

# Canada's Liberal government secures parliamentary majority after seven years of minority rule

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Canada's Liberal government has pasted together a parliamentary majority following a series of "floor crossings" by members of other parties and victories in three by-elections held earlier this month. For the first time since October 2019, a Liberal majority government now holds power in Ottawa.

The securing of majority status will enable former central banker and current Prime Minister Mark Carney to accelerate the rapid shift to the right in official politics he has overseen since replacing Justin Trudeau in March 2025.

Carney and decisive sections of corporate Canada hope to use a majority government to escalate a vicious onslaught on workers' jobs and public services to pay for the planned explosion of military spending over the next decade and the enrichment of Canada's financial oligarchy.

Carney's majority has been engineered with the support of powerful sections of the capitalist ruling class in a series of back-room deals with individual MPs. They calculate that a majority government will be better insulated from popular pressure—no matter how distorted and attenuated this is within the capitalist parliamentary system—and therefore more capable of pushing through unpopular policies.

Corporate Canada is demanding the government act "boldly" in imposing "sacrifices" on working people. The *Globe and Mail*, the traditional voice of the financial elite, chided Carney in an editorial published Tuesday for not slashing public services and social spending more aggressively in last November's budget; then added that now, armed with a parliamentary majority, he has the opportunity to "create a more competitive and entrepreneurial economy ... all that is needed is political boldness."

## A political realignment

Since November 2025, four Conservative Members of Parliament have "crossed the floor" from the opposition to the government benches, including Nova Scotia MP Chris d'Entremont, Markham's Mark Ma, Edmonton's Matt Jeneroux and, most recently, the far-right MP for Sarnia-Lambton-Bkegwanong, Marylin Gladu. On March 11, the NDP MP for Nunavut, Lori Idlout, defected from the already-decimated NDP caucus, which was reduced to just seven MPs at the 2025 parliamentary election.

These five defections still left Carney and his Liberals one seat shy of an absolute majority (two if one counts the Speaker who generally does not vote). On April 14, the Liberals swept three by-elections, held to fill vacant seats in the House of Commons. Two of the by-elections were in Liberal strongholds in the Toronto area that had been previously held by

Trudeau cabinet ministers—Chrystia Freeland and Bill Blair—whom Carney had pushed out because he deemed them too close to his predecessor. The third, in the suburban Montreal riding of Terrebonne, was ordered by the Supreme Court due to election irregularities.

Underscoring the broad support within the labour bureaucracy and traditional social-democratic circles for a "stable government," one of the newly elected Liberal MPs was Dolly Begum, who until February was deputy leader of the Ontario NDP.

Each of the defections is significant. They reveal a realignment within establishment politics in response to the deep crisis provoked by American imperialism's push to annex Canada as part of Trump's "Greater North America" strategy to prepare Washington for war with China and other rivals, and the threat this poses to Canadian capitalism, its profits, imperialist interests and federal state.

Since Trudeau returned the Liberals to power in 2015 with a majority, the Canadian bourgeoisie's preferred party of national government has relied heavily on its corporatist partnership with the trade union bureaucracy to smother the class struggle and pursue a right-wing, pro-corporate agenda.

Trudeau's "progressive" rhetoric, amplified by the union bureaucrats in their 2015 "Anybody but Harper" campaign to oust Tory Prime Minister Stephen Harper, was quickly shown to be a fraud. Once in office, the Liberals continued where Harper had left off. Public spending austerity, support for the US-led war for regime change in Syria, preparations for war on Russia by providing unyielding support to the far-right Ukrainian government, a concerted turn to rearmament and a brutal crackdown on refugees within the framework of the so-called "Safe Third Country Agreement" with the US: these were the chief features of Trudeau's first term between 2015 and 2019.

Workers and young people, who had been duped by the union bureaucracies and other "progressive" forces to back the Liberals in 2015 to bring about "change" after close to a decade of Tory rule, refused to give the Liberals a second majority. After the 2019 election, Trudeau only held onto power thanks to the support offered by the social democratic New Democratic Party, with the strong backing of the union bureaucracy. Although the NDP had failed to make any gains at the polls under its right-wing leader Jagmeet Singh, it held the balance of power in the House of Commons and continued to do so after a further election in 2021.

The NDP ensured the Liberals could govern as they bailed out corporate Canada to the tune of hundreds of billions during the COVID-19 pandemic and infected millions of workers through their profits-before-lives policies. In 2022, the NDP-backed Liberal government made sure Canada played a major role in the US-NATO war on Russia in Ukraine, and it wholeheartedly endorsed Israel's imperialist-backed genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza from October 2023. On the domestic front,

Trudeau and later Carney enforced austerity spending through below-inflation transfers to the provinces, and waged a systematic onslaught on democratic rights, including workers' right to strike.

### **The NDP, the trade union bureaucracy and the Carney government**

The fact that Carney now has the opportunity to continue and intensify this anti-worker assault is due first and foremost to the suppression and political disenfranchisement of the working class by the trade unions and their NDP allies. From the fall of 2021 through 2025, a large strike wave swept through all sectors of the Canadian economy. From public sector workers in New Brunswick, to Ontario education support staff, Quebec public sector workers, West Coast dockers, airline workers and postal workers at the end of 2024 and again during the fall of 2025, workers came forward in struggle to oppose wage cutting, austerity budgets and attacks on working conditions. The unions worked tirelessly to confine these battles within the straitjacket of the pro-employer collective bargaining system, allowing workers to blow off steam in isolated strikes before federal and provincial governments, and private corporations rammed through their planned attacks. Whenever workers found themselves in a position of real strength, the union top brass swooped in to sabotage their struggles.

When 55,000 education support workers defied the right-wing Ontario Ford government's draconian ban of their 2022 strike, prompting support among broader sections of workers for a general strike, the union bosses intervened to shut the movement down and buy time for Ford to impose major concessions. Workers resisted the union leaderships' connivance with big business and the government, delivering a series of massive strike votes and repeatedly voting down contracts recommended by their union leaderships. But this militant opposition to austerity and wage cuts failed to find a political outlet.

At last year's federal election, workers delivered their verdict on the despicable role played by the NDP and their union allies. The social democrats saw their share of the popular vote cut by two-thirds to a minuscule 6.1 percent, and were reduced to a parliamentary rump group of just 7 MPs, five below the number needed for official party status.

Nonetheless, the NDP continued to prop up the Carney government. In November it joined with the lone Green MP to ensure passage of Carney's first budget, which imposed further austerity and over \$80 billion in military spending increases by 2030. In line with NATO goals, Carney has since vowed to triple defence spending to \$150 billion per year by 2035, and committed billions to strengthening Canada's military-industrial base.

The union-NDP-Liberal alliance is continuing even now that Carney has cobbled together a majority, and even as the corporate media acknowledges that he has lifted many of his policies from the Conservatives and their far-right leader Pierre Poilievre. Newly elected NDP leader Avi Lewis held a friendly meeting with Carney on April 16 to open up lines of communication and collaboration.

The corporatist character of this partnership found expression in Carney's new Canada-US advisory council unveiled last week. The body, which aims to assist the government in negotiating a new trade arrangement with Trump to secure Canada's position as a junior imperialist partner in American imperialism's "Fortress North America," includes Unifor president Lana Payne and Quebec Federation of Labour President Magali Picard, as well as numerous CEOs and heads of business lobby groups. Retired Conservative politicians such as Lisa Raitt, Jean Charest and Erin O'Toole are also members.

Carney's new majority is based on a concerted appeal to the Tory right,

which under federal leader Pierre Poilievre has morphed increasingly into a far-right formation like the US Republicans. Ontario's right-wing populist premier Doug Ford, who stated prior to this month's by-elections that he hoped Carney would secure a parliamentary majority, declared that Carney's majority would strengthen the bargaining position of Canadian imperialism in upcoming trade negotiations with the United States.

The defection of the far-right Conservative Marilyn Gladu speaks volumes about the Liberals' class war agenda. Gladu was a champion of the fascist-led "Freedom Convoy," which occupied downtown Ottawa and two US border crossings in 2022 to demand the complete dismantling of anti-COVID-19 public health measures. It amounted to an attempt to overthrow the Trudeau government. Gladu has also signalled opposition to abortion rights and support for "conversion therapy," a pseudo-scientific and abusive practice aimed at "converting" LGBTQ people.

Canadian imperialism is desperate to press forward with its aggressive agenda. Its plans for rearmament and global war with Russia and China and its defence of its profits and markets amid global trade war cannot be undertaken without escalating the class-war assault on the working class that has been ongoing under governments of all political stripes for the past four decades.

No faction of the ruling class or any of its political representatives opposes Trump on a progressive social basis. To the extent opposition exists within ruling circles, it is from the standpoint that Trump's "America First" economic policies and threat to annex Canada cut across the interests of Canadian imperialism, including the "right" of Canada's financial elite to have first claim to the surplus value squeezed out of Canadian workers. The union bureaucracies and NDP seek to cover up this reality with their reactionary "Team Canada" propaganda, which falsely asserts that Canadian workers and bosses have common interests that unite them in the struggle against Trump.

The reality is that Canada's ruling class is increasingly adopting Trumpian policies. These include a dramatic escalation of military spending, expanded police powers, and attacks on immigrants and democratic rights. The allies of Canadian workers are not to be found in the corporate boardrooms of Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver, or around the cabinet table of Carney's majority Liberal government. Rather, they will come from the factories and worksites of the industrial Midwest, California and the US south, and the maquiladoras of northern Mexico. Unifying the North American working class in struggle against war, dictatorship and attacks on worker rights requires above all a socialist and internationalist program, and a revolutionary leadership capable of fighting for it—the Socialist Equality Party, Canadian section of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Everyone who agrees with this perspective should join and help build the SEP as the revolutionary socialist party of the working class.



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