

Young Canadian men likely to vote for Trump-like Conservatives

The Dilemma of Canadian Federal Elections for the Left

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The current Canadian federal election creates a dilemma for the left. The electoral system is of British origin, using first-past-the-post voting, and no mass anti-capitalist party, or one claiming to be, participates in it. However, the center-left NDP party usually rallies the non-sectarian left as being the least bad choice. Small anti-capitalist party candidates can compete for the left' voters' favor, which can create tension over voting strategies, especially when the NDP has some chance of winning the constituency. This time, in a global and especially North American context of a drastic rise in neo-fascism, there is a need to prevent Canada's Conservative Party, a pale Trump-like thing, from winning a parliamentary majority. Should we vote NDP every time, or even for a small anti-capitalist party, if that means the Conservatives could win the constituency?

The dilemma is all the more crucial as a historic reversal is emerging — young males seem to want to vote right-wing, more so than older generations. Based on a mid-April Nanos poll, Bloomberg states that “young men are particularly attracted to Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre. According to Nanos Research, women are twice as likely to support Mark Carney's Liberal party as Poilievre's.” Are young men turning sharply to the right? A Léger poll conducted at the same time is not so conclusive, although it shows the same trend while allowing comparison between Canada (including Quebec) and Quebec.



If we divide the competing parties into two groups – the neo-fascist-leaning parties (Conservative and People's parties) and those that are not (Liberal, New Democratic, and Green parties), and setting aside for one moment the contentious case of the Bloc Québécois – we find that at the Canadian level, men and women, as well as older people (55+) and younger people (18-34), all vote predominantly for parties that are not neo-fascist-leaning. However, women do so in a significantly larger proportion (a gap of more than 25 percentage points compared to nearly 10 points for men). And it is true that older people do so in a greater proportion than younger people, more than 20 percentage points compared to more than 10 points. This is a reversal of a historical trend. If the data had allowed, it would have been interesting to compare young women with young men. Is masculinism [anti-feminist ideology] causing havoc?

Looking at Quebec, we face the difficulty of classifying the Bloc Québécois. This is a national-populist party that feeds at all troughs. Its election campaign has nevertheless strongly underlined

its identity-based character, to put it politely, more than its so-called progressive one. There was that friendly Valentine's Day meeting between the Bloc leader and the leader of the Conservative Party of Quebec. But it's also a means, in these times of Canadian chest-thumping, to affirm Quebecer national resistance to Canadian chauvinism. The Bloc has some aspects of a red-brown party, that is, a center-left position, but only for those of "pure laine" [French: "pure wool," a term for Québécois with deep French-Canadian roots]. According to the Léger poll, nearly a third of Quebec francophones intend to vote Bloc compared to just over 5% for Quebec anglophones and people who speak other languages at home.. While there is no notable difference between men and women, older people are twice as likely to support the Bloc as younger people. Which might mean thr Bloc is nearing the exit door.



If we ignore voting intentions for the Bloc, we see that Quebec women favor non-neo-fascist parties by more than 40 percentage points compared to neo-fascist ones, while men do so by only about fifteen percentage points. For older people, it's more than fifty percentage points compared to about thirty for younger people. For anglophones, it's about forty points, a little more than thirty for those who speak other languages at home as well as for francophones. It's difficult to conclude except to note that among young francophone men, all indications are that the rise of masculinism combines with identity nationalism as well as with "dog whistle" undertones toward asylum seekers.

In a previous article, we noted that this latent racism conveyed by the nationalist bloc (CAQ, PQ, Bloc Québécois) permeates Quebec society. One would have thought that Liberals and, certainly, Québec Solidaire would fight this discourse tooth and nail. On the contrary, they adhere to it through the back door. "The migratory flow risks putting pressure on services, and this pressure on services will challenge all of us," says Monsef Derraji [Quebec Liberal Party deputy]. A few minutes earlier, Québec Solidaire deputy Guillaume Cliche-Rivard [and interim spokesperson] had said he "agreed with Mr. Legault [Premier of Quebec] on substance, not on form." The day before, the Premier had reiterated his request to federal party leaders, on the campaign trail, to reduce by half the number of asylum seekers in Quebec territory."

What then is the value of the Quebec solidaire party spokesperson's pro migrant off-the-cuff speech during her big public meeting with Jean-Luc Mélenchon? *The answer is blowing in the wind.*

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P.S.

Translated for ESSF by Adam Novak