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## 'Change' cited for Tory win

Feb. 23, 2006. 01:00 AM

SUSAN DELACOURT

OTTAWA BUREAU CHIEF

OTTAWA—A new poll of Canadian attitudes' toward the Jan. 23 election result shows that Prime Minister Stephen Harper is right to be cautious about making any hard-right Conservative turns in his new government.

The poll, conducted earlier this month by SES Research, shows that the narrow Conservative minority was not achieved because of any great groundswell of support for Harper or Tory policies.

When 1,000 Canadians were asked why they believed the Conservatives won the election, just 6 per cent said it was because Harper was the best leader, and only 11 per cent said it was because the Tories had the best platform.

On the other hand, 46 per cent said "it was time for a change," and 25 per cent said it was because the Liberals needed a "time out." In other words, the Jan. 23 election result was more of a statement against the Liberals than for the Conservatives.

Or, as SES president Nik Nanos says: "Polling clearly shows that the Harper mandate is founded on change and punishing the Liberals."

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