world leader trying to bring peace to the Middle East, it is important for the U.S. to work with Arab nations like Egypt and Jordan, even if it means weakening our strong relationship with Israel.

Israel is America's most loyal ally in the Middle East. The U.S. has a moral and strategic obligation keep our relationship with Israel strong, even if this means weakening our relationship with the Arab world.

Peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians will never take place without the continuing leadership and involvement of the U.S. government.

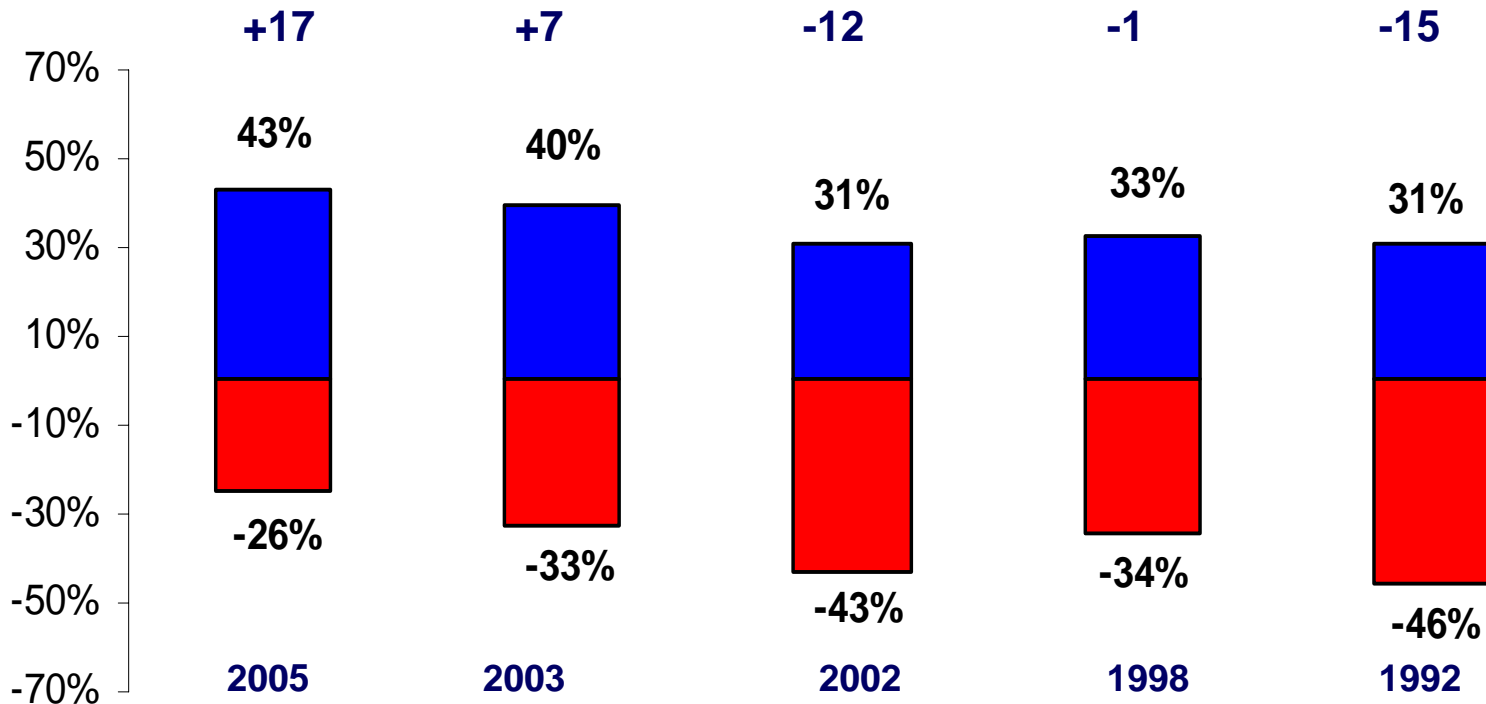
It is up to the Palestinians and the Israelis to solve their own problems; any lasting peace agreement between them must be reached with minimal involvement from the U.S.

In 2003 only 38% said agreement must be reached with minimal U.S. involvement



The Israeli government's favorable rating is at its highest in over a decade.

## Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of the current Israeli government?

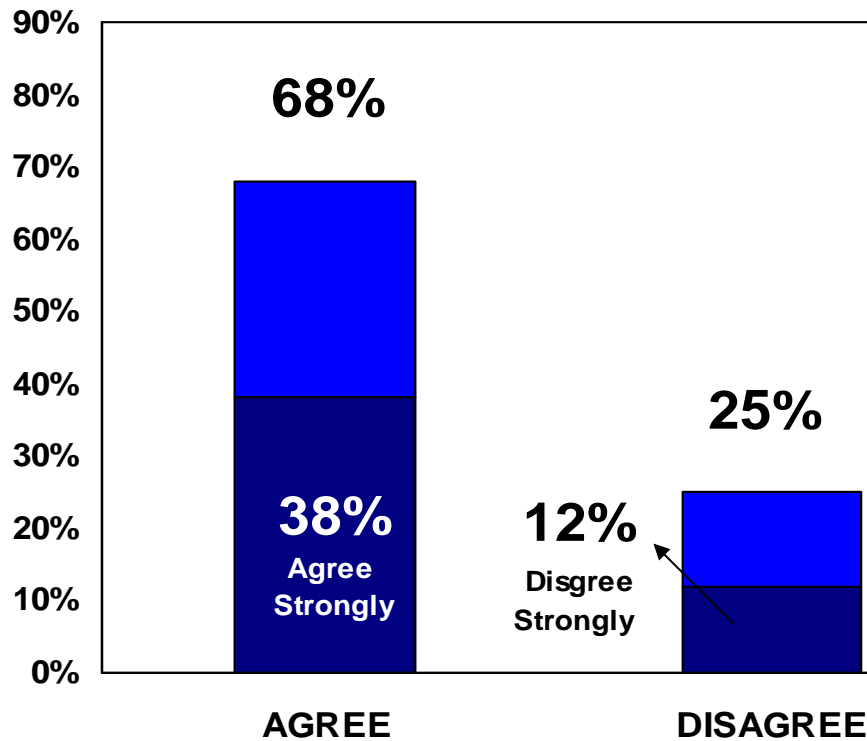


■ Favorable ■ Unfavorable

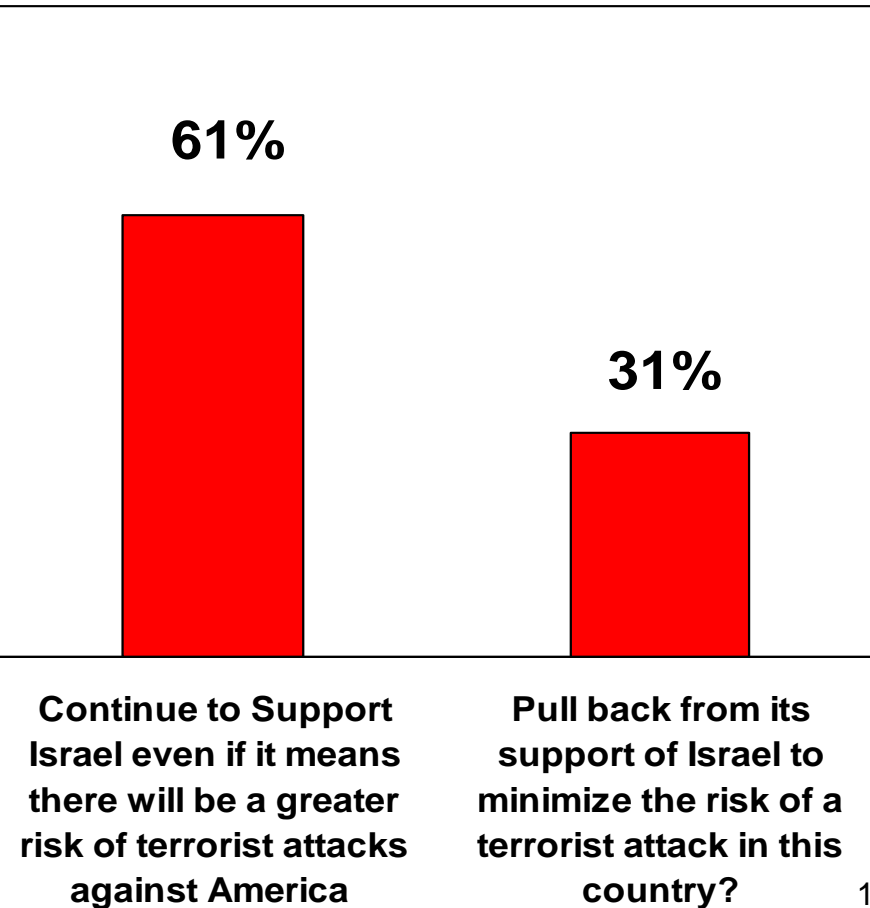


Even though most Americans continue to believe the U.S. is more likely to be targeted for terrorist attacks because of our support for Israel, a clear majority believes we should continue to support Israel in spite of this risk.

**AGREE/DISAGREE: The U.S. is more likely to be targeted for terrorist attack because of our support for Israel**



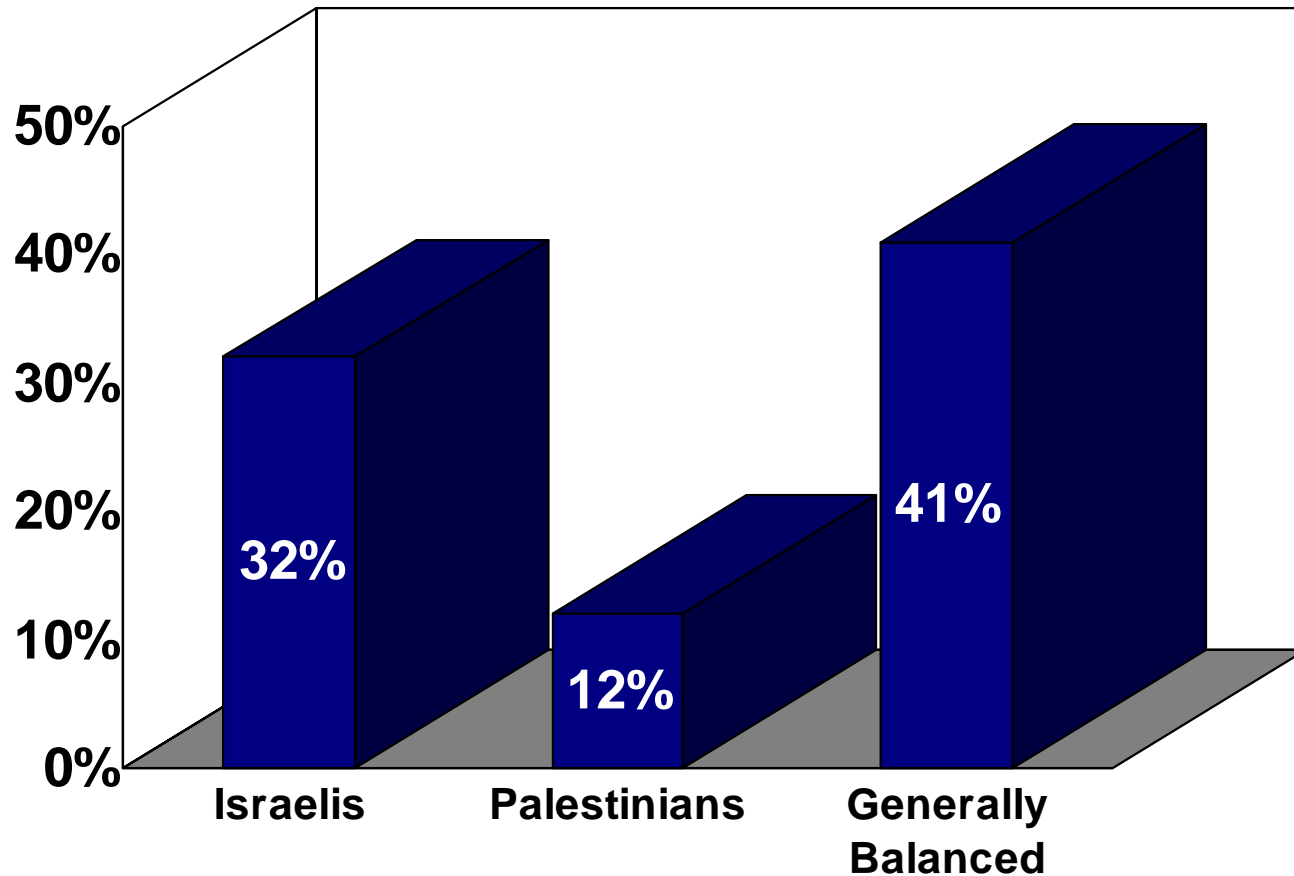
**ASKED TO THOSE WHO AGREE: In your opinion, should the US ...**





A majority believes American news coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is balanced; those who believe the coverage favors one side believe it favors Israel.

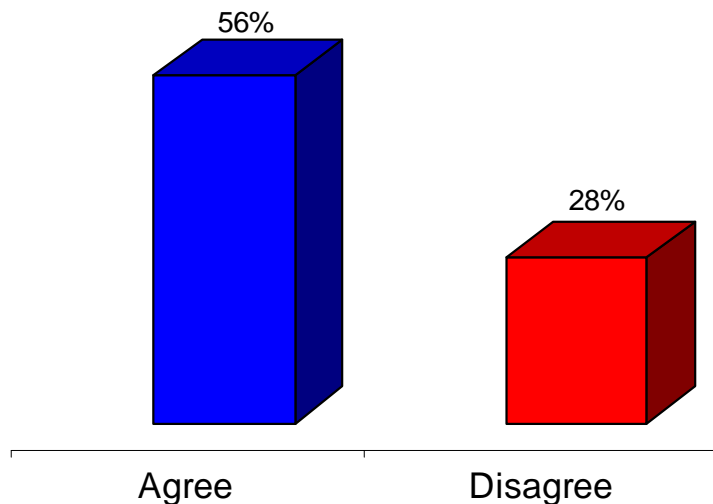
**In general, do you believe the American news coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East tends to favor the Israelis, the Palestinians, or is it generally balanced?**



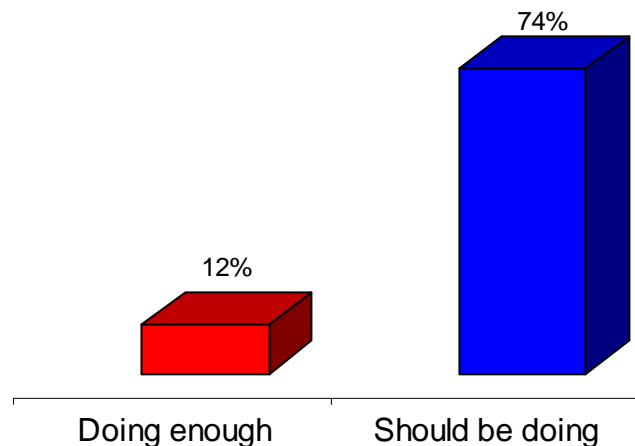


Americans remain critical of the role Arab countries have played in the Middle East conflict.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Regardless of what they say publicly, most Arab leaders are committed to the destruction of Israel.



Do you believe the leaders of the moderate Arab countries like Jordan and Egypt are doing enough to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – or should they be doing more?





Internationally, Americans hold British Prime Minister Tony Blair in high regard. In the Middle East, Americans hold favorable views of Israel, Egypt and Jordan and negative views of Syria, Saudi Arabia, the Palestinian Authority, and Iran.

**Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of...?**

