



Canadian Attitudes Toward Americans

**A New Survey of Canadians in
Advance of President Bush's Visit**

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GPC Public Affairs
*Strategic Communications, Government
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Canadian Attitudes Toward Americans:

A New Survey of Canadians in Advance of President Bush's Visit

A recent telephone survey conducted by the research division of GPC Public Affairs finds that apparent *anti-Americanism* in Canadian public opinion has been overstated by a vocal minority in the country.

Friends of America, a non-profit organization funded by ordinary Canadians who want to strengthen the Canada / U.S. relationship found widespread support for the U.S. among Canadians. The survey, conducted among a representative sample of 1,000 adults across Canada on November 23 and 24, 2004 has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Almost 3/4 of Canadians (71%) cite the U.S. as Canada's closest friend, with another 67% believing that anti-American statements hurt our ability to resolve disputes. A full 73% also believe that opposing the policies of the President is not the same as being anti-American.

Overall, Canadians continue to consider Americans their best friends, identifying first and foremost their longstanding and extensive economic and trade relationship but also citing common culture and language as reasons underpinning this friendship.

Moreover, not only do most Canadians believe that the people of the two countries have close ties; the majority of Canadians continue to have a favourable impression of the United States as a country.

1. Most Canadians Identify the United States as Canada's Closest Friend

Seven out of ten (71%) Canadians identify the United States as their closest friend when asked which country is Canada's closest friend, followed at a great distance by the United Kingdom (9%), France (5%) and Australia (1%) (see Chart 1).

Two interesting outcomes from a regional analysis demonstrate Quebecers are slightly less likely than other Canadians (64%) to identify the United States as our closest friend, although it's worth noting this still represents almost 2/3 of respondents in Quebec. In Ontario, where many anecdotes suggest a surge of anti-Americanism, 76% of respondents identify the United States as Canada's closest friend. The United States is also identified as Canada's closest friend by a majority of Western Canadians (70%) and 4/5 Atlantic Canadians (80%) (see Chart 2).

The question asked was 1) "Which country would you say is Canada's closest friend?" (see the results of question 1 in Charts 1 and 2).

Chart 1: Canada's Closest Friend



Q1. Which country would you say is Canada's closest friend?
(open-ended)

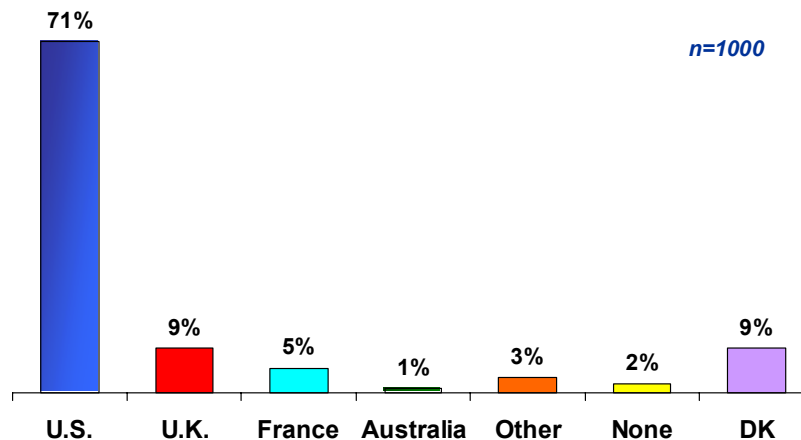


Chart 2: Canadians Who Believe the U.S. is Their Closest Friend, by Region



Q1. Which country would you say is Canada's closest friend?
(open-ended)

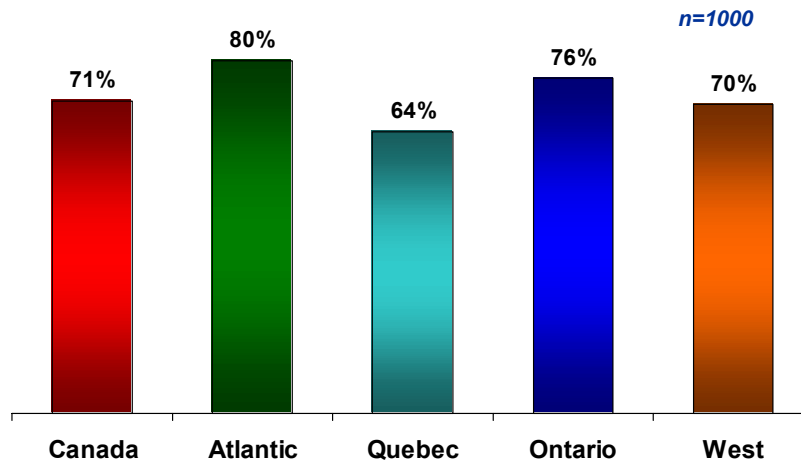


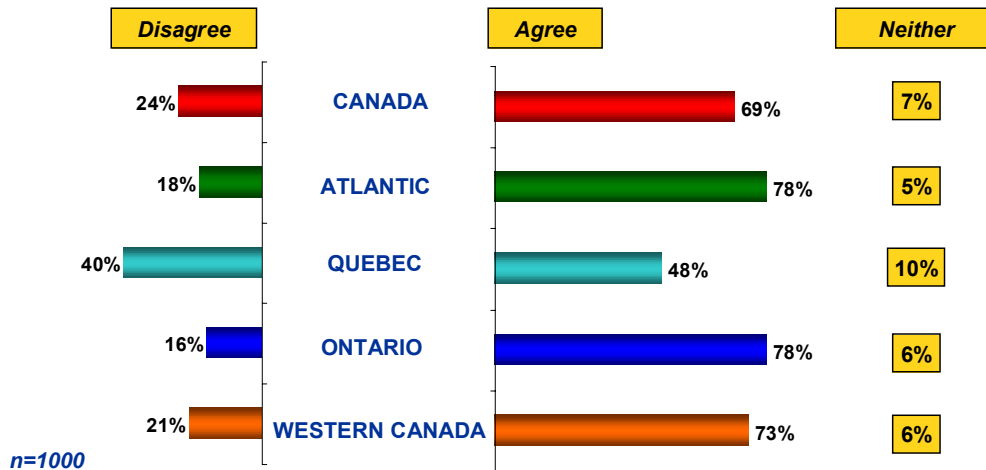
Chart 2 indicates the percentage of Canadians in each region who identify the United States as Canada's closest friend.

Canadians also emphatically agree with the statement, "*Deep down, I know that Americans are our closest friends.*" Fully two thirds (69%) agree with that statement. Agreement is highest in Atlantic Canada (78%) and Ontario (78%) and lowest in Quebec (48%) (see Chart 3).

Chart 3: Agreement that Americans Are Our Closest Friends, by Region



Q6b. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statement :
 "Deep down I know that Americans are our closest friends"



2. Despite Recent Strains, Most Canadians Believe that the Two Countries Are Close

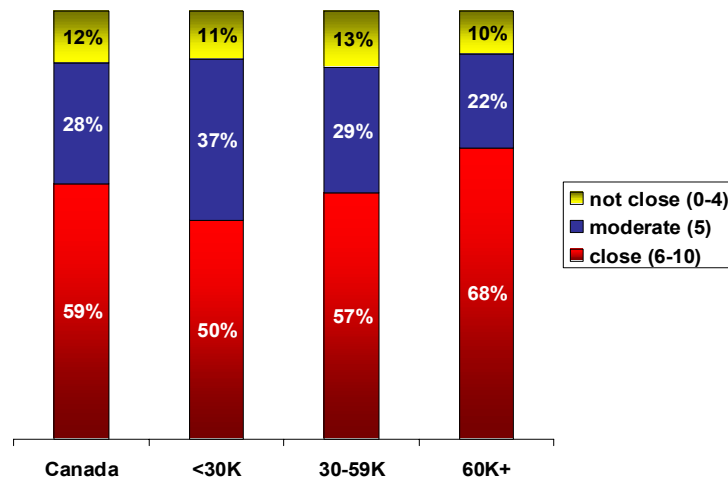
While Canada and the United States have faced disagreements in recent years over the war in Iraq, softwood lumber and restrictions on beef exports, most Canadians still believe that our relationship is still close. When asked to rate the closeness of the relationship between Canadians and Americans, a majority of Canadians (59%) indicated they believed relations are “close” (defined here as at least 6 out of 10 on a scale from 0 to 10). Canadians with higher incomes are much more likely to consider the relationship as “close” (68% of people with household incomes of \$60,000) than those with lower household incomes (50% of those with a household income of \$30,000 or less rate it as “close”).

The question asked was, “thinking about the relationship between Canadians and Americans, how close would you say we are? Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means we are not at all close and 10 means we are very close. 5 means we are only somewhat close.” (see results in Chart 4).

Chart 4: Belief that Canadians and Americans Are Close, By Income Level



Q2. Thinking about the relationship between Canadians and Americans, how close would you say we are?



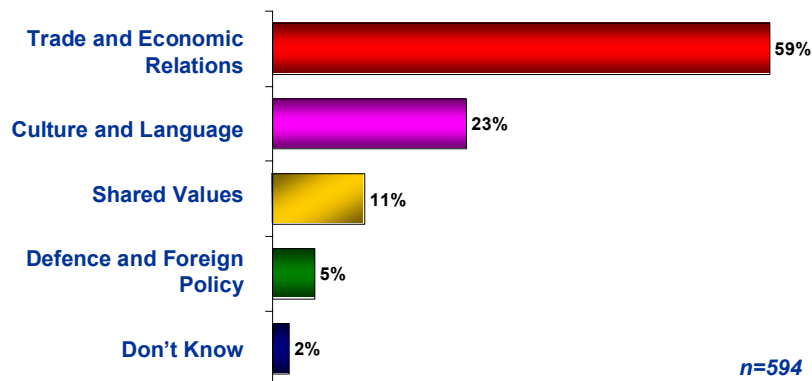
Those 59% of Canadians who believe that the relationship is “close” were asked to choose the most important factor underpinning the close relationship. A clear majority (59%) believe *trade and economic relations* are the chief factor. Almost one in four (23%) chose *culture and language* while only one in ten (11%) chose *shared values*. *Defence and foreign policy is not a primary factor in our relationship with only 5% identifying this option.*

The question asked was, “Which one of the following do you believe is the most important reason that Canadians and Americans are close: trade and economic relations, culture and language, shared values, and defence and foreign policy?” (see Chart 5).

Chart 5: Why Canadians and Americans Are Close



Q3. Which one of the following do you think is the most important reason that Canadians and Americans are close (among people responding 6-10 to Q. 2)



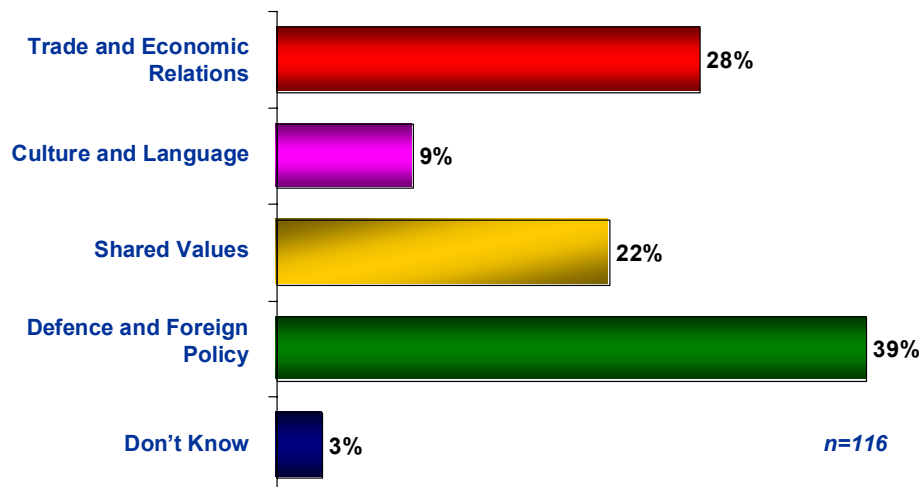
Among Canadians who believe that the relationship is “not close” (only 12% of respondents), opinion was more divided: 39% chose *defence and foreign policy* while 28% chose *trade and economic relations*. Another 22% identified the lack of *shared values*.

The question asked was, “Which one of the following do you believe is the most important reason that Canadians and Americans are not close: trade and economic relations, culture and language, shared values, and defence and foreign policy?” (see Chart 6).

Chart 6: Why Canadians and Americans Are Not Close



Q4. Which one of the following do you think is the most important reason that Canadians and Americans are NOT close (among people responding 0-4 to Q. 2)



3. Canadians Believe That There Are Strong Links Between Themselves and Americans Living in Nearby Regions

Approximately six in ten (59%) Canadians believe there is a “close” regional relationship between themselves and Americans living in states just across the border. British Columbians are most likely to believe that people in their province have a “close” relationship to Americans immediately to the south—in this case, Washington State (66%). Similarly, almost two out of three (64%) Ontarians believe that they are “close” to Americans living in New York and Michigan.

Six out of ten (60%) Atlantic Canadians consider themselves “close” to Americans living in New England while 55% of residents of the Prairie Provinces believe that they are “close” to people in North Dakota and Montana.

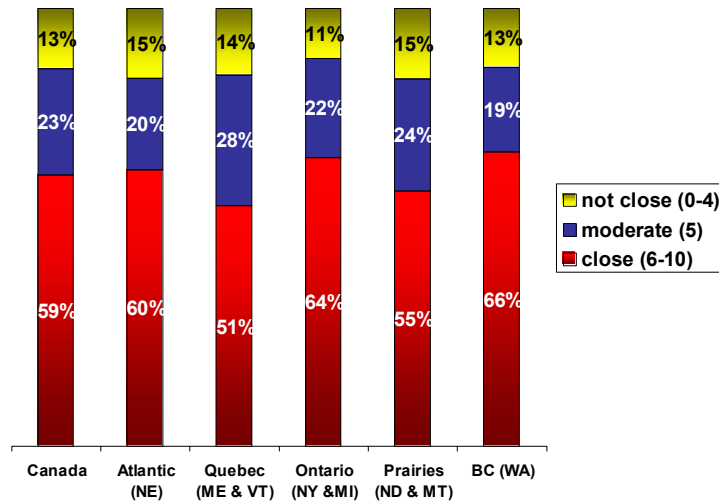
Links between Quebec and the states to their south are slightly weaker: only 51% of Quebecers consider themselves “close” to Americans in Maine and Vermont.

The question asked was, “Thinking about the relationship between (your region and the US states bordering it), how close would you say we are? Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means we are not at all close and 10 means we are very close. 5 means we are only somewhat close.” (see Chart 7).

Chart 7: How Close Are People in My Region to Americans in States Across the Border



Q5. Thinking about the relationship between (your province) and (U.S. States bordering it), how close would you say we are?



4. It's Not Cool These Days to Dislike Americans

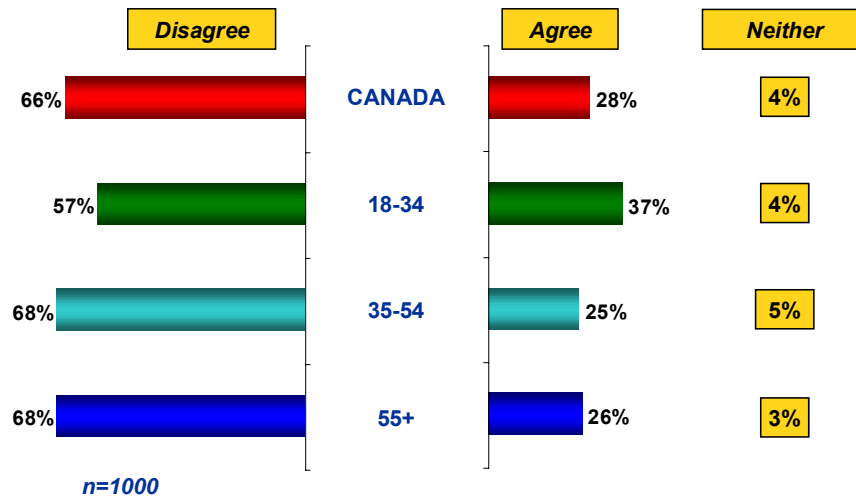
A full 2/3 of Canadians disagreed with the statement, "It's cool these days to dislike Americans." Less than 1/3 agreed with the statement (28%).

The only significant difference in responses to this question came from Canadians aged 18-34, with 37% agreeing with the statement. (see results in Chart 8).

Chart 8: It's Not "Cool" to Dislike Americans



Q6a. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements : "It's cool these days to dislike Americans"

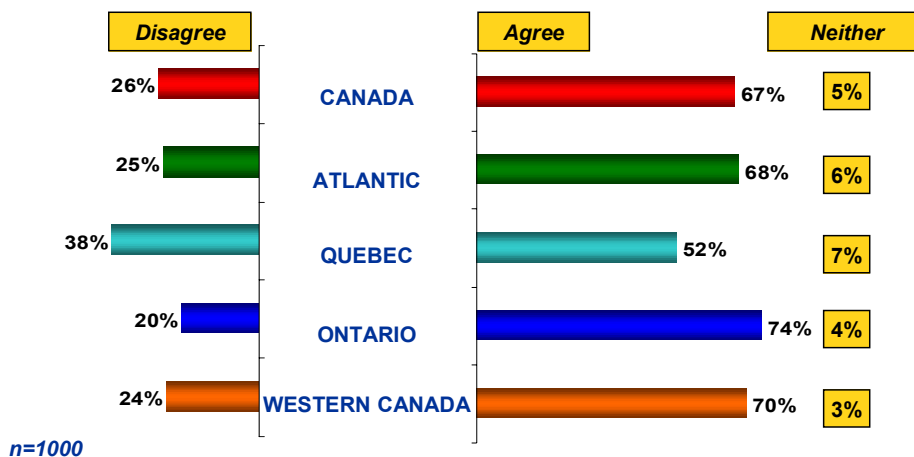


Anti-Americanism is also widely perceived by Canadians as not constructive to resolving disputes. Two thirds (67%) of Canadians agree that anti-American statements hinder the two countries from resolving problems of mutual concern. Agreement with the statement, “*Anti-American statements only hurt our ability to resolve disputes with the Americans on things such as softwood lumber and mad cow disease*” is highest in Ontario (74%) and lowest in Quebec (52%) (see results in Chart 9).

Chart 9: Anti-American Statements Hurt Ability to Resolve Mutual Problems



Q6c. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statement : “*Anti-American statements only hurt our ability to resolve disputes with the Americans on things such as softwood lumber and mad cow disease*”



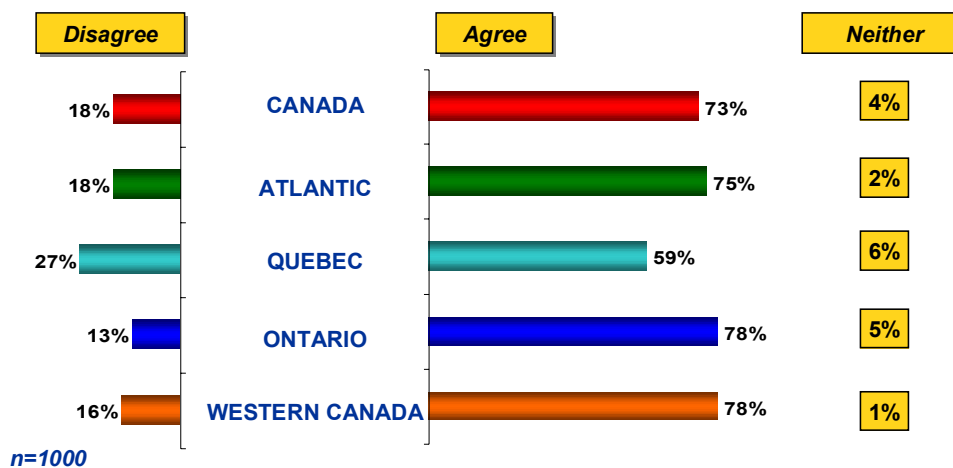
Almost 3/4 of Canadians (73%) agree with the statement, “*Opposing the policies of President Bush is not the same as being anti-American*” (see results in Chart 10).

According to Chart 10, agreement is highest among Western Canadians and Ontarians (78% in both regions agree) and lowest in Quebec (59% agree).

Chart 10: Opposing Bush’s Policies Is Not Necessarily Anti-American



Q6d. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statement : “*Opposing the policies of President Bush is not the same as being anti-American*”



5. Overall feelings toward the United States are positive

Canadians have an overall favourable attitude toward the United States, with 60% of Canadians indicating “positive” feelings (at least 6 on a scale from 0 to 10) while only 15% said their feelings were “not positive” (4 or less on a scale from 0 to 10). A full 25% of Canadians indicated their feelings were only “somewhat positive” (5 on a scale from 0 to 10).

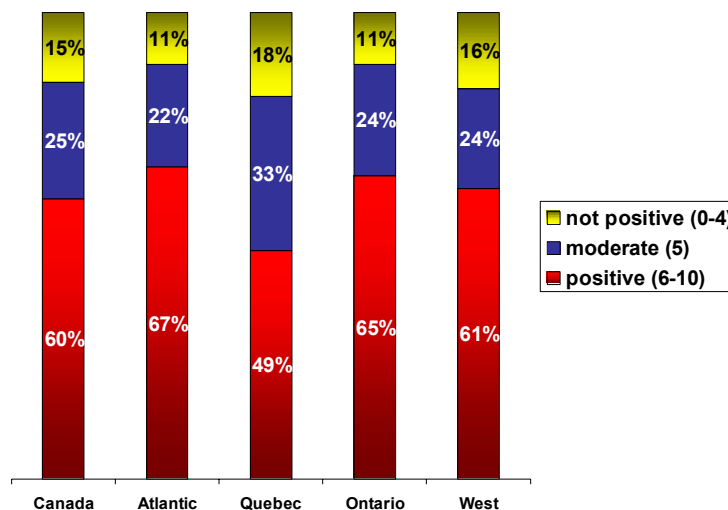
“Positive” feelings were expressed most often in Atlantic Canada (67%) and Ontario (65%), with 61% in Western Canada and 49% in Quebec.

The question asked was, “Overall, thinking about the United States in general, how positive would you say your feelings are? Please use a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning that your feelings are not at all positive and 10 meaning that your feelings are very positive. 5 means your feelings are only somewhat positive.” (see question 7 in Chart 11).

Chart 11: How Canadians Perceive the United States as a Country



Q7. Overall, thinking about the US in general, how positive would you say your feelings are?



Notwithstanding almost 2/3 of Canadians feeling positively about the U.S., opinion is equally divided on how they believe Americans view Canada. In response to the question, “Overall, thinking about American views of Canada, how positive would you say their feelings are?”, only one in three (33%) Canadians believes that American feelings toward Canada are “positive” (that is, 6 to 10 on a scale from 0 to 10) while another third (33%) believes that they are “not positive” (0 to 4 on a scale from 0 to 10) (see Chart 12).

Chart 12: How Canadians Think Americans See Them, By Income Level



Q8. Overall, thinking about American views of Canada, how positive would you say their feelings are?

