

Liberal Rule Continues

Canadian Federal Election, November 27, 2000

by Mark Wegierski

The Canadian federal election largely confirmed the Liberal Party's longstanding dominance of Canadian politics. With a total of 301 seats in the federal Parliament, the Liberals (led by Jean Chretien) won a large majority of 173 seats, with 100 seats from Ontario (out of a total of 103 seats available), 37 seats from Quebec, 19 seats from the Maritimes, and 17 from Western Canada. The center-right Canadian Alliance (led by Stockwell Day) won 64 of the 91 seats available in Western Canada, and also 2 seats in Ontario. The separatist Bloc Quebecois (led by Gilles Duceppe) won 37 of 75 seats available in Quebec. The New Democratic Party, Canada's social democrats (led by Alexa McDonough) won 13 seats, 4 of them from the Maritimes, 8 from Western Canada, and 1 in Ontario. The "ultra-moderate" federal Progressive Conservatives (led by Joe Clark) won 12 seats, 9 of them from the Maritimes. (Numbers as reported on November 28.) These voting patterns could indicate that the four main regions of Canada—Western Canada, Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes, may already be seen in many ways as "distinct societies".

Immigration issues had little salience, except negatively. An Alliance candidate's "Asian invasion" comments significantly hurt Stockwell Day's campaign — only ratcheting up the ever-continuing accusations of "intolerance", "bigotry", and "racism" (although that candidate almost immediately withdrew from the election).

Given the left-liberal dominance in the Canadian media, in the education system (from daycare to universities), in the judiciary and justice system, in the government bureaucracies, in so-called high culture (typified by government-subsidized "CanLit"), in North

American pop-culture and "youth culture," in the big Canadian banks and corporations, and in the leaderships of the main churches, any existing "small-c conservative" tendencies are being continually ground down. There is also the panoply of special interest groups, who receive extensive government and some corporate funding. Even as elections come and go, the long-term trend is towards the ever-intensifying undermining of conservative and traditionalist impulses in Canada.

An election today is really a "management problem" for left-liberals — of how to assure, by any means necessary, the "anointing" into power of a preferred, center-left party. Such a center-left party has to be commonly perceived as moderate enough to attract a large portion of the general vote, but at the same time must uphold substantive elements of left-liberalism, notably in social and cultural areas. In the last decade, left-liberalism has become far more willing to concede some fiscal and economic issues to the "managerial Right" — while continuing a ferocious struggle against small-c conservatism or social conservatism. They also try to maintain, as far as possible, eviscerated, pseudo-conservative parties as the "official" Right (such as the federal Progressive Conservatives in Canada) to absorb or fragment the right-wing vote.

What can be seen is that the left-liberal attacks on notions of traditional nation, family, and religion, on the work-ethic, and on strict law and order, only grow more intense, even as these notions become increasingly attenuated in society. Perhaps the only thing that can challenge such ever-intensifying attacks is a profound chastisement of the center-left parties at the ballot box, by a substantively conservative party, that will actually try to govern in an "activist", "transformative" fashion. However, given the left-liberal dominance in so many social and cultural areas, the election of a substantively conservative government at the federal level in Canada, may indeed be possible to be perpetually stymied. In such a case, ideas of maximal regional devolution may become more salient in Canada.

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