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**Canada 20/20 Online Panel**

**Liberal Leadership November 2006**

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**November 28, 2006**

## **Liberal Leadership Candidates Leave Voters on the Fence**

### **However, Canadians Not Yet Ready to Embrace Conservative Majority**

#### **Overview**

A new poll conducted on behalf of Maclean's Magazine by Innovative Research Group (INNOVATIVE) shows that while Conservatives are failing to win many new friends, the Liberals have their own set of challenges that are holding back voters who are nervous about the Conservatives.

The Tories enjoy a firm, but stable base of support, while many voters in the non-Conservative world are very much on the fence when they look at the Liberal leadership contenders.

Just over one-in-three voters (35%) say they are more comfortable with the idea of a Conservative majority now than they used to be - virtually the same number who voted Conservative in the last election. Meanwhile, 49 per cent disagree they are more comfortable.

But the failure of the Conservatives to expand their universe of potential support is not an open door for any new Liberal leader to walk through to their own majority government. A majority of 55 per cent say, no matter whom the Liberals choose, they are still the same old party.

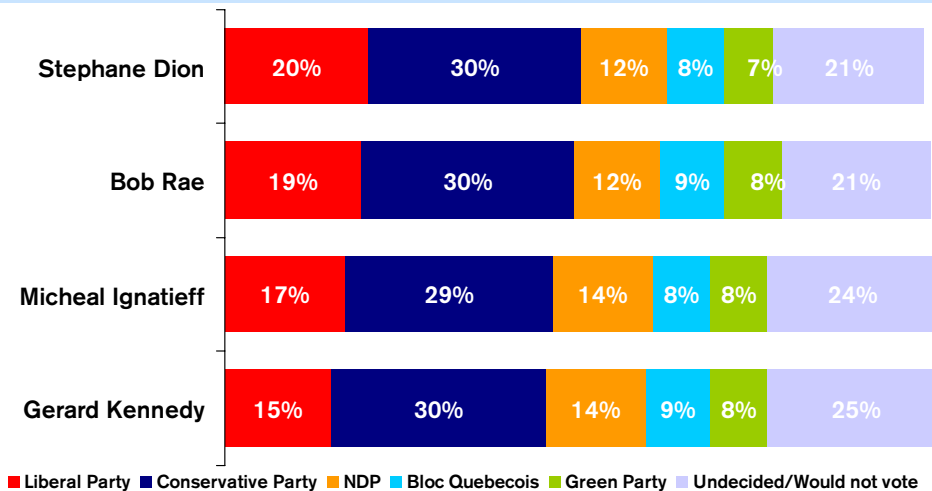
Despite, or perhaps because of, a long and high profile leadership campaign, none of the four major Liberal leadership contenders is ready yet to challenge Stephen Harper and the governing Conservatives. With a significant number of voters who are likely to vote against the Conservatives sitting as undecided, none of the four major candidates, Michael Ignatieff, Bob Rae, Gerard Kennedy or Stephane Dion comes close to the level of support given to the Conservatives in the trial ballots included in this survey.

Further, while each of the major contenders has baggage that could affect the likelihood of supporting the Liberals if chosen as leader, when asked directly, there appears to be little impact on party support after respondents are provided background information on each of the candidates and some possible negatives for each.

## Initial Vote

Each respondent was asked how they would vote in a federal election under four different scenarios, one for each of major federal Liberal leadership candidates. Stephane Dion (20%) and Bob Rae (19%) come out as the most popular of the four candidates, followed by Michael Ignatieff (17%) and Gerard Kennedy (15%). Under all four tests, the Conservatives receive support from three-in-ten (approximately 30% in each scenario) Canadians, while NDP support ranged from 12% (in the Dion and Rae scenarios) to 14% (in the Ignatieff and Kennedy scenarios). Bloc support is also fairly stable in all four scenarios.

**Q** As you may know the Federal Liberal party will be choosing their new leader in Montreal on December 2. Based on how you feel right now, if a federal election were held today and [RANDOMIZE LIBERAL LEADERSHIP CANDIDATES] was the leader of the federal Liberal party, which federal party would you personally vote for? [RANDOMIZE PARTY] And what if [NEXT LIBERAL CANDIDATE] was the Liberal leader, which federal party would you personally vote for?

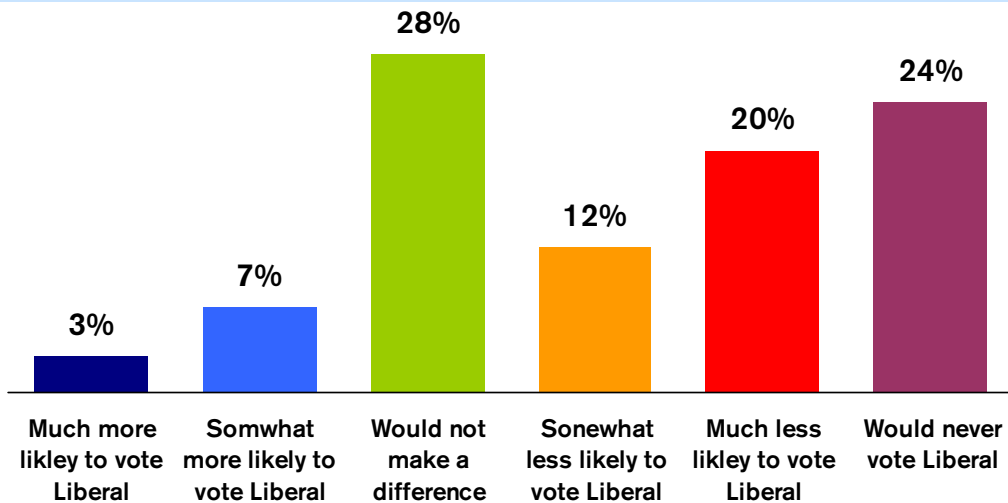


## Background Information and Effect on Likelihood to Vote Liberal

None of the candidates comes without some baggage. When presented with background information on each of the candidates, including some of their possible negatives, the net likelihood to vote Liberal if each of the candidates becomes leader is negative.

For example, respondents were told that Michael Ignatieff, although born in Canada has spent most of his adult life outside of Canada as an academic and journalist, has only limited political experience and expressed, and at least initially, support for the US War in Iraq. When presented with this information and asked if it makes them more or less likely to vote for the Liberals if Mr. Ignatieff is elected leader on December 2, the overall result is a net negative in likelihood (-22 points = more likely 10% - less likely 32%). When taking out the respondent who report they would never vote Liberal (24%) the net score plunges to -29 points (more likely 13% - less likely 42%).

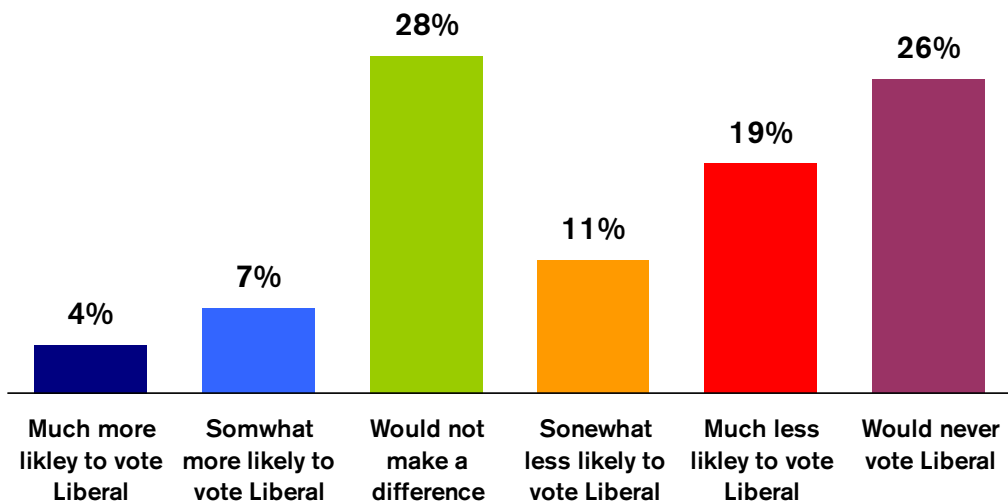
**Q** Michael Ignatieff is a former academic and journalist in Europe and the United States. Although born in Canada, he has spent most of his adult life outside of the country, until returning home last year. In various articles written before entering politics, Mr. Ignatieff expressed support for the US war in Iraq. His first entrance into elected politics was last winter's election when he won his seat in Parliament. . With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Michael Ignatieff is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .



*Note:* 'Don't know' (5%) not shown

Bob Rae, also receives a net negative likelihood score (-18 = more likely 11% - less likely 29%) after respondents were told that "Before joining the federal Liberals this year, Bob Rae was a long-time member of the NDP and served as both a federal NDP MP as well as the only NDP Premier of Ontario between 1990 and 1995 before being defeated. While Mr. Rae was Premier, Ontario experienced a deep economic recession and record provincial budget deficits." Removing those who say they would never vote Liberal (26%), the net likelihood score declines to -24 points (more likely 15% - less likely 39%).

**Q** Before joining the federal Liberals this year, Bob Rae was a long-time member of the NDP and served as both a federal NDP MP as well as the only NDP Premier of Ontario between 1990 and 1995 before being defeated. While Mr. Rae was Premier, Ontario experienced a deep economic recession and record Provincial budget deficits. With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Bob Rae is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .

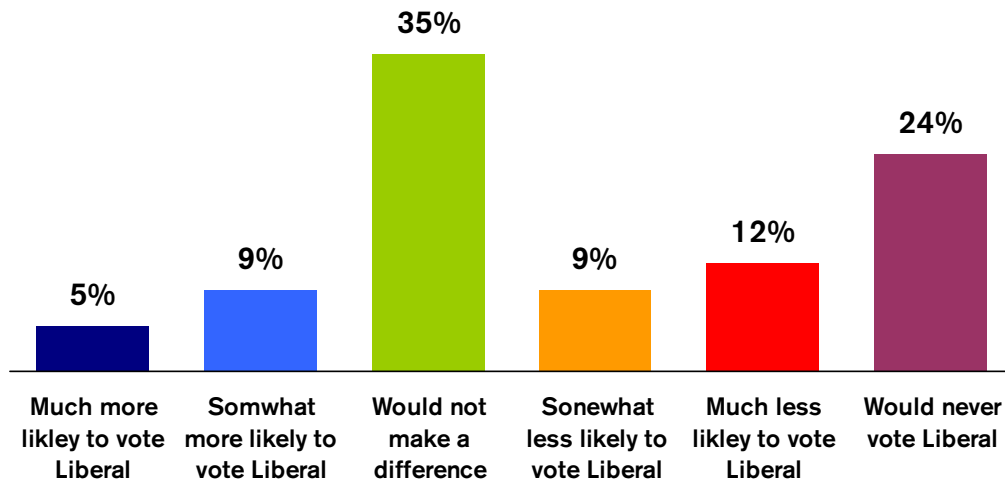


Note: 'Don't know' (6%) not shown

The net scores for Stephane Dion (-7 = more likely 14% - less likely 21%) and Gerard Kennedy (-6 = more likely 13% - less likely 19%) are less severe. Respondents were reminded that Mr. Dion was a Quebec academic and commentator before joining the Jean Chretien's cabinet in 1996 and held cabinet positions under both Mr. Chretien and Paul Martin. Further, respondents were told that while he was Minister of the Environment, some people say that action on the Kyoto Accord did not match Canada's rhetoric on the subject. Removing those who say they would never vote Liberal (24%), the net score is -10 (more likely 18% - less likely 28%).



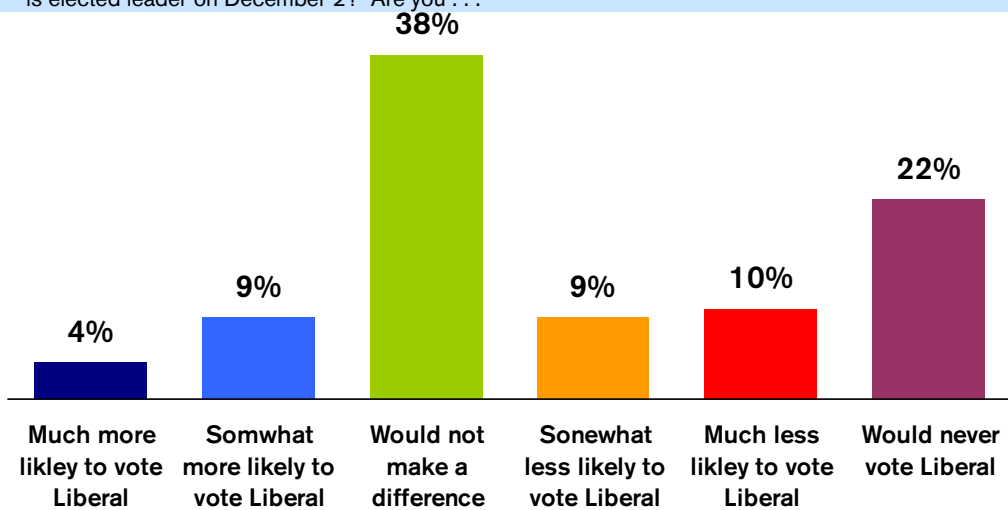
Stephane Dion was a Quebec academic and commentator before becoming a member of Jean Chretien's cabinet in 1996. Under Chretien and Paul Martin, Mr. Dion held a number of federal cabinet positions including Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. While he was Minister of the Environment some people say that action on the Kyoto Accord did not match Canada's statements. With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Stephane Dion is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .



Note: 'Don't know' (7%) not shown

Meanwhile, respondents were reminded that Mr. Kennedy was an Ontario cabinet minister before resigning to join the federal Liberal leadership campaign and that before entering Ontario politics he ran a major food bank in Ontario. Further, respondents were told that while the other three main candidates are bilingual, Mr. Kennedy is not currently functionally bilingual (net -6 = more likely 13% - less likely 19%). Removing the 22 per cent who report they would never vote Liberal, results in little change to the net score (-8 = more likely 17% - less likely 25%).

**Q** Gerard Kennedy was a cabinet minister in the current Ontario Government before resigning to enter the Federal Liberal leadership campaign. Before entering Ontario politics in the mid 1990s Mr. Kennedy was head of a major food bank in Toronto. He was born in Manitoba and went to university in Alberta. While the other three main leadership candidates are bilingual, Mr. Kennedy is not currently functionally bilingual. With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Gerard Kennedy is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .

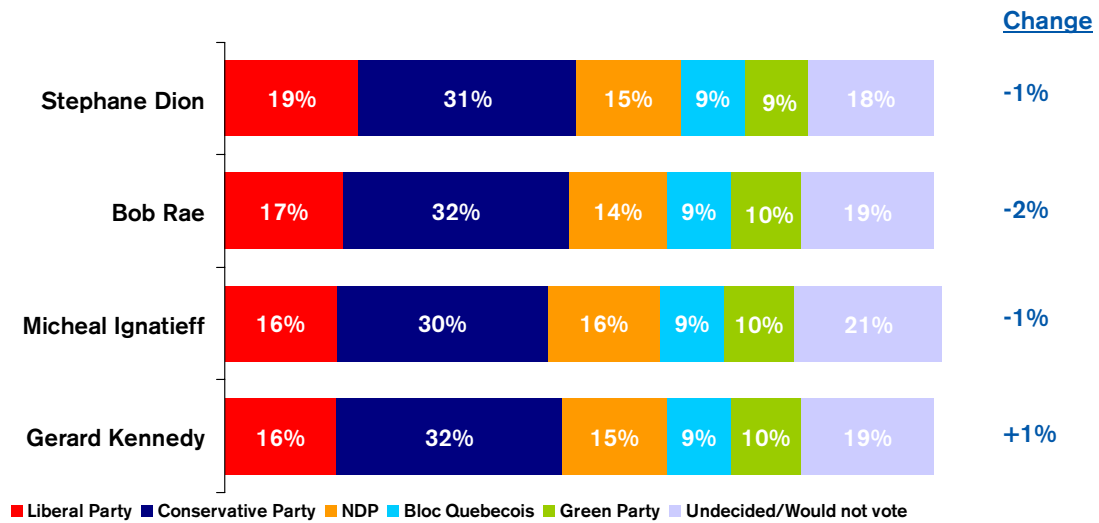


Note: 'Don't know' (7%) not shown

## Second Ballot Test

Despite net negative likelihood scores, the impact on actual support is minor. It appears that most of those who say they are less likely to vote for the Liberals did not support them in the first place. When asked how they would vote, keeping in mind the background information provided, there is little change in actually voter support. Once again, Mr. Dion (19%, down 1 point) and Mr. Rae (17%, down 2 points) lead the way if they were the Liberal leader, followed by Mr. Ignatieff (16%, down 1 point) and Mr. Kennedy (16%, up 1 point). Support for the Conservatives remains approximately the same under each Liberal leadership scenario at roughly three-in-ten (30% to 32%).

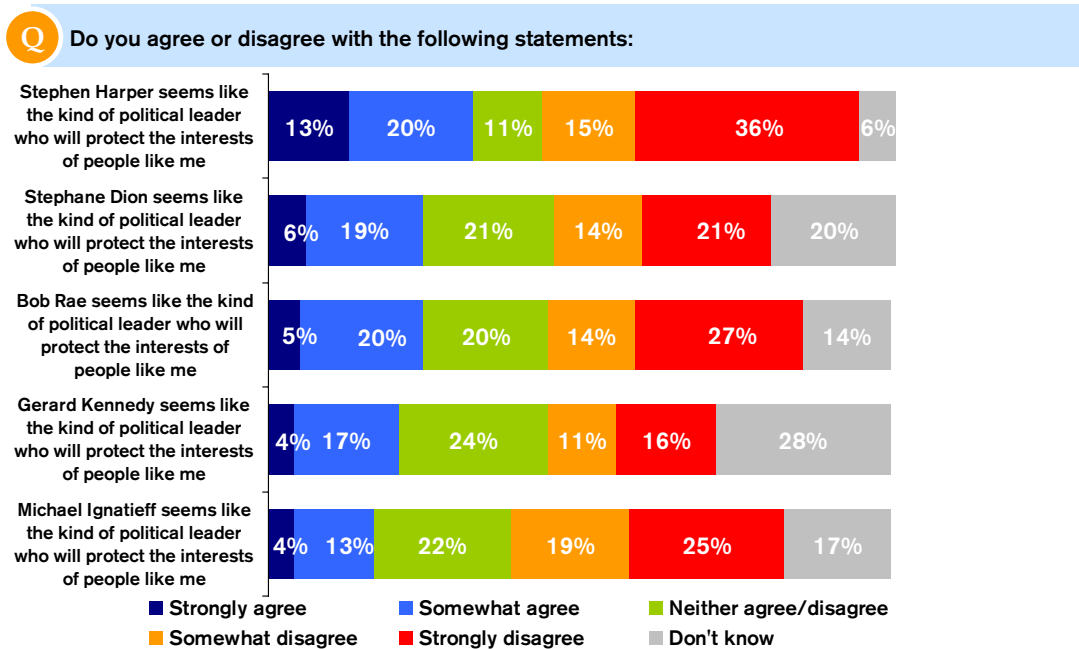
**Q** Keeping in mind all of the information regarding the major leadership candidates and based on how you feel right now, if a federal election were held today, which of the following parties and leaders would you personally vote for?





## Which leaders will protect the interests of people like me?

One surprise in these findings is the strong showing of Stephane Dion, and the relatively unimpressive showing of assumed front-runner Michael Ignatieff. This difference is also illustrated when asked the same question regarding the four leadership candidates and Prime Minister Stephen Harper; that is, does each seem 'like the kind of political leader who will protect the interests of people like me.' One-in-three (33%) agree that Stephen Harper is such a political leader; however, slightly more (36%) strongly disagree. Among the Liberal leadership candidates, Stephane Dion (25%) and Bob Rae (25%) come out on top, followed by Gerard Kennedy (21%). As for the perceived front-runner, Michael Ignatieff, just under one-in-five (17%) believe that Mr. Ignatieff is the kind of political leader who will protect the interest of ordinary Canadians.



Conservative supporters firmly believe that Stephen Harper is one of them, with over eight-in-ten (82%) agreeing that he is a leader who will protect the interests of individuals like themselves. However, after moving past his base of Tory voters, he has little traction with anyone else, including those currently undecided.

	If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly?				
<u>Stephen Harper</u> seems like the kind of leader who will protect the interests of people like me	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP	Bloc	Undecided
Agree	82%	10%	3%	6%	14%
Neither	9%	11%	9%	17%	21%
Disagree	5%	77%	81%	68%	46%
Net Score	+77	-67	-78	-62	-32

Stephane Dion does the best among current Liberal supporters, and also has some appeal among New Democrats, with just a little less interest among undecided voters than Gerard Kennedy. One striking finding for Mr. Dion is that he is the least liked Liberal candidate among Bloc supporters. This no doubt relates to past role as a federalist champion and his leadership on the Clarity Act.

	If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly?				
<u>Stephane Dion</u> seems like the kind of leader who will protect the interests of people like me	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP	BQ	Undecided
Agree	14%	47%	27%	9%	14%
Neither	18%	26%	23%	11%	29%
Disagree	46%	16%	28%	66%	24%
Net Score	-32	+31	-1	-57	-10

Bob Rae also does well with current Liberal voters. He also polls very strongly amongst supporters of his former party, the NDP. Many undecided voters are on the fence when it comes to Rae.

	If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly?				
<b>Bob Rae</b> seems like the kind of leader who will protect the interests of people like me	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP	Bloc	Undecided
<b>Agree</b>	10%	51%	39%	10%	11%
<b>Neither</b>	16%	22%	20%	17%	32%
<b>Disagree</b>	60%	22%	26%	54%	29%
<b>Net Score</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>+29</b>	<b>+13</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>-18</b>

Gerard Kennedy does as well as Bob Rae with Liberal supporters and has some appeal with NDPers; just not as much as Mr. Rae. However, Mr. Kennedy has fewer negatives than Mr. Rae, among undecided voters.

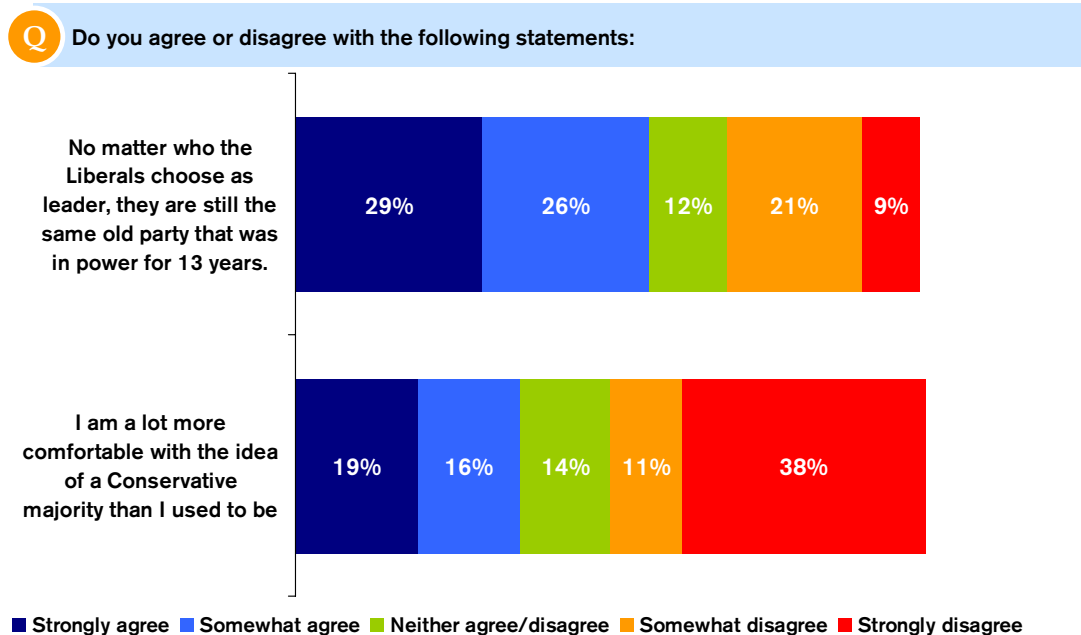
	If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly?				
<b>Gerard Kennedy</b> seems like the kind of leader who will protect the interests of people like me	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP	BQ	Undecided
<b>Agree</b>	12%	40%	23%	5%	13%
<b>Neither</b>	22%	31%	20%	18%	29%
<b>Disagree</b>	36%	13%	27%	48%	14%
<b>Net Score</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>+27</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-43</b>	<b>-1</b>

The assumed leadership front-runner, Michael Ignatieff, only holds his own with current Liberal supporters and has little appeal with supporters of other parties and those currently undecided.

	If a federal election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly?				
Michael Ignatieff seems like the kind of leader who will protect the interests of people like me	Conservatives	Liberals	NDP	Bloc	Undecided
Agree	13%	31%	11%	18%	7%
Neither	22%	27%	18%	20%	28%
Disagree	46%	34%	53%	45%	31%
Net Score	-33	-3	-42	-27	-24

## Canadians fundamentally sceptical about both Tories and Liberals

Despite the long, high profile leadership campaign intended to renew the federal Liberal party most Canadians (55%) believe that no matter who the new leader is, the party is still the same old one that was in power for 13 years.



Note: 'Don't know' not shown

However, this does not mean that Canadians are ready to embrace a Conservative majority. Just one-in-three (35%) say they have become a lot more comfortable with the idea of a Conservative majority than they use to be. In comparison, close to two-fifths (38%) strongly disagree.

## **About This Survey**

**Innovative Research Group, Inc.** ([www.innovativeresearch.ca](http://www.innovativeresearch.ca)), a research and strategy firm with offices in Toronto and Vancouver, surveyed 1,495 Canadians from its online Canada 20/20 panel. The survey was conducted between Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, and Monday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006 and has a margin of error of  $\pm 2.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20. The data was weighted in accordance to the 2001 census. The portions of the survey mentioned above were commissioned by Maclean's Magazine.

Anyone interested in participating in these surveys can join the Canada 20/20 panel by going to [Canada2020.com](http://Canada2020.com)

## **Attribution**

In the first instance of mentioning the poll results the survey should be identified as a "Maclean's survey conducted by Innovative Research Group using their Canada 20/20 online panel".

All subsequent mentions can use the convention "Maclean's/INNOVATIVE poll" or "the INNOVATIVE poll".

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## Questions Asked:

As you may know the Federal Liberal party will be choosing their new leader in Montreal on December 2.

Based on how you feel right now, if a federal election were held today and [RANDOMIZE LIBERAL LEADERSHIP CANDIDATES] was the leader of the federal Liberal party, which federal party would you personally vote for? [RANDOMIZE PARTY]

And what if [NEXT LIBERAL CANDIDATE] was the Liberal leader, which federal party would you personally vote for?

### [Liberal Leadership Candidates]

- MCL1. Michael Ignatieff
- MCL2. Bob Rae
- MCL3. Gerard Kennedy
- MCL4. Stephane Dion

The Liberals led by [CANDIDATE NAME]	1	
The Conservatives led by Stephen Harper	2	
The NDP led by Jack Layton	3	
The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe [QUEBEC ONLY]	4	
The Green Party led by Elizabeth May	5	
Undecided who would vote for	98	
Would not vote	99	

[RANDOMIZE Q 5-8]

The following questions are about the four main leadership contenders, Michael Ignatieff, Bob Rae, Gerard Kennedy and Stephane Dion.

MCL5. Michael Ignatieff is a former academic and journalist in Europe and the United States. Although born in Canada, he has spent most of his adult life outside of the country, until returning home last year. In various articles written before entering politics, Mr. Ignatieff expressed support for the US war in Iraq. His first entrance into elected politics was last winter's election when he won his seat in Parliament.

With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Michael Ignatieff is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .

Much more likely to vote Liberal	1
Somewhat more likely to vote Liberal	2
Would not make a difference in decision	3

Somewhat less likely to vote Liberal	4
Much less likely to vote Liberal	5
Would never vote Liberal	6
Don't Know	98

MCL6. Before joining the federal Liberals this year, Bob Rae was a long-time member of the NDP and served as both a federal NDP MP as well as the only NDP Premier of Ontario between 1990 and 1995 before being defeated. While Mr. Rae was Premier, Ontario experienced a deep economic recession and record Provincial budget deficits.

With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Bob Rae is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .

Much more likely to vote Liberal	1
Somewhat more likely to vote Liberal	2
Would not make a difference in decision	3
Somewhat less likely to vote Liberal	4
Much less likely to vote Liberal	5
Would never vote Liberal	6
Don't Know	98

MCL7. Gerard Kennedy was a cabinet minister in the current Ontario Government before resigning to enter the Federal Liberal leadership campaign. Before entering Ontario politics in the mid 1990s Mr. Kennedy was head of a major food bank in Toronto. He was born in Manitoba and went to university in Alberta. While the other three main leadership candidates are bilingual, Mr. Kennedy is not currently functionally bilingual.

With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Gerard Kennedy is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .

Much more likely to vote Liberal	1
Somewhat more likely to vote Liberal	2
Would not make a difference in decision	3
Somewhat less likely to vote Liberal	4
Much less likely to vote Liberal	5
Would never vote Liberal	6
Don't Know	98

MCL8. Stephane Dion was a Quebec academic and commentator before becoming a member of Jean Chretien's cabinet in 1996. Under Chretien and Paul Martin, Mr. Dion held a number of federal cabinet positions including Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. While he was Minister of the Environment some people say that action on the Kyoto Accord did not match Canada's statements.

With this information in mind, are you more or less likely to vote for the federal Liberals if Stephane Dion is elected leader on December 2? Are you . . .

Much more likely to vote Liberal	1	
Somewhat more likely to vote Liberal	2	
Would not make a difference in decision	3	
Somewhat less likely to vote Liberal		4
Much less likely to vote Liberal	5	
Would never vote Liberal	6	
Don't Know	98	

Keeping in mind all of the information regarding the major leadership candidates and based on how you feel right now, if a federal election were held today, which of the following parties and leaders would you personally vote for? [RANDOMIZE] [ROTATE PARTIES WITHIN EACH]

#### MCL9 – Michael Ignatieff

The Liberals led by Michael Ignatieff		1
The Conservatives led by Stephen Harper	2	
The NDP led by Jack Layton	3	
The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe	4	
The Green Party led by Elizabeth May	5	
Undecided who you would vote for	98	
Would not vote	99	

#### MCL10 – Bob Rae

The Liberals led by Bob Rae		1
The Conservatives led by Stephen Harper	2	
The NDP led by Jack Layton	3	
The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe	4	
The Green Party led by Elizabeth May	5	
Undecided who you would vote for	98	
Would not vote	99	

#### MCL11 – Gerard Kennedy

The Liberals led by Gerard Kennedy	1	
The Conservatives led by Stephen Harper	2	
The NDP led by Jack Layton	3	
The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe	4	
The Green Party led by Elizabeth May	5	
Undecided who you would vote for	98	
Would not vote	99	



## MCL12 – Stephane Dion

The Liberals led by Stephane Dion	1
The Conservatives led by Stephen Harper	2
The NDP led by Jack Layton	3
The Bloc Quebecois led by Gilles Duceppe	4
The Green Party led by Elizabeth May	5
Undecided who you would vote for	98
Would not vote	99

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements: **[RANDOMIZE STATEMENTS]**

Strongly agree	1
Somewhat agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
Don't know	

MCL13. Stephan Harper seems like the kind of political leader who will protect the interests of people like me

MCL14. Michael Ignatieff seems like the kind of political leader who will protect the interests of people like me

MCL15. Bob Rae seems like the kind of political leader who will protect the interests of people like me

MCL16. Gerard Kennedy seems like the kind of political leader who will protect the interests of people like me

MCL17. Stephane Dion seems like the kind of political leader who will protect the interests of people like me

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? **[RANDOMIZE STATEMENTS]**

Strongly agree	1
Somewhat agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
Don't know	98

MCL18. I am a lot more comfortable with the idea of a Conservative majority than I used to be

MCL19. No matter who the Liberals choose as leader, they are still the same old party that was in power for 13 years.