

NEWS

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Liberals will provide effective representation in Ottawa: Jones

Northern Pen

Yvonne Jones says she's pleased voters in this province sent six Liberals to Ottawa in last Tuesday's general election.

As the leader of the Opposition, she says incumbents Todd Russell, Gerry Byrne and Scott Simms, along with newly -elected Liberals Siobhan Coady, Judy Foote and Scott Andrews, will give constituents effective representation and challenge a minority government led again by Conservative Stephen Harper.

"These MPs will stand up for Newfoundland and Labrador and we're going to need that," she notes.

Ms. Jones says the election of New Democrat Jack Harris, which effectively shut out the Conservatives in the province, is partial confirmation that an effort by Premier Danny Williams to encourage voters to vote 'Anything But Conservative' (ABC) had a bearing on the campaign. However, she suggests that Mr. Andrews is a hard-working individual who accomplished much on his own and with the help of supporters to knock off incumbent Fabian Manning, who was seen as the best hope for the Conservatives to retain a seat in the province. She says the ABC campaign had a minimal effect in rural areas of the province, where Liberal support was already entrenched.

The Cartwright-L'Anse au Clair MHA says she harbours concerns that Prime Minister Harper may take a dim view of the 'goose egg', in spite of the fact that he won 143 seats in the election.

"I'm concerned the prime minister may take an approach that will be detrimental to Newfoundland and Labrador in terms of resources and funding from Ottawa," she told the *Pen*. "Time will tell."

In the meantime, she admits to surprise that the federal Liberals didn't win more than 76 seats, pointing out that the loss of 10 districts in Ontario was especially disappointing.

She predicts the Liberals will form an effective opposition in the House of Commons, but says there's a need on the federal scene to the review the party's strategy. Part of that will involve a determination by leader Stephane Dion on his future.

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