

For over a year, we have been monitoring the activities of 'ABC' groups -- Anybody But Conservatives - who hope to mobilize their members to vote for the party that has the best chance of ousting the local Conservative candidate. Veterans have been among the most active groups and in this regard, this morning's announcement by Justin Trudeau should be the news they've been hoping to hear. While the current compensation program for vets was developed by Paul Martin's government, it was adopted unanimously in Parliament and was implemented by Stephen Harper's Conservatives. Then, cuts to Veterans Affairs and other decisions led to a degradation of compensation and services, leaving badly injured vets increasingly desperate and angry. Today, the Liberals have announced that there will be a return to lifetime disability pensions and a boost in the level of services offered by Veterans Affairs.

This announcement follows one earlier last week that would give families more flexibility to use EI benefits to look after seriously-ill family members. Another measure that's on target, in terms of responding to a significant issue for many Canadians.

While all of this was going on, gaps were developing in the NDP's flagship plan - a \$15 per day national daycare program. It turns out that delivering all of the promised spaces would take eight years *and* \$3 billion in annual funding support from the provinces, most likely over and above any daycare-support programs they have. Provincial buy-in is not certain, with Ontario voicing its reservations in spite of news reports saying it was on side. Other critiques included the fact that the NDP plan would not be 'income-tested'. That means well-to-do families could access highly-subsidized child care spaces, which indeed was the experience in Quebec. This is another example of fuzzy thinking by the New Democrats, who are now reported to be backing away, at least in part, from their vow to increase corporate taxes. Like the leader, the NDP platform appears to be supporting a beard...and it's hard to tell what's really going on behind there.

Mr. Harper, in the meantime, has lost his agenda to the Duffy trial. This is much to the chagrin of the message-control maestros in his campaign and PMO as well as some die-hard Conservative supporters, one of whom had a Grade-A hissy-fit with reporters. An environmental protection announcement for BC salmon was derailed by the use of a picture of an Atlantic salmon on party material and the appearance of Boy Scouts in the photo-op, which offended Scouts Canada's non-political stance. 'Environmental protection' together with 'Conservative government' doesn't pass the snicker test these days.

Based on revelations at the trial from lawyer Ben Perrin, who provided senior level legal counsel to the Prime Minister's Office, the walls seem to be closing in on the Prime Minister. Ray Novak, his current Chief-Of-Staff apparently knew the details

of the bailout package for Mr. Duffy and, according to the Conservatives' campaign spokesperson, it would be 'unfathomable' that Mr. Novak would know of the deal and not inform Mr. Harper. It would appear that our Prime Minister has become a stranger to the truth, which is pertinent to the campaign because doing so would clearly offend basic conservative values as well as those of all right-thinking Canadians.

One development the week before last has been particularly interesting. An editorial in the New York Times seems to have galvanized Canadians' concern and anger at how ten years of Conservative government have 'darkened the Canadian mind'. Could it be that the usually esoteric issue of the health of our democracy, and how it has suffered under Mr. Harper, has become important? The article is repeated from last week's update in the links below.

So far, the heavy investment in dialogue with Canadians Justin Trudeau has been making since becoming leader has been resulting in sound policies that so far have proven to be right on target. There are specific, expertly-designed plans to resolve important issues and deliver sound results. The 'Real Change' tag is starting to have real substance.

Latest Public Opinion Survey Results:

Nanos: <http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/Nanos%20Ballot%202015-08-14E.pdf>

Ekos: <http://www.ekospolitics.com/index.php/2015/08/fractured-country-produces-tight-and-unpredictable-race/> (no change in data)

Forum: <http://poll.forumresearch.com/post/1358/ndp-minority-government-in-the-cards/>

Leger: http://leger360.com/admin/upload/publi_pdf/soen20150815.pdf (no change in data)

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 Seniors' Commission release on Voter ID information has been sent to all senior Liberals in BC, with a request to share with neighbours, family and friends who may need to take extra steps in order to vote. The details are here: <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:

-Today's announcement on a boost in services and funding for our veterans:

https://video-sea1-1.xx.fbcdn.net/hvideo-xtp1/v/l/t42.1790-2/11920309_882080938506339_2138667395_n.mp4?efg=eyJybnRlIjMzMSwicmxhIjo1NTF9&rl=331&vabr=184&oh=032b1fb2ce0f1fc5c9f25a476c429161&oe=55DB7A8A

<http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b71b47a81da6e7d67dc2f2074&id=6789708c01&e=c7564a3127>

-iPolitics looks at equity as a value the Liberals may have taken away from the NDP:

<http://ipolitics.ca/2015/08/22/what-would-tommy-douglas-say-liberals-target-ndps-left-flank/>

-A repeat of that New York Times published an article from Canadian writer Stephen Marche claiming 'darkness and ignorance' have been products of Stephen Harper's regime:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/16/opinion/sunday/the-closing-of-the-canadian-mind.html?smid=fb-share&r=0>

-Andrew Coyne delivers the most biting piece of satire so far in the Duffy trial:

<http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/andrew-coyne-oh-harper-forgive-us-we-misjudged-you-over-the-duffy-affair>

-The Toronto Star suggests there are some missing pieces in the Liberals' campaign platform:

<http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2015/08/18/puzzling-gap-in-justin-trudeaus-plan-goar.html>

-Speaking of gaps, there appear to be some major ones in the NDP's day care plan:

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/ontario-disputes-mulcair-s-claim-that-it-supports-his-day-care-plan-1.2529335>

-Finally, in the category of 'I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore' - a Conservative supporter flames out (edited for family consumption):

<http://www.thestar.com/news/federal-election/2015/08/18/conservative-supporters-lash-out-at-reporters-during-campaign-event.html>

-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!