

# BC ELECTION 2001

## PARTY LEADERS

***MAJORITY PICKS GORDON CAMPBELL (52%) AS BEST PREMIER FOR BC;  
ABOUT HALF AS MANY CHOOSE DOSANJH (28%)***

***BC LIBERALS HAVE MOMENTUM AS CAMPAIGN BEGINS (24% IMPROVED);  
PUBLIC MOOD TURNS SOUR ON NDP (37% WORSE)***

***BC PUBLIC SEES TAX CUTS AS CAMPBELL'S MAIN ISSUE (36%), HEALTH CARE  
FOR DOSANJH (38%), ENVIRONMENT FOR THE GREENS (35%)***



**Ipsos Reid**



**THE GLOBE AND MAIL**

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*This BC Ipsos-Reid poll is based on a random provincial telephone survey conducted between April 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2001 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbian adults. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 1996 Census data. With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within +3.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult BC population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population.*

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## **BC ELECTION 2001**

### **PARTY LEADERS & ELECTION MOMENTUM**

**(Vancouver, BC - April 26, 2001)** – As the BC election campaign gets under way, the first Ipsos-Reid/Globe & Mail/VTV/CKNW poll shows British Columbians giving Gordon Campbell a strong endorsement in his bid to sit in the Premier’s chair; 52% choose him as the party leader best suited to be Premier of BC, a very significant 18 point increase in the past 6 weeks. Meanwhile the current Premier, Ujjal Dosanjh, has lost significant ground to Campbell in this regard; 28% choose him as best Premier, down 12 points in 6 weeks.

Not surprisingly, then, the findings also reveal that the public mood towards Ujjal Dosanjh and the New Democrats has deteriorated over the past couple of months (37% gotten worse) while it has improved for Gordon Campbell and the Liberals (24% improved). Meanwhile, public opinion has become more positive towards the BC Green party, and is ambivalent about Unity BC.

Further, despite presenting election platforms covering a full range of issues, British Columbians have come to identify key issues with party leaders – tax cuts for Campbell (36%), health care for Dosanjh (38%), and the environment for Carr (35%).

“If this election campaign turns on leadership, there’s little doubt the Liberals hold a trump card in their leader Gordon Campbell. British Columbians have grown increasingly comfortable with Campbell, and with the policies he espouses. This is particularly significant, because it puts Campbell in a strong position as he prepares to lead the province,” notes Daniel Savas, Senior Vice-President at Ipsos-Reid. “To contrast, a year ago, much hope and

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promise was placed in Ujjal Dosanjh and his ability to turn NDP fortunes around in the aftermath of Glen Clark's resignation. This does not seem to have happened. While Dosanjh is certainly ahead of his party, the public mood is now distinctly more negative, and it's unlikely he alone can win the race to the finish line for the New Democrats in this election campaign. Moreover, the public's expressed appetite for tax cuts and their confidence in the Liberals' ability to handle health care issues is a sign of the difficulties Dosanjh faces in trying to get the upper hand on Gordon Campbell as the election campaign plays itself out."

***52% of BC PUBLIC PICKS GORDON CAMPBELL AS BEST PREMIER; HALF AS MANY (28%) CHOOSE DOSANJH***

When it comes to choosing the Premier from among the different party leaders, British Columbians have a clear favourite in Liberal leader Gordon Campbell. A slim majority of those surveyed – 52% - say Campbell is the person best suited to sit in the Premier's chair. This is an increase of some 18 percentage points in just the past 6 weeks when 34% chose Campbell.

By comparison, currently only 28% of British Columbians would choose NDP leader Ujjal Dosanjh as the best person for Premier of the province. This is down a significant 12 points since the beginning March of this year when 40% chose Dosanjh.

Another 6% choose BC Green party leader, Adriane Carr, as best Premier, and 3% single out Chris Delaney, Unity BC leader. Eleven percent did not know who to choose.



Gordon Campbell's popularity as the potential Premier is consistent across all regions of the province, and among all population segments. He does nevertheless garner somewhat stronger support from individuals living in non-union households (55%).

Ujjal Dosanjh is behind Campbell in every region and among all groups. His strongest endorsement surfaces among Vancouver Island residents (36%).

There are no statistically significant regional or socio-demographic variations in the support given Carr or Delaney.

### ***CAMPBELL AND LIBERALS HOLD MOMENTUM AS ELECTION BEGINS; BC PUBLIC MOOD TURNS SOUR ON NDP***

In the past couple of months, including the days following the drop of the election writ, British Columbians have come to hold generally more favourable views of Gordon Campbell and the BC Liberals, but are now more negative towards the Ujjal Dosanjh and the NDP.

Overall, a quarter of those surveyed (24%) say their opinions of Campbell and the Liberals have improved, compared to 13% who say their opinions have "gotten worse". To gauge momentum we subtract the "worse" from the "improved", creating a momentum rating. Gordon Campbell and the Liberals have a +11 momentum rating.

Comparatively, 11% of the BC population hold more positive views of Dosanjh and the New Democrats versus 37% with more negative opinions, for a -26% momentum rating.



British Columbians give a more favourable than unfavourable nod to Adriane Carr and the BC Greens, with 15% having improved impressions of the leader and party, compared to 5% who say their views have gotten worse, for a +10% momentum rating. Meanwhile, the rating for Chris Delaney and Unity BC is -1; 5% have improved opinions and 6% are more negative.

For Campbell, positive momentum is most notable among the following people: suburban Vancouver residents (+14), men (+14), higher income earners (+18), and non-union households (+13).

Dosanjh's negative momentum is particularly acute among the following people: Interior residents (-30), men (-30), middle income earners (-28), and non-union households (-28).

***TAX CUTS SEEN AS CAMPBELL'S MAIN ISSUE (36%), HEALTH CARE FOR DOSANJH (38%), ENVIRONMENT FOR GREENS (35%)***

While all parties provide British Columbians with positions on a variety of issues, the public clearly identifies each of the major party leaders with a single issue. When it comes to the front-running BC Liberals, most British Columbians surveyed saw "tax cuts" as the main issue Gordon Campbell stands for in this election campaign; 36% tie the Liberal leader to this one issue. Far fewer see Campbell tied to other main campaign issues - the economy (13%), and health care (12%), education (3%), business/free enterprise (3%), and balanced approach to government spending (3%). One-in-five (18%) do not know Campbell's main issue in the campaign.

For Ujjal Dosanjh, the issue mix is somewhat different. Fully 38% believe Dosanjh's main issue is health care. The BC public is much less likely to link the NDP leader to any of the



other election issues – education (6%), social programs (4%), environment (2%), the economy (2%), tax cuts (2%), and honesty/integrity (2%). Twenty-one percent do not know Dosanjh's main campaign issue.

British Columbians are very much of the view that Adriane Carr is a one issue leader. While 35% tie Carr to the environment, only 1% see her issue as health care. No other issue in the public's radar screen when it comes to the Green party leader. However, a full 59% have no clear idea what the Green party leader 's main issue is in this campaign.

Unity BC leader, Chris Delaney, is a big question mark when it comes to his main issue in this campaign. Fully 86% of those surveyed could not identify a single issue Delaney stands for in election. Two percent do, however, tie him to the economy.



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