

Justin Trudeau and Jean Chretien did the Party and the nation proud yesterday with their wonderful tribute to Canada's flag on the occasion of its 50th birthday. The Liberal event was in stark contrast to the official government observance -- there wasn't one. Many people are speculating that the Conservatives' lack of interest was due to the fact that it was a Liberal Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, who succeeded in getting us our own flag. While that might appear to be an unfair, partisan shot at PM Harper and Co., a journalist a few weeks ago noted that then Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird had the name of his HQ building taken off of his business card. It is, by the way, The Lester B. Pearson Building.

Back to the flag event, both Justin and Jean delivered outstanding speeches, with Jean's being particularly passionate and to the point. The CBC has posted it on their web site and a link to both speeches is here: <http://new.livestream.com/LiberalLive/events/3803027/videos/77239653>

The government's anti-terrorism bill, Bill C-51, will continue to be under intense scrutiny this week. There is clearly a major perception gap between the media and the majority of Canadians on the measures being proposed. The media is critical of the degree of intrusion into Canadians' privacy the legislation will allow, thanks to new powers for enforcement agencies. The public seems to be willing to accept that intrusion, with opinion surveys showing over 70 per cent approval, most notably in Quebec.

The Liberals have voiced concern over the lack of oversight, saying that if the Conservatives don't fix it, we will when we form government. In spite of the flaws, the Liberals will support Bill C-51. The NDP and the Green Party have come out against it, the Greens most aggressively so. Mr. Mulcair will need to balance his position with sentiments in Quebec, where his party currently holds a solid lead in voter support.

Meanwhile, there appears to be some consensus in the results of various polls that ISIS and the terrorist threat are not as top of mind for Canadians as in the past months. The muted reaction to the latest ISIS atrocity in Libya suggests a lessening of political traction for the Conservatives on this issue. At the same time, there appears to be growing concern for the economy, which has proven not to be the point of strength for the Conservatives they've claimed in the past. With poorer job numbers forecast over the next few months plus the launch of the Mike Duffy trial in early April, the road ahead could be rocky for the Tories.

Our messages to the public:

Justin Trudeau in Beauce, Quebec, focused on jobs and economic growth

This week, Justin Trudeau visited [Winnipeg](#), where he held an economic and innovation roundtable, met with Aboriginal leaders, and toured the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. Mr. Trudeau also met with local residents, toured a manufacturing facility, and held a [rally with Winnipeg supporters](#).

Liberals believe that government must not only create the right conditions for economic growth, but also ensure that growth is sustainable and will [help struggling middle class families](#).

We need leadership with a plan to grow the economy for all Canadians in all regions, but Mr. Harper's priority is a \$2 billion tax break for the wealthiest Canadians.

Mr. Trudeau's priority is clear: we must [strengthen the prosperity of middle class Canadians](#), who have not had a decent raise in 30 years. Canadian families deserve a real and fair chance at success.

A medicare approach to fight climate change in Canada

Last week, [Justin Trudeau announced](#) that a future Liberal government will take a medicare approach to fight climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Please view [video and the text](#) of Mr. Trudeau's speech in Calgary.

Items of interest from the news and the party:

-Three points of view on Bill C-51:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/parliament-must-reject-the-anti-terror-bill/article22932072/>

<http://o.canada.com/news/national/coyne-new-anti-terrorism-bill-ultimately-must-stand-or-fall-on-its-own-merits>

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/01/30/canada-anti-terrorism-bill_n_6580952.html

-The implications of party positions on Bill C-51 in Quebec:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/in-quebec-security-changes-the-game-plan/article22987998/>

-Bill C-51 may self-destruct according to a former CSIS officer

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2015/02/13/former-csis-officer-warns-new-federal-anti-terror-bill-will-lead-to-lawsuits-embarrassment/>

-Jean Chretien's comments on the 50th Anniversary of Canada's Flag:

<http://www.cbc.ca/player/News/Politics/ID/2653985031/>

-A Hill Times item on how austerity and balancing the budget are the wrong tools for the job to be done:

<http://www.hilltimes.com/opinion-piece/2015/02/09/canada-faces-huge-economic-challenges-in-danger-of-being-ignored/40957>

Looking ahead:

Our next BC Seniors Commission Executive Meeting will be a pot-luck luncheon - a fund-raiser to support our Commission's new web site now under construction. All executive members and EDA reps are invited - bring along an appetizer and \$10 - we'll get underway at noon with the executive meeting to follow. Mark the time and place: Wednesday, March 11 - noon - 1033 Marinaside Crescent in Vancouver, just 3 1/2 blocks from the Yaletown - Roundhouse Canada Line station. Please RSVP to me ken.hardie@telus.net so that we'll know how many to expect.