

CARP Prorogation Poll Report September 20, 2013

Key Findings

Members are not in favour of proroguing parliament, even when circumstances justify it, and they think the current prorogation is particularly egregious, because no important legislation was passed, too much infighting occurred and the government used their majority to their own advantage.

Members especially do not like constant campaigning for the next election, the substitution of talking points for real debate and expense fiddling. They expect better of parliament, like enacting enhanced CPP, senate reform or a National Pharmacare program. Other decisions of this government that do not sit well with members include the elimination of the compulsory long-form census.

Most members consider themselves middle-class, and suspect the government doesn't really have them in mind when it speaks of helping the middle class. Members say those less fortunate than the middle class are more deserving of government support. What the middle class needs is a growing economy they say.

Very few are making more on CPP/OAS/GIS than they made before retirement, and, on average, members are retired on about 58 percent of their pre-retirement income. Members are exactly split on whether their children will do better or worse in life than themselves.

The Liberals have seen a dramatic surge in their support, to almost half our members, since the last poll, and this has been accompanied by a decline for the Conservatives.

Detailed Findings

More than half of members disapprove of prorogation the way it's supposed to happen, at the end of a term (56%).

Parliaments may be prorogued when the government's business has been completed and goals met. A new parliament is begun and a Throne Speech is given, laying out the government's new goals. Do you approve or disapprove of this application of prorogation?

APPROVE	39%
Approve strongly	7%
Approve	32%
DISAPPROVE	56%
Disapprove	19%
Disapprove strongly	37%
DON'T KNOW	6%

Two thirds disagree that the latest prorogation met the minimum standards of the procedure (66%).

Do you agree or disagree that the current prorogation of parliament meets this description?

AGREE	25%
Agree strongly	5%
Agree	20%
DISAGREE	66%
Disagree	24%
Disagree strongly	42%
DON'T KNOW	8%

Twice as many believe no important legislation was passed in this parliament (52%) as think the opposite (26%). One quarter don't have an opinion (23%).

As far as you know, was any important legislation passed in the most recent parliament?

Yes	26%
No	52%
DON'T KNOW	23%

Two thirds agree the most recent parliament did a “bad job” (64%), mostly because of infighting (30%) and misuse of the government majority (24%). Fewer than a fifth think it did a good job *18%).

How would you describe the most recent parliament?

GOOD JOB	18%
Made good use of majority	7%
Important legislation passed	6%
Opposition held government to account	3%
Good job (OTHER)	2%
Neither good job nor bad job	17%
BAD JOB	64%
Too much infighting, not enough legislating	30%
Government misused majority	24%
No important legislation passed	7%
Bad job (OTHER)	3%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	3%

The two biggest concerns with the most recent parliament are that the government steamrollered the opposition with their majority (25%) and that too much time was spent scoring political points (20%). Other concerns are that important files were ignored (13%), citizens’ lives were not improved (11%) and that the politicians did little while Canadians were in need (10%).

What would be the best way to describe the most recent parliamentary session?

Government abused majority/steamrollered opposition	25%
Too much time scoring political points	20%
Important files ignored	13%
Canadians’ lives not improved	11%
Fiddled while Canadians needed relief	10%
Government fulfilled election promises	7%
No progress on aging society	6%
No better or worse than all parliaments	6%
Opposition demonstrated capable of governing	1%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	1%

Constant campaigning for the next election is the one thing that annoys most about politicians (26%), followed by lack of discourse on important files and cheating on expenses (12% each) and the behaviour and rote answers seen in Question Period (12% each).

What is the most annoying aspect of federal politics right now for you?

Constant manoeuvring for next election	26%
No public discourse on jobs, pensions, health care	12%
Cheating on expenses	12%
Talking points in the place of real answers	11%
Poor behaviour in question period	11%
Opposition powerless	8%
Nothing gets done	7%
Using parliamentary funds for partisan ends	7%
Every parliament is prorogued	4%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	2%

The top items members wish the most recent parliament had dealt with include an enhancement to CPP (24%), Senate reform (20%), followed by a National Pharmacare Plan (11%) and a national home care program (10%).

What should the most recent parliament have achieved?

Enhanced CPP contributions/benefits	24%
Senate reform	20%
National Pharmacare Program	11%
National home care program	10%
Create supplementary Universal Pension Plan (UPP)	9%
Long Term Care insurance plan	6%
Bulk purchase of pharmaceuticals	5%
National Investor Protection Agency	4%
National program to curb elder abuse	3%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	9%

Three quarters disapproved of the long form census decision when it was made, and the same proportion feel the same way now (74%). One half disapprove strongly (49% then, 48% now).

Did you approve or disapprove of the decision to eliminate the mandatory long-form census when this decision was made/ Do you approve or disapprove of this decision now?

	Then	Now
APPROVE	21%	21%
Approve strongly	4%	4%
Approve	17%	17%
DISAPPROVE	74%	74%
Disapprove	25%	26%
Disapprove strongly	49%	48%
DON'T KNOW	4%	5%

The same three quarters agree the long form census should be reinstated (76%) and fully one half agree strongly (51%).

Do you agree or disagree the mandatory long-form census should be reinstated?

AGREE	76%
Agree strongly	51%
Agree	25%
DISAGREE	19%
Disagree	14%
Disagree strongly	5%
DON'T KNOW	6%

The majority describe themselves as “middle class” (53%). If not in the middle, the remainder are upper middle class (15%) or lower middle class (22%).

How would you describe your household's station in life?

Upper class	-
Upper middle class	15%
Middle class	53%
Lower middle class	22%
Working class	5%
White collar	1%
Blue collar	1%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	3%

Members feel the working class (34%) and the permanent underclass in Canada (37%) are more deserving of help from government than the middle class (24%).

Governments say they have the interests of the middle class at heart. Which segment of society requires support and help the most?

Middle class	24%
Working class	34%
Permanent underclass	37%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	5%

There is a split in whether members think politicians are aiming their “middle class” rhetoric at members, and 45% agree and 46% disagree.

Do you agree or disagree when politicians talk about the Middle Class, that they are talking about people like you?

AGREE	45%
Agree strongly	4%
Agree	41%
DISAGREE	46%
Disagree	37%
Disagree strongly	9%
DON'T KNOW	10%

Economic growth (37%) and also job opportunities (30%) are seen to be the solutions to the middle class economic crisis, and these are twice as important as social support (13%) or a guaranteed annual income (14%).

What kind of solutions are best for a struggling middle class?

Economic growth	37%
Job opportunities	30%
Guaranteed Annual Minimum Income	14%
Social supports	13%
NO INTERVENTION REQUIRED	4%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	4%

Very few are receiving, or know someone who is receiving more in retirement benefits than they did working (9%).

Are you, or is anyone you know now receiving more in retirement from CPP, OAS and GIS than they made in income when they were working?

YES	9%
Yes, me	3%
Someone I know	6%
No	91%

On average, members say they live on a bout 58 percent of their pre-retirement income.

About what percent of your pre-retirement income do you now live on?

Avg. Percentage of pre-retirement income	58 Percent
NOT RETIRED	7%

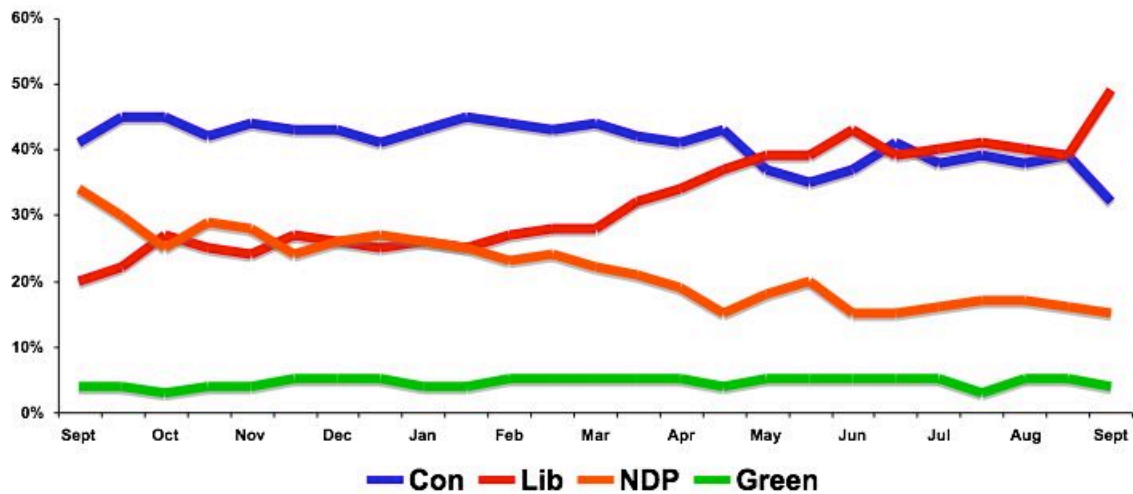
There is a split in opinion on whether members' children will be better off in life than members (31%) or will do worse (34%). Just one fifth think their children will end up in the same socio-economic situation they are in (22%).

As far as you know, will your children achieve the same station in life as you have?

EXCEED	31%
Will exceed by far	10%
Will do a little better	21%
End up the same as me	22%
DO WORSE	34%
Will do a little worse	24%
Will fall far below	10%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	13%

Electoral Preference

Since the last wave of polling, the Liberals have undergone a dramatic 10 point increase in our poll, to 49%, well past majority territory, while the Conservatives have suffered a commensurate decline, all the way to 32%..



More than 2400 CARP Poll™ panel members responded to this poll between September 6 and 10, 2013. The margin of error for a probability sample this size is about plus or minus 2%, 19 times out of 20