



Media Release

Fragmented Right Perpetuates Federal Liberal Dominance No Honeymoon for Harper – House Performance Critical

Ottawa, May 20, 2002 - A recent national survey released by polling firm SES Research indicates that the malaise of the right will continue to result in Liberal dominance for the foreseeable future.

Current SES polling puts the federal Liberals at 49%, the Canadian Alliance (CA) at 19%, the Progressive Conservatives (PC) at 16%, the NDP at 10% and the Bloc at 6% nationally. The firm also measured the potential positive bump for the Canadian Alliance from their change in leadership. Canadian voters were asked if they would be more or less likely to consider voting for the Canadian Alliance with the election of Stephen Harper as the new CA leader.

Polling data indicates that under the best case scenario the CA would realize a maximum net gain of 9 percent nationally. “Unfortunately for the CA, their net gain among undecided voters was only 1.7% (7.4% more likely, 5.7% less likely). With no breakthrough imminent, Harper and the CA will be hard-pressed at this time to build a national alternative to the Liberals,” said Nikita Nanos of SES. “The pressure will clearly be on Harper to perform well in the House of Commons. The CA leadership convention was a missed communications opportunity. Combined with no post-leadership honeymoon, a poor performance in the House by Harper could stall the CA.”

Even with the Liberal dominance on the ballot question, only three of every ten Canadians rate the performance of the Liberals as very good (7%) or somewhat good (24%). Forty-one percent describe Liberal performance as average and another 25% describe it as somewhat poor (14%) or very poor (11%). Four percent of Canadians were unsure as to how to rate the Liberals.

“Without a clear national alternative, the Liberals can rule with impunity,” notes Nikita Nanos of SES Research. “The current Liberal formula of a centrist social agenda working in tandem with a centre-right fiscal policy is effectively blunting opposition to the government from a policy perspective. Well positioned and facing three



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regionally-based federal parties, the odds will continue to be stacked in the Liberals' favour."

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 April 20th and April 24th, 2002. The margin of accuracy for the survey 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>.

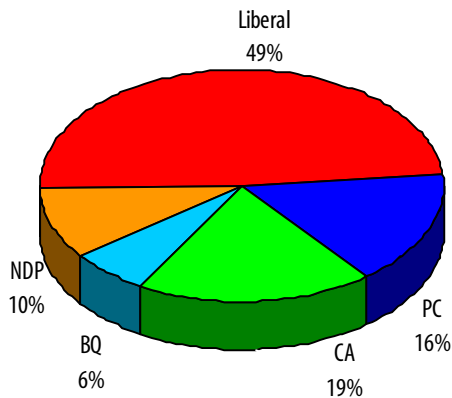
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Canadian Federal Politics – The Ballot

THE BALLOT (committed voters only)

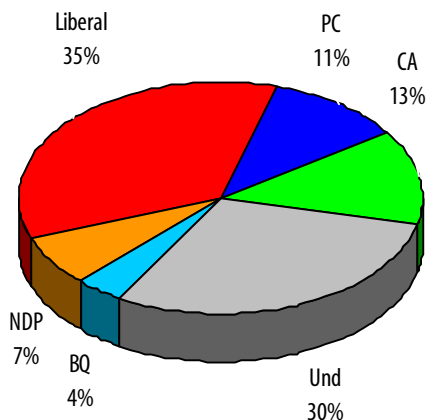


Decided (%) Apr-02 2000* 1997*

Liberal	▲	49.0	40.8	38.5
CA	▼	19.0	25.5	19.4
PC	▲	16.1	12.2	18.8
NDP	▲	9.7	8.5	11.0
BQ	▼	6.3	10.7	10.7

* Federal Election

THE BALLOT (all)



THE METHODOLOGY

Between April 20th and April 24th, 2002, SES conducted a total of 1,000 telephone interviews across Canada with eligible voters. 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.

Target Groups (+/- index score)

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

Note: Plus/minus index scores are based on the difference between the sub-group and the sample average. For example a +13 score for the BQ in Quebec would indicate that their support is 13% higher in Quebec than their 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 currently have a comfortable lead over the opposition parties. Liberal support exceeds that registered in the last federal election by nine percentage points.

Apart from the Liberals, the PCs and the NDP are the only two other parties to realize an increase in support compared to the 2000 Federal Election. Support for the Canadian Alliance (CA) at the time of the survey was lower than their 2000 election results and comparable to their support in 1997.

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 three of every ten eligible voters are undecided. This level of undecided could be a result of a general indifference with the federal political scene and the performance of the Liberal government. For example, SES polling data indicates that only 30% of Canadians would describe the performance of the federal Liberal government as very/somewhat good.

ABOUT SES

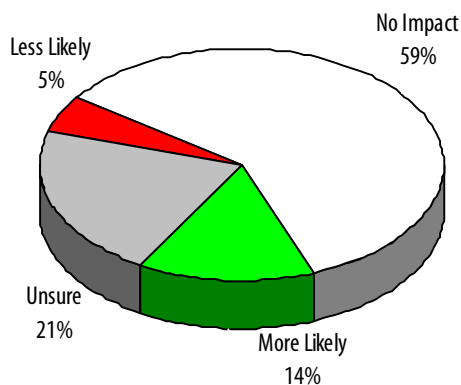
Established in 1987, SES Canada Research Inc. is a full service public opinion research and management consulting firm.

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 or contact:
Mr. Nikita Nanos at (613) 234-4666 ext.400 or nnanos@sesresearch.com

Canadian Federal Politics – Harper Impact

POTENTIAL HARPER IMPACT ON CA VOTE



Harper/New Leader Impact on CA All Canadians

Maximum Net Gain/Loss (%)

More likely to vote CA	14.1
Less likely to vote CA	5.1
Maximum Net Gain/Loss	+9.0
(N=1,000)	

Harper/New Leader Impact on CA Undecided Voters Only

Maximum Net Gain/Loss (%)

More likely to vote CA	7.4
Less likely to vote CA	5.7
Maximum Net Gain/Loss	+1.7
(N=296)	

THE METHODOLOGY

Between April 20th and April 24th, 2002, SES conducted a total of 1,000 telephone interviews across Canada with eligible voters. 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.

THE QUESTION

As you may know, the Canadian Alliance has just selected Stephen Harper as their new leader. Regardless of how you vote locally, will this change in leadership mean that you will be more likely to vote for the Canadian Alliance, less likely to vote for the Canadian Alliance or will the change in leadership have no impact.

Target Groups (+/- index score)	More Likely	Less Likely	No Impact	Und
Atlantic	-5	-3	+16	-7
Quebec	-6	+1	+15	-9
Ontario	+4	+1	-3	0
West	+3	0	-11	+9
Men	+4	0	+1	-4
Women	-3	0	0	+4
18 to 29	-1	-1	+4	-2
30 to 39	-2	+1	+4	-2
40 to 49	-1	-2	0	+5
50 to 59	+2	0	-1	0
60 plus	+4	+3	-6	+1

Note: Plus/minus index scores are based on the difference between the sub-group and the sample average. For example the +16 score noted above in the Atlantic would indicate that Atlantic Canadians are 16% more likely to say there will be no impact on their support compared to the national average. Considering the sample size of 1,000 voters, readers should focus on scores greater than ± 5 .

COMMENTARY

The maximum net positive impact of Stephen Harper on CA support is 9% at this time. The likelihood of undecided voters considering the CA as a result of the change in leadership is even lower than the Canadian average. Factoring the margin of accuracy of the survey, one could point to a no growth scenario among undecided voters for the CA currently.

The CA leadership process was clearly a missed opportunity to renew the perceptions of the Canadian Alliance through their new leader. Harper's performance in the House of Commons, therefore, will be even more critical. A poor performance could lead to CA support stalling for the immediate future.

ABOUT SES

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