

Opinion: Trudeau cries wolf

Written by Scott Taylor

This is the definition of racism courtesy of Merriam-Webster:

?A belief that [race](#) is the primary [determinant](#) of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.?

If you're still with me, here's what I'm getting at. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was attending a corn roast in Sabrevois, Quebec Aug. 16 when a woman in the crowd began heckling him. The event was a campaign-style stop for the PM, who has kicked off his 2019 re-election campaign, whether officially or otherwise.

These events are designed to be fun, light, and enthusiastic. In this case, however, a woman in the crowd wasn't playing along. She wanted to know when the federal government was going to pay Quebec for the thousands of refugees that have crossed the border from the United States into that province.

She screamed at him as he was speaking to the crowd, asking when he was going to ?return the \$146 million we paid for your illegal immigrants.?

It is surely not a delicate question asked in a polite manner, especially considering she asked it a number of times while waving her arms and demanding an answer.

Having spent the first 25 years of my life in Quebec, I know well of the intolerance some ?old stock (her words) Quebecois? feel towards immigrants and even English-speaking Quebecers. That said, refugees have poured across the border into Quebec causing great strain on social resources and financing. There are tent cities, some of them have been housed inside Olympic Stadium and more arrive each day.

So at this joyous corn roast in the heart of Quebec came an uncomfortable question.

When are you going to pay us for all of this?

Finally, when he could stand it no more, he told the woman her ?racism has no place here.?

It might be that she is a racist. It might be that she's frustrated, an older woman who doesn't like the change she's seeing in her province.

But her words didn't express that. She asked a question that has been asked by the Conservatives many times in the House of Commons.

Trudeau's response, and his accusation of racism, belittled the woman and the general conversation about where these asylum seekers are going to go and how much it's going to cost Canadian taxpayers.

By lumping her into the crowd of far-right zealots, all Trudeau did was prove that he is the intolerant one. Not everything he attends is going to be a kumbaya photo op. Voters have the right to ask him hard questions and to demand thoughtful, truthful answers.

If Trudeau thinks it's racism to ask who's going to pay for all these many newcomers (remember, she didn't advocate sending them back, locking them up, or building a wall), then he still has a lot to learn about being the leader of a country. He has a lot to learn about being a leader for everyone, not just those that agree with him.