

Political Chameleons 2026

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In the past six months, we've seen a number of shape-shifting defections of MPs from the Conservative Party of Canada. In some cases, the newly-minted Liberal MPs have begun expressing entirely different views than those they claimed were their deeply-held convictions only a short time before. The most notable example was MP Marilyn Gladu, who once claimed to be pro-life and who even expressed outrage regarding other MPs who had crossed the floor. Then she crossed the floor. She now sits under Prime Minister Mark Carney's watchful eye and speaks Liberalese fluently.

We're seeing the same thing happening in British Columbia where MLA Peter Milobar¹ has recently announced that he will be leaving the BC Conservative caucus because of what he identifies as "residential school denialism." He now sits as an independent. Leaving aside for a moment the extremely important question about so-called "denialism" and what it means, one has to wonder why Mr. Milobar was elected as a BC Conservative in the first place? Was he not aware of the concerns around the Kamloops residential school "unmarked graves" controversy?

The reality is that Mr. Milobar became a BC Conservative MLA not because of deeply held convictions but because of political expediency. He was originally elected as a BC Liberal, a party which for many years was seen as the philosophical equivalent of the federal Conservative Party of Canada. Of course, we in the CHP have long questioned the "conservative" credentials of the federal CPC. In spite of having many good and upright members and a handful of very noble and principled MPs, the federal CPC has, nevertheless, become a party that has tolerated—and in many cases adopted—the policies of the progressive elites of Canada. Their leader, Pierre Poilievre, has declared himself to be pro-abortion (under the euphemism of "pro-choice") and supportive of same-sex marriage.² The fact that many grassroots members of the Conservative Party of Canada do not share those opinions did not stop the majority of them from choosing him as their leader in 2022. This is a convoluted and confusing strategy . . . but compromise and pragmatism have become the basic pattern for many seeking power.

Back to BC and MLA Peter Milobar; Mr. Milobar took on the branding and talking points of the BC Conservatives during the last provincial election when the renamed and failing United Party of BC (formerly the BC Liberal Party) merged with the BC Conservatives in a failed attempt to win a majority. They saw clearly—as did the BC Conservative Leader at the time, John Rustad—that they would not be able to unseat the NDP with two major parties on the centre right. Of course, they misjudged the political electorate of British Columbia who still voted to retain the socialist new Democrats. In other words, the merger that was supposed to restore fiscal sanity and responsible government failed. The merger that was supposed to produce a political victory only made suspicious allies of former opponents.

The important point to note in this story is that a merger of two parties does not necessarily mean the melding of principles and opinions. We've seen plenty of evidence of infighting in the BC Conservative caucus since their disappointing poll results in 2024. That was reasonably foreseeable even at the time of the merger. There's even been another new party formed, OneBC. MLA Dallas Brodie now sits in the BC

Legislature as the leader of that party; she was ejected from the BC Conservative caucus over her outspoken views on the Kamloops controversy and two other MPs, Tara Armstrong and Jordan Kealy, left the caucus at that time and now sit as independents. Another BC Conservative MLA, Hon Chan left the caucus after being charged with assault. Newly-elected Leader of the BC Conservatives, Kerry-Lynne Findlay³ is working hard to try to rally the troops, resolve differences and rebuild a sense of unity and direction.

Most people gravitate to a party or to a movement with values similar to their own. While many party loyalists of every stripe are willing to make some concessions and to tolerate some policies with which they are not in complete agreement, they will not maintain that enthusiasm when the policy gap widens and when their own core values are under attack.

They say a leopard cannot change its spots . . . but people can change their opinions and they often do. Those changes can be good or bad, depending on the reason for the change. Some—like our loyal and committed members of the CHP⁴—stand on principles and will not compromise. Others—who base their decisions on shifting public opinion, media bias, electability or the fear of being labeled and attacked by the woke, DEI, cancel culture—are willing to adopt new standards. They go along to get along. They fit well with this statement attributed to humorist Grouch Marx: “Those are my principles, and if you don’t like them...well, I have others...”

When it comes to political parties and the policies they espouse, Canadians would be well advised to consider carefully what policies they are able to enthusiastically support, not based on the likelihood of a particular party forming government but on the moral values they represent. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Policies ought to represent eternal values. Short-sighted and fleeting gimmicks will fade. Politicians who adopt certain trendy causes may distort the truth for political gain but will not leave an enduring legacy.

In politics, as in all life, it would be good to remember these lines from the poem⁵ by missionary C. T. Studd:

“Only one life, ’twill soon be past,
Only what’s done for Christ will last . . .”

Footnotes

¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Milobar

² www.cbc.ca/news/politics/poileuvre-same-sex-marriage-abortion-1.7222881

³ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kerry-Lynne_Findlay

⁴ www.chp.ca

⁵ mwerickson.com/2019/04/16/c-t-studd-only-one-life/

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