

# Unity BC expects to name candidates here this week

## New party leader getting tired of questions on vote-splitting

He's in the middle of a cross B.C. tour to get out the ideas of B.C.'s second, maybe third best known right wing political party, and he still gets asked about splitting votes.

Chris Delaney, leader of Unity B.C., the party that amalgamated Family B.C., parts of Reform B.C. and a scattering of other parties on the right of the B.C. Liberals, sounds frustrated as he answers the question.

"Can you name a riding that the Liberals aren't predicted to sweep?" he asks.

Taking strength from a recent invitation to participate in televised leadership debates with Ujjal Dosanjh, Gordon Campbell and Green Party leader Adriane Carr, Mr. Delaney says even the NDP

seem to know their time is limited.

"They're bringing in all kinds of legislation at the last minute, if pay equity was such an important issue why did they leave it to the last minute?" he says. "I don't think this is about splitting the vote, really I think this is about the Liberals not taking 79 ridings."

In that light, Mr. Delaney has been getting out the party platform, making sure people know he's in favour of independent referendums for native bands and the province's remaining population, as well as land and cash settlements to B.C.'s First Nations people, that would go to band members, not bands.

He also wants less forestry regulations under the Forest Practices Code, and a stumpage system

based on lumber sales. He'd like to see the party develop a constitution for B.C. and has a completely different approach to taxes than either the Liberals or the NDP.

"I'd like to see a gradual shift in taxes, leading to a flat tax in five years," he says. Such a system would reward workers who take on extra shifts, instead of penalize them by increasing taxes, increase business certainty and investment and be fair to low income people, who would ultimately be exempt," he says.

The Unity Party would also like to see the oil and gas moratorium on the northwest coast lifted and increase development in the Peace, to take advantage of natural resources to return B.C.'s economy to the strength it had under a Socred government.

Unity B.C. expects to run a full slate of candidates and will confirm candidates here within the next week.



**Delaney:** 'really I think this is about the Liberals not taking 79 ridings.'

# Reformers try to get party on ballot

The party may be suspended, but Reform B.C. members in the Lower Mainland haven't put themselves out of the running yet.

Reform B.C. representatives filed court documents, announcing their intent to sue B.C.'s chief electoral officer Robert Patterson, on March 23.

Party officials say Mr. Patterson "acted without evidence and contrary to all evidence" when he suspended the party for overspending in the Delta South by-election last year. The party was not allowed to respond to the grounds for the decision, and that the ultimate effect of Mr. Patterson's decision is to "deny British Columbians who support the Reform Party the ability to vote for a Reform Candidate in the forthcoming election."

The party is asking that Mr. Patterson's decision to suspend the party be quashed, that the party be relieved of all penalties

and that the Electoral Officer pay Reform B.C.'s legal costs.

Elections B.C. spokesperson Jennifer Miller did not comment on legal matters but Elections B.C. has seven days from the day after the petition was filed to respond.

A court date has not yet been scheduled but Reform lawyer Bruce Hallor has asked for one to be scheduled in April.

Reform secretary Shirley Abraham says lawyers are trying to fast track the application because of the upcoming election, but individual members are still considering a back up plan.

"We are positive the suspension will be lifted," she says. "If there are delays there is some talk that people will run as independents under the Reform banner. But that's a last resort because as

independents they do not have the clout that they would have under the party."

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**FLOW FACTS**

The winter release at the Skins Lake Spillway, as set by the Nechako Fisheries Conservation Program, is 1163.7 cubic feet per second (cfs), or 32.95 cubic metres per second (cms). This will remain the approximate release until April, 2001.

On March 30th, 2001, the reservoir elevation was 2788.14 feet. The reservoir level is currently about 3.62 feet below the long-term average. Flow measurement in the Nechako River at Vanderhoof is unreliable at this time of year due to ice build-up around the Water Survey of Canada gauging station.

Snow pack measurements continue to indicate below average accumulation on the mountains surrounding the Nechako reservoir. The average of the three highest mountain snowpacks is approximately 82%. The snowpack on Mt. Wells, which has always been the most reliable, in terms of predicting reservoir inflow, is 68%. The next snow measurement will be taken April 1st.

For more information, please call Alcan's Regional Office in Vanderhoof at 567-5105 (Prince George: 561-1189; Burns Lake: 692-4315). Skins Lake Spillway discharges are posted on Alcan's home page at [www.sno.net/alcan](http://www.sno.net/alcan). Nechako Fisheries Conservation Program information can be accessed at [www.NFCP.org](http://www.NFCP.org). Flow Facts information is provided on Alcan's 24 hour information line in Vanderhoof at 567-5812.

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