



## **10 reasons to vote against Stephen Harper and the Conservatives**

*No other Canadian government has such a deplorable agenda as that of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives. Despite its minority status, this government rushed through a series of radical measures, attacking values that are widely held. That's why ATTAC-Quebec, faced with the threat that this government will be re-elected, has come up with 10 reasons to not vote for the Conservatives.*

### **1. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives gave tax cuts to the rich:**

Since its election, the Harper government has been particularly generous to large corporations, which have seen their taxes reduced to the point that Canada will have the lowest corporate tax rate in the G7 by 2012. In addition, the TFSA (Tax Free Savings Account) of the 2008 budget created a new tax shelter for the well-off.

### **2. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives adopted policies that are disastrous for the environment.**

The Harper government refuses to have Canada do its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. After a spectacular about-face, Canada no longer respects the obligations it undertook when it joined the Kyoto Protocol and remains one of the worst polluters on the planet.

### **3. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives brought its foreign policy in line with the US administration of George W. Bush and intensified Canadian involvement in the offensive war in Afghanistan.**

The militaristic policies of the Harper government have not brought peace to Afghanistan, and resistance, resentment of the population, and support for the Taliban are increasing. This pointless war has brought a drastic increase in military spending at the expense of funding public services, social programs and the international development aid that would actually help those in need.

### **4. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives limits access to information and undermines democracy.**

The Harper government exerts unprecedented control over the media. Journalists encounter many obstacles when trying to do their job: they have difficulty getting interviews with ministers, information is hidden from them, and opportunities for questions are restricted. Freedom of the press in Canada is seriously at risk. Civil servants and the agencies of parliament are also increasingly being muzzled.

### **5. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives has made indefensible cuts to the arts and cultural sector.**

The Harper government has made cuts estimated at \$45 million. This amount, insignificant when compared to the total Canadian budget, are nevertheless essential to the existence and expansion of the arts in our country and to a rich and vibrant cultural life. This decision of the Harper government should be seen as a deliberate act of censorship.

**6. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives has set back the cause of women.**

With Bill C484, the foetus could have gained legal status, which would open the door to recriminalizing abortion. The Harper government reduced the budget for the Status of Women by 43%. And the Women's Program will no longer finance research into and defence of the rights of women.

**7. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives has set back the cause of aboriginal people.**

The Harper government refused to sign the UN Declaration of the Rights United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that was adopted by 144 other countries. It also decided not to respect the Kelowna Accord that was intended to improve the lives of aboriginal people.

**8. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives promotes a repressive and merciless justice system.**

The Harper government wants harsher penalties for young offenders instead of programs aimed at social reinsertion, even though the latter is more effective in combating delinquency. Stephen Harper refuses to repatriate Omar Khadr, the child soldier who is imprisoned at Guantanamo. He has not asked for clemency for Ronald Allen Smith, a Canadian citizen condemned to death in the US, thereby giving his tacit support for the death penalty.

**9. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives promotes the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) that puts Canada's autonomy at risk.**

Following along with the previous Liberal government, Harper supports the development of the SPP, an agreement negotiated in secret that accelerates the economic integration of North America. In addition, this government is completely in support of free trade, even though this puts large corporations above the law and creates an ever-increasing gap between the rich and the poor.

**10. The government of Stephen Harper and the Conservatives has not respected electoral law.**

According to Elections Canada, during the last election the Conservative Party exceeded the \$1.2 million ceiling set on election expenses set by the law through a system of phony invoices. It has attacked the process designed to investigate this corruption, demonstrating a lack of basic respect for democracy.

*There are many other reasons to not vote for Stephen Harper and the Conservatives and you can add your own. Above all, do not support the Conservatives in this election!*