

And they're off! (Me too...) Although there has been some hand-wringing about the implications and political tactics surrounding our extra-long campaign, October 19th will still arrive before we know it. The Tories want to exhaust our campaign fund, but exhausting our volunteers won't be that easy. I marched a few feet behind Justin in yesterday's Pride Parade in Vancouver, and the guy sprinted from side to side to be directly in touch with as many of the thousands lining the route as possible. My guess is he covered three times or more of the actual distance of the parade route. His availability and accessibility scored big points, and the Rock Star welcome he received energized the sea of Red Shirts behind him.

It may take a week or two to see if the public is actually paying attention to the campaign. With so many people set to cram holidays into the last few weeks of the school summer vacation, it would be nice to think that all those ads the Conservatives will buy with their massive war chest won't actually reach the intended audiences.

In various bits and pieces in previous dispatches, we've highlighted some startling similarities between Tom Mulcair and Stephen Harper. This past week, two more higher-profile examples came to light. Mr. Mulcair has said he will not attend the debates that Stephen Harper plans to miss; both leaders are joined at the hip it seems. Elizabeth May has been a one woman wrecking crew on this issue. Then, just yesterday, Mr. Mulcair out-Harpered Mr. Harper by refusing to take questions at his campaign launch. Mr. Harper at least took five questions at his...two more than usual. It was noted by journalists that Mr. Trudeau took questions until reporters ran out of them. Along with being in the Pride Parade and not joining the official harrumphing in Ottawa, Justin's launch was a perfect match for the persona and style he has been cultivating since becoming leader.

Mr. Mulcair has been accused of playing a 'dangerous game' having been caught saying one thing in one part of Canada and something else in other places. Pipelines and coalition with the Liberals are two examples.

And then there are the polls. Forum puts the NDP way out in front, EKOS says it's all too fuzzy and Nanos claims it's a three-way stand-off. Still too early to take stock in these? Depends how quickly people start actually paying attention, and what they pay attention to. To many, it is almost inexplicable that the Conservatives are polling as well as they are, as the economy sputters and the Senate story is going to heat up considerably over the coming weeks.

Latest Public Opinion Survey Results:

Nanos: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/nanos-on-the-numbers>

Ekos: <http://www.ekospolitics.com/index.php/2015/07/midsummer-haze-clouds-voter-outlook/>

Forum: <http://poll.forumresearch.com/post/334/new-democrats-headed-for-solid-minority/>

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/>

Many thanks to Doug Brydges for keeping us in the loop on the Red Team releases so far. Now, the best is to sign up for these bulletins and you can do this here: <https://www.liberal.ca/rr-opt-in/>

Items of interest from the news and the Party:

-The Toronto Star's story about the first blush reaction in the polls:

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/08/03/ndp-surges-past-conservatives-liberals-in-latest-poll.html>

-On the other hand, the Georgia Straight makes Justin the Day One winner:

<http://www.straight.com/news/500676/justin-trudeau-wins-day-1-election-campaign-fight-tom-mulcair>

-...but the National Post says the Conservatives are pushing voters from the NDP to the Liberals:

<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/conservatives-trudeau-attack-ad-is-prompting-ndp-supporters-to-vote-liberal-forum-research-poll>

-With the dropping of the writ...the pre-election gravy train runs out of steam:

<http://ipolitics.ca/2015/07/31/tories-pledge-new-cash-recycle-old-promises-as-election-looms/>

-Looking at the lead-off messages from the party leaders:

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/fact-checking-the-campaign-kick-off-speeches-1.2499615?hootPostID=77dab66c25f41389816d2765d8abd99d>

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

The Liberal site is being a bit cranky today, so the actual list of BC events is not available. You can still look for ones in your home riding anywhere in Canada at the above link.

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](#)

A reminder that all of these weekly updates now appear on the BC Seniors Commission website: www.federalslcbc.ca

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!