

**Just 29% say Tories honest**

Results not all bad for government, with 39 per cent saying it's doing a good job

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OTTAWA -- Less than a third of Canadians believe the Conservative government is "open and honest," suggests the findings of a newly released internal poll.

The Privy Council Office, the bureaucratic arm of the Prime Minister's Office, periodically tracks public opinion to give the government a "macro level" view of how it is doing and what issues concern Canadians.

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents thought the government was generally doing a good job, up from 35 per cent from a poll in March.

Nevertheless, the poll, conducted by Ekos Research, contains some disturbing findings for the Harper government, including a relative lack of interest in the Afghanistan mission, poor marks for the government's efforts to combat climate change, and a surprising lack of awareness in the government's tax cuts.

The poll suggest Canadians are skeptical about how much things have changed under the Conservatives.

Only 29 per cent of respondents believed the government was doing a good job of being "open and honest." Forty-five per cent thought the government was doing a poor job in that area.

Only 23 per cent of respondents thought the government was doing a good job at "fixing climate change," compared with 46 per cent who believed it was doing a poor job.

The Afghanistan war ranked well down Canadians' list of priorities. The environment and climate change topped the list, with 20 per cent of Canadians saying it should be the government's priority. It was followed by health care at 19 per cent and the economy at 11 per cent. The war came sixth at six per cent, below poverty issues.

The survey also reveals widespread ignorance of the Harper government's tax-cutting agenda. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced \$60 billion over six years in corporate and personal tax cuts last October, including a one-point reduction in the GST to five per cent. But 61 per cent of respondents believed the government had either raised taxes or had left them the same in 2007.

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**CONSERVATIVE TAX CUTS DIDN'T REGISTER WITH MANY CANADIANS**

- 39 per cent of Canadians believe the government is doing a good job.
- 37 per cent have "high trust" in the government.
- 38 per cent feel it is doing a good job of "leading Canada in a direction I agree with."
- 38 per cent believe it is good at "maintaining high ethical standards."
- 29 per cent believe it is "open and honest."
- 23 per cent feel it is doing a good job "fixing climate change."
- Eight per cent were not aware of the GST reduction.
- 36 per cent were not aware of the \$1,200 universal child-care benefit.
- 51 per cent were not aware of the children's fitness tax credit.
- 64 per cent were not aware of the working income-tax benefit.

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