

# CANADIANS VOTERS ASSESS FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LIBERAL PARTY



Ipsos Reid

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## CANADIAN VOTERS ASSESS FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LIBERAL PARTY

**Toronto, ON** – With the finish line in sight, a new Ipsos-Reid / CanWest Global poll shows that if the Conservatives were to win a minority government on January 23rd, 2006 with the Liberals in “distant second”, at least two-thirds (65%) of Canadian voters believe Prime Minister Paul Martin should resign as Leader of the Liberal Party. With a majority Conservative win, almost the same number (66%) believe the Prime Minister should step down as the Liberal Leader—thus setting in motion a Leadership campaign and vote among Liberals. And in an era where party leaders resign without less than eighty-or-more percent support by the party faithful in a leadership review, 42% of Liberal voters agree as well.

In the event that the Prime Minister steps down as the leader of his Party, Canadian voters’ top candidate out of a list of possible contenders to take his place is Canada’s current Ambassador to the United States and former Premier of New Brunswick, Frank McKenna (17%) followed by former Federal Cabinet Minister and Newfoundland Premier Brian Tobin (13%) -43% indicate “none of the above” to the list provided. Among Liberal voters, Mr. McKenna is proffered by 20% followed by former Mr. Tobin (17%), newly minted Liberal Minister and one-time-Tory Belinda Stronach (12%) and former Chretien Deputy Prime Minister John Manly (9%)

When asked who is to blame for the Liberal’s current election troubles, a full majority of voting Canadians (57%) point to Liberal campaign advisors and strategists (35%) and Paul Martin himself (22%). Approximately four-in-ten (37%) Canadian voters blame former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

Liberal voters are more split with a total of four in ten (42%) who point to Mr. Martin's campaign advisors and strategists (37%) and to Mr. Martin himself (5%) compared with 46% who blame the former Prime Minister. One in ten (12%) place no blame.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted for CanWest News Service/Global News from January 13th to January 15th, 2006. A total of 8256 Canadian voters were surveyed via the internet, yielding results which are accurate to within  $\pm 1.1\%$  (19 times out of 20). The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. The data were statistically weighted to ensure that the sample's age, sex, regional and party support composition reflects that of the actual Canadian voter population. The sample was drawn from a pre-recruited panel of over 12,000 voters drawn from Ipsos Reid's internet panel.*

## ***Under What Scenario After Election Day Should Paul Martin Resign ?***

After sitting in government for close to twenty years, including almost two as Prime Minister, a full majority of Canadian voters feel Prime Minister Paul Martin should resign as Leader of the Liberal party of Canada if the Conservatives continue their momentum and emerge as the government on election day.

Two-thirds (65%) of Canadian voters believe Mr. Martin should step down as Leader of the Liberal Party if the Conservatives were to win a minority and they trail in a "distant second" place and 66% of Canadian voters he should resign if there is a Conservative majority.

Almost half (46%) of Canadian voters say Paul Martin should resign if the Conservatives win a minority but the Liberals are a "close second". Even in the event that the Liberals win a minority, nearly four-in-ten (41%) of Canadian voters as a whole say Mr. Martin should resign.

Liberal voters are more generous than Canadian voters as a whole; however, in an era where Leaders look for approval ratings among their followers of 80% or more, Mr. Martin would appear to have his days numbered:

- 46% say he should resign in the event of a Conservative majority
- 42% say he should resign in the event of a Conservative minority with Liberals a “distant second”
- 17% say he should resign in the event of a Conservative minority with Liberals a “close second”
- 9% of Liberal supporters feel he should resign in the event of a Liberal minority

## ***Frank McKenna Leads (17%) As Top Liberal Leader Choice Among Voters...***

Among Liberal voters, the top choices are former Premier of New Brunswick and current Canadian Ambassador to the United States Frank McKenna (20%), former Federal Cabinet Minister and Newfoundland Premier Brian Tobin (17%), former Conservative and current Liberal Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Belinda Stronach (12%), former Chrétien Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister John Manley (9%), former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (5%), current Liberal candidate and author Michael Ignatieff (4%), former Conservative and now Liberal Minister of Public Works and Government Services Scott Brison (2%), and former Cabinet Minister Martin Cauchon (1%). Almost one third (30%) of Liberal voters say “none of the above”.

Among Canadian voters as a whole, the list of possible replacements for Mr. Martin are as follows: Frank McKenna at 17%, Brian Tobin (13%). followed by Belinda Stronach (9%), John Manley (8%), Jean Chretien (4%), Michael Ignatieff (3%). Scott Brison (2%)

and Marin Couchon (1%). A total of 43% of Canadian voters choose “none of the above”.

## *Playing The Blame Game...*

Asked who is to blame for the Liberal’s current election troubles, a majority of liberal voters (51%) point to Mr. Martin himself (5%) and his campaign advisors and strategists (37%) compared with 46% who blame former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (46%).

Canadian voters as a whole are more pronounced: a full majority (57%) point to Liberal campaign advisors and strategists (35%) and Paul Martin (22%) himself. Approximately four-in-ten (37%) Canadian voters blame former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

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