

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A new movement for a ‘big tent’ progressive party

A unified Liberal-NDP-Green party could have won a decisive majority in 2011

Montreal, October 3, 2013 – The Libdemo Movement, dedicated to improving young Canadians’ engagement in social and political issues, is launching a campaign to raise awareness of vote-splitting between the Liberal Party, the NDP, and the Green Party that enabled the Conservatives’ election wins in 2006, 2008, and 2011—and will quite possibly lead to another Conservative win in 2015 if the parties do not address the issue soon.

Libdemo’s inaugural project will be to promote and advocate for the unification of the Liberal Party, the NDP, and the Green Party for real representation in Parliament of the clear majority of Canadian voters—nearly 60%—who did not vote for a Conservative government in the 2011 election. “We are confident that a new unified party could develop a platform built on consensus and in the best interests of Canadians and the environment,” said Libdemo Vice President Éric Gendron.

A clear majority of 195 seats

The movement’s researchers tabulated 2011 election results to demonstrate how a unified party could have easily defeated the Conservatives. In 53 ridings—including 32 in Ontario alone—the Liberal or NDP candidate came in second due to vote-splitting between the three parties, resulting in Conservative candidates being elected with a minority of the popular vote. The same phenomenon likewise led to four Bloc Québécois wins. Had these ridings been won by candidates from a unified party, the party would have formed a decisive and truly representative majority government of 195 seats (their 138 MPs actually elected plus 57).

“It’s important to stress that these results are intended simply to demonstrate the tremendous electoral potential of a unified party,” said Libdemo political sociologist Peter Nicoll. “We feel that a unified party with the full endorsement of the current party leaders, running on a platform that fully and fairly represents the interests of the majority of Canadians, would be able to amply overcome voter apathy, especially among those youth who aren’t interested in elections.”

Indeed, according to Elections Canada, voter participation in 2011 among the 18-to-34 demographic sunk to less than 40%, compared to the overall participation rate of 61%. The 2011 Canadian Election Study found that only around 31% of 18- to 29-year-olds who voted did so for Conservative candidates. Countless surveys and studies have shown that the youth demographic—usually referred to as the Millennial generation—is overwhelmingly progressive in its social and political beliefs.

“Canadians deserve an inclusive ‘big tent’ party oriented to the realities of the twenty-first century,” Nicoll added. “We are always confronted with new and challenging issues, especially increasingly urgent ones such as the environment. These require our elected officials to come together in good faith to find real solutions.”

Among Libdemo’s initial activities will be raising public awareness of the effect of vote splitting in elections and the benefits of party unification, seeking the support of prominent Canadians who have endorsed party unification in the past, and establishing lines of communication with the three party leaders and their MPs.

“We’re here first and foremost to give a voice to Canadians who believe in party unification, while growing public support for the idea. As for the politicians, we just want them to initiate an honest dialogue on the issue, even if it’s just between individual MPs,” Nicoll said.

About Libdemo

Founded in Montreal, the Libdemo Movement brings together young workers and students who want to raise their peers' interest in voter participation, especially at the federal level.

“Young Canadians are much less interested in voting compared to previous generations,” added Gendron. “They don't always realize how lucky they are to live in a free and democratic country. We believe the unification of the centre-left parties would better reflect their progressive values and beliefs, and would increase their motivation and enthusiasm to get out their generation's vote.”

#

For a visual depiction of the 57 ridings that could have been won by a unified party in 2011, and an example of the vote-splitting problem, see www.libdemo.ca/unify/unify.htm

For further information and media requests, contact

Peter Nicoll, sociologist

Libdemo Movement

info@libdemo.ca