

**Conservative Party Prospects:  
A Good Product with Ineffective Marketing and Sales**



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## 1.1. Overview

COMPAS carried out a national survey for the *National Post* focusing on electoral prospects for the Conservative Party of Canada. The survey explored in depth the personal beliefs and perceptions of the CPC held by four segments of voters:

- ❑ *Current* CPC voters,
- ❑ *Potential* CPC voters drawn from among Liberal and other party segments as well as the undecided, identified as “potential CPC voters” because they affirmed that they might vote CPC in one of the next three federal elections,
- ❑ Strong CPC opponents, identified as *anti-Conservative* voters because they affirmed that they would never vote CPC or certainly not within the next three elections, and
- ❑ A special type of *undecided* voter, non-Conservatives who would not indicate whether they would or would not consider voting CPC in any of the next three federal elections.

The portrait of the Conservative party that emerged from the data resembles that of some wellknown business school consumer product cases. In the era of the video cassette recorder, customers had difficulty distinguishing the ironically named Betamax from the VHS format competitor. Betamax’s technical performance exceeded that of VHS but Betamax lost market share and disappeared first because customers could not connect psychologically with the product.

The famous Ford Edsel was an adequately performing vehicle—some say more than adequately performing—that promptly disappeared because of poor marketing. By conventional wisdom, Edsel failed because it was marketed as everyman’s car in an era of aspiring consumers.

In Canadian politics, the Conservative party is the political “product” with the more appealing features in the eyes of today’s consumer-voter, much closer to where the public stands on issues. The Liberal party appears to outsell or outpoll the CPC because it appears to outperform the CPC in marketing. In



consumer product language, the Liberal brand appears to trump the Conservative brand while the Conservative product appears to outperform the Liberal product.

One consequence of superior Liberal marketing is a public image of the Conservative party as somewhat extremist. The Conservatives' image of extremism emerges in the public's tendency to see the Conservatives as somewhat "rightwing" while scoring the Liberals, the BQ, and themselves as essentially centrist. For the vast majority of the electorate, the terms left and right have no policy meaning; they are epithets that denote psychological rather than policy or ideological positions. The left-right spectrum is above all a measure of the degree to which voters feel a party is "like me."

Canadian voters are different from American voters. American voters do use ideological labels meaningfully, correctly positioning themselves on liberal-conservative or left-right scales. Canadian voters, by contrast, are non-ideological in their language. The terms left and right mean almost nothing to them of an ideological or policy nature.

## **2.2. Gap Closing with More than Half of Non-Conservative Voters Amenable to Switching**

The Liberal lead has fallen to 5 percentage points, as shown in table 2A. Meanwhile only two-fifths of the remaining electorate rules out the possibility of voting Conservative in upcoming elections, as shown in table 2B.



Table 2A: Federal Vote<sup>1</sup>

	MAR 11, 2005	FEB 26, 2005	FEB 1, 2005
The Liberal Party led by Paul Martin	35	38	42
The Conservative party led by Stephen Harper	30	29	28
The NDP led by Jack Layton	19	18	18
[IN QUEBEC] The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe	13	12	10
[UNPROMPTED] Other	3	3	2
[UNPROMPTED] DNK/Undecided/Refused/ Won't vote (excluded from calculation)	18	19	21

Table 2B: Potential New CPC Voters<sup>2</sup>

	%
Definitely, Probably, Possibly	49
Never	41
Don't know/Refused	10

### 3.0. Strong Product—Conservatives Closer to the Public than Are the Liberals on 7 Policies vs. 2

The Conservatives are perceived as closer to the average voter than the Liberals on 7 issues, tied on one, and farther on two, as shown in table 3A:

<sup>1</sup> Could you please tell me if you would you vote for [ROTATE] if an election were held today? [ROTATE]. Combines initial response plus “leaning” among respondents who initially aver that they don't know how they would vote.

<sup>2</sup> (Q5) [IF NOT CONSERVATIVE] Would you definitely, probably, possibly, or never consider voting for the Conservative party in, say, one of the next three federal elections?



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- ❑ On tougher sentencing, the CPC is seen as decidedly softer than the public, but decidedly tougher than the Liberal party;
- ❑ On marriage, the CPC is seen as closer to the public than the Liberal party, albeit fractionally more traditionalist than the public itself;
- ❑ On freedom of medical choice, the CPC are seen as much closer to the public than the Liberal party but less pro-free market than the public itself;
- ❑ On government corruption, the CPC is seen as far less interested in cleaning up corruption than the public but definitely more than the Liberals;
- ❑ On tax cuts, the public perceives the CPC as less free-market oriented than the public but more than the Liberal party;
- ❑ A similar pattern likewise emerges with respect to size of government;
- ❑ On missile defence, the CPC is seen as fractionally closer to where the public stands than the Liberal party with the CPC being more pro-missile than the public and the Liberals more-anti-missile;
- ❑ The two parties are perceived as similar on healthcare spending with the public wanting more money for health than either party is seen as advocating;
- ❑ On social programs, the CPC is seen as less willing to spend than the Liberals, who are seen as less willing to spend than the public itself; and
- ❑ On the “need for more socialism”, the CPC is seen as less supportive of such directions than the public and the Liberal party, which is seen as nominally more so than the public.



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*Table 3A: Ten Issues—Where Voters Stand and Where They See the Conservative and Liberal Parties Standing<sup>3</sup>*

	ALL	cpc	POT. <sup>4</sup> cpc	NEVER <sup>5</sup>	UNDECIDED VOTERS <sup>6</sup>	ALL							
	MEAN					7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK
<b>The courts need to be changed so that Judges give hardened criminals much longer prison sentences</b>													
Respondent <sup>7</sup>	6.0	6.3	5.9	5.5	6.4	56	14	14	6	3	3	3	2
Conservatives <sup>8</sup>	5.0	5.1	4.9	5.2	4.8	18	12	17	11	7	3	3	28
Liberals <sup>9</sup>	4.0	3.4	4.3	4.5	4.2	9	6	14	16	13	8	7	26
<b>It's vital for families and society to preserve the law defining marriage as between a man and a woman</b>													
Respondent	4.6	5.4	4.4	3.7	5.2	41	7	7	5	7	5	24	5
Conservatives	4.8	5.1	4.6	4.9	4.9	23	12	12	12	7	3	9	22
Liberals	3.4	2.9	3.8	3.5	3.0	10	4	11	11	11	10	22	20
<b>Sick people should have more freedom to get medical help outside the government system when they feel they cannot get fast or good enough treatment from within the government system</b>													
Respondent	5.4	5.7	5.5	4.7	5.5	44	13	16	8	3	3	11	3
Conservatives	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.4	15	10	17	15	8	4	5	26
Liberals	3.7	3.2	3.9	4.1	3.6	9	5	12	15	12	11	13	24

<sup>3</sup> "(Q6) Turning to policy issues, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following opinions using a 7 point scale where 7 means agree a lot and 1, the opposite."

<sup>4</sup> Potential CPC voters are non-Conservative voters who, when asked, say that they might vote CPC in one of the next three federal elections.

<sup>5</sup> Liberal, NDP, BQ, or Green voters who would not consider voting CPC in the future. Termed anti-Conservative voters in fig. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Undecided voters (DNK): Non-Conservative voters and respondents who refuse to say how they would vote if an election were held to day or say that they do not know and who do not know whether they would vote for CPC in any of the next three federal elections when asked.

<sup>7</sup> Question wording: "Using the 7 point scale, please tell me where you stand on the issue"

<sup>8</sup> Question wording: "Using the 7 point scale, please tell me where the Conservatives stand."

<sup>9</sup> Question wording: "Using the 7 point scale, please tell me where the Liberals stand."



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	ALL	cpc	POT. <sup>4</sup> cpc	NEVER <sup>5</sup>	UNDECIDED VOTERS <sup>6</sup>	ALL							
	MEAN					7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK
<b>It should be a priority to clean up corruption in the federal government</b>													
Respondent	6.3	6.6	6.3	5.9	6.6	70	11	6	5	3	1	2	2
Conservatives	4.9	5.0	4.8	5.0	4.9	21	12	19	11	7	4	6	20
Liberals	4.0	3.4	4.2	4.7	4.0	15	8	14	11	9	8	16	18
<b>Taxes need to be reduced because high taxes slow the economy and harm everyone in the long run</b>													
Respondent	5.2	5.6	5.0	4.7	5.7	37	13	16	12	6	4	8	3
Conservatives	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.7	14	12	18	12	10	6	4	24
Liberals	3.9	3.2	4.0	4.5	4.3	9	7	13	16	13	9	11	22
<b>It's important to reduce the relative size of government in Canada</b>													
Respondent	4.8	5.2	4.6	4.5	5.4	26	14	18	12	8	5	10	7
Conservatives	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.1	3.9	9	9	17	16	8	7	6	28
Liberals	3.6	3.1	3.8	3.8	3.8	5	7	12	13	12	11	13	28
<b>We need to collaborate with the U.S. in missile defence because we have always defended North America together and our standard of living benefits from collaboration and goodwill</b>													
Respondent	4.2	4.9	4.2	3.3	4.0	25	8	14	11	11	7	21	4
Conservatives	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.6	16	13	17	11	7	3	8	27
Liberals	3.4	2.9	3.6	3.5	3.5	7	5	11	12	16	10	19	21
<b>More money needs to be put into government-run healthcare, which is under funded</b>													
Respondent	5.8	5.4	6.1	6.1	5.5	54	14	12	6	5	2	6	2
Conservatives	4.4	4.9	4.3	4.0	3.6	11	8	20	17	9	6	7	24
Liberals	4.3	4.0	4.4	4.5	4.0	11	9	19	18	9	6	8	21
<b>Canada's problems are such that we need more socialism and more socialist policies</b>													
Respondent	4.0	3.2	4.1	4.9	3.9	14	9	17	15	10	7	16	11
Conservatives	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.1	3.4	5	6	13	14	10	11	15	27
Liberals	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.2	7	8	17	16	13	6	7	27
<b>Canada needs to spend more on social programs, which are under funded</b>													
Respondent	5.3	4.5	5.6	5.8	5.0	36	15	18	12	6	5	6	3
Conservatives	3.9	4.3	3.9	3.4	3.6	7	6	14	18	14	8	8	24
Liberals	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.2	9	12	20	17	10	5	6	21





Table 3A shows that the CPC is perceived to be closer to the public on the issues. It shows that the Conservative party is especially close to the two groups from whom it must elicit more ballots in order to excel:

- ❑ “Potential CPC” voters, i.e. Liberal, NDP, BQ, and Green voters who say that they might vote Conservative in an upcoming federal election, and
- ❑ “Undecided voters,” those non-Conservatives who refuse to say whether they might or might not vote Conservative.

On the issues, potential CPC voters position themselves as much closer to the CPC’s perceived position than to the Liberal party’s perceived position. An analogous pattern holds true for undecided voters, non-Conservatives who will not reveal whether they might or might not vote Conservative in one of the expected, upcoming three federal elections.

Respondents’ self-position scores on the issues were dimensionalized using factor analysis, a multivariate statistical technique<sup>10</sup>. Two underlying factors, dimensions, or axes emerged—a free market-oriented horizontal factor or axis and a high spending vertical factor or axis, as shown in table 3B and fig. 3.

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<sup>10</sup> Conventional R-technique using Varimax rotation.



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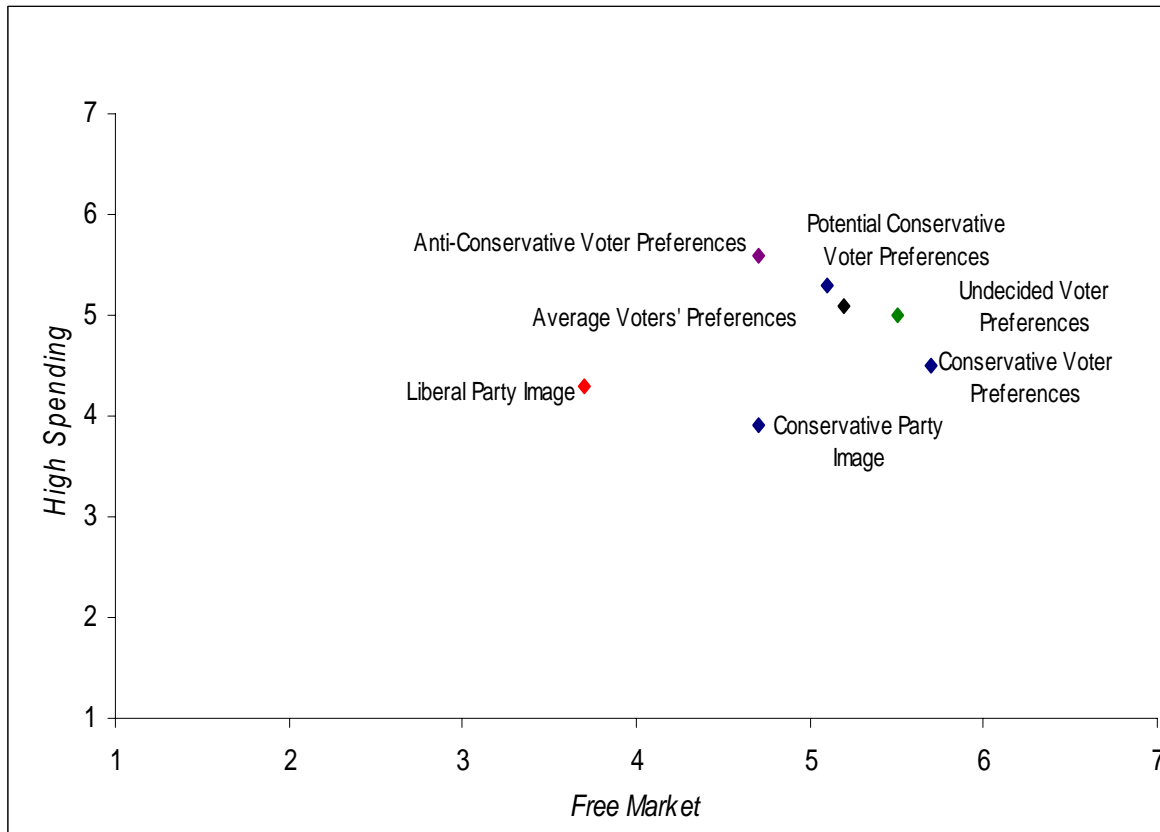
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*Table 3B: The Free Market and High-Spending Factors that Underlie and Explain Respondents' Personal Preferences on the Policy Themes Presented in Table 3A.*

	FACTOR 1: FREE MARKET	FACTOR 2: HIGH- SPENDING
Taxes need to be reduced because high taxes slow the economy and harm everyone in the long run	.67	
It's important to reduce the relative size of government in Canada	.62	
Sick people should have more freedom to get medical help outside the government system when they feel they cannot get fast or good enough treatment from within the government system	.62	
The courts need to be changed so that Judges give hardened criminals much longer prison sentences	.60	
It's vital for families and society to preserve the law defining marriage as between a man and a woman	.56	
We need to collaborate with the U.S. in missile defence because we have always defended North America together and our standard of living benefits from collaboration and goodwill	.56	
It should be a priority to clean up corruption in the federal government	.51	
Canada needs to spend more on social programs, which are under funded		.82
More money needs to be put into government-run healthcare, which is under funded		.75
Canada's problems are such that we need more socialism and more socialist policies		.68



Fig. 3: Perceptual Map of Where Voter Segments Stand on the Issues and How the Electorate as a Whole Perceives the Positions of the Conservative and Liberal Parties<sup>11</sup>



<sup>11</sup> The mean policy preferences of different voter segments and the electorate's perceptions of the Liberal and Conservative party positions are mapped on the two axes emerging from an R-factor analysis of the policy preferences of all voters. Anti-Conservative voters are non-Conservatives who would not vote CPC in any of the three upcoming federal elections; potential Conservative voters, those who might vote CPC; undecided or discreet voters, those who do not know if they would or would not vote CPC. Liberal and Conservative party images are the perceived positions on the issues according respondents as a whole.



Fig. 3 displays the positions of various voter segments along the two factors listed in table 3B, free market and high spending. The Liberal party image is far from voters' preferences. Even the CPC image is somewhat far from the average voters' preferences, albeit less so than in the case of the Liberal party. In summary, it looks as if all segments of the public, including even "anti-Conservative voters" (those who would never vote CPC) are more pro-free market than the Liberal party on such issues as taxation, size of government, medical freedom, justice issues, and marriage—the horizontal axis. On this axis, the CPC wins. On the vertical axis, which reflects a readiness to spend on social and health programs, both parties are perceived as less willing to spend than most segments of the public would like, especially the Conservatives.

In short, the Liberal party edges over the CPC in respect of the public's desire for program spending whereas the CPC enjoys a greater edge in respect of free market issues.

#### **4.0. In Marketing and Promotion—CPC Very Weak**

The CPC is profoundly weak in marketing and communications efforts as evidenced by the following facts, some of which have been discussed heretofore while some will be discussed below:

- ❑ Though perceived as much closer to the public on the issues, the CPC earns persistently less electoral support than the Liberal party, as shown above in sections 2.0 and 3.0;
- ❑ The CPC is perceived as much farther from the average voter on the left-right spectrum than the Liberals or BQ or even the NDP, as shown in table 4A, and yet few Canadian voters understand or use the terms left and right in ideological, policy, or other predictable ways; for most voters, the terms left and right are frequently synonyms for the parties and most often unknown terms; and
- ❑ Voters believe that the CPC experiences electoral frustrations because the public perceives the party as excessively anti-homosexual even though voters



themselves are far closer on the marriage issue to where they perceive the CPC to be than where they perceive the Liberal party to be.

In the psychological, non-ideological ways in which voters use these terms, voters see themselves as essentially centrist with a hint to the left, as shown in table 4A. The Liberal, Bloc, and NDP parties are seen as proximate with the CPC as distant and rightwing. This portrait might make ideological sense if the public used the terms left and right ideologically. But the public does not.

Appendices 1 and 2 reproduce verbatim all the responses of a random sample of voters who were asked two open-ended questions about left and right in a follow-up wave of interviewing.<sup>12</sup> In the follow-up wave of interviewing, respondents were asked to explain what they thought were meant by the terms right and left in politics. As is evident from the Appendices, the largest group of respondents acknowledge that they do not understand the terms.

Many others offer incorrect or non-ideological definitions. For example,

Of the left in politics... "It means the opposition. For example, let's say the Liberals are rightwing, then the opposition (conservatives) would be leftwing."

"Leftwing represents the conservatives."

Of the right in politics... "Well it means better; it may not be good but it's in the middle. Rightwing is the good way. I don't know anything more."

"A society offering the good life. A political party with good ideas about good governance of the country. (our transl.)"

"Somebody who would have guts to stand up for the proper rights. It would be someone with a conscience. No, that's all I can say."

Even if journalists and political scientists often use the terms left and right as ideological or policy shorthand, Canadian voters do not. The language of left and right are virtually irrelevant to Canadian voters even if voters use the terms left and right to indicate how close or how distant they may feel from the parties or to repeat what they recall hearing from journalists or politicians.

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<sup>12</sup> Interviewed March 14, 2005.



Voters may organize their preferences in seemingly left-right ways. Fig. 3A can be interpreted as signifying that Canadian voters structure their policy preferences in two implicit left-right ways, a seemingly left-right divide over program spending and a seemingly left-right divide over free market principles.

It is nonetheless important to emphasize that no statistical relationship emerges between voters' attitudes on these policies and their self-positioning on the left-right scale. Virtually no statistically significant correlations emerge between respondents' left-right self-positions and their attitudes towards policies that journalists and political scientists might readily associate with a position on a left-right spectrum. All correlations are very low.

Causal modeling or multiple regression provides additional evidence that Canadian voters do not use the terms left and right as ideological or policy shorthand. Stepwise regression was used in an effort to account for respondents' left-right self-positionings in terms of their policy preferences in table 3A. Only 7% of the variance in left-right positioning was explained by policy preferences.<sup>13</sup> This means that 93% of why voters define themselves as left or right has nothing to do with the issues explored in table 3A.

Our view is that voters' left-right self-definitions rarely have a relationship to their policy preferences on an issue. If non-CPC voters position themselves as less rightwing than CPC voters, this is because both groups understand that the CPC is called a rightwing party in the media but voters do not attribute policy meaning to the idea of being leftwing or rightwing. To the extent that the CPC is positioned as far from the mainstream on the left-right axis, this is evidence of CPC marketing failure. It is evidence of the party's failure to connect psychologically with the public and to convey appealing lifestyle imagery. The CPC's positioning as distant from the mainstream on the left-right axis ought not to be interpreted as signifying that the party has adopted policy positions that cause discomfort to the electorate.

Still another indicator of the CPC's marketing failure is that the public attributes CPC electoral weakness to being too anti-homosexual on same sex marriage, as shown in table 4C. The public paradoxically blames CPC electoral

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<sup>13</sup> The two independent variables to emerge in the causal model were support for "more socialist policies" and the "need to collaborate with the U.S. in missile defence..." Their respective standardized betas are 0.22 and -0.13, respectively. The adjusted R Square is a modest 0.069.



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weakness on attitudes to same-sex marriage that the public itself holds, as shown in table 3A.

Successful CPC marketing would have succeeded in making the public feel confident rather than sheepish about attitudes to same-sex marriage that are a majority opinion. Had CPC marketing been successful, the public would not have attributed CPC electoral frustrations to the party's position on same-sex legislation.

*Table 4A: (Q7) Some people say that they themselves are leftwing while other people say that these other people are rightwing. How would you describe [INSERT YOURSELF/PARTY] using a 7 point scale where 7 means left wing and 1, rightwing?*

*All Respondents*

	MEAN	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK
Respondents' self-labels <sup>14</sup>	4.3	9	9	19	26	8	3	10	16
Perceived NDP Position	4.6	16	14	12	11	6	6	9	25
...Liberals'...	4.2	9	10	19	18	11	6	9	20
...Bloc Quebecois...	4.1	11	9	9	9	6	6	12	39
...Conservatives...	3.3	6	6	9	14	13	14	18	21

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<sup>14</sup> Question wording: "How would you describe yourself using a 7 point scale where 7 means leftwing and 1, rightwing?" and "What score would you give the...[PARTY]"



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*Table 4B: Mean Self- and Party Perceptions by Voter Groups*

	ALL		CPC		POT. CPC		NEVER		UNDECIDED <sup>15</sup> (DNK)	
	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK
Respondents' self-labels	4.3	16	3.6	11	4.4	13	4.7	17	4.3	41
Perceived NDP Position	4.6	25	4.7	21	4.6	28	4.6	17	4.5	55
...Liberals'...	4.2	20	4.4	16	4.3	20	4.0	15	4.3	46
...Bloc Quebecois...	4.1	39	4.1	44	4.2	37	4.0	32	4.6	63
...Conservatives...	3.3	21	3.8	16	3.5	21	2.6	18	3.6	45

*Table 4C: Explaining CPC Frustrations—(Q9) Using a 7 point scale where 7 means agree, how do you feel about each of the following possible explanations for why the Conservatives do not get more voter support than they do? [RANDOMIZE]*

All

	MEAN	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK
The Conservatives seem too anti-homosexual on the issue of same-sex marriage	4.7	27	12	14	13	7	6	12	10
Harper and the Conservatives haven't given voters any particular reason to vote for them	4.7	23	14	16	13	9	7	10	9

<sup>15</sup> Non-Conservative voters and respondents who refuse to say how they would vote if an election were held to day or say that they do not know and who do not know whether they would vote for CPC in any of the next three federal elections when asked.





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	MEAN	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK
The Conservatives seem too pro-Life and against women's choice with respect to abortion	4.7	22	14	15	13	9	6	10	12
The Conservatives act as if they are trying to hide their real opinions	4.3	18	11	15	14	11	9	10	12
Harper doesn't seem like a major political leader or Prime Minister	4.3	16	12	17	14	12	9	11	8
They're poor communicators and can't get their opinions across	4.3	15	12	17	18	12	9	9	9
Harper seems humourless and against fun	4.1	12	10	16	17	13	9	11	12
Paul Martin is a persuasive, likeable leader	3.8	9	9	20	18	11	9	18	6

*Table 4D: Means by Voter Grouping*

	ALL		CPC		POT. CPC		NEVER		UNDECIDED (DNK)	
	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK
The Conservatives seem too anti-homosexual on the issue of same-sex marriage	4.7	10	4.1	3	4.9	11	5.2	9	4.6	35



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	ALL		CPC		POT. CPC		NEVER		UNDECIDED (DNK)	
	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK
Harper and the Conservatives haven't given voters any particular reason to vote for them	4.7	9	4.2	6	4.8	9	4.9	5	4.6	32
The Conservatives seem too pro-Life and against women's choice with respect to abortion	4.7	12	4.0	7	4.9	13	5.1	6	4.8	36
The Conservatives act as if they are trying to hide their real opinions	4.3	12	3.8	4	4.5	14	4.9	13	4.4	32
Harper doesn't seem like a major political leader or Prime Minister	4.3	8	3.8	3	4.5	7	4.7	7	4.0	35
They're poor communicators and can't get their opinions across	4.3	9	4.0	4	4.4	10	4.5	7	4.7	27



	ALL		CPC		POT. CPC		NEVER		UNDECIDED (DNK)	
	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK
Harper seems humourless and against fun	4.1	12	4.0	6	4.1	13	4.4	9	4.0	39
Paul Martin is a persuasive, likeable leader	3.8	6	3.4	3	4.1	3	3.7	5	4.0	29

## 5.0. Grading Harper and Explaining Martin’s Electoral Frustrations

To this point, our report has emphasized the appeal of the policy component of the CPC product and the weakness of the CPC marketing effort. The leader of any party is part policy product and part marketing device.

*Table 5A: (Q8) Thinking specifically of Conservative leader Stephen Harper, please use the 100 point scale to give him a score for each of the following? [RANDOMIZE]*

*Means by Party Grouping*

	ALL		CPC		POT.CPC		NEVER		DISCREET (DNK)	
	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK	Mean	DNK
For saying honestly what he believes	63	13	71	6	63	14	53	11	60	40
For helping to unite the Alliance and PC parties	61	18	71	11	61	20	51	13	59	44



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	ALL		CPC		POT.CPC		NEVER		DISCREET (DNK)	
For being a dynamic advocate of conservative viewpoints	60	15	69	7	58	18	54	9	58	42
For speaking up clearly and persuasively on the issues of the day	59	13	68	4	58	16	47	10	63	31
For having an open personality	56	15	67	8	55	17	43	12	54	36

Stephen Harper succeeds as a policy product. He is the party's leading policy-maker and CPC policy performs very well, as explored above at length.

The Conservative leader faces challenges with respect to his personal marketing effectiveness. Harper earns strong scores among CPC voters. However, he does not do as well among potential CPC or undecided<sup>16</sup> voters, as shown in table 5A.

Potential CPC and undecided voters are farther from CPC voters on evaluations of the party leader than they are on evaluations of party policy. As amply discussed above, the CPC has a major opportunity among potential CPC and discreet voters insofar as they perceive the Liberal party as very far away from where they themselves stand on policy. Compared to the electorate as a whole, potential CPC and discreet voters do not feel as positively towards the party's leader as they do towards its policies.

Tables 5B and C display how voters feel about the Liberal party's own frustrations in failing to secure a majority. The Prime Minister's reputation for dithering emerges throughout the two tables, suggesting that his image of

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<sup>16</sup> For purposes of this analysis, undecided voters are non-Conservative voters and respondents who refuse to say how they would vote if an election were held to day or say that they do not know and who do not know whether they would vote for CPC in any of the next three federal elections when asked.



indecisiveness represents a weakness for the Liberals and an opportunity for the Conservative opposition.



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Table 5B: (Q10) Using a 7 point scale where 7 means agree, how do you feel about each of the following possible explanations for why the Liberals don't seem to be getting enough popular support to guarantee a majority in Parliament if an election were held?  
[RANDOMIZE]

All

	MEAN	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	DNK
It's hard to know what Paul Martin really thinks because he so often changes his mind	5.3	33	16	17	13	7	4	4	7
Martin and the Liberals haven't given voters any particular reason to vote for them	5.0	26	16	18	13	8	5	5	8
They're poor communicators and can't get their opinions across	4.4	17	9	21	17	13	8	9	7
Stephen Harper is a persuasive, likeable opponent	4.1	13	10	19	18	9	10	13	9



Table 5C: Means by Voter Grouping

	ALL		CPC		POT. CPC		NEVER		DISCREET (DNK)	
	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK	MEAN	DNK
It's hard to know what Paul Martin really thinks because he so often changes his mind	5.3	7	5.8	3	5.1	6	4.9	4	5.4	27
Martin and the Liberals haven't given voters any particular reason to vote for them	5.0	8	5.5	5	5.0	7	4.6	6	5.0	30
They're poor communicators and can't get their opinions across	4.4	7	4.8	4	4.3	6	4.0	4	4.3	29
Stephen Harper is a persuasive, likeable opponent	4.1	9	4.9	4	4.0	9	3.2	6	4.1	29

## 6.0. Methodology

A representative national sample of 688 voters was interviewed March 11-13, 2005 by professional interviewers using CATI. Samples of this size are



conventionally deemed accurate to within 3.9 percentage points 19 times out of 20. Principal investigators were Conrad Winn and Tamara Gottlieb.

## Appendix 1: Unedited Verbatims on the Meaning of Leftwing

WHAT DOES THE IDEA OF LEFTWING MEAN?	
CODE	OPEN END
Correct	NDP. Unions. Trying to get as much money from the rich with working as little as possible. No that's all.
Correct	Social policy. Spending on social issues as perceived by the people. Less responsible. Less business like spending of Government money. Large debt. Over spending. Mortgaging our children's future.
Correct	More socialist. NDP type government. Less strict.
DNK	Not familiar with politics. Don't know what it means.
DNK	No idea.
DNK	Never heard the term before.
DNK	I don't know. I don't follow politics.
DNK	I have no idea.
DNK	It doesn't mean anything to me. No, I can't comment on it at all.
DNK	I don't follow politics at all. I have no idea what it means.
DNK	No I don't know what it means. No, I just don't know.
DNK	I can't explain that.
DNK	I don't think about it at all. I have no idea.
DNK	I don't remember what it means. No I can't comment on it.
DNK	I have no idea. I don't follow politics at all.
DNK	I don't know. No I don't associate it with anything.
DNK	Nothing at all. No I have no idea what it means.
DNK	I don't know. I don't understand the term.





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<b>WHAT DOES THE IDEA OF LEFTWING MEAN?</b>	
CODE	OPEN END
DNK	I'm not sure what it means.
DNK	No, I don't know.
DNK	No idea. Not interested in politics.
DNK	Je ne sais pas.
DNK	C'est la meme chose, je ne sais pas.
DNK	Je ne sais pas, ca ne m'interesse pas.
DNK	Je ne sais pas, pas de politique.
DNK	Je ne sais pas
DNK	Non plus.
DNK	Je ne sais pas.
DNK	Je sais pas. Je ne sais rien de la politique.
DNK	I don't know.
DNK	Ne sais pas.
DNK	Nothing. I have heard it but I don't know what it means.
DNK	Nothing.
DNK	Peu de difficulte a definir. point de vue et vision des gauches et la droite pour moi c est pas tres claire.selon moi la gauche est peut etre plus exttremiste et radicale.
DNK	I have no idea.
Incorrect	C'est le communisme et la dictature. Un parti qui impose ses idees. c'est que je n' aime pas et j'aime la liberte.
Incorrect	La gauche c'est plus une dictaure comme les chinois et les sovietiques. Le pay est dirige par un parti unique.
Incorrect	More conservative. More status quo.
Incorrect	Leftwing represents the conservatives. I may have them backwards.
Incorrect	Conservatism.
Incorrect	It means the opposition. For example, let's say the Liberals are rightwing, then the opposition (conservatives) would be leftwing.
Incorrect	Same as rightwing, it doesn't mean anything to me. /p I've never actually thought about it because politics don't mean anything to me.
Incorrect	Rightwing is much more for the people, the masses. p/ No further comments.



<b>WHAT DOES THE IDEA OF LEFTWING MEAN?</b>	
<b>CODE</b>	<b>OPEN END</b>
Incorrect	Une politique acces plus aux niveau sociale. Centre plus sur l'individu. c'est programme d'aide par exemple a la sante et prestation sociale.
Potentially correct	Le gauchisme c'est associe au pouvoir par le peuple et pouvoir au peuple. C'est le peuple qui decide dans un pays democratique. Comme les ecologistes ils sont plus de gauche.
Potentially correct	A more enlightened society. More compassionate. Less like the Americans.
Potentially correct	It means liberal I think. Well in other words dishonest. There's not much else to say.
Potentially correct	Liberal. Opposite from Conservative.
Potentially correct	A social type attitude or opinions.
Potentially correct	Socialist side.
Potentially correct	It means pretty much the opposite, Liberal. No association with a religious denomination.

## Appendix 2: Unedited Verbatims on the Meaning of Rightwing

<b>What Does the Idea of Right Wing Mean?</b>	
<b>Code</b>	<b>Open End</b>
Correct	Conservative. Mike Harris. More money for the rich and taking advantage of the poor anyway they can. No, that's all.
Correct	Conservative minded. Traditional values. Fiscally responsible. Well managed. Business-like approach.
Correct	I think of Conservatives. I think of an association with a religious denomination. Most often Christianity. To a lesser extent Judaism.



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<b>What Does the Idea of Right Wing Mean?</b>	
Code	Open End
Correct	Aaccess surtout sur l'entreprise et plus radicale par rapport aux sociale. Au niveau des gestions plus accces aux niveau monetaire et moins acces aux services sociaux.
Correct	Eux un peu plus capitaliste soins de sante publique plus aux prive qu' au service public. c est une politique a deux vitesses.
DNK	Not familiar with politics. I don't know what it means.
DNK	I have no idea.
DNK	Never heard the term before.
DNK	I don't know. I don't follow politics.
DNK	I have no idea.
DNK	I don't have a definition. No, I'm sorry I don't know.
DNK	I don't follow politics at all. I have no idea what it means.
DNK	I don't know what it means. No, I don't know anything about the politics.
DNK	I have no idea.
DNK	I'm not really into politics. I don't pay attention to that stuff so it doesn't mean anything to me.
DNK	I don't think about it at all. I have no idea.
DNK	I don't know. I remember hearing it before. It doesn't ring a bell.
DNK	I have no idea. I don't follow politics at all.
DNK	I'm not really into politics. No, I don't know what it means.
DNK	Not a clue. Just that it's a political term.
DNK	I don't know. I have never figured out the meaning of the term
DNK	I'm not sure what it means.
DNK	Nothing, because I am not interested in politics.
DNK	Je ne connais rien en politique. Je ne sais pas.
DNK	Je ne sais pas, c'est quoi la droite.
DNK	Je ne suis pas interessee en politique.
DNK	Aucune idee, je ne suis pas interessee en politique.
DNK	La politique ne m'interesse pas
DNK	Je ne sais pas vraiment
DNK	Aucune idée.
DNK	Aucune idee. Je ne sais rien



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<b>What Does the Idea of Right Wing Mean?</b>	
Code	Open End
DNK	Ne sais pas.
DNK	Nothing. No, I don't know what it means.
DNK	Not much. I'm not interested in politics. I don't know what it means.
DNK	I have no idea. p/ No further comments.
Incorrect	More liberal. More favourable towards social programs that are more liberal. No, that's all.
Incorrect	Well it means better, it may not be good but it's in the middle. Rightwing is the good way. I don't know anything more.
Incorrect	Avoir une societe ou la vie devrait etre bonne.Un parti politique qui a des bonnes idees pour la bonne gouvernance du pays.
Incorrect	Somebody who would have guts to stand up for the proper rights. It would be someone with a conscience. No, that's all I can say.
Potentially correct	A more Conservative government. I think of the Bible when I hear the term rightwing.
Potentially correct	Souvent le droitisme est associe- cest qui a trait au pouvoir. Une tendance vers le pouvoir religieux et de l' autre cote le pouvoir policier.
Potentially correct	Rightwing represents the liberals and fascism.
Potentially correct	Liberalism.
Potentially correct	Conservative. Well, opposite to the Liberals.
Potentially correct	The opposite of liberal.
Potentially correct	Conservative. I don't know, they are all pretty much middle of the road in my opinion.
Potentially correct	Conservative.
Potentially correct	More like the Americans. Red neck. No, that's all.
Potentially correct	La droite c'est la ridigite. Les americains est une bonne exemple. Ils imposent leurs idees sur tout le monde.



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<b>What Does the Idea of Right Wing Mean?</b>	
Code	Open End
Potentially correct	Means more nationalism. Do more for the country in terms of trade and relation with other countries.
Potentially correct	More extreme. Represents people with a lot of money. It's for the elite.

