

## Conservative Woman Poised To Lead Canada

# 'Campbell Mania' Sweeps The Nation As The Exuberant Female Defense Minister Calls For A Revolution.

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WINDSOR, ONTARIO — Her critics call her Brian Mulroney in a skirt, but the woman poised to be Canada's next prime minister envisions a political revolution.

Defense Minister Kim Campbell has emerged as the last, best hope to bring the prime minister's Progressive Conservative Party back from the political dead.

Even before she officially announced her candidacy to succeed Mulroney last month, "Campbell mania" swept this nation of 27 million.

The party's leadership convention June 9-13 seems likely to be a coronation for the bright and witty lawyer from Vancouver. If so, Mulroney would resign immediately and Campbell, 46, would become Canada's first female prime minister.

Even after four years of record unpopularity for Conservatives, polls now show the party could win a third consecutive federal election - which must be held by November - if Campbell is at the helm.

But Campbell, a former justice minister and first-time member of Parliament wants more: a sweeping renewal of Canada's political system to bring in fresh ideas, and gender equity between men and women.

Playing off Canada's historic French and English nations and cultures, the bilingual Campbell adopted the phrase "two founding genders" to promote her own "commitment to the equality of men and women."

"It's just a way of pointing out that women have been around right from the beginning," Campbell said earlier this month.

For Canadians weary of economic hardship, higher taxes and French-English squabbling - and blaming Mulroney for all three - Campbell's animated style and youthful exuberance are a breath of fresh air.

She is seen as more intellectual than Mulroney, more dynamic than old-style opposition Liberal leader Jean Chretien and more popular personally than any of the Tory (Progressive Conservative) opponents she will face in upcoming leadership debates. And she gives women special hope that their time of empowerment finally has come.

[http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/1993-04-19/news/9304190104\\_1\\_campbell-mulroney-progressive-conservative](http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/1993-04-19/news/9304190104_1_campbell-mulroney-progressive-conservative)

But this apparent appeal of personality over substance also could be her undoing on the long campaign toward a federal election.

"She's been part of the Tory record, and that is bound to catch up with her at some point," said Angus Reid, head of a national polling organization in Vancouver.

But a national poll by Reid on March 22 found the Conservatives had made a comeback and were within 10 points of the long-leading Liberals. This is attributed as much to "Campbell mania" as to Mulroney's decision to resign following months of popularity ratings that drooped into the low teens.

Asked how they likely would vote if the election were held today with Campbell as the Tory leader, respondents chose Campbell 43 percent to Chretien's 25 percent.

A recent Gallup Canada poll showed the Conservative government has doubled in popularity since February, rising to 32 percent, 7 points below the Liberals.

While she shares most of Mulroney's views, she so far has avoided prickly conservative issues ranging from free trade with the United States and Mexico to the hated goods and services tax.