
Bye Bye, Justin

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It was not even two weeks when he met with the elected president of the United States, Donald Trump, in his "den" of the main headquarters of the Latin American worm farm in Florida, listening to the threatening diatribes about tariffs on products imported from Canada and - we don't doubt - about the advantage that becoming the 51st state of the Union would represent for his country.

I don't think this was the straw that broke the camel's back of the crisis that led to Justin Trudeau's resignation as Canadian prime minister and the president of his Liberal Party, after more than nine years of uninterrupted government, without ever having suffered an electoral defeat.

Charismatic, he became prime minister in 2015, with the endorsement of being the heir of his father, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, an honest, progressive and blameless person, who did not accept impositions or threats, which is why he was a good friend of Cuba. For this reason, his son made a courtesy visit to our country.

Justin initially maintained his father's legacy with a fresh and optimistic narrative, managing to position himself as a progressive leader who prioritized climate change, diversity and reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

However, his government also faced growing criticism in its later years. Despite promising "sunny roads", his administration was hit by a stagnant economy, growing social inequality and questions about his leadership style.

Canada's political and social context gives clear clues about his decision. Citizen discontent intensified in recent years, due to the rising cost of living, persistent inflation and perceptions of a disconnected government. Iconic moments, such as a public confrontation with a steelworker who accused him of doing nothing for the working class, reflect the growing unrest.

On the other hand, the rise of Pierre Poilievre, leader of the opposition Conservative Party, has transformed the political landscape. With a popular and combative speech, Poilievre has managed to build a lead of more than 20 points in the polls, leaving the Liberals in their worst position in more than a decade.

Justin also faced internal challenges. The resignation of Chrystia Freeland, his deputy prime minister and finance minister, was a significant blow to his administration. In her resignation letter, she questioned the government's economic policies, calling them "political tricks" aimed at winning short-term votes, a criticism that exposed deep tensions within the Liberal Party.

DISCONNECTED FROM REALITY

In the last years of his mandate, he kept a foreign policy that was in line with the United States' warmongering policy, contributing financially and with military resources to American aggression against smaller states, as well as joining Washington in its use of the Nazi regime in Ukraine to attack Russia.

In this context, Justin had to apologize for hiding the fact that several members of Adolf Hitler's government have secretly resided in Canada since the end of the Second World War.

Paul Wells, a Canadian political journalist and author of a book focused on his figure, recently told the British Broadcasting Corporation that he believes Trudeau will be remembered "as an important prime minister," especially for having offered genuine leadership on issues such as indigenous reconciliation and, to a certain extent, climate policy.

But Wells believes Trudeau is someone "who was perceived as increasingly disconnected from public opinion and increasingly incapable of adapting to the new times."

He had highlighted in his departure announcement the aspects of his administration of which he is most proud, including managing the chaos of the COVID pandemic, renegotiating a free trade agreement with the previous Donald Trump administration in the United States and implementing a child benefit widely seen as helping to alleviate poverty.

But a series of scandals began to blur his administration: he was found to have violated federal rules on conflicts of interest in handling a corruption investigation (the SNC-Lavalin affair) and in luxury trips to Bahamas.

In 2020, he received criticism for choosing a charity linked to his family to manage a major government program.

In the general election of the previous year, his party was reduced to a minority, so the Liberals began to depend on the support of other parties to stay in power.

The early elections of 2021 did not improve his fortunes.

More recently, Trudeau and his popularity have been hit by rising living costs and inflation, which have contributed to electoral setbacks for governments around the world.

His promotion of an agenda overly laden with grand promises has helped fuel dissatisfaction.

His handling of immigration has also fueled discontent. Last year Liberals abandoned their traditional open-door policy and significantly cut the number of foreigners allowed to settle in Canada.

At times Trudeau gave his rivals easy ammunition, such as when it emerged that he had painted his face black to disguise himself as an African-American character when he was in his 20s, a practice now seen by many as racist and particularly embarrassing for a leader who portrayed himself as an exemplar of tolerance and progressivism.

More recently, a series of political setbacks had made it clear that Trudeau had exhausted his credit.

At age 53, his resignation marks the beginning of a period of uncertainty for the Liberal Party and the political future of Canada.

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