

ING  OTTAWA
MARATHON

canada.com

▼ NEWSPAPERS

▼ TELEVISION

▼ CITIES

▼ CHANNELS

▼ CLASSIFIEDS

▼ RADIO

SEARCHWORD:

go

Search the Web

go



YellowPages.ca

Canada 411

Tuesday, June 1, 2004



OTTAWA CITIZEN

WEATHER
12°
Light drizzle

FORECAST OTHER CITIES

OttawaCitizen.com: Find out more! |  = subscriber only content

Status: not logged in [Login] [Register]

CLASSIFIEDS

- Find a job
- Find a car
- Find a home
- Find a partner
- Find an ad
- Place an ad

IN THE CITIZEN

News
Letters
Editorials
City
Decision Canada
Arts
Business
Sports
Columnists
Headline Scan
Online Extras
Special Reports
Technology
Dark Matter Blog
Meet our Interns
Sound Off!
7-Day Archive
Births archive
Obituaries archive
Electronic Edition

YOUR CITIZEN

Subscribe
Help
Send us a news tip
Letters:
- To the editor
- About your event
- Site Feedback
Advertising
Contact Us



OTTAWA

Ottawa city site
Global TV
Event Listings

ARCHIVE STORY

List of the 7 Days Archived & Search Tools

MONDAY, MAY 31, 2004

SECTIONS IN THIS ISSUE:

News | Letters | Editorials | Opinion | Sports | Arts | City

Grits, Tories in dead heat, poll shows

Former cabinet minister wants purge of Martin's campaign team

Robert Fife And Jack Aubry

The Ottawa Citizen

Monday, May 31, 2004

The Liberals are in a virtual tie with the Conservative party amid growing rancour within Liberal ranks and calls for Prime Minister Paul Martin to make drastic changes to his election campaign team.

A new public opinion survey by SES Research for CPAC -- Canada's parliamentary TV channel -- of 600 people on Friday and Saturday show Liberal support has plunged seven points to 34 per cent since the May 23 election call.

The Conservatives, led by Stephen Harper, are at 31 per cent, but with a plus

ADVERTISEMENT

CareerPicks

Catering Help

Exp. necessary, valid driver's license. Weekends a must...
Rest./Hospitality

Electronic Security

Technical knowledge of access control, CCTV, is critical. Strong customer service skills...
Diebold

Managers

Previous fashion retail management experience is required combined with proven leadership and...
Tabi International

Vehicle Mechanic

Demonstrated related experience with vehicle maintenance repair, diesel and hydraulic systems repair...
Hydro Ottawa

Manager

Ability to regularly assess individual and team performance against objectives, require 10 years of...
Assurant Solutions

View All CareerPicks

Powered by:
careerclick.com

ADVERTISEMENT

Great Values from leading retailers from across the National Capital Region

Click here for the online version of
Capital Values

Sports Events
Live Music
Movies
Restaurants
Bars
Accommodations
Contests
Local Links



7:00 PM
Train 48
7:30 PM
Entertainment
Tonight
8:00 PM
Fear Factor
9:00 PM
Fear Factor
10:00 PM
Judging Amy

full listings:
TVtimes

and minus error of 4.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, pollster Nikita Nanos said the two parties are in a "statistical tie."

Nationally, the NDP are at 19 per cent and the Bloc Quebecois at 12 per cent.

The Liberal freefall is largely attributed to the decision of Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty to break an election pledge not to raise taxes and to impose health premiums in the provincial budget.

"There is obviously some spillage on what is happening provincially to (what is happening) federally. It has to do with trust and the Liberal brand," Mr. Nanos said in an interview.

"Federally, the Liberals have just come off the advertising scandal. Now in the week they have launched their campaign, the provincial Liberals broke many of their campaign promises, so you have a conjunction of Liberals and trust and really bad timing."

In the face of tumbling results, two former Liberal cabinet ministers sounded a warning about the party's failing campaign. Former natural resources minister Herb Dhaliwal yesterday urged Mr. Martin to clean out the Liberal election team, which he blames for running a bad campaign.

"I've said right from Day 1 that we are looking at a minority government," said Mr. Dhaliwal, who declined to run in this election.

Mr. Martin "has serious problems, no doubt about it, and he has got to show that he is going to make changes."

Brian Tobin, another ex-Liberal minister, said yesterday that Mr. Martin's election prospects aren't looking good, with all signs pointing to a minority government.

Mr. Dhaliwal said Mr. Martin's team made a serious mistake in over-selling the new prime minister in the early days of the government since "he has not met those expectations."

Mr. Dhaliwal added Mr. Martin's initial unwillingness to reach out to loyalists of former prime minister Jean Chretien is causing serious internal problems and he levelled part of the blame on campaign co-chairman David Herle.

Mr. Herle ran Mr. Martin's leadership campaign, but Mr. Dhaliwal questioned whether he has the ability to run a national election campaign.

"The very people that win you the leadership are not necessary the people who are going to win you the election," he said.

However, Liberal deputy campaign director Steve McKinnon said there are no plans for Mr. Herle to leave the campaign

Mr. Dhaliwal added Mr. Herle should never have advised Mr. McGuinty on the budget that jacked up health premiums as high as \$900 per person. Mr. Martin also admitted Mr. McGuinty told him about his plan to break an election pledge and impose higher premiums before the budget was tabled.

Mr. Tobin said the less-than-positive comments he made on CTV's Question Period only reflect the recent polls, adding it wouldn't pay "to pretend there's

not an election on."

Liberal MPs say the fallout from Mr. McGuinty's budget has hurt them and polls show party support crumbling in the province where the Liberals won 98 of the 103 seats in the last election.

A well-known southern Ontario MP, who is considered a strong Martinite, said he's been receiving panicky calls from fellow MPs who are upset at Mr. Herle and his team.

"They're a bunch of juvenile delinquents who don't seem capable of shooting straight. I'm not quite sure who the brain might be -- well I'm not quite sure there are any brains" he said, asking not to be named.

"They think they're pretty smart.

"I think it's a group who have been in this leadership mode, and know how to count heads and that sort of thing, but now that they have arrived, they don't know what to do."

Seat projections show the Liberals poised to win 67 of Ontario's seats compared to 34 for the Tories and five for the NDP. Nationally, the Liberals would win 135 seats to 98 for the Conservatives, 54 for the BQ and 21 for the NDP.

At dissolution, the Liberals held 168 seats in the House of Commons, while the Conservatives held 73. The Bloc Quebecois had 33 and the New Democrats held 14. There were also nine independents and four vacancies in the 301-seat Commons.

This election will see the number of Commons seats increase to 308.

Mr. Dhaliwal, a former B.C. MP, said Liberals are also in trouble in British Columbia where they had hoped to win all 36 seats.

"Look at B.C., they said they were going to win all the seats in B.C. Just two weeks ago that's what David Herle said. Now they are down, according to the polls, to 10 and I think they will be lucky if they win a seat," he said.

However, Ontario Liberal MP John McKay said the situation is not as dire as it seems, at least in his Scarborough-East riding.

"You get up in the morning and you read the newspapers and you say: 'Oh man this is going to be a tough day' and then you go walk the streets and knock on doors and it doesn't turn out to be so tough after all," he said.

Angry voters come around after he explains Mr. Martin's record of lowering taxes, eliminating the deficit and improving Canada's productivity, he said.

Mr. McKay would not venture an opinion on Mr. Herle's handling of the campaign or his decision to provide strategic and polling advice on the Ontario budget.

"Politics is a funny business. When you win, it doesn't matter how you manage and what kind of a bum you were for the previous five weeks. All is forgiven," he added.

Mr. McKay said the Liberals have also been helped by NDP leader Jack Layton's pledge to scrap the Clarity Act and his "shoot-from-the-hip" assertion that Mr. Martin is responsible for the death of 100 homeless people in Toronto.

Robert Fife is parliamentary bureau chief

Federal Election 2004.

© The Ottawa Citizen 2004

 **Print Story**

 **Send to a Friend**

MONDAY, MAY 31, 2004

SECTIONS IN THIS ISSUE:

[News](#) | [Letters](#) | [Editorials](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Sports](#) | [Arts](#) | [City](#)

[List of the 7 Days Archived & Search Tools](#)

[Search canada.com](#) [About Us](#) [Advertise](#) [Site Map](#) [Privacy](#) [Terms](#) [FAQ](#) [Our Partners](#)

Copyright © 2004 CanWest Interactive Inc. All rights reserved.
CanWest Interactive Inc. is an affiliate of [CanWest Global Communications Corp.](#)
[Copyright & Permission Rules](#)

canada.com