



POLL SUGGESTS POSSIBILITY OF PROGRESSIVE MAJORITY GOVERNMENT IN ALBERTA

A poll conducted by the Leger Marketing organization in late November 2010 for the *Alberta Democratic Renewal Project* suggests that unity among progressive parties elevates support for such parties to the point where they could form a majority government in Alberta.

When voters were offered the choice of supporting a pre-election coalition of progressive parties (Liberal, ND, Alberta Party, and Vision 2012 – the new Greens), support for Alberta Conservatives fell from 39 percent to 29 percent. Working separately, however, the 4 progressive parties were less attractive to voters – especially to undecided voters and soft supporters of the Conservatives. The poll, which Leger claims has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 percent, included two questions. The first asked respondents which party they would vote for if an election were held today. 39 percent of decided voters cited the Tories, 20 % Wildrose, and 40 % cited one or other of the four centre-left parties (21% Liberal, 10% NDP, 7% Vision/Green, 2% Alberta Party). Those figures are exclusive of “undecideds” who made up 25 percent of all Albertans whom Leger polled.

The second question asked respondents how they would vote if the 4 progressive parties worked together. In this scenario, surprisingly, the Tory vote dropped to 29%, while the potential vote for the parties of the centre and left, which almost no poll in Alberta has ever found to be greater than 40%, rose to 48 percent.

Of particular note, when given the option, a large group of voters who had originally declared themselves “undecided” and a smaller but still significant group who had declared themselves “decided Conservative” voters, supported a hypothetical coalition of centre and left parties. In addition, no one who planned to vote for one of the 4 progressive parties in answer to the first question, shifted their support to the Tories or Wildrose when the prospect of a centre-left coalition was put to them in the second.

When given the choice of simply voting for a candidate from one of the 4 progressive parties (regardless of party of origin) or voting for the coalition only if the candidate in their riding were that of their preferred party, the majority of respondents chose the latter option. However, while it remains unclear how voters would respond if the *only* progressive candidate on the ballot were from a party other than their own, the desire to elect a new and progressive government appears strong enough that, in the absence of a formal progressive coalition, a targeted campaign of support for the “most winnable progressive candidate” in each riding could prove sufficient to end 75 years of conservative government (Social Credit and then PC) in Alberta.

*See Official Leger Poll Results on News/Issues page