


# THE GLOBE AND MAIL

[Subscribe to RSS](#) 

## Ottawa Notebook



JANE TABER AND THE GLOBE'S PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU SET THE AGENDA

Entry archive:

[February 2010](#)

[January 2010](#)

[December 2009](#)

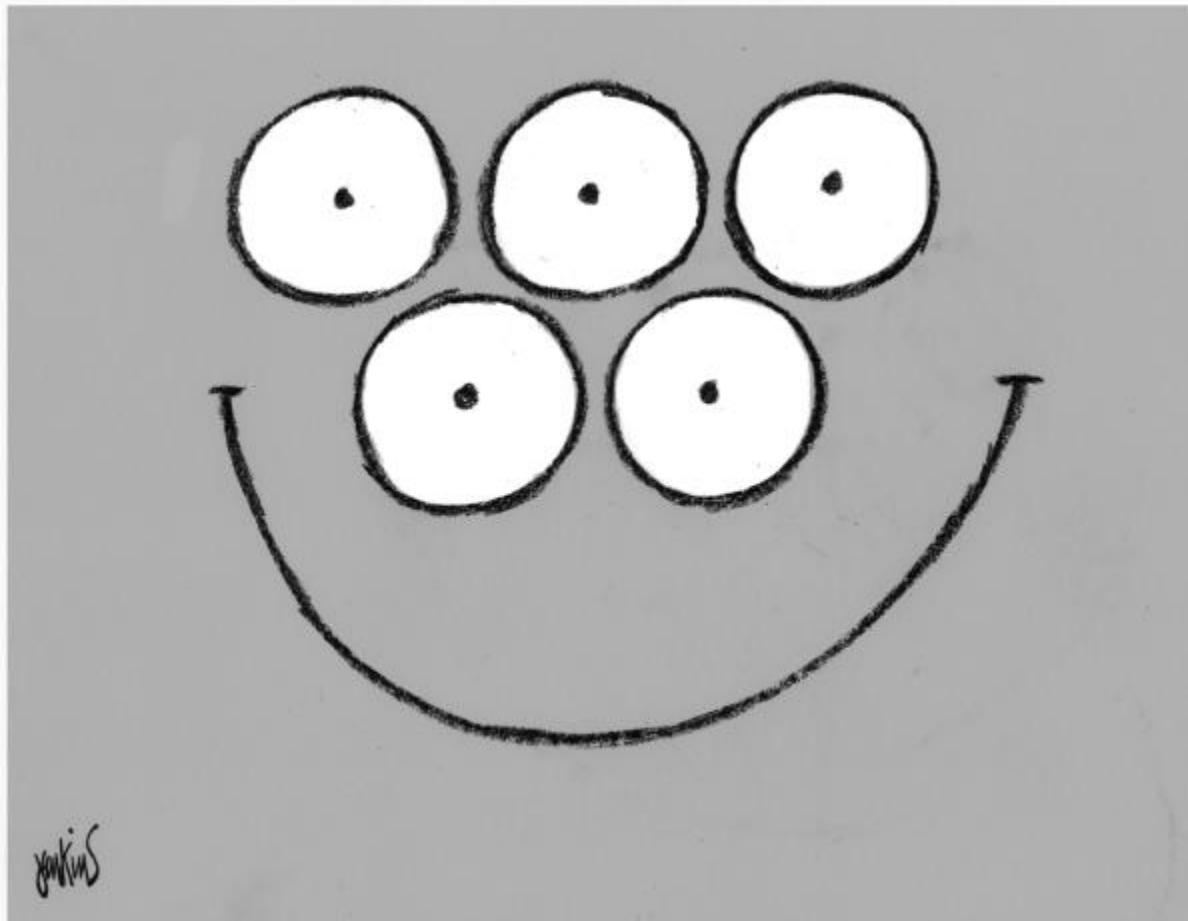
[November 2009](#)

[October 2009](#)

[September 2009](#)

[August 2009](#)

[Older Posts](#)



Tuesday, February 16, 2010 2:32 PM

# Tories take early gold in polls

Jane Taber

---

In keeping with the Olympic spirit, it's gold so far for Stephen Harper's Conservatives, according to two new national public opinion polls.

And in keeping with Canadians' generous spirit, NDP Leader Jack Layton has received a slight bump in public perception, an increase the [latest Angus Reid](#) survey attributes to news he is suffering from prostate cancer.

Mr. Layton's approval numbers are at 29 per cent, up 2 per cent, since the firm's last poll in late January.

Angus Reid also shows the Tories leading Michael Ignatieff's Liberals by four points. And the [other poll, by Nanos Research](#), shows the Prime Minister is still the most popular federal leader despite his unpopular prorogation decision.

According to Angus Reid, the Tories are enjoying 34 per cent support from Canadians compared to 30 per cent for the Liberals; 18 per cent for the NDP; 9 per cent for the Bloc; and 8 per cent for the Green Party.

These results are notable since other recent polls have had the Tories and Liberals statistically tied for several weeks. This one shows Mr. Harper's team pulling away.

Last fall, the Conservatives enjoyed a 10-point lead over the Liberals. That evaporated, however, after Mr. Harper's decision to shut down Parliament until after the Vancouver Olympics.

The Angus Reid online survey of 2,003 Canadians was conducted between Feb. 11 and Feb. 13. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.2 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

The Nanos poll, meanwhile, measured the performance of the party leaders. On who would make the best prime minister, Mr. Harper won handily with 32 per cent compared to Mr. Layton at 18 per cent.

Mr. Ignatieff did not fare well – only 16 per cent of Canadians think he would make a good prime minister; 6.9 per cent believe Green Party Leader Elizabeth May would be a good PM compared to 5.8 per cent for Bloc Leader Gilles Duceppe.

In all other categories – most trustworthy leader, most competent leader and leader with the best vision for Canada's future – Mr. Harper is out front, followed by Mr. Layton and then Mr. Ignatieff.

Both the Prime Minister and the Liberal Leader numbers have dropped in all categories since pollster Nik Nanos last tested the leadership scores in December. Mr. Layton's numbers have improved, however.

"The leadership index measures changes in perceptions on trust, vision and competence so it's unlikely there was a connection between Layton's cancer diagnosis and his improvement," Mr. Nanos told The Globe. "In many instances, federal party leaders benefit from the missteps of other federal party leaders. In this case, Harper's prorogation pushed his personal numbers down, while Ignatieff is still recovering from his image score loss resulting from his fall challenge to defeat the government and trigger an election."

In the analysis that accompanies the poll, Mr. Nanos says the new session of Parliament, which is to begin in early March, will be crucial for both the main party leaders.

"For Harper, he needs to put behind him the controversy related to prorogation," Mr. Nanos writes. "For Ignatieff, it is a key opportunity to jump-start his profile and personal definition among Canadians."

The Nanos poll of 1,001 Canadians was conducted between Feb. 5 and Feb. 8. It is considered accurate to within plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

*(Editorial cartoon by Anthony Jenkins/The Globe and Mail)*

---

## More Blogs from The Globe and Mail

- [Points East](#)
- [Subcontinental](#)
- [Witness: Kandahar](#)
- [Africa Diary](#)
- [Project Jacmel](#)
- [Mideast Notebook](#)
- [Inside City Hall](#)
- [Douglas Bell](#)
- [Ottawa Notebook](#)
- [Andrew Steele](#)
- [Alberta Watch](#)
- [Adam Radwanski](#)
- [Bruce Anderson](#)
- [Brian Topp](#)
- [Blogolitics](#)
- [Rick Anderson](#)
- [Silver-Powers](#)
- [Spector Vision](#)