



Liberal Party Leadership Race: Candidates’ positions on the Middle East and important statements

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David Bertschi

Bertschi was born in Sainte-Adèle, Quebec to a family of Swiss German immigrants. He graduated from Carleton University in 1980, receiving his law degree at the University of Windsor three years later. He has been practicing law since 1985, later founding his own firm Bertschi Orth Smith LLP, specializing in insurance law. Bertschi has also played a role in the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, acting as a prosecutor in some cases. After serving behind the scenes for John Turner and Jean Chretien as an organizer, Bertschi ran for the first time in the 2011 Canadian federal election, as the Liberal Party's candidate in the riding of Ottawa—Orléans, but arrived second behind his Conservative opponent.



- His vision for Canada’s foreign policy involves “muscular peacekeeping, specialized military, foreign aid, and international Leadership.”¹
- On the day commemorating Israel’s establishment, he issued the following: “Today, we celebrate the Independence of our friend, ally and beacon of democracy and freedom in the Middle East – Israel. We should pause and reflect and the courage, sacrifice and resolve of the Israeli’s at home around the world. Happy Yom Ha’atzmaut!” ²

Martin Cauchon

Cauchon was born in La Malbaie, Quebec and studied law at the University of Ottawa and the University of Exeter. He worked as a lawyer from 1985 to 1993, and from 2004 to present. He was first elected to political office in October 1993 in the federal riding of Outremont, Québec. Throughout his political career, he has held



¹ David Bertschi’s website. Accessed Feb. 6, 2013. <http://davidbertschi.ca/restoring-the-canadian-advantage/>

² David Bertschi Tumblr. Accessed Jan. 29, 2013, <http://davidbertschi.tumblr.com/>



many cabinet positions, including Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Québec) from 1996 to 2002, Minister of National Revenue from August 1999 to 2002, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada in 2002-2003, as well as Minister with political responsibility for Quebec during that same period.

- In a recent speech in Berlin, he criticized Canada government’s position on the Israel-Palestine conflict: “Traditionally, Canada has been a voice for reason and compromise. Unfortunately, our Government has abandoned that approach and this has not been helpful in bringing the two sides back to the negotiating table. Today, Canada lacks a good Middle East policy.”³
- He’s favouring going back to what he called “the moderate approach of Lester Pearson and Jean Chrétien.”⁴

Deborah Coyne

Deborah Coyne holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from Osgoode Hall Law School of York University and a Master of Philosophy from Oxford University in international relations. She practised law before embarking on a public policy career that included the Business Council on National Issues, the 1986 Ontario Insurance Taskforce and the law school at the University of Toronto. Beginning in 1987, she took a role in the constitutional debates that unfolded involving the Meech Lake Accord and the referendum on the Charlottetown Accord. In the 2006 federal election, she ran in the district of Toronto—Danforth against NDP leader Jack Layton.



- She believes Canada should be a leader “in the pursuit of human security across the globe.” Among her priorities are to end mass poverty and reform global governance structures.⁵

Marc Garneau

Marc Garneau was born in Quebec City. He is a retired military officer, former astronaut, and engineer. Garneau was the first Canadian in outer space taking part in three flights aboard NASA Space shuttles. He was the president of the Canadian Space Agency from 2001 to 2006. In the 2006 federal election, he unsuccessfully sought a seat in the Canadian House of Commons in the riding of Vaudreuil-Soulanges. Two years later he was elected in the riding of Westmount—Ville-Marie in downtown Montreal, winning by over 9000 votes. He was re-elected to the House of Commons in the 2011 federal election by 642 votes.



- Although the Liberal party does not support the bid for Palestinian Statehood, Garneau agreed with NDP MP Paul Dewar in saying that the Canadian government does not seem to want to bring Israel

³ Martin Cauchon, “In a Global World, why Canada and its Values matter for World Peace and Democracy?” Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Dec. 13, 2012. Accessed on Feb. 6, 2013, <http://demarchy.ca/post/40464076984/martin-cauchon-goes-international>

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Deborah Coyne, “A Roadmap to One Canada.” Accessed on Feb. 5, 2013, <http://www.deborahcoyne.ca/policy/a-roadmap-to-one-canada/>



and Palestine together. “Certainly from what is public,” he said, “I don’t get the impression that this government is trying to bring the two sides together.”⁶

- His vision for Canadian foreign policy overall includes a statement supporting “a belief in fairness, equality, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law”.⁷
- He publicly criticized NDP Deputy Leader Libby Davies’ comments that she supported a boycott of Israel and that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land had begun in 1948. “Mr. Speaker, the comments made by the deputy leader of the NDP concerning the state of Israel are not only irresponsible and counterproductive, but they are unworthy of Canada's foreign policy. While acting as a moderator in the region, Canada has always defended Israel's right to exist. The comments of the NDP's deputy leader, on the other hand, qualify as gratuitous rhetoric that reveals intolerable ignorance of Israel's history. When she questioned Israel's right to exist, her remarks went beyond the realm of what is acceptable”.⁸

Martha Hall Findlay

Martha Hall Findlay was born in Toronto and is a lawyer, businesswoman and entrepreneur with experience in small businesses and major multi-national corporations. She is a graduate of the University of Toronto (International Relations) and Osgoode Hall Law School (LL.B.). She is currently the Chief Legal Officer at EnStream LP and Executive Fellow at the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary. She is the former Liberal MP for Willowdale (2008-2011) and has held Official Opposition Critic roles for International Trade, Associate Finance, Transport, Infrastructure & Communities, and Public Works and Government Services.



- During a recent leadership debate in Vancouver, she has criticized Stephen Harper for his “absolute, blind, unilateral support of Israel, at all costs.” She believes that a one-sided approach is “not conducive to a solution” to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. She also believes that Canada should be able to strongly support Israel but still be able to criticize where criticism is warranted. She has cited Israel's intention of allowing more settlements in strategic areas of the West Bank as an example of an instance needing more criticism.⁹
- In 2006, she thought it was naïve to believe that troops in Afghanistan could be solely engaged in reconstruction and development without any combat role – they faced terrorists and guerrilla warfare with the Taliban. Canada was part of a NATO mission towards human security, which required combat. She would have liked to see a higher concentration of attention in the areas of the country where there was a greater prospect of stability and ensuring self-sustaining security.¹⁰
- She approved of the Supreme Court of Canada’s unanimous ruling that Stephen Harper’s government has violated Omar Khadr’s Charter Rights, and continues to do so. Additionally supports

⁶ “Canada’s pro-Israel stance undermining clout in Middle East talks: Expert,” *The Vancouver Sun*, September 24, 2011.

⁷ Marc Garneau, “Canada in the world.” Accessed on Jan. 27, 2013. <http://marcgarneau.liberal.ca/en/canada-in-the-world/>

⁸ Marc Garneau. *House of Commons Debates (Hansard)*. 40th Parliament, 3rd Session, June 15, 2010.

⁹ Bryden, Joan, “Martha Hall Findlay: Liberal Leadership Failure Doesn’t Mean I’ll Run in 2015”, *The Canadian Press*, Jan. 16, 2013

¹⁰ “National Post Survey of Candidates”, *The National Post*, September 2006, Accessed Jan. 29, 2013,

<http://2013.marthahallfindlay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/2006-09-26-Questionnaire-2006-Leadership-National-Post.pdf>



that Canada's adherence to principles of international law on the protection of child soldiers must take precedence over whether or not Canadians 'like' or 'approve' of someone or not.¹¹

- She criticized the use of "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) to support the no-fly zone in Libya, which enabled the armed Libyan opposition to overthrow Gaddafi, in light of the fact that R2P has not been invoked or even considered in the case of Syria, which might make rallying international support harder the next time R2P is truly needed.¹²
- She chose to identify the "Arab Spring, the Arab Awakening, revolution in the Middle East and North Africa" as the biggest story of 2011. She believes the actions of oppressed peoples are extraordinary and inspiring. Additionally, she considers these actions to have shifted the world's approach to international relations. She believes that we have seen an unprecedented involvement by other countries in a coordinated, multilaterally-sanctioned way. She hopes that these events will herald a new era of collective responsibility – one that includes involvement to protect innocent people and to encourage human rights.¹³
- She considers the international community to have failed the people of Syria. She was especially critical given that just a few months prior, the international community found consensus for action around Libya.¹⁴

Karen McCrimmon

Karen McCrimmon was born in Weston, Ontario. She is a retired Canadian Forces Lieutenant Colonel who was the first female Navigator and the first woman to command a Canadian Forces air force squadron. She has carried out humanitarian and military operations around the world, and has completed a tour in Afghanistan. She was also a senior staff officer at NATO Headquarters in Germany. She became involved in federal politics with the Liberal Party in 2008. During 2011, she was the Liberal candidate for the federal election in Carleton-Mississippi Mills riding.



- No statements were found to clarify her position on Canada's foreign policy in the Middle East.

Joyce Murray

Joyce Murray was born in South Africa, and immigrated to Canada with her parents in 1961, settling in Vancouver. In 1979, Murray co-founded Brinkman and Associates Reforestation Ltd. along with her husband. From 1996 to 1999, Murray sat on the BC Forest Resources



¹¹ "Omar Khadr and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms", Martha Hall Findlay Blog, January 2010. Accessed Jan. 29, 2013, <http://2013.marthahallfindlay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/2010-01-29-Blog-Omar-Khadr-and-the-Charter-of-Rights-and-Freedoms-eng-fr.pdf>

¹² Hall Findlay, Martha, "Can R2P Survive Libya and Syria?" Strategic Studies Working Group Papers, Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute and Canadian International Council, November 2011. Accessed Jan. 29, 2013, <http://2013.marthahallfindlay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/2011-11-01-Article-Can-R2P-Survive-Libya-and-Syria-CDFAI.pdf>

¹³ "The Biggest Story of 2011," Martha Hall Findlay Blog, February 2012. Accessed on Jan. 29, 2013, <http://2013.marthahallfindlay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/2012-02-29-Blog-The-Biggest-Story-of-2011-for-Me-long-version.pdf>

¹⁴ Hall Findlay, Martha, "The Olympics, an international success. Syria, an international failure. What can Canada do?", Politically Speaking, August 2012. Accessed Jan. 29, 2013, <http://2013.marthahallfindlay.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/2012-08-12-Op-Ed-Olympics-and-Syria-Success-and-Failure-Hi-Rise.pdf>



Advisory Board, as well as the GVRD Waste Management Committee. Her work in the forestry sector led her to join the BC Liberal party and to be elected to provincial office in 2001, becoming Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection (Environment and Parks), and serving as Minister of Management Services in 2004-2005. In 2007, she was elected to the Canadian Parliament in a federal by-election in Vancouver Quadra, and have been re-elected in the 2008 and 2011 federal elections.

- In 2010, she criticized the Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), accusing it to “delegitimize Israel’s very existence – checkpoints, inflammatory language and deliberate attempts to portray the Jewish state as criminal undermine any attempt for legitimate dialogue or debate to occur.” She said that “the intent of the IAW campaign appears to solely demonize and undermine the state of Israel and, in turn intimidate and alienate Jewish and non-Jewish students alike.”¹⁵
- Again in March 2012, she condemned the IAW and stated that “Singling out the State of Israel through Israeli Apartheid Week defies logic and the cause of social justice.”¹⁶
- She took a sponsored trip to Israel in July 2011, as part of a Parliamentary Mission paid for by the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy.¹⁷

George Takach

George Takach was born in Toronto, and is the son of Hungarian immigrants who came to Canada in the wake of the Soviet invasion. He received both his BA and his JD (Dean's Honour List) from the University of Toronto. He also has an MA in International Relations from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa. He worked for about 30 years as a technology lawyer in Toronto, advising Canadian and international organizations on information technology projects and initiatives. He is also a senior partner at the Canadian law firm McCarthy Tétrault and an adjunct law professor at Osgoode Hall Law School (York University).



- He made the following statement on his website regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict:

“I’d like to make clear my position on Canada’s relationship with Israel. Israel is a democracy. Israel has an absolute right to exist. Israelis have an absolute right to live in peace and security. Canada would never accept having rockets fired at its civilian population – and neither should Israel.

Getting the parties back to the negotiating table in the pursuit of peace must be the priority of all those who are true friends of both Israel and the Palestinian people. I hope that the next Israeli government, to be elected later this month, will recommit itself toward accomplishing that goal. By putting itself forward as one of Israel's best friends in the world, Canada has been well positioned to speak frankly about the settlement question in particular. Now is not the time to try to change current Canadian policy, which dates back more than 10 years. Canada's Middle East policy must not be used for partisan political gain, and must bring all Canadians together to press forward beneath the banners of peace.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC), “Statement by Liberal MP Joyce Murray regarding Israeli Apartheid Week. Accessed Feb. 7, 2013, <http://www.cjpac.ca/en/2010/03/statement-by-liberal-mp-joyce-murray-regarding-israeli-apartheid-week/>

¹⁶ Joyce Murray, “Press Releases.” Accessed Feb. 7, 2013, <http://joycemurray.liberal.ca/blog/in-the-house/press-releases/statement-by-liberal-mp-joyce-murray-criticizing-israel-apartheid-week/>

¹⁷ Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, “List of Sponsored Travel,” 2011.

¹⁸ George Takach, “Israel should not be used for partisan gain,” Jan. 18, 2013.



Justin Trudeau

Justin Trudeau was born in Ottawa and he is the eldest son of Margaret Trudeau and Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the late former Prime Minister of Canada. Trudeau has a Bachelor of Arts degree in literature from McGill University and a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of British Columbia. After graduation, he worked as a social studies and French teacher in Vancouver. He became more involved with the Liberal Party throughout the 2000s. In 2008, he was first elected as a Member of Parliament in the Montreal riding of Papineau and has since acted as the Liberal critic for youth, post-secondary education, and amateur sport.



- Questioned about the Harper government being too pro-Israel, he responded: “[...] Pro-Israel is a political statement and my biggest criticism of the Harper government around this issue is that they have managed to make supporting Israel a Canadian political football, something to use to pressure other parties. [...] We’ve removed the possibility of even having a discussion around some of the strengths and perhaps some of the mistakes that the Israeli government does as a democracy that represents a number of people but there is an opposition always. [...] We’ve managed to polarize the debate so much that we can’t actually have rational or reasonable conversations about it anymore. And I think that everyone loses in politics when everything becomes black and white.”¹⁹
- In a recent talk at a Jewish school in Toronto, he said he was a strong supporter of Israel, and believes that Canada's position would be the same, no matter who is in power. He criticized Stephen Harper for trying to make it appear otherwise: “My concern is that he continues to make support for Israel a domestic, political, strategic issue.”²⁰
- In December 2012, he spoke at the Reviving the Islamic Spirit Conference in Toronto despite calls by some to cancel his speech. He responded: “As you know, some conservatives tried to stir up controversy about my appearance here today. They tried to appeal to people’s fears and prejudices, the very things that this gathering was founded to overcome. [...] I want you to know that I will always stand up to the politics of division.”²¹

¹⁹ WinnipegJewishReview.com, “M.P. Justin Trudeau – His views on Israel and the mosque at Ground Zero,” Nov. 3, 2010. Accessed on Feb. 8, 2013, http://www.winnipegjewishreview.com/article_detail.cfm?id=499&sec=4

²⁰ CTV News, “Trudeau talks politics with Toronto’s future voters,” Nov. 6, 2012. Accessed on Feb. 8, 2013, <http://toronto.ctvnews.ca/trudeau-talks-politics-with-toronto-s-future-voters-1.1026543>

²¹ Justin Trudeau, Public Statements, “Speech delivered at the Reviving the Islamic Spirit Convention, Dec. 22, 2012. Accessed on Feb. 8, 2013, <https://justin.ca/speech-delivered-at-the-reviving-the-islamic-spirit-convention/>