

**Federal Election:
Martin Support Strong But Parliamentary Majority Not
Guaranteed, Adscam Off the Radar, Bloc Powerful,
B.C. in 3-Way Contest**

**A COMPAS/National Post Poll
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Federal Election: Martin Support at Near Majority, Adscam Off the Radar, Bloc Powerful, B.C. in 3-Way Contest

Liberals Near Majority with Much Uncertainty

The federal Liberals have near majority Parliamentary support with 39% of the decided vote and the Conservatives in distant second with 27% support, as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Vote Intentions
"If a federal election were held today, which party
would you vote for?" [ROTATE] [IF DON'T KNOW
OR REFUSE: Which party would you lean towards?] [COMBINED VOTE,
i.e. initial vote intention plus party
that initial undecideds would lean to]

	FIELD DATES		
	APR 30- MAY 2	FEB 13	JAN 26- 28
The Liberal Party led by Paul Martin	39	44 ¹	49
The Conservative Party led by Stephen Harper	27	26	19
The NDP led by Jack Layton	20	18	17
The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe	12	9	11
Other	3	3	4
Would not vote [REMOVED]	2	3	4
Don't know/undecided [REMOVED]	14	19	14
Refused [REMOVED]	3	4	4

The biggest advantage for the Liberals is that Adscam and corruption have nearly disappeared from the radar screen. These issues are hardly volunteered by respondents as issues driving their vote, as discussed below. On the other hand, Liberal

¹ Percent voting for each party after DNK, won't vote, and refused are removed from the calculations.



support is not stable. Few voters express a strong pro-Liberal or pro-Martin feeling or opinion. Furthermore, the issues of importance to voters are widely disparate and transitory, as discussed below.

British Columbia is in a tight race as are parts of Ontario while Quebec faces the prospect of a Bloc sweep.

Regional Distribution—Tight Race in B.C., Liberal Weakness in Quebec

As evidenced in table 2, the Liberals retain a strong lead in Ontario and Atlantic Canada while facing a kind of electoral lottery in a 3-way contest in British Columbia and a potential rout in Quebec. The Liberals' strong lead in Ontario as a whole might not lead to an efficient delivery of Liberal seats because of concentrations of NDP support and Conservative support in their respect areas of strength. The Liberals are set to do very well but their support is not stable and cannot be counted on to deliver a majority of seats.

Table 2: Regional Distribution of the Vote

	Lib	CPC	NDP	Bloc	Other
Atl	41	36	21	0	2
QC	37	5	7	50	1
ON	45	31	22	0	2
Prairies	33	40	22	0	5
B.C.	33	31	32	0	4

Adscam Off the Radar Screen But No Dominant Issues

Respondents were asked an open-ended question about the issue or "factor" that is most apt to affect their vote. The very favourable news for the Liberals is that the issue of Adscam and corruption has virtually disappeared, as shown in table 3. The pattern of issue selection nonetheless shows a fair amount of potential volatility:

- A sizeable number of voters are volunteering local issues as drivers of their vote;
- Some are pointing to provincial issues such as education;
- No single issue or set of issues has come to the fore; the issues seems disparate;



*Federal Voter Behaviour for National Post
May 3, 2004*

- ❑ Very few voters are volunteering decidedly pro-Liberal, pro-Martin, anti-Harper, or anti-Conservative considerations.

Table 3: Issues (“Thinking of how you’re likely to vote, please tell me what factor most affects how you’ll probably vote”?)

issue	percent volunteering the issue as driving respondent’s vote
Local candidates and local platforms	23
Health	18
Taxes and the economy	14
Leadership in general, integrity in general	13
Adscam/Liberal corruption	5
Gay, women’s and other rights; social issues	5
Pro-Liberal party	4
Education	3
Foreign policy and defence	3
Anti-Liberal party	3
Environment	2
Pro-Bloc	1
Pro-Conservative party	1
Anti-Conservative	1
Pro-NDP	1
Anti-NDP	1
Pro-Martin	1
Anti-Martin	1
Pro-Harper	*
Anti-Harper	*
Martin will clean up the mess	*
Anti-Bloc	*
Pro-Layton	0
Anti-Layton	0
Pro-Duceppe	0
Anti-Duceppe	0
Other	4
DNK/refuse excluded from calculations; note errors due to rounding	15



A further element of uncertainty is that few of the issues are associated with or appear to favour one party over another. For example, there is little difference in the inclination of Liberal, Conservative, or NDP voters to identify the economy, healthcare, or any other issue as their own driving issue. The only issues associated with a partisan slant are:

- ❑ Liberal corruption or Adscam, named by 12% of Conservatives and no Liberals
- ❑ Gay and other human rights issues, named by 9% of NDP voters vs. 2% of Liberals
- ❑ Foreign and defence policy, identified by 7% of NDP voters, who express various forms of anti-Americanism, but not by a single Conservative or Liberal voter.

Methodology

The nationally representative sample of N=906 Canadians was interviewed by professional interviewers using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) April 30-May 2nd, 2004. Samples of this size are deemed accurate to within approximately four percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The principal investigator on this study was Dr. Conrad Winn (416-498-0310).

