



Policy

Canadian Politics and Public Policy

Welcome to our special issue on Campaign 2015. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, after nearly a decade in power, knows better than anyone that the ballot question will come down to him (and however he tries to brand himself relative to his rivals...competence, security, maturity, all three) vs. change. The story of that choice from here to October (so Harper tells us) will be unfurled through policy, strategy and tools. Let's get to our expert insight on all three.

In This January – February Issue:

- [Andrew MacDougall](#), now a senior consultant at MSLGROUP in London, is a former communications director for Harper. MacDougall knows of which he writes, and says the struggle for control of the agenda; the message and the messenger, will frame the ballot question.
- [Brad Lavigne](#), communications director for Jack Layton in the NDP's successful 2011 campaign and later Layton's principal secretary, looks at the disruptive innovation of social media in elections—from Facebook and Twitter to LinkedIn and Tumblr—and its impact on campaigns. Twitter may be an echo chamber, but what an echo.
- Respected political strategist [Robin Sears](#) takes a look at what the parties need to do in the campaign. Sears asks: why not have an election about issues? If only.
- [Tom Axworthy](#), who was principal secretary to Pierre Trudeau, and his Conservative co-author [Rana Shamoon](#) consider Harper's bid to win a fourth consecutive election, and whether the Conservatives could replace the Liberals as the country's natural governing party.
- BMO Financial Group Chief Economist [Douglas Porter](#) provides an overview of the Canadian economy and fiscal frameworks, and in spite of plunging oil prices, finds the fundamentals in pretty good shape.
- Trudeau foreign policy advisor and former ambassador [Jeremy Kinsman](#) writes that while foreign policy is not usually a factor in Canadian elections, 2015 could be the exception. Between Ukraine, the Islamic State, the Middle East and relations with Washington, there are many areas for improvement, writes Kinsman.
- On the environment and climate change, the road to COP21 in Paris in November and December runs through the Canadian election in October. Former Mulroney chief of staff and environmental expert [David McLaughlin](#) provides us with an environmental update for Campaign 2015.
- Child care has already been staked out as a battlefield between the Tories and the NDP. [Geoff Norquay](#) provides a short history of child care policy in Canada, going back to the 1980s. Minister of Social Development [Candice Bergen](#), herself a mother of three, offers a spirited defence of the government's family policy, while Opposition Leader [Tom Mulcair](#) explains the NDP's proposal for \$15 a day national daycare.
- Two important regions, Quebec and the Greater Toronto Area, tell us a lot about what to look for in the campaign. [Bernard St-Laurent](#) tells us why Quebec is different, and [Patrick Gossage](#) reflects on lessons of the Toronto mayoralty campaign for the federal GTA vote.
- Green Party Leader [Elizabeth May](#) tells us why her party should be included in the leaders' debates and the larger national conversation, which is one of the reasons why we have included her on our cover. She's earned her way there.
- Beyond the cover package, [Yaroslav Baran](#) reflects on the situation after the parliamentary elections in Ukraine, where he has been a leader of Canadian observer teams for several elections.
- Finally, [Paul Miller](#) of the University of Alberta writes of the impact of winter on Canadian rail operations. There's a "tipping point", he suggests, of -25 minus degrees, where cold becomes an economic factor.

Enjoy the issue.