

# **Impact of Police Investigation**

**THE ONTARIO POLITICAL SCENE**

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Research Report

April 15, 2014

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**Innovative Research Group, Inc. | [www.innovativeresearch.ca](http://www.innovativeresearch.ca)**

**Vancouver**  
1055 West Hastings, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Vancouver BC | V6E 2E9

**Toronto**  
56 The Esplanade, Suite 310  
Toronto ON | M5E 1A7



# Impact of Police Investigation

## The Ontario Political Scene: April 2014

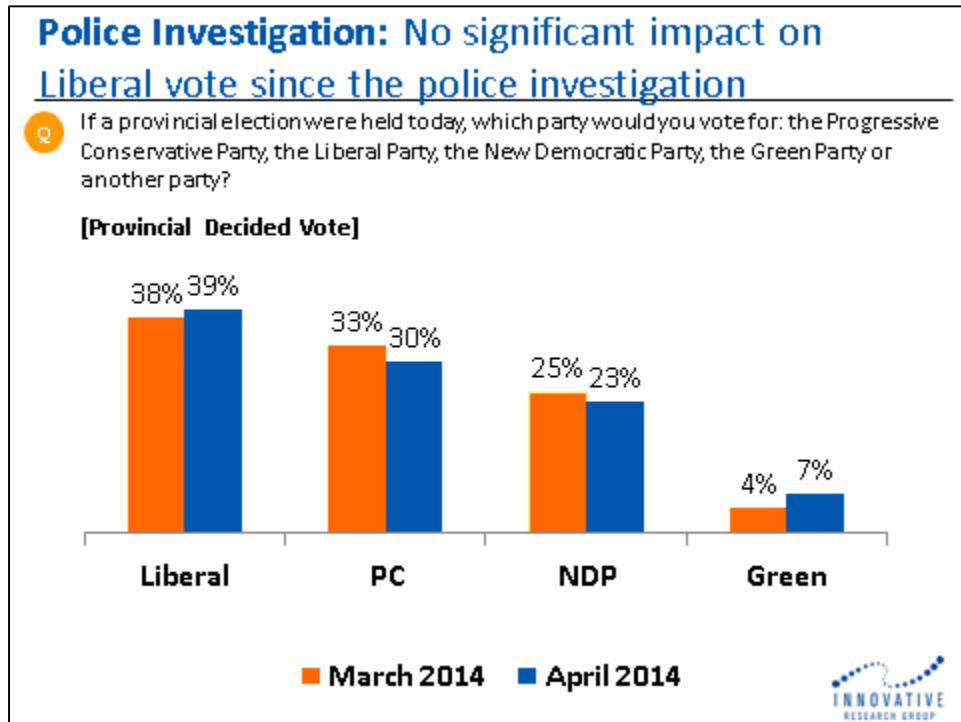
In his presentation at the 2014 Ontario Power Conference (<http://www.ontariopowerconference.com/>) this morning, Jason Lockhart, Vice President at Innovative Research Group Inc. (INNOVATIVE) released the results of an online survey of 800 Ontario adults, aged 18 and older.

The poll looked at the impact of the police investigation into the possible deletion of government records from computers in the Premier's office during the transition of party leadership from Dalton McGuinty to Kathleen Wynne.

### Summary of Findings

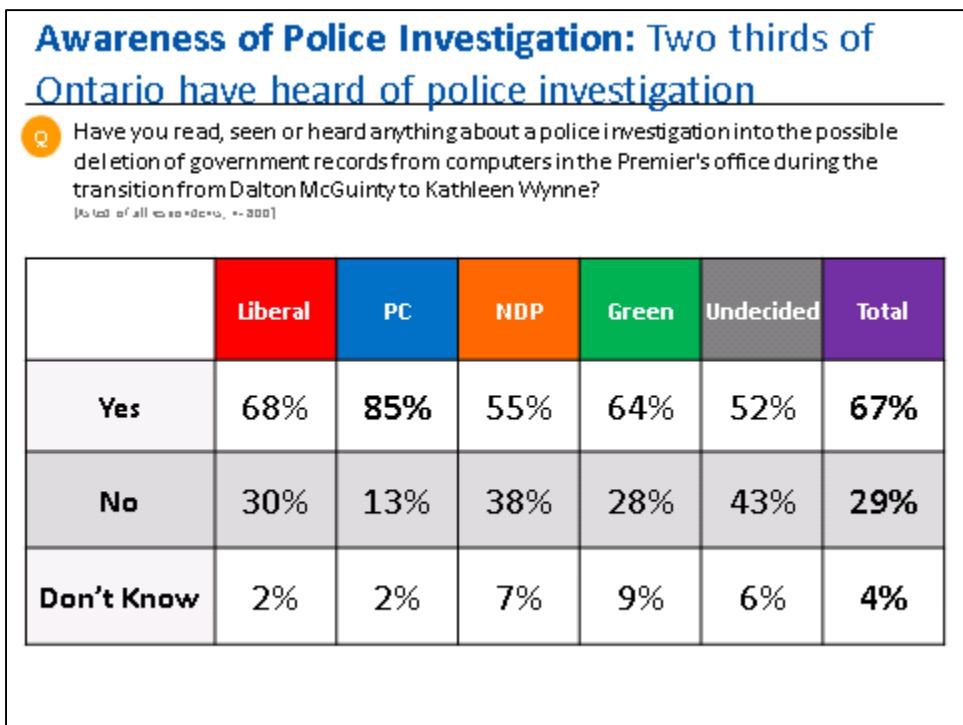
#### ***Investigation Has No Impact on Vote Intent***

Compared to the results of a similar online poll conducted by INNOVATIVE immediately prior to the announcement of a police investigation (data collected March 21<sup>st</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014), there has been no significant change in the decided provincial vote numbers. In fact, at 39% the Liberals are directionally in better shape now than they were prior to the police investigation being announced.



## **Awareness of the Investigation**

The lack of impact on vote intent is not due to a lack of awareness. Two thirds (67%) of Ontarians are aware of the police investigation into the possible deletion of government records from computers in the Premier's office. This level of awareness is higher than is seen for most provincial issues, with the budget typically garnering about 50% awareness. At 85%, awareness among those planning to vote Conservative is significantly higher than the provincial average.

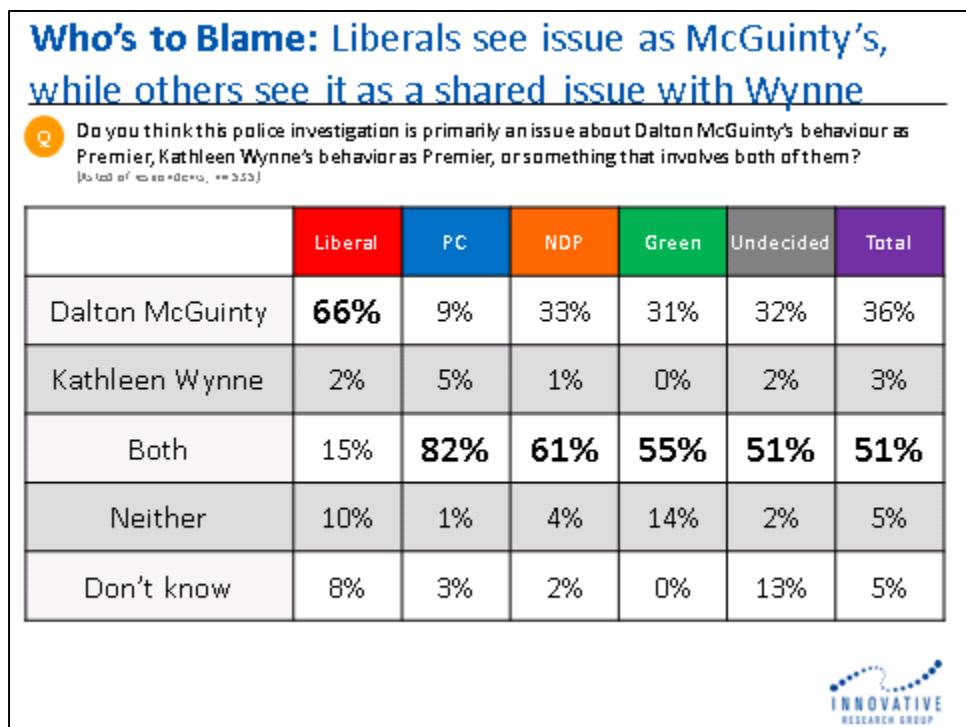


## **McGuinty or Wynne: Who is to Blame?**

For the most part, Liberal voters see this as a McGuinty issue, while others see it as an issue in which McGuinty and Wynne are both culpable.

Fully half (51%) of survey respondents feel that both Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne share the blame for the police investigation. More than 4-in-5 (82%) PC voters think the issue involves both the former and current Liberal Party leaders.

More than one third (36%) think the police investigation is primarily an issue about McGuinty's actions alone. This figure rises to 66% among Liberal voters.



## **Impact on Liberal Vote**

The police investigation is having no impact on the majority of Liberal voters who are aware of the police investigation, with 66% saying they are neither more nor less likely to vote Liberal in a provincial election because of it. Just over a quarter (26%) of Liberals actually rally to their party and say they are more likely to support the Liberals as a result of the controversy.

On the other hand, Tory voters who are aware of the police investigation, are angered by the issue and 4-in-5 (81%) say it makes them “a lot less likely” to vote Liberal. Over half (55%) of Undecided voters say this issue makes them either “somewhat” or “a lot” less likely to vote Liberal in a provincial election.

Response is more mixed for other parties and the undecided. Almost half of NDP (44%) and Green Party (48%) voters aware of the police investigation say the controversy will make no difference to their vote while 31% of the Undecided say the same with another 13% unsure. However, there is a significant negative impact among these voters with 50% of NDP voters, 45% of Green Party voters and 55% of the Undecided saying they are less likely to vote Liberals due to the controversy.

Partisanship aside, overall 9% of Ontarians say the issue will have no impact on their likelihood of voting Liberal, while a similar proportion (38%) say the police investigation makes them “a lot less likely” to vote Liberal.

<b>Liberals no change or rally, Tories rage, while NDP cool to Liberals</b>						
Q Are you more or less likely to vote for Kathleen Wynne and the Ontario Liberals as a result of this issue? <small>[Total of 1000+ respondents who heard about the police investigation, == 353]</small>						
	Liberal	PC	NDP	Green	Undecided	Total
<b>A lot more likely to vote Liberal</b>	13%	1%	0%	7%	0%	5%
<b>Somewhat more likely to vote Liberal</b>	13%	1%	5%	0%	2%	6%
<b>Neither</b>	<b>66%</b>	11%	<b>44%</b>	<b>48%</b>	31%	39%
<b>Somewhat less likely to vote Liberal</b>	8%	5%	16%	28%	15%	10%
<b>A lot less likely to vote Liberal</b>	0%	<b>81%</b>	<b>34%</b>	17%	<b>40%</b>	38%
<b>Don't know</b>	2%	2%	1%	0%	13%	3%

## **About This Study**

These are the results of an online survey conducted using INNOVATIVE's *Canada 20/20* national research panel. The survey is comprised of a representative online sample of 800 Ontario adults, and was conducted April 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Data have been weighted according to 2011 Census data to ensure the sample is representative of the actual population of Ontario. Margin of error is not applicable to online surveys, as it is not a random sample.

## **Contact**

For more information, please contact **Greg Lyle** at 416-642-6429 or by email: [glyle@innovativeresearch.ca](mailto:glyle@innovativeresearch.ca)

Greg Lyle, President  
Innovative Research Group Inc.  
56 The Esplanade, Suite 310  
Toronto, Ontario M5E 1A7  
[glyle@innovativeresearch.ca](mailto:glyle@innovativeresearch.ca)  
[www.innovativeresearch.ca](http://www.innovativeresearch.ca)