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**April 29, 2025**

## **Canada Votes**

On Monday, April 28, 2025, Canada held legislative elections for the Canadian House of Commons (Parliament). According to preliminary results as of the morning of April 29, the results were:

43.5%, 168 seats: Liberal Party (Center - Left) - **WINNER**  
41.4%, 144 seats: Conservative Party (Center Right - Populist Right)  
6.4%, 23 seats: Bloc Québécois (Québec Independence)  
6.3%, 7 seats: New Democratic Party or NDP (Left - Workers)

On those preliminary results, the Liberals are expected to win at least 168 seats in the 343-seat House of Commons when results are final, with a chance to get to the 172 needed for an absolute majority as remaining close races are called. Mark Carney, current Prime Minister and leader of the Liberals since the resignation of former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in March, will remain as Prime Minister and form the next government. Carney, who had been running the government without a seat in Parliament, won election in the riding (Parliamentary district) of Nepean, Ontario. Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre, until a few months ago considered a shoo-in to become the next Prime Minister, actually lost his own seat in Carleton, Ontario and may have to resign as party leader. The leader of the NDP also lost his seat and resigned as party leader.

The election was marked by what could be called "externalities": Carney, an economist and investment banker by training, the only person ever to be central bank governor of two countries (Canada, during the financial crisis of 2008 - 2009, which less leveraged and less overextended Canadian banks weathered far better than U.S. banks; and the United Kingdom during Brexit), and who has never

before held elective office, was seen as by Canadians as a steadier hand at the economic tiller than professional politician Poilievre. This counted more than anyone in Canada anticipated until a few months ago and the election in November of Donald Trump as U.S. President.

Until the U.S. election and Trudeau's resignation, the Conservatives were leading the Liberals by over 20 points in the polls, and their election, ending nearly ten years of Liberal rule, was seen as a foregone conclusion. The U.S. election, however, and the new Trump administration's slapping of punitive tariffs on Canada, was seen as a betrayal of Canada by its most important trading partner and bilateral relationship, and Trump's repeated, crass, sneering threats to annex Canada and make it the 51st United State, along with his accompanying belittling and insulting references to the Prime Minister as "Governor Trudeau," didn't help. As recently as January, Canadian firefighters were in California battling the Los Angeles wildfires, asking nothing in return, and the perceived back-of-the-hand and cavalier treatment by the United States stung, justifiably in this writer's opinion. Abruptly, Carney, who asserted a resolute and retaliatory attitude towards the United States, was the beneficiary of a reinvigorated wave of Canadian nationalism, and Poilievre was seen as a "Trump-lite" boot-licking economic populist, and an untried one, to boot.

Also, Carney and the Liberals benefited from Canada's electoral map. The western provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan are the only true Conservative strongholds, while the two central provinces of Ontario and Québec which together have almost 60% of the seats - almost as many seats in the House of Commons as the rest of the country combined - generally vote Liberal at the federal level, with the Conservatives second in Ontario and the Bloc, which only runs candidates in Québec, a close second there. Under Canada's "first-past-the-post" electoral system, the candidate in each parliamentary district, or riding, with the most votes, or a plurality, wins that House of Commons seat, with the result that a party can win the national popular vote by only a couple of points but have a significant majority in the House of Commons; in a four-candidate race, a candidate might win the riding with, for example, only 30% of the votes cast, with the other three candidates dividing up the remaining 70%. The system potentially distorts and exaggerates results in the same manner as the U.S. Electoral College. The reason that the Bloc, with a nearly identical number of votes as the NDP, won many more seats than the NDP, is that the Bloc's votes are concentrated in Québec, while the NDP is (or was) a national party.

On that subject, the real losers in the election were the NDP and the Bloc, which each lost votes to the Liberals and each failed to crack 10% of the national vote. Apparently, Canadian voters reacting to the Trump administration threat were in no mood to waste their votes on minor parties that had no chance of forming a government, and voted "with their heads, and not with their hearts," in much the way French

voters in the second round of their elections are said to do. On these preliminary results, Carney should be able to form a strong minority government with coalition support from either the Bloc or NDP, or, if the remaining races are mostly called in the Liberals' favor, a majority government without coalition support from either the NDP or the Bloc, considerably diminishing their influence.

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