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But Layton and NDP Lead in Early Voter Momentum

Public Release Date: Wednesday, September 3, 2008, 6:00 AM EST

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Toronto, ON –-Prime Minister Stephen Harper is chosen by half [50%] of Canadians as the major federal party leader who would "make the best Prime Minister of Canada" compared to his opponents—31% choose NDP leader Jack Layton while 20% choose Liberal leader Stephane Dion.

Further, the incumbent Prime Minister also bests his opponents nationally and in Québec as the leader rated the highest in terms of "leadership qualities and skills".

But in terms of the overall impressions formed over the last couple of months that the individual leaders and their party's have left in the minds of voters, it's NDP leader Jack Layton who comes out on top.

The Party leader who would make the best Prime Minister...

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is chosen by a wide margin of Canadian voters as the party leader who "would make the best Prime Minister of Canada":

- **Stephen Harper 50%**

- Jack Layton 31 %

- Stephane Dion 20 %

Mr. Harper leads in every region of the country -- either by majority or plurality -- as the federal leader who would make the best Prime Minister of Canada, with the exception of Atlantic Canada where he places second.

Stephen Harper: Alberta (74%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (63%), British Columbia (52%), Ontario (46%), Québec (46%) and Atlantic Canada (39%)

Jack Layton: Atlantic Canada (43%), Québec (36%), British Columbia (32%), Ontario (29%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (23%) and Alberta (16%)

Stephane Dion: Ontario (25%), Québec (18%), Atlantic Canada (18%), British Columbia (17%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (14%) and Alberta (11%)

Who has the leadership qualities and skills...?

Asked to rate the leadership qualities and skills that each of the major federal party leaders possesses, the incumbent Prime Minister also scores above his opponents. Canadian voters were asked to rate these qualities on a scale of great/good/poor/bad. To achieve a relative

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"score", the "poor/bad" ratings were subtracted from the "great/good" ratings. As such, results are:

- **Stephen Harper +33 -- 65% good/great – 32% poor/bad**

Alberta: **+ 54**—75% good/great -- 21% poor/bad

British Columbia: **+36**—66% good/great -- 30% poor/bad

Québec: **+31**—64% good/great -- 33% poor/bad

Saskatchewan/Manitoba: **+25**—52% good/great -- 37% poor/bad

Ontario: **+20**—64% good/great -- 34% poor/bad

Atlantic Canada: **+14**—54% good/great -- 40% poor/bad

- **Jack Layton +26-- 58% good/great – 32% poor/bad**

Québec: **+37**—63% good/great -- 26% poor/bad

Atlantic Canada: **+35**—60% good/great -- 25% poor/bad

Saskatchewan/Manitoba: **+31**—63% good/great -- 32% poor/bad

Ontario: **+27**—60% good/great -- 33% poor/bad

British Columbia: **+11**—49% good/great -- 38% poor/bad

Alberta: **+ 9**—46% good/great -- 37% poor/bad

- o **Stephane Dion -12-- 39% good/great – 55% poor/bad**

Ontario: **-9**—44% good/great -- 53% poor/bad

Alberta: **-16**—35% good/great -- 51% poor/bad

Atlantic Canada: **-17**—36% good/great -- 53% poor/bad

Québec: **-18**—39% good/great -- 57% poor/bad

British Columbia: **-20**—35% good/great -- 55% poor/bad

Saskatchewan/Manitoba: **-34**—29% good/great -- 63% poor/bad

In Quebec…

- o **Jack Layton**: **+37**—63% good/great -- 26% poor/bad

- o Stephen Harper: **+31**—64% good/great -- 33% poor/bad

- o Gilles Duceppe: **+25**—61% good/great -- 36% poor/bad

- o Stephane Dion: **-18**—39% good/great -- 57% poor/bad

Impressions = Voter Momentum…

Impressions of the leaders and their parties at this early stage in an impending campaign are important because they can suggest a form of voter momentum. Voters are asked to determine whether their impression of a specific leader and party have improved, worsened or not changed over the last couple of months. A "momentum score" is determined by subtracting the "worsened" impressions from the "improved" impressions while leaving the "not changed" impressions as a neutral.

- o **Jack Layton and the NDP**: **+7**—18% improved, 11% worsened, 66% not changed: Québec +15, Alberta +9, British Columbia +8, Ontario +5, Saskatchewan/Manitoba +2, Atlantic Canada -5

- o **Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party**: **-11**—17% improved, 28% worsened, 53% not changed: Alberta +7, British Columbia -3, Ontario -10, Saskatchewan/Manitoba -11, Québec -21, Atlantic Canada -26

- o **Stephane Dion and the Liberal Party**: **-16**—14% improved, 30% worsened, 53% not changed: British Columbia -13, Québec -15, Ontario -17, Saskatchewan/Manitoba -19, , Atlantic Canada -29, Alberta -22

In Quebec…

o **Jack Layton**: **+15**—24% improved, 9% worsened, 63% not changed

o Gilles Duceppe: **-6**—15% improved, 21% worsened, 60% not changed

o Stephen Harper: **-21**—13% improved, 34% worsened, 50% not changed

o Stephane Dion: **-15**—17% improved, 32% worsened, 47% not changed

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of CanWest News Service and Global Television. For this survey, an online survey of 1005 Canadian adults was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel August 26 to August 28, 2008. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

For more information on this news release, please contact:
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