



# Media Release

## Leadership may be irrelevant to Liberal electoral chances PM, Martin or other leadership hopefuls could win next election

Ottawa, August 8, 2002 - A recent national survey released by polling firm SES Research indicates that, based on the current political environment, it is likely irrelevant who leads the Liberals. SES Research polled Canadians between July 26<sup>th</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. They were asked why they thought the Liberals were re-elected back in November 2002. 40% of Canadians believed the Liberals won because the alternative parties and leaders were unappealing, 21% were unsure why the Liberals won, 17% noted that the Liberals won because Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin were a strong team, 15% said Jean Chrétien was the best choice to lead Canada and only 7% said the Liberals won because they had the best vision for Canada.

“Credit for the Liberal victory in the last election clearly rests on the shoulders of the opposition parties. Canadians believe the last election was won by the Liberals because of the unpalatable alternatives,” noted Nikita Nanos of SES. “This could be considered good news for Chrétien because this reveals that, regardless of who leads the Liberals, they can win the next election not because of their leader or even their Liberal vision but simply because the alternative party/leader choices are unappealing.”

Among committed Liberal voters (N=352), 30% believed the Liberals won because of the unappealing opposition parties/leaders, 28% because Jean Chrétien was the best person to lead Canada, 20% said the Liberal victory could be attributed to the Chrétien-Martin team, 12% to the Liberal vision and 10% were unsure.

“Although Martin may have convinced party members that the Liberals can only win under his leadership, the polling data clearly shows that Liberal success is fundamentally predicated on a vote split and unappealing alternatives,” stated Nanos. “One could also observe that under the current situation, Liberal infighting will also likely have only a marginal effect on Liberal support due to the lack of perceived choices.”

Current SES polling among decided voters puts the federal Liberals at 46% (down 3%), the Canadian Alliance (CA) at 18% (down 1%), the Progressive Conservatives (PC) at



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12% (down 4%), the NDP at 12% (up 2%) and the Bloc at 8% nationally (up 2%). Support for other parties came in at 4%. Overall, 24% of Canadians were undecided.

“The fact that federal Liberal numbers have not significantly dropped in the face of an open schism between Chrétien and Martin further demonstrates that potentially soft and disaffected Liberals supporters do not know where to move to register their displeasure,” noted Nanos. “With almost a 30 point cushion, in the absence of politically viable alternatives, the Chrétien-Martin saga is more an exercise in ego than a necessary changing of the guard to keep the Liberals in power. Based on the current vote-split and opposition leadership choices, the Prime Minister or any reasonable Liberal leadership hopeful would have a good chance to return the Liberals to a fourth mandate.”

SES’s National Omnibus Survey is conducted quarterly. It is based on a random telephone sample of 1,000 Canadians, 18 years of age and older conducted between July 26<sup>th</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. The margin of accuracy for the survey of 1,000 Canadians is 3.1 percentage points, plus or minus, 19 times out of 20. Validation of the demographic profile of respondents indicates that the poll is a fair representation of the Canadian voting populace.

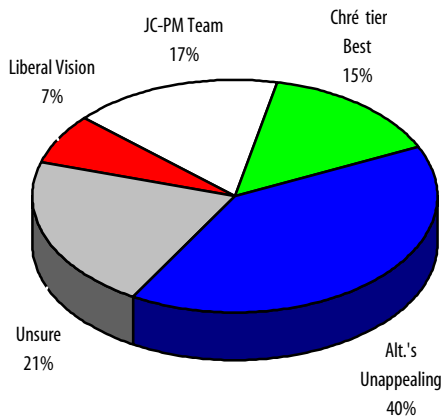
Established in 1987, SES Canada Research Inc. is a full service marketing and public opinion research firm with offices in Toronto and Ottawa.

For a detailed review of the survey tables, please visit the SES Research website at <http://www.sesresearch.com>.

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**WHY LIBERALS WON THE LAST ELECTION****COMMENTARY**

According to Canadians, credit for the November 2000 Liberal victory clearly rests on the shoulders of the split and unappealing opposition parties. Factoring the margin of accuracy of the survey, the Prime Minister and the Chrétien-Martin team can claim equal credit.

Committed Liberal voters were comparatively the group most likely to credit the Prime Minister for the Liberal victory. Quebecers and BQ voters were the groups most likely to cite the Chrétien-Martin Team while Western Canadians, CA and PC supporters were most likely to point to the unappealing alternatives

**THE QUESTION**

Thinking of the last federal election in November 2000, do you think Canadians elected the Liberals, led by Jean Chrétien because...[rotate options]

- Jean Chrétien was the best choice to lead Canada
- Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin made a strong team
- The Liberal Party had the best vision for the future
- The alternative parties and leaders were not appealing

Target Groups (+/- index score)	JC Best	JC-PM Team	Lib Vision	Poor Alt.'s	Und
Atlantic	+2	-3	0	-4	+5
Quebec	+3	+12	+3	-15	-2
Ontario	0	-4	+1	0	+3
West	-4	-5	-3	+13	-2
Men	+4	+1	-1	+5	-8
Women	-5	-1	+1	-4	+9
18 to 29	+7	-2	+2	-8	+1
30 to 39	-1	0	-2	+7	-3
40 to 49	+1	+1	+2	-2	-2
50 to 59	-5	-4	0	+7	+2
60 plus	-6	+3	-2	-2	+6
Liberal voters	+13	+3	+5	-10	-11
CA voters	-4	-9	-5	+18	-1
PC voters	-8	-5	0	+22	-8
NDP voters	-10	+8	-2	+8	-3
BQ voters	-8	+23	-5	-19	+10
Undecided	-9	-7	-2	-2	+20

Note: Plus/minus index scores are based on the difference between the sub-group and the sample average. For example the +12 score noted above in Quebec would indicate that Quebecers are 12% more likely to say the Liberals won because of the Jean Chrétien-Paul Martin team compared to the national average. Readers should focus on scores greater than +/-5.

**THE METHODOLOGY**

Between July 26<sup>th</sup> and August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002, SES conducted a total of 1,000 telephone interviews across Canada with eligible voters as part of the SES National Quarterly Omnibus. Aggregate results of the survey are accurate  $\pm 3.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

Validation of the demographic profile of respondents indicates that the poll is a fair representation of Canadian voters.

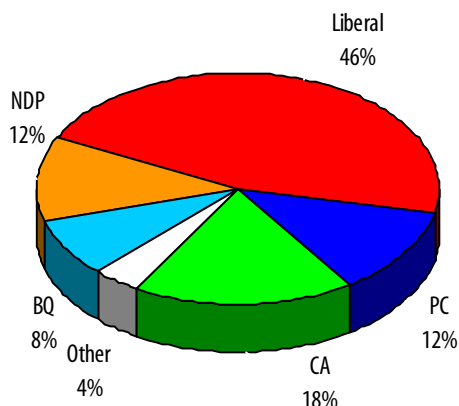
**ABOUT SES**

Established in 1987, SES Canada Research Inc. is a full service public opinion research and management consulting firm.

In order to maximize turn-around time and increase efficiency, SES has a 110-line call centre complete with a predictive dialer. SES is regularly called upon by corporate, government and para-public clients in Canada and the United States to conduct research and provide strategic advice.

For more information on our full range of services please visit our website [www.sesresearch.com](http://www.sesresearch.com) or contact:  
Mr. Nikita Nanos at (613) 234-4666 ext.400 or [nnanos@sesresearch.com](mailto:nnanos@sesresearch.com)

## THE BALLOT (committed voters only)

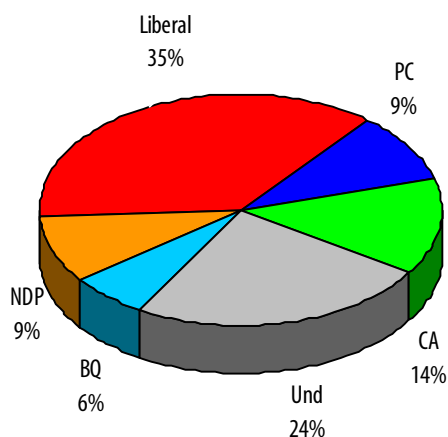


### Decided (%) Jul-02 Apr-02 2000\*

Liberal	▼	46.4	49.0	40.8
CA	▼	17.8	19.0	25.5
PC	▼	12.1	16.1	12.2
NDP	▲	11.6	9.7	8.5
BQ	▲	8.2	6.3	10.7

\* Federal Election

## THE BALLOT (all)



## THE METHODOLOGY

Between July 26<sup>th</sup> and August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2002, SES conducted a total of 1,000 telephone interviews across Canada with eligible voters as part of the SES National Quarterly Omnibus. Aggregate results are accurate  $\pm 3.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

Validation of the demographic profile of respondents indicates that the poll is a fair representation of Canadian voters.

### Target Groups (+/- index score)

	LIB	CA	PC	NDP	BQ	Und
Atlantic	+6	-1	+11	+4	-6	-14
Quebec	+8	-12	-5	-3	+19	-6
Ontario	+13	-8	0	-3	-6	+4
West	-18	+15	+1	+3	-6	+5
Men	+4	+4	-2	0	0	-5
Women	-3	-5	+3	-1	+1	+5
18 to 29	+1	-3	-6	0	0	+6
30 to 39	+3	-5	+2	0	+1	+1
40 to 49	+7	+6	0	-1	-2	-10
50 to 59	-4	+3	+4	+2	-3	-2
60 plus	-8	-2	+2	-1	+4	+5

Note: Plus/minus index scores are based on the difference between the sub-group and the sample average. For example a +19 score for the BQ in Quebec would indicate that their support is 19% higher in Quebec than the national average. Considering the sample size of 1,000 voters, readers should focus on score of +/-5 or greater.

## COMMENTARY

A review of the SES polling data would indicate that the Liberals continue to have almost a 30 point lead over the opposition parties. Liberal support continues to exceed that registered in the last federal election by six percentage points.

The fact that federal Liberal numbers have not significantly dropped in the face of an open schism between Chrétien and Martin demonstrates that potentially soft and disaffected Liberals supporters do not know where to move to register their displeasure.

Generally, the Liberals do not perform as well in the West as they do in the rest of Canada and the CA support in Quebec is below their national average. Currently, almost one of every four eligible voters is undecided.

Over the past three months both the NDP and the BQ have managed to post some gains in support.

## ABOUT SES

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