

Now Is the Time to Accelerate the Growth and Prosperity of Our Confederation

By Conrad Black

It could be worse. There were no voting irregularities, the turnout was high, and all the leaders spoke graciously on election night.

Justin Trudeau had moved the Liberal party so far left that the NDP had become redundant, and the voters recognized that. No one can dispute that it is a substantial achievement for a party to win four consecutive, almost full terms. This has only happened three times before and was accomplished by the country's greatest prime ministers: John A. Macdonald, Wilfrid Laurier, and the combination of W.L. Mackenzie King and Louis St. Laurent.



Liberal Party supporters celebrate at the party's election night campaign headquarters in Ottawa on April 28, 2025. The Canadian Press/Frank Gunn

Mark Carney crowns a remarkable career, and while I have been critical of the liberties with the truth that he has taken (hardly unprecedented among politicians), and some of the representations of his performance in previous roles, he has come from socioeconomic and geographic obscurity meritocratically to confirmation in the country's highest office. He deserves not only respect for his career success, but the best wishes of all Canadians for success in his great office.

I was critical of the ludicrous exaggeration of the threat from President Trump, which was the basis of the Liberal Party and its leader's ability to transform a profound national consensus to change the party in government a few months ago into what I still regarded as a spurious contest over who would be most capable of managing Canadian-American relations. If Mr. Carney succeeds as an effective leader of our country, he will have few more strenuous admirers of that success than

I, and I will certainly acknowledge with suitable humility what will then have been proved to be the inaccuracy of my predictions for his government.

As we all know, Canada is a strong country. It is a treasure house of practically every resource except tropical fruit (and we do produce some bananas). And it is a skilled, well-motivated, and law-abiding population of over 40 million people, a more numerous population than France had during [La Belle Époque](#) (late 19th and early 20th century), the years of its greatest cultural brilliance in almost every field, and then of the heroic resumption of its status as the greatest continental European power in World War I.

There is no limit to what this country can achieve with creative leadership: Canadian distinctiveness can be established by transforming Canada into a successful laboratory for innovative legislation that magnifies our humanitarian tendencies and accelerates—as our recent lack of competitiveness requires—our successful pursuit of greater and well-distributed prosperity. In his remarks on election night, Mr. Carney eloquently espoused those goals, and I hope as ardently as his most devoted followers do that he is able to deliver on that promise.

In abandoning in mid-campaign some of the more preposterous ingredients of his former somewhat irrational conjuration of a crisis of climate change, I wholeheartedly embrace the hope that Carney demonstrated in his speech a rational flexibility and esteemed analytical skill, and not mere opportunism. The Liberal Party has demonstrated again, as it [has so many times](#) since the first election of Wilfrid Laurier in 1896, its mastery of the political arts. On many occasions, Canada has not only been the beneficiary of that talent, but it has sometimes been absolutely essential to the growth, in every respect, of Canada as a sovereign and distinguished nation and one of the world's respected states.

In this context, the poor result of the Bloc Québécois—though it has a reasonably amiable leader and has no business contesting a federal election—may be taken as a refreshing confirmation that Quebec, for all its endless grumbling about Canada, recognizes that it does well within this country, and that taking its chances as a sovereign state with 2 percent of

the population of North America in a tiny French-speaking enclave may not be the long-deferred paradise that the Quebec separatists have been extolling for the last century.

It should again be noted that the Liberals cannot win an unambiguous mandate in Canada with an English-speaking leader. The last English-speaking federal Liberal leader to win a federal election was [Lester Pearson](#), who dissolved Parliament prematurely in 1965 to gain a majority. Yet he gained only one MP and lost ground slightly to the imperishable John Diefenbaker leading the Progressive Conservative Party in a national election for the fifth time in eight years. The last time an English-speaking federal Liberal leader won a majority in a Canadian general election was [Mr. King in 1940](#), a wartime election when official relations with French Canada were effectively delegated to his associate prime minister, Ernest Lapointe.

Nor should the achievement of Pierre Poilievre be overlooked. He was heavily opposed by the national political media, mercilessly portrayed as harsh and being enchanted with bitcoin and straining at the leash to fire the governor of the Bank of Canada. He gained 18 MPs in Ontario, and in an election where the NDP largely collapsed into the lap of the Liberals, he clearly picked up a large number of centrist Liberals, led his party to its greatest percentage of the popular vote since Brian Mulroney divided the country in his favour in 1988 on the issue of free trade, and fully did his part in leading the country back to a functioning two-party system for the first time since before World War I.

In this election, Poilievre has gone a considerable distance towards reconstructing the Conservative Party as a genuine and responsible party of the moderate right and rescuing it from the post-Harper ignominy of being an ineffectual facsimile of the Liberals. This fact, and Mr. Carney's excellent start on re-creating the Liberals and reorienting them with a new program based on gravitas and maturity that was only personified by a few of the most capable ministers of the Justin Trudeau government, may well be seen as a double

Renaissance by Canada's only national political parties.

The election night speeches from the party leaders were the best I've heard since 1957. There's room for great hope that out of the much-magnified imbroglio with the United States, Canada can pull itself together and build on its political institutions, which are among the most durable in the world for a country of at least 20 million people—and without losing an important province as the United Kingdom did with Ireland, or resorting to a terrible Civil War that killed 750,000 people in a population of 31 million, as befell the United States.

We are the only transcontinental, bicultural, parliamentary Confederation in the history of the world, and now is the time to accelerate the growth of the originality, self-confidence, and prosperity of our Confederation, after a regrettable lapse of 10 years which, by the narrowest of margins, an adequate number of Canadians were persuaded to overlook in Monday's election.

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