

Political round-up

The Hugo Group

Wellington

Feb 17 2016

US politics – a protest election

- Trump/Cruz vs Rubio/Bloomberg (??)
- Hillary vs Bernie
 - tapping into ‘sick of politics as usual’
 - role of super-delegates in the candidate selection process may worsen this
- Replacing Antonin Scalia
 - adds a potent extra element

The primaries race

- Primaries and caucuses – key dates:
 - Tuesday, March 1 – ‘super Tuesday’
 - 12 states, inc. Texas
 - March 15
 - 5 states, inc. Florida and Ohio
 - April 19 – New York state
 - April 26
 - 5 states, all north-eastern
 - June 7
 - 6 states, inc. California

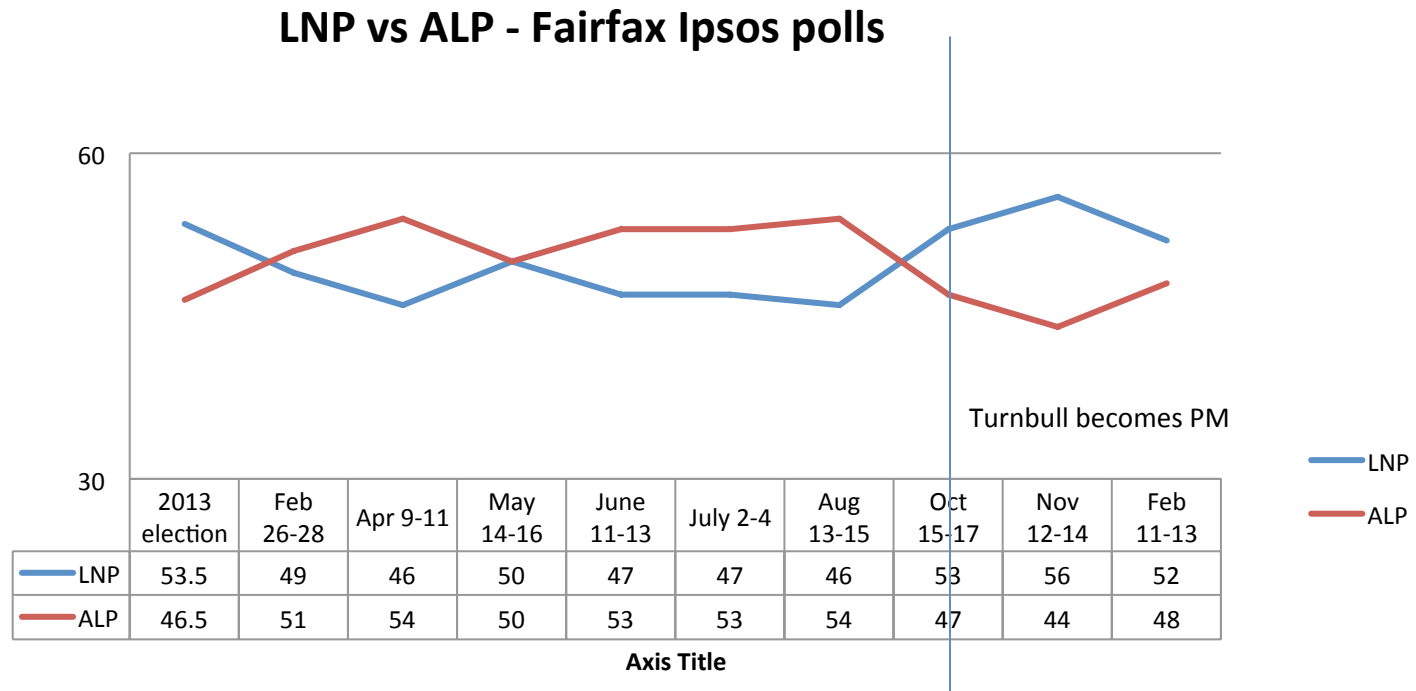
Australian politics

- Key and Turnbull meet this Friday in Sydney
- Malcolm Turnbull has rejected a plan to raise GST in return for substantial company and personal tax cuts
 - Economic gains judged insufficient
 - Electoral risks judged too great
 - Damage with business/commentariat judged survivable
 - A “captain’s call”
- Accompanied by reshuffle late last week

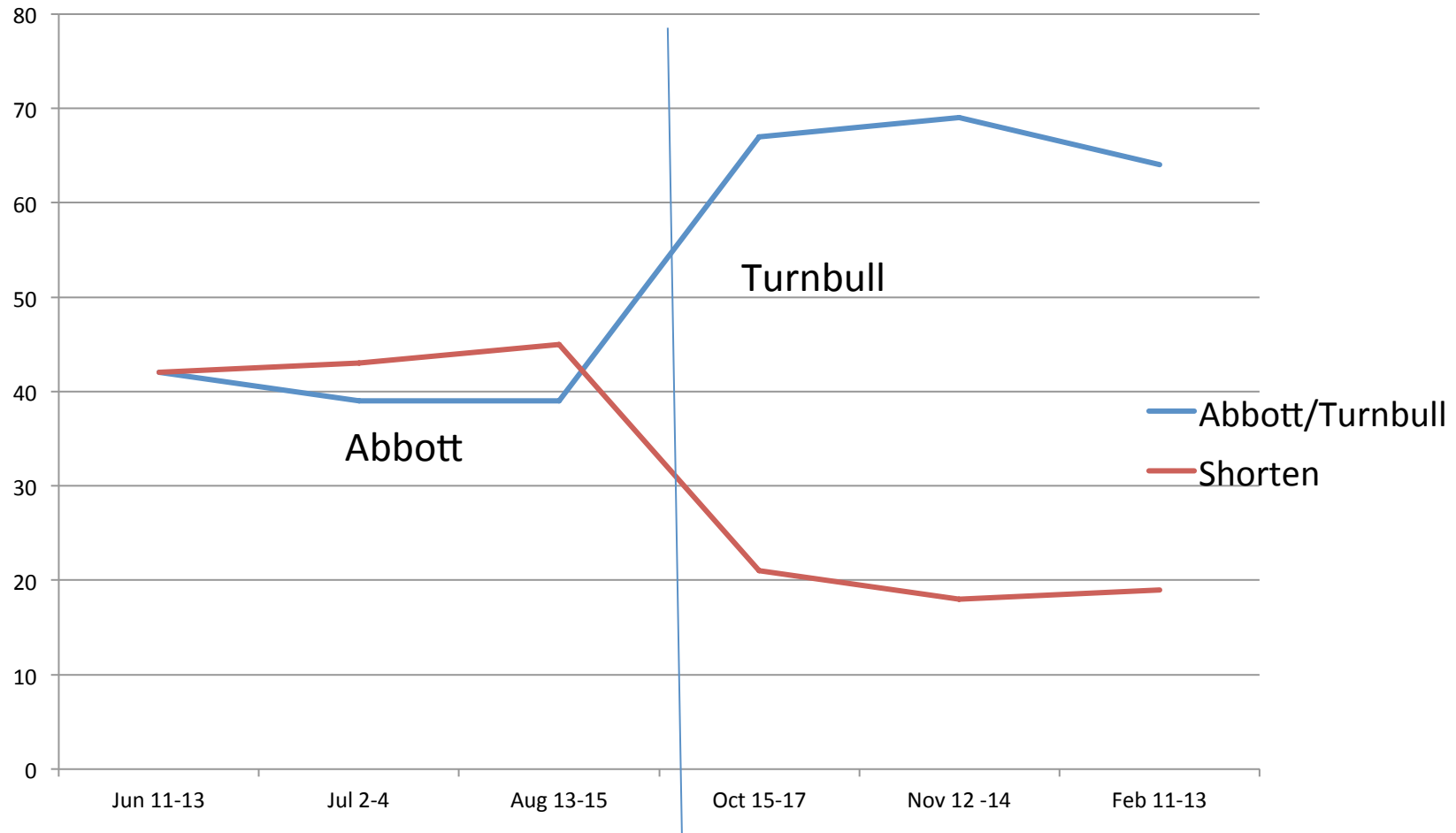
Turnbull's GST backdown

- Paul Kelly read it right:
 - “two iron political laws underpin Turnbull's GST retreat:
 - the economic dividends from reform are less than before
 - the political risks are greater than before.
 - “This double blow works against bold policy.”
 - And robs Labor of its scare campaign
- Much other commentary much more critical

Honeymoon ending for the Coalition



But Turnbull is dominant



Source: Ipsos Fairfax polls

NZ politics

- Parliamentary year has started
 - Key continues to promise tax cuts
 - Gareth Hughes delights the left with attack on Key
 - But probably achieves nothing
 - Just as likely to lead to vote-shifting within the left as to bring soft Nats across
 - ‘phoney war’ element – Cabinet agenda this week extremely light

Flag change looks like a loser

Flag preference by certainty of voting



Issues to watch

- Freshwater reform
- RMA reform – how will the bill come out of select committee?
- Ron Mark – angry with Peters for not stepping aside?
- Grant Robertson – really on board with Andrew Little?
- China FTA renegotiation – Chinese officials dragging the chain