

Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index is News from Texas to Tehran

When Public Agenda released the results of the first Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index in August 2005, it made news around the world. As attacks on American troops in Iraq continued, the negotiations on the new Iraqi constitution came to a head, and the President's ratings in the surface-level "approval" polls were dropping, the Foreign Policy Index revealed Americans' deep concern about U.S. relations with the Muslim world, as well as swelling concerns about immigration and the outsourcing of jobs.

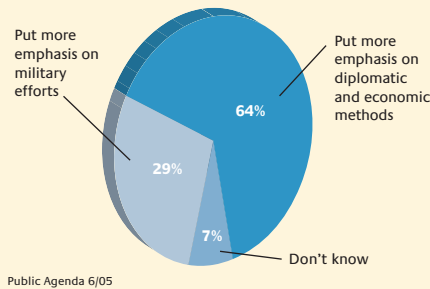
Public Agenda released the Foreign Policy Index findings in cooperation with the **Council on Foreign Relations** publication *Foreign Affairs*. To be issued regularly by Public Agenda, the Index is designed to explore the public's long-term judgments and beliefs about America's role in the world. Supported with initial funding from the **Ford Foundation**, the Index covers more than 25 different issues through more than 80 different survey questions.

Public Agenda Chairman **Daniel Yankelovich** noted "Americans are broadly uneasy about the quality of our relations with the rest of the world, especially Muslim nations. The questions reveal widespread doubts about the country's current course, with overwhelming public support for greater emphasis on economic and diplomatic rather than military strategies."

Foreign Affairs Editor James F. Hoge, Jr. said, "This Index does something individual polls don't do - it provides insight into the public mind on the larger

More Diplomacy, Less Military Intervention

Thinking about the things that government must do to fight terrorism, in your opinion, should the government:



issues of international affairs." *Foreign Affairs* created a Special Edition on its website for the Index to highlight the overall findings and later published an in-depth article by Mr. Yankelovich analyzing the results.

The Index was discussed in *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, *The Washington Post*'s online White House Briefing column, CNN and in syndicated Associated Press and Bloomberg News stories.

The Index was the subject of international reporting by Reuters, Agence France Presse, Navosti (the Russian News Agency) and others that reached readers in China, India, Australia, Iran, the Philippines and across the globe. In a piece that was syndicated worldwide, *The Financial Times* reported, "Growing public dissatisfaction with both the war in Iraq and U.S. relations with the Muslim world could soon lead the American public to

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"[The Index] reveals widespread doubts about the country's current course, with overwhelming public support for greater emphasis on economic and diplomatic rather than military strategies."

- DANIEL YANKELOVICH

Education Insights

New Initiative Seeks More Community Involvement in Public School Reform

A new Public Agenda initiative will reach out to those on the front lines of education reform - teachers, parents, and school leaders - and help them work together more effectively to achieve key education goals. *Education Insights* is being launched amid intensifying calls to refashion American high schools and just as the impact of No Child Left Behind is becoming more visible at the community level.

Through this new initiative, Public Agenda will partner with foundations, reform groups, education associations, and communities nationwide to address the problems of poor communication and lack of consensus that could slow progress on improving schools.

"There is a tremendous public stake in improving education," said

Jean Johnson, Public Agenda's Executive Vice President and *Education Insights*' Director. "And some schools and communities are showing tantalizing progress. But others are struggling to get from A to B. In some cases, leadership hasn't been able to build broad enough support for change. That's what *Education Insights* will work on - helping school leaders, teachers, parents, and the community talk seriously about improving schools and joining forces to make it happen."

Over the past several years, Public Agenda's surveys have picked up strong indications that beneath the surface agreement on the need for schools to change, there are often gaps in understanding, miscommunication, confusion and occasionally resentment. Majorities

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Gala Honors Yankelovich

Celebration Coincides with Public Agenda 30th Anniversary



Public Agenda Executive Committee Chairman and Harman International Industries Chairman **Sidney Harman**, **Thomas F. McClarty** of Kissinger Associates and former Chief of Staff to President Clinton and former Secretary of State **Henry Kissinger** at the gala honoring Daniel Yankelovich.

On May 25, 2005, celebrants from across America came to New York City to honor Public Agenda’s co-founder **Daniel Yankelovich** and to recognize his enduring commitment to excellence in public opinion research and to helping citizens grapple with complicated social issues. The gala celebrated both Mr. Yankelovich’s 80th birthday and the 30th anniversary of Public Agenda’s founding.

In addition to establishing Public Agenda with co-founder and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Mr. Yankelovich founded the marketing and research firm Yankelovich, Skelly & White, Inc. Mr. Yankelovich also created the New York Times/Yankelovich Poll in the mid-1970s, which evolved into the New York Times/CBS Poll. He is the chairman of DYG, Inc., a research firm tracking social trends which he established in 1986. He is also chairman of Viewpoint Learning, founded in 2003 to advance dialogue-based learning as a core skill in business and public sector leadership.

The gala at New York City’s Harvard Club brought together Mr. Yankelovich’s friends, family and colleagues from business, government and the policy world. **Sidney Harman**, Public Agenda’s Executive Committee Chairman and Chairman of Harman International Industries, served as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. Mr. Harman led stories of personal tributes and reminiscences from **Arthur White**, the partner in Yankelovich, Skelly



Bernard Schwartz, CEO of Loral Space & Communications, was a major supporter of the gala honoring Daniel Yankelovich and delivered a special tribute to him.

“Dan is famous for saying ‘The magic doesn’t work if you substitute a different form of talk for dialogue.’ I say the magic of Public Agenda wouldn’t have worked if you’d substituted anyone else for Dan Yankelovich. He is the unstoppable intellectual force that continues to guide our work every day.”

RUTH A. WOODEN
President of Public Agenda



Mr. Harman, Mr. Yankelovich and his wife, Barbara Lee, unveil Public Agenda’s gift to Mr. Yankelovich, an antique map of his hometown, Boston.

Just the
FACTS

52%


of teachers said that if some form of merit pay for teachers were implemented at their school, **“principals would play favorites** and reward teachers who are loyal to them or who don’t rock the boat.” 23% said “it would give principals a way to reward teachers who really help kids learn and 25% said they weren’t sure. Source: *Stand by Me* 2003

Coming Soon

& White who has been Dan's friend since childhood, friends **Alan Jaffe** from La Jolla, CA, and **Lisbeth Schorr** of Harvard University, **Bernard Schwartz**, the Chairman of the Board of Loral Space & Communications, **Deborah Wadsworth**, former President of Public Agenda, **Judith Davidson Moyers**, a member of the Public



Agenda board and her husband **Bill Moyers**, and **Ruth A. Wooden**, President of Public Agenda. The evening was underwritten by a generous contribution from Bernard Schwartz. Other financial supporters of the evening were Arthur White, **Sally**

Minard and **Norton Garfinkle** of Oxford Management and **Yankelovich, Inc.** 



TOP: *Larger than Life*: Public Agenda Co-Founder **Dan Yankelovich**, live and in front of a portrait of himself at the Harvard Club.

BOTTOM: PBS's **Bill Moyers**, Public Agenda President **Ruth A. Wooden**, **Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.**, former Deputy Secretary of State and former head of TIAA-CREF, and **Dolores Wharton**, gathered with 175 others at the Harvard Club to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Public Agenda's founding.

Reality Check 2005

What is really happening on the front lines of education? Are parents, teachers, administrators and students themselves seeing improvement? What about principals and superintendents? Do they believe that schools are heading in the right direction? How do they feel about the reforms that have been implemented and the ones that are being proposed? Public Agenda is re-launching and re-vamping its influential Reality Check tracking surveys. First conducted in 1998, Reality Check is being supported by the **GE FOUNDATION**, **THE WALLACE FOUNDATION**, and **NELLIE MAE EDUCATION FOUNDATION**. The 2005, 2006 and 2007 surveys will identify progress and potential obstacles on the most important education reform initiatives now underway.

What Do Libraries Mean to People?

Working with the **AMERICANS FOR LIBRARIES COUNCIL** with support from the **BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION**, Public Agenda is exploring public attitudes and relationships with libraries – what they feel the mission of libraries is, or should be, in these times dominated by information overload and unprecedented access to unfiltered ideas via the internet.

Scientists Talk About Aging

The Baby Boom is graying. Soon the nation will be spending \$24 trillion annually on healthcare – half of which will likely go toward older Americans' medical services. To understand more clearly the potential of aging research in the coming years, Public Agenda worked with the **ALLIANCE FOR AGING RESEARCH** and the **AMERICAN FEDERATION FOR AGING RESEARCH** to conduct interviews with leaders in the field. This study looks at the hopeful signs for dramatic progress in our understanding of aging and the treatment of age-associated illness. It also explores researchers' perceptions of major obstacles, including an increasingly austere funding environment for basic research, a variety of bureaucratic and structural impediments to research, ethical concerns related to stem cells and other issues and commercial interests that focus primarily on short-term gains. The research will be released at a White House Conference on Aging in December 2005.

30%

of principals said **firing a tenured teacher** who was terrible in the classroom would be virtually impossible. 67% said it would be "difficult but doable," while 3% said it would be relatively easy. Source: *Rolling Up Their Sleeves* 2003

79%

of teachers said that their school "tries hard to get parents involved but **there's just no reaching some parents.**" 78% also said that "most parents of underachieving kids wait for their children to fail before they intervene." Source: *Attitudes About Teaching* 2003

Public Engagement Update

Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count



Americans value opportunity. Community colleges provide it. That’s the starting point for a new nationwide initiative in which Public Agenda is a key player.

But many community college students face significant challenges and daunting obstacles. Some are students who were the least well served by their earlier education and therefore have the greatest needs. Many are adults returning to school after a long period of time. And many are individuals who are working, caring for kids and juggling other commitments. Achieving the Dream is dedicated to closing achievement gaps by identifying existing practices at participating institutions that hinder student progress toward earning degrees and new practices that could help.

“Almost no one disputes the need to improve students’ chances of completing college and earning a degree. But taking action and following through requires that higher education leaders and faculty, the

community, government, local schools and employers and students themselves talk seriously and honestly about what kinds of changes will really work,” Public Agenda President **Ruth A. Wooden** said. “Engaging these different groups early and throughout the process is essential – to improve communication, to anticipate the roadblocks and pitfalls to change and to build critical partnerships.”


Working with the **Lumina Foundation for Education**, Public Agenda is participating in Achieving the Dream, a multi-year initiative to increase the success of community college students, particularly those who face the greatest obstacles. Public Agenda is working closely with Achieving the Dream partner organizations to build the principles of effective dialogue and engagement into work with local communities and leaders, as well as community college staff, faculty, and students. Additionally, Public Agenda is working directly with six of the 35 participating colleges, providing technical



assistance as they plan community conversations. The six colleges are Tallahassee Community College in Tallahassee, FL, Valencia Community College in Orlando, FL, Jefferson Community College in Stubenville, OH, Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, CT, Norwalk Community College in Norwalk, CT, and Alamo Community College in San Antonio, TX.

“We will also work directly with many of the 27 colleges now participating to hold effective and productive conversations in their own areas,” Senior Vice President for Public Engagement **Will Friedman** noted. “And we will develop an integrated ‘tool kit’ of print and video materials and discussion guides that all Achieving the Dream colleges - as well as community colleges across the country – can use.”

As we go to press, Public Agenda is close to completion of a Choicework Video Discussion Starter, which can be used to jump start community conversations and/or stakeholder dialogues on the topic of “Success is What Counts: Helping all Community College Students Succeed.”

Public Agenda has worked with communities and organizations nationwide on engagement projects that center on “Choicework” – a unique dialogue process that encourages people to look at a range of options and to think about the pros and cons of each, as well as tradeoffs and tough choices. “The advantages of Choicework can be significant,” Dr. Friedman added. “People are so used to experts telling them what to do and special interests telling them what to think. They are often surprised, energized and quite motivated when someone offers the chance to think through the strategies for themselves.” 

47%

of Americans said **getting a college education has become more difficult** than it was 10 years before, while 16% said less difficult and 30% said about as difficult. In 1993, 55% said more difficult than 10 years before, 12% said less difficult, and 28% said about the same. Source: *Public Attitudes on Higher Education 2004*

64%

of parents disagree with the idea that “when students misbehave (in class), it’s usually **because their teacher is not interesting.**” 32% agreed. Source: *Teaching Interrupted 2004*

Speaking Out Bringing the PUBLIC into Public Policy


Public Agenda Chairman Daniel Yankelovich teamed with *Foreign Affairs* Editor James F. Hoge, Jr. in September 2005 to present findings from the Public Agenda Confidence in Foreign Policy Index (see page 1) to the **Pacific Council** in Los Angeles and to the **World Affairs Council of Northern California**.

Earlier in the year, Mr. Yankelovich moderated a panel discussion on Social Security at the **Commonwealth Club of Silicon Valley** in March 2005.

Senior Vice President for Public Engagement Will Friedman gave a joint presentation with Nebraska State Commissioner of Education Doug Christensen at the **Council of Chief State School Officers** meeting in July in Washington State, and he will present at the annual **Education Trust** conference in Washington, DC, in November. Public Engagement Program Director **Lara Birnback** will make a presentation at Rockford College's "Extraordinary Conversations" Conference also in November. (Keynote address to be given by Senator Barack Obama).

Public Agenda President Ruth A. Wooden gave the keynote speech at the annual meeting of the **National School Public Relations**

Association in Boston in July 2005. In her speech, Ms. Wooden announced the launch of Education Insights (see page 1), a topic of special interest to this important audience, which works daily with public opinion issues in local school districts.

In April 2005, Ms. Wooden spoke at the annual meeting of **Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement**, a community of grantmakers and donors committed to strengthening democracy by using the power, influence and resources of philanthropy to open pathways to participation. In her paper, Ms. Wooden likened democratic health to physical health and advocated public engagement as a "healthy regimen" for keeping our nation strong. The conference paper is available for download in the "Speeches & Articles" section of Public Agenda Online. 



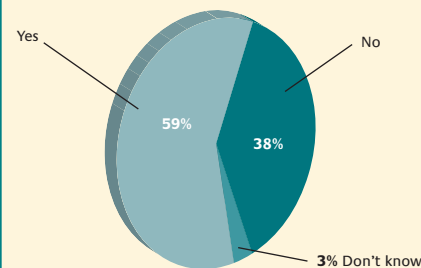
OLIVER LE PORD / WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Public Agenda Chairman Daniel Yankelovich and *Foreign Affairs* Editor James F. Hoge, Jr. address the World Affairs Council of Northern California.

Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index

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Do you think that improved communication and dialogue with the Muslim world will reduce hatred of the U.S.?




Public Agenda 6/05

demand a change of course by the administration, according to a new poll of foreign policy attitudes."

In the weeks following its release, journalists began to dig deeper into the Index's findings on religion, immigration and other issues.

The Economist, *The Arizona Republic*, *The Daily Telegraph (UK)* and *The Christian Science Monitor* devoted attention to the Index's findings on the public's growing concerns about immigration. PBS's Religion & Ethics Newsweek and others, including the widely-distributed Religion News Service, focused on analysis showing significantly greater support for current US foreign policy among those who frequently attend religious services.

The Foreign Policy Index survey questions will be fielded again in early 2006. Public Agenda will eventually be able to develop trend lines of public opinion on dozens of critical foreign policy issues. Summing up his piece in *Foreign Affairs*, Mr. Yankelovich said we may be heading toward what he terms a "tipping point" on several topics: "Unless Washington makes tangible progress on these fronts (the war in Iraq, immigration and outsourcing of jobs), we should expect the next few readings of the [Index] to show mounting public demand for change in U.S. foreign policies." 

65%

of 6th-12th graders said that decisions on how their out-of-school time was spent was mostly **their own decision**. Only 23% of parents said decisions on after school time go mostly according to what their child wants. Source: *All Work and No Play* 2004

48%

of Americans said the statement "the nation needs more politicians with honesty and integrity – it **does not need more politicians who are religious**" comes closer their view. Another 48% said "If more politicians were religious, they would be more likely to be honest and have integrity." Source: *Religion and Public Life* 2005

ISSUES IN POLLING

Where I Live is What I Believe

by Ana Maria Arumi, Director of Research

What does your neighborhood have to say about who you are? More and more, people of shared characteristics are self-selecting communities populated by others who share their values, priorities and politics. And that is having a huge impact not only on voting patterns, but on how we conduct social research.

The early 20th century's shift of populations away from rural communities into cities and the growth of surrounding suburbs still left fairly neat and tidy

geographic boundaries and considerable social and political diversity within communities. But dramatic change is occurring.

While inner cities still reliably vote Democratic and truly rural areas dependably Republican, ever-expanding suburban populations are anything but single-minded and monolithic. The 'burbs themselves vary widely in their characteristics, ranging from inner-ring small cities to isolated exurban developments abutting farmland, from high-end mega-mansions to rapidly aging split-levels. Demographic composition of suburban communities also varies tremendously depending on the type of city they surround.

Americans, especially those with advanced education and financial means, are more mobile than ever. Choosing where to live and work is increasingly a lifestyle choice with political implications.

The analysis of the 2000 presidential election that focused mostly in terms of "red" states and "blue" states has turned out to be overly simplistic. But it is true that people are choosing their geography, actually "sorting" themselves by race, industry, age, education and values – characteristics of which strongly influence political affinities – not by state, but by

region and neighborhood instead.

The young and educated are leaving behind old industrial and low-tech cities and choosing to live in high-tech cities such as San Jose, Austin and Seattle. The growing suburban populations around those cities are more and more politically liberal. Other lower-tech cities with expanding pop-

ulations, such as Dallas and Atlanta, have suburban populations that are increasingly conservative.

But even within metro areas, there are neighbor-

hoods where certain types cluster. In Washington, DC, for example, whose suburban areas attract some of the most highly-educated people from across the nation, there are distinct neighborhoods of self-selecting political orientation. The "family values" conservative churchgoer is likely to settle in the northern Virginia suburbs and far-reaching exurbs. The more liberal-minded have been choosing the Maryland suburbs in communities such as Takoma Park and Garrett Park.

Similarly, in Austin, the regions north of the city are becoming increasingly Republican and the area south of the Colorado River are more and more Democratic. In short, when it comes to drawing conclusions about demographic, political and social characteristics, "suburban" doesn't have as much meaning as it used to.

For researchers and sociologists, that means developing more accurate breakdowns for analysis of suburban data, breaking out data by zip code or by the first six digits of the 10-digit phone number. And for journalists and researchers trying to understand political and social trends, it will mean, at the very least, developing a more nuanced understanding of suburban identity. 🗳️

The "red" and "blue" state analysis turned out to be overly simplistic.

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50 Coolest Websites 2005

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64%

of 18-25 year olds said "the best way to get a good job and a comfortable lifestyle is to **get a college degree.**" 35% said "there are many ways to get a good job and comfortable lifestyle without getting a college degree." Source: *Life after High School 2005*

35%

of Americans say the statement "The U.S. has been **too quick to resort to war**" is totally justified. 27% say the statement is partly justified and 37% said it is not justified at all. Source: *Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index 2005*

Education Insights

continued from page 1

of superintendents and principals worry, for example, that some reforms are just not practical. Teachers often believe that they are being left out of the loop when it comes to school decision-making.

Education Insights will work with national and regional organizations, state and local districts, business coalitions and national and community foundations to help identify communication gaps and promote broader community engagement and dialogue. Among the services *Education Insights* will offer are:

- Assessments of, and planning for, community engagement
- Leadership training and workshops
- Communications advice and strategy
- Technical assistance, training, and partnerships to conduct public engagement projects

One key component of *Education Insights* will be the 2005 re-launch and expansion of *Reality Check*, Public Agenda’s signature tracking study of Americans’ views on public schools (see Coming Soon, Page 3).

“Schools simply aren’t going to be able to introduce and maintain changes of this magnitude without more involvement and buy-in from parents and the community at large.”

JEAN JOHNSON
Director, Education Insights


To help develop plans for *Education Insights*, Public Agenda Board Member **Deborah Wadsworth** led an effort to consult with a group of advisors including: **Ramon Cortines**, former Chancellor of Schools in New York City and former Superintendent of Schools in Los Angeles; **David Coleman**, President of The Grow Network; **Lloyd Morrisett**, former President of the Markle Foundation; **Thomas Payzant**, Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools; **Hugh Price**, former President of the National Urban League; **Diane Ravitch**, author and former Assistant Secretary of Education; and **Michael Usdan**, Senior Fellow, Institute for Educational Leadership. 

Reading Past the Headlines Religion Splits Americans on Foreign Policy

In an article in the September/October issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Public Agenda Chairman **Daniel Yankelovich** analyzed data from the Public Agenda Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index and found America split in two along religious and party lines.

“People who regularly attend religious services are confident about the success of U.S. policies in Iraq and express low levels of worry about casualties or costs, they are optimistic about Washington’s commitment to helping other nations democratize, they are comfortable with the United States’ diplomatic relations, they are satisfied that the United States is fully living up to its moral ideals and is conducting its foreign policy in a humanitarian spirit, and they are largely unconcerned about threats to their civil liberties,” Mr. Yankelovich says. “The convergence of opinions is so clear, in fact, that on some issues, frequent attendance at religious services has become a proxy for support of U.S. foreign policy.”

In the article titled “Poll Positions,” Mr. Yankelovich provides concise analysis of the broad range of issues covered by the Foreign Policy Index (see cover page for full story), including areas of common ground and a discussion of which issues are at or close to a “tipping point” – those issues where public opinion is gathering enough momentum to start exerting a decisive influence on policymaking.

In the article, Mr. Yankelovich explains how the U.S. has moved away from relative unity on foreign policy issues in the post-World War and Cold War eras, to a new era of major polarization across religious and party lines. “The actively religious U.S. public tends to see the world in terms of good and evil, hold its own values in the highest moral esteem, and feel ready to make whatever sacrifices are required to combat what they perceive as evil,” Mr. Yankelovich says. 

Opinions on Polarizing Issues, According to Religious Attendance

Percentage who agree, among people who attend religious services:

STATEMENT:	RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE			
	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY	REGULARLY	FREQUENTLY
Believe the U.S. is “generally doing the right thing with plenty to be proud of” in its relations with the rest of the world	28	33	49	52
“Worry a lot” that the U.S. may be losing the trust and friendship of people in other countries	47	46	34	24
“Worry a lot” that the war in Iraq is leading to too many casualties	63	60	50	45
Agree that the U.S. can help other countries become democracies	31	35	43	48
“Worry a lot” that the war in Iraq is requiring too much money and attention	49	48	38	32
Give a high grade to the U.S. on giving the war on terror all the attention it deserves	48	56	64	64
Give a high grade to the U.S. on meeting its objectives in Iraq	30	37	43	46
“Worry a lot” that concern with security can lead to violating the rights of U.S. citizens	44	42	32	28
Give a high grade to the U.S. on living up to American ideals of human rights and justice in its foreign policy	35	42	47	50

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Americans Have Something to Say About Foreign Policy

By Ruth A. Wooden



When airplanes slammed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it shocked many Americans into the realization that our nation's relationships with the rest of the world *matter* – that how we are perceived abroad and how our leaders conduct foreign policy deeply affect our daily lives here at home.

In the four years since September 11, 2001, one poll after another showed that foreign policy issues including terrorism and the war in Iraq were at the top of public concerns. Answers to questions that were generally being asked in such polls – i.e. Is our foreign policy “on the right track?,” Is the Administration “doing enough to fight terrorism?,” and “Are you for or against waging war against Iraq?” – were the best indicators we had of the nature of public feelings about U.S. foreign policy.

These types of questions were important starting points for discussion, but they just didn't go deep enough to allow the American people to think and talk about the very complex issues swirling around U.S. foreign policy. As we talked to leaders in the foreign policy field, in government and in communities across the nation, we became convinced that the American people had more to say than just “the U.S. is on the wrong track” or “yes, I agree with current foreign policy.”

We wanted to know what people thought were the aspects of international relations that concerned them the most, what policy strategies they thought would be most effective and what areas are not getting the attention they deserve. And we didn't want to probe deeply into these issues just once and leave it at that. We wanted to give the public the opportunity to weigh in regularly, to be a constant and vigilant voice in U.S. foreign policy.

The Public Agenda Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index is designed for just that. We intend to conduct this survey on a regular basis and eventually create a tracking index of overall confidence. The Index covers more than 25 different issues through more than 80 different survey questions. The Foreign Policy Index is not a political poll in the classic sense, but a tracking survey that measures longer term levels of concern, worry, comfort or pride for that matter among average Americans in this new era of global engagement.

This is not to say that the public has all the answers. But the public does have important points of view that were not being heard thoroughly and clearly. Now, with the Public Agenda Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index, the public has a platform on international affairs. And with a platform comes the ability to stand tall and speak out. 🗣️

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