

A campaign college was held yesterday in Surrey, where over 30 people spent five hours of their Sunday learning how 'Team Trudeau' strategies and organization can make a huge difference in the ground game in any riding.

For whatever use the polls are, they show the Liberals leading the pack, but not by much. Ontario is shaping up to be a critical battleground for votes, and with the fall in oil prices, the Tories have had a rather late-in-the-day epiphany that maybe the long-neglected manufacturing sector in that province could indeed make a huge contribution to the nation's economy with some support. The ministerial change at Veterans' Affairs has not had a very enthusiastic reception from some groups who have been trying to unite Canada's vets against the Conservatives. The main message we hear from them is that PM Harper still calls all the shots, and the distrust level there is very high. Our Ralph Goodale wrote a particularly fine piece on the subject that was picked up by the national press.

Another of Ralph's pieces on the mismanagement of Canada's economy (Silk Purses and Sows Ears) is attached.

An item of particular note is the Conservatives' decision to de-fund and close the Health Council of Canada as well as to not renew the health accord with the provinces. Coupled with PM Harper's move to tie health care funding increases to the nation's GDP growth (now on a slippery, oily downward slope), Canadians need to be made aware that our national medicare program is headed for dangerously difficult times. Links to the story are below.

Getting back to oil for a moment, US President Obama appears ready to veto any approval by Congress and the Senate for the Keystone XL pipeline. If that happens, Mr. Harper will wear it due to his refusal to consider climate change mitigations and for what one writer in the Huffington Post sees as his wrecking of our relationship with the US. The Keystone XL is intended to move bitumen from the Alberta oil sands to refineries in Texas. One might ask what the incremental cost is to move bitumen over such a long distance and what those dollars might get us in refinery capacity here in Canada. If we refined it at home, we would be shipping a less toxic product over sensitive ecosystems and, perish the thought, we might be able to provide Canadians with a more sustainable reduction in gasoline and diesel prices.

### **Our messages to the public:**

Justin Trudeau launches tour of the North

Today, Justin Trudeau kicks off a [five-day tour](#) of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut focused on working with Northerners to ensure that they have a real and

fair chance at success. Liberals understand that the only way to achieve success for Northerners is to listen to and work with them directly.

During his five-day tour, Mr. Trudeau is visiting Inuvik, Yellowknife, and Iqaluit, where he will host and attend community events and roundtables, meet with Indigenous and business leaders, and tour local organizations.

The people of the North and the strength of their communities are our country's best guarantee of Canadian sovereignty. There is huge potential for growth in the North, but a partner is needed in Ottawa who will invest in the North's people, infrastructure, and research, in order to help ensure that this growth is realized.

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

### **Stephen Harper continues to fail Canadian veterans**

We have a sacred obligation to our veterans. The Prime Minister handpicked a Minister who joined him in rejecting this obligation.

Mr. Harper' priority instead was to shutter nine veterans' service centres across the country, and his government insulted veterans who asked his government to reconsider its actions. It was Mr. Harper's government that knew two years ago about its inability to forecast the future needs of our veterans, contributing to the \$1.13 billion in unspent funding.

Mr. Harper cut almost 1,000 Veterans Affairs staff positions since 2009, with the vast majority falling in frontline services for disabilities, pensions, health, and rehabilitation programs. He has left veterans waiting for urgently needed mental health care. The Prime Minister even underfunded our military cemeteries in an effort to pad the books, and thousands of grave markers needing repair were not fixed.

Liberals will continue fighting to ensure that our veterans and their families have nothing less than the best of care and support from a grateful nation.

Please [share](#) the latest on veterans from the Liberal Party.

### **Keystone XL Pipeline Project**

One of the Prime Minister's fundamental duties is to open up markets abroad for Canadian resources, and to help create responsible and sustainable ways to get those resources to those markets. Against this standard, Mr. Harper has failed miserably.

The Prime Minister's failure to adopt stronger, credible environmental policies has stalled the Keystone XL Pipeline Project. President Obama has directly connected Canada's carbon emissions to his reason for delaying, and now is even saying he will veto the project.

From the broader international community, French President Hollande - on the floor of Canada's House of Commons - and the UN Secretary General have both challenged Stephen Harper's Conservatives to show real leadership on the environment.

As the Keystone debacle has shown, if we do not demonstrate to the world that we have our act together, as a country, on climate change and the environment, we will find it harder and harder to get our resources to markets. The federal government should immediately collaborate with all provinces and territories to tackle Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and finally implement regulations.

### **Items of interest from the news and the party:**

Note: The real value of these items is the fact that they are from independent writers and publications and not from the Liberal Party. As such, they can be quoted or shown to people in your riding as credible and more objective 'third party' views.

-Troubles for the Keystone XL pipeline are tied to PM Harper's poor relationship with the US:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/01/06/keystone-pipeline-veto-barack-obama\\_n\\_6424288.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/01/06/keystone-pipeline-veto-barack-obama_n_6424288.html)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/sandy-garossino/keystone-pipeline-harper-obama\\_b\\_6427762.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/sandy-garossino/keystone-pipeline-harper-obama_b_6427762.html)

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/obama-harper-dont-like-each-other-and-only-a-new-leader-can-thaw-relations/article21691812/>

-The Forum Poll has been one of the least reliable in recent elections, but its findings here reflect those of other companies' surveys:

<http://poll.forumresearch.com/post/211/conservative-minority-seen-under-new-338-seat-distribution>

-The government's latest moves are seen to be seriously damaging to Canada's national medicare system:

[http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/04/17/by\\_closing\\_the\\_national\\_health\\_council\\_stephen\\_harper\\_is\\_abandoning\\_national\\_medicare.html](http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/04/17/by_closing_the_national_health_council_stephen_harper_is_abandoning_national_medicare.html)

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2015/01/07/how-harper-killed-medicare-and-got-away-with-it/>

<http://healthcoalition.ca/budget-2014-triggers-harpers-plan-to-dismantle-national-health-care/>

-Reaction to the new Veterans Affairs minister:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/veterans-military-personnel-split-on-erin-otooles-cabinet-appointment/article22305911/>

Much more can be found on our Seniors Commission Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bclibs/>

### **Looking ahead:**

The Liberal calendar is packed with events right across the country: <http://events.liberal.ca/Event-List.aspx>