

A 'political killing field'

Poll suggests growing unrest with Tories' handling of Afghanistan

Macleans.ca staff | May 7, 2007 | 1:18 pm EST

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The followup:

Pollster and *Macleans's* 50 member Nik Nanos says new numbers **revealed** in his recently released poll indicate Canadians are "concerned about the casualties."

Nanos, the head of SES Research, points out that 40 per cent of committed Conservative voters think the government should pull out if more casualties are incurred in the mission - calling it "a political quagmire for Conservatives."

The lack of support for the mission may be further aggravated in Quebec, where troops are scheduled to leave for Afghanistan shortly, Nanos says - adding that Quebecers are "more likely" to oppose the mission.

"Now we're going to have Quebec media reporting on Quebec casualties as a result of the mission in Afghanistan," he says. "And that's another monkey wrench in the whole formula."

The story:

The latest Sun Media/SES Research poll suggests that Stephen Harper could find himself in a "political killing field" if Afghanistan becomes a ballot question in the next election, **writes** columnist Greg Weston.

According to the poll, which was conducted over the last ten days and released by Sun Media on Sunday, 48% of those surveyed disapprove of how the Conservative government has managed the mission thus far. That compares to 44% who support the Tories' approach. But if casualties continue to mount, 54% want Canada to pull out of the mission - a majority in every region surveyed, including the West.

According to SES pollster and *Macleans's* 50 member Nik Nanos, the results show that Afghanistan could make it difficult for Harper to build the necessary coalition to form a majority government. "It is unusual for foreign policy to be an election issue," Nanos **notes** on his blog. "But this one is a sleeper."

Story from Macleans.ca:
http://www.macleans.ca/canada/national/article.jsp?content=20070507_131830_9696

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