

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** OUR VALUED CLIENTS AND FRIENDS

**FROM:** K&A

**SUBJECT:** OUR PERSPECTIVE OF CAMPAIGN 2015

**DATE:** OCTOBER 21, 2015

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Considered one of Canada's leading public policy organizations, K&A never misses the chance to offer our clients and friends a candid perspective on important political events. We hope you enjoy this edition of our perspective of Campaign 2015.

### **The 2015 General Election - Our Perspective**



Ready or not, Justin Trudeau is the Prime Minister of Canada.

In what many pundits, pollsters and politicians have described as a stunning, yet predictable win, but not to the size of majority it did finally receive, the Liberal Party of Canada becomes the Government under the Leadership of its Party's 14th Leader since Confederation, Justin Trudeau, who becomes the 23rd Prime Minister of Canada.

And that's a good thing! Here's what we think.



Many have suggested that the Liberal Party's apparently flawless campaign seemingly worked so well to attract voters that it netted a larger than expected percentage of the popular vote. While that may indeed be true, because we know that campaigns matter, and the Liberals did put on a good show, however, consider too, that this general election - the longest in Canadian recorded history – may well have served as a referendum solely on and about Stephen Harper himself. In fact we suggest that the call of the 2015 general election, in of itself, precipitated the presumptive intention of many voters across Canada who pollsters recorded really wanted to get rid of Prime Minister Harper. Thereby opened the floodgates for a sea change of fortune for his replacement as Government and Prime Minister. Mr. Trudeau and his Party seemingly took complete advantage of this.

Consider for a moment that Canadian voters, prior to the call of the election, were actually prepared and chomping at the bit to exact their own personal revenge against former Prime Minister Stephen Harper who, after a decade in the highest political job in Canada had fashioned a style of governing like a one-man show that appeared to promote division, tension, partisanship and public frustration that permeated every aspect of politics and public affairs.

His personal and political relations with provinces appeared dismissive and unhealthy in Canada's confederation. His relationship with the Supreme Court of Canada proved to be so confrontational that the Chief Justice herself actually went public with what she called an unprecedented and inexplicable attack on the nation's highest court. Not to mention, media and political observers mused openly that *"Harper's resentment-based approach to politics has at its core the active encouragement of its supporters' latent anger against a range of groups in society, whether they're public servants, academics, judges, unions, environmentalists ... or Muslims"*.

Add in the enmity that the former Prime Minister himself seemed to hold toward the media and the mutual lack of trust that developed, Canadians it appeared collectively had had enough of his brand of "values".

For Stephen Harper, Campaign 2015 may have seemed, at least in his mind, that it would be a cakewalk, but he could not have miscalculated more. In his own words, he said this election would be fought on values and as it turned out he was right.

At the end of the day, there's an old saying in politics that advises, "know your demons".

You see, the culture of negativity, division, partisanship and tension that had so permeated the body politic in Ottawa by virtue of the actions of the ruling Conservative

**Best Campaign  
line in 2015  
General Election**

"...that stubby  
little pencil in  
the voting booth  
is your most  
powerful  
weapon for  
change"

**Elizabeth May,  
Leader, Green  
Party of Canada**



Party, specifically its Leader, had the effect of giving Canadians a real opportunity through Campaign 2015 to realize how their values were actually in stark contrast to what Stephen Harper was selling and, as the polls showed, they yearned for an alternative. But what alternative?

In fact, the Conservative plan to call an extended campaign (most federal campaigns are usually about a month), viewed as “calculus” by many in the media, was designed to give the well-financed Conservatives a perceived edge over the Opposition NDP and Liberals. In fact, the plan was to out spend both of the other two Parties during the writ period. They had ads booked for media outlets and had run a campaign prior to the writ being officially announced slamming Justin Trudeau as not being ready. The Conservatives clearly viewed the Liberal Party as their threat.

The NDP campaign started out well, Thomas Mulcair, its Leader, had been an effective Leader of the Opposition. He was seen on TV for the past several years as intellectual and able to parry and thrust in the visceral world of national politics. His polling numbers going into the campaign gave him just as much of an edge as the Liberal Party. In fact, fresh off a stunning Alberta win as government for his Party in Alberta, it may have seemed to some that the same thing could happen for Mulcair and his Party in Campaign 2015. He had good candidates and a well-oiled machine. But he apparently underestimated the Conservative machine and took the bait on the most controversial of wedge issues designed to metaphorically take the sniffing dogs off their scented trail. Mr. Mulcair fell victim early to the Conservative’s “niqab” issue and sidelined the remainder of his NDP campaign as he and his Party’s polling numbers in Quebec plummeted. After that it almost appeared as if Tom Mulcair stopped campaigning. The Party and its Leader were ostensibly taken out of the equation to be government. BUT they seemingly could prove to be spoilers in the case of a minority parliament in the House of Commons – for one Party or the other - and pollsters and observers agreed.

In stark contrast, the Liberal Party started out with very low expectations. The worst thing any political foe(s) can do to the Liberal Party is discount them – they literally have a national machine of supporters who mobilize better than any political party. All those tens of thousands of volunteers stepped up to the challenge and the opportunity. At the same time, their campaign team launched what appeared to be an easy to understand message, which quickly caught on when compared to the negativity against Trudeau by the Conservatives. Attacking head on the issue of the Leader not be ready was a risk and it worked – the Liberal Party’s “Ready for Real Change” was their easy to understand message – and it apparently resonated with voters looking for a place to park their vote. Couple this with the fact that the Leader and his Party attracted a cohort of quality candidates across Canada and that gave them some attention. Moreover, the Party and its Leader wouldn’t fall for the Conservative ploy to divert attention from the campaign by falling prey to and on the “niqab issue” and the lines intersected to drive positive



attention to Justin Trudeau in Quebec and across Canada.

The rest is, as they say, history! The media, political analysts and historians will parse this election for a long time. It's the first time in the history of Canada that a father and son have attained the position of Prime Minister – and not just any father and son team - Pierre Trudeau put Canada on the world's stage and in this new political world the expectations are very high for his son Justin.

So what's next?

While many may choose to believe that the massive majority of the Liberal Party of Canada spells doom for the Conservatives, they may wish to think again. As far as number of votes, the Conservative Party of Canada only had 50,000 less votes this election than they received in 2011. That means that all the bleeding from the electorate that gave Justin Trudeau and his Liberal Party such a massive victory in seats apparently came from NDP and other voters who apparently left their traditional base in spades. So what does this mean?

It means, in a way, that although the new PM designate came out of the election with a majority, he and his advisors will have to pay special attention to the Opposition Conservatives and perhaps cautiously temper some of their policy changes with a mind to looking at how Canadians may actually react to decisions that may be perceived as impetuous or lacking thoughtfulness by Conservative MPs in the House of Commons. The Conservative Party of Canada still has one third of the seats in the House of Commons and may pose a viable challenge to the new government as time goes by. We'll keep all our readers apprised of this as life settles in on Parliament Hill.

In the meantime, with all of the hype and the new PM designate coming out of the gates fast, Mr. Trudeau has announced that he would swear in his new Cabinet on November 4, 2015. More on that in a bit.

He has been the toast of international media already. For example, he has spoken with some world leaders already and was quick off the mark with a message to President Obama that he would take Canada out of the ISIS airstrikes in Syria and other regional ISIS led fighting, which may prove to be a good thing or impetuous. Either way, it shows that the PM designate is decisive.

Trudeau's Cabinet, he says, will be small in its composition – 24 and, he says is will be gender-balanced meaning twelve men and twelve women. Most observers might say that it's not new in Canada but it is the first time at the federal government level. Some

say that it may hinder his ability to create a good Cabinet. Not so! Consider that he has 185 MPs from which to draw the best, and even a cursory glance at his MP line up tells the casual observer that he has a wealth of talent from which to choose and, for the first time since 1968, (when his father won that election and became PM) he can form a Cabinet that actually represents the aspirations of every part of the country because he has MPs elected from coast to coast to coast.

Some of his key portfolios will likely go to MPs who have had previous experience in Cabinet. Although there are several in his caucus who have experience in Cabinet, he will need to send a message that a portfolio is not necessarily reserved for experienced MPs. Therefore, look for:

- Hon. Ralph Goodale (MP from Saskatchewan) to take on a senior portfolio
- Hon. Scott Brison (MP from Nova Scotia) to take on a senior Cabinet portfolio
- Hon. Carolyn Bennett (MP from Ontario) to take on a senior role portfolio.
- Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (MP from New Brunswick) will take on a role
- Hon. Lawrence McAuley from PEI a long serving MP and former Cabinet Minister will take on a senior role too.

Other key Cabinet hopefuls may include:

- Hon. Stephane Dion (MP from Quebec and former Leader of the Party)
- Marc Garneau – long serving MP from Quebec – an important part of the Liberal team
- Mélanie Joly – newly elected from Quebec and a well regarded Quebec personality
- Emmanuel Dubourg – current MP from Bourassa and former MNA in the province of Quebec – well regarded
- Darshan Kang – MP from Alberta and the first MP elected to a Calgary riding since 1968
- Joyce Murray – long-serving MP from British Columbia and a Leadership candidate
- Jody Wilson-Raybould – newly elected from Vancouver area and a well respected First Nations lawyer
- Larry Bagnell – re-elected to the federal riding of Yukon
- Kevin Lamoureux – MP from Winnipeg and re-elected will figure prominently in Cabinet
- Karen McCrimmon – Kanata – a Leadership candidate
- Andrew Leslie – newly elected in Ottawa area – he is a retired Lt. General in Canadian Forces
- Hon. John McKay – re-elected to Scarborough riding
- Bill Blair- newly elected in Scarborough riding and former Chief of Police in Toronto

- Adam Vaughn – MP for Spadina riding and an advisor to the PM designate on urban issues
- Navdeep Bains – re-elected to the riding of Mississauga- Malton, he is a trusted advisor to the PM-designate
- Krystia Freeland – newly elected in a Toronto riding and an internationally known business journalist
- Bob Bratina – former Mayor of Hamilton and newly elected from the area
- Filomena Tassi – newly elected in Hamilton and a well respected lawyer and activist
- Raj Saini – newly elected from Kitchener – a well respected community Leader
- Kate Young – newly elected from London – a former journalist

Other Considerations:

- Look for Hon. Mauril Belanger – long serving MP from Ottawa area to become Speaker of the House of Commons
- Hon. John McCallum – re-elected to the riding of Markham-Unionville that he has held since 2000. He is a former senior economist at a Canadian bank. Look for him to have a senior role.
- Hon. Judy Sgro – has been elected since 1993 without interruption from a Toronto riding
- Chris Bittle – newly elected from St. Catharines and a lawyer from the Niagara Region
- Mark Holland – elected again to the riding he held in Whitby-Ajax prior to the 2011 election. A star in Liberal circles and accomplished health executive
- Kristy Duncan – re-elected MP from Etobicoke North and former university professor
- Paul Lefebvre – newly elected from Sudbury and well known in the Franco-Ontarian community
- Patty Hajdu – newly elected from Thunder Bay area and accomplished health executive – she could represent the north west of Ontario in Cabinet
- Seamus O'Reagan – newly elected in Newfoundland and Labrador and a national broadcaster with close ties to PM designate Trudeau
- Jöel Lightbound – newly elected in St. Foy Quebec area – an accomplished international lawyer
- Alexandre Medéz - former MP from a Montreal riding in Quebec. She is former President of the Liberal Party of Canada.

The point is the PM-designate has a very talented cast of over 150 NEW MPs along with his 34 existing MPs to choose a Cabinet. We merely have provided some food for thought and something that you can use to measure against our attempts to build a federal Cabinet.



What to expect in the coming weeks:

1. Cabinet swearing in – November 4
2. Look for the House of Commons to be recalled and a Speech From the Throne in the coming weeks. The House will have to deal with new Committees and new order papers that will have to decide on important issues among them:
  - i. Debate and ratification of the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (K&A will write more on this important initiative in days to come),
  - ii. Repealing or amending Bill C-51 – the Anti-Terrorism Act that has led to so much controversy,
  - iii. Legalization of marihuana – how? Who will advise the PM and his team?
  - iv. The Senate – reform? More appointments?
  - v. The appointment(s) of new justices to the Supreme Court of Canada and other judicial reform issues,
  - vi. Environmental and climate control including the Oil sands, Keystone XI, the west-east pipeline and other related issues.
3. Look for an announcement about a First Minister’s Conference sometime in the new year
4. Look for Mr. Trudeau’s presence at G-7 Conference and Climate Conference in the new year
5. Look for a Budget in March/April 2016

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