

Canada: Tired of a decade of Conservative rule

A Liberal tide has washed over Canada, said Chantal Hébert in the *Toronto Star*. Canada's "progressive majority" finally "got its act together" this week and ended the nine-year rule of Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Under the leadership of the young and charismatic Justin Trudeau, the center-left Liberals took every parliamentary seat in the Atlantic provinces and a nice chunk of the rest, giving them an outright majority. Trudeau can thank the extra-long campaign period, said *The Globe and Mail* in an editorial. The election date was set long ago, so when Harper dissolved Parliament in August, Canada was in for 11 weeks of politicking—four weeks longer than a normal election season. Harper thought a lengthy campaign would benefit him, because the Conservatives had a bigger war chest, but Trudeau used that time to charm the electorate. With his "optimism and openness" and electrifying debate performances, he was able to give the lie to the Conservatives' claim that, at 43, he was "just not ready."



Trudeau and his wife, Sophie: Victorious

The election wasn't so much won by the Liberals as lost by the Conservatives, said Conrad Black in the *National Post*. After a decade in office, Harper's government was "sclerotically rigid, media-inaccessible, authoritarian, and peevish." The prime minister's reactionary agenda was "obnoxious to traditional Canadian respect for rights and due process." Harper's crime bill, for example, called for draconian sentences, more prisons, and less rehabilitation. The proposal to strip Canadian citizenship from

dual nationals convicted of terrorism was rightly denounced as cruel. And his recent pledge to ban the wearing of the Muslim face veil during citizenship ceremonies was simple "pandering to knuckle-dragging authoritarians." Harper and his Conservative Party were out of ideas.

Trudeau, by contrast, is brimming with them, said the *Montreal Gazette*. His platform, under the slogan "Real Change Now," calls for cutting taxes on the middle class, raising them on the rich, and running deficits for three years to finance infrastructure projects. He wants to reform our health-care and federal voting systems, and legalize marijuana and assisted suicide. Canadians inspired by Trudeau's message of change will be eager to see him deliver on these promises, "which might be harder than anticipated." It'd be a tall order even for a veteran statesman, but Trudeau is "shockingly inexperienced," said Anthony Furey in the *Toronto Sun*. All he has is the pedigree of his popular late father, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. The son is nothing but a schoolteacher who twice dropped out of two graduate programs. He can't even explain his own fiscal plan.

What Trudeau is, though, is thoroughly Canadian, said Howard Elliott in *The Hamilton Spectator*. Voters have had "enough with the Americanization of Canadian politics," with an executive-style government and paranoia about national security. Trudeau calls for inclusion, fairness, and tolerance. It's the "hopeful alternative that Canadians, apparently, have been longing for."

PHILIPPINES

Refusing to treat the poor

Editorial
The Manila Times

The Philippines has shamed itself by refusing medical treatment to an American Nobel laureate, said *The Manila Times*. Richard Heck, 2010 co-winner of the prize in chemistry, died this month after being turned away from a private hospital to which he owed money. Heck, 84, had moved to the Philippines with his Filipina wife in 2006, and in his last years had spent his entire fortune on medical treatments for prostate cancer, diabetes, and chronic pulmonary disease. When he was rushed to the Manila hospital with severe vomiting, it refused to admit him, and by the time he'd been transported to a public hospital he

was dead. The terrible irony is that his discoveries in organic chemistry have been "used to advance medical breakthroughs aiming to save millions of lives," yet his own life was deemed not worth saving. Heck is not the only person to be so ill treated. *The Economist* ranks the Philippines 78 out of 80 countries for palliative care. Even in public hospitals, government aid covers less than one-third of the cost of treatment, while patients shoulder the rest. Unable to pay, 70 percent of Filipinos die without having seen a doctor. This is supposedly a Catholic country. "Something is gravely wrong."

CHINA

A risky game in the South China Sea

Editorial
Global Times

The U.S. wants "to play rough" in the South China Sea, said *The Global Times*. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter has announced that American ships and aircraft will not respect the sovereignty zone of 12 nautical miles around Chinese islands there. The U.S. calls them "artificial islands," but that is inaccurate. China is expanding existing reefs and has not built "these islands out of thin air." In any case, China has not yet made any statement about the expansion of its sovereignty rights to include 12 miles around each island. Instead, it has said only that freedom of navigation will be respected throughout the South China

Sea. But make no mistake: If the U.S. "adopts an aggressive approach," we will respond in kind. China will never tolerate "rampant U.S. violations" of Chinese waters and airspace. We will be "ready to launch countermeasures according to Washington's level of provocation." The South China Sea is China's doorstep and is not an area where America should try to claim hegemony. "If the U.S. encroaches on China's core interests, the Chinese military will stand up and use force to stop it." Surely nobody wants a "major-power conflict." The U.S. should take care that it does not begin one.