

YouGov / Daily Telegraph Survey Results

Sample Size: 1722

Fieldwork: 24th - 26th October 2006

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It is being said at the moment that Britain's armed forces are 'over-stretched' – that they have too few people and too little equipment to perform properly all the tasks they are asked to perform. Is it your impression that the armed forces are, or are not, over-stretched at the moment?

Yes, they are over-stretched	81
No, they able to perform all these tasks properly	7
Don't know	12

If you had to choose, which of the following options would come closest to your own view?

The armed forces should be provided with more personnel and equipment in order to be able to perform properly the tasks they are now being asked to perform	54
Things should be left pretty much as they are	4
The armed forces should not be asked to perform all the tasks they are now being asked to perform, so that there would be no need to increase their overall strength	36
Don't know	7

Britain spends more on defence per head of population than most other European countries but less than the United States. Do you think that under present circumstances we should be spending more or less on defence?

We should be spending a lot more	18
We should be spending a little more	28
We are currently spending about the right amount	22
We should be spending a little less	13
We should be spending a lot less	9
Don't know	11

From what you know, are you proud, or not proud, of the way Britain's armed forces are performing their duties at present?

Yes, I am proud of the way they are performing their duties	77
No, I am not proud of the way they are performing their duties	11
Don't know	12

From what you know, do you believe there is at present a clear strategy guiding the use of British troops in Iraq?

Yes, there is a clear strategy	15
No, there isn't a clear strategy	70
Don't know	15

From what you know, do you believe there is at present a clear strategy guiding the use of British troops in Afghanistan?

Yes, there is a clear strategy	19
No, there isn't a clear strategy	64
Don't know	17

It has been suggested that Britain's troops in Iraq could be defeated, in the sense of having to leave Iraq before their mission there has been fully accomplished. Do you think there is a realistic chance of that happening or not?

Yes, there is a realistic chance of that happening	66
No, there isn't a realistic chance of that happening	19
Don't know	16

It has been suggested that Britain's troops in Afghanistan could be defeated, in the sense of having to leave Afghanistan before their mission there has been fully accomplished. Do you think there is a realistic chance of that happening or not?

Yes, there is a realistic chance of that happening	59
No, there isn't a realistic chance of that happening	22
Don't know	19

How much confidence do you have in the British Government's handling of the difficult situation in Iraq?

A great deal	2
Quite a lot	14
Not much	45
None at all	34
Don't know	5

How much confidence do you have in the British Government's handling of the difficult situation in Afghanistan?

A great deal	3
Quite a lot	15
Not much	48
None at all	28
Don't know	7

General Sir Richard Dannatt, the head of the army, said recently that he believed the presence of British troops in Iraq was ‘exacerbating’ the security situation there. From what you know, do you think the present of British troops in Iraq is making the security situation better or worse than it would be if they were not there?

It is making the security situation better	14
It is making it worse	41
It isn’t making much difference either way	30
Don’t know	15

Leaving aside whether or not you agree with Sir Richard’s comments, which of these statements comes closer to your view?

‘It is right that the head of the army should feel free to speak out publicly on military issues, even if his remarks conflict with Government policy’	70
‘It’s important that the elected Government is fully in control of the armed forces, and the head of the army should never publicly contradict Government policy’	19
Don’t know	12

Looking back, do you think the United States and Britain were right or wrong three years ago to take military action against Iraq?

They were right	29
They were wrong	60
Don’t know	11

Thinking about the British troops now in Iraq, do you think the Government should...?

Withdraw all British troops from Iraq immediately	19
Withdraw all British troops within the next 12 months regardless of conditions in Iraq	37
Keep British troops in Iraq until Iraq’s own police and troops are able to take over	35
Don’t know	9

Thinking about the British troops now in Afghanistan, do you think the Government should...?

Withdraw all British troops from Afghanistan immediately	22
Withdraw all British troops within the next 12 months regardless of conditions in Afghanistan	31
Keep British troops in Iraq until Afghanistan’s own police and troops are able to take over	35
Don’t know	12