

US -Canada political impasse: The patient is dead

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The disastrous Bush years have left a legacy of war and financial collapse. They have also brought North America to a political impasse,

The really extraordinary political event in North American politics as 2008 came to a close was not the albeit remarkable election of the first US black president, but the collapse of Canada's parliamentary system. Canada's first-past-the-post electoral system allowed the Conservatives to form a minority government during the past three years with about 1/3 of the popular vote, supported by the Canadian equivalent of the Bushites (hardcore rightwingers — Bible-thumpers and the very rich).

Last month's election resulted in another stalemate, and when the Cons presented a budget that did nothing to address the alarming fallout for average Canadians of the financial crisis, the three left-centre opposition parties were galvanised into agreeing to defeat the Conservatives in the next major vote in parliament and, in parliamentary tradition, form a coalition government. This has happened only once in Canada's history — in 1926.

Prime Minister Steven Harper realised his goose would be cooked and called on Canada's equivalent of the US president, the otherwise powerless Governor General Michaëlle Jean (BTW, a black woman), to "prorogue" parliament for two months, creating a new first - the government avoiding defeat by dismissing the lawmakers. How's that for democracy? Pundits joke that this makes Canada a "pro-rogue" state.

The Cons are gambling that the opposition's plans will fall apart by the end of January. The uncharismatic Liberal leader Stéphane Dion has already been pressured into ceding leadership of the Liberal Party to the unproven and reluctant coalitionist Michael Ignatieff, and the separatist, albeit social democratic Bloc Québécois is not the most reliable friend for a coalition consisting of the Liberals and the socialist New Democratic Party.

But dismissing parliament is precisely what German President Paul von Hindenburg did in 1933 at the request of another minority conservative government, making Hitler chancellor and allowing the Nazis to finish off the democratic system there and begin a fateful rule which still sends shudders down one's spine.

Even if the opposition had prevailed, however, the policies of this fractious centre-left coalition would not have looked startlingly different. Sure, an economic stimulus package of sorts, maybe slightly better regulation of shady business practices, some good environmental legislation. Nothing to sneeze at.

But Canadian troops would continue to murder Afghan patriots and be blown up by their

roadside bombs, despite the desire of 60 per cent of Canadians to bring the troops home immediately; the military budget would get a hefty boost; health care would continue to flounder; the Cons' corporate tax cuts would be enacted. The Liberals insisted there was no socialist bottom line agreed upon, and the neocon-in-sheep's-clothing Michael Ignatieff, an nasty silver-tongued American (sorry, Canadian) actually hailed Bush's criminal invasion of Iraq. The NDP — Canada's sole political party voicing the will of Canadians to pull out of Afghanistan immediately — could be decimated if a sufficiently charismatic Liberal leader called an election at the moment of his choosing, the public's fear of a Conservative majority is so great.

Cut to the much slicker US political scene, where liberals, workers, blacks and hispanics united to defeat their Bushites, electing a clutch of Democrats, including the world's darling, president-elect Barack Obama. He promises a Canadian-style health insurance, better environmental standards, and promised — at one point — to withdraw all troops from Iraq by the end of next year. His statements on Iraq were interpreted to mean that there would be no permanent US bases there.

But even before he has taken office, he has shown which side of his bread the butter is on. The "change" incumbent supported the shameful bailout of the big banks of US President George W Bush and company, and proceeded to appoint some of the very culprits in the deregulation madness of the past two decades to positions in his cabinet and as advisers to implement the bailout. Not one nod to his promise for change.

He talks about using "soft power" abroad but reappointed Bush's Robert Gates, a hawk if there ever was one, as his secretary of defence. As for pulling out of Iraq, forget it. And the US military is hard at work building barracks for an addition 20,000 troops in Afghanistan with plans to increase this to 40,000 for up to four years.

How can this be? The same policies that have driven Americans and Canadians to distraction over the past decade are being pursued by politicians both left and right today, after "democratic" elections. You kick one party out but get much the same policies from the other. There is no relief.

The current war/ financial crises, orchestrated by Zionists Wolfowitz, Greenspan et al remind ex-Israeli writer Gilad Atzmon of the joke about the surgeon who comes out of the operating theater after a 12-hour open-heart operation and tells the anxious family, "The operation was a great success but unfortunately your beloved didn't make it to the end."

Greenspan's and Wolfowitz's doctrines looked promising on paper. Greenspan claimed in an April 2005 speech: "Innovation has brought about a multitude of new products, such as subprime loans and niche credit programmes for immigrants." Yes to help these humble immigrants buy houses. How thoughtful. Wolfowitz and his PNAC crew claimed they were invading various countries to bring them "democracy and freedom". Greenspan would keep the US economy afloat long enough for Wolfie to capture Iraqi oil and to secure pipeline routes through Central Asia, fueling the empire for long into the future.

As it turned out, Greenspan's success with his subprime-primed real estate boom was much like Wolfowitz's success in toppling Saddam Hussein. It started out all "shock and awe" (remember the obscene carpet bombing of Baghdad in 2003?), but ended up pulling the American empire down with it. However, it is not necessary to claim the credit crunch to be

a Zionist *plot* (though the intent was a boom to finance their war in Iraq) so much as a Zionist *accident*. The trouble is the patient didn't make it through to the end. This Zionist accident shows us that we are all victims along with those other victims — Palestinians, Iraqis and Afghans. The operation was carried out but it appears the American empire is now on life support and headed for the morgue. Unless, of course, the Zionist answer to its own mad operation — bankrupt the rest of the world by printing dollars to keep the patient alive — succeeds.

The pattern is familiar: these selfless civil servants are always trying to save the world. They bring democracy to the Arabs, they bring prosperity to the poor. But somehow, it is their friends, in the first place, Israel, that always benefits. "One has only to read Herzl to know that this is what political Zionism is all about: the manipulation of superpowers to serve the Zionist cause," writes Gilad Atzmon in "Credit Crunch or rather Zio Punch?"

The events leading up to the current US financial bailout follow the logic of Naomi Klein's *Shock Doctrine*, with 9/11 as the "shock" that allowed the neocon establishment to railroad through an anti-democratic "homeland security" system and tax cuts for the superwealthy. The \$700 billion Paulson bailout merely adds the finishing touch to this breathtaking con. It was steamrolled through Congress not to "solve" the financial crisis but to solidify the gains that a tiny disproportionately Zionist hyper-wealthy class has stolen through deregulation and war since 9/11.

Obama is surrounded by Zionists, from his veepee Joseph Biden ("You don't have to be Jewish to be a Zionist") down to his lowly (ex-IDF volunteer) White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel. His domestic policy will be presided over by Zionists Timothy Geithner, Lawrence Summers, Paul Volker, Peter Orszag, Jason Furman, not to mention the founder of Rubinomics, the great Robert Rubin himself.

Is this mention of implicit political affiliation impolite? The question is: do they act tribally, as a cabal, rather than simply as individuals? Unconditional US support for Israel would evaporate overnight without their intensive lobbying. There would have been no US invasion of Iraq. Obama would not be appointing their likes to "change" the disastrous direction the US is heading in. In business circles, it is well known that it takes as little as 15 per cent of a company's stock to effectively control company policy. Thirty per cent of the rich and 50 per cent of the billionaires in the US are Jewish (and you can bet they are Zionists), whereas Jews, the inspiration behind Zionism, constitute only 2.5 per cent of the population. It's as if one family controls 30 per cent of the "stock" in the US government.

Is it possible that this whole electoral system has become a farce, manipulated from behind the scenes by these very grey eminences to keep an agenda of war for Israel and economic elitism on track? Why would the Canadian gg refuse to give the centre-left a chance to govern, and even if she did, why would the coalition Liberals suddenly replace the one-time critic of Canada's "mission" in Afghanistan Dion with the more reliably neocon Ignatieff? How could Obama possibly appoint architects of the Bush-era war/ financial policies, after he was elected to end the war, and with the culprits now exposed for what they are? Both the Canadian and US political events of the past few months defy any other explanation and yet are accepted as perfectly normal in the mass media.

American politicians are rushing to save the bankers and their warrior brothers, all in the defence of Israel, with their Canadian counterparts acting on cue, governed by the same

forces, if anything, moreso. But the patient is dead.

Eric Walberg writes for *Al-Ahram Weekly*.

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