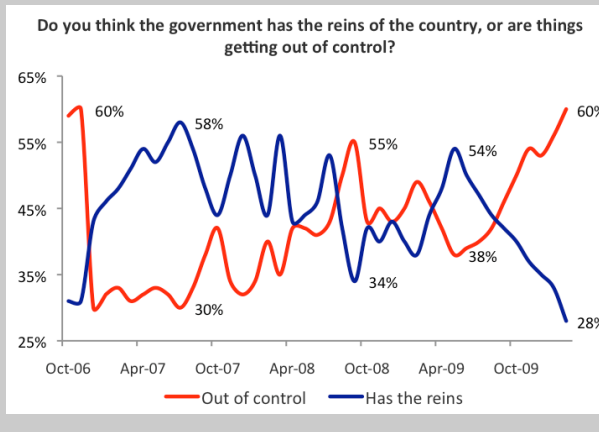
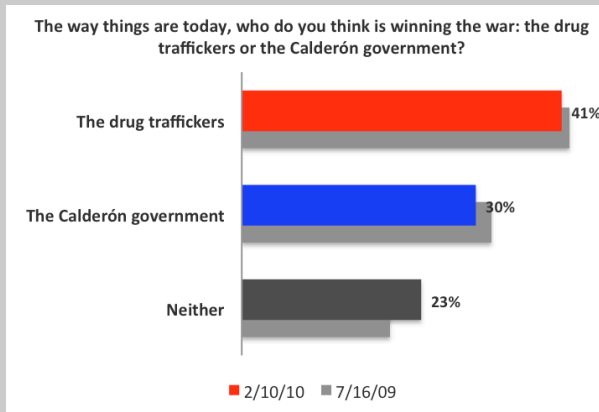


**Alan Stoga, President**  
**Daniel Wilson, Managing Director and Editor**

**Poll**

**Government losing control of the war against the narcos**

A BGC-Beltran nationwide telephone poll showed that a majority (56%) believed that some of the murdered youths in Juárez were gang members, while 23% believed they were all innocent victims. By a margin of 41% to 30%, respondents said the narcos were winning the war against the government, little changed from last July. However, the share saying the country was out of control (60%) reached the highest levels of the Calderón government. Only 28% said the government had the reins of the country, a low for this administration. ([Excelsior 2/8](#))



**Key Dates**

- 2/22-3:** Rio Group summit, Cancún
- 4/30:** End of congressional session
- 5/16:** Yucatán elections
- 7/4:** Elections in 13 states
- 9/1:** Presidential *Informe*; start of fall congressional session
- 9/15:** 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence
- 10/3:** Chiapas elections (possible)
- 11/15:** 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Revolution

**President changes tack on Juárez violence**

After initially seeming to blame the victims in the massacre of 15 high school students at a birthday party in Ciudad Juárez (“they were probably killed by another group with which they had a certain rivalry”), President **Calderón** announced another change in strategy to address the violence in the border city. The President promised, without providing details, an “integrated” strategy including new social assistance programs, while also saying that the measures “will not be imposed from the center, but proposed and discussed with the people of Juárez, and implemented hand in hand with them.” Government Secretary **Fernando Gómez Mont** is travelling to Juárez today to discuss new actions with Governor **José Reyes Baeza**. Separately, the Army said they killed the presumed leader of the attack on the students, Adrián Ramírez, in a shootout. The motivation for the attack on the students remains unknown. ([Reforma 2/3, 2/7](#))

**Chihuahua to move seat of state government to war zone**

Chihuahua Governor **Reyes Baeza** (PRI) said he was issuing a call to move the legal seat of the three branches of state government to Juárez from Chihuahua for as long as necessary until the city’s violence is brought under control. He demanded that the federal government provide another Ps. 3 billion in assistance to the state and called on President Calderón to come to Juárez to visit first hand the families of the victims. PAN party president **Cesar Nava** called Reyes Baeza’s action “pure progaganda” and “illegal.” According to *Reforma*’s tally, there were 2,082 gang killings in Chihuahua in 2009, mostly in Juárez, and another 228 in the first five weeks of 2009. ([Universal 2/7, 2/8, Reforma 2/7](#))

**Parties trade blame for flooding**

Record downpours during what is normally the dry season caused flooding in the poorer districts of Mexico City and adjacent areas of Mexico State, as well as Michoacán and Guerrero. At least 22 persons died in Michoacán. In the capital region, two major drainage canals broke their banks, leaving neighborhoods 6 ft deep in raw sewage, and closing the main Mexico-Puebla highway. President **Calderón**, Mexico state governor **Enrique Peña Nieto**, and Mexico City mayor **Marcelo Ebrard** toured the affected areas. National Water Commission head **José Luis Luege** blamed the Mexico City government for closing the deep drainage system for repairs despite forecasts of bad weather, while Ebrard blamed the feds for underspending on water infrastructure. ([Reforma 2/8, Excelsior 2/8](#))

**‘Secular state’ amendment moves forward in Congress**

In reaction to the PAN’s efforts to overturn Mexico City’s law permitting gay marriage, state-level bans on abortion, and other actions favored by the Catholic Church, the PRI and PRD opposition moved forward with a constitutional amendment that adds the word ‘secular’ to the definition of the state: “It is the will of the Mexican people to constitute themselves in a representative, democratic, secular, and federal Republic...” The measure passed the Commission on Constitutional Issues by a vote of 18-5, with all parties uniting against the PAN. The measure may go for a vote in the full Chamber this session. Since Mexico City passed a law decriminalizing early-stage abortion, 18 states have passed laws or constitutional amendments stating that life begins at conception. ([Universal 2/4, 2/8](#))

**Government launches political reform website**

The Ministry of Government launched a new website, [www.reformapolitica.gob.mx](http://www.reformapolitica.gob.mx), to lay out the government’s proposals for political reform. The site includes space for citizen comment, a library of various useful documents on political reform, information on public forums on the reform, and a variety of other materials.