



A Weekly Column by Dean Hickey

THE FINAL TAKEAN UNVARNISHED LOOK AT THE MANY
SOCIAL & POLITICAL ISSUES OF OUR TIME...**A LOOK AT THE ROOT CAUSES OF CANADA'S
DECLINE BETWEEN 2015 AND 2025**

NATIONAL POST COLUMNIST TRISTAN HOPPER released a short work of roughly 164 pages last April entitled 'Don't be Canada: How the Great White North did Everything Wrong all at Once.' In it, he says Canada has mismanaged several critical issues compared to other developed nations, including drug and crime policies, euthanasia, health care, transgender policy, the judiciary, and housing. "We just sort of became wildly complacent and got into a headspace that we were special, we were Canadian, we had a functioning society, and ... we didn't have to defend it," Hopper said in an interview with the Epoch Times.

His work makes for interesting reading, and it reminded me of an earlier volume penned by author and journalist Kenneth McDonald, a copy of which I bought during my time as a college student in Toronto. McDonald's work is entitled 'His Pride Our Fall: Recovering from the Trudeau revolution.' It's a critique about Justin Trudeau's father, Pierre, and the damage that resulted from 16 years of Trudeaumania when, as prime minister, the elder Trudeau made himself a nuisance by inserting the tentacles of government where they had no place to be – in the private lives of ordinary citizens.

Once a thriving nation, Canada has seen a steep erosion in prosperity and security since 2015 as a direct result of self-inflicted policy failures. My column this week will highlight some of the philosophical extremes from the first Trudeau 'legacy' which ultimately gave rise to the disastrous sequel, during which time Justin Trudeau aggressively pursued a vision of Canada that has left us with a crippling debt, an ever-expanding government, and a variety of misguided policies on immigration, justice reform, and gender issues – just to name a few.

Let's begin by identifying the state, or what I like to refer to as Big Government, for what it is; a massive regulator of all things – a sort of untamable master exercising full dominion over its people. Those are my words, however Kenneth McDonald offers the following analysis: "The secret of (the state's) power lies in its very remoteness. "It is one thing to refrain from advising the man next door, whom we know. "It is another thing altogether to compose a set of regulations for people collectively...not in order to create wealth, but to regulate the private citizens who are engaged in wealth creation."

When the growth of the state passes beyond control, as ours has, it becomes a law unto itself. Justin Trudeau enjoyed a powerful opportunity to bring forward a self-satisfying process of dismantling a nation that he described in a 2015 interview with The New York Times as "a country with no core identity, no mainstream..." which he said made it the "first post-national state".

As ludicrous as that sounds, it has its origins in Pierre Trudeau's own policies – most notably official multiculturalism and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms – both of which were manifestly created to shift the Canadian identity away from its traditional Eurocentric and Common Law heritage towards a more civic framework based on universal liberal values.

In 1971, Trudeau introduced official multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. This policy was revolutionary because it decoupled state and culture, and it asserted that no single cultural entity could (or should) define Canada. It was an attempt to actually delegitimize – in his view – the idea of a "core" national identity. As most of us now realize, encouraging diverse ethnic groups to preserve their own heritage has not resulted in a peaceful Canada enjoying some sort of fictional mosaic. Rather, we have become a series of politically armed cultural camps – each one jostling the other in an attempt to gain power and control.

On the matter of our economy, or more to the point, what's left of it, we can look back to 1971 when the prevailing wisdom among Trudeau's inner circle suggested that, to one who sees some people as poor while others are rich, it may seem obvious that the rich should share some of their wealth – and if they are at all reluctant, surely a just society would require (force) them to do it. From this rather frightening inclination sprung the idea within the Liberal Party – one that remains central to their manifesto – that state socialism is, in itself, part of the 'age of miracles'.

Pierre Elliott Trudeau's premiership (1968–1984) marked a definitive shift toward structural deficit spending in Canada. The federal government had carried debt since Confederation (1867) to finance nation-building and wars, however, Trudeau oversaw a period of nearly continuous and rapidly increasing budget deficits – a tradition carried on by his son and political heir, Justin.

Trudeau the elder's first budget ran a deficit of \$667 million, and as a result of his spending habits, Canada's national debt increased from approximately \$18 billion to over \$200 billion, representing a more than tenfold increase, or roughly 700% in nominal terms.

Not to be outdone by his father, Justin Trudeau's first budget saw a deficit of \$19.0 billion after accounting adjustments, and during his ten years in office, the total debt in Canada nearly doubled, reaching approximately \$654.2 billion by the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Like father, like son.

Of course, one cannot attempt to highlight the more disastrous aspects of the Trudeau-x2 legacy without referencing the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, a legal instrument that has caused significant damage to our justice system by having shifted too much power to unelected judges, allowing them to overrule the will of democratically elected legislatures. Charter challenges can be lengthy and complex, contributing to delays in the justice system – but more importantly, certain judicial interpretations of the Charter have made it much more difficult to secure convictions for serious crimes. Now isn't that just great.

Once again, not to be outdone by his father, Trudeau the younger made his own legal mess through a determination to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences for drug and firearms offences, and to codify a 'principle of restraint' into law which encouraged granting bail at the earliest opportunity. Fast forward to today and we all know the results of his "soft-on-crime" ideology and the disastrous outcomes that have allowed repeat offenders the freedom to commit more crimes.

And yet, in spite of the damage left by these two men, there exists an element within Canadian society who refuse to accept certain realities, preferring instead to hold on to a collective dream where peace and love and good intentions are all that is needed. God help them – and indeed, the rest of us.

**THE X Files**

By John Mutton

CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

Karmageddon

By Mr. 'X' ~ John Mutton

CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

Happy New Year!

The New Year has started with a bang. With the municipal election just ten months away, we are already seeing declarations of intent across the province.

In Durham Region alone, we are facing two open mayoral seats—in Ajax and Oshawa—and we already have two serious contenders announcing their intentions to run: Regional Councillor Marilyn Crawford and Regional Councillor Tito Dante Marimpietri.

To be clear, candidates are allowed to announce their intention to run, but they cannot file nomination papers, fundraise, or spend money until the official nomination period opens.

Both Crawford and Marimpietri bring significant experience to the table, and what I find refreshing about each of them is that they are not simply rubber stamps for staff reports. That matters. We've seen very clearly this year that the ability to make independent political decisions—and to withstand peer pressure, especially at the regional level—is not just a nice quality, but a necessary one for any mayor in Ontario.

In Ajax, Councillor Crawford would be well positioned to succeed current Mayor Shaun Collier. Expect homelessness to be a key issue, and look for challenges from extreme left-wing voices, including Councillor Sterling Lee.

In Oshawa, the strength of Tito's potential run lies in fiscal responsibility—particularly his unwavering support for the creation of an Auditor General, both locally and at the regional level.

These are only two mayoral contenders so far. Expect more names to come forward and make these races increasingly interesting.

As I write this column, it comes as no surprise that polling shows the Premier's proposed Highway 401 tunnel being viewed by the general public as exactly what it sounds like: ridiculous. Most people know I am a strong supporter of the Premier. That said, not every move deserves blind loyalty. Having spent time around construction and roadwork, I know one of the biggest cost drivers is unknown soil conditions. A tunnel under the 401 is, quite frankly, f***ing ridiculous. The real bombshell Mr. X is dropping this week concerns Bowmanville.

The tragic downtown fire was one of the most significant local news stories of the year. The community came together in an incredible way to support the affected businesses and families. What Mr. X has uncovered, however, is deeply troubling.

Just months before the fire, the administration of the Municipality of Clarington made a decision to stop proactively conducting fire prevention inspections in the residential units above downtown storefronts—specifically in the area where the fire later occurred.

I have spoken with two former staff members and one current staff member who were either included on, or directly aware of, an internal email chain. In those emails, administration instructed both the Building Department and the Fire Department to cease inspections in the downtown core because the issue was deemed "too politically volatile."

Let me be clear: proactive fire prevention could very well have prevented this tragedy.

I certainly would not want to be on the receiving end of the class-action lawsuit that may follow, and the Municipality of Clarington has placed itself squarely in that position.

I am proud of the former and current employees who had the courage to come forward and expose the immense liability the municipality has created by abandoning fire inspections for political convenience.

If any municipality in Durham Region needs change—from the top down—it is the Municipality of Clarington. Stay tuned. More mayoral announcements are coming across Ontario.

**Only Child Dreams - The Transition from
Being an Only Child to One of Four Kids**

By Camryn Bland

Youth Columnist

Growing up as an only child, I spent my days hoping for a sibling. I was always looking for someone to talk to, play with, or go places with. I hoped and prayed for a brother or sister to accompany me through my boring days, and for over fifteen years I was disappointed. As I got older, I stopped hoping, adjusting to independence in place of reliance. However, just as I accepted my life as an only child, I was introduced to three kids who would make every dream come true; my future step siblings.

In February of 2025, my mom and I moved in with her boyfriend and his three kids. The move felt very sudden, and confusing. We originally planned for us to move together in late 2026 or early 2027, when I was in grade 12 and could drive myself to school. Now it was early 2025, and my mom decided we were going to move soon. It felt like I blinked, and all of a sudden I was packing everything into big boxes. By late February, our two person basement apartment had been replaced by a chaotic home, inhabited by six people and three pets.

The biggest adjustment for me was my new role as a sister, a role which I'd never been exposed to before. Time which was once spent reading alone was replaced by helping with homework, time to bake was now used to pick up after others and do chores that were never mine to begin with.

Although I had known the kids for almost three years, always being surrounded by them felt new and unfamiliar. Every boundary I knew had changed and I found myself struggling to adjust to the simplest things. I worried about what to talk about during meals, where I could be in the house without bothering anyone, and when I could go out without causing scheduling issues.

At first, the new dynamics felt like a maze. However, over time the change got easier, and now it feels almost normal. I've realized my step-sisters are like built in best friends, who make sure there's never a dull moment in my day. I've accustomed to my step-brother, who always has an honest opinion, even when I don't want to hear it. They're an aspect of my day that feels so normal, yet so special at the same time. I know it would leave a gap in my life if they left. I think what made the transition, and even my time now, easiest was the time apart. My step-siblings only spend half of their time at my house, and the other half living with their mom. These rotating weeks act as a break a lot of siblings don't have. They're my time to see my friends, focus on my own work, or do personal projects. By the time my week alone is almost over, I miss my step-siblings and I'm excited for them to come home. It's a system that I'm lucky to have in place, as it made it easier to adjust to a new family, and it helps even now. With my step-siblings, I've not just adjusted to them, but also feel like I belong among them. Despite the fact I came into their family late, I don't feel excluded or different from them. The four of us laugh like siblings, fight like siblings, and share like siblings. Even when I'm arguing with them, or getting annoyed at something they said, I appreciate them the same. In the span of 10 months, I have found a family which I always wished for, and it feels right. I will forever be grateful for that.

Despite my gratitude, not everything is perfect. There have been many doors slammed and voices raised which have made me wish things were back as they used to be, back as I grew up with. However, that feeling doesn't last, and we always make up, as family does.

The imperfections don't just come from others; I know I also have room for improvement as a sister. I need to be more patient and understanding. I'm quick to get annoyed when my step-siblings are bothering me while I'm working, even if they just want to spend time together. I get upset when they don't clean, even if they don't notice the mess in the first place. Sometimes, I get upset over small jokes they made and make a big deal out of nothing. Over time, I hope to fix these habits so I can be a better sister, a fitting member of the family.

For fifteen years, I wished to have a brother or sister to spend time with. Now I have three of them, and it's so much different than I imagined. Our household is one of chaos and arguments, but also of gamenights and laughter. I try to appreciate every second of it, because I know my younger self would be thrilled to spend time with my new family. Most days, I'm thrilled to spend time with them too.