

The big news this week will be the federal budget, and the big scrutiny will be on how the Tories have managed to balance it. Over the past week or so, various tidbits have been leaked/released that indicate a couple of measures that are going to be popular with wealthier families, especially seniors. It is expected that the Conservatives will double the annual contribution to a Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA), a nice break for those who can afford to put aside \$11,000 per year for their retirement. A change to the rules that will lower mandatory withdrawals from RRSP's will provide tax relief for well-to-do seniors. Both of these moves, especially on the TFSA's, will mean lower tax revenues for the federal government in the future and may shift the costs of government to lower income Canadians.

Defence Minister Jason Kenny signalled today that the military budget will be boosted and the Conservatives have also said that there will be \$1 billion per year in infrastructure funding for Canada's big cities. As noted in earlier updates, the infrastructure funding is expected to be simply a re-announcement of an existing program; no new money on the table. As for the lift in the military budget, it will be interesting to see what else gets cut to allow this. Then again, we were reminded recently that there has been little action so far on the big \$11 Billion ship-building program for the Navy and the Coast Guard announced in 2011, so it's likely the finance critics from the Liberals, NDP and the Greens will be looking carefully for more slight-of-hand. Our Ralph Goodale will be all over this one.

Speaking of Ralph, his speech to the Canada 2020 Club last week was a damning indictment of the Tories' financial record, and although some Conservative-friendly journalists tried to mitigate the damage he inflicted, his analysis will continue to stand up to scrutiny by the average, right-thinking Canadian.

The Coast Guard's response to the oil spill in English Bay set off an unseemly scrap between James Moor and both the City of Vancouver and the Province. Both the Liberals and the NDP have vowed to reopen the Kits Coast Guard Base.

A rather curious poll by Ipsos-Reid for Global TV concluded that approval ratings for Justin Trudeau have fallen dramatically. The poll is curious because it is contradicted by other polling organizations who monitor public sentiment more frequently and comprehensively. Polling methodology can make a big difference in survey outcomes and the Ipsos method was suspect. Both Nanos and Ekos continue to show a very tight race with scores for Mr. Harper and Mr. Trudeau very

close and those for Mr. Mulcair putting him in third place, relatively well behind. On the party rankings, Nanos now shows the NDP overtaking the Conservatives for second place and particularly bad news for the Tories in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. EKOS continues to drill into the reasons why the Conservatives are polling so well when the majority of Canadians don't feel the country is headed in the right direction.

Nanos: <http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/Nanos%20Political%20Index%202015-04-10E.pdf>

Ekos: <http://www.ekospolitics.com/index.php/2015/04/harper-once-again-in-scant-lead-in-muddy-see-saw-voter-contest/>

Our messages to the public:

Liberals focused on jobs and growth for middle class

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

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.

Mr. Trudeau's priority is clear: we must strengthen those at the heart of our economy, middle class Canadians, who have not had a decent raise in 30 years. Canadian families deserve a real and fair chance at success.

On balanced budget legislation:

Under Mr. Harper, Canadians have faced seven years of budget deficits, rising debt and unemployment, stagnant incomes, and weak economic growth.

The Conservatives' hypocrisy of proposing balanced budget legislation betrays the truth: middle class Canadians need a new economic plan and leadership.

Items of interest from the news and the party:

-A pre-budget analysis by the left-leaning Press Progress -- they're not hopeful that any but the wealthy will benefit:

<http://www.pressprogress.ca/en/post/wealthy-get-monopoly-tax-cuts-joe-olivers-federal-budget>

-The Tyee notes that in the grand scheme of things, federal budgets are no big deal:

http://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2015/04/20/Tories-Promised-Balanced-Budget/?utm_source=daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=200415

-Ralph Goodale had a hot message for a friendly audience at Canada 2020 -- there are videos of the speech, but here is the text version with all of the useful factoids:

<https://ralphgoodale.liberal.ca/blog/canada-2020-economic-speech/>

-Here's the Ipsos-Reid survey done for Global TV -- the comments following the item are worth reading:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/trudeaus-leadership-scores-tumble-in-new-poll/article23907452/>

-Justin Trudeau pledges support for the CBC to undo the damages from Tory funding cuts:

<http://livestream.com/inspiredimagepicturecompany/events/3933598/videos/84078551>

-Another set-back for the Tories at the Supreme Court of Canada:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/supreme-court-quashes-mandatory-minimum-sentences-for-gun-crimes-1.3031847>

-Some believe that the CBC is being turned into a 'state broadcaster' as the Conservatives bring it to heel:

http://thetyee.ca/Mediacheck/2015/04/20/Harper-Brings-CBC-to-Heel/?utm_source=daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=200415

-The EKOS surveys indicate that Canadians have a stronger connection on values with the Tories than the Liberals, and iPolitics takes an revealing look at what makes conservatives tick - a must read:

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2015/04/13/what-conservatives-care-about/>

-The Conservatives remain non-committal on a national seniors strategy (this may be behind a pay-wall - let me know if you want a cut and paste version):

<http://www.hilltimes.com/q-a/2015/04/20/feds-continue-to-tiptoe-around-committing-to-a-national-seniors-strategy/41808>

-Chantel Hebert examines Justin Trudeau's assertion that a coalition with the NDP is not on (maybe it is??):

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/opinion/1281605-h%C3%A9bert-liberal-ndp-alliance-improbable-but-not-impossible>

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

April 20

Calling for Change in North Vancouver, Vancouver South (east) and Vancouver Granville

Change On The Doorstep in Vancouver Quadra and in North Okanagan-Shuswap (Salmon Arm)

A Toast with Terry (Beech) North Vancouver

April 21

Team Trudeau Coffee Meeting in Nanaimo-Ladysmith (Ladysmith) Change on the Doorstep in Chilliwack and Kelowna

Pints & Politics in Courtenay-Alberni (Qualicum Beach)

Calling for Change in Vancouver South (west)

April 22

Change On The Doorstep in North Vancouver and in Burnaby North-Seymour (Burnaby)

Calling for Change in West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country (West Vancouver), Vancouver Granville (northeast and Oakridge)

Pints & Politics in Nanaimo-Ladysmith (Ladysmith)

Team Trudeau House Meeting in Vancouver South and Burnaby South

April 23

Change on the Doorstep in Vancouver Granville (Fairview and Oakridge), Vancouver South (west), Vancouver Centre

Dialing for Dollars in Coquitlam (Port Coquitlam)

Team Trudeau meeting in North Vancouver

Coffee meeting in Abbotsford

Small Business Round Table in Burnaby

April 25

Change On The Doorstep in North Okanagan-Shuswap (Vernon), Vancouver South (east), North Vancouver, Vancouver Granville (northeast), Burnaby-North Seymour (Burnaby)

Democracy Talks - the environment with John McKay, Liberal Critic for the Environment (Bowen Island)

April 26

Change on the Doorstep in North Vancouver, West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country (West Vancouver) Burnaby

Outreach Support in Central Okanagan-Similkameen-Nicola (Kelowna)

Volunteer Rally for Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra)

Meet & Greet Candidate Tim Tessier in Lantzville

April 27

Change on the Doorstep in North Vancouver, Burnaby-North Seymour (Burnaby) and North Okanagan-Shuswap (Salmon Arm)

Calling For Change in Vancouver Granville (northwest) and in Vancouver South (east)

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](#)

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!

Have a great week!