

Politics are and will always be a very tricky subject, as it is very personal to each and every individual. Everyone has their own political preference depending on the values which they have upheld throughout their lives. Certain happenings in a person's life such as a faith instilled in early childhood, needs or fears, a chosen career or just personal opinions are what morph into political standings. Some prefer a certain candidate or party as they seem to uphold similar values and ideas. Factors such as the environment, the economy, careers, children and/or seniors, immigration, wars, crime and many more define the crossing point between deciding to vote for a party or not. Some parties appeal to different demographics such as people of colour, immigrants, certain religions, rich and poor people, different ages, sexualities and genders, environmentalists, or those with disabilities. There are many people who do not find a candidate who fit into their criteria of governmental standards, and either are forced to vote for a candidate they don't fully support or they simply do not vote at all. In Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's opinions on how to run the country have so far been quite controversial. Trudeau has been very open on his very Liberal views on things such as feminism, equality, environment, education and many more. After nearing two years of being Canada's leader, Justin Trudeau might not have accomplished as many things as some had hoped, and might have done certain things which people do not approve of. But for some, he has done many wonderful things so far which have and will improve Canada for the greater good. This essay will discuss the highlights of the Trudeau government's accomplishments so far, as well as what has gone wrong and could be fixed to win over more voters in the upcoming Canadian federal election.

It's safe to say that our planet is currently in a bit of a disaster. Brutal terror attacks are happening more and more everyday, as well as senseless acts of violence towards many who are innocent. Since the beginning of his campaign, Trudeau has made the subject of refugees and immigration a very important and relevant topic in Canada. In November of 2015, shortly after the election, the Liberal party under his command donated \$100 million to United Nations in effort to help Syrian refugees. At the time, there were approximately 4.3 million refugees fleeing the terrible conditions they were forced to live in Syria, and the donation was to help the UN settle select Syrians in Canada for the time being. The money helped situate over 25,000 refugees to Canada, and was a huge help for United Nations as their programs are severely unfunded.¹ In another effort to help, in 2016, the Trudeau government restored the Interim Federal Health Program which was cut off in 2012 under the Harper government, which provides certain health benefits to refugees. This program which refugees can have temporarily access to allows them to have basic health care such as a physician and hospital care, vision and dental care, and prescription drug coverage.² The program has helped many refugees

regain their health as many of them come to Canada with injuries or sicknesses they had gotten during the difficult times in their native countries. Throughout the past four years, over 200,000 innocent Syrians have died in war related incidents, 23,000 of them being women and 24,000 being children.³ Their country is completely unsafe, and the citizens of Syria have absolutely no future ahead of them. This is a severe issue, and we cannot let innocent bystanders be murdered.

For a long time, Indigenous people, the LGBT+ community, youth, people of colour and women have unfortunately been victims of discrimination and mistreatment. Luckily, as time goes on our society continues to evolve and become more open, especially when the Prime Minister himself is a self-proclaimed feminist and ally to all the communities previously noted. It is known that in politics, women are unfortunately not involved much and are always cut short from the opportunities which men receive. In a step forward towards progression, Justin Trudeau announced at a press conference in 2015 that his cabinet would be female and male, being the second gender balanced cabinet in Canadian history. After being asked why he chose to have 15 out of 31 female cabinet members, Trudeau simply answered “Because it’s 2015”. Compared to the conservative party which has 12 out of 39 women cabinet members, the liberal party shows support for women and a great deal of progression with this decision.⁴ It is a move that will truly inspire Canadian women and young girls to choose whatever career path they decide and to fight the stigma for many years to come. Furthermore, in 2016 the Trudeau government formed an advisory council which was created to help prevent gender-based violence. A study done in 2014 shows that in Canada, 7 out of 10 victims of family related violence (the most common method of abuse) were women and girls.⁵ Women are over 10 times more likely than men to be victims of police reported sexual assaults⁶, and in 2011, 173,600 women were victims of violence, meaning approximately 1,207 victims for every 100,000 woman in the Canada.⁷ Gender-based violence is a clearly an unfair problem which Canada needs to diminish. An other controversial issue that women face is reproductive rights. In March of 2017, Justin Trudeau promised to give \$650 million in hopes of helping women’s reproductive rights around the world. Within three years, this money will be put towards very necessary things such as sex education and help with family planning and contraceptives, as well as programs to help diminish issues such as forced marriage, genital mutilation and support for women to receive legal and safe abortions.⁸

Throughout Canada’s history, the First People have continuously been immorally disrespected and violated. Many governments in the past have disassociated themselves from First Nations people and neglected to show compassion or support in order to try

and heal what brutal damage has been done in the past. But every little step and advancement made towards helping the situation is a step towards reconciliation. From 2016-17, the Trudeau government plans on providing \$76.9 million in order to help the construction of cultural and recreational infrastructure on First Nations reserves.⁹ This donation could make a large difference as better buildings and centres can help strengthen the community and bring people together. To help better more First Nations communities, an amount of \$25 million has been provided throughout 2016-17 to the economic development of the Métis Nation, which approximately 32% Indigenous Canadians identify as.¹⁰ The Trudeau government is also in the progress of building a new water treatment plant in the Neskantaga First Nation, located in Ontario. They have been dealing with terribly unsafe tap water for over 20 years, and many people have developed sicknesses from drinking the water or rashes from bathing in it.¹¹ Clean water is such a simple thing that we all need and should have access to, especially in a first world country like Canada where we can afford to provide it. Most First Nations communities have very little funding, therefore any amount of money donated by the government can help a lot. Yet another pressing issue which Canadian First Nations have struggled with for a long time is the death and loss of many First Nations women. According to a report made by the RCMP, approximately 1,017 First Nations women were murdered between 1980 and 2012, making their homicide rate 4.5 times higher than any other Canadian women.¹² Within the 1,017 women, 164 are currently presumed missing, and 225 of their cases are still unsolved.¹³ This causes incredible grief and trauma to family members and friends of the women, especially when they aren't found. Because of this epidemic, in 2015 the Trudeau government launched an inquiry on these missing and murdered Indigenous women. In the near future, Trudeau promises to find closure and justice for families as well as the victims.

Health is a very important thing for people of all ages to pay attention to, especially in 2017. New diseases are popping up everyday, obesity is at an all time high and medications are being needed by much too many people. In Canada, a very current and controversial issue is marijuana. The Liberal party has promised since the beginning of their campaign to legalize the use of marijuana by July 2018, in order to decriminalize it and for the government to be in control of who's hands it gets into or who is selling it.¹⁴ A task force had also been created in 2016 to help maintain safe usage of marijuana and to minimize any harms that may come with marijuana use.¹⁵ This law will most likely diminish unnecessary drug related arrests and crime, considering that in 2013, 59,000 Canadians were arrested for simply possessing marijuana.¹⁶ Canada's approximated annual cost associated with illegal drugs are \$1.4 billion, and the cost of enforcing marijuana laws are over \$500 million.¹⁷ These costs are ridiculous and absolutely unneces-

sary, therefore legalizing marijuana seems to be for the greater good. Another very important health issue which the Canadian government need to attend to is what Canadians are eating, as the amount of obesity in Canada is rapidly growing each year. Statistics found that the number of overweight Canadians in 2015 had grown 20.2%, from 15% in 2003.¹⁸ Because of this, some action has been done so far under the Liberal government to help fix these issues. The 2016 Canadian federal budget proposes to give \$64.5 million over the next five years, and \$13.8 million per year after to expand Nutrition North Canada which will help to support all northern isolated communities with healthy eating and educate people on how to maintain a sustainable diet.¹⁹ Also, in 2016, the federal government changed Canada's healthy eating guidelines, with different and more strict rules for marketing and labelling foods specifically aimed towards youth. This was proposed in hopes of diminishing exposure of children towards advertisement of unhealthy foods. This project will be in the works for about 5-10 years, and the government will work with food companies to hopefully find a better way to clearly label what is in their products.²⁰ Obesity more than often begins during one's childhood, therefore these guidelines could very well help diminish the rates of obesity overall in Canada.

Planet Earth is not doing too well right now. We are in the midst of a very severe climate change issues, which is destroying our environment, killing different living species and affecting us in ways that we don't even realize. It is clearly obvious that we must act now to help save our home. In 2016, Canada's first ministers met to discuss climate change and ways that Canada can help. They plan on doing things such as improving energy efficient, public transit and green infrastructure, lowering the carbon economy fund, advancement in electric vehicles, going towards using renewable energy instead of diesel around Indigenous communities, and many more.²¹ One of the things that Canada is very well known for is our beautiful outdoor parks. Canada has some of the world's most amazing wildlife and outdoors, which is in desperate need of preservation. In order to preserve our beautiful parks, the 2016 Canadian budget plans to provide \$142.3 million over the next five years to the Parks Canada Agency and Natural Resources Canada, as well as \$16.6 million during the same time period to expand the Learn to Camp program, develop new programs to tell Canada's history to children, Indigenous story-telling and eco-tourism. In early 2017, free admission to all Canadian parks was also introduced to celebrate Canada's 150th year of confederation and to increase park use.²² To help wildlife, the 2016 budget also proposes to provide \$197.1 million over the next five years to Fisheries and Oceans Canada to help ocean and freshwater science, and to provide support for the Experimental Lakes Area in North-western Ontario. The funding will help research that will promote the health of fish and

aquaculture, help to create better monitoring of aquatic pollution, and enhance our knowledge of freshwater ecosystems.²³

Despite their good efforts to help Canada in many ways, the Liberal party does have some ideas that are concerning. The most controversial and current issue by far are the pipelines, which the Liberal government are approving. In 2016, the Kinder Morgan Trans-Canada pipeline was approved to be built through British Columbia to Alberta. The 1,150-kilometre long pipeline expects to bring in roughly a million more barrels of oil a day to markets everywhere. This puts our oceans and wildlife at a huge risk, as the existing pipeline built by Kinder Morgan in Canada has had 82 reported oil spills since its launch in 2005. It also poses the risk of eliminating endangered species such as the orca whale in B.C., as the sound and space the pipeline will take will largely affect their habitats and life. The pipeline is also bad news for jobs in Canada, as it would create roughly 50 permanent jobs, and threatens 98,000 jobs supported by the B.C. coastline. Kinder Morgan and tar sands producers would obtain almost all of the revenue and B.C. would get less than 2 per cent.²⁴ It clearly is not safe for the well being of wildlife, the environment or humans and does more bad than good. This is a big mistake that the Trudeau government has made, and has definitely deterred many supporters who have our environment in mind. Another issue which the Trudeau government has been under scrutiny for is their many broken promises. With almost two years in office, 30 out of 225 promises made by Trudeau have been broken. Out of the 225, approximately 49 have been achieved, 62 are in progress and 84 have not been started. This raises suspicion and doubt within Canadians, as when you vote for a certain candidate or party that promises something, you are expecting them to fulfill that promise. Not working on your promises or just forgetting about them leads to distrust and a loss of many supporters which can cost a candidate or party their whole career.

In conclusion, the Liberal party has done both good and bad while under Justin Trudeau's direction. Their efforts to help rebuild communities, tackle environmental issues, help those in need and to protect Canadians as a whole have been quite impactful so far. As we are in the midst of so many new and serious situations that we must face as a society, the leaders of our countries must step up and do their all to help. Despite their bad decisions, it is without a doubt that Justin Trudeau and the Liberals are leading Canada better than many other countries are being lead currently. If they take some of their negative feedback and use it to made some changes, Justin Trudeau might just be elected again as Prime Minister in 2019.

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