

We have experienced an eventful week to say the least, and it is likely that many Canadians appreciated the messages from the party leaders and, perhaps, the momentary suspension of partisanship. Two interesting items emerged from the events and the analysis of them. First, Justin Trudeau's remarks following the Boston Marathon bombing attack last year, attacked as they were by the Conservatives, have ultimately been vindicated and strongly validated by the follow-up stories on the individual behind the incidents on Parliament Hill. In fact, it is necessary to understand the root causes of acts like these, and in the case of Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, it has become evident that the problems had more to do with the ability of our mental health system to respond appropriately to a troubled individual. The second angle had to do with the CBC. Our public broadcaster was hailed in the US for the calm, professional and responsible way it reported on the incident. Ironically, in the midst of this acclaim, information emerged about further, substantial cuts to the Corporation due to it being starved for ad revenue and government funding.

There has also been a swing in the media's attitude toward Justin Trudeau, particularly by opinion writers in the Globe & Mail who have picked up on the themes of his perceived inexperience and tendency to gaffes. This is likely part of the Globe's program to balance its coverage over time, which has been quite typical of media for decades. The 'comments' section following the articles (something that we've had only within the last ten years) adds new depth, and in the case of the article links you'll find below, make for interesting reading. It is clear that Mr. Trudeau's message has connected with Canadians and has much more depth than the columnists give credit.

Our messages to the public:

The responses to the tragic events in Ottawa and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu has dominated the Party's communication in the past week and are available on line. There was focus on an odd incident involving the government's sale of protective equipment for pennies on the dollar that could have been used for much more productive purposes:

Liberal Opposition Day Motion on Ebola Outbreak

The federal government must take every step necessary to protect the public from the spread of dangerous diseases like Ebola, and it must communicate in an open and transparent way about what it is doing.

This week, Liberals introduced an [Opposition Day Motion](#) that will require the Minister of Health, Minister of Public Safety, and Canada's Chief Public Health Officer to appear on a twice-monthly basis before the House of Commons Health Committee. This would ensure that they update Parliament and the public on the

specific measures that the government is taking to make certain that the Ebola virus does not pose a threat to the health and safety of Canadians.

This government has shown little regard for public health, as evidenced by the decision to leave the Chief Public Health Officer position without a permanent appointment for 16 months.

We are extremely concerned by [reports](#) that even after the Ebola outbreak, the government ignored pleas for help. It chose to sell off, rather than donate, roughly \$1.5 million worth of stockpiled medical equipment urgently needed to help combat the Ebola epidemic in Western Africa. This is unacceptable. Canada can and must do more as part of the international effort to combat Ebola on the ground in affected countries.

Items of interest from the news and the party:

-This item and links to other stories in the Vancouver Sun demonstrate the value of understanding the root causes of the Parliament Hill attack. Mr. Zehaf-Bibeau was not a jihadist, he was mentally unwell:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/Mulgrew+Ottawa+attack+reveals+gaping+holes+social+safety/10322590/story.html>

-Esquire Magazine favourably compared news coverage provided by the CBC with American networks and cable news outlets:

http://www.esquire.com/blogs/politics/The_Voice_Of_Experience?src=soc_fcbks

-Meanwhile, the Canadian Media Guild released information on further cuts to the CBC:

<http://www.cmg.ca/en/2014/10/23/yet-more-cuts-at-cbcradio-canada-as-details-filter-out/>

-The Globe & Mail's warning to Justin Trudeau about the 'gaffe' of threatening to reverse the Conservatives' proposed tax splitting program - the follow up comments are worth a read:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/income-splitting-leave-it-to-trudeau/article21293240/>

-The cynical might suggest that the Liberals themselves put Lysiane Gagnon up to writing this article, given the response it generated:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/hes-sweet-but-is-trudeau-a-pm/article21200020/>

-...and in other news, Canada's international reputation took another hit on the environment file:

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/10/21/canada-climate-change-ranking-oecd-report_n_6024844.html

You'll find much more on our Seniors Commission Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bclibs/>

Looking ahead:

Today's municipal elections in Ontario will be interesting to watch, as some media observers suggest that a number of Liberal-leaning candidates may be elected as mayors.

There are two by-elections scheduled on November 17th in Whitby-Oshawa (formerly held by the late Jim Flaherty) and Yellowhead.