



TODAY'S EDITION



September 14, 2003

**Top Stories**  
Full News index

**Business**  
Full Business index

**Showbiz**  
Showbiz index

**Sports**  
Full Sports index



**NEWS**

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EDITORIAL

SHOWBIZ

BUSINESS

SPORTS

WHAT'S RELATED ON CANOE



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Sunday, September 14, 2003

## Half say Martin's pick of the pack

Canucks ready for PM as prime minister: Poll

By **BILL RODGERS**, Parliamentary Bureau Chief

Sixty-nine percent of Canadians believe Paul Martin will lead federal Grits to a fourth consecutive victory in the next election, a SES/Sun Media poll suggests.

The national survey of 1,000 people conducted between Aug. 24 and Sept. 2 found just 7% didn't believe the former finance minister would win. Twenty-four percent wouldn't say or were unsure.

"Canadians generally have high expectations of Paul Martin," said Nik Nanos, president and CEO of SES Canada Research Inc., adding the poll found Martin "has an image as a winner and a person with a strong vision for the future who will change things in Ottawa."

But the poll also shows Martin has some political vulnerabilities. Only 38% of those interviewed said Martin shares the views of average Canadians -- 35% disagreed.

IN THE DUST



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Sun Media Newspapers

On another important issue, 42% said Martin was somebody they could trust -- 31% disagreed.

Martin leaves his political opponents in the dust when the SES/Sun Media poll asks Canadians who would make the best prime minister.

Forty-nine percent chose Martin as the best man for the job. Alliance Leader Stephen Harper was picked by just 10% while Tory Leader Peter MacKay and NDP Leader Jack Layton are tied at 8%.

Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe is hardly a blip on the national public radar at 2%, based on responses from interviews in Quebec only.

Martin's popularity is highest in Quebec (60%), British Columbia (53%), and Ontario (52%).

His lowest numbers come from Alberta (24%), Manitoba and Saskatchewan (39%), and Atlantic Canada (47%).

The survey is accurate to within 3.1 percentage points, plus or minus, 19 times out of 20.

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