

*The New York Times*  
**“A Chaotic Kenya Vote and a Secret U.S. Exit Poll”**  
**By Mike McIntire and Jeffrey Gettleman**  
**January 31, 2009**

<p>For three days in December 2007, Kenya slid into chaos as ballot counters steadily took what appeared to be a presidential election victory for the challenger and delivered it to the incumbent.</p>	
<p>As tensions mounted, Kenneth Flottman sat in Nairobi and grew increasingly frustrated. He had in his hands the results of an exit poll, paid for by the United States government, that supported the initial returns favoring the challenger, Raila Odinga.</p>	<p>The data was not available until January 17, 2008, 21 days after the elections and Flottman did not, until February 8, 2008, express to IRI officials that the exit poll should be released.</p> <p>As early as January 15, 2008, Flottman was writing to an U.S. Embassy official, “To be perfectly frank, my single biggest concern was the release of ‘preliminary’ oral data most especially while the polls were still open and also while the actually [sic] counting/tallying were underway.”</p> <p>On January 19, 2008, Flottman writes to IRI officials and a U.S.-based polling consultant that “This is enough to tell me that we need to check against the actual questionnaires to see [sic] what they do and don’t say.”</p> <p>In a later e-mail on January 19 Flottman wrote to IRI officials “James [Long a Kenya-based polling consultant with the political science department at the University of California at San Diego who oversaw the Kenya exit poll for IRI] agrees we should do an audit. We will set up the meeting and then I’ll just have him start auditing. Will let you know what we are finding.”</p> <p>On January 24, 2008, James Long writes to Flottman discussing the Kenyan polling firm, “I have no idea how they [expletive deleted] up the weighting, but please don’t give this information to anyone, it’s wrong.”</p> <p>Later on January 24, 2008, Flottman writes to IRI officials, “James</p>

	<p>brought up the idea of hiring people here to re-code everything anyway, at their expense. He is fairly p.o.'d at Strategic about what they gave us today.”</p> <p>Flottman writes to IRI officials later on January 25, 2008, “I am inclined to think that recoding the whole thing from scratch here would be the way to go.”</p>
<p>Mr. Flottman, East Africa director for the International Republican Institute, the pro-democracy group that administered the poll, said he had believed that the results would promptly be made public, as a check against election fraud by either side. But then his supervisors said the poll numbers would be kept secret.</p>	<p>That is not true. IRI’s policy has always been to not release any poll unless and until there is confidence in the integrity of the data – as IRI said in a statement issued on January 15, 2008.</p> <p>At no time was a decision made to keep the poll numbers secret, in fact just the opposite. IRI’s intention was always to release the poll results as soon as data, in which the Institute had confidence, was available. Because of the flawed data entry IRI worked for six-and-a-half months to have all the data re-entered and independently reviewed by three pollsters. It was not until this was done that IRI had confidence to release the data.</p> <p>The original data Flottman now claims IRI should have released showed Raila Odinga winning by eight points – 48.5 percent to 40.9 percent. The re-entered data show Odinga winning by six points – 46.4 percent to 40.3 percent. More to the point, IRI did not know in January how flawed the original data was (it would not know that until the data was correctly entered) and the correctly entered data could have shown a far different result, perhaps even a different winner.</p> <p>In a presentation on the poll at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in July 2008, James Long used data that showed Odinga winning by six points. So even Long was not willing to use the original data...the data Flottman is now claiming he told IRI it should have released.</p>
<p>When the incumbent, Mwai Kibaki, was finally declared the</p>	<p>Violence broke out in Kenya on December 29, 2007. Again, the</p>

<p>winner amid cries of foul, Kenya exploded in violence that would leave more than 1,000 people dead before the two sides negotiated a power-sharing deal two months later. With rioters roaming the streets, Mr. Flottman sent an e-mail message to a colleague saying he was worried that, in rebuffing his pleas to release the poll, the institute had succumbed to political pressure from American officials.</p>	<p>initial flawed data was not available until January 17, 2008.</p> <p>From January 17 through February 1, 2008, James Long attempted to reconcile discrepancies in the data. Given all of the concerns raised, that data was then sent to Craig Tufty, a U.S.-based pollster with expertise in Kenya, a pollster whose opinion Flottman had sought out in the preparation of the exit poll, to conduct an independent review. On February 5 Tufty advised IRI it could not release the poll with confidence. Flottman was notified of Tufty’s recommendation immediately. IRI did not issue its <a href="#">statement outlining the concerns</a> raised by Tufty until February 7, 2008. Flottman had two days to respond to Tufty’s concerns to show that they were either unfounded, had been addressed or were statistically irrelevant. He did nothing.</p> <p>Flottman may have been sharing conspiracy theories he had with other people outside IRI, but he never made his supervisor or the management of IRI aware “that, in rebuffing his pleas to release the poll, the institute had succumbed to political pressure from American officials.” In fact, he was making no “pleas” and he never raised this point with anyone at IRI involved in the decision-making process.</p>
<p>“Supporting democracy and managing political outcomes are two different objectives for a nonpartisan, foreign-based organization or country,” he wrote, “and sometimes there is a conflict that requires a choice.”</p>	
<p>A year later, the poll’s fate remains a source of bitter contention, even as Kenya has moved to remake its electoral system. The failure to disclose it was raised at a Senate hearing in Washington last year and has been denounced by human rights advocates, who said it might have saved lives by nudging Mr. Kibaki to accept a negotiated settlement more quickly.</p>	<p>Senator Russell Feingold asked then-Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Jendayi Frazier and USAID Africa Administrator Kate Almquist why the poll had not been released and if State and USAID had taken a position about why the poll should or should not be released. Assistant Secretary of State Frazier responded that “I haven’t discussed it [the poll] with IRI, and so I don’t know why they haven’t made their report public.”</p> <p>Assistant Administrator Almquist stated, “To my knowledge, we have not asked IRI not to make the report public, but I believe there is a question of confidence for IRI in the results of the exit poll.”</p>

	<p>IRI then briefed the Senator’s staff on the review process the poll was undergoing. The Senator’s staff was and has continued to be informed of IRI’s efforts to ensure the validity of the poll before it was released and has not expressed any additional concerns about the poll to the public or to IRI staff.</p>
<p>Exit polls, of course, are not always accurate, and it is impossible to know if events might have played out differently had the institute publicized the results, as it has usually done elsewhere. But in Kenya’s highly contested election, this particular exit poll, conducted by an experienced American organization, might have been the best gauge of who really won.</p>	<p>This implies that IRI did not release valid exit poll results. That is completely false. The data was released as soon as IRI had confidence in the data. Later in the article the <i>Times</i> admits IRI did release the poll so why make it sound as if the poll was not released?</p> <p>Since 2000 IRI has conducted 13 exit polls. In six cases results were not released for weeks if not months after Election Day, including an exit poll conducted in conjunction with Kenya’s 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections, which was never released. (Unlike in established democratic societies, where exit polls are conducted to project a winner in an election, those conducted in emerging and non-democratic societies are done with the purpose of providing quantitative data about the election process. These data are an important component of understanding democratic development and provide the public and governments with valuable information to make assistance and policy decisions.)</p>
<p>An examination by The New York Times found that the official explanation for withholding the poll — that it was technically flawed — was disputed by at least four people involved in the institute’s Kenya operations. The examination, including interviews and a review of e-mail messages and internal memorandums, raises questions about the intentions and priorities of American observers as Kenyans desperately sought credible information about the vote.</p>	<p>Flottman is the only person “involved in the Institute’s Kenya operation” who makes this claim.</p> <p>There are more than 2,000 e-mails dealing with the Kenya exit poll. The article quotes liberally from e-mails Flottman to buttress the charge. Not mentioned are other Flottman e-mails in which he agrees with IRI’s decision not to release the poll because the Institute believed the data was flawed.</p> <p>As noted above, for example, in one such e-mail that was sent as late as January 25, 2008, Flottman tells his superiors in Washington that “I am inclined to think that recoding the whole thing from scratch</p>

	<p>here would be the way to go.”</p>
<p>None of those interviewed professed to know why the institute withheld the results. But the decision was consistent with other American actions that seemed focused on preserving stability in Kenya, rather than determining the actual winner.</p>	<p>It is not the job of Americans to determine the winner in other country’s elections. That is the job of voters in that country. If Flottman thought it was IRI’s job to determine a winner in the Kenya election he had clear misunderstanding of the role IRI plays.</p> <p>IRI issued three separate statements (<a href="#">IRI Statement on December 27, 2007, Kenya Election Day Poll</a> and <a href="#">Poll Results</a>, August 14, 2008; <a href="#">IRI Statement on Kenya Exit Poll</a>, February 7, 2008; <a href="#">IRI Statement on Kenya Exit Poll</a>, January 15, 2008) detailing why IRI was unable to release the poll as that point. Those statements have been widely distributed and have been consistently available on <a href="http://www.iri.org">www.iri.org</a>.</p> <p>In addition, IRI continually briefed interested parties throughout the review process so that they were aware of the latest information.</p>
<p>When Mr. Kibaki claimed victory on Dec. 30, 2007, the State Department quickly congratulated him and called on Kenyans to accept the outcome, even though international observers had reported instances of serious ballot-counting fraud. American officials backed away from their endorsement the next day and ultimately pushed the deal that made Mr. Odinga prime minister.</p>	
<p>After insisting for months that the poll was flawed, the institute released it last August — long past the point of diplomatic impact — after outside experts whom it had hired determined that it was valid. It showed Mr. Kibaki losing by about six percentage points.</p>	<p>Earlier in the article the <i>Times</i> implies that IRI did not release the poll.</p> <p>The poll was released in August 2008 because that is when IRI had completed its re-entry of the data, a course of action Flottman had recommended on January 25, 2008.</p> <p>The fact that the original data file and the re-entered data file showed different results for both presidential candidates proves that IRI made the correct decision. Again, IRI did not know in January how flawed the original data was (it would not know that until the data was correctly entered) and the correctly entered data could have shown a far different result, perhaps even a different winner.</p>

<p>The institute would not make anyone available for interviews. In written responses to questions, a spokeswoman, Lisa Gates, said that the decision to withhold the results was based on “a lack of confidence in the data, nothing else,” and that any suggestions that it was at the behest of the United States government were “completely false.” To clear its name, the institute has asked that the State Department inspector general look into whether the poll was withheld “at the request of U.S. government officials,” she said.</p>	<p>Lisa Gates made herself available for every request Mike McIntire had. Gates was involved in every aspect of the Kenya exit poll so to imply that the <i>Times</i> did not have access to someone with first-hand knowledge of events is disingenuous.</p>
<p>“Had I.R.I. released a poll which we had reason to believe was incorrect,” she said, “The New York Times would be asking — quite rightly — how we could have been so cavalier and irresponsible.” The outside experts’ review, she said, showed that the initial results were off by two percentage points.</p>	<p>The <i>Times</i> fails to point out that the two point difference was outside the poll’s margin of error.</p> <p>The <i>Times</i>’ own policy on covering polls states “Keeping poorly done survey research out of the paper is just as important as getting good survey research into the paper. If we get it wrong, we’ve not only misled our readers, but also damaged our credibility. This holds true for polls on every topic used in every section of the paper.” (The <i>Times</i> Updates Standards For Use of Poll Results, <i>The New York Times</i>, August 29, 2006)</p> <p>In this article the <i>Times</i> seems to be saying that IRI should have taken a course of action that not even the <i>Times</i> itself would have taken.</p>
<p><b>High-Profile Task</b></p>	
<p>The institute, which is mostly government financed, conducts campaign workshops, polling and election monitoring in emerging democracies. It has earned praise from elected officials in many countries. But at times, it has also been accused of meddling. In Haiti, for example, a former American ambassador asserted that the institute’s operatives undermined reconciliation efforts among political opponents, contributing to a coup in 2004. The institute denied it.</p>	<p>The reporter is implying that IRI selectively meddles in the political process of other countries; clearly not understand the role IRI plays in supporting reformers in a country as they undertaking the difficult task of building democratic institutions. In a past article on Haiti the accusation was IRI undermined U.S. foreign policy (See <a href="#">Point by Point Rebuttal to The New York Times article "Mixed U.S. Signals Helped Tilt Haiti Toward Chaos"</a>). In this article the accusation is we were implementing U.S. foreign policy by suppressing an exit poll. Neither are true and neither accusation are supported by any evidence.</p>

	<p>This theory is undermined by the <i>Times</i> own reporting. Throughout 2007 <i>The New York Times</i> reported on IRI polls conducted in Pakistan that clearly indicated Pakistanis did not support President Pervez Musharraf. This article is silent on why, if in a country central to the fight against terrorism IRI had repeatedly publicized polls so critical of the Bush administration's closest ally, it would suppress an exit poll in Kenya.</p>
<p>The institute has worked in Kenya since 1992, but the 2007 presidential election provided its most high-profile assignment yet: monitoring the vote and conducting an exit poll for the United States Agency for International Development.</p>	<p>This is not true. IRI fielded an election observation delegation for Kenya's 1992 presidential and parliamentary elections and conducted an exit poll for Kenya's 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections.</p> <p>In fact, IRI has a 25-year history monitoring more than 130 elections and conducting hundreds of polls...many times monitoring and conducting exit polls for the same elections. To imply that IRI did not have the expertise or the capacity to monitor Kenya's elections and conduct an exit poll is not supported by any facts.</p>
<p>Despite initial economic successes and popular support after his election in 2002, Mr. Kibaki had gained a reputation for playing divisive tribal politics, and his administration had become tainted by scandal. Still, he had a good relationship with the Bush administration and generally supported American counterterrorism policies in East Africa.</p>	
<p>Mr. Odinga was viewed skeptically by some in Washington because of his flamboyant manner and his background: he was educated in East Germany and named his son after Fidel Castro.</p>	<p>The <i>Times</i> description of Prime Minister Odinga is the first time IRI's management had heard this information. IRI has worked with the Prime Minister for more than 20 years, if anything IRI had motivation to want Odinga to win.</p>
<p>Heading the institute's Kenya operations in 2007 was Mr. Flottman, on leave from his job as a senior counsel for a major defense contractor. His position put him in close proximity to Western officials in Kenya, including the American ambassador, Michael E. Ranneberger, a career diplomat appointed in 2006.</p>	

Mr. Flottman said he was surprised when, before the election, Mr. Ranneberger made public comments praising Mr. Kibaki and minimizing Kenyan corruption.	
Behind the scenes, Mr. Flottman recalled, the ambassador was even more direct. A few months before the election, Mr. Ranneberger proposed releasing a voter survey showing Mr. Kibaki ahead and trying to block a roughly simultaneous one favoring Mr. Odinga, according to Mr. Flottman, who said he witnessed the episode during a meeting at the ambassador's office. The suggestion was dropped, he said, after the embassy learned that the pro-Odinga results were already out.	
"It was clear, in my opinion, that the ambassador was trying to influence the perceptions of the Kenyan electorate, and thus the campaign," Mr. Flottman said.	
In an interview, Mr. Ranneberger said it would have made little sense to try to squelch one of many pre-election polls, and he called the suggestion that he had tried to tilt the outcome toward Mr. Kibaki "utter nonsense." He added, "Odinga praised me for being very evenhanded."	
<b>Deepening Unease</b>	
Another episode deepened Mr. Flottman's unease. As the institute assembled its monitoring delegation, the ambassador objected to plans to include his predecessor, Mark Bellamy, according to two delegation members and a former State Department official. The institute withdrew the invitation, citing budget constraints.	
"I don't know the reason why the ambassador wanted Mark off, but he did," said one delegation member, Joel D. Barkan. He added, "Perhaps somebody in the Kenya government made comments along the way."	
Mr. Flottman reached the same conclusion during a conversation in which the ambassador remarked that the Kibaki camp viewed Mr. Bellamy as "antigovernment," according to an e-mail message that Mr. Flottman sent to institute officials in Washington shortly afterward.	
"In sum," Mr. Flottman wrote, "the ambassador indicates respect	In fact at the request of Flottman, IRI's President Lorne Craner

<p>for our independence, but seems to have some agenda in regard to the election itself.”</p>	<p>contacted the Ambassador directly and explained the importance of IRI independence. Craner also passed that message to Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer.</p> <p>In this instance, Flottman approached IRI’s President directly about his concerns and he saw immediate results to protect IRI’s independence. During the review process of the exit poll Flottman never exercised this same process to raise the concerns he now claims he had.</p> <p>If Flottman thinks the Ambassador respects IRI’s independence, as he states here, why does he think the Ambassador would try to get IRI to suppress the exit poll?</p>
<p>Mr. Ranneberger disputed that characterization, saying that he played no role in Mr. Bellamy’s removal. Mr. Bellamy declined to comment.</p>	
<p>Under its contract, the institute was expected to consult with the Agency for International Development and the embassy before releasing the exit poll results, taking into account the poll’s technical quality and “other key diplomatic interests.”</p>	<p>This language is from a grant modification that was signed by IRI on October 10, 2007. While the language is correct, the decision to delay release of the results until they could be reviewed was made solely by IRI. No one from the U.S. government was involved in IRI’s decision to delay release of the results.</p> <p>The <i>Times</i> was told this on the record by IRI, but did not include that in their story.</p>
<p>Quality was not expected to be a concern. In addition to retaining a local polling firm it had used since 2000, the institute contracted with Clark C. Gibson, chairman of the political science department at the University of California at San Diego, to oversee the design of the questions, the surveying of voters and the collection of data.</p>	<p>Actually quality was a big concern and quality was IRI’s only concern.</p> <p>Throughout the preparations for the exit poll James Long, who was a doctoral student of Dr. Gibson’s and supervised the poll’s conduct in Nairobi, expressed serious concerns about the quality of work of the Kenyan polling firm. In a December 3, 2007, memo to Stephanie Blanton, director of IRI’s Africa Programs, and Flottman, Long stated, “The last two exit polls, from 2002 and 2005, conducted by Strategic did not fall within the margin of error of the actual results.</p>

This did not seem to concern many since Strategic still projected the winners. But failing to fall within a vote's real margin of error either suggests a problem in the way Strategic conducted the poll or vote fraud on the part of the parties and government. I have never seen legitimate allegations of fraud made in either race. Because I have already seen some of the ways in which Strategic produces bias in their weekly polling results, I question their exit poll results. They were headed towards bias for the upcoming exit poll before I suggested an adjustment in their sampling methodology. Further improvements need to be made, however, or else the exit poll they conduct will not be scientific."

On December 13, 2008, Long wrote asking Flottman "Did you share this [a performance review of the Kenya polling firms work] with anyone at Strategic to say: 'look, we know you're doing a crappy job, we have a way to fix it, you'd better play ball'? Is there anyone at AID or State that can put pressure on?"

On December 14, 2007, Long went on to write to Flottman of the Kenya polling firm "This is total [expletive deleted]. They never had 120 research assistants. They had 220. They are clearly just trying to cook the books here. We've caught them in outright lies."

And for a September 14-16, 2007 poll being conducted by the same Kenyan polling firm in Rift Valley, Western and Nyanza Provinces it was found that the firm was not conducting interviews they claimed they were. Flottman stated in an e-mail on September 18, 2007, "data collectors lied to us, as did their supervisor."

On October 23, 2007, in an e-mail to an IRI colleague working on another program, Flottman stated, "I think Strategic has some serious problems, but I generally think they all try to be accurate, and the physical situation and culture is such that polling is a long way from being anywhere near as reliable here as it could hope to be in [sic] West."

<p>When the voting ended and ballot-counting began, Mr. Gibson and others involved in the exit poll said they expected its results to be announced soon.</p>	<p>Given that the data was not available until January 17, 2008, it would have been impossible to release data when voting ended and ballot-counting began.</p> <p>IRI did not have conversations with Dr. Gibson about what it would or would not do with the data. Any expectations he may have had were not based on any involvement in the decision-making process.</p>
<p>But senior institute officials decided to withhold it. Most opposed to releasing the numbers, Mr. Flottman said, was Constance Berry Newman, the institute board member leading the monitoring delegation. In an e-mail message to another delegation member shortly after the election, Mr. Flottman said Ms. Newman opposed “any kind of release from the outset — essentially suggesting it would be inflammatory and irresponsible.”</p>	<p>Ms. Newman said, before she even knew what the data showed, that until all the data was available it was irresponsible to release results based on incomplete data. Again, all of the data was not available until January 17, 2008.</p>
<p>Ms. Newman, who had worked with Mr. Ranneberger when she was the Bush administration’s assistant secretary of state for African affairs, declined to comment. Mr. Ranneberger said he recalled speaking briefly with Ms. Newman or another institute official about the exit poll but had no role in deciding whether to release it.</p>	
<p>By Dec. 29, two days after the voting, trouble was brewing. The Kenyan electoral commission’s tally showed that Mr. Odinga’s 370,000-vote lead had shrunk to 38,000 and was still dropping, prompting accusations of fraud. Demonstrators took to the streets in several cities, setting fires and threatening members of rival tribes. The next day, paramilitary officers converged on the ballot-counting center, and the commission chairman, on state-owned radio, declared Mr. Kibaki the winner.</p>	<p>At this point exit poll data was not available. Again, even in incorrect form, it was not available until January 17, 2008. So to imply, as this article does, that release of the data would have avoided these unfortunate events is ridiculous as they happened before there were incorrect results to release.</p> <p>If IRI had released the initial (incorrect) reported figure of an eight-point win for Odinga and then subsequently released the correct figure the Institute would have been rightly attacked for trying to influence the results.</p> <p>Again, in a presentation on the poll at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in July 2008, James Long used the data that showed Odinga winning by six points. So even Long was not willing</p>

	to use the original data...the data Flottman is now claiming he told IRI it should have released.
Push for Information	
Among those aware of the exit poll, there was rising clamor for its release.	<p>That is simply not true. There was no clamor. Dr. Barkan did not state that he thought IRI should release the poll until his public comments to the African Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 5, 2008. Dr. Gibson never told IRI it should release the poll. Maina Kiai, Chairman of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and L. Muthoni Wanyeki, Executive Director of the Kenya Human Rights Commission called for the poll's release on February 6, 2008, in testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health and again in a <i>Times</i> op-ed in Feb. 12, 2008.</p> <p>Until early February, no one was "clamoring" for the poll's release and after Feb. 5 only three people called for its release.</p>
"With the breakdown of the electoral commission, that is precisely the point when you want an exit poll to be released," said Mr. Barkan, a Kenya expert and a senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.	The Electoral Commission of Kenya began to "breakdown" on December 29, 2007. At this point IRI was still waiting for the poll data to be available, so any information available was anecdotal, not empirical. To release anecdotal information and claim that it was empirical to try to influence the outcome of an election would have been highly irresponsible, not to mention a violation of IRI's mission.
The institute remained silent until Jan. 15, 2008, when it issued a statement citing "concerns about the validity of the initial results."	<p>What the <i>Times</i> deleted from IRI's statement is "which were based on incomplete raw data in part because the violence throughout Kenya has delayed the return of questionnaires."</p> <p>It was not until January 17, 2008, that all of the responses from the questionnaires had been entered and complete incorrect results were available. At this time Flottman and James Long still had concerns about the quality of the work the Kenyan polling firm had done.</p> <p>Flottman in this article now claims he had already been pushing IRI for release of the results. Again, the data was not available until</p>

	<p>January 17, 2008, 21 days after the elections and Flottman did not, until February 8, 2008, express to IRI officials that the exit poll should be released.</p> <p>Again, as early as January 15, 2008, Flottman was writing to a U.S. Embassy official, “To be perfectly frank, my single biggest concern was the release of ‘preliminary’ oral data most especially while the polls were still open and also while the actually [sic] counting/tallying were underway.”</p> <p>Again, on January 19, 2008, Flottman states in an email to IRI officials and a U.S. based-polling consultant that “This is enough to tell me that we need to check against the actual questionnaires to see [sic] what they do and don’t say.”</p> <p>Again, in a later e-mail on January 19 Flottman wrote to IRI officials “James agrees we should do an audit. We will set up the meeting and then I’ll just have him start auditing. Will let you know what we are finding.”</p> <p>Again, on January 24, 2008, James Long writes to Flottman of the Kenyan polling firm, “I have no idea how they [expletive deleted] up the weighting, but please don’t give this information to anyone, it’s wrong.”</p> <p>Again, later on January 24, 2008, Flottman writes to IRI officials, “James brought up the idea of hiring people here to re-code everything anyway, at their expense. He is fairly p.o.’d at Strategic about what they gave us today.”</p> <p>Again, Flottman writes to IRI officials later on January 25, 2008, “I am inclined to think that recoding the whole thing from scratch here would be the way to go.”</p>
<p>In February, with Mr. Kibaki resisting calls to share power, the leaders of two Kenyan human rights groups wrote an opinion</p>	<p>IRI’s comments stating that the Institute “does not have confidence in the integrity of the data and therefore believes the poll is invalid.”</p>

<p>article for The Times, saying the refusal to release the poll had “fueled mistrust.” After the poll was mentioned during a Senate hearing, the institute stepped up its public criticism of the poll, saying it “does not have confidence in the integrity of the data and therefore believes the poll is invalid.”</p>	<p>were based on the expert opinion of a U.S.-based pollster who reviewed the initial data set. On February 5, 2008, he advised that there were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern over the possibility of compromised questionnaires due to the unrest following the elections and the significant delay in data being returned to Nairobi as a result;</li> <li>• Significant problems with duplicate and non-sequential numbering of questionnaires during the coding process which indicates possible missing questionnaires or duplicate data-entry of results;</li> <li>• In the full sample there were no voters who responded undecided or refused to answer the presidential ballot test question. However, in the over-sample there were voters who responded undecided or refused to answer; and</li> <li>• Data from the parliamentary ballot test question was excluded from the full data set making it impossible to compare the presidential ballot test question and the parliamentary ballot test question to check for anomalies.</li> </ul> <p>Again, Flottman was notified of Tufty’s recommendation immediately. IRI did not issue its statement outlining the concerns raised by Tufty until February 7, 2008. Had Flottman wanted to make a plea for IRI to release the data or respond to the concerns Tufty raised he had two days to do so. He did nothing.</p>
<p>Mr. Gibson said he told the institute that its technical concerns were baseless, to no avail. His contract barred him from publicly disclosing the polling data for six months, and in March of last year the institute asked him to sign a new contract that would have restricted him from speaking publicly about the institute’s polling program without written permission.</p>	<p>From February 22 through March 13, 2008, Dr. Clark Gibson, chairman of the political science department at the University of California at San Diego, actively pursued collaborating with IRI on the re-entry of the poll data. If, as the <i>Times</i> states, “Mr. Gibson said he told the institute that its technical concerns were baseless, to no avail,” why did he pursue re-entering the data for IRI?</p>
<p>“I think they were trying to shut me up,” he said. “I refused to sign it.”</p>	<p>The poll data was proprietary information owned by the International Republican Institute. On January 14, 2008, before complete data was available, someone involved with the project leaked incorrect data to the media.</p>

	<p>IRI’s efforts after that unethical incident were focused on ensuring only accurate information was released.</p> <p>As IRI has stated many times, the Institute does not release a poll it believes is invalid and in which we do not have full confidence.</p>
<p>In July, after his contract expired, Mr. Gibson and one of his doctoral students presented their analysis of the data at a seminar in Washington. A month later — one day before Mr. Gibson was to testify before Kenyan investigators — the institute announced that, after the outside review, it “now had confidence” in the poll and released the results.</p>	<p>Again, the original data Flottman now claims IRI should have released showed Raila Odinga winning by eight points – 48.5 percent to 40.9 percent. The re-entered data show Odinga winning by six points – 46.4 percent to 40.3 percent. Again, IRI did not know in January how flawed the original data was (it would not know that until the data was correctly entered) and the correctly entered data could have shown a far different result, perhaps even a different winner.</p> <p>Again, in the presentation, held at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, James Long, the doctoral student, used the data that showed Odinga winning by six points. So even Long was not willing to use the original data...the data Flottman is now claiming he told IRI it should have released.</p>
<p>For Mr. Odinga, bitterness lingers. He declined to sign a letter the institute drafted last month that amounted to an unqualified endorsement of its conduct. Instead, he wrote that while he appreciated the institute’s past work, “the 2007 experience has cast some doubts among ordinary Kenyans.”</p>	<p>To read the Prime Minister Odinga’s full letter to IRI see <a href="#">IRI Releases Letter from Prime Minister of Kenya</a>.</p>
<p>“While I have no evidence to make me believe that I.R.I. withheld the exit poll results at the request of the U.S. government,” Mr. Odinga wrote, “my supporters believe that had I.R.I. released those polls, they would have made a huge difference and even saved lives.”</p>	<p>Again, to read the Prime Minister Odinga’s full letter to IRI see <a href="#">IRI Releases Letter from Prime Minister of Kenya</a>.</p>