

ANALYSIS

Time for Liberal reflection

The Liberals got their majority, but they failed to meet their goal of 55 seats. Couple that with the NDP sweep through Vancouver Island and the North Coast and it was a disappointing night for the reigning Liberals.

The Liberals held on to just 46 of their 77 seats. The NDP picked up 33, a gain of 31 since the last election.

And it became apparent early Tuesday night the Liberals would have to do a lot more than bust out the AC/DC at Liberal headquarters to get the small crowd pumped.

Their election night gala was lackluster, with only a few dozen supporters huddled around six TV screens as the results poured in and NDP numbers crept up.

Newly elected Carole Taylor and Wally Oppal, key members of Campbell's star candidate team, seemed to inject some energy into a tired bunch late in the evening, but when Gordon Campbell finally breezed through, the crowd's loud cheers didn't fool anyone.

"You could tell the room wasn't packed and the crowd was quite subdued and surprised," said polit-



Kristin Bradford, 24 hours

They were in party mode at NDP headquarters in Victoria Tuesday.

ical pundit Michael Geoghegan.

It was a different story in Victoria, where Carole James looked, and spoke, like the night's winner.

"Carole James sort of had to fight her way through the crowds ... it was a huge comeback."

So what's the next for the Liber-

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- Geoghegan

als? According to Geoghegan, this election showed B.C. wants a leader who not only knows how to get things, but who is likeable while doing it.

"The struggle for (Campbell) will be to be less of a technocrat and more of a populist leader. The clear battleground was the hearts and minds of the people in the middle, so the challenge for both leaders is to rein them in."

Campbell needs to take a more moderate approach, said 24 hours' political columnist Bill Teileman.

"I don't know that he will, but he can listen to what voters are saying and not proceed with more privatization ... and (not) make radical decisions," Teileman said.

The premier is keeping quiet about any impending changes to the cabinet, telling reporters yesterday he won't make any decisions until the final results are in May 30.

- Robyn Dickens, 24 hours



24
hours
on the
Campaign
Trail

Quotables

"There's no reason why people should be disagreeable when they disagree."

- Gordon Campbell on the 33 new NDP faces in the legislature Tuesday night.

"I think it's pretty clear they want us to pay more attention to some of the issues they think we weren't paying enough attention to."

- Gordon Campbell, on why the NDP gained so many seats.

"What we're seeing is the return to traditional voting patterns."

- Gary Collins, former Liberal finance minister

"This election brought the NDP back from the brink of annihilation."

- Michael Geoghegan, political pundit

STV no go

About 57 per cent of voters said yes to STV - three per cent short of the total the measure needed to pass. That has supporters steamed. "Sixty per cent is an arbitrary number," said BC-STV Yes spokesperson Bruce Hallsor. "It's never been used before in any B.C. referendum."

Premier Gordon Campbell called the results "significant." Hallsor agreed: "It's completely wrong to carry on with a system that the majority of B.C. voters have rejected."



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Come clean

The B.C. Teachers Federation is just one election-advertising sponsor that spent a lot of green endorsing their preferred party, buying campaign ads and signs. Any sponsor who spends more than \$500 is required to file a disclosure report within 90 days of the election. So if you're interested in just how much was spent in a month, the information will be posted at www.electionsbc.ca.

Turnout

Voter turnout was impressive in some ridings this election. Reports from election night said voters in Surrey-Whalley were particularly numerous. More than 15,000 turned out in the riding won by the NDP's Bruce Ralston. Last election, the riding had one of the lowest voter turnouts.

online poll

Do you expect the Liberals will change?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Yesterday's question

Were you surprised at the election vote?

- Yes - 31%
- No - 69%
- Don't know - 0%

Two too close to call

It isn't over yet. Despite the Liberals' majority, there are still two ridings in question.

There are currently recounts underway in Vancouver-Burrard and Cariboo South.

"I was expecting it to be close," said NDP Vancouver-Burrard candidate Tim Stevenson, "but I never expected it to be a cliff-hanger."

Stevenson is in a seesaw battle with Liberal rival Lorne Mayencourt.

Early Wednesday morning, Elections BC had Mayencourt ahead by 13 votes, but Stevenson edged ahead yesterday afternoon.

A winner won't be declared until the recount on May 30, after all ballots have been recounted and absentee ballots factored in.

"There's probably at least 1,000 absentee ballots," he said. "I'm feeling cautiously optimistic."

- Matt Kieiltyka

Vancouver-Burrard

Lorne Mayencourt Liberal
Tim Stevenson NDP

Winner: ???

Cariboo South

Water Cobb Liberal
Charlie Wyse NDP

Winner: ???

Vancouver-Burrard

Lorne Mayencourt	..... Liberal	.....11,230
Tim Stevenson	..... NDP	.....11,217
Janek Kuchmistrz	..... Green Party	.....3,405
John Clarke	..... Libertarian	.....361
Lisa Voldeng	..... Work Less Party	.....153
John Ince	..... The Sex Party	.....92
Ian McLeod	..... DR BC	.....77
Antonio Ferreira	..... Platinum Party	.....26
Total		- 26,561

Cariboo South

Charlie Wyse	..... NDP	.....6,748
Walter Cobb	..... Liberal	.....6,747
Ed Sharkey	..... Green Party	.....793
Mike Orr	..... Independent	.....506
Total		- 14,794

Brace for change: James

The legislature is going to look very different, warned NDP Leader Carole James at a press conference in Victoria yesterday.

She also said she was surprised at the success of her campaign.

"The results did exceed my expectations. I don't play the numbers game, but ... the people of British Columbia sent a very clear message that people want change," said James.

She conceded she voted against STV, but will push other options.

"I felt there were other models to look at," she said.

Like Campbell, James will take the weekend off and celebrate.

- Kristin Bradford