

"The Times They Are A-Changin'" (Bob Dylan)

By Brian McLaughlin

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What an apropos quote to sum up events in Alberta's election!

The NDP's win in Alberta – a change in the once sacrosanct myths of hegemony of PC invulnerabilities. "Change has finally come to Alberta", stated NDP Premier-Elect Rachel Notley. And what a change indeed. Gone is the myth of an eternal C-brand or right-wing hegemony in the mindset of Canada's most conservative province! NDP which was expected to, maybe if lucky, garner a minority government has trumped all their provincial contenders. NDP won 40% of the popular vote in Canada's traditionally 'have' province. And what's so key to this strategic upheaval? The severe rejection of the policies set out by the ruling PC party. It also reveals voters are becoming more insightful, wise, and responsible in local, regional, national, and even with an awakened consciousness about social, environmental and international affairs in the wider world's space and time continuum.

The internet (social media) is having the same effect on the Canadian voter's psyches as the printing press and newspaper publishers did on the American voter's psyches pre- during- and post- the American civil war. We are living in an immediate organic, social continuum of change and progress with animate influences and expectations instantly triggering activities in the mind, heart, gut, and in action. It's the political equivalent of Einstein's equation on Theory of Relativity ($E=MC^2$). The electorate population is the collective mass of dynamic events (after all that's what Bertrand Russell said Einstein was referring to in "the activities of particles of atoms"). And the increasing advancements towards reaching a doubling-the-speed-of-light transmission of ideas, percepts and even political (Jim Prentice's statement: "Math is hard") gaffes are/is *the light* travelling rapidly around geographic political events and into the human consciousness for cognitive absorptions, digestion, reflection and reaction. What does that mean for a pending federal election and any myths about invincibility's in certain regions of Canada with the federal C-brand, the success of 2015 Federal Budget, and pollster predictions? Anything goes! It's all up for grabs!

Bertrand Russell said a wise man is the better measure of things than a fool. And Canadians continue to show quantum leaps in that adage in their voting behaviours. Deep diversities become the nutrients for sustainable deliberative democracies: the internet sharing, Facebooking posts and comments, and tweets become the electric catalysts that spark growth in the politically nutrient undersoil. It levels the political playing field for all major (Conservative, Liberal and NDP) contenders on constituency ballots from coast-to-coast. It allows for possibilities of effecting the "what ought to be" versus the stagnant "what is." It propels us to demand, and seek higher possibilities of actualizations in a more radicalized social liberalism. We ARE a living-and-breathing federal organism.

Now that proof is evident in Alberta! Notley's policies (which reflects calls for social value-ism, calls for responsible consciousness for justness, calls for environmental responsibility, and calls for accountable energy industry economic and fiscal obligations) accomplishing a major upset in all Edmonton ridings – NDP took all 19 ridings in the provincial capital; while in Calgary, traditionally the heart of BIG business influence on provincial oil economic policies, showed significant decline for the PC's status with the NDP winning 14 of 25 ridings. Further, for the first time in Alberta's history, the PC (Conservatives) don't even make up the official opposition – that torch is passed to the Wild Rose Party, which only faired significantly in the Fort McMurray ridings and other rural areas of the province.

So looking at the tide of transformation on the horizon from antecedent political events across the nation we see a palpable change momentum. PEI, NB, NS, Quebec, Ontario all brought in Liberal provincial governments. PEI's recent election brought in a resounding Liberal majority as did previous in Nova Scotia's, Ontario's and Quebec's. What that does to the Canadian electorates' synapses is *electric!* It's an exciting anticipation that *people are power*, and *people are fluid energy* that effects real change. That tide of provincial Liberal change is reflective of *the fresh wave* of resurgence of social value-ism across the Canadian landscape of electorate expectations.

Edward Hallett Carr (in his book *What is History?*) wrote that often illusions of what fit in one era can become solecism in another. "And is condemned on that account." Are we seeing the grass-shoots of a ground swell towards out-warn federal solecism of the myth that Conservative federal policies have actually benefited any regional *realpolitik* for progress in a Canadian federation now re-evaluating our anticipations about change?

A Maritime Canadian freelance journalist and writer, Brian McLaughlin has written extensively on politics, education, economic development, energy (oil, electricity, gas), as well as on alternative technology and contemporary business issues. His articles have appeared in local, regional, national and international publications (The Daily Gleaner, Telegraph Journal (NB Reader), Atlantic Business and Natural Resources magazines, Atlantic Progress and National Fisherman magazines; plus Energy Exchange and Alberta Oil magazines).