

The long-awaited trial of Senator Mike Duffy on a variety of charges relating to his expenses starts tomorrow. Although few believe PM Harper will suffer any direct hits, a big bright light will shine on the machinations of the PMO and some Canadians will recoil from what they learn of the Tories' hyper-drive to manage issues. In a strange way, the 41 day trial may work to the Conservatives' advantage if it blows economic issues out of the headlines for that length of time.

Leader Justin Trudeau's new radio ads may have hit the spot, highlighting the Conservatives' poor economic record and signalling measures that Liberals can hold up as 'a better idea' - a theme line that seems to work.

Speaking of messaging, Pierre Poilievre, Minister of Social Development, repeated in parliament something I heard PM Harper say on a Conservative radio ad - that the Liberals were planning to eliminate income splitting for seniors' pensions. This is false. The income splitting Liberals are targeting is the one the Tories will give to single income families with a stay-at-home parent and a youngster under 18...the one that will benefit only 15 per cent of the wealthiest Canadians.

On the economic front, there are mutterings of some obscure government fund that could be tapped to balance the Conservatives' budget, expected now on April 21st. Pundits are speculating that the government will roll out infrastructure spending and jobs training (didn't we already have an Action Plan program for that?). We should be watching for a super-duper fanfare announcing big dollars to energize the neglected manufacturing sector, but some under-the-breath mutterings about the initiatives not kicking in for a couple of years or a very long roll-out period that will mean very small amounts available now. No doubt Ralph Goodale will be all over the budget when it's finally released.

Bill C-51 rolls on toward its eventual approval with only minor tinkering that will fall far short of appeasing the critics. While our fighter planes launch sorties into Syria, a deeper examination of the roots of the Middle-Eastern conflicts (there seems to be new outbreaks almost weekly) has started to point an increasingly accusatory finger at Saudi Arabia as a source of the inspiration and the funding for some of the major combatants. A report on violence and retribution in aftermath of Iraqi troops retaking Tikirt makes one wonder how we can be sure we're fighting for the good guys.

Polling numbers this past week may signal that the Tories may have peaked on their terrorism/war theme while the NDP 'surge' continues. Ekos Research asks an intriguing question in light of their numbers showing the Conservatives with a four point lead over the Liberals: 'If Canada is So down, why is Stephen Harper so up?'

Nanos: <http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/Nanos%20Political%20Index%202015-03-27E.pdf>

Ekos: <http://www.ekospolitics.com/index.php/2015/04/if-canada-is-so-down-why-is-stephen-harper-so-up/>

308 - a compilation of various survey

results: <http://www.threehundredeight.com/p/canada.html>

Our messages to the public:

Liberals focused on jobs and economic growth for middle class

After months of delay and a failure to present a plan, today the Conservatives announced a federal budget date of April 21st.

Stephen Harper's priority is a \$2 billion dollar tax break for the rich, but 85 percent of Canadians will never see a dime of this.

Liberals are committed to cancelling Mr. Harper's unfair tax break. We will use this money to help the middle class and those working hard to join it.

Liberals believe this country needs a new economic plan, and the evidence is mounting daily. This week we learned that the Canadian economy has shrunk. The Governor of the Bank of Canada has also labelled Canada's economic growth as "atrocious."

Canadian families deserve a real and fair chance at success - and that means growing incomes and real job opportunities.

Help spread our message:

- . Please view and share Justin Trudeau's [new video](#) on a better plan for the middle class.
- . Please view the Liberal Party's latest [shareable](#) on Mr. Harper's economic priorities.

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

The Liberal Party of Canada raised concerns years ago with the completely mismanaged Temporary Foreign Worker Program. The Conservatives deliberately and rapidly expanded this program.

The government must act with compassion and flexibility; any worker in Canada who has applied for permanent resident status should be given an extension on their current work permit.

The program must also create new pathways towards citizenship for workers who have proven they can succeed in Canada and wish to make a life here.

Liberals would restore the program to its originally intended purpose: filling job shortages on a short-term basis when absolutely no Canadian can be found.

Canada Pension Plan

For many Canadians, CPP contributions are essential, long-term investments for a secure and dignified retirement.

While today this sounds like common sense, 50 years ago it took extraordinary vision, diplomacy, and persistence to get it done.

But more recently, Stephen Harper's Conservatives have weakened this commitment to basic retirement security for Canadian seniors.

They eliminated previous investment tools like Income Trusts, destroying about \$25-billion in value formerly in the savings accounts of some two million Canadians. They have delayed eligibility for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement by two years, which will take nearly \$30,000 from the lowest-income and most vulnerable seniors.

Items of interest from the news and the party:

-A 'contingency fund' - one that the Tories don't like very much - may be tapped to balance the budget:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/how-an-obscure-federal-fund-could-be-the-key-to-balancing-the-budget/article22747877/>

-n Easter reflection for the Prime Minister:

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2015/04/05/a-message-for-harper-in-a-season-of-mercy/>

-Expect support for manufacturing in the federal budget:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/tories-vow-budget-will-include-measures-to-spur-manufacturing/article23801201/>

-Coverage of the Mike Duffy trial is revving up:

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/04/06/duffy-the-one-on-trial-b_n_7009174.html?utm_hp_ref=canada

-Some predictions on what the Conservatives might do with another term in office:

<http://www.straight.com/news/424596/what-might-stephen-harper-do-his-fourth-term-prime-minister>

-Falling oil prices continue to grease the skids for Canada's economy:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/bank-of-canada-survey-shows-oil-dimming-corporate-confidence-1.3022372>

-Another analysis of young voters, and why they aren't exercising their considerable influence on politics:

http://thetyee.ca/News/2015/04/06/Young-Voters-Could-Defeat-Harper/?utm_source=daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=060415

-An analysis of Wahhabism - the dominant form of Islam in Saudi Arabia - and its influence in the Middle East:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saudi/analyses/wahhabism.html>

-The violent aftermath of Iraqi forces retaking Tikrit:

http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/after-iraqi-forces-take-tikrit-a-wave-of-looting-and-lynching/article23791548/?cmpid=rss1&click=sf_globe

Looking ahead: -- BC Events below -- for details on all scheduled events, click the 'Events' tab here: <https://www.liberal.ca/get-involved/>

April 7

Change on the Doorstep in Chilliwack-Hope, Burnaby South and Kelowna-Lake Country

Calling for Change in Vancouver South (west)

April 8

Coffee Meeting in Salmon Arm

Meet Cindy Derkaz, Candidate for North Okanagan-Shuswap in Vernon

Calling for Change in Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo and West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country

Change on the Doorstep in Burnaby South, Kelowna-Lake Country and Chilliwack-Hope

Board Games Night in Kamloops

Team Trudeau House Meeting in Burnaby South

April 9

Candidate Selection Meeting in Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam

Change on the Doorstep in Burnaby South and Kelowna-Lake Country

House Meeting in Vancouver South

April 11

Change on the Doorstep in North Okanagan-Shuswap

Calling for Change in West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country

Coffee Meeting in Kamloops

April 12

Team Trudeau Day of Action - Change on the Doorstep in Burnaby South, West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country

Team Trudeau Day of Action - Calling for Change in Burnaby South

Vancouver Centre campaign kick-off

Finally:

Keep up to date on the activities of the major ABC groups:

- [C.R.U.S.H.](#)
- [Council of Canadians](#)
- [Canadians Deserve Better](#)
- [Operation Maple](#)
- [Lead Now](#)
- [Anything But Conservative in 2015](#)