

FEDERAL POLITICAL SCENE

AUGUST 2001

The Battle for Alberta Now a 3-Way Race

- ***Canadian Alliance Support in Alberta Continues to Slip (CA currently at 30% of decided vote), Favouring Both the Tories and the Liberals***
- ***Tories Surge to 32% of Decided Vote in Province – Lead in the Polls for the First Time in Nearly a Decade***
- ***PCs Hold Edge in Calgary (36%), with Preston Manning's Retirement on the Horizon***
- ***Liberals lead in Edmonton (36%) with CA a Distant Third (22%)***



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Calgary, AB – Party turmoil continues to take a toll on the Canadian Alliance's fortunes in Alberta, according to the most recent Ipsos-Reid poll in the province. The survey shows Alliance support reduced to nearly one-half of the vote captured eight months ago (30% of the decided vote currently, compared to 59 percent of votes cast in the General Election), leaving Alberta a statistical dead-heat between the Alliance, Tories and Liberals. The Tories currently enjoy 32 percent support from decided Alberta voters, which represents a marginal lead over the Alliance and the Liberals (29%). The New Democratic Party trails with 7 percent support from decided voters, along with 2 percent leaning toward various other party alternatives. Overall, roughly one-in-ten (11%) voters are currently undecided about which federal party they would support in an election.



The July survey represents a 19 percentage point jump in support for the federal Tories in Alberta since the Election, and also is the first time in almost a decade that the federal Tories are the most popular party in Alberta. Indeed, the Conservatives are the primary beneficiary of slumping CA fortunes in the province – fully 22 percent of Alliance voters from November now say they would vote for the PCs if an election were held tomorrow. The Liberals would gain another 9 percent of those who voted Alliance in November 2000, while two-thirds (67%) report that they would stick with CA as their vote.

While province-wide party support is split evenly between three federal parties, there is considerable regional variation in the returns. With Preston Manning's retirement on the horizon, the Tories enjoy a small edge in support in Calgary — 36 percent, compared to CA at 31 percent and the Liberals at 26 percent. In Edmonton, the Grits hold an advantage (36%) with the PCs at 30 percent and the Alliance well back at 22 percent of the decided vote. For their part, the Canadian Alliance continues to hold a majority of support from voters in Central (45%) and Southern (37%) Alberta.

These are the findings of a survey conducted under the auspices of the Alberta Reid Report, a quarterly examination of business, economics and politics in the province. The telephone survey was conducted between July 19th and July 24th, 2001. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 800 adult Albertans. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population in Alberta been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual provincial population according to Statistics Canada Census data.

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