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September 13, 2003

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Saturday, September 13, 2003

NDP on the rise: Poll

By **BILL RODGERS**, Parliamentary Bureau

The popularity of the federal New Democrats has jumped five points over the last three months and the Liberals are down 6%, a national SES/Sun Media poll suggests.

Support for the NDP under new Leader Jack Layton shows growth in every area of the country except Alberta and Quebec.

The poll of 1,000 Canadians taken from Aug. 24 to Sept. 2 shows the Grits continue to enjoy a commanding lead with 46% of committed voter support. The Tories trail with 19%, followed by the NDP with 15%, the Canadian Alliance with 13% and the Bloc Quebecois at 8%.

The biggest spurt in growth for the NDP comes in B.C., where the party now has 26% of committed voter support. It continues to enjoy its highest popularity in its Saskatchewan-Manitoba base.

MARTIN FEARS

"The switching of voters from Liberals to the NDP may be a precursor of a future trend as Liberal voters perceive Paul Martin to be taking the party more to the right," said Nik Nanos, president and CEO of SES/Canada Research Inc.



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SUN SPECIALS



"Paul Martin has this very corporate image and I'm sure there are a lot of soft Liberals who could vote either Liberal or NDP who might be a little uncomfortable with that."

Stephen Harper's Canadian Alliance maintains its stranglehold in Alberta at 53% but has slipped to just 8% in vote-rich Ontario. The Tories are at 21% in Ontario while the governing Liberals lead with 56%.

The poll is accurate to within 3.1%, plus or minus, 19 times out of 20.

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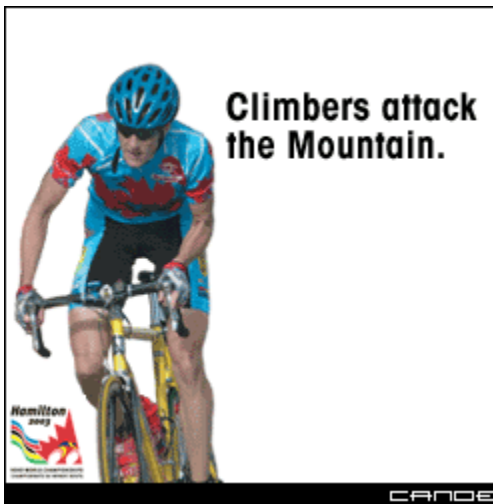
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