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Premier Campbell's Performance (64%) and Think BC Liberals
Do Not Deserve Re-Election (63%)*

*Yet, NDP (38%, unchanged) and BC Liberals
(40%, up 3 points) in Statistical Dead Heat*

NDP Leader James' Approval Rating Slides (46%, down 8 points)



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Vancouver, BC – The BC NDP made substantial gains immediately following the election of leader Carole James last November. By May of 2004, the NDP erased a 14-point deficit to the BC Liberals (Sept 2003) and built a 7-point lead (44% to 37%). Now, it appears this momentum has officially stalled. For the second consecutive BC Ipsos-Reid poll, the NDP (38%) and BC Liberals (40%) and are in a statistical dead heat among the province's decided voters. The Liberals are up a statistically insignificant three points since July, while the NDP are unchanged. The Green Party has the support of 16% (down 2 points) of decided voters.

The BC Liberals are tied with the NDP despite some shaky fundamentals. Two-thirds (64%, up 2 points) of British Columbians currently disapprove of the performance of Gordon Campbell as Premier. Similarly, nearly two-thirds (63%) of residents think the BC Liberals do not deserve to be re-elected based on their performance in government since the last election.

The honeymoon may be over for Carole James. Her job approval rating as NDP leader has slipped to 46%, down 8-points from July. Meanwhile, her disapproval rating has jumped 8-points to 32%. And although James has a superior job approval rating to Gordon Campbell, this does not mean she is the preferred choice to be Premier of British Columbia. In fact, Gordon Campbell (41%) is selected more often than James (37%) as the party leader who would make the best Premier.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid telephone poll conducted September 9th to 15th, 2004 with a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbia residents. 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 BC adult population 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 BC population according to the 2001 Census.

Two-Thirds of British Columbians Disapprove of Premier Campbell's Performance (64%) and Think BC Liberals Do Not Deserve Re-Election (63%)

Gordon Campbell's approval rating is unchanged from July. One-in-three (35%, unchanged) British Columbians approves of Campbell's performance as Premier. One-in-ten (8%, unchanged) residents "strongly" approve of the job Campbell is doing as Premier, while one-quarter (26%, down 2 points) "moderately" approve. Nearly two-thirds (64%, up 2 points) of BC residents currently disapprove of Campbell's performance as Premier, including 46% (up 3 points) who "strongly" disapprove and 18% (down 1 point) who "moderately" disapprove.

The public's overall assessment of the BC Liberal government is very similar to their assessment of the Premier. Specifically, only one-third (35%) of British Columbians think the BC Liberals deserve to be re-elected based on their performance in government since the last election. Nearly two-thirds (63%) think the Liberals do not deserve re-election, while 2% are undecided.

Regional and demographic differences are as follows:

- Premier Campbell's approval is higher in the Lower Mainland (39% vs. 29% rest of BC), with men (39% vs. 30% women), with non-union households (38% vs. 27% union) and higher income households (41% vs. 27% lower, 29% middle).
- A "Liberals deserve to be re-elected" sentiment is highest in the Lower Mainland (40% vs. 29% rest of BC), with men (42% vs. 29% women) and with non-union households (39% vs. 27% union).

Yet, BC Liberals (40%, up 3 points) and NDP (38%, unchanged) in Statistical Dead Heat

The BC Liberals (40%) and NDP (38%) remain effectively tied for the support of decided voters in British Columbia. The only change from July (NDP 38%, Libs 37%) is that the Liberals have supplanted the NDP as the notional leader. The Green Party has the support of 16% (down 2 points) of decided voters, followed by BC Unity at 3% (down 1 point). These results exclude the 11% of BC residents who have no party preference or are undecided.

The regional analysis continues to show the BC Liberals ahead in the Lower Mainland (44% BC Liberals, 35% NDP) and the NDP out front in the rest of the province (43% NDP, 34% BC Liberals).

- The BC Liberals do better with men (45% vs. 35% women), non-union residents (44% vs. 31% union) and higher income households (45% vs. 30% lower, 37% middle).
- The NDP do better with women (43% vs. 34% men) and union households (53% vs. 32% non-union).
- The Greens do better with younger voters (25% 18 to 34 years vs. 16% 35-54 years, 8% 55+ years) and middle-income households (23% middle vs. 15% lower, 12% higher).

NDP Leader James' Approval Rating Slides (46%, down 8 points)

Public impressions of NDP leader Carole James are beginning to slip. Her approval rating as NDP leader currently stands at 46%, a drop of 8-points from July. One-in-ten (8%, down 1 point) residents “strongly” approve of her performance, while 39% (down 6 points) “moderately” approve.

One-third (32%, up 8 points) of British Columbians now disapprove of Carole James' performance as NDP leader. This includes 14% (up 6 points) who “strongly” disapprove and 18% (up 2 points) who “moderately” disapprove.

Even with the drop, Carole James (46%) has a better approval rating than Gordon Campbell (35%). However, Carole James is being measured as NDP leader, while Gordon Campbell is being measured as Premier. To compare apples with apples, the two leaders should be evaluated for the same job. In terms of who would make the best Premier, Gordon Campbell (41%, up 1 point from March) leads Carole James (37%, down 1 point) by a statistically insignificant 4-points among residents with an opinion. Adriane Carr is selected as best Premier by 14% (up 1 point) of British Columbians, followed by Chris Delaney at 7% (down 2 points). These results exclude the 23% of residents who are undecided about which party leader would make the best Premier.

Demographic and regional differences are as follows:

- James' approval is highest with union households (58% vs. 41% non-union).
- Campbell is more likely to be picked as best Premier by men (46% vs. 36% women), non-union residents (46% vs. 31% union) and higher income households (49% vs. 28% lower, 37% middle).
- James is more likely to be picked as best Premier by union households (48% vs. 32% non-union).

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