

**CONFIDENTIAL**

TRUDEAU, THE RT HON PIERRE ELLIOTT, PC MP

Former Prime Minister of Canada.

Born in 1919 of mixed French Canadian and Scottish ancestry, he comes from a wealthy Montreal family. Attended the Universities of Montreal, Harvard and Paris and the London School of Economics. Has travelled widely. Lecturer in Jurisprudence at Montreal University and a member of the Quebec Bar before entering politics. He has written various books and theses, particularly on constitutional matters and the French Canadian problem.

First became active in politics when he supported the asbestos miners in Quebec in 1949. Opposed the corrupt regime of M Duplessis, Premier of Quebec. Later he came out clearly as a federalist French Canadian, maintaining that a separate Quebec could not be viable, that French Canadians could only find their fulfilment in Canada, and that it was largely the failure of Quebec provincial governments to exercise their powers under the Federal Constitution that had left Quebec as a ghetto for so long. He joined the Federal Liberal Party in 1965 and was elected to the Federal Parliament in the same year.

Mr Trudeau's star rose rapidly in the House of Commons. After a short spell as Parliamentary-Secretary to Mr Pearson who was then Prime Minister, he was appointed in 1967 as Minister of Justice, where he attracted favourable notice for his handling of a new Divorce Bill. In April 1968 he ran for the party leadership and swept aside a number of senior rivals as well as one or two other young hopefuls. In the general election that followed the Liberals were returned to power with an absolute majority, for the first time since 1953, as Trudeaumania swept the country.

Mr Trudeau was Prime Minister of Canada from 1968 until 1979, and again from 1980-84. His first government lasted 4 years and included the October 1970 kidnapping crisis, and was, in retrospect, probably his finest period as Prime Minister. By the end of his first 4 years in office the force of Trudeaumania was, however, spent. The ease with which he had come to power, his pre-eminence within his own party and the ineffectiveness of the opposition led him to adopt an autocratic style, although he continued to philosophise from time to time about "participatory democracy". About this time his relations with the press deteriorated and were never to recover.

In the October 1972 election campaign, Mr Trudeau seemed to fight without enthusiasm. The Liberals scraped back into power as a minority government and for the next 2 years were largely preoccupied with holding on to office.

They did better in the 1974 election when Mr Trudeau barnstormed through the country demonstrating some of his old magic. But the 5 years of government that followed his electoral victory were on the whole undistinguished. His party had few new policies left, and Mr Trudeau's dominance and intolerance of opposition led to the resignations of two of his leading Ministers. It was during this time that a separatist government came to power in Quebec and this and the future of the federation became the over-riding – and totally intractable – issue for Mr Trudeau. After the Liberal defeat in 1979 and five months in opposition Mr Trudeau announced his resignation in November 1979. However, the next month the Progressive Conservative Government was brought down, almost by accident, and Mr Trudeau decided to run in another election in February 1980; and was returned to power.

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From 1980 to 1982 he devoted much of his time and energy to his aim of patriating the Canadian Constitution from Westminster, and providing Canadians with a Charter of Rights, eventually succeeding in 1982.

Mr Trudeau announced on 29 February 1984 his intention to resign as Leader of the Liberal Party. A leadership convention in Ottawa in June 1984 elected Mr John Turner (qv) to succeed him. Mr Trudeau stepped down, and Mr Turner was sworn in as Prime Minister on 30 June 1984.

He is a very complex man, full of paradoxes and enigmas. He combines great personal charm with brutal insensitivity. He can be tough and robust, especially when it comes to Quebec about which he cares the most. But he became bored with day-to-day politics and did not conceal his contempt for other MPs, the press and, sometimes the man in the street. This came from his often bloodless and over-intellectual approach.

Mr Trudeau married in 1971. After a long period of difficulties he and his wife Margaret were separated in the summer of 1977. They were divorced in 1984. He retains custody of the three children.

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