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Wed, June 16, 2004

No party can break deadlock

By BILL RODGERS, OTTAWA BUREAU CHIEF

OTTAWA -- The majority of Canadian voters still want a change in government but it remains to be seen whether last night's debate and the French-language tussle on Monday shook loose enough support to propel the Conservatives or Liberals to a clear election night victory, says SES pollster Nik Nanos. "Appetite for a change is strong," said Nanos, whose CPAC/SES overnight tracking poll yesterday showed 59% of Canadians think its time to clean house in Ottawa.

The random telephone survey of 600 people taken between June 12-14 shows the Conservatives and Grits remain in a dead heat.

Stephen Harper's Tories have 33% support, followed by the Liberals with 32%. The New Democrats pick 19% of decided voters surveyed, with Quebec's Bloc at 12% and the Green Party at 4%. The number of undecided voters is now 15%.

On the question of who would make the best prime minister, Paul Martin has a slight lead at 28%. Stephen Harper is two points back at 26%, while Jack Layton is far behind at 12%.

Almost a third of Canadians can't make up their minds or don't like any of the choices.

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