In Canadian election campaigns, Indigenous people’s voices are often not heard. In fact, but Aboriginal votes could make the difference in a handful of strategic ridings on Oct. 19. Harper apologizes for the residential schools in 2008, offering $5.1 billion in compensation for those who attended. Since then, his relationship with Aboriginals has been uneven, and it didn’t feature much in his campaign.

The signature Conservative program is the Universal Child Care Benefit, which pays $160 per month for each child under the age of six and 660 per month for children between the ages of six and 12. (The payments are taxable.) Harper’s big new offer is parental leave of up to 18 months in federally regulated sectors.

Harper's first major promise of the election campaign was that a Liberal government would invest a total of $6.2 billion in First Nations education over four years, supported by another $50 million over three years to improve school infrastructure on reserves. The Liberals also promised to spend $10 million to inject new life into the Aboriginal Employment Training Strategy, and provide $25 million a year for training facilities.

Mulcair pledged $8.1 billion over four years for First Nations education, promised to create a cabinet committee on Aboriginal issues, and launch an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The Greens are alone in pledging to restore and implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. They have been broadly critical of the Conservative record on First Nations.

Liberals would introduce a cap-and-trade system that puts a market price on carbon, and Mulcair would cap emissions. The NDP has been broadly critical of the Conservative record on climate change.

The Greens have an extensive climate change platform, right down to encouraging efficient light bulbs. The party opposes all current pipeline projects and advocates an aggressive reduction in greenhouse gases. By 2050, it believes this can halve global warming by 2050, on the way to Canada becoming "carbon neutral" by 2100.

The Greens call for an independent law-reform commission that would report to Parliament on proposed changes to the Criminal Code, and for a forum for public discussion of controversial legal issues such as assisted suicide, prostitution, and some realist anti-drug policies, including legalization and regulation of marijuana.

Conservatives campaign hard on crime, the other parties far less aggressively. It’s considered a trump card by strategists, especially among seniors voting with an eye on law and order.

Mulcair signaled a new direction for gun control. But Harper promised more of the same, although that assumes major buy-in from coalition governments around the world, which is "extremely doable" in Canada. But how? “We’ve simply got to find a way to create lower carbon-emitting sources of energy,” he said. He offered no further detail, beyond pledging to “balance what’s best for our climate with the needs of our economy.”

Trudeau promised a $5.1-billion funding commitment for First Nations education, promised to create a cabinet committee on Aboriginals and improve school infrastructure on reserves. The Liberals also promised to create a flexible parental benefits lasting up to 18 months. They would eliminate income-splitting for couples with children.

The NDP has been broadly critical of the Conservative imposition of mandatory minimum sentences continued during the campaign, with an Ontario judge striking down a six-month term for growing marijuana for trafficking. Still, Harper promises more of the same, such as two years for fraud over $5,000, with multiple victors. He also pledged $4.5 million annually for RCMP crack downs on grow ops and meth labs, as well as a drug hotline for worried parents.

The Greens bemoan the uneven Tory record on gun control, and call for a bigger minority scenario a crucial question. He has ruled out supporting Harper or any "formal coalition" with the NDP. The Greens have a trip to Paris at the end of November for a major United Nations climate change conference.

Trudeau said his goal is to elect enough MPs to become leader of a majority coalition, with Bloc Quebecois "coalition" only in the context of Canada's minority scenario, won't be a big factor. She told an interview that Greens are part of coalition governments in the future. She also said her goal is to elect enough MPs to become the balance of power in a Conservative or Liberal minority scenario. The Greens have been broadest in their critique of the Conservatives' tough-on-crime agenda, calling for a bigger public consultation on toughening up on gun control and strangling and disrupting ISIS in the Middle East right now. Harper demonized the 2008-09 recession. His key promises for the campaign was that a Liberal government would scrap the Universal Child Care Benefit, which pays $160 per month for each child under the age of six and 660 per month for children between the ages of six and 12. (The payments are taxable.) Harper’s big new offer is parental leave of up to 18 months in federally regulated sectors.

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**DEMOGRAPHIC REFORM**

Harper has appointed 7 senators, including Mike Duffy, Pamela Wallin and Patrick Brazeau, all suspended in the last Senate session. But now he says he's done with naming new senators as vacancies open up (there are now 22 empty seats). A re-elected Harper government would maintain a moratorium on appointments until the Senate is somehow reformed. Harper has suggested the provinces must lead the way.

**HEALTH CARE**

The Conservatives unilaterally cut the rate of growth of health transfers to the provinces, but point out that massive federal support still increases every year, and is now projected to rise from $51.1 billion in 2016-17 to $64.9 billion in 2019-20. On top of that, Harper promised new projects during this campaign, including $50 million a year starting in 2017-18 for a non-profit organization to fight cancer.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Conservatives say federal infrastructure spending ballooned to more than $5 billion a year from $1.5 billion a decade ago. They focus on priorities like ports and public transit expansions that ease gridlock in big cities.

**ELECTION 2015**

THE LIBERALS

Trudeau kicked all Liberal senators, 12 at the time, out of his party's caucus in 2014, and has advocated a non-partisan appointment process. He's promised this will be the last federal campaign to elect MPs with less past the post voting, vowing to set up an all-party committee to look at alternatives like ranked ballots and proportional-representation systems, and institute reforms within 18 months.

The NDP has long called for abolishing the Senate, but that would require major constitutional negotiations to bring all the provinces into agreement. Mulcair promises to get rid of winner-take-all voting in each riding, bringing in a system called mixed-member proportional representation.

May links overseeing the Senate to other democratic reforms, such as proportional representation in voting and even lowering the voting age. The Greens want to hold a referendum on Senate reform to determine how to proceed with changes proposed by a non-partisan commission—possibly electing senators and changing regional distribution—or abandoning the upper chamber outright.

**JOBS**

Despite, GDP growth, trade balances, infrastructure spending—there are the terms that tend to dominate the economic policy debates for many voters, though, they often fail to see economic jobs.

When measuring Harper's jobs record, your yardstick matters. He points to 1.3 million net new jobs since the nadir of the 2008-09 recession. His rivals emphasize last month's rise in unemployment to 7.1 per cent, the highest rate since February 2014. The Conservatives set the goal of creating another 1.5 million "well-paying" jobs by 2020, through a mix of low taxes, more deficits, and, and trade deals. Can it be done? It amounts more to an aspiration than a plan.

Mulcair stresses the loss of 400,000 manufacturing jobs in Canada in the Harper years. Ontarians have said that international trend began before the Tories took power. But higher manufacturing jobs in Canada are growing at 2.6 per cent a year, much faster than in the United States.

Mulcair says face coverings make him uncomfortable, but government can't dictate what someone wears. He also accuses Harper of exploiting the issue, saying: "You are using it as a weapon of mass distraction."

May proposes studying the social and legal issues surrounding marijuana, and other drug policy issues, through an independent commission that would produce balanced public reports. May has publicly supported the legalization and regulation of marijuana.

The Liberals promise a three-year "youth employment strategy" financed at $300 million and they say they would expand it to $500 million a year into supporting so-called "incubators and accelerators" for innovative firms. Another $100 million a year would beef up Ottawa's long-standing Industrial Research Assistance Program, which helps innovative small- and medium-sized companies, and is generally thought to have a solid track record.

A Liberal video features Trudeau and Toronto MP Adam Vaughan explaining the party's positions. Legalization and regulation would make it harder for kids to access pot, they say, while the status quo enriches organized crime. As well, the current laws lock up too many "picky" criminals. It was one of the first issues Trudeau on which took a bold, distinctive stance as Liberal leader, but he's made it high-profile in this campaign. Tories would like it to be bigger.

The NDP would give municipalities another $400 million a year for new community health clinics across Canada, including mobile clinics for rural and remote areas.

**MARIJUANA**

Is it crime or health policy? Either way, pot policies signalize. Stances on marijuana tend to be highly partisan, something buyout policy—suggesting rational dieting bias that can still matter deeply.

**NIOB**

Sundance hinders the government's ban on mining during citizenship ceremonies and quickly became an election issue that overshadowed the small shadow of a citizenship after a court ruling tied her to her force.
Harper increased the Guaranteed Income Supplement and introduced pension income-splitting. This time, his platform promised a new credit for single and widowed seniors and a new fund to combat fraud aimed at seniors.

After little Alan Kurdi’s tragic death, Harper said careful security vetting of migrants and skilled workers had helped deter migrants from Syria and Libya. Eventually, he promised: “When asked about the TPP, Trudeau stresses a responsible approach to thoroughly examining the Trans-Pacific Partnership,” he said. “The Harper Conservatives have failed to be transparent.”

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Trudeau vowed to create a Syrian refugee coordinator to make that happen. Mulcair’s campaign pitch has been to offer a bigger war chest than the Liberals for C-51. Mulcair’s platform promises to repeal only parts of C-51. He approves of some elements, like sharing information among federal agencies and tightening up the no-fly list. Among a raft of changes he proposes is the creation of an all-party committee of MPs to provide oversight of national security agencies. He would also require a statutory review of the Anti-Terrorism Act after three years. In 2016, while making more government data virtually free, give Statistics Canada independence, consolidate federal science in a central portal, and create a chief science officer.

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The TPP represents a real threat to our rights and freedoms. We call the related issues "vanishing Canada"—lost security concerns prompted an audit of Syrian refugees earlier this year. Harper promises to hold cabinet meetings weekly to deal with the refugee issue. He promised: "By staunchly opposing Bill C-51, Mulcair set himself apart from Trudeau. Mulcair’s campaign pitch has been to offer a bigger war chest than the Liberals for C-51. Mulcair’s platform promises to repeal only parts of C-51. He approves of some elements, like sharing information among federal agencies and tightening up the no-fly list. Among a raft of changes he proposes is the creation of an all-party committee of MPs to provide oversight of national security agencies. He would also require a statutory review of the Anti-Terrorism Act after three years. In 2016, while making more government data virtually free, give Statistics Canada independence, consolidate federal science in a central portal, and create a chief science officer.

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