

Week #1 of Election #42 and you could hear the motors revving up in campaign offices across the land. Right now it seems mostly to be the ground game as election teams make phone calls and go door-to-door. A personal observation is that the vast majority of people are not ready to get their heads around the election or, if they've given it much thought, are undecided. The pollsters continue to send mixed messages: on the one hand, they report a very tight race with the parties all hovering around the 30% mark. Then they disclose that 61% are undecided and shift to an examination of how votes might migrate from one party to another. Most of the 'sharing' is between the Liberals and the NDP, and while the Conservative core support appears to be holding (but under some stress), the Tories are seldom a second choice.

The big news of the week was last Thursday's debate. Partisans were quick off the mark to celebrate the performance of their leader, but the more credible analysis was done by journalists and other independent observers. They found things to like and dislike about each leader, but the consensus was that Justin came out on top. Mr. Harper continues with his amazing ability to say things with a straight face while Tom Mulcair has found himself in the somewhat precarious position of having to play it safe and protect his position in the polls. Elizabeth May should be in all debates because her perspective needs to be heard and she speaks with the ease of someone who has a great grasp of the issues and can be much more candid with little stress.

Strangely, there have not yet been any follow-up surveys from the major polling companies, but it is clear from a review of Google searches that Justin attracted the most attention. It reminds one of the water pressure readings they used to follow when something big like the Super Bowl was on TV...the meters would register big changes as people used commercial breaks to grab a quick bio-break.

Not unexpectedly, the mass media has settled into its usual election coverage style. We should not expect too much reporting on policies and their implications, rather it will be on the horse race itself. The focus will be on gaffes (so far the NDP is in the lead on that front) and promises (nod to the Tories). All signs suggest that things will really start rolling after Labour Day.

Latest Public Opinion Survey Results:

Nanos: <http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/Nanos%20Political%20Index%202015-07-31E.pdf>

Ekos: <http://www.ekospolitics.com/index.php/2015/07/midsummer-haze-clouds-voter-outlook/> (the same report as last week)

Forum: <http://poll.forumresearch.com/post/334/new-democrats-headed-for-solid-minority/> (the same report as last week)

Our messages to the public:

Now that we are into the most dynamic stretch of the campaign, the Party HQ has launched its Social Media Red Team - fast breaking information and messages that we can use in our networks.

Our commissions here in BC have launched a drive to help those who may lose their right to vote due to the Tories' 'Fair Election Act'. There are new ID requirements that may make it more difficult for students and seniors to vote. We have prepared tip sheets for these groups and you can help spread the word by sharing this link to our BC Seniors' Commission web site: <http://federalslcbc.ca/voter-info/>

Sign up to get the latest campaign bulletins here: <https://www.liberal.ca/rr-opt-in/>

Items of interest from the news and the Party:

-The Conservative campaign will feature what one reporter called 'hermetically sealed events':

<http://ipolitics.ca/2015/08/08/participants-at-conservative-events-must-agree-to-gag-order/>

-Ontario's premier, Kathleen Wynne, is campaigning against Stephen Harper:

<http://www.thestar.com/news/federal-election/2015/08/08/kathleen-wynne-makes-historical-jab-against-stephen-harper.html>

-We include links to ABC groups on this weekly update. Now, an analysis of 'strategic voting' by Jeffrey Simpson:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/how-strategic-voting-might-play-out-in-october/article25867616/>

-The Hill Times has been keeping track of spending promises...somebody has raided (and maybe broke) Canada's national piggy bank:

<http://www.hilltimes.com/news/news/2015/08/10/tories-announced-%2414-billion-in-spending-in-six-weeks-before-election-call-670/43034>

-Alberta is no longer the friendliest place for conservatives...more proof from an Alberta blogger commenting on Mr. Harper's economic record (there are links to detailed reports):

<http://albertapolitics.ca/2015/07/shhhhhh-dont-tell-anyone-as-pm-stephen-harpers-economic-performance-is-a-bust/>

Looking ahead: --

Click here: <http://event.liberal.ca/#/en/events> enter your riding name and find an event near you.

This is the time when your effort to show up at an event will give volunteers and candidates the boost they need, better yet if you're able to volunteer yourself!

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!