

Ric Dolphin's

Insight

into Government

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"HOLY SHIT!"

AT LONG LAST: THE MUCH ANTICIPATED CONVULSION

ALL THE POLLS PREDICTED IT, BUT WHO BELIEVES POLLS? CERTAINLY NOT THE PUNDITRY, NOR THE POLITICIANS, NOT EVEN THE DIPPERS THEMSELVES. BUT BY 9 P.M. TUESDAY, THE ONLY POLLS THAT MATTER REVEALED THE AWFUL TRUTH.

In the ominously quiet banquet room of Calgary's Metropolitan Centre, site of many a raucous Tory celebration over these past four decades, the most commonly heard invocation Tuesday night was a hushed, almost prayerful, "Holy shit!"

On the big video screens, the writing was on the wall an hour after the polls had closed: NDP MAJORITY GOVERNMENT.

Not only was **Rachel Notley's** Orange machine about to take every single seat in Edmonton (which had been more or less expected), but was poised to snap up most of those in the outlying Capital region, two-thirds of those in Calgary, the twin seats in both Lethbridge and Red Deer, and a smattering of others around the province including Banff-Cochrane, Medicine Hat, and Peace River.

Meanwhile **Jim Prentice's** Progressive Conservative party, the default ruler of Alberta since **Peter Lougheed's** upset of the Social Credit dynasty on Aug. 30, 1971, were not only reduced to being the opposition, but, thanks to Brian Jean's resurrection of the Wildrose Party, the *Second Opposition*.

The media, arrayed on risers at the back of the room, many with their trios of experts at make shift desks, seemed as nonplussed as anyone. "Holy shit!" allowed a Calgary newspaper columnist. "I was predicting a Tory minority and that would've been *historic*. This is like..." He struggled for words, but came up short. "Holy shit!"

A scattered group of maybe 50 Tory supporters sat mutely in the rows of seats prepared for three hundred awaiting the appearance of **Jim Prentice** as you await the verdict of your boss when he asks you to close the door and please have a seat.

The Premier was preceded by the team from the Tories' 4th Street campaign headquarters: Southern Alberta manager **Alan Hallman**, his lean face drained of its usual vulpine twinkle; the glamorous **Emma May**, appointed in October as head of the Premier's McDougall Centre Calgary office and seconded for the

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POLITICAL PULSE

DANI REDUX

EX-ROSER SMITH BOUNDS BACK INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Nice to see that **Danielle Smith** is fully recovered from the floor-crosser blues and the nomination desolation that had de-verved her in recent months.

Not only is the ex-Roser-cum-ex-Tory writing a political memoir (suggested title: *Thorn Among the Rosers*) and littering the Twittersphere with her opinions, but she is now popping up regularly on TV and Radio news broadcasts to impart her trenchant political commentary—something of a reversion to her previous incarnation, before the political sickness hit, as a newspaper pundit and news show host.

In an interview with CBC Radio's **Carol Off** on *As It Happens* Wednesday, Smith took the opportunity to slag the freshly departed premier. She and the other eight Wildrosers who crossed the floor in December, she implied, were lured into the PC fold under false pretences. For example, they were led to believe an election would not be held until the spring of 2016.

"Before I went away on holiday [to Mexico in January], I talked to the Premier about hopefully having my nomination in September. I found out on the beach that I was going to have to hold it earlier. If you'd have asked any of us at that time if we would have been able to rebuild confidence with our constituencies... in two or three months we would have said, 'You're crazy,' so that'll be more fodder for my book."

She also accused **Jimbo** of convincing the floor-crossers that he was going to put forward a "fiscally conservative budget."

"He kept talking about a fiscally conservative budget; he kept talking about how he was going to find wasteful spending. And quite frankly it was just talk and didn't materialize in this budget... And as a result you end up with a split conservative vote [in the election]."

She continued: "I'll put out one more thing: I don't want to take anything away from Rachel Notley's victory, but she won 52 seats with 40% of the vote. The combined PC and Wildrose vote was 52%. The PCs actually got a higher vote than the Wildrose."

"So there is still a large number of Albertans—the majority—who want a conservative government. Now it's incumbent on new conservative leaders, **Brian Jean** and whoever leads the Progressive Conservative party, to come back together in some way. I did it wrong. Hopefully the next two leaders will figure out how to do it right."

With the remaining 10 Tories currently leaderless, might this be an oblique job application? Stranger things have happened.

Meanwhile **Danielle** has been training to be a financial consultant for low income earners lacking money-management skills.

An hour or so after the **Off** interview, she tweeted: "Finished my facilitator training in money management at Momentum today. What an incredible group."

Might the new gov't have a position for her?

campaign, fought back tears.

And there was campaign manager **Randy Dawson**, of the infamous, gov't-fattened Navigator firm; a paunchy and balding 60ish man with sharp intelligent eyes that were widely believed to be able to see into the future.

That myth had been burnished in 2008 when Randy had taken the Stelmach gov't from dismal prospect to glorious victory. He'd also assisted in the rescue of 2012 when **Alison Redford's** gov't came from behind at the last minute to beat the favoured Wildrose

But now he was the bum who had advised **Jim Prentice** to call an early election in an economic downturn and with an unpopular budget. Had he been motivated by a pressing need for the handsome fee that came with the job, some Tories were now asking?

And how much had this six-week gig grossed him anyway? Half a mil? Guess we'll have to wait for the Elections Alberta Q2 report for the true number.

Those gimlet eyes were now clouded. Dawson, a crony of Prentice's since their early days as red Tories trying to get **Rick Orman** elected in the 1993 provincial leadership, looked deflated and diminished. He held to the hand of Rudy, his sweet, diminutive Filipino boyfriend, as tightly as a drowning man grasps a rope. The great Tory ship had been driven onto the shoals and his fingerprints were all over the wheel.

POOR OLD J.P. WAS AT THE OTHER END OF THE BIBLICAL CLICHÉ, THE ONE ABOUT PRIDE GOING BEFORE THE FALL

Not just his prints, of course, but also those of the man who, surrounded by carrion cameras and mikes, now made his way towards the stage, wife Karen at his side.

But the trademark grey suit, uncharacteristically, was wrinkled, the pants were baggy and unpressed, and there was no tie neatly Windsored at the collar. The collar, in fact, was open, but not the Oxford-buttoned kind of open that keeps the wings erect like a German Shepherd's ears—the style favoured by Jimbo on his “country casual” whistle stops. Tonight's collar cried for a tie, for without one, it flopped.

The audience, now infused with the 60 or so campaign workers, stood and applauded bravely as **Jim Prentice**, the party's savior not so many weeks ago, took the stage where 12 Alberta flags had been arrayed: one for each election won by the Tories since 1971. There would be no 13th.

In the sad lexicon of political verbiage that passes for oratory in this country, it is the wont of the victorious to declare themselves “humbled.” Prentice used the word when he won the leadership last September; used it again when the Tories took all four by-elections in October.

An hour later in Edmonton, surrounded by a manic multitude of orange sign-wavers chanting “Rachel! Rachel!” in the same Westin Hotel ballroom where she was chosen leader last October, Notley would declare, “I am deeply humbled.”

No! one felt like shouting, *you are feeling your oats, you are revelling in the adulation, you are proud as punch and pumped up on pheromones and plain old fashioned pride. No humility here. Humble? Pull the other one.*

Poor old J.P., on the other hand, was at the other end of

the Biblical cliché, the one about pride going before the fall. This was the time, replete with baggy pants and flacid collar, to declare himself humbled.

But he eschewed the word. He gave a mostly gracious, boilerplate speech of five minutes. He congratulated Rachel and Brian; thanked his candidates and the volunteers. He dished up an anodyne concession —“The voters are always right in our democracy.”—but without much conviction.

He accepted “responsibility for tonight's outcome,” expressing his disappointment and becoming ever so slightly moist of eye. He added a little self-aggrandizing coda about his call to duty to save the province from fiscal ruin and how he could not have lived with himself had he not stepped up to “do what I could to set things right in my province.”

Then he announced something that struck some as cowardly, others as the arrogance that many Albertans had seen in the premier these last few weeks, especially during his performance in the debate.

“Clearly, however, my contribution to public life is now at an end,” he said. “It is time for me to dedicate my time to the other responsibilities I have as a husband, and as a father, and a grandfather. Accordingly I have resigned as the leader of the Progressive Conservative party of Alberta effective immediately. And furthermore I will step aside as the elected member of the Legislative Assembly for Calgary Foothills.”

The subtext seemed clear.

After being king, how on earth could this man, a man persistently rumored to have his heart set on an eventual try for the federal leadership, settle for a seat in the *second* opposition? Now that would indeed be a *humbling* experience. Humiliating in fact.

In the rapidly emptying room, we took a seat next to **Gillian Stewart**, a freelance writer in her sixties. In 1971 she had been a fledgling advertising copywriter with the company handling the campaign for the Social Credit gov't, which produced print ads for leader **Harry Strom** like the one seen here.

Monday August 30th is your day. Not ours. Or theirs. It's your day for deciding Alberta's future. On that Monday you'll be asked to cast your ballot for one of four political parties. Consider your vote carefully.

Consider as well. Is it a time for changing governments? For somebody else's good? Or yours? In this election the Alberta Social Credit party stands on its record of good, solid government. And what this kind of approach to government can mean in the next four years of rapid economic and social change.

August 30th.

And the dependable leadership qualities of three outstanding Albertans.
William Aberhart, Ernest Manning.
And now, Harry Strom.

Alberta Social Credit. Albertans building together.

Vote Social Credit.

Approved by the Alberta Social Credit League of Women

Gillian, who, like most of us, was surprised by the NDP's 54-seat sweep, remembers how few people in 1971 believed **Peter Lougheed's** upstart Progressive Conservative Party could possibly topple the 36-year-old Socred

dynasty.

“No one was expecting the Tories to win,” she says. “Everyone was voting and thinking they would get a strong opposition. Of course, back then we didn’t have the polling and the internet that we have today, so there was not forewarning. It was a complete surprise when they won.”

These political “convulsions,” as former federal Reform Party leader Preston Manning termed them, seem to occur every two or three generations in Alberta.

The Socreds themselves elected one in 1935, in the depths of the Depression, when **William Aberhart** defeated the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) with his promise of a new monetary system, an Alberta bank, and dividends in Alberta currency for citizens (“funny money”). Aberhart lost the resulting jurisdictional fight with Ottawa, then promptly died in 1943.

His successor, **Ernest Manning** (Preston’s dad), abandoned the “funny money” policy and turned the Socreds into a more conventional conservative gov’t.

The United Farmers (UFA) themselves, who turfed out Alberta’s last Liberal gov’t in 1921, were a radical, socialist-inclined precursor to the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), formed in Calgary in 1932.

The CCF, however, was displaced by the Socreds in Alberta, moved to Saskatchewan, producing Premier **Tommy Douglas**, whose imitation of the British Labour Party’s national health care plan made him a Canadian hero on a par with **Wayne Gretzky** and the guy who invented the zipper.

At its first convention in Regina in 1932, the CCF adopted a manifesto which stated, “No CCF government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism and put into operation the full program of socialist planning that will lead to the establishment in Canada of the Cooperative Commonwealth.” (The New Democratic Party, the name adopted by the CCF in 1962, tends to avoid such strident language these days—although NDP MLAs still pronounce the word “corporate” with a sneer.)

In Alberta, the CCF/NDP made little headway outside of Edmonton municipal politics, where it elected several CCF/NDP Edmonton mayors, including **Harry Ainlay**, **Elmer Roper**, **Ivor Dent**, **Jan Reimer**, and (possibly) **Don Iveson** (who may come out of the closet now the Dippers have taken over Manor Farm.)

One or two CCF members were elected as MLAs in the ‘40s and ‘50s, and **Garth Turcott**, a lawyer from the union-rich Crowsnest Pass mining region, won a byelection in 1966 and sat as the first NDP MLA (Pincher Creek Crowsnest) before being defeated by a Socred in the general election of 1967. (At 84, Turcott still maintains a law practice in Pincher Creek.)

Rachel’s father **Grant Notley**, a Didsbury native with a U of A history degree, was the first NDP candidate elected in an Alberta general election, winning the Spirit-River Fairview seat in 1971 at age 32. He served as the lone socialist until **Ray Martin** (now a 73-year-old Edmonton school trustee) joined him in 1982.

In 1984 Notley died with six others in a small plane crash. Notley, whose face graces the hagiographic t-shirts sold at NDP shindigs, missed the subsequent NDP breakthrough in the 1986 election when the party won 29% of

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GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS

A selection of motions put forward by NDP MLAs in the seven years since **Rachel Notley** was first elected MLA provides hints of what to expect from Alberta’s new gov’t.

Motion (mover & year)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to prepare and table in the Assembly a clear plan to limit fees for child care while ensuring child care providers have funding available to provide high quality care. (Notley: 2008)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly establish an all-party committee on oil and gas royalties. (Mason 2008)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to investigate a bulk buying plan for pharmaceuticals and use any savings to reduce the cost of prescription drugs for Alberta seniors. (Mason 2008)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to move wind energy projects that are currently on the Alberta Electric System Operator queue onto the grid. (Notley 2008)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to oppose proposals for nuclear power plants in Alberta and pursue renewable energy alternatives to coal-fired electricity generation. (Mason 2009)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to introduce legislation to protect the rights of landowners, ensuring property rights cannot be arbitrarily violated or extinguished without consultation and fair compensation. (Mason 2011)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to introduce legislation which requires that all proposed electrical transmission lines be subject to an open and transparent public consultation process and that the costs of new transmission lines be shared equitably by consumers and industry. (Notley 2011)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to review the constitutionality and legality of each of its Bills prior to introduction in the Assembly. (Bilous 2014)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to commit to the immediate study and drafting of a plan to phase out all coal-generated power in Alberta by 2025. (Notley 2014)
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to introduce legislation that prohibits mandatory fees in Alberta’s public and separate schools from kindergarten to Grade 12. (Bilous 2015)

INSIGHT'S LISTING OF THE 2015 ELECTION RESULTS

This latest convulsive change came 44 years after the last one with the NDP replacing the Tories in a similarly drastic fashion to when the Progressive Conservatives replaced the more conservative Social Credit in 1971. The unofficial seat count (pending the ongoing recount) in this 29th Alberta general election: **NDP: 53 (40.5% of the vote); Wildrose: 21 (24.23%); PC: 11 (27.8%); Liberal: 1 (4%); and Alberta Party: 1 (2.29%)**. Voter turnout was 58.1%, highest in two decades. As can be seen from this chart, the NDP gov't is almost half female, the highest proportion of women of any legislature in North America. The Dipper caucus also boasts at least two openly gay MLAs, including **Ricardo Miranda** in Calgary-Cross and **Michael Connolly** in Calgary-Hawkwood. The majority in the gov't caucus are members, if not officials, of trade unions.

RIDING	WINNER	OCCUPATION	SECOND	THIRD	% SPLIT
AIRDRIE	Angela Pitt, 31 (WR)	Event mgmt co. owner	Chris Noble (NDP)	Peter Brown (PC)	35/30/29
ATHABASCA - STURGEON - REDWATER	Colin Piquette, 45 (ND)	Boyle Chamber pres.	Jeff Johnson (PC)*	Travis Olson (WR)	40/30/30
BANFF - COCHRANE	Cameron Westhead, 37 (ND)	Male nurse	Scott Wagner (WR)	Ron Casey (PC)*	43/29/28
BARRHEAD - MORINVILLE - WESTLOCK	Glenn van Dijken, 53 (WR)	Grain farmer	Tristan Turner (ND)	Maureen Kubinec (PC)*	39/34/27
BATTLE RIVER - WAINWRIGHT	Wes Taylor, 55 (WR)	Realtor/teacher	Blake Prior (PC)	Gordon Naylor (ND)	42/31/23
BONNYVILLE - COLD LAKE	Scott Cyr, 38 (WR)	Accountant	Craig Copeland (PC)	Josalynne Head (ND)	46/30/18
CALGARY - ACADIA	Brandy Payne, 36 (ND)	Yoga instructor	Linda Carlson (WR)	Jonathan Denis (PC)*	35/31/29
CALGARY - BOW	Deborah Drever, 26 (ND)	Sociology student	Byron Nelson (PC)	Trevor Grover (WR)	34/33/23
CALGARY - BUFFALO	Kathleen Ganley (ND)	Labour lawyer	Terry Rock (PC)	David Kahn (LIB)	35/28/25
CALGARY - CROSS	Ricardo Miranda, 38 (ND)	Union researcher	Rick Hanson (PC)	Moiz Mahmoud (WR)	36/35/16
CALGARY - CURRIE	Brian Malkinson, 30 (ND)	Drilling equip. sales	Christine Cusanelli (PC)*	Terry DeVries (WR)	40/24/20
CALGARY - EAST	Robyn Luff, 34 (ND)	Junior HS teacher	Moe Amery (PC)*	Ali Waissi (WR)	39/28/26
CALGARY - ELBOW	Greg Clark, 44 (AP)	IT co. founder	Gordon Dirks (PC)*	Catherine Wellburn (ND)	42/30/16
CALGARY - FISH CREEK	Richard Gottfried (PC)	Airline executive	Jill Moreton (ND)	Blaine Maller (WR)	33/32/30
CALGARY - FOOTHILLS	Jim Prentice, 58 (PC)	Outgoing leader	Anne Wilson (ND)	Keelan Frey (WR)	40/32/18
CALGARY - FORT	Joe Ceci, 57 (ND)	City councillor	Andy Nguyen (PC)	Jeevan Mangat (WR)	50/23/21
CALGARY - GLENMORE	Annam Kazim (ND)/Linda Johnson (PC)* TIE, PENDING RECOUNT			Chris Kemp-Jackson (WR)	33/33/24
CALGARY - GREENWAY	Manmeet Bhullar, 35 (PC)*	Ex cabinet minister	Don Monroe (ND)	Devinder Toor (WR)	43/36/21
CALGARY - HAWKWOOD	Michael Connolly, 21 (ND)	Student activist	Jason Luan (PC)*	Jae Shim (WR)	36/31/22
CALGARY - HAYS	Ric McIver, 56 (PC)*	Ex cabinet minister	Carla Drader (ND)	Bob Mailloux (WR)	38/29/26
CALGARY - KLEIN	Craig Coolahan (ND)	Union mediator	Kyle Fawcett (PC)*	Jeremy Nixon (WR)	44/26/23
CALGARY - LOUGHEED	Dave Rodney, 50 (PC)*	Adventure guide	Mihai Ion (ND)	Mark Mantel (WR)	35/32/28
CALGARY - MACKAY - NOSE HILL	Karen McPherson, 48 (ND)	Business analyst	Kathy Macdonald (WR)	Neil Brown (PC)*	37/30/27
CALGARY - MCCALL	Irfan Sabir, 38 (ND)	Lawyer	Happy Mann (WR)	Jagdeep Saohota (PC)	30/27/18
CALGARY - MOUNTAIN VIEW	David Swann, 65 (LIB)*	Physician	Marc Chikinda (ND)	Mark Hlady (PC)	37/29/24
CALGARY - NORTH WEST	Sandra Jansen, 52 (PC)*	CTV presenter	Karen Mills (ND)	Jeff Callaway (WR)	33/30/27
CALGARY - NORTHERN HILLS	Jamie Kleinsteuber, 38 (ND)	Airport worker	Teresa Woo-Paw (PC)*	Prasad Panda (WR)	38/31/25
CALGARY - SHAW	Graham Sucha, 28 (ND)	Restaurant mgr.	Jeff Wilson (PC)*	Brad Leishman (WR)	31/30/30
CALGARY - SOUTH EAST	Rick Fraser, 43 (PC)*	Paramedic	Mirical Macdonald (ND)	Brandon Lundy (WR)	33/31/39
CALGARY - VARSITY	Stephanie McLean, 28 (ND)	Divorce lawyer	Susan Billington (PC)	Sharon Polsky (WR)	44/30/14
CALGARY - WEST	Mike Ellis, 43 (PC)*	Calgary Police sgt.	Mizanur Rahman (ND)	Gary Lucyshyn (WR)	47/28/25
CARDSTON - TABER - WARNER	Grant Hunter, 47 (WR)	Building contractor	Brian Brewin (PC)	Aaron Haugen (ND)	42/35/20
CHESTERMERE - ROCKY VIEW	Leela Aheer, 49 (WR)	Carwash owner	Bruce McAllister (PC)*	William Pelech (ND)	37/36/18
CYPRESS-MEDICINE HAT	Drew Barnes, 53 (WR)*	Developer, rancher	Bob Olson (PC)	Bev Waege (ND)	55/22/21
DRAYTON VALLEY - DEVON	Mark Smith, 54 (WR)	Teacher	Diana McQueen (PC)*	Katherine Swampy (ND)	37/31/28
DRUMHELLER-STETTLER	Rick Strankman, 61 (WR)*	Grain farmer	Jack Hayden (PC)	Emily Shannon (ND)	48/34/18
DUNVEGAN - CENTRAL PEACE - NOTLEY	Marg McCuaig-Boyd, 63 (ND)	Retired teacher	Kelly Hudson (WR)	Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier (ND)	39/33/29
EDMONTON - BEVERLY - CLAREVIEW	Deron Bilous, 39 (ND)*	Teacher	Tony Caterina (PC)	Stephanie Diacon (WR)	74/15/8
EDMONTON - CALDER	David Eggen, 53 (ND)*	Teacher	Tom Bradley (PC)	Andrew Altimas (WR)	71/18/9
EDMONTON - CASTLE DOWNS	Nicole Goehring, 38 (ND)	Social worker	Thomas Lukaszuk (PC)*	Gerrit Roosenboom (WR)	64/23/8
EDMONTON - CENTRE	David Shepherd, 41 (ND)	Edm.City PR flack	Laurie Blakeman (LIB)*	Catherine Keil (PC)	54/25/14
EDMONTON - DECORE	Chris Nielsen, 48 (ND)	Warehouseman	Janice Sarich (PC)*	Dean Miller (WR)	68/18/8

RIDING	WINNER	OCCUPATION	SECOND	THIRD	% SPLIT
EDMONTON - ELLERSLIE	Rod Loyola, 41 (ND)	UofA staff union pres.	Harman Kandola (PC)	Jackie Lovely (WR)	62/20/14
EDMONTON - GLENORA	Sarah Hoffman, 34 (ND)	Public school trustee	Heather Klimchuk (PC)*	Don Kozaiak (WR)	69/17/8
EDMONTON - GOLD BAR	Marlin Schmidt, 36 (ND)	Gov't hydrogeologist	David Dorward (PC)*	Justic James (WR)	69/19/6
EDMONTON - HIGHLANDS - NORWOOD	Brian Mason, 61 (ND)*	Former party leader	Jonathan Dai (PC)	Joshua Loepky (WR)	78/12/7
EDMONTON - MANNING	Heather Sweet, 33 (ND)	Social worker	Gucharan Garcha (PC)	Atiq Rehman (WR)	72/15/8
EDMONTON - MCCLUNG	Lorne Dach, 57 (ND)	Realtor	David Xiao (PC)*	Steve Thompson (WR)	55/26/14
EDMONTON - MEADOWLARK	Jon Carson, 23 (ND)	Electrician	Katherine O'Neill (PC)	Amber Maze (WR)	57/23/11
EDMONTON - MILL CREEK	Denise Woolard, 68 (ND)	Retired teacher/psychologist	Gene Zwozdesky (PC)*	Harpreet Gill (LIB)	56/24/12
EDMONTON - MILL WOODS	Christina Gray, 36 (ND)	Software developer	Sohail Quadri (PC)*	Baljit Sall (WR)	65/19/9
EDMONTON - RIVERVIEW	Lori Sigurdson, 54 (ND)	Social work professor	Steve Young (PC)*	Donna Wilson (LIB)	63/19/7
EDMONTON - RUTHERFORD	Richard Feehan 55 (ND)	Social work instructor	Chris LaBossiere (PC)	Joseph Pisa (WR)	64/22/9
EDMONTON - SOUTH WEST	Thomas Dang, 20 (ND)	UofA computing student	Matt Jeneroux (PC)*	Cole Kander (WR)	53/29/10
EDMONTON-STRATHCONA	Rachel Notley, 51 (ND)	Premier Designate	Shelley Wegner (PC)	Steve Kochan (LIB)	82/14/4
EDMONTON - WHITEMUD	Dr. Bob Turner, 67 (ND)	UofA medicine prof (rtd.)	Stephen Mandel (PC)*	Chad Peters (WR)	58/32/6
FORT MCMURRAY - CONKLIN	Brian Jean, 52 (WR)	Lawyer, businessman, ex MP	Ariana Mancini (ND)	Don Scott (PC)*	44/31/22
FORT MCMURRAY - WOOD BUFFALO	Tany Yao, 50 (WR)	Investor, former fireman	Steven Drover (ND)	Mike Allen (PC)*	40/30/26
FORT SASKATCHEWAN - VEGREVILLE	Jessica Littlewood, 32 (ND)	Office worker	Jacque Fenske (PC)*	Joe Gosselin (WR)	46/28/20
GRANDE PRAIRIE - SMOKY	Todd Loewen, 48 (WR)	Outfitter	Todd Russell (ND)	Everett McDonald (PC)*	33/31/31
GRANDE PRAIRIE - WAPITI	Wayne Drysdale (PC)*	Ex cabinet minister	Mary Dahr (ND)	Laila Goodridge (WR)	36/29/24
HIGHWOOD	Wayne Anderson, 61 (WR)	IT entrepreneur (rtd.)	Carrie Fischer (PC)	Leslie Mahoney (ND)	41/33/19
INNISFAIL - SYLVAN LAKE	Don MacIntyre, 60 (WR)	NAIT tech. instructor	Kerry Towle (PC)*	Patricia Norman (ND)	43/28/23
LAC LA BICHE - ST. PAUL - TWO HILLS	David Hanson (WR)	Oilfield Consultant	Catherine Harder (ND)	Darrell Younghans (PC)	39/34/24
LACOMBE - PONOKA	Ron Orr, 60 (WR)	Journeyman carpenter	Doug Hart (ND)	Peter Dewit (PC)	36/30/28
LEDUC - BEAUMONT	Shaye Anderson, 40 (ND)	Telus installer/repairman	Sharon Smith (WR)	George Rogers (PC)*	38/30/28
LESSER SLAVE LAKE	Danielle Larivee, 40 (ND)	Registered Nurse	Darryl Boisson (WR)	Pearl Calahasen (PC)*	43/35/22
LETHBRIDGE - EAST	Maria Fitzpatrick (ND)	Corrections worker (rtd.)	Tammy Perlich (PC)	Kent Prestage (WR)	48/45/20
LETHBRIDGE - WEST	Shannon Phillips, 39 (ND)	Assistant to AFL pres.	Greg Weadick (PC)*	Ron Bain (WR)	60/21/16
LITTLE BOW	David Schneider (WR)	Farmer, former reeve	Ian Donovan (PC)*	B. Muendel-Atherstone (ND)	35.4/35.3/25
LIVINGSTONE-MACLEOD	Pat Stier, 62 (WR)*	Farmer, land consultant	Evan Berger (PC)	Aileen Burke (ND)	40/35/23
MEDICINE HAT	Bob Wanner, 66 (ND)	Union mediator	Val Olson (WR)	Blake Pederson (PC)*	38/36/20
OLDS - DIDSBURY - THREE HILLS	Nathan Cooper, 35 (WR)	Carstairs councillor	Wade Bearchell (PC)	Glen Norman (ND)	54/26/17
PEACE RIVER	Debbie Jabbour, 60 (ND)	Psychologist	Frank Oberle (PC)*	Nathan Steinke (WR)	38/35/20
RED DEER - NORTH	Kim Schreiner, 51 (ND)	Seniors homecare worker	Buck Buchanan (WR)	Christine Moore (PC)	29/25/23
RED DEER - SOUTH	Barb Miller, 57 (ND)	Safeway cashier	Darcy Mykytyshyn (PC)	Norman Wiebe (WR)	36/28/25
RIMBEY - ROCKY MTN. HOUSE - SUNDRE	Jason Nixon, 35 (WR)	SU exec dir., Athabasca U.	Tammy Cote (PC)	Hannah Schlamp (ND)	40/32/17
SHERWOOD PARK	Annie McKittrick, 63 (ND)	Retired teacher	Cathy Olesen (PC)*	Linda Osinchuk (WR)	52/26/22
SPRUCE GROVE - ST. ALBERT	Trevor Horne, 24 (ND)	Poli-Sci student, GMU	Rus Matichuk (PC)	Jaye Walter (WR)	47/26/19
ST. ALBERT	Marie Renaud (ND)	PDD Foundation Exec.	Stephen Khan (PC)*	Shelly Biermanski (WR)	54/28/19
STONY PLAIN	Erin Babcock, 35 (ND)	LPN Royal Alex Hosp.	Kathy Rondeau (WRP)	Ken Lemke (PC)*	38/29/25
STRATHCONA - SHERWOOD PARK	E. Cortes-Vargas, 24 (ND)	Social work student GMU	Dave Quest (PC)*	Rob Johnson (WR)	43/30/24
STRATHMORE - BROOKS	Derek Fildebrandt, 29 (WR)	Former CTF director	Molly Douglass (PC)	Lynn MacWilliam (ND)	53/27/15
VERMILION - LLOYDMINSTER	Dr. Richard Starke, 54 (PC)*	Ex cabinet minister, vet	Danny Hozack (WR)	Saba Mossagizi (ND)	47/33/19
WEST YELLOWHEAD	Eric Rosendahl, 62 (ND)	Mill worker, fish&game pres.	Robin Campbell (PC)*	Stuart Taylor (WR)	39/33/29
WETASKIWIN - CAMROSE	Bruce Hinkley, 66 (ND)	Retired Teacher	Verlyn Olson (PC)*	Bill Rock (WR)	44/35/21
WHITECOURT - STE. ANNE	Oneil Carlier, 52 (ND)	Public Service Alliance rep.	John Bos (WR)	George VanderBurg (PC)*	36/33/31

KEY: * = incumbent; boldface designates party leader; % Split lists the percentage of the vote earned by top three

the vote and 16 seats—its peak performance to date.

With the resurgence of the Liberals in the 1990s under **Lawrence Decore**, the NDP faded back into the single digits, alternating between two and four seats for the past decade and a half.

That, of course, changed last Tuesday when the party, headed by Grant's daughter, effected Alberta's latest convulsion, winning a majority of 54 of the 87 seats in the Legislature.

HOW IT HAPPENED

HARMONIC CONVERGENCE ON THE PRAIRIE

Miracles aren't really an NDP thing, so to borrow **Ralph Klein's** "Miracle on the Prairie" tag line from his 1993 unexpected majority would be wrong. And unoriginal.

So instead let's get new-agey and call this NDP thing a harmonic convergence—you know, one of those mass meditation exercises when the stars and planets are in alignment and the moon is in the seventh house and Buddha is smiling down from his yurt atop the misty mountain while the most *amazing* whale song comes cascading down a rainbow and into your headspace as you assume the lotus position and visualize peace.

All right, enough.

The winning of a majority by a socialist party in capitalist Alberta was a convergence, but not a particularly harmonic one. Several discordant factors were at play.

First of all, Jim blew it. Bad budget, wrong time, not sold well. Prentice gambled and lost.

Edmonton in particular was turned off by this corporate suit from Calgary calling himself the new management and telling us to grin and bear it while he cut jobs, taxed health-care and booze, and told us it was our own stupid fault that the provincial economy had been mismanaged.

Edmonton has grown weary of Calgary telling it what to do. Ralph was one thing, Redford quite another. Prentice was turning out to be combination of the two and it was a hybrid Edmonton found displeasing. The two-thousand-dollar suits, the cuff links, and the Italian suits didn't help either. Especially when he told us to look in the mirror to discover why the gov't had mismanaged our money.

Rachel, by comparison, seemed warm, spontaneous and *caring*. She only seems to own one suit (the cream one). And she promised us more teachers, better healthcare, and better treatment for our elderly. And instead of taxing us, she was going to go after those corporations, which, as every good Edmontonian knows, are part and parcel of the evil empire on the Bow.

And so Edmonton, which has a history of picking pinkos anyway, went NDP in a big way. Every riding in the city turned orange. So did all the ridings touching the city, even though lefties are scarce in those parts. Theirs was pure protest, against both the PCs and the Wildrose. In the Capital Region the votes for the NDP out-numbered those for the other parties combined.

Then there was Calgary. One sometimes forgets that Calgary contains people who don't drive Porsches and commute from castles on foothills. But there are some ordinary people, and a growing number of lefties—enough to vote the NDP into 14 Calgary ridings. But only thanks to the Wildrose.

And there, of course, is the rub. The Roser vote came back from the grave, prevailed in the rural areas, and split the conservative vote with the Tories in much of Calgary. They won 21 seats for themselves and a majority gov't for the NDP.

Math is hard for us, but let's quickly tally up the ridings where the sum of the Wildrose and PC votes exceeded the NDP count...29 seats. Meaning the NDP would have only won 25 seats had the conservatives converged.

Wildrose (and of ficial opposition) leader **Brian Jean**, who now occupies the catbird seat on the right, is saying there will be no merger or floor crossings on his watch. And one guesses that most of the remaining 10 or 11 Tories would not be too happy about climbing into bed with the party that helped kill their dynasty.

(We say 10 or 11 because Calgary-Glenmore was a dead-heat between PC incumbent **Linda Johnson** and NDP'er and **Annam Kazim**. The deadlock may be resolved by a recount in the coming week.)

Finally it should be said that Notley ran a great campaign. She's telegenic, bright, upbeat, natural, and holds her own well in debate and under questioning. Her platform focused on family-friendly initiatives with wide general appeal.

She kept the ideology to a minimum and, other than sticking to her guns on adding another 2% to Alberta's 10% corporate tax, was non-committal on other NDP-style measures such as hikes to the minimum wage, a cap-and-trade scheme for greenhouse gas emitters, and subsidized day care.

And although energy stocks took a reflexive plunge of 3.2% on the day after the NDP won gov't, the Calgary oil-patch appears to be reserving comment and taking a wait-and-see approach.

"They're going to stand on the sidelines and wait for the budget," says veteran oil and gas developer **Jim Gray**.

The \$12B allotted in the **Interim Supply Act**, passed in March, will only last until the end of the June. Meaning a new budget may have to be tabled by late May in order to allow enough time for debate before its passage.

Alternatively, executive council can issue a special warrant for more interim funds without going to the Legislature if the new administration wants to delay the budget, say until the fall. Given all that the new premier has on her plate, such a delay might be anticipated.

Notley, who answered the official call from the Lieutenant Governor to accept the premiership on Thursday, is now engaged in the transition process. She had kept the Prentice-appointed **Richard Dicerni**, 66, a veteran civil servant who has served provincial and federal gov'ts of all stripes, as deputy of cabinet.

Roy Romanow, 75, the former NDP premier of Saskatchewan, has been brought in from Saskatoon to head the transition team, which also includes **Anne McGrath**, a federal NDP strategist and former chief of staff to the late leader

Jack Layton.

We ran into McGrath 18 months ago at the Alberta NDP's convention in Lethbridge, where she gave encouragement to the provincial party with her account of how the federal party had gone 10% of the vote and 13 seats in 2004 to 30% of the vote, 102 seats, and official opposition status in 2011.

The secret of this success, said McGrath, was attitude. Instead of being resigned to forever existing as a valiant little rump party, the federal party had developed "an intention to form gov't."

At the time it seemed that all the attitude in the world could never elevate the four-MLA provincial NDP into the gov't of a province where Tories seemed as immovable and as immutable as the Rocky Mountains.

Things, it would appear, have changed.

Insight

into Government

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Verbatim

Premier Elect **Rachel Notley** tells the story of being a five-year-old girl at home with her mother in Fairview while her father **Grant Notley**, the sole NDP MLA at the time, was far away in Edmonton fighting for socialism in a Legislature full of conservatives.

"What does Daddy do all the time when he's away?" asked the tow-haired girl.

"Well," said Mom, "You know the story of **Robin Hood**. That's what your father does."

In her maiden speech to the Alberta Legislature on April 23, 2008, the newly elected MLA for Edmonton-Strathcona, who freely describes herself as a socialist, showed that the apple had not fallen far from the tree. After quoting her father's call for "activist gov't" in his 1972 maiden speech, Rachel went on:

"Mr. Speaker, there are several priority areas of the public interest that I believe require our attention. Our royalty regime is not serving the public interest, and I appreciate that the new Premier initiated a panel to review the regime last fall. However, both the gov't's panel and the gov't's final decision fell short. Today Albertans are losing money. Revenue which should be flowing to the owners of the resource is missing from this year's budget, and money for our future slips through our hands and drains south of the border as we speak.

"Our environmental regime is not serving the public interest. It sets the course for decades of environmental degradation and guarantees that our children and our grandchildren will have to struggle with the crisis of climate change.

"Our child care programs are not serving the public interest. The gov't is planning ahead to 2011, at which time they would see themselves providing for approximately half of the spaces required in 2006.

"Our post-secondary education system is serving less of the public interest than it once did. With tuition rates among the highest in the country, with Alberta having the lowest university participation rate of any province in the country, with university students receiving no help with the highest housing costs of at

HER FATHER'S DAUGHTER

least the last four decades, only some of the public can access these institutions.

"Our housing strategy is not serving the public interest. The failure to impose rent controls combined with the gov't's rent assistance program amounts to gov't-funded gouging in some cases while in others ineligible tenants merely descend further into financial crisis and poverty. Indeed, it amounts to the 'sluggish efforts on housing, but only after housing becomes a critical problem,' predicted by my father 36 years ago.

"Our labour laws are absolutely not serving the public interest. They serve only the interests of large employers at the expense of average working Albertans. Our labour laws have been condemned by the United Nations' International Labour Organization. More recently portions of them have been ruled in breach of our country's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Our gov't's refusal to establish balance between employers and their workers along with its refusal to amend our human rights act to reflect a principle of equality long since recognized in every other jurisdiction in the country all are in direct conflict with the public interest.

"Finally, in the richest province in the country, we still see the greatest disparity between rich and poor and rates of income support which are well below recognized measures of the poverty line. A measure of a community's strength is not how well it punishes those unable to care for themselves. Gov'ts simply must do much more and much better to eliminate poverty from our midst.

"All of these issues must be addressed, Mr. Speaker, if gov't is to adopt an activist stance focused on meeting its obligation to the public. Moreover, they must be addressed if gov't is to restore a faith or, in fact, even an interest in the democratic system in Alberta because it is this interest and this faith in the democratic system upon which the strength, the effectiveness, and the relevance of this Assembly rely. As Members of this Legislative Assembly we must never forget that.

Talk in the Corridors

Case dismissed, but Jono goes down...

● By Wednesday it was “Jonathan who?”, but for the first two days of this week **Jonathan (Jono) Denis**, 39, the Justice minister who, depending on which version one believed, angrily punched his wife **Breanna Palmer**, 30, in the nose, or accidentally kneed her when she woke him from sleep with some fellatio.

An ignominious way for a senior minister to go down, perhaps, embroiled as he was in a nasty marital legal spat whose salacious details became public on Monday, 24 hours before the polls opened. Premier **Jim Prentice** had earlier obtained Denis’ resignation as minister when the matter went before the courts (*Insight*, May. 1), but Jono remained a candidate in Calgary-Acadia.

Denis’ lovely and—er—free-spirited wife of all of six months had earlier given evidence to obtain an emergency protection order (EPO).

The premier’s wife, **Karen Prentice**, had been mentioned, having learned of the separation and accusations in mid-April from Breanna, who at the time was running Education Minister **Gordon Dirks’** campaign office.

Alan Hallman, the Tories’ southern Alberta campaign manager, was called as a witness in the proceedings. He said he had tried to talk her out of seeking the EPO, worried that the timing of the court application would hurt Denis’ election chances.

Given the generally—er—guileless nature of the bride, some campaign personnel suspected that a political rival was out to derail Jono’s campaign.

Both Denis and Palmer testified that the relationship had been a rocky one since its beginnings in 2013, but things got worse following their marriage last October.

She accused him of threatening her, of verbal and emotional abuse, and of bloodying her nose after putting her in a headlock. Denis explained that the bloodied nose occurred when she startled him from sleep, and that he apologized repeatedly for hurting her. She moved out of their shared home in April.

On Monday Queen’s Bench Justice **Craig Jones** revoked the EPO issued by a lower court judge, declaring, “Ms. Palmer is not in danger of family violence and is not in need of protection.”

How much damage this unpleasantness did to Denis’ campaign, or indeed to the Tory campaign in general, is impossible to determine.

But on Tuesday the former justice minister came third in the Acadia election with 29% of the vote, behind winner **Brandy Payne** of the NDP, a yoga instructor (35%), and second-place finisher Linda Carlson of the Wildrose (31.5%).

House cleaning...

● An air of melancholy filled the Legislature and the nearby Annex this week as defeated MLAs—more than 40 of them—packed their belongings, while ministerial staffers spent their last days tidying upfiles and shredding documents. About a hundred of the latter will be out of work soon, assuming the incoming NDP ministers (yet to

be picked) fail to hire any of them.

Most MLAs and ministers encountered by media were gracious in defeat.

Speaker **Gene Zwozdesky**, 66, a former teacher and Shumka dancer, who lost his Mill Creek riding after 18 years to NDPer **Denise Wollard**, 69, a retired teacher and school psychologist, by a margin of more than 4,000 votes, admitted he was surprised. True to character, he was diplomatic. “Albertans have spoken and I respect what they’ve said.”

Softening the blow for Zwozdesky, who was first elected in 1993 as a Liberal in the previous riding of Edmonton-Avonmore (he crossed to the Tories in 1998), will be a severance package which by our calculations comes to around \$750K. (Although we find math hard.) Meanwhile he will stay on as Speaker, presiding over the allocation of legislative offices for new members, etc., until a new speaker has been appointed by the Notley gov’t.

Hoisted on her own petard?

● Another victim of the orange tsunami that struck Edmonton especially hard was veteran Liberal **Laurie Blakeman**, 56, (Edmonton-Centre), a former actress and theatre administrator, elected 18 years ago.

A dab-hand in arcane Legislative rules and procedures, the carrot-topped, nose-ringed Blakeman was ever the effective opposition gadfly and fun to have around.

Most recently, it was Laurie’s motion on the gay-straight alliance issue (*Insight*, Mar. 13) that became the wedge that divided the Wildrose, precipitated the floor-crossing to the PCs, and ultimately led to the splitting of the right-wing vote in the election outside of Edmonton that almost killed off the Tories.

Although she attempted to avoid left-wing vote splitting in her downtown riding by simultaneously running for the Liberals, the Alberta Party, and the Greens, the refusal of the NDP to join in spoiled her chances of survival in a riding that, in past years, she had aced.

NDP newbie **David Shepherd**, 41, a black communications flack with the City of Edmonton and rapper/poet/musician (i.e. Laurie’s kind of people) got almost 9,000 votes to Laurie’s 4,000.

“I probably helped draw people away from the Prentice gov’t because of the work I did on gay-straight alliances,” a teary Blakeman told reporters on election night. “It certainly helped a progressive party. It just didn’t help my progressive party.”

The week ahead ...

May 9—The 54 members of the somewhat variegated NDP gov’t caucus gather in Edmonton for a preliminary orientation session and to enable **Rachel Notley** to further ponder whom she might appoint to cabinet. Will the yoga teacher get Health? Might the Safeway cashier be trusted with the Treasury? The fun has just begun.

May 15—Elections Alberta releases the results of its official recount of all ballots. This should resolve the deadlock in Calgary-Glenmore where PC incumbent **Linda Johnson** and NDP challenger **Annam Kazim** finished the night tied at 7,015 apiece.