

The monarchy 'is way more divisive than pot,' Canadians evenly split on sticking with the Queen: survey

Postmedia News Jan 18, 2012



Getty Images/Stock - Canadians are far more divided about keeping the Queen than the legalization of marijuana, Forum Research says

By Derek Abma

There's an even split among Canadians on whether to abolish the monarchy, according a new survey.

Forum Research released data Wednesday showing 43% of respondents were in favour of abolishing the monarchy after Queen Elizabeth II dies, 43% were against it and the remaining 14% had no specific opinion.

Some notable differences were seen among people from different regions and between those of different political stripes.

For instance, 67% of Quebec respondents favoured abolishment. That was down to 39% in Ontario, 35% on the Prairies, 30% in British Columbia and 28 per cent in the Atlantic provinces.

“In Quebec, of course, the monarchy has never been that popular,” said Lorne Bozinoff, president of Forum Research. “The monarchy has always been popular in the Atlantic, and still is, as well as the Prairies.”

Not surprisingly, Bloc Quebecois supporters were most supportive of abolishment at 71%. New Democratic supporters were the next most likely to answer this way at 49%. It was 41% among Liberal backers, and 37% for those supporting the Conservatives.

These results follow data of another survey released this week, also from Forum Research, that showed 66% of respondents in favour of either outright legalization of marijuana or decriminalizing the possession of small amounts.

A federal Liberal party convention last weekend resulted in delegates voting against a proposal to support abolishing the monarchy but coming out in favour of legalizing marijuana.

With these poll results suggesting more of a consensus on reforming marijuana laws than on severing ties with the monarchy, Bozinoff said the Liberals were politically wise in the way they came down on both issues.

“[The monarchy] is way more divisive than pot,” he said.

On the 41-45 split among Liberal supporters in this survey on whether they want to abolish or maintain the monarchy, Bozinoff said: “Why would you get into a wedge issue like that when half your supporters aren’t really with you on it?”

He added that those who support the monarchy tend to have stronger feelings about it than those who support its abolition. An example of this, he said, is the fact that, according to a report in London’s *Guardian* newspaper, two anonymous Canadians have contributed \$12-million toward a new yacht for the Queen to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee, even after British Prime Minister David Cameron refused to provide funding for it.

Bozinoff said with a majority Tory supporters — 53% — saying they were opposed to abolishing the monarchy, it could explain some of the federal government’s recent moves, such as reinstating the term “Royal” in the Royal Canadian Air Force and Royal Canadian Navy, and putting more pictures of the Queen in government buildings.

“That’s because that’s where (the Tories’) base is,” Bozinoff said. “Otherwise you would say, ‘Where does this issue even come from?’ ”

The survey was based on phone interviews taken of 1,211 Canadian adults in random phone interviews on Jan. 13. The results are considered to represent the population within 2.82 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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