

The future still belongs to Pierre Poilievre

By Conrad Black

By the narrowest of margins, anti-Trump posturing and pugnacity was more influential with voters on Monday than recollections of the shambles by almost every measurement of the government's previous ten years. Trump is an extraordinarily effective president for the Americans, but his carnival manner and flippant bombast does not travel well, (though it is often entertaining). His trade argument against Canada, as many have pointed out, is rubbish since there would be no American trade deficit with this country if energy were excluded and much of the oil that we sell the United States is at a knock-down price and is sold on by them to third parties for a large and easy profit. As I wrote in this column when he started his nonsense about Canada becoming the 51st state, instead of every politician in the country putting on the uniform and airs of Captain Canada, and Justin Trudeau telling Trump that Canada would "collapse" but that we would make a manful effort to raise our contribution to our own national defence to two per cent of GDP as we have pledged, but in five years, we should have countered the U.S. president with hauteur and ridicule.



Canadian Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre flashes the V-sign as he arrives to speak to the media at CBC-Radio-Canada after he participated in the French Federal Leaders Debate broadcast in Montreal, Canada, on April 16, 2025. PHOTO BY ANDREJ IVANOV/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

We should have invited all of the governors of the northern U.S. border states to secede from that country, (though the practice was discouraged by Abraham Lincoln and General Grant and General

Sherman), and join Canada for the benefit of a lower crime rate and a relatively honest justice system where prosecutors are disbarred for replicating the conduct of the Nazi jurist "Raving Roland" Freisler, a frequent phenomenon in the U.S.

If absurd tariffs continued to be threatened, the federal government should have announced that it would compensate and where possible find alternate markets for Canadian suppliers of electricity, oil, and phosphates to suspend deliveries to the United States, to remind its president that we are useful, resourceful, and little minded to behave like doormats. For good measure, I recommended massive funding of American pro bono law reform institutions such as the Innocence Project, to assist the United States in reducing its 98 per cent federal conviction rate, 95 per cent without trial, through the perversion of the plea bargain system and the gutting of the Bill of Rights, in the cases of nonviolent alleged first offenders.

Instead, the new prime minister plied his rounds uttering gratuitous snideries about the United States which, we might

occasionally wish to remind ourselves, despite its many shortcomings, is incomparably the most successful country in the history of the world, with whom we have had an astonishingly cordial relationship for over 200 years. The Liberals tried to rise above Justin Trudeau's assertions that we had no identity and were a post-national country that had attempted genocide against our native people and were on the verge of collapse. They tried to prove by raising their voices that we were not a 98-pound weakling country. Donald Trump doesn't care who the prime minister of Canada is and unfortunately, neither does anyone else in the world outside this country. One of the fables of the Justin Trudeau era was that "The world needs more Canada." Perhaps, but the world, unfortunately with some reason, thinks we are an absurdly woke, under-achieving country. Canada was hornswoggled by Carney's nasty fairy tale that "Trump's trying to break us." Trump thinks that federal union would be a favour to Canada. We don't agree but Trump does not spend five minutes a week thinking about Canada. Our schoolyard pouting and fist-shaking did not impress him and if Carney succeeds in imposing his climate straight-jacket, this country will be on political suicide watch.

The president's chief interest seems to be to repatriate the parts of the American automobile business that moved to this country. If he is implacable in that determination, and some of the Japanese automakers have already indicated that they would be happy to relocate to the United States, then we should prepare arrangements to take over automobile and auto industry related businesses in this country at depreciated values, make arrangements with overseas manufacturers such as Volvo or Kia, (if the Swedes and the Koreans can do it so can we), and build an automobile industry of our own for the first time since Sam McLaughlin in Oshawa over a century ago and assure that no American-manufactured automobile ever enters this country again other than with a tourist at the wheel. So far, we have been, as the English say, "all mouth and no trousers," and if Trump assists us in learning how to act like and be taken as a serious country, he will, no doubt

inadvertently, have done us a favour. We can start by using the fiscal influence of the federal government on the provinces to require that public education in this country cease to teach that we are a nation of imperialists, racist colonialists, and reprobates. We must reacquaint ourselves with our history-warts and all, it is a distinguished history which all Canadians should know something about and regard with pride.

I do not unsay what I have written here and elsewhere about Mark Carney, but he has retained his office in a fair election and, like all the party leaders, spoke graciously on election night. He's my prime minister too and I wish him success. If it turns out better than I have predicted, I will recant my previous comments as appropriate, with unfeigned humility and a glowing heart. The only previous leaders who won four consecutive general elections without facing a fragmented official opposition were Macdonald, Laurier, and King-St. Laurent. For the government of Justin Trudeau to be elected for a fourth consecutive time is counterintuitive, disappointing, embarrassing, but a remarkable achievement for Mark Carney, especially since he was the gray eminence of that blunderbuss regime.

It was in some respects also a good night for the Conservatives. Trudeau had taken the Liberal party so far left that the so-called New Democrats, (though after 64 years their novelty is wearing thin), have become redundant. That the Conservatives came within a couple of points of the Liberals after the NDP had collapsed into the Liberals' lap was a remarkable achievement, and a resurrection of an authentically conservative national party in a practically two-party system, for the first time since Robert Borden in 1911. (Stephen Harper is an authentic conservative but he only gained and held office for nine years when there was a fortuitous division of the traditional Liberal clientele with the NDP and the Bloc Québécois. As soon as the Liberals reverted to a French-speaking leader, Harper was out.) Mark Carney is the first successful English-speaking federal Liberal leader since

Lester Pearson and his position is just as tenuous. The last time an English-speaking Liberal federal leader won a parliamentary majority was Mackenzie King in 1940. The liberals should remember this before they become intoxicated drinking their own bath water from a fire-hose.

Nor should Pierre Poilievre be at all discountenanced at losing his own constituency, which has been invaded by Liberal civil servants over the years. King was prime minister for 22 years and lost his own district four times, twice as prime minister. It's irrelevant. On Monday, the Conservatives defied the (biased and amateurish) polls for Ontario, gained 18 MP's in the province, ran the Liberals a practical dead heat with a shrivelled NDP and sold intelligent conservatism to hundreds of thousands of converts, including a promising number of young voters and of working people. Poilievre missed it by a thread this time but he still looks more like the future than his rivals, in his own and other parties.

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