

National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? If she needs help, let the party pay



Poor Sophie.

Here she is ? Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, that is ? wife of the prime minister and mother of three young children, and all she wants is a bit of help.

At your expense, of course.

And ? wouldn't you know it? ? some of those nasty opposition politicians (mostly women) and those unconscionable people on social media, have the nerve to wonder aloud why the public should pay even more than it is already paying so that the prime minister's wife can go out and politic on behalf of the prime minister and the Liberal Party.

Unless, that is, you believe in the tooth fairy like the Toronto Star, which wrote in a Sunday editorial that the opposition parties ?are taking the low road when they make the role of the prime minister's wife a partisan issue.?

Really? And who, exactly, was that woman who spent a lot of time during the last election actively and openly campaigning for hubby Justin Trudeau? Or are we to believe that her efforts on behalf of hubby were non-partisan?

And you can be sure years ago when Mila Mulroney, the high-profile wife of then prime minister Brian Mulroney, demanded ? and got ? an office and staff for the first time for a prime minister's wife that the Toronto Star was not lauding her for her ?non-partisan? efforts and accusing the opposition Liberals, who were highly critical of Mila, of taking the low road.

As much as some would apparently love to see it, our system, unlike the U.S. system, does not have a formal title of First Lady (or, in the case of a female boss and male spouse, First Gentleman ? think of the irony of that if Hillary Clinton becomes president and Bill First ?Gentleman.?) But we digress.)

Sophie recently whined to a Montreal radio host that she and her current publicly paid assistant can't keep up with the demand for her services.

?I have three children at home and a husband who is prime minister. I need help. I need a team to help me serve people,? she said. Never mind that she already has a ?team? to help her on the public dime, including two nannies to look after her children, plus various other staffers at the prime minister's official residence to help her with the day-to-day demands of life.

But, for somebody apparently raised on all the finer things in life, it just isn't enough, and to those who would begrudge her every wish, well, as Star columnist Heather Mallick opined ? in a bizarre twist of logic even by her odd standards ? it just goes to show how much hatred there is out there for women. Huh?

Now if you want to argue that there is nothing wrong with the taxpayers supplying an army of help for the prime minister's wife ? particularly when the prime minister is a Liberal ? then go for it. But let's drop all this claptrap about her work being ?non-partisan,? designed not to help her hubby and the Liberal Party at all, but simply to make Canada a better place.

Then again, the Star and other Liberal apologists believe that simply being a Liberal makes Canada a better place by definition, so there is nothing really partisan here. Tories and New Democrats are partisan, of course. But Liberals are completely selfless and forever in search of that glorious path to a better ? and dare we say, ?sunnier? ? tomorrow.

And so endeth the lesson.

If indeed she feels she needs more help in promoting her husband's agenda then certainly let the Liberal Party pay for it.

But I can't help wonder what your average Canadian woman ? albeit not the wife of a prime minister, but nevertheless facing the endless challenges of children in the home ? thinks when they see a privileged, wealthy woman demanding more of their taxes in

order to facilitate her every whim.

You will recall that Justin Trudeau made much during the election campaign of making the lives of these women easier but, so far at least, the only woman who seems to be directly benefiting from this munificent promise is his darling wife, mother of his children and ?non-partisan? cheerleader-in-chief.

After all, Rome wasn't built in a day, so the rest of you will just have to cope on your own.