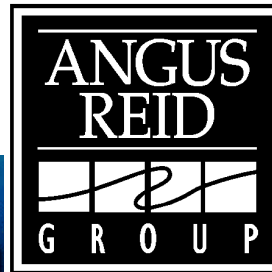

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HEATING UP ACROSS NOVA SCOTIA**

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JOHN HAMM, PC LEADER, RECEIVES POSITIVE REVIEWS FOR HIS
PERFORMANCE AT THE LEADERS' DEBATE**



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This First Edition, The CBC News/Angus Reid Poll was conducted by telephone between March 6th and 8th 1998 among a representative cross-section of 800 Nova Scotia adults.

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

With a province-wide sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within +/-3.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Nova Scotian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

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Although Liberals in the lead (41%), a regional race is heating up across the province

The governing Liberals are holding onto the lead across the province, garnering 41% of support among decided voters, in what is shaping up to be a heated regional race in Nova Scotia. Provincially, the New Democratic Party garners the second highest support at 32% and the Progressive Conservatives are in third place with 25% of the vote.

Looking at seat-rich Metro Halifax (16 seats), the Liberals and New Democrats are in a dead heat (38% versus 35% respectively). In third place, the Progressive Conservative Party garners 25% of Halifax voters' support.

In Cape Breton, where 10 seats are being contested, the Liberals hold a substantial lead over the other parties accounting for 59% of the vote. The New Democrats place second in the region (33%) and the Progressive Conservatives lag behind at 8%.

There is a three-way race in the rest of the province where the remaining 25 seats will be determined. Specifically, the Liberals lead with 38% and the NDP and the Progressive Conservative Party are close behind at 30% each.

Liberal leader Russell McClellan top pick for Premier

Respondents were asked to forget for a minute about the parties and what they stand for, and to forget which party they might be supporting, and to indicate which party leader they think would make the best premier of Nova Scotia. At the top of the list, Russell McClellan (Liberal) was named by 35% of respondents, followed by Robert Chisholm (NDP; 27%) and John Hamm (PC; 26%).

Similar to Nova Scotians' voting intentions, an interesting regional scenario emerges wherein Liberal leader Russell McClellan and NDP leader Robert Chisholm share the top spot among Halifax voters (30% each) and Progressive Conservative leader John Hamm follows behind at 23%. In Cape Breton, Liberal leader Russell McClellan out-ranks the others as he garners the support of 53% of the vote versus NDP leader Robert Chisholm who holds onto 22% and Progressive Conservative leader John Hamm who accounts for 14%. Estimations of who would make the best Premier are tightest in the rest of the province where Liberal leader Russell McClellan and Progressive Conservative leader John Hamm are in a dead heat (33% and 32% respectively) and NDP leader Robert Chisholm follows at 25%.

While majority approve of all leaders' performances, Robert Chisholm, NDP leader, has the highest approval rating (64%)

Nova Scotians have high estimations of all three Party Leaders. Specifically, garnering the most support, 64% of Nova Scotians approve of Robert Chisholm's performance as Leader of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (64%), 58% indicate approval of John Hamm's performance as Leader of the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservative Party and 55% approve of Russell McClellan's performance as Premier of Nova Scotia and Leader of the Liberal Party.

NDP leader Robert Chisholm's support is quite consistent across the province but it peaks in Halifax where he receives a 66% approval rating. Liberal leader Russell McClellan's support is highest in Cape Breton (68%) and lowest in Halifax and the rest of the province (52% and 53% respectively). Progressive Conservative leader John Hamm's support peaks outside of Cape Breton and Halifax (63%) and is lowest in Cape Breton (49%).

***John Hamm, PC Leader, receives positive reviews for his performance
at the leaders' debate***

Forty-three percent of Nova Scotians watched all or part of the televised leaders' debate on Thursday March 5th. Among those who viewed the debates, a majority (54%) indicates that PC Leader, John Hamm triumphed. Twenty-three percent believe that NDP Leader, Robert Chisholm won the debates and 11% pick Liberal Leader, Russell McClellan as the victor.

Campaign Momentum

Thinking over the last few weeks, two thirds (33%) of Nova Scotians indicate that their opinion John Hamm and the Progressive Conservative Party has improved (an additional 33% indicate that it has "remained the same" and 9% say it has "gotten worse"). The Conservative Party has enjoyed the most gains outside of Halifax and Cape Breton where 36% indicate an improved opinion.

Twenty-eight percent indicate an improved opinion of Robert Chisholm and the NDP. An additional 63% indicate that their opinion has remained the same and 6% say "it has gotten worse". Robert Chisholm and the NDP have improved their standings across the province at a relatively consistent rate. Specifically, 28% of Halifax residents, 30% of Cape Breton residents and 27% throughout the rest of the province indicate an improved opinion.

One-third (35%) of Nova Scotians indicate that their opinion of Russell McClellan and the Liberals has "gotten worse" over the last few weeks. An additional 9% indicate an improved opinion. Russell McClellan and the Liberal Party's largest gains are in Cape Breton where 22% have an improved opinion of the Leader and the Party.

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