

## FEDERAL POLITICAL SCENE — AUGUST 2001

***Alliance Leader's Approval Continues "Free-Fall" in Former Home Province - Stockwell Day's Personal Approval Now at All Time Low (21%)***

***Day's Call for Leadership Election Well Known (78% Aware) and Well Received in Alberta — Eight-in-Ten (82%) Think the Decision Is A 'Good Thing' For the Alliance Party.***

***While a Majority (63%) of the Province Feels that Day Should Not Run Again, Alliance Voters Divided on the Issue (47% Say He Should Run Again versus 51% Saying He Should Not)***



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***Day's Call for Leadership Election Well Known (78% Aware) and Well Received in Alberta — Eight-in-Ten (82%) Think the Decision Is A 'Good Thing' For the Alliance Party.***

***While a Majority (63%) of the Province Feels that Day Should Not Run Again, Alliance Voters Divided on the Issue (47% Say He Should Run Again versus 51% Saying He Should Not)***

**Calgary, AB** – The results of a July Ipsos-Reid poll show that approval for Stockwell Day in Alberta has hit an all-time low. Currently, only two-in-ten (21%) Albertans approve of Day's performance as Leader of The Official Opposition Canadian Alliance Party, compared to 76 percent who disapprove of the leader's performance. Day's personal approval in the province has endured a "rollercoaster" ride over the past year, reaching a high of 66 percent approval in August 2000 and plummeting continually since the election — support for Day has dropped 13 percentage points since April and a total of 25 percentage points since February.

Albertans have followed the Alliance leadership woes with considerable interest. Within one week of the leader's announcement, fully 78 percent of Albertans are aware of the call for a leadership election for the Canadian Alliance. Further, Albertans are very receptive to the call for a leadership election — fully eight-in-ten (82%) Albertans think that Stockwell Day's

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decision is a 'good thing' for the Canadian Alliance Party, compared to only 15 percent who consider this decision a 'bad thing'.

While Day's announcement is welcomed by many Albertans, the uncertainty of his fate and the Alliance leadership continues to divide the electorate. Overall, two-thirds (63%) of Alberta voters do not think that Stockwell Day should run in the leadership election to keep his job as Canadian Alliance leader, compared to 35 percent who think he should run to succeed himself as leader. However, this issue is considerably more divisive among Canadian Alliance voters. Among those who voted for the Canadian Alliance in November 2000, a bare majority (51%) maintains that Stockwell Day should not be allowing his name to stand in a future leadership contest, while 47 percent say he should run in an effort to keep his leadership.

*These are the findings of Ipsos-Reid poll conducted under the auspices of the Alberta Reid Report, a quarterly syndicated study on business, politics and economics in the province. The survey was conducted between July 19<sup>th</sup> and July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2001, with a random sample of 800 adult Albertans. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  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.*

Detailed findings of this poll on party leadership are as follows:

### **Federal Leader Approval in Alberta**

A total of 49 percent of Albertans approve of Jean Chrétien's performance as Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party, with 13 percent offering strong approval and 36 percent

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moderately approval. Conversely, one-half (50%) of Alberta voters disapprove of Chrétien's performance (33% strongly and 17% moderately). Overall, Chrétien's levels of approval have climbed 10 percentage points since our April survey (up from 39% approval).

- Chrétien receives the most support in Edmonton (54% approval) and the lowest levels of support from voters in Central Alberta (39%).

Stockwell Day's personal approval has steadily dropped since the beginning of the year. Last August, when 66 percent of Alberta voters approved of his performance as leader of the Canadian Alliance, he was at the peak of his popularity. This month, our poll finds only 21 percent of Albertans approve of his performance as leader of the Alliance party — 6 percent strongly approve and another 15 percent of Alberta voters moderately approve. Meanwhile three-quarters (76%) of those interviewed say they disapprove of his performance (54% strongly and 22% moderately).

- Day's support is highest in Northern and Southern Alberta where 25% of Alberta voters in those regions say they approve of his performance as leader of the Alliance party. His lowest levels of support come from Central Albertans, where only 18% Approve of Day's performance.

Ratings for Joe Clark's performance have remained high over the past six months, with 63 percent of Albertans offering approval this July (14% strongly, 49% moderately). This represents a remarkable personal resurgence for Clark over the past year, with his personal popularity nearly double levels measured in August 2000 (at the time only 32% of Albertans approved of Clark's performance).



- Clark receives the highest levels of approval in Northern Alberta (66%), Calgary (64%) and Edmonton (64%), while his performance is given lower ratings in Southern (59%) and Central Alberta (56%).

Alexa McDonough is rated positively as leader of the New Democratic Party by 44 percent of Alberta voters. Though 20 percent of Albertans said they did not know enough about her to offer a rating, 36 percent say they disapprove of her performance as leader of the NDP.

- McDonough receives the highest ratings of approval from residents of Edmonton and Calgary, where 46% of voters in those cities say they approve.

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