



Ipsos Reid

Ontario Politics





The Voter Landscape...

- It is an election for the Hudak PC's to Lose...
- There's no "ballot question" yet...just table setting...
- Today: Don't get into the granularity of the latest numbers—look instead at the motion and wider dimension...
- The latest polls show the numbers on vote and some key attributes starting to tighten up between the Grits and Tories...the NDP is still a wild card...
- Grits are closer but still trailing and have already used all advantages of government—after Labour Day they all campaign with the same resources...

Some Key Questions:

- Every election is about change or continuity: What is it about this time?
- McGuinty going for three majorities: is this a bridge too far?
- Role of Rob Ford in the election - big changes are coming during September and coincide with voting day. What will the impact be?
- Will Hudak's fear of "pulling a Tory" keep him too low key? Hudak will have to fight for this job: won't just fall into his lap, so what's *his* ballot question?



Observations...

- The campaign has not “officially” started but the air war is on...The PC’s have framed McGuinty as Tax Man and the latest (bizarre) ad’s put him in the pocket of Unions...another ad takes him on over the Windsor Bridge “to nowhere”...The Grits have ads by proxy via a “Family Coalition” targeting Hudak as a Mike Harris clone and the “green power” group supporting the government’s energy programs...the NDP have a limited buy supporting “working families”...
- Hudak’s talking point mantra is starting to provoke questions in the media: is this it? Is this all there is? Is there any more depth here? By “boxing” Healthcare and Education in the platform it has shielded him from attacks—but has left the field open to the other parties to skate freely if they choose to do so...
- The Liberals hope to tie the environment issue up as a job creator/economic plank and continue to outmaneuver the NDP and Greens (irrelevant in this election)...the Liberal platform to come in September will lay out the “orchestra” versus the single notes...



Final Observations...

- The NDP positioning has moved them more to the centre (like Layton's NDP)—union “absent”, more “working family” mantra like Lib's and especially PC's with “tax breaks” ...so, will the NDP be a “safe” middle choice or get a “mushy” middle pass...
- For **the Liberals here's the challenge**: Right now, 51% (up 19 points in one year) think the province is on the right track but only 34% believe the Liberals deserve to be re-elected (up 4 points in one year)...and the Premier has always trailed his party...so, if it's time for a change, what's the choice and the alternative?
- For **the PC's Here's the challenge**: Has he got the right stuff to run the province—a plan of broad substance—or a hidden agenda, and the Tory “Trifecta”...?
- For **the NDP here's the challenge**: Who are you? What makes you different and better than the Liberals—or even the Tories for that matter...?
- For the **Green's here's the challenge**: Relevancy...

Finally...You don't need a majority to get a majority ...you need roughly 42%...Which means 58% of people can think badly of you or you're on the wrong track overall or on an issue and you can still win handily...



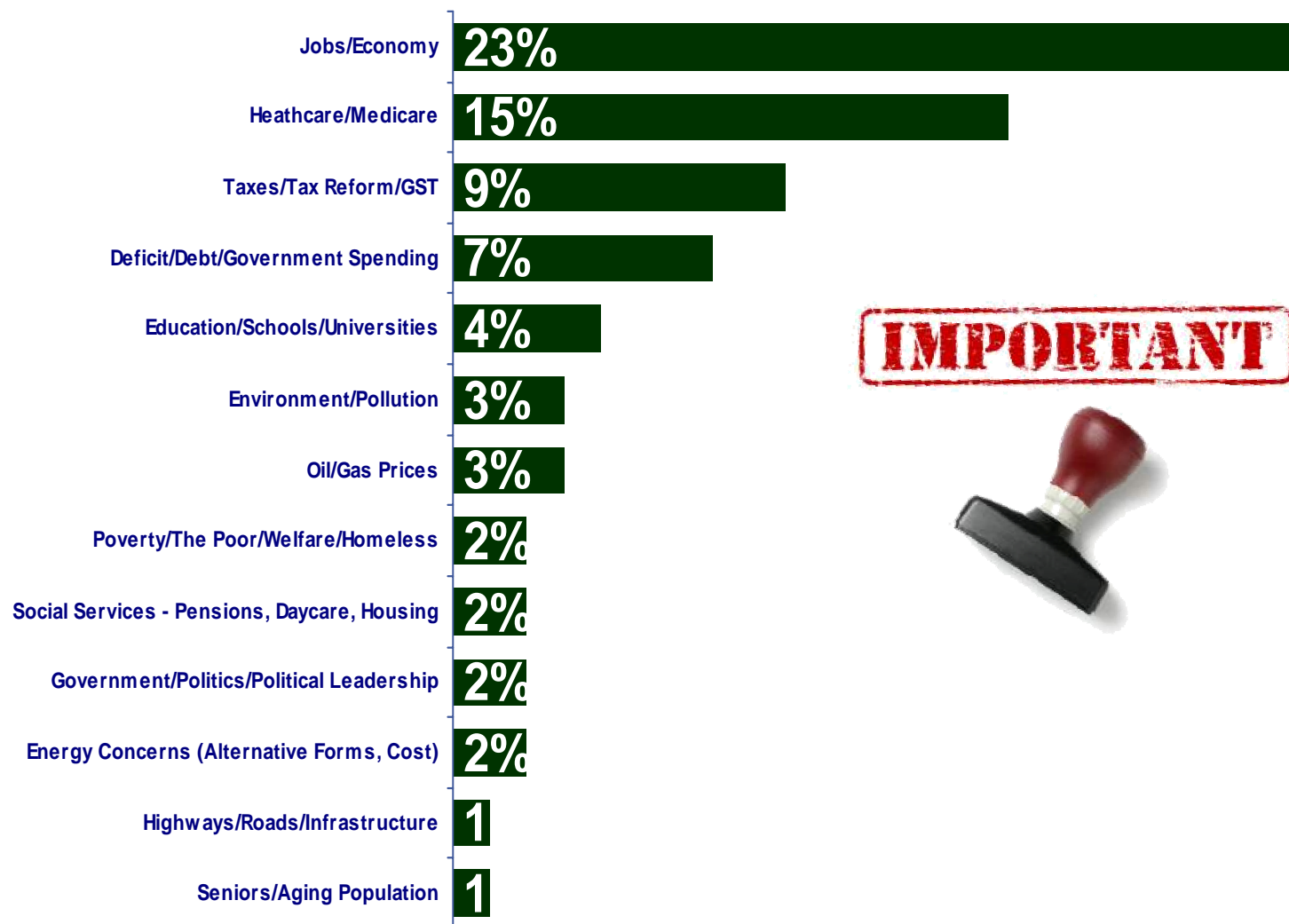
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By The Numbers



Nobody's Unpredictable

Most Important Issues For Ontario Voters...

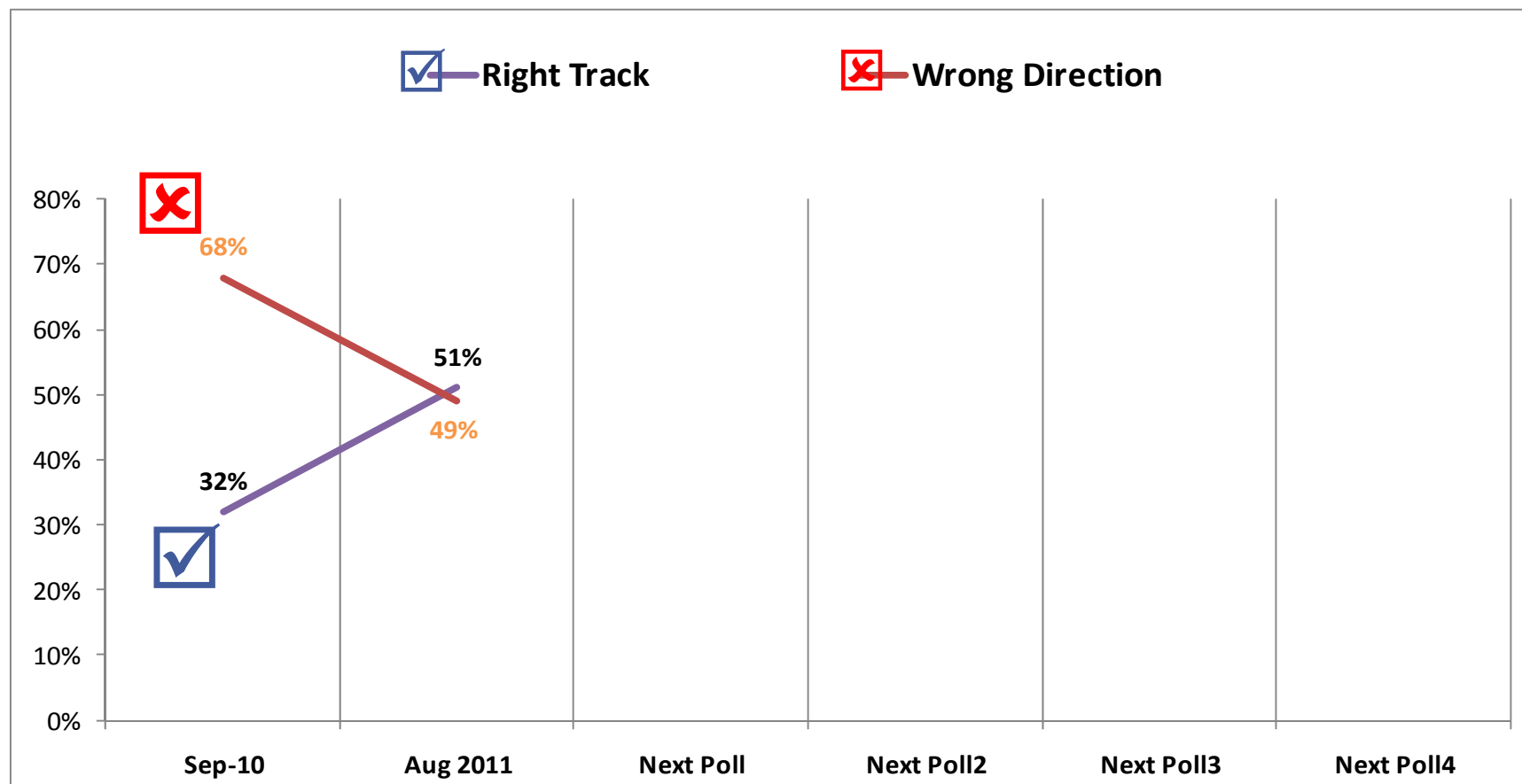


Please indicate the most important issue that you believe your PROVINCIALY elected MPP representative should be dealing with on your behalf right now...

Base: All respondents (n=899)

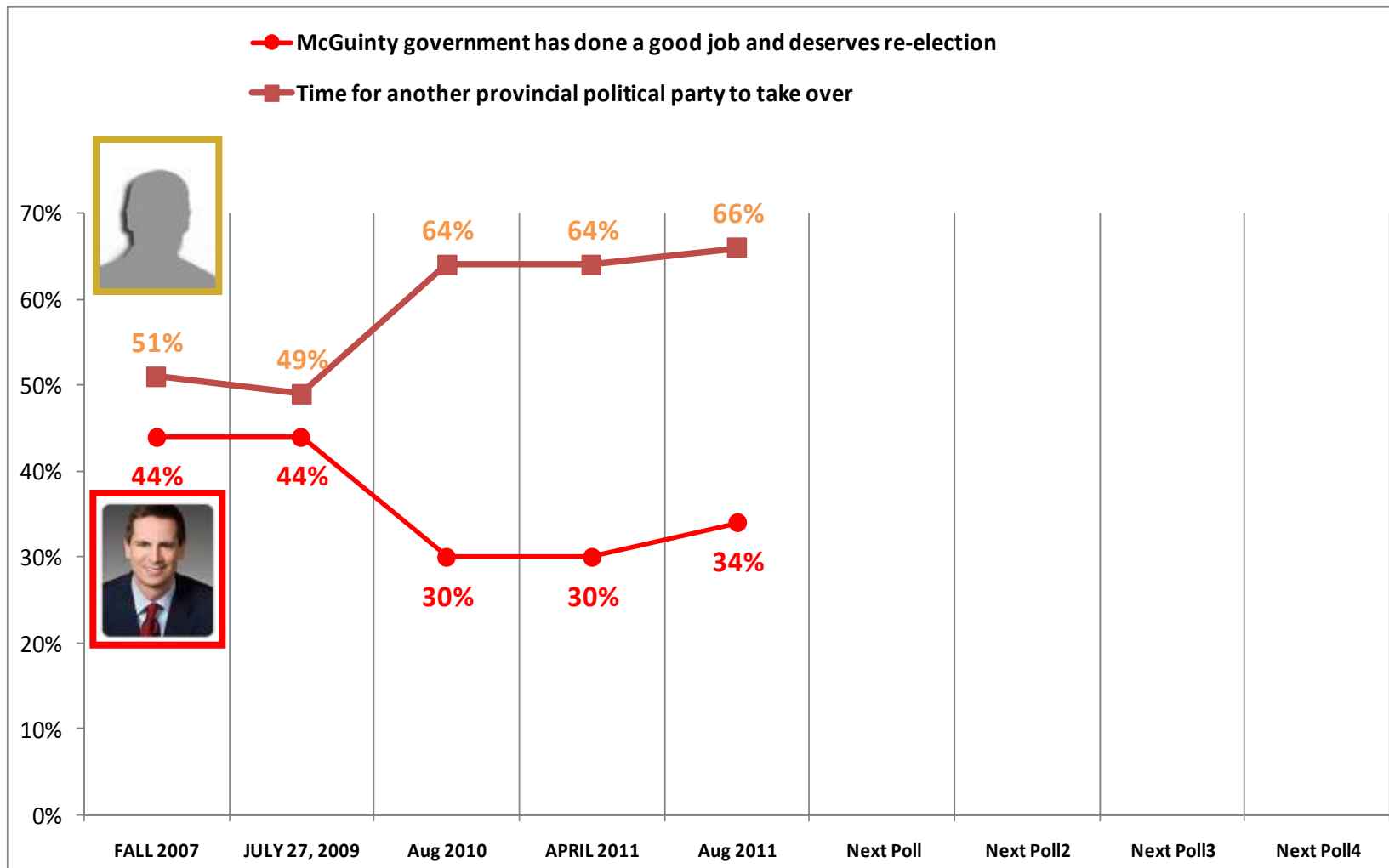


Ontario: 51% Say Province Headed on the Right Track, Up 19 Points in a Year...



Overall, would you say that Ontario is headed on the right track these days or headed in the wrong direction?
Base: All respondents (n=899)

But 2/3 Say it's Time Another Provincial Political Party Takes Over/Runs Province...



Some people say that the Liberal Government under Premier Dalton McGuinty has done a good job and deserves to be re-elected during the provincial election this October. Other people say that it is time for another provincial political party to take over and run the province. Which statement is closest to your point of view?

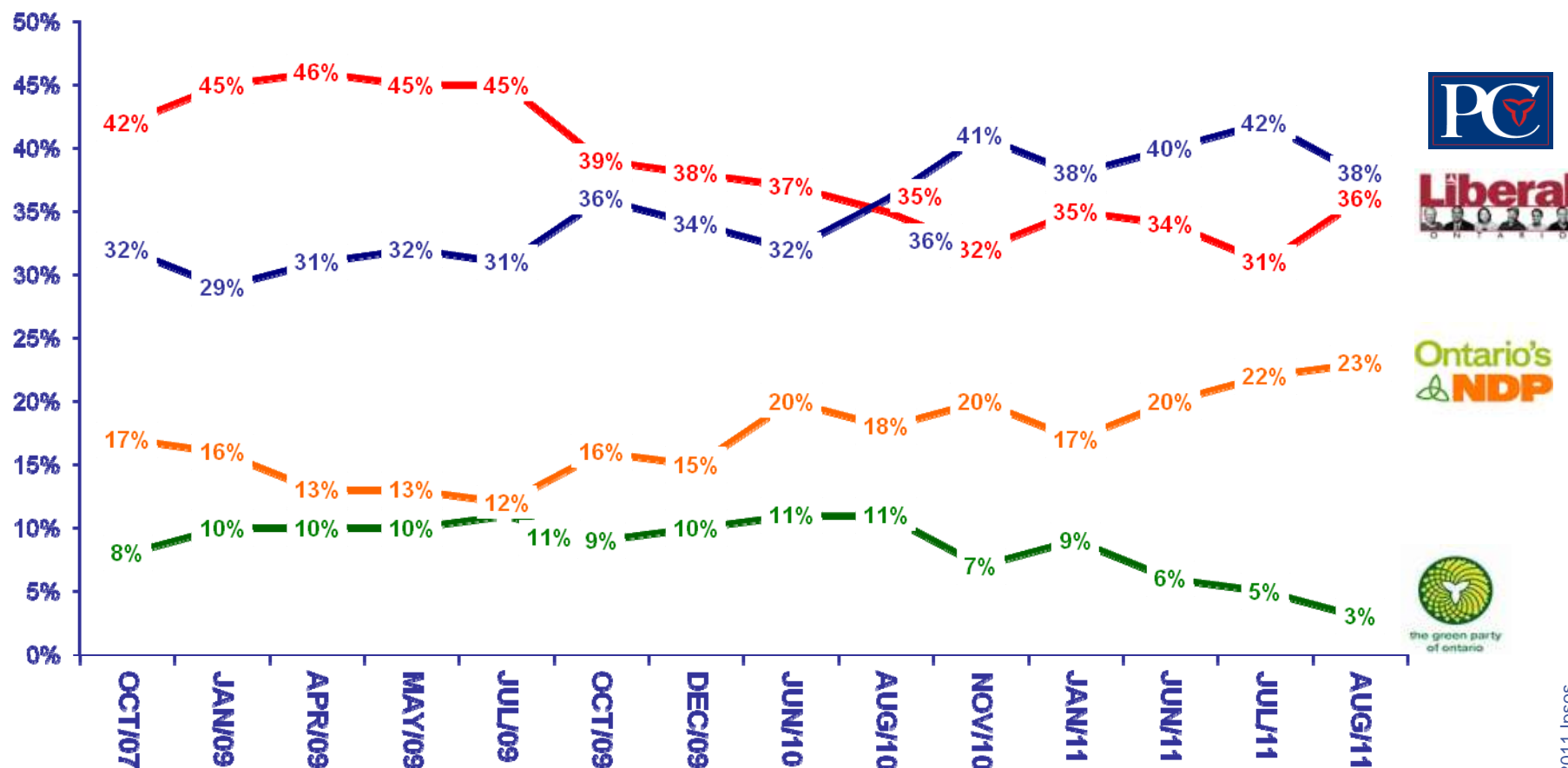
Base: All respondents (n=899)

Provincial Vote Support: Tightening...

(Decided Voters – Leaners Included)

Party Support in Ontario (TRACKING 2007-2011)

August , 2011

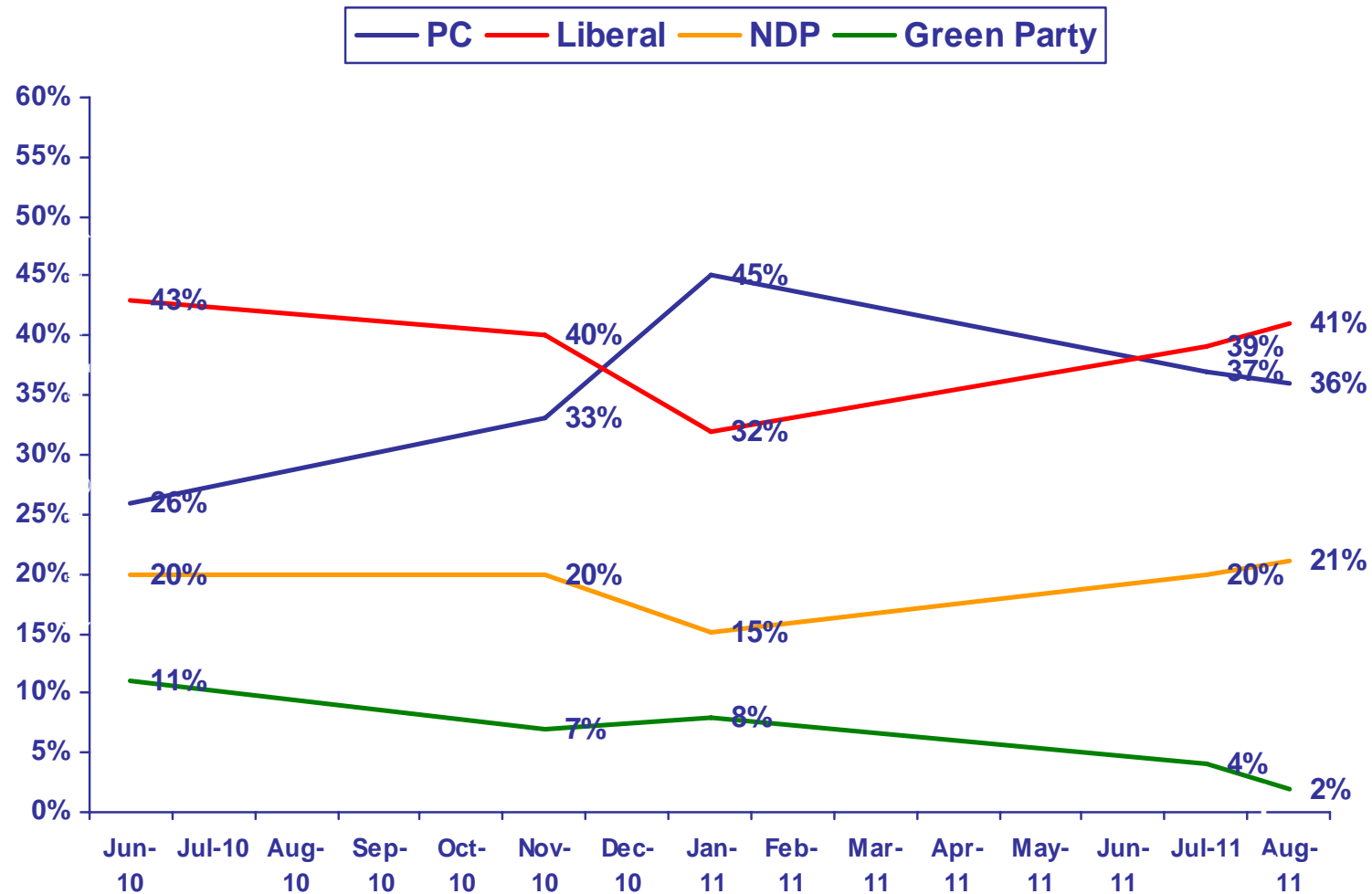


Now, I would like you to focus on the Ontario provincial government, not the federal government. As you may know, a provincial election is scheduled for October 6, 2011. If the PROVINCIAL election were to be held tomorrow, which of the following parties' candidates would you, yourself, be most likely to support:

Base: All respondents (n=899)



Mainly Because of This in the GTA:



Thinking of how you feel right now, if a PROVINCIAL election were held tomorrow, which of the following parties' candidates would you, yourself, be most likely to support?



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Assessing The Leaders

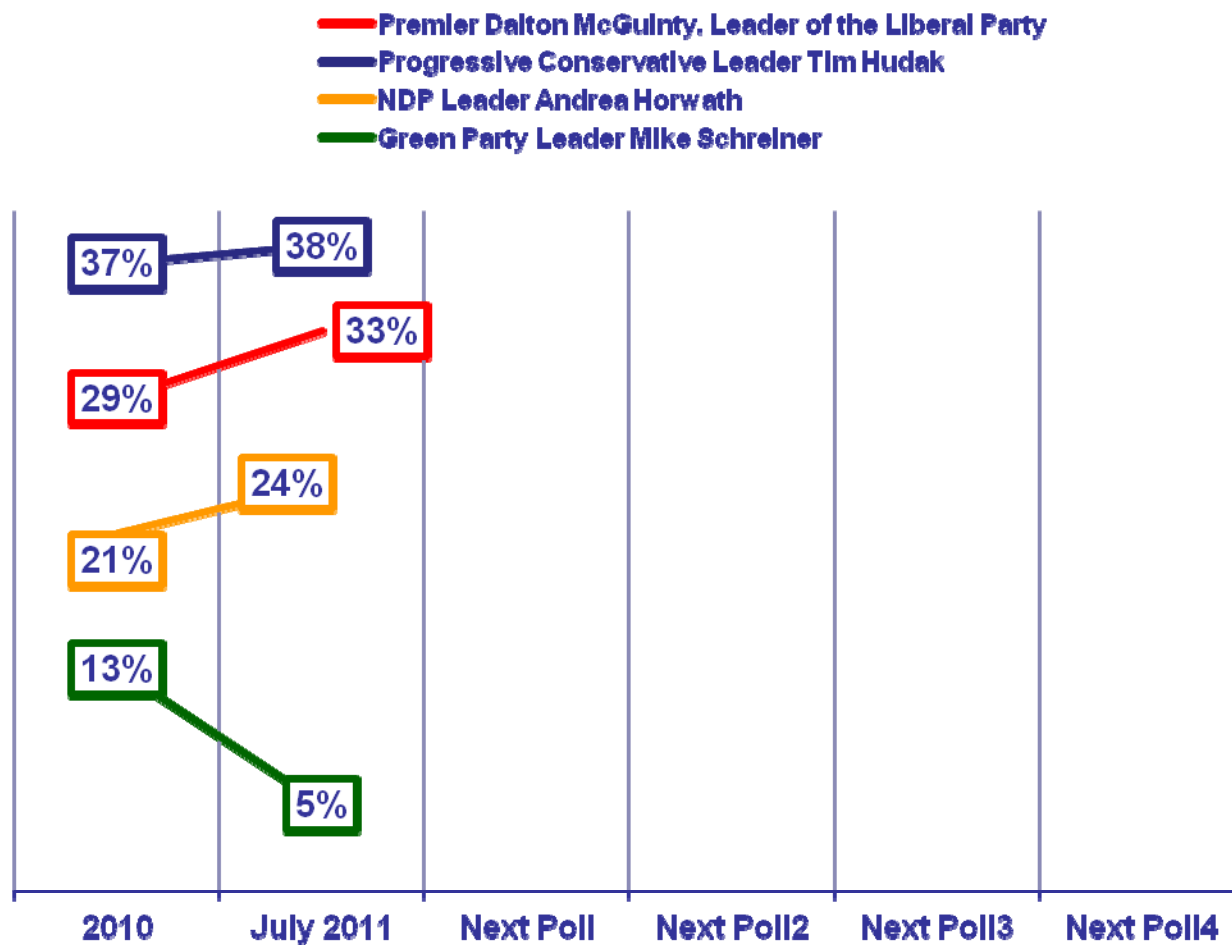


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Who Would *Make the Best Premier of Ontario?* McGuinty Closing the Gap...

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*

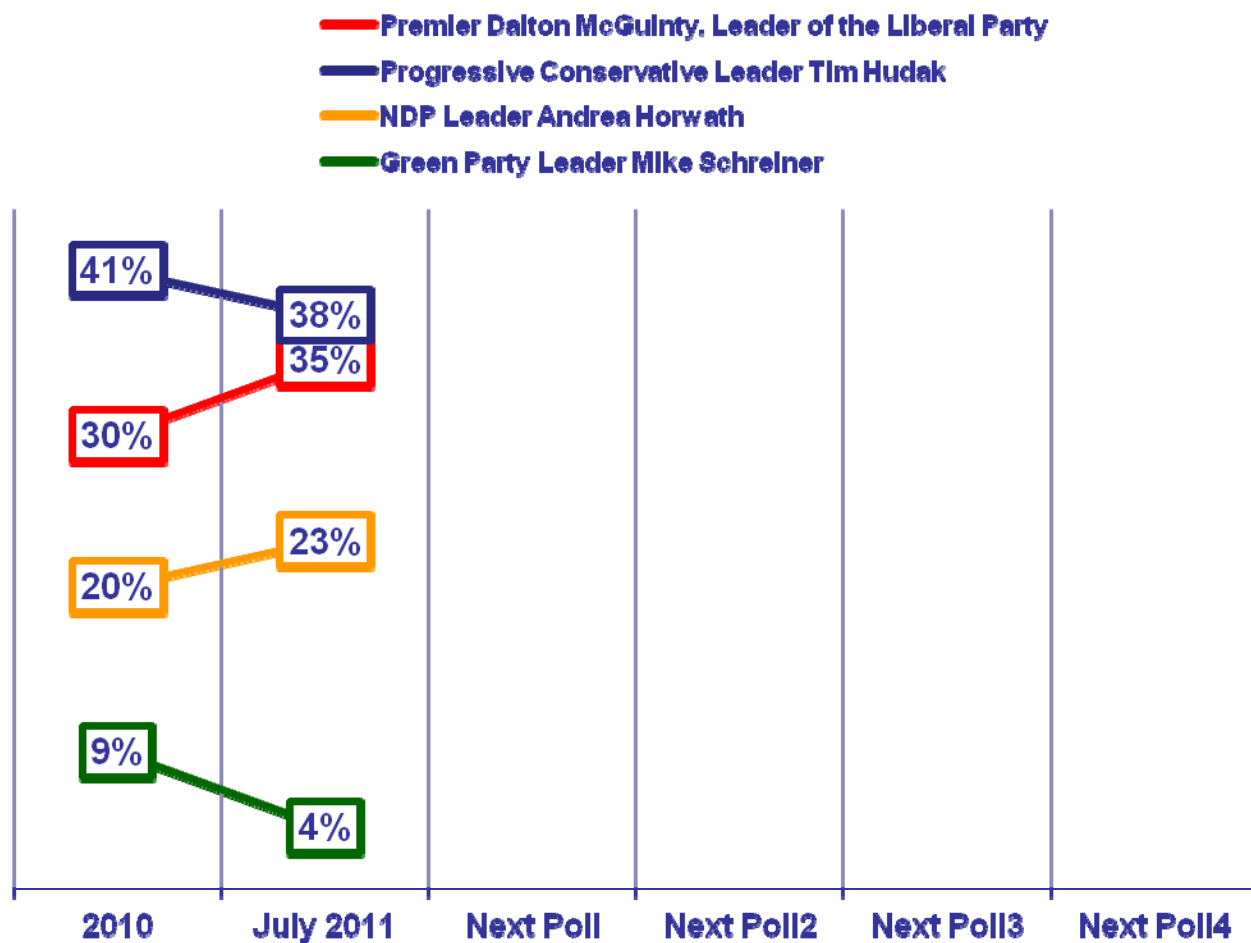




Someone Who Has What It Takes to Lead Ontario: Hudak and McGuinty Narrow the Gap...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*

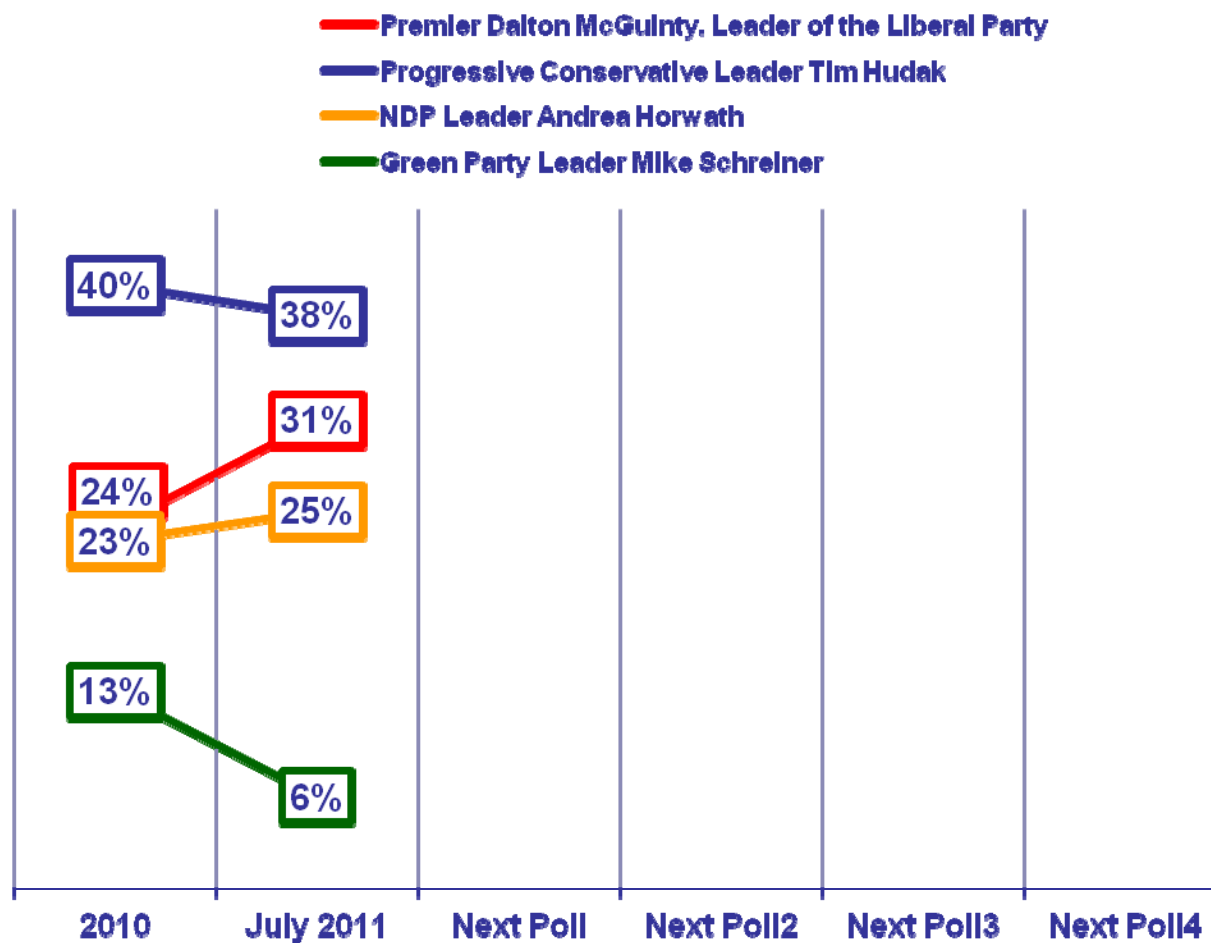




Someone Who Has A Vision Of Ontario You Can Support...Hudak Leads But Narrowing...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*



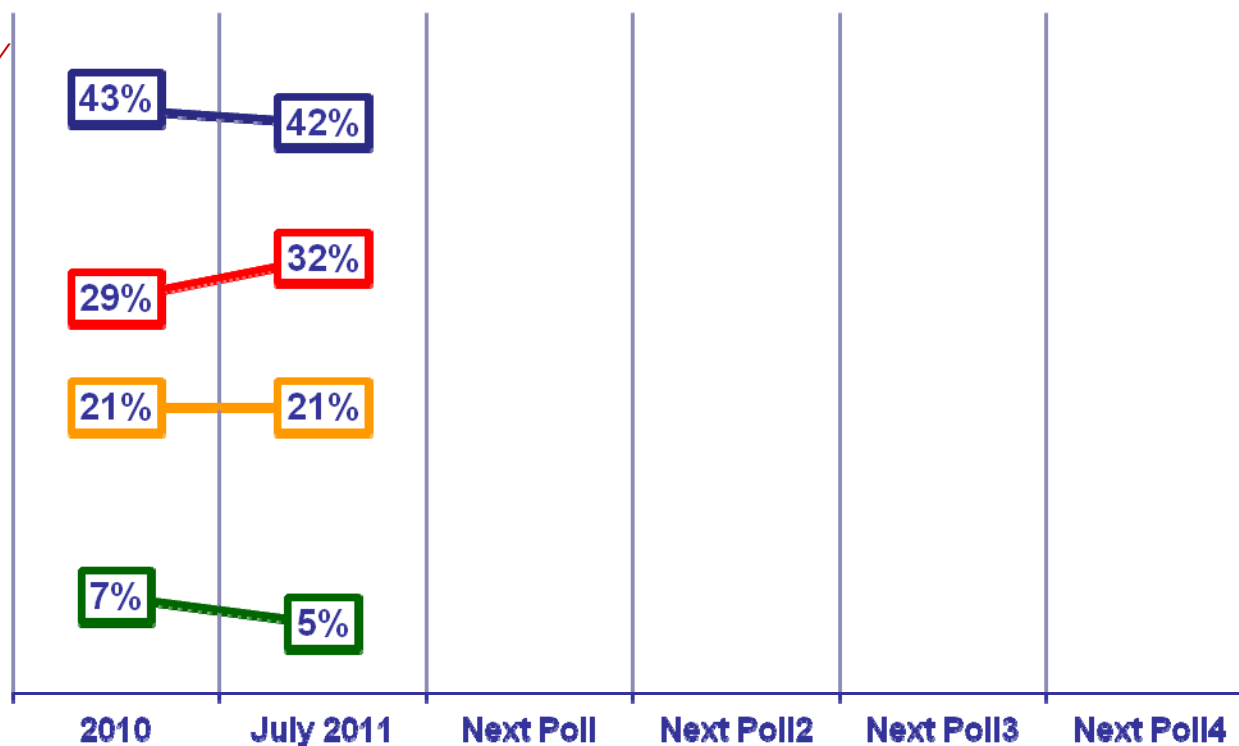


Someone Who Is Best To Manage The Economy: Hudak by 10...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

- Premier Dalton McGuinty, Leader of the Liberal Party
- Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak
- NDP Leader Andrea Horwath
- Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*



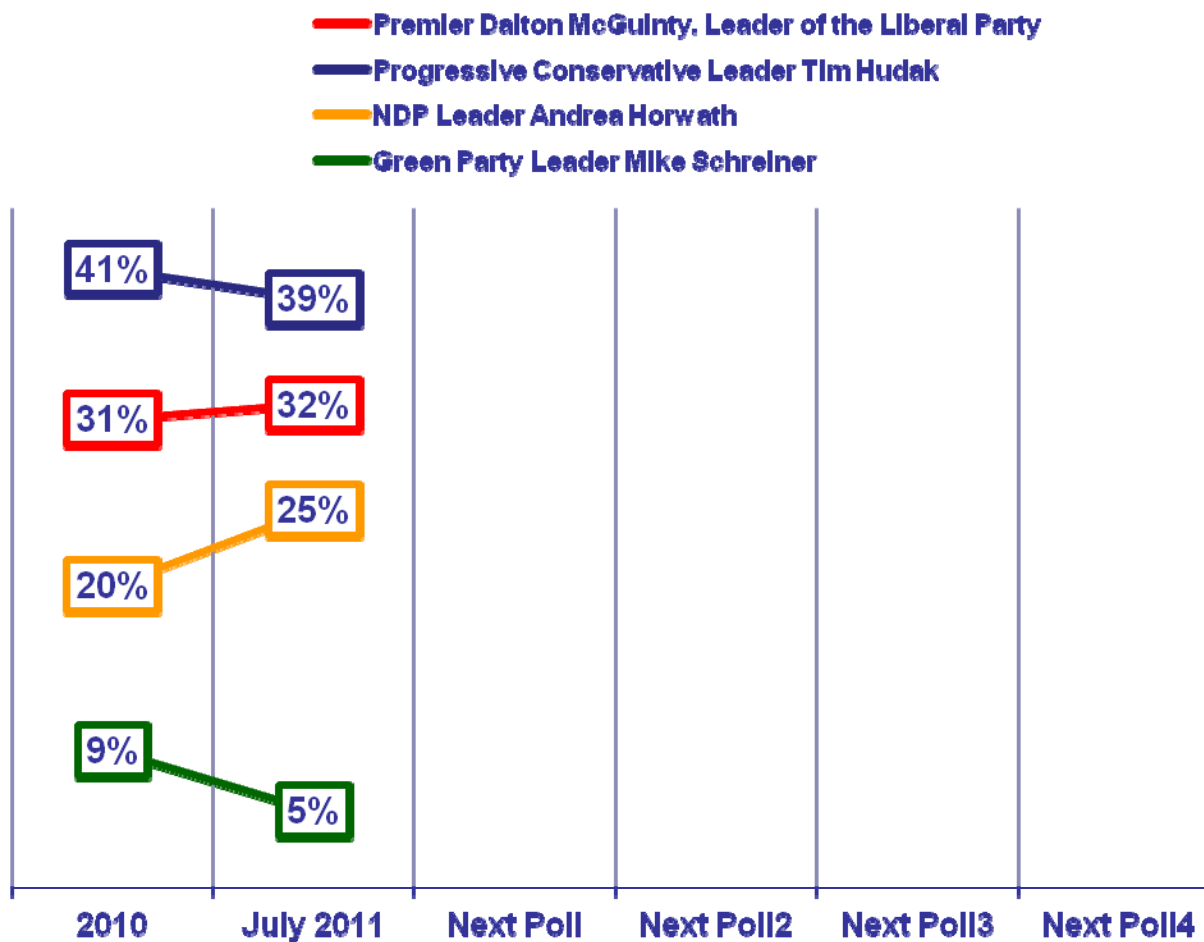
Q4. Please indicate which leader is best described by each trait:
Base: All respondents (n=899)



Someone Who Will Get Things Done: Hudak Leads by 7 Points...NDP has Bounce...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

*Magic Majority Numbers:
41% - 42%*

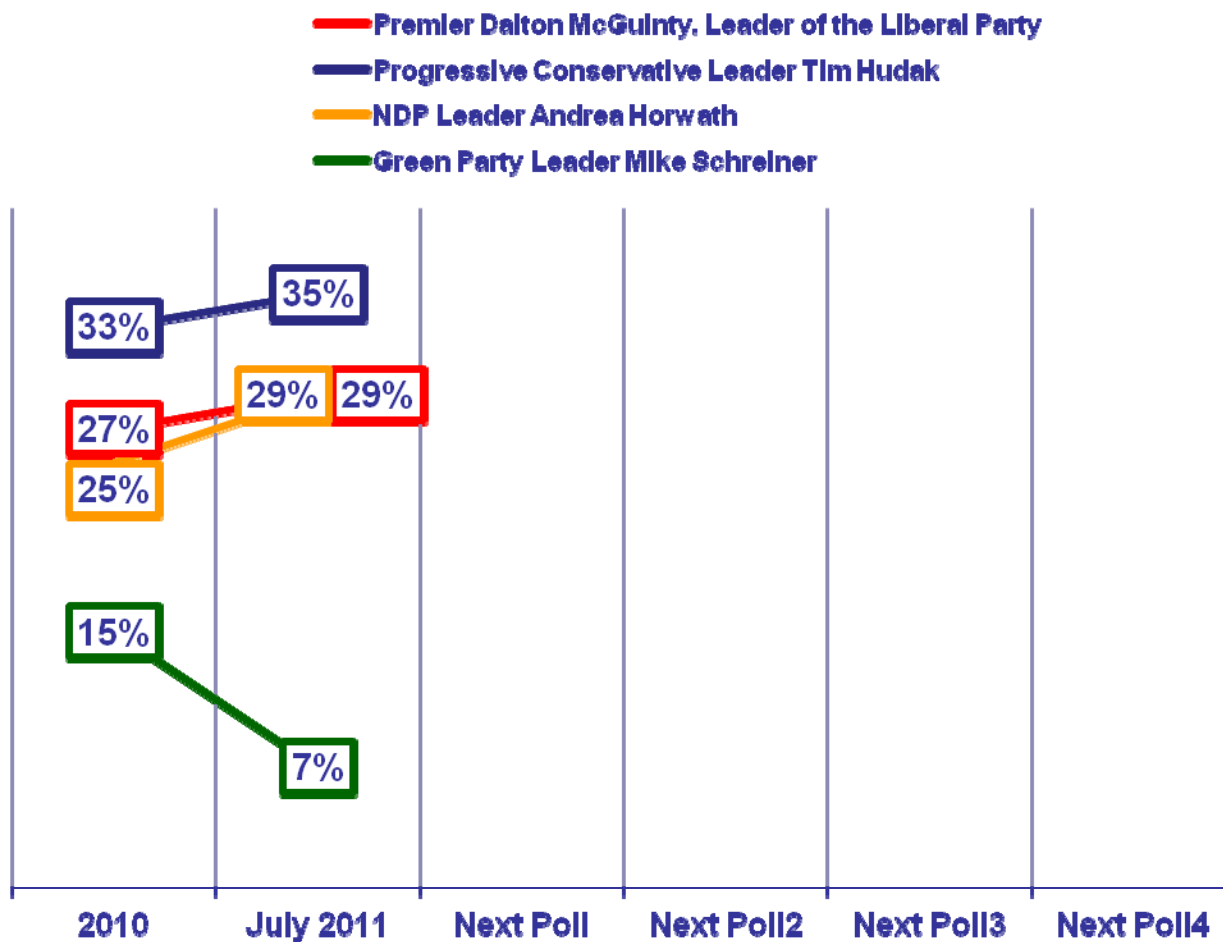




Someone You Can Trust...Green Drops, All Others Move Up in Proportion...Hudak Leads by 6...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

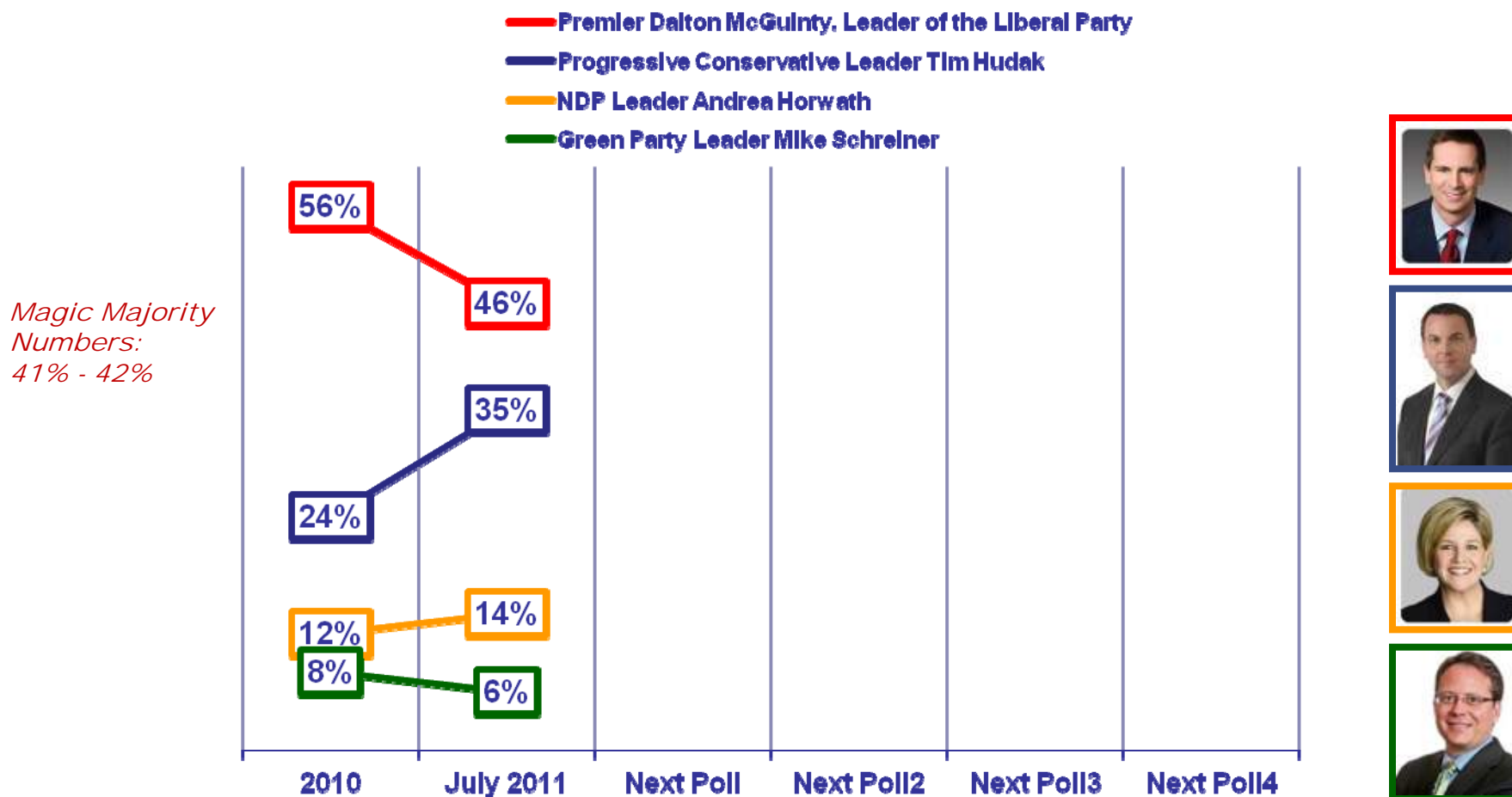
*Magic Majority Numbers:
41% - 42%*





But, *Someone Who Has A Hidden Agenda:* GAP Closing Between Front Runners...

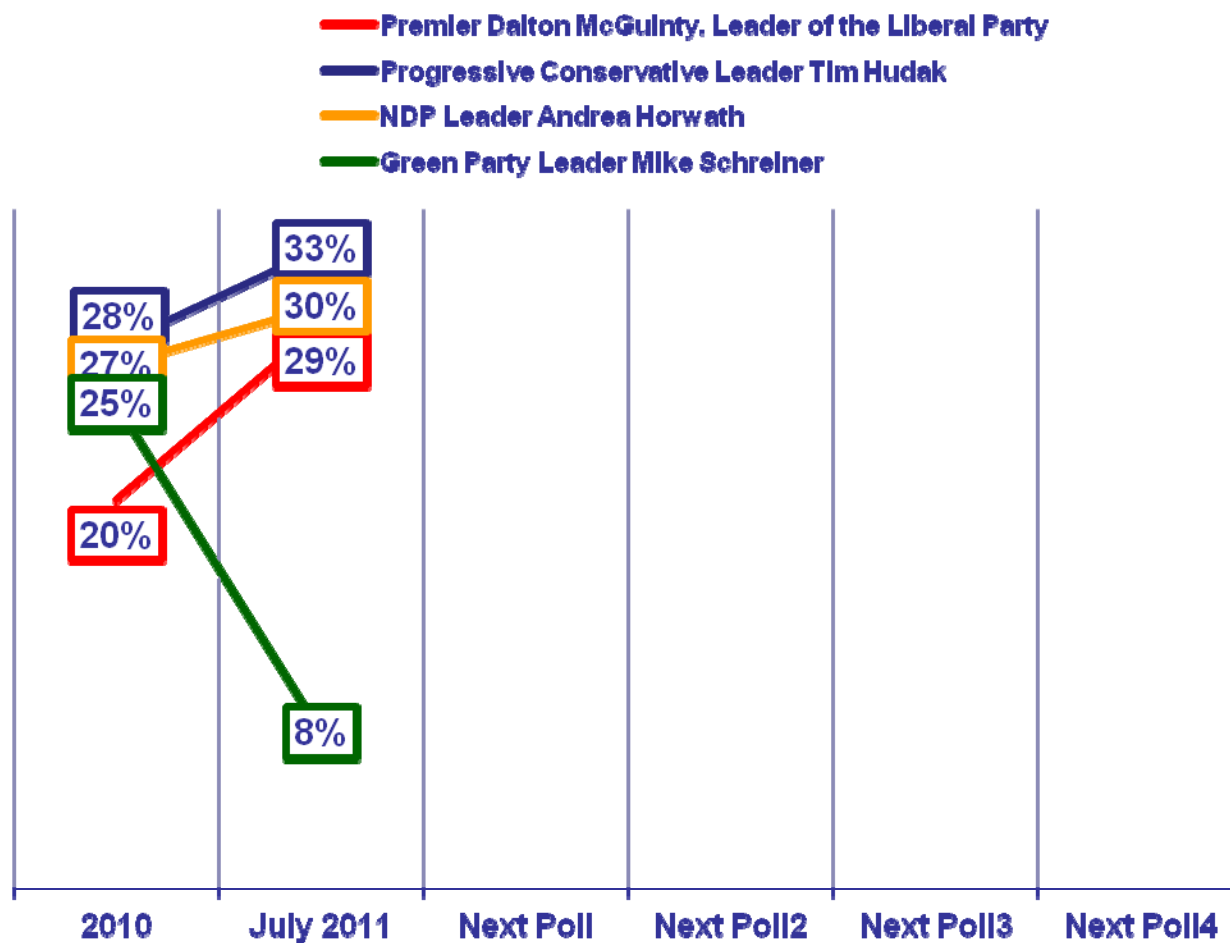
Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:



Someone Who Is Open To The Ideas Of Others: A Virtual Tie...Except for Green...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*

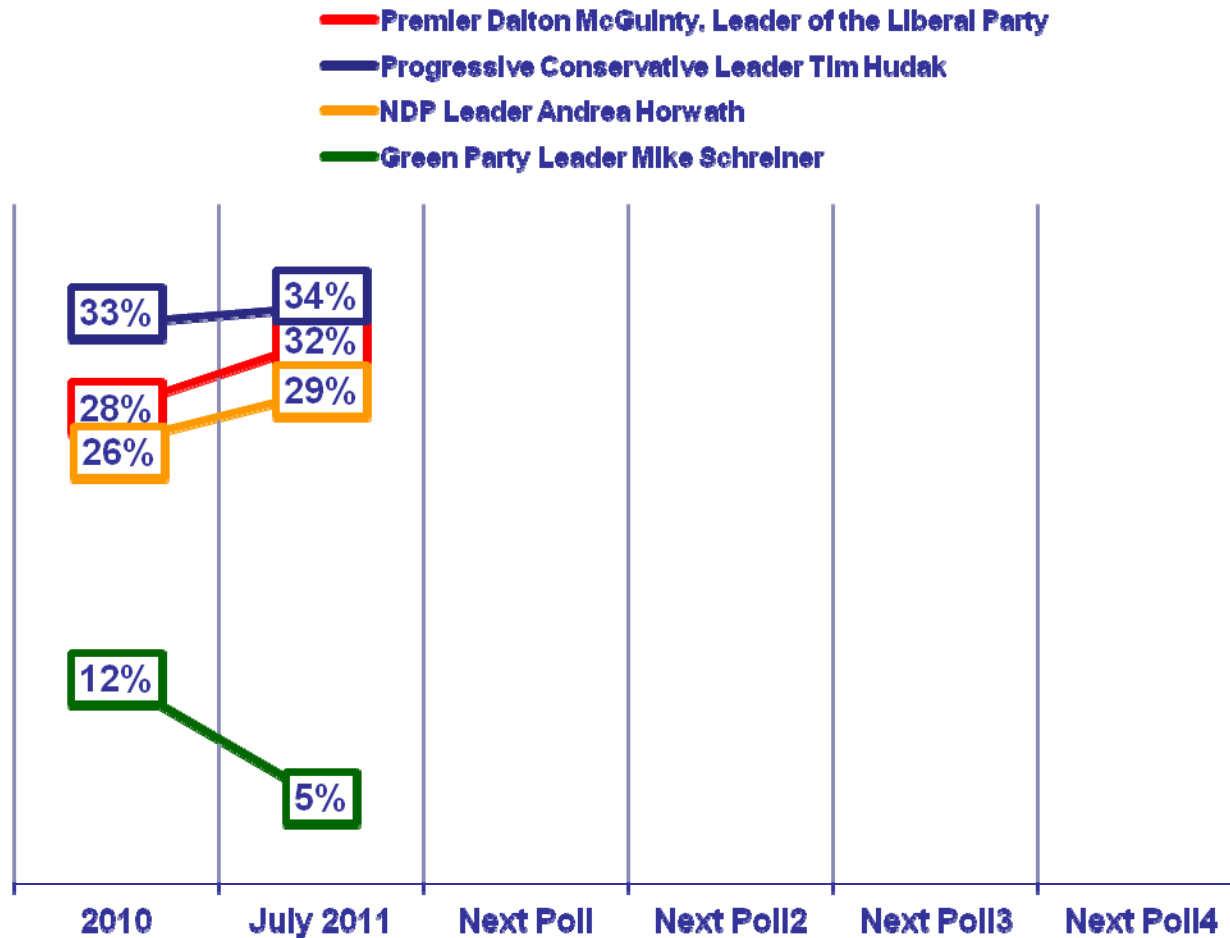




Someone Who Knows When To Compromise For The Greater Good: Ditto...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*



Q4. Please indicate which leader is best described by each trait:
Base: All respondents (n=899)

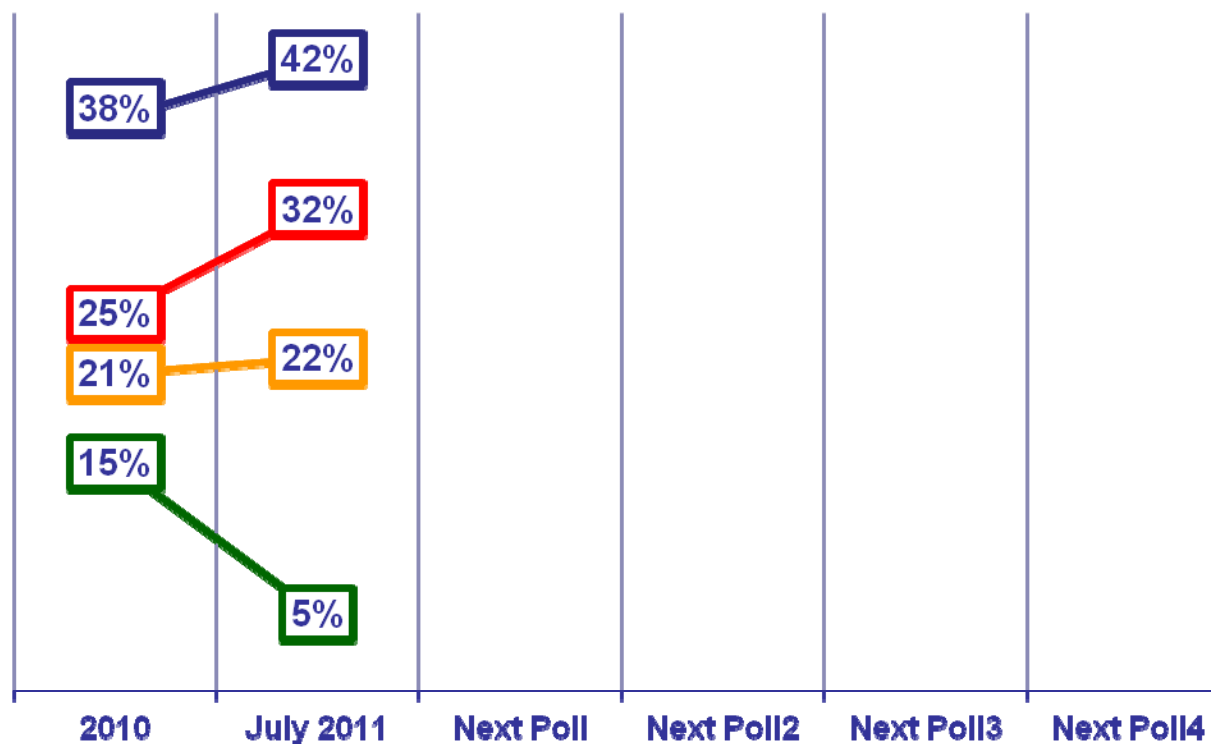


Someone Who Is Best To Manage Taxpayers Dollars: Hudak Leads by 10, Grits Recovering...

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

- Premier Dalton McGuinty, Leader of the Liberal Party
- Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak
- NDP Leader Andrea Horwath
- Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner

*Magic Majority Numbers:
41% - 42%*

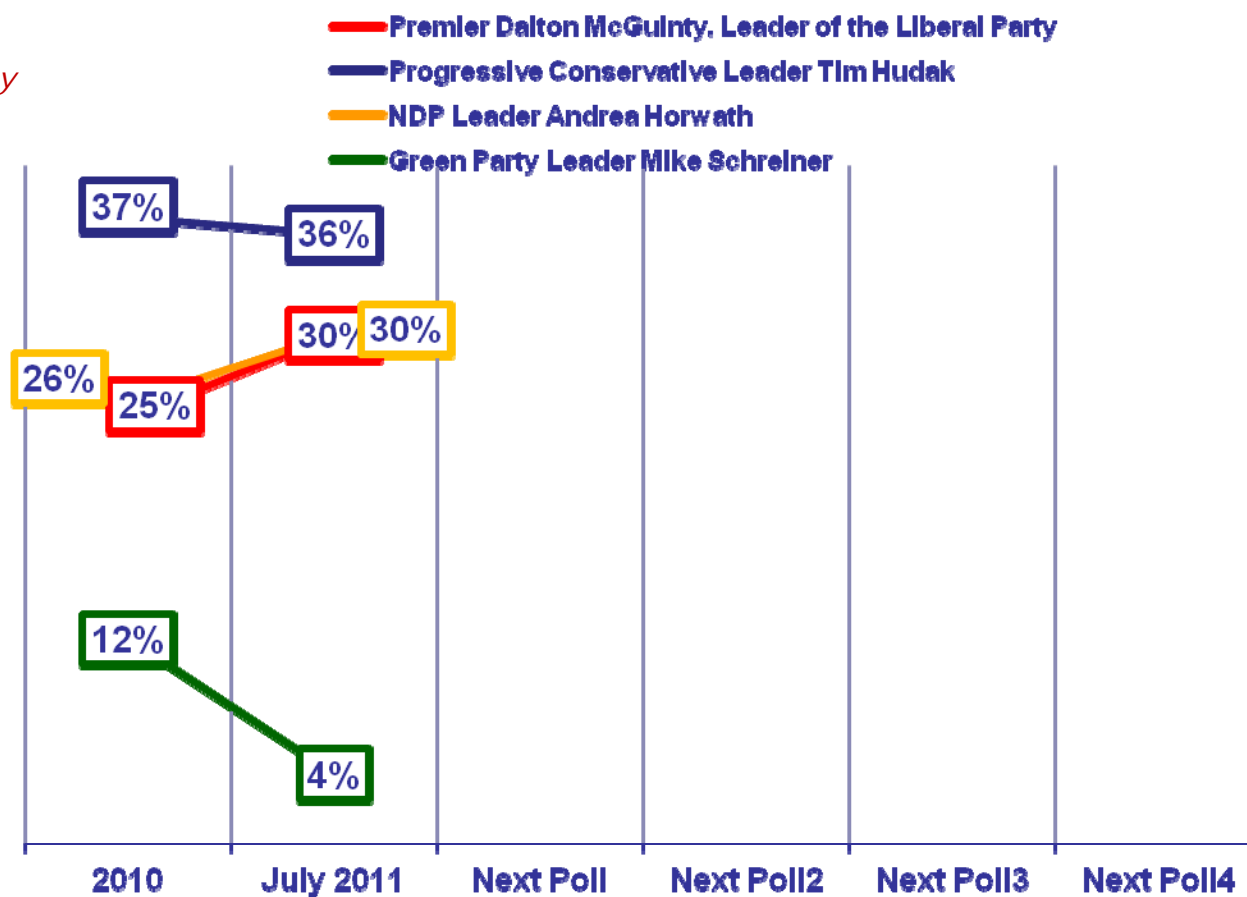




Who Is Best To Manage Future of Provincial Healthcare System: GAP Narrows..

Which Leader is Best Described By This Trait:

*Magic Majority
Numbers:
41% - 42%*





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Conclusions...

Nobody's Unpredictable



The Guns of August...

- Despite the PC's leading in all areas of the Province except GTA and their Leader topping most of the attributes, this is an election outcome no-one should be betting on for some weeks to go...
- The numbers are not pointing to victory yet for anyone—in fact right now it looks like a toss-up for a minority for either the Tories or the Grits with the NDP holding the balance...
- Is GTA the Alamo or the Break out Beachhead?
- The PC leader is starting to be portrayed as “**light and trite**”—his mantra may be good discipline but it is now likely irritating journalists who are going to wonder if he really has the right stuff as a conservative or any depth in policy...this will play to the hidden agenda theme for the Liberals on health care, as a job killer on the green economy and as a member of the Ford – Harper Team...not to mention whose stand on abortion is not clear cut...The PC's have to spice up the grit waste/incompetence file now and have to establish a battlefield for September 7 +...



The Guns of August...

- The Liberals are closing the gap with the PC's and need to use their policy platform launch to position experience with fresh ideas, tying in the “province is headed on the right direction” because of their governance...and they should take healthcare, education and green jobs/economy as the campaign turf that the PC's have boxed: they should say **they embrace whatever Hudak and the NDP throw at them because that's what making good, tough choices are about, not on the job training and hidden agenda's with three Conservative Party leaders...**
- The NDP need to sharpen a difference—any difference—between them and the two others positioning themselves as the “safe” balance of power between the two **others—this is the minority government scenario that should be to move the NDP to the centre, pushing the Liberals more to the left...**
- The Green Party has to figure out their **relevance...political force, policy wonks or protest bucket?**



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