

## AVANT PROPOS

### Feu, Sang et Démocratie !

Richard Henry Bain, l'auteur de l'attentat meurtrier commis en plein rassemblement péquiste au Métropolis, à Montréal, tuant une personne et blessant une autre, est un canadien non arabe, qui a voulu s'opposer, à sa manière avec le feu et le sang, à la victoire du Parti Québécois de couleur séparatiste selon ses derniers mots lancés au moment de son arrestation. Ce qui reste surprenant c'est la quantité des armes découvertes chez lui, qui s'élevait à 22 pièces, dont 21 enregistrées. Ce qui pourrait déclencher de nouveau la campagne pour la réduction des licences d'armes à laquelle s'oppose le parti au pouvoir à Ottawa. Toutefois, ce qui retient l'attention c'est la manière avec laquelle les médias ont donné cette information. L'attentat n'est pas décrit comme un acte terroriste, mais juste une agression. Ce qui a poussé plusieurs personnes de la communauté, dans les sites de réseautage social, à se poser la question suivante : Et si l'agresseur était musulman ? Les médias se contenteront-ils juste de signaler son âge son travail, son domicile et l'accuser de folie comme ils l'ont fait avec Bain ? Certainement, les principaux journaux et stations de télévision le taxeront de terroriste islamiste, évoqueront la nécessité de revoir les politiques trop laxistes en matière d'immigration et parleront des cellules dormantes et la responsabilité des mosquées, des clercs, des enseignements de l'Islam et les dispositions coraniques. Les accusations pourraient mener certaines personnes à agresser une femme voilée dans la rue, mettre le feu à une mosquée ou écrire des slogans antimusulmans sur les murs de leurs magasins? Cela n'est-il pas survenu dans plusieurs autres pays? Les responsables de la sécurité ont-ils étudié en profondeur les raisons de la diffusion de cette atmosphère de peur qui pousseraient des personnes à des acte de violence et de crimes, comme on l'a vécu cette nuit du 4 septembre en plein victoire du PQ ? Certainement ce qui s'est passé n'est pas ordinaire. Il nous a fait penser aux élections dans certains pays du tiers monde, où le mot Élection rime avec Mort. Ce qui a conduit d'aucuns dans les cercles gouvernementaux à soulever la question de la sécurité des personnalités politiques et la nécessité prendre d'autres mesures de protection. Le Canada n'est plus menacé seulement par les islamistes, comme l'a dit Harper dans sa célèbre déclaration, mais par l'extrémisme, qu'il soit politique, religieux, ethnique ou nationaliste, et qui demeure un danger permanent dans toutes les sociétés. C'est pourquoi, les responsables et les médias sont invités à éviter de lier le terrorisme à l'Islam, et seulement à l'Islam, parce que, comme dit le proverbe « Ceux qui vivent dans des maisons de verre ne devraient pas lancer de pierres. »

La rédaction

### suspending diplomatic relations with Iran is not going to serve any Canadian interests



Crescent-Online.net

The real reasons behind Ottawa's moves are its unflinching support of the racist Zionist regime, and the massively successful non-aligned movement summit in Tehran.

The September 7 announcement by Canada's Foreign Minister John Baird suspending diplomatic relations with Iran is not going to serve any Canadian interests. What it has done is to prove that under the conservative government, Canada has been reduced to the status of a Zionist puppet.

Canada has withdrawn all diplomatic staff from Tehran and given Iranian diplomats five days to leave the country.

What prompted this move and the timing has left most observers bewildered. The litany of allegations rattled off by Baird makes no sense. Among other worn out allegations, Baird also said Iran was supporting the regime of Bashar al-Asad in Syria. If that is really the reason, would Canada also suspend diplomatic relations with Russia and China, two staunch supporters of the Asad government that have used their veto power at the UN Security Council to block anti-Syria resolution?

The real reasons behind Ottawa's moves are its unflinching support of the racist Zionist regime, and the massively successful non-aligned movement summit in Tehran. The NAM summit was a big slap on the face of western regimes trying to isolate Iran. The summit's success showed yet again that it is not Iran but the western imperialist powers that are now isolated globally.

In recent months, the Canadian government has instituted other policies that adversely affect ordinary Iranian Canadians. Among them are steps blocking money from being sent from Iran for students in Canada and the freezing of bank accounts of Iranian-Canadians by at least one Canadian bank, TD Canada Trust.

The other reason for Canada's move is the belligerent tone adopted by the Zionist regime threatening war against Iran. Should the Zionist warmongers make the mistake of attacking Iran, it will likely set the whole region on fire. Further, the Zionist regime may end up disappearing altogether.

Baird's belligerent stand has not gone unchallenged. A number of Canadian peace groups have criticized the move and have spoken out against it. Other activities are planned.

In Tehran, meanwhile, Ramin Mahmanparast, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, denounced the move and said Canada was simply following Britain in its hostility to Iran. This was a reference to Britain's decision a few months earlier to cut off diplomatic relations with Iran.

Relations between Iran and Canada have been in the deep freeze for many years and trade between the two countries is virtually non-existent. The diplomatic cut off will have minimal impact on Iran. All it has done is to show how subservient Canada has become to the Zionist regime.

It was this subservience that resulted in Canada losing to Portugal for a rotating Security Council seat a couple of years ago. Ottawa tried to put a brave face on it but former Canadian diplomats clearly saw this as a snub.

The diplomatic cut off will reinforce the loss of respect that Canada had earlier enjoyed that had been built over decades of carefully cultivated diplomacy. The pro-Zionist regime in Ottawa clearly does not care much about Canada's global reputation as it continues to grovel at the zionists' feet.

It is also necessary to point out that the decision made by the Harper regime does not represent the view of the Canadian society. The weakness of the Canadian electoral system provides the Harper regime with an opportunity to hide behind the mask of a "majority" government. While in reality the Harper regime only represents just over 5.8 million Canadian voters out of almost 24 million eligible voters. During the latest Federal Elections in May 2011 up to 40% of eligible voters stayed away from the ballot box. This is a clear sign that a great number of Canadians distrust their elitist political system.

In April 2012 it emerged that during last May's general elections there were serious issues of voter suppression. Many people known to be supporters of other parties received phone calls — dubbed robocalls — telling them their polling station had been moved to some far-off location. The callers claimed to be from Elections Canada. After the story broke out, Elections Canada received 31,000 complaints from people being misdirected to wrong polling stations. Given that, many conservative candidates won by a narrow margin, ranging from 18 to 26 votes, such calls perhaps seriously distorted the election outcome

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# analysis of quebec election results

Samer Majzoub\*

**PARTIES:**

- Parti Québécois (PQ): The PQ scored a victory and suffered defeat. They expected a majority or at least a strong minority but were only left with 55 seats and only 32% of the popular vote. However, the PQ has energized its base by having the Premier of Quebec within its ranks.

- Parti libéral du Québec (PLQ): The PLQ won 50 seats and far surpassed most projections that foresaw a PLQ freefall. Perhaps more tellingly, they trailed the PQ by only 1% in the popular vote. Notwithstanding this, Jean Charest has resigned as the leader of the PLQ and the party will be rudderless until they elect a new leader.

- Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ): The centre-right CAQ won 19 seats and captured 27% of the popular vote. Though the CAQ is left with a sizeable caucus at the National Assembly, it was likely a disappointing result for CAQ supporters who believed that they would capture a greater portion of the PLQ votes. The CAQ's gambit of focusing their campaigning at PLQ supporters was not enough to sway voters to change their choices at polling stations.

- Québec Solidaire (QS): The left-wing party that was founded in 2006 was hoping to establish a broader base wider in the National Assembly but they finished with two seats. However, while the QS has a minuscule caucus, the track records of Amir Khadir and Françoise David suggest that they will make their voices heard.

**CAMPAIGN ISSUES:**

- Economy: Quebecers have proven in this election that they are far from accepting the right wing parties' positions on welfare and economic choices.

- Social justice: Quebecers have proven again that they are correctly known for their inclination toward social justice and their tendency to support center-left social programs and policies.

- Union movement: Jean Charest's stated reason for calling the election was the student movement against increasing tuition. This reinforces the strength of the student and union movement in Quebec politics.

- Sovereignty: The majority of Quebecers cast their ballots in favour of pro-sovereignty parties: the PQ, CAQ and QS. However, this belies the fact that there is significant diversity in the manner in which sovereigntist Quebecers see the path to independence. Some hold an extreme view that envisions immediate separation preceded by a referendum led by the PQ. Others share the goal of independence but are considered soft sovereigntists who do not favour an immediate referendum and who incorporate other considerations in their political preferences.

- Language: It's the theatre of war for the PQ. The PQ has promised that they would toughen language laws and seek to further sideline the English language in the public and private sectors. For the PQ this issue is both a question of identity and ground zero to the path to Quebec sovereignty.

- Relations with the Federal go-



vernment: The PQ believes that the best way to keep the battle of independence front and centre is by maintaining a tense relationship with Ottawa. The PQ will do so by demanding more power. If they are successful in being granted more power, for example, over employment insurance they will be laying the groundwork to an independent

Quebec. If they are unsuccessful, they build a case that as part of the Canadian federation, Quebec can never live up to its aspirations. With the Conservative Party of Canada having little support in Quebec but nonetheless holding a majority in Parliament and with the official opposition, the NDP drawing strong support from the

province of Quebec, the tension between the PQ and the federal government will have significant ramifications in federal politics as well.

- Islamophobia: Under the guise of defending Quebec values, the PQ's stated agenda is to establish a policy of extreme secularism. The PQ's notion of secularism will see the exclusion of individuals who wear religious symbols such as hijabs, turbans and kippahs, from working for the provincial government and perhaps even receiving government services. It may be difficult for the PQ to enact a secularism charter per se due to their minority status but they may propose other ideas along the same vein that seek to marginalize individuals from minority communities. Moreover, on this point it is important to note that the PQ's minority status does not guarantee Quebec's minority communities freedom from discrimination as the National Assembly voted unanimously in 2011 to ban the Sikh kirpan from legislative buildings.

The Quebec election has produced uncertainty in provincial politics and federal politics. The fact that the three main parties are almost equal in the popular vote reflects sharp divisions in Quebec political preferences and suggests that the PQ and the National Assembly may be hard pressed to push through a coherent agenda. This uncertainty may lead to political turmoil and trigger another general election in the short or medium term.

\*President, Canadian Muslim Forum

## I voted for Québec Solidaire



Mohamed Kamel\*

When Jean Charest called for election, Quebecers wondered if he was going back to office or not? And most of us started to question if we were going to vote and if yes, to whom? Are we waking up on September 5th to a minority or a majority government?

We entered this election with one question. Are we ready to accept Charest's bill 78 that for the first time in Canada, curbs people's rights, curbing on freedom of speech while raising tuition fees and introducing his conservative views? Charest governed for 9 years, shaded with corruption that involved many figures and he is not clean from it yet. He called the election to avoid negotiating with the students after issuing his undemocratic bill. For me when a party fails to listen to the new generation and their logic, they wrote their own death certificate.

On the other hand, there is Pauline Marois who has been trying to

lead the Parti Québécois (PQ) for years, only succeeding once the party failed in all attempts to gain power. Marois is the leader of the opposition who shyly supported the student movement in refusing the tuition increase and opposing bill 78.

We imagined that she could govern, until she returned to the stone age and started fighting the windmills by not recognizing today's society. Marois is still dreaming of creating a confrontation between the old and the new Quebec, so she can win a separation referendum. She is re-introducing her party's vision of a pure white catholic society that pretends to be secular just as a tool to refuse the others. At the same time, she helped in shifting the party's policy far from the left, disconnected the movement from the labour movement.

By refusing to accept the others and living in the past through her hard secular dream, Marois wrote her own political death.

Even her own team fragmented into two other parties, Option Nationale

(ON) a new small party supported by one of PQ's old guard, Jacques Parizeau, and Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ).

Competing with both the Liberal party and the PQ came the new political party, Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ). When François Legault exited from the PQ, he formed his new movement representing the far right capitalizing on the remains of Action démocratique Québec (ADQ), a party that was born and died in less than 18 years. CAQ, similarly to the ADQ, is a soft sovereign movement. CAQ supported the Liberal in passing bill 78 and is calling for abolishing school boards, which will minimize the participation and the role of taxpayers and parents in managing the education system. Another party that I can't support!

Not being able to vote for any of these parties brought me back to the basics of democracy. Why are we voting strategically? Why don't we go back to the principals and vote for what we believe in? I prefer a minority government be-

cause it is the only way to allow people's voice to be heard. When a majority governs, they become a sort of dictatorship. They don't fear people and don't bother with people's needs or their point of view. They only serve their own close circle of beneficiaries, and that is proven by the corruption that has shaded our life for a while.

Some might vote for one of these parties based on one issue to avoid the others. Some might vote against referendum, others might vote against Marois' citizen chart and some might vote against bill 78 or the corruption.

I am sure that Quebecers are not looking for these votes. Our children deserve better than that. We should come back to the principles. We need a strong party that can raise our concerns and represent the general population. Québec Solidaire (QS), as small as it is, is co-lead by Françoise David and Amir Khadir, both long time activists for people's rights and community development, believe in a soft secularism of the state that creates a state without a religion but maintains and respects people's right in practicing their own beliefs.

I voted for QS because they sup-

port all people's rights, because their political stand is my political stand.

Are they going to govern? Most properly not now, but maybe some time soon. If this vote didn't help QS to govern, it will help us magnifying the need to apply the proportional representation.

One day, we will be able to achieve our goal in recognizing the proportional representation, a basic democratic principal that big parties are afraid of applying, because it will bring power back to the people instead of corporations.

\* Mohamed S. Kamel: is a Freelance writer, he is a professional engineer, a LEED Green Associate and a recognized project manager professional, he is Member of several civil society organizations, a co-founder of the Alternative Perspective Media (APM-RAM), Québec Antiwar movement "Échec à la Guerre", Canadian Egyptian for Democracy (CEFD), National Association for Change in Egypt (Taghyeer - Canada), Association of the Egyptians of Montreal (AEM). He could be reached at public@mohamedkamel.com

### CMF Congratulates Winners of QC Elections, Calls on Community to Stay Involved

The Canadian Muslim Forum (CMF) congratulates Madame Pauline Marois on her win as Premier-elect of Quebec. The fact that Mme Marois will be the first female Premier also deserves special attention. The CMF also congratulates all parties and candidates who ran determined campaigns, in the interests of serving Quebecers and bettering society. Importantly, all who voted deserve special applause for helping to choose our elected representatives. The CMF is encouraging community members to remain involved in societal debate.

"The CMF also extends condolences to the family of the 48-year-old man who was shot and killed outside the Metropolis theatre during the PQ's victory party," said Samer

Majzoub, CMF President. Throughout the election campaign, and in meetings with politicians, the CMF called for: 1) a positive discourse around Quebec's minorities; 2) discrimination and Islamophobia to be confronted; 3) dignity and full employment rights for women who choose the hijab; and, 4) underemployment within sectors of the Muslim community to be addressed.

With the election over, the CMF is calling on community members to remain involved in societal discourse. This can be done in many ways, including volunteering in a local or societal institution, giving your opinion during radio phone-in shows, posting comments on web articles, or writing letters to the papers.