

# Blackface / Brown Face of the Past: Is Justin Trudeau a Racist?

By [Kim Petersen](#)

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*Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. — Matthew 7: 1-2*

Canada's prime minister **Justin Trudeau** has found himself in the the center of a media tempest, and a countrywide tempest, because of having appeared at events in blackface/brownface in the past.

Trudeau appeared before the media and apologized for what he acknowledged is racist, albeit he stated that he was unaware at the time of this action being racist.

## Does a Racist Act Mean a Person is Racist?

There are two important aspects to consider with regard to denouncing a person as racist: temporality and intentionality.

Few, and probably none, of us are perfect; consequently, we have at one time or another said or done something we truly regret. These regrettable incidents do not necessarily represent how we truly feel or reveal who we really are. Humans are creatures who can be affected by emotions and negative life events, who thus influenced can lash out unthinkingly and angrily. Yet, afterwards they are filled with angst and remorse for what they have said or done.

What we believe today and who we are today might be very different from what we believed in the past and who we were then. Are we to be condemned for all our past mistakes, despite having accepted accountability, having sincerely apologized, and having lived a morally centered life ever since?

Who will cast the first stone?

More important than when an event transpired is what was meant by the words or acts. The simple reason is that humans are imperfect; they can have otherwise good hearts, and even in expressions of good mirth might say or do something ignorant of what this negatively connotes.

I do not ascribe racist sentiments to Trudeau over his blackface/brownface episodes. To wit, if Trudeau were then aware of any racist symbolism of blackface/brownface, would he then have appeared in a photo sandwiched between two Sikhs while also wearing a turban? (see below image)



The media is assuming a holier-than-thou stance (something Trudeau has been criticized for) in piling on over Trudeau's past indiscretions. This is hypocrisy.

### **Is Trudeau Presently a Racist?**

Certain political stances reveal that Trudeau is indeed, undeniably, a racist.

#### **Anti-Palestinian**

Trudeau has turned [a willfully blind eye to the racism and oppression](#) suffered by Palestinians at the hands of the State of Israel. He mischaracterizes and [opposes BDS](#), a non-violent means for Palestinians to pressure Israel to end occupation and oppression. In another example of poor judgment, Trudeau has [appeared](#) at a function for the Jewish National Fund, a [racist registered charity in Canada](#).

Moreover, the Trudeau government has [imperiled free speech](#) by agreeing to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism. This definition equates criticism of the state of Israel with anti-Semitism.

Especially under Trudeau, Canada has been [no friend to Palestine](#).

#### **Anti-First Nation**

In 2015, Trudeau promised to guarantee the rights of First Nations, stating that it was a "sacred obligation."

There are several examples of Trudeau trampling on the sacred obligation. The plight currently facing the people of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation starkly illustrates Trudeau's fidelity to a sacred obligation between nations.

The Wet'suwet'en First Nation lies in the central interior of the province colonially designated British Columbia. The territory is unceded and the Wet'suwet'en people live under their own laws. The Wet'suwet'en First Nation rejected the passage of pipelines on their territory. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court of BC decision granted an injunction allowing pipeline corporations to enter their territory.

The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs representing all 13 Wet'suwet'en house groups have stood behind the rejection of pipelines in their territory.

The Unist'ot'en (C'ihlts'ehkhyu / Big Frog Clan of the Wet'suwet'en) continue to [press their case](#) in the BC Supreme Court arguing that Wet'suwet'en law must be upheld on unceded Wet'suwet'en lands. They await the court decision which they see as indicating whether reconciliation is sought by the Canadian legal system or whether the colonial laws will continue to be imposed and Indigenous laws and ways ignored.

## Media Hypocrisy

Trudeau's colored faces is a distraction. It is a distraction for longstanding racism that has lined the pockets of corporate types and the government types that facilitate the plunder of the lands of other peoples.

Lastly, the fact that the corporate/state media allow the racist occupations of historical Palestine and First Nations to continue with nary a criticism speak loudly to what underlies the supposed indignation over Trudeau's facial make-up. Trudeau represents an opportunity for the media to cash-in on another how-the-mighty-have-fallen story that titillates some among the masses. Meanwhile, racism continues to simmer under the mediascape and the wider Establishment.

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**Kim Petersen** is a former co-editor of the *Dissident Voice* newsletter. He can be reached at: [kimohp@gmail.com](mailto:kimohp@gmail.com). Twitter: [@kimpetersen](https://twitter.com/kimpetersen).

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