

## Justin Trudeau Throws his (Cultural) Grandmother Under the Progressive Bus

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} Blain called out, "Trudeau, Trudeau," but had no chance to continue, for Justin Trudeau was now on a roll: "Madam,
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Canada was built by waves of immigration that were welcomed by the First Nations, who showed us how to build a strong society, and the people who come here, generation after generation to build stronger communities, this is what makes us stronger as a country and, madam, your intolerance does not have a place here." The mantra wave swells. "We are Liberals here, we know that diversity is a source of strength, never a source of weakness and madam, your fear, your fear of others, your intolerance does not have a place among us tonight" and "you must know that strength is to unite and not to scream, not to spread fear, not to spread intolerance, madam." All his buzz words with their subtexts are on display: "strong" "diversity" "unite" (that's us Liberals) and "fear," "scream" "intolerance" (that's you "intolerants" – Can

Hillary's "deplorables"). And now Blain casts her baited fishing line on the roiled rhetorical waters: "Are you tolerant of

québécois de souche [old stock Quebecers, those who can trace their line back to the original 14 families who came from France to New France]?" He chomps down and is hooked. Trudeau repeats three times: "Madam, your racism has no

place here." There's a lot to unpack here. First, it should not make any difference whether or not Blain holds unsavory

views about immigrants, since the initial question about the \$146 million could have been asked by any Quebecer, even one who has no particular views whatsoever on what immigration levels should be. It could have – and indeed has – been

asked by the Premier of Quebec, and Trudeau kindly did not accuse him of racism.

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} Far more unsettling is that a Prime Minister takes heckling of any kind so personally that he allows himself to go
nuclear: publicly labelling a private citizen as a racist – in this era there is no worse epithet you can apply to an individual
– and telling her, many times over, she “has no place” in her own society is an astonishing spectacle in itself.As I said, I
have no other explanation for such vituperation other than the fact that a white Québécoise, obviously “old stock,” using
the word “us” set him off. Nothing he said subsequently nuanced that first hammer blow; his thrice-repeated accusation of
racism doubled down on it. var quads_screen_width = document.body.clientWidth;
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} Blain’s taunting follow-up question regarding Trudeau’s “tolerance” for people of her ethnic provenance (and his own)
was interpreted as a racist dog whistle, but I don’t see it that way. I see it as a jeering reference to Trudeau’s hypocrisy, a
gloss on Trudeau’s obsessive harping on “diversity” and “tolerance” and his reflexive accusations of fear-mongering against
anyone who even expresses disquiet concerning permeable borders. var quads_screen_width =
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} She seems to be asking: “Why are you acting so intolerantly toward me right now, Mr Trudeau? If I were wearing a
hijab and brown skin, would you have answered my innocuous first question without rancour?” She had his number and
was using it against him.Because he does have double standards, and in fact feels, or at least expresses, no particular
tolerance for white people, especially those white people who dare to take pride in their cultural provenance. Being well-
schooled in progressive identity politics, collectively speaking, he takes a pretty dim view of white people. And he’s
proved it.When, for example, it was a case of terrorists from Afghanistan planting bombs at the Boston Marathon,
Trudeau called for consideration of the “root causes” that perhaps made the bombers feel “excluded” from society. But when
he learned that the Quebec City mosque massacre had been perpetrated by a white Quebecer, he immediately dubbed it
“a terrorist attack.”He’s famously tolerant of religion, if the issue is a non-Christian woman’s right to cover her face; but
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famously intolerant of Christians who believe in the sanctity of human life from conception. He has said “there is no core identity, no mainstream” in Canada, that we are a “post-national” country, a concept even the ultra-liberal New York Times found to be “radical.” “No place” for the likes of Mme Blain, who may be guilty of thought crimes, but when it comes to ISIS fighters returning from Iraq, where they may have performed acts of pure evil, “A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian.” How tolerant! Blain may or may not hold racist views. The chances of her acting on them, though, are slim to nil. But in treating her as he did, Trudeau is playing a dangerous game. Cultural and ethnic chauvinism is not a white invention. Many immigrants come to Canada from countries where chauvinism on grounds of ancestry or tribe are normative and acceptable. They often come from regions where discrimination of various kinds runs rife: caste systems in which higher status and lightness of skin colour go together; two-tier religious status or even state-endorsed persecution on religious grounds; gender apartheid. It is not racist to make that observation, but it is racist to speak and act as though only one identifiable group is historically guilty of such moral crimes. Pride in one’s cultural heritage is normal and universal, and not necessarily a sign of bigotry towards others. It is improper, to say the least, for a national leader to use his privilege to defame a citizen on this ground alone without any evidence whatsoever that she has ever behaved badly. If Justin Trudeau loathes his own whiteness and ethnic heritage, that’s his personal problem. But before projecting it onto all ethnic québécois, he should have checked his insult’s political price tag to see if he could afford it.

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