

I'm mad at Liberals but terrified of Conservatives

The Edmonton Journal

June 4, 2004

Pollsters say Canadians are mad at Paul Martin and the Liberals. I am too. But I think I'm more terrified than mad. What is the alternative?

The alternative is the Conservative Party of Canada, the party of Richard Spencer, who wanted to criminalize homosexuality. The party of health critic Bob Merrifield, who wants to assail a woman's right to determine if she wants an abortion by instituting mandatory independent third-party counselling. It's the party of Stephen Harper who wanted a "firewall" between Alberta and the same national government he now wants Canadians to elect him to lead. It's the party that would send Canadian troops to die in Iraq to support "our traditional allies," the Americans.

While I'm furious with Liberal buy-your-vote politics, do Canadians want a right-wing religious dark age that a Conservative government would bring?

Do Canadians want a government that honours rulings of the Supreme Court regarding the Charter right to same-sex unions while still honouring the right of churches not to sanctify them as church marriages? Do Canadians want a government whose foreign policy reflects the interests of Canadians or Americans?

Liberals are right in one respect: Canadians choose higher taxes to sustain social programs and the health-care system. That is a significant distinction between us and our American cousins. That is a distinction that appears to be lost on the Conservative party. While Canadians are mad as hell with the Liberals, I'm not sure I am prepared for the "alternative" offered by the Republicans. Sorry, I meant Conservatives.

Barry K. Winters,

Edmonton

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