


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](#)



Friday, February 19, 2010 7:11 PM

Tories put themselves atop Olympic podium

Jane Taber

VANCOUVER – Halfway through the Winter Olympics and Stephen Harper's Tories are already out with a new video campaign, starring Mike Duffy, pitching pride and patriotism in our athletes and country.

It didn't take them long to use the Games to appeal to supporters.

To be clear, the good senator from PEI and well-known former broadcaster is not asking for donations or for votes. Rather, he appears in the video with a supporting cast of one – Senator Nancy Greene Raine, who is also Canada's Olympic ambassador.

Together, they engage in a hokey pitch – at one point he says, 'Hey, Nance,' as he introduces his colleague – about Canada's athletes and how they are competing against the world's best.

Ms. Greene Raine compares the athletes to "our strong leader," Mr. Harper, who is in a competition of his own: "With our strong leader Canada will continue to compete with the world's best," she says. And Mr. Duffy, who also refers to his colleague as "my Olympic champion," goes on to say, "We Conservatives are champions in our own right."

An e-mail from Mr. Duffy, sent to Conservative supporters, provides the link to the video. Mr. Duffy writes: "Thank you for taking a few minutes during this busy time to reinvigorate our Canadian pride, by listening to the Conservative story – Canada's story. Our athletes' success on home soil makes us think about the Conservatives incredible track record of historical firsts."

Fred DeLorey, Conservative Party spokesman, says the focus of the video is to show Conservative pride in Canada's athletes and the country.

"It is time for Canadian pride, and we want Canadians to tell us what makes them proud of our country – and at the same time, we want to highlight to our supporters the role the Conservative Party has played in Canada's development," Mr. DeLorey says.

So far it's not working on former Progressive Conservative member Larry McLean.

"I found the e-mail particularly offensive," says Mr. McLean, who writes to all sorts of politicians and figures that's why the Tories must have his address. "The Conservatives are using the Olympics for their own crass political purposes."

So what if they are? Does this campaign of using the Olympics actually translate into winning votes for the government? Is there such a thing as a "gold-medal bounce" – enough goodwill resulting from the Games to bounce the Tories into a majority government?

“Since federal politics these days is a game of inches, anything that helps, helps,” says Darrell Bricker, global CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, a polling firm. “... anything that improves the overall public mood helps the incumbent.”

Nik Nanos, of Nanos Research, says these Games can help bolster the image of a politician. For Canadians to see the Prime Minister at events, cheering on the country’s athletes, provides a platform for him to display a “human face,” Mr. Nanos says. But he does not believe it will make an impression at the ballot box.

As for Mr. Bricker, he says that regardless of how many medals the Canadian team wins, in the end it’s all about hockey. “A true downer would be the men’s hockey team getting less than gold,” he says.

And so no matter how proud and patriotic Mike Duffy, Nancy Greene Raine and Stephen Harper want us to feel, they have to know that the only truly good feeling for Canadians is riding on an unpredictable puck.

More Blogs from The Globe and Mail

- [Points East](#)
- [Africa Diary](#)
- [Mideast Notebook](#)
- [Inside City Hall](#)
- [Project Jacmel](#)
- [Witness: Kandahar](#)
- [Subcontinental](#)
- [Spector Vision](#)
- [Douglas Bell](#)
- [Ottawa Notebook](#)
- [Andrew Steele](#)
- [Adam Radwanski](#)
- [Blogolitics](#)
- [Brian Topp](#)
- [Bruce Anderson](#)
- [Alberta Watch](#)
- [Rick Anderson](#)
- [Silver-Powers](#)
- [Jeff Rubin's Smaller World](#)
- [Reguly In Europe](#)
- [Morning Manager](#)
- [Number Cruncher](#)
- [Globe Investor](#)
- [Markets Blog](#)
- [Market View Video](#)
- [Fund Watch](#)