

Welcome to February -- 8 months and 17 days away from the fixed election date. That is to say, it's the fixed date that we'll hold the election (maybe), hopefully not the date we hold a fixed election.

The main stories this week concern the government's anti-terrorism legislation, Bill C 51. Media pundits have noted that the terrorism issue has a majority of Canadians on side with Prime Minister Harper, so clearly a political winner that he will use. Both the Liberal and NDP positions on the Bill have been described as 'weak'. Columnists and editorial writers have expressed concern about the lack of parliamentary oversight included in the Bill and have reminded readers that the attacks that killed two members of our military were committed by individuals who were more psychologically unbalanced than jihadist. A CBC Radio report also uncovered the fact that there are no new funding resources for CSIS that would allow them to implement the new powers they will be given and, in fact, budget cutbacks have forced the agency to abandon some sensitive investigations. These messages appear not to have resonated thus far with the public.

Here is a link to Bill

C51: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&DocId=6932136>

As troubled times loom for the Canadian economy, most acutely in Alberta, Canadians are coming to a fork in the road in terms of the reaction they can have. One direction is to question the government's management of the economy and their fiscal prudence, the other will be fear of turning the situation over to the Liberals, especially in the absence of a compelling plan by the Party to fix the problems. With 'Fear' being such a potent force on the side of the Conservatives, it will take a good helping of 'Hope' from the Liberals, delivered at the right time, to influence that choice.

A scan of the most recent polls show Liberal support just slightly ahead of the Conservatives' with the exception of Ipsos Reid, who show the Tories with a four point lead. It will be interesting to see if the Liberal platform will have an impact, not only on the polling numbers but also on turning Liberal support into actual votes.

Our messages to the public:

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

Today, Justin Trudeau is touring Beauce, Quebec, and speaking at the regional chamber of commerce on the need to strengthen Canada's middle class. Now more than ever, Canadians need a Prime Minister who will [cooperate and collaborate with all regions and all sectors.](#)

Stephen Harper's Conservatives responded to the drop in oil prices with confusion, delays, and secrecy. It is clear that the Prime Minister has no Plan B. [Mr. Harper is making it up as he goes along](#), cancelling meetings with our largest trading partners and allies, pushing back the budget, and refusing to meet with Canada's Premiers.

We need leadership with a smart plan to [grow the economy](#) for all Canadians, but Mr. Harper's priority is a [\\$2 billion tax break for the wealthiest Canadians](#).

Mr. Trudeau's priority is clear: we must bolster the strength and 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.

Prime Minister must be honest about the mission in Iraq

The Liberal Party of Canada unreservedly supports our men and women in uniform. Our troops always have the right to defend themselves when in harm's way.

There is no question that ISIL poses a real and serious threat to security in the region and to Canada. While we disagree with the Prime Minister on what is the best way for our country to participate, we do believe that Canada has a role to play in the international effort against ISIL.

The Prime Minister has not been open and honest with Canadians since the beginning of the mission. In Parliament, the Prime Minister explicitly stated that our Canadian Armed Forces would only "advise and assist" - and would not be "accompanying" Iraqi forces into combat.

Recent committee testimony by Conservative Ministers did nothing to provide Canadians with the truth.

Mr. Harper has a responsibility to be open and honest with Canadians.

Please check in with the [Liberal Party](#) and [Justin Trudeau](#) for content to share with your networks over the coming days.

Items of interest from the news and the party:

-The Globe & Mail are calling for more oversight of the new powers proposed for CSIS:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/editorials/parliament-must-reject-harpers-secret-policeman-bill/article22729037/>

-The Ottawa Citizen agrees:

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/canada/Opinion+Canada+needs+better+system+watching+watchers/10778769/story.html>

-The National Post does not:

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2015/02/02/kelly-mcparland-hold-the-crisis-harpers-new-anti-terror-bill-will-not-make-canada-a-police-state/>

-The G&M proposes five conversations Canadians should have (but we must ask ourselves if average Canadians care about these issues):

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/editorials/five-conversations-canadians-need-to-have-in-2015/article22274774/>

Here's an interesting blog that takes a close and critical look at the Tories' crime measures:

<http://www.michaelspratt.com/law-blog/for-petes-sake>

-The Hill Times reviews a 40-year-old book that signalled the discomfort Big Money had with 'too much democracy' back in the 70's, and how their reaction has played out since then.

<http://www.hilltimes.com/opinion-piece/2015/02/02/downsize-democracy-for-40-years-heres-what-you-get/40883?mcl=1008&muid=31244>

Looking ahead:

The Liberal calendar is packed with events right across the country: <http://events.liberal.ca/Event-List.aspx> The Vancouver East riding will be hotly contested now that the popular NDP MP Libby Davies has announced her retirement, and the Liberals will be hold a nomination meeting on February 10th

Another ABC group has surfaced, cleverly named 'Canadians Rallying to Unseat Stephen Harper' or 'C.R.U.S.H.' (sounds like something from *Get Smart*). We'll add them to the list below so that you can visit and get a handle on their issues. They did have a neat 'meme' on their Facebook page this morning:

-[C.R.U.S.H.](#)

-[Council of Canadians](#)

-[Canadians Deserve Better](#)

-[Operation Maple](#)

-[Lead Now](#)

-[Anything But Conservative in 2015](#)

Feel free to share these weekly updates with your riding executive and others who are following the issues. If you have outreach ideas or photos of events, pass them along!