

## NDP's Paul Dewar upbeat despite poor polling

John Ivison

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Thomas Dewar, scion of the famous whisky family, once said he would never invest in a going concern until he knew which way it was going. On that basis, if you believe a new poll on the NDP leadership, you might not invest too much time helping the whisky baron's namesake, Ottawa MP Paul Dewar.

A poll by Forum Research for the National Post asked Canadians who voted for the NDP in the last election who they preferred as the next leader of the party. Of the 300

respondents, nearly half were undecided, which suggests there is still plenty to play for. But of the 163 decided voters, 45% said they favoured Thomas Mulcair, with support coming from right across the country. Peggy Nash came second with 16%, while Mr. Dewar and perceived front-runner Brian Topp languished at 8%.

All polls come with red flags and this one in particular should be treated with caution because of its small sample size and high margin of error (+ or – 8%). But it is interesting nonetheless, as it's the first public poll on the leadership question and the size of Mr. Mulcair's lead suggests he has the ability to break out of his home province of Quebec, which has just 5,500 of the 95,000 party members.

The poll, part of a broader interactive voice response telephone survey of 1,160 Canadians from across the country, was taken last Tuesday. The results suggest support for the federal Conservatives has slipped nationally to 33% from 39% at the time of the general election in May, NDP support has dipped four points to 27%, the Liberals have gained two points to 21%, the Greens are up four to 8% and the Bloc is unchanged at 6%.

