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## PM legacy in doubt

### Poll shows most can't name a single achievement

**By BILL RODGERS, OTTAWA BUREAU CHIEF**

OTTAWA -- A majority of Canadians can't cite a single accomplishment for Jean Chretien as his 10 years in office come to a close, an SES/Sun Media poll has found.

On the same day Chretien fast-tracked his plans to step down as prime minister, the poll results showed 51% of 1,000 Canadians surveyed couldn't name one accomplishment he'd made as PM.

Almost 10% said Chretien doesn't have a legacy while 8.9% said eliminating the deficit would be remembered as his biggest political achievement.

Refusing to send Canadian troops to war in Iraq was mentioned as an important accomplishment by 11% of Canadians surveyed.

At a Liberal gathering two months ago, Chretien suggested that calming the separatist storm in Quebec was one of his greatest achievements.

But in the SES/Sun Media poll, only 4.4% cited keeping the country together as Chretien's greatest achievement during his decade in office.

SES pollster Nic Nanos said while Chretien's personal popularity remains high, he is regarded by most as a good manager, not a visionary.

"There's usually one major accomplishment that people can think of," said Nanos.

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"For Mulroney it was free trade, for Pierre Trudeau it was the Charter (of Rights and Freedoms), for Lester Pearson it was his foreign policy."

Nanos said the PM gets very little credit for slaying the federal government's annual deficits because most Canadians see it as a joint accomplishment with Paul Martin, his successor.

A small percentage of Canadians gave the retiring PM credit for foreign policy, winning three consecutive majority governments, economic growth and increased health-care funding.

Chretien announced yesterday that he'll be gone by Jan. 12 -- a day after his 70th birthday.

Chretien let his timeline slip out after registering at the Liberal leadership convention in Toronto, teasing reporters about being on the lookout for a good story: "It will be the same story the 13th (of January)," the PM said. "There will be a new cabinet. And I will not be a (prime) minister."

Before leaving Ottawa for Toronto yesterday, Chretien adjourned Parliament and set Jan. 12 as the recall date.

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