
CTV/NATIONAL ANGUS REID GROUP POLL

-- CANADIANS' VIEWS ON PRESTON MANNING MOVING INTO STORNOWAY --

**- Which Issues Should Receive The Greatest Attention From Canada's
Leaders -**

- Major Priorities For The New Session Of Parliament -



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This National Angus Reid Poll was conducted by telephone between September 23rd and 30th, 1997 among a representative cross-section of 1,503 Canadian adults.

These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 1991 and 1996 Census data.

With a national sample of 1,500, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within ± 2.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

CANADIANS' VIEWS ON PRESTON MANNING MOVING INTO STORNOWAY AND THE PUBLIC AGENDA

A slim plurality of Canadians (49%) believe that it was appropriate for Preston Manning to move into Stornoway, the official residence provided for the leader of the Official Opposition, compared to just under one-half (45%) who indicate that this move was “not right.”

As well, in the wake of the "Calgary Accord", the national unity issue has moved up to the No. 1 spot on Canadians' policy priorities agenda – in fact, current "top-of-mind" concern over national unity is the highest it has been since immediately following the October 1995 Quebec referendum. Unemployment places a close second, although "top-of-mind" concern over this issue has been subsiding since early summer. These findings emerged from a National Angus Reid Poll conducted among 1,503 Canadians between September 23rd and 30th, 1997.

The highlights of the poll findings include:

Preston Manning Moving into Stornoway

- ◆ Overall, almost one-half (49%) of Canadians feel that “Preston Manning is right to move into Stornoway because that’s what the residence is there for and it would just be sitting vacant otherwise”, compared to just under one-half (45%) of Canadians who believe that “it’s not right for Preston Manning to move into Stornoway because, before the election, he criticized it as a waste of taxpayers’ money”. (Table 1)
- ◆ Albertans (60%) and older respondents aged 55 years or more (64%) are disproportionately more likely to report that Preston Manning “is right” to move into Stornoway because it is meant to be used to house the leader of the Official Opposition.

- ◆ Quebeckers (61%) and younger respondents between the ages of 18 and 34 years (55%) are predominantly more likely to indicate that “it’s not right’ for Preston Manning to have moved into Stornoway given his criticism of the residence.
- ◆ In addition, almost seven in ten (68%) Canadians who indicated supporting the Reform Party during the 1997 Federal election view Preston Manning’s move into the residence as the “right thing” to do, compared to just under three in ten (27%) Reform supporters who feel that “it’s not right” for Mr. Manning to move into Stornoway.

The Priority List

A look back at Canadians' policy agenda at the early stage in the Chretien Liberals' first mandate shows some interesting differences in the public priorities compared to today: In 1993, there was higher "top-of-mind" concern for jobs, the deficit and free trade, whereas here in 1997 Canadians display more concern over issues such as national unity, health care and education.

The late-September National Angus Reid Poll included an ongoing monitor of Canadians' public issues agenda. Those surveyed were posed an "open-ended" question at the beginning of the interview asking them to name the most important issues facing Canada today. This probing yielded the following responses, presented here in descending order of total mentions: (Table 2)

- ◆ **National Unity/Quebec's Future/The Constitution** – Almost one-half (45%) of Canadians surveyed in late September cited national unity/Quebec's future as a pressing priority for the country today. This level of total unaided mentions represents a 5-point increase since this summer and, indeed, is the highest level recorded by the Angus Reid Group since right after the Quebec referendum (72% named this issue in an October 1995 post-referendum sounding).

- ◆ **Jobs/Unemployment** – This was highlighted by 40 percent of respondents, down from 49 percent in July and the 1997 peak of 60 percent recorded in May. "Top-of-mind" concern over unemployment is highest among Atlantic Canadians (57%) and lowest in Alberta (26%).
- ◆ **Health Care/Medicare** – One in four (24%) respondents mentioned health care as a top priority for Canada right now, a 9-point increase since July and comparable to the 27 percent recorded in May.
- ◆ **Deficit/Debt** – A similar number (22%) pinpointed the federal deficit/debt as in need of serious attention. This is down 12 points from the 1997 high of 34 percent measured in a post-budget sounding conducted in February. Respondents from B.C. (33%) were the most likely to cite this issue.
- ◆ **The Economy** – Sixteen percent of Canadians polled said the overall state of the economy is an important issue facing Canada today.
- ◆ **Education** – The education system was cited by 13 percent as a pressing issue for Canada.
- ◆ A number of **other issues** were mentioned by smaller numbers of surveyed Canadians, including: other social services (7%); poverty (6%); taxes/taxation (6%); the environment (5%); crime/justice issues (4%); government/politics (3%); immigration/refugees (3%); among other cited by still fewer respondents.

Different Agendas for 1993 and 1997

A comparison of the public agendas at the beginning of the 1993 and 1997

Parliamentary sessions reveals a very different landscape in terms of Canadians' policy priorities. Back in November 1993, when the Chretien Liberal government was beginning its first mandate, the issues of unemployment, the deficit/debt and free trade were generating relatively greater public concern. Four years later, as the Chretien

Liberals are entering their second mandate with the opening of a new Parliament, Canadians are attaching much more "top-of-mind" priority to national unity, as well as to the issues of health care and education. (Table 1)

Priorities for This Parliament

This National Angus Reid Poll, conducted in the very early days of the opening of the new Parliament, asked Canadians what they think should be the major priorities for this session of Parliament. As would be expected, these priorities reflect the public's broad list of policy concerns. Unemployment/jobs received the highest "top-of-mind" mentions in this context (43%), followed by national unity/Quebec's future (32%). Other priorities named included: health care (24%); the federal deficit/debt (24%); the overall state of the economy in general (15%); education (11%); and taxes/tax cuts (10%).

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Table 1

CANADIANS VIEWS ON PRESTON MANNING MOVING INTO STORNOWAY										
	REGION							AGE		
	Canada	BC	Alberta	Man/Sask	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	18-34	35-54	55+
(Weighted Bases)	1503	196	135	105	567	377	122	507	578	409
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
It is not right	45	38	35	50	39	61	48	55	46	32
It is right	49	55	60	46	55	35	47	40	48	64
(Unsure)	6	8	5	3	6	5	5	6	6	4

“As you may have heard, Reform Party leader Preston Manning, who was elected as the new leader of the Official Opposition in the June election, decided to move into “Stornoway” – the official residence provided for the leader of the Official Opposition. Some people say that it’s not right for Preston Manning to move into Stornoway because, before the election, he criticized it as a waste of taxpayers’ money. Other people say Preston Manning is right to move into Stornoway because that’s what the residence is there for and it would just be sitting vacant otherwise.”