



Canada's Immigration Troubles and Justin Trudeau's Tepid Response

The United States isn't the only North American country currently facing an immigration problem. After President Trump took office in the United States, amid promises of a crackdown on illegal immigration, Canada, our neighbor to the north, began seeing an influx of so-called asylum seekers. Some in Canada are saying the increased immigration was brought on by progressive darling Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (shown on left with President Trump). And now, Trudeau has a problem.



"To those fleeing persecution, terror and war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith," Trudeau tweeted in January 2017, shortly after Trump took office, a not-so-subtle jab at Trump's so-called Muslim ban.

Though Canadian immigration policy cannot be fully explained in a single virtue-signaling tweet, many illegal immigrants, fearful of a Trump-led America, took Trudeau at his word and began showing up in Canada at "irregular" spots along the border, which is a place other than an official port of entry. The U.S. border with Canada is approximately 4,000 miles long, most of it undefended. These illegal immigrants have caused a strain on resources and a debate on just what to do about it.

Much of the trouble has been caused by a [Safe Third Country Agreement](#) signed with the United States in 2005. The agreement states that refugees must request asylum in the first country they arrive in (the United States or Canada) unless they qualify for an exemption. This prompts many refugees who are afraid of Trump's America to cross from the United States at irregular points so that they can request asylum in Canada, instead of crossing at a port of entry shared with the United States.

Liberals in Canada have called for the federal government in Ottawa to suspend the Safe Third Country agreement on the grounds that the United States under Trump has become a nation hostile to refugees. They argue that refugees from the United States should not be forced to cross at isolated, irregular points in order to leave the United States.



Written by [James Murphy](#) on July 24, 2018

Conservatives, on the other hand, wish for the agreement to extend to the entire border so that illegal border crossers from the United States cannot claim asylum anywhere. Conservatives in Canada argue that the illegal border crossers are a strain on resources, which the provinces must deal with without — so far — any federal assistance.

Most of the illegal crossings occur in Quebec. In Montreal, officials were [forced to use Olympic Stadium](#) as temporary housing for new immigrants owing to an influx of asylum seekers from Vermont. Quebec officials have been forced to set up a make-shift processing center on what is essentially a dirt road on the New York border, since so many are crossing there.

In Ontario, the City of Toronto estimates that it will spend more than \$64 million on temporary housing for immigrants this year. The newly elected Conservative government of Ontario, headed by Premier Doug Ford, has called on the federal government to clean up what he calls the immigration “mess.”

“The province and the city (Toronto) are spending a fortune, and from the person (Trudeau) who created this mess, we haven’t seen any funding,” Ford said on July 9.

Under Canadian law, crossing the border at “irregular” points is illegal. But, true to their nature, liberal politicians have muddied that water. Conservatives in Canada call those who cross at irregular points “illegal border crossers,” while the Trudeau government has dubbed them “irregular migrants.” Executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees, Janet Dench further confuses the issue when referencing those who cross the Canadian border illegally: “It makes it illegal but also says it’s not illegal at the same time.”

In an effort to calm nervous Canadians, Trudeau appointed Bill Blair, a member of parliament and the former police chief of Toronto, to the new position of minister of border security and organized crime reduction on July 18. Blair’s role will be to work with the provincial governments on solutions. “Bill Blair has always stepped up in public service and we’re excited about being able to have him focus on this particular question within the larger areas of public safety and immigration,” Trudeau said.

The title of the new ministry post is interesting: minister of border security and organized crime reduction. Are Trudeau and the Ottawa government equating illegal immigration with organized crime? American liberals might call the title, well, racist.

So the American crackdown on illegal immigration is affecting our neighbors to the north. The numbers of crossings are paltry compared to those in America, but the problem is, basically, the same. Will the Canadians embrace Trudeau’s “welcome everyone” policy, or will they show some common sense and demand that their own border be secured?



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