

## BC PROVINCIAL POLITICS – PART I

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While Gordon Campbell (48%) Leads Carole James (35%) and  
Adriane Carr (18%) as Public's Choice for Best Premier ...  
Majority (58%) Thinks Campbell will be a Liability to His  
Party's Election Chances*



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## BC PROVINCIAL POLITICS – PART I

### *BC Liberals (44%) and NDP (41%) Remain in Tight Race While Gordon Campbell (48%) Leads Carole James (35%) and Adriane Carr (18%) as Public's Choice for Best Premier ... Majority (58%) Thinks Campbell will be a Liability to His Party's Election Chances*

**Vancouver, BC** – For the third consecutive BC Ipsos-Reid poll (Jul, Sep, Dec), the BC Liberals and the NDP are effectively tied for the support of the province's decided voters. The BC Liberals are at 44% and the NDP are at 41%. Both the Liberals (up 4 points from Sep) and the NDP (up 3 points) have made gains at the expense of the Green Party (12%, down 4 points) and BC Unity<sup>1</sup> (0%, down 3 points).

While the two parties are tied for voter support, Gordon Campbell has a significant edge over Carole James in voter preferences as best Premier. Among those with an opinion, 48% (up 7 points from Sep) select Campbell as the party leader who would make the Premier of British Columbia. Carole James is next best at 35% (down 2 points), followed by Green Party leader Adriane Carr at 18% (up 4 points)<sup>2</sup>.

Carole James still leads Gordon Campbell in job approval, although both leaders post more positive results this quarter. Five-in-ten (52%, up 6 points from Sep) British Columbians approve of James' performance as NDP leader. Four-in-ten (40%, up 5 points) residents approve of Campbell's performance as Premier. Conversely six-in-ten (59%, down 5 points) residents currently disapprove of Campbell's performance.

Looking ahead to the spring election, a majority of British Columbians – likely reflecting on the Premier's long standing and frequently published six-in-ten disapproval rating – think Gordon Campbell will be more of a liability (58%) than an asset (37%) to the Liberal's election chances. Meanwhile, the situation is reversed for NDP leader Carole James. Fifty-five percent expect her to be more of an asset to the NDP than a liability (30%).

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<sup>1</sup> BC Unity was dropped from Ipsos-Reid's list of read party choices this quarter. Respondents still had the opportunity to mention BC Unity in an "other" category, but less than 1% did so.

<sup>2</sup> BC Unity leader Chris Delaney (resigned) was dropped from Ipsos-Reid's list of best Premier choices this quarter. Delaney registered 7% as best Premier in September.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid telephone poll conducted November 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004 with a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbia residents. 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 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.*

## ***BC Liberals (44%) and NDP (41%) Remain in Tight Race***

It's still a very tight race. The BC Liberals (44%) have a statistically insignificant 3-point lead over the NDP (41%) among decided voters in British Columbia. The Green Party is a distant third choice at 12% support this quarter. These results exclude the 7% of BC residents who have no party preference or are undecided.

Both the BC Liberals (up 4 points) and the NDP (up 3 points) have made gains since September. These gains have come at the expense of the Green Party (down 4 points) and BC Unity (down 3 points). Following the resignation of BC Unity leader Chris Delaney, BC Unity was removed from Ipsos-Reid's list of read-parties in the ballot question. Less than 1% of decided voters "volunteered" BC Unity as their choice this quarter.

The regional analysis shows the BC Liberals with a 7-point lead in the Lower Mainland (46% BC Liberals, 39% NDP) and trailing by a statistically insignificant 3-points in the rest of the province (41% BC Liberals, 44% NDP).

- The BC Liberals do better with men (48% vs. 39% women), non-union residents (51% vs. 27% union) and higher income households (50% vs. 31% lower, 39% middle).
- The NDP do better with women (48% vs. 35% men), union households (58% vs. 34% non-union) and lower income households (52% vs. 46% middle, 37% higher).
- The Greens do better with younger voters (16% 18 to 34 years vs. 13% 35-54 years, 6% 55+ years) and lower/middle-income households (14% lower/middle vs. 9% higher).

## ***While Gordon Campbell (48%) Leads Carole James (35%) and Adriane Carr (18%) as Public's Choice for Best Premier ...***

In terms of which party leader would make the best Premier, Gordon Campbell (48%, up 7 points from Sep) leads Carole James (35%, down 2 points) among residents with an opinion. Adriane Carr is selected as best Premier by 18% (up 4 points) of British Columbians. Chris Delaney (7% in Sep) who resigned as BC Unity leader in September was dropped from the list of choices this quarter. These results exclude the 12% of residents who are undecided about which party leader would make the best Premier.

Demographic and regional differences are as follows:

- Campbell is more likely to be picked as best Premier by men (54% vs. 42% women), non-union residents (55% vs. 29% union) and higher income households (56% vs. 39% lower, 39% middle).
- James is more likely to be picked as best Premier by women (39% vs. 31% men), union household residents (49% vs. 29% non-union) and lower/middle income residents (41% vs. 29% higher).
- Carr is more likely to be picked as best Premier by younger and middle-aged voters (22% 18 to 34 years, 20% 35-54 years vs. 9% 55+ years).

## ***Majority (58%) Thinks Campbell will be a Liability to His Party's Election Chances***

When asked to think ahead to the 2005 election campaign, a majority (58%) of British Columbians think BC Liberal Party leader Gordon Campbell will be more of a liability than an asset (37%) to his party's election chances. In fact, more than one-third (36%) of current BC Liberal voters say they think Campbell will be more of a liability in the election campaign.

The situation is reversed for Carole James. A majority (55%) of BC residents, and 70% of NDP voters, think James will be more of an asset than a liability (30%) to her party's election chances.

- Campbell is more likely to be viewed as an asset by men (41% vs. 33% women), non-union residents (42% vs. 27% union) and higher income households (42% vs. 34% lower, 32% middle).

- James is more likely to be viewed as an asset by union household residents (66% vs. 51% non-union).

These findings are likely a byproduct of Gordon Campbell's long standing and frequently published job disapproval rating. This quarter, Campbell's approval rating as Premier rises a significant 5-points (from Sep) to 40%. One-in-ten (10%, up 2 points) residents "strongly" approve of the job Campbell is doing as Premier, while three-in-ten (30%, up 4 points) "moderately" approve. Campbell's disapproval rating also drops a significant 5-points this quarter to 59%. This includes 39% (down 7 points) who "strongly" disapprove and 20% (up 2 points) who "moderately" disapprove.

Carole James also sees her approval rating rise this quarter. Her approval rating as NDP leader currently stands at 52%, a rise of 6-points from September. One-in-ten (8%, unchanged) residents "strongly" approve of her performance, while 45% (up 6 points) "moderately" approve.

One-third (33%, up 1 point) of British Columbians disapprove of Carole James' performance as NDP leader. This includes 13% (down 5 points) who "strongly" disapprove and 20% (up 6 points) who "moderately" disapprove.

- Premier Campbell's approval is higher in the Lower Mainland (43% vs. 36% rest of BC), with men (44% vs. 36% women), with non-union households (47% vs. 25% union) and higher income households (48% vs. 32% lower, 31% middle).
- James' approval is highest with union households (66% vs. 47% non-union).

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