**Right Wing (Conservative) vs. Left Wing (Liberal) Beliefs**

*We all want the same things in life.  We want freedom; we want the chance for prosperity; we want as few people suffering as possible; we want healthy children; we want to have crime-free streets.  The argument is how to achieve them…*

**Overall**

**Liberals** believe in government action to achieve equal opportunity and equality for all.  It is the duty of the government to lessen social problems and to protect civil liberties and individual and human rights.  Believe the role of the government should be to guarantee that no one is in need.  Liberal policies generally emphasize the need for the government to solve problems.

**Conservatives** believe in personal responsibility, limited government, free markets, individual liberty, traditional Canadian values and a strong national defense.  Believe the role of government should be to provide people the freedom necessary to pursue their own goals.  Conservative policies generally emphasize empowerment of the individual to solve problems.

**THE ISSUES:**

**Death Penalty**

**Liberal**The death penalty should be abolished.  It is inhumane and is ‘cruel and unusual’ punishment.  Imprisonment is the appropriate punishment for murder.  Every execution that is performed risks killing an innocent person.

**Conservative**The death penalty is a punishment that fits the crime of murder; it is neither ‘cruel' nor unusual.'  Executing a murderer is the appropriate punishment for taking an innocent life.

**Economy**

**Liberal**

A market system in which government controls the economy is best.  Government must protect citizens from the greed of big business.  Unlike the private sector, the government is motivated by public interest.  Government regulation in all areas of the economy is needed to level the playing field.

**Conservative**The free market system, competitive capitalism, and private enterprise create the greatest opportunity and the highest standard of living for all.  Free markets produce more economic growth, more jobs and higher standards of living than those systems burdened by excessive government regulation.

**Energy**

**Liberal**Oil is a depleting resource.  Other sources of energy must be explored.  The government must produce a national plan for all energy resources and subsidize (partially pay for) alternative energy research and production.  Support increased exploration of alternative energy sources such as wind and solar power.  Support government control of gas and electric industries.

**Conservative**Oil, gas and coal are all good sources of energy and are abundant in Canada. Oil drilling should be increased both on land and at sea.  Increased local production creates lower prices and less dependence on other countries for oil.  Support increased production of nuclear energy.  Wind and solar sources will never provide plentiful, affordable sources of power.  Support private ownership of gas and electric industries.

**Healthcare**

**Liberal**Support free or low-cost government controlled health care.  There are millions of Canadians who can’t afford health care and are deprived of this basic right.  Every Canadian has a right to affordable health care.  The government should provide equal health care benefits for all, regardless of their ability to pay.

**Conservative**Support competitive, free market health care system.  All Canadians have access to health care.  The debate is about who should pay for it.  Free and low-cost government-run programs (socialized medicine) result in higher costs and everyone receiving the same poor-quality health care.  Health care should remain privatized.  The problem of uninsured individuals should be addressed and solved within the free market healthcare system – the government should not control healthcare.

**Social Security** (employment insurance, old age pensions, student loans, university tuitions)

**Liberal**
The Social Security system should be protected at all costs.  Reduction in future benefits is not a reasonable option.  [Opinions vary on the extent of the current system's financial stability.]
Social Security provides a safety net for the nation's poor and needy.  Changing the system would cause a reduction in benefits and many people would suffer as a result.

**Conservative**The Social Security system is in serious financial trouble.  Major changes to the current system are urgently needed.  In its current state, the Social Security system is not financially sustainable.  It will collapse if nothing is done to address the problems.  Many will suffer as a result.  Social Security must be made more efficient through privatization and/or allowing individuals to manage their own savings.

**Taxes**

**Liberal**Higher taxes (primarily for the wealthy) and a larger government are necessary to address inequity/injustice in society (government should help the poor and needy using tax dollars from the rich).  Support a large government to provide for the needs of the people and create equality.  Taxes enable the government to create jobs and provide welfare programs for those in need.  Government programs are a caring way to provide for the poor and needy in society.

**Conservative**Lower taxes and a smaller government with limited power will improve the standard of living for all.  Support lower taxes and a smaller government.  Lower taxes create more incentive for people to work, save, invest, and engage in entrepreneurial endeavors.  Money is best spent by those who earn it, not the government.  Government programs encourage people to become dependent and lazy, rather than encouraging work and independence.

**Welfare**

**Liberal**

Support welfare, including long-term welfare.  Welfare is a safety net which provides for the needs of the poor.  Welfare is necessary to bring fairness to American economic life.  It is a device for protecting the poor.

**Conservative**Oppose long-term welfare.  Opportunities should be provided to make it possible for those in need to become self-reliant.  It is far more compassionate and effective to encourage people to become self-reliant, rather than allowing them to remain dependent on the government for provisions.