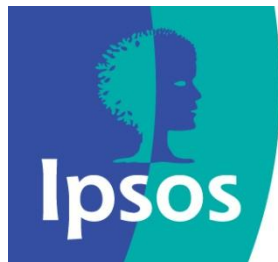


Fast Fallout: Chief Spence and Idle No More Movement Galvanizes Canadians Around Money Management and Accountability

*Majority Says Most of the Problems of Native Peoples are Brought on by
Themselves – 60% nationally, up 25 points from 35% in 1989*

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Majority Says Most of the Problems of Native Peoples are Brought on by Themselves – 60% nationally, up 25 points from 35% in 1989

Toronto, ON – Last week’s protests by First Nations activists appear to have had a hardening effect on Canadian public opinion regarding Aboriginal issues, according to a new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the National Post/Postmedia News and Global Television.

While there’s general support for resolving land claims to provide Aboriginal Peoples with the land and resources needed to become self-sufficient (63%) and for the federal government to act now to raise the quality of life for Aboriginal peoples (63%, unchanged from July 2010), many Canadians also believe that there needs to be better financial accountability when it comes to supporting Canada’s Aboriginal peoples. Majorities believe that:

No additional taxpayer money should go to any Reserve until external auditors can be put in place to ensure financial accountability (81% nationally), with residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (92%) most in agreement with this and Atlantic Canadians (77%) and Quebecers (76%) least.



Canada's Aboriginal peoples receive too much support from Canadian taxpayers. Two thirds (64%) nationally share this view -- unchanged from July 2012. Canadians from the Prairies (83% - Saskatchewan/Manitoba and 74% - Alberta) most believe this while Eastern Canadians (53% - Atlantic Canada, 60% - Ontario, and 62% - Quebec) are least to do so.

Canada's Aboriginal peoples are treated well by the Canadian Government. Two thirds (62%) nationally share this sentiment, down from 66% in July 2012. Western Canadians (74% - Saskatchewan and Manitoba, 69% - British Columbia, and 63% - Alberta) most agree that this is the case, while Eastern Canadians (57% - Atlantic Canada, 58% - Ontario, and 61% - Quebec) least agree.

Most of the problems of native peoples are brought on by themselves (60% nationally, up 25 points from 35% in 1989). Canadians in the Prairies (76% - Saskatchewan/Manitoba and 68% - Alberta) are most likely to believe this, while Quebecers (58%) and British Columbians (58%) are least likely to do so.

Much of the money spent by the federal government for on-reserve services is managed well by the native leaders and communities who receive it (27% nationally) – Quebecers (36%) and British Columbians (34%) most agree with this, while those in the Prairies (8% - Saskatchewan/Manitoba and 16% - Alberta) least agree.

Taken together, these data suggest that last week's protests have done little to build sympathy for First Nations issues, and have instead created a new issue for First Nation leaders to struggle with – financial accountability.



Approval...

Canadians were asked a number of questions to gauge the credibility of the various players involved in last week's events. In terms of overall approval of how the various groups/people have been dealing with First Nations issues over the last few weeks, the survey shows:

The national leaders of Canada's First Nations, including the Assembly of First Nations – 51% nationally approve (61% among Atlantic Canadians and 56% among Quebecers and British Columbians)

Prime Minister Stephen Harper – 46% nationally approve (78% among Conservative voters and 62% among Albertans)

The Idle No More Movement – 38% nationally approve (54% among Atlantic Canadians and 47% among British Columbians)

Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence – 29% nationally approve (highest at 38% among British Columbians)

These data show that the national leadership of Canada's First Nations have distinguished themselves as the representatives for Canada's First Nations in the minds of Canadians, and that Prime Minister Stephen Harper maintains a credible position, especially with his voters. It's important to remember that the Harper Tories won a comfortable majority in 2011 with 40% of the vote, so 46% is a solid position. It's also clear that Attawapiskat Chief Spence is struggling to build public support. At 29% she's well behind both the national First Nations leadership, and the Idle No More Movement.



Who is Being Fair and Reasonable – the Harper Government or Canada's First Nations?

A majority of Canadians (56%) believe that it's "none of the above". Only one in three (27%) feel that the Harper Government is being fair and reasonable on these issues with 17% thinking it's Canada's First Nations.

Canadians from the Prairies (47% - Saskatchewan/Manitoba and 38% - Alberta) are most likely to believe the Harper government is being the more fair and reasonable. Atlantic Canadians (33%) and Quebecers (24%) most believe that Canada's First Nations are the more reasonable are the more reasonable parties in this dispute. Ontarians (59%) are most likely to believe that neither side is being fair and reasonable in this dispute. A majority (56%) of Conservative supporters believe the Harper government has been the more fair and reasonable party in this dispute, while Bloc Quebecois (28%) supporters most believe Canada's First Nations are being more reasonable. Liberal (58%) and NDP (58%) supporters equally believe that neither side is being more fair and reasonable.

And while neither side gets good marks for cooperation from Canadians, there is an acknowledgement that the **Federal government must act now to help raise the quality of life of Canada's Aboriginal peoples** by two thirds (63%) nationally with the most support coming from Atlantic Canadians (68%), Ontarians (66%) and Quebecers (65%) with least support from Manitoba/Saskatchewan (49%), Alberta 55% and British Columbians (59%).



Dealing With Protests...

While only half of Canadians (51%) say they've been paying "close attention" to news about recent First Nation's protests, most (58% - this compares to 67% during the Oka stand-off) believe that what they have heard indicates a sign of growing discontent and anger among Aboriginals (over-all) as opposed to isolated incidents that shouldn't be viewed as anything bigger (16%) with one quarter (26%) still unsure.

Residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (60%) and Ontario (56%) most agree they've been paying close attention to the news about recent First Nation's protests, while Quebecers (57%) are most likely to say they haven't been paying close attention to this issue. Ontarians (65%) most believe that the protests are a sign of growing discontent and anger among Aboriginals, while Albertans are least likely to believe this.

If this growing discontent leads to additional protests by First Nations people, only 31% believe that shutting down roads and railways constitutes legitimate protest. Atlantic Canadians (43%) and Quebecers (37%) most believe that these types of protests are legitimate, while Canadians in the Prairies (79% - Saskatchewan/Manitoba and 70% - Alberta) and in Ontario (74%) least believe these protests are legitimate.

However, if roads and railways are shut down due to protest, most Canadians (59%) would want the police to back off and let things cool down as opposed to moving in to arrest the protestors (41%). British Columbians (75%) and Atlantic Canadians (74%) most believe that this 'cool down' approach is the best option, while those in the Prairies (55% - Saskatchewan/Manitoba and 45% - Alberta) and Ontario (47%) believe this is the wrong approach.



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between January 11th to 14th, 2013, on behalf of the National Post/Postmedia News and Global Television. For this survey, a sample of 1,023 Canadians from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 3.5 percentage points had all Canadians adults been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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