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Thu, November 4, 2004

Kerry is Canada's choice: Survey

By BILL RODGERS, Parliamentary Bureau

If Canadians had been able to vote in Tuesday's U.S. presidential election, the electoral map would have been blue north of the 49th parallel, an SES poll suggests. The survey of 1000 people between Oct. 26 and Nov. 1 found 51% of Canadians felt Democratic Party candidate Sen. John Kerry would have been the better choice for improving the North American economy while 47% said the senator best reflected their values.

George W. Bush trailed far behind, with just 18% saying he would be better for the economy while only 15% said they felt the Republican president shared their values.

"For a majority of Canadians, there is a personal disconnect with George W. Bush," said SES's Nik Nanos.

Conservative MP John Reynolds believes the stark contrast between the attitudes of Canadians and Americans towards the U.S. president has been shaped by the anti-Bush coverage of most of the Canadian media.

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Sun Media Newspapers

'SKEWED TO KERRY'

"Coverage of the U.S. election by Canadian media outlets was skewed to Kerry," Reynolds complained. "All you heard was that everybody hated the president."

But NDP Leader Jack Layton said "tough trade issues" that prevailed during the president's first term in office have driven the dislike of Bush among Canadians.

Christopher Waddell, an associate professor of journalism at Carleton University, thinks many Canadians know very little about their neighbour.

"We know about the Americans who live right across the border from us but once we get beyond that, we really don't know and understand them at all," Waddell said.

The poll's results are considered accurate to plus or minus 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

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