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Poll Shows Rising Public Opposition to Afghan War

By Jason Ditz

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A new [NBC/Wall Street Journal Survey](#) shows a public growing increasingly pessimistic about the Obama Administration's handling of a number of issues, including a major rise in opposition to the Afghan War.

Confidence is now plummeting, with 68% saying they feel "less confidence" about whether the war will reach a successful conclusion. Perhaps even more importantly, for the first time yet, the poll shows, the American public generally disapproves of the president's handling of the Afghan War. The 44%-45% opposition was a stark drop in popularity of the war from five months ago, when they generally approved 53%-35%

This was even worse when the question was how President Obama had lived up to expectations on the war, with only 34% saying he had, and 57% saying that he had "fallen short" of what they were hoping for.

This suggests that the support, which had been buoyed by the December escalation and the promise of a July 2011 drawdown, has entirely evaporated already, likely in no small part because the president has disavowed that drawdown date, and the [record death tolls in the nation](#).

The poll further showed an extremely pessimistic attitude on Afghanistan, with only 10% of Americans having a positive attitude compared to 58% having a negative attitude. Only Pakistan fared worse in the poll, with a 4%-61% result.

Interestingly enough, the poll also hints at the first stages of a renewed opposition to the Iraq War, with the poll showing a drop in the number of people who believed the war was somewhat successful and an increase in the number who believed it was very unsuccessful. Iraq's death toll too has been on the rise, with [July seeing the highest civilian death toll in over two years](#). While Iraq has largely been supplanted by Afghanistan in media coverage of overseas warfare, this suggests that Americans are starting to realize that the pretense of "victory" in Iraq has fallen far short of the reality, and may usher in even more opposition if, [as US officials predict, the violence continues to rise in the near term](#).