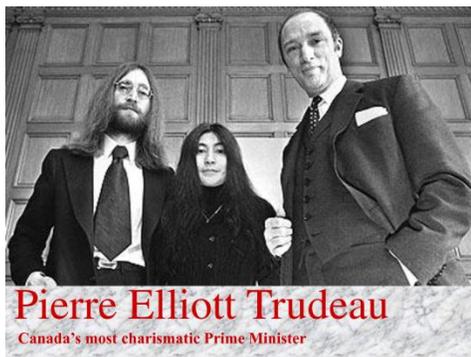


Canada in the 1970's

Canadian politics in the 1970's were dominated by one man – **Pierre Elliott Trudeau**. He was the Liberal leader from Quebec and the first PM not to have been raised under the Great Depression and the Second World War. Trudeau's had the charisma, a strong personality and was tied in with popular culture, meeting with John Lennon, dating Hollywood actress Barbara Streisand, etc, attracting many young people to politics ,



- Trudeau was from a French and English family in Montreal. He was a leader during Quebec's Quiet Revolution, but when they drifted towards separatism Trudeau became a strong federalist.
- Trudeau wanted to build a strong national government . He believed Canada needed a strong **Centralized Government**, where Ottawa had more power and the provinces followed.
- In order to unite the country, the Trudeau liberals passed the Official Language Act, recognizing both English and French as part of Canada's make-up.
- One of Trudeau's goals in office was to 'bring home' the constitution. Canada's constitution was the British North America Act, created in 1867 by the British Parliament. Trudeau wanted to create a truly Canadian version of a constitution. He began the process but could not get all of the provinces to agree on the details. The process would end in 1982 when the BNA Act was amended and became the Constitution Act.
- Trudeau was very popular in Federal politics and his Liberals were in power up until 1979. However, at the provincial level, the Liberals were suffering. By 1979 not one provincial government was led by a Liberal party.

The October Crisis 1970

- Pierre Trudeau was PM when the October Crisis hit in 1970. The Quebec separatist group, the FLQ, carried out terrorist acts against English targets in Quebec.
- On October 5, 1970 the FLQ kidnapped the British trade commissioner James Cross and make demands of the Federal government for his release, including money and the release of other FLQ members from jail.
- Trudeau would only agree to read the groups manifesto on the radio so the group kidnapped a Quebec cabinet minister; Pierre Laporte.
- There were strikes and demonstrations by FLQ supporters happening in Quebec and so the provincial government asked for Ottawa to send them the army for support. On October 15 PM Trudeau used the War Measures Act to send the army into Montreal, arrest and hold suspected members of the FLQ and ban civil liberties to prevent further demonstrations leading to violence.
- Hundreds of people were arrested but only a few were FLQ members. Pierre Laporte's body was found in the trunk of a car on October 17, but it took over a month to find James Cross.
- The leaders of the FLQ were arrested, tried and send to jail.
- It was claimed that Trudeau over-reacted by bringing in the army and using the War Measures Act. He always stated that his government acted in the best way to deal with the problem, however the FLQ crisis lost the Liberals a lot of support in Quebec.



The Parti Québécois

- Quebec was really struggling with the language issue in the 70's. The liberal government created Bill 22 to promote French. French would be the official language of the Quebec government and workplaces and most schools would be French based. Unless new immigrants to Quebec could pass an English proficiency test they would attend a French school. This still caused problems for the provincial government.
- Under Rene Levesques leadership, the PQ party main focus was to argue for a strong Quebec leading to a separate nation. They gained more and more support
- With the growing discontent with the Liberals and with the conservatives being weakened, many Quebecers turned to the Parti Québécois for leadership.
- In 1979 the PQ won the election and formed the provincial government. The party saw this as the first step toward independence, although most Quebecers did not really want to leave Canada, just a strong province.
- In 1980 the PQ held the first referendum on separation. It was defeated by a 60% vote, showing Levesque that Quebec did not want to leave Canada. However, the PQ did not give up and would try again.



- The PQ's did pass Bill 101, banning all use of English language in advertising, promoting French in all official situations and restricting the use of English in education. Fears of PQ policies and the referendum caused about 200000 anglophones to leave Quebec. This led to Montreal going into decline and Toronto becoming the firm leader in Canadian economics.

