

News (/News/)

Sunny Ways or Gloomy Days? Checking in on Liberal Promises

Gov't coming up short on key vows to vets, TFWs, charities, say critics.



By Jeremy J. Nuttall (/Bios/Jeremy_J__Nuttall/) 14 Jul 2016 | TheTyee.ca

Jeremy J. Nuttall is The Tyee's reader-funder Parliament Hill reporter in Ottawa. Find his previous stories here. (http://thetyee.ca/Bios/Jeremy_J__Nuttall/) Support his work here. (<http://support.thetyee.ca>)



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Back before he was PM. Sun still shining? Photo: arindambanerjee (<http://www.shutterstock.com/gallery-382675p1.html?cr=00&pl=edit-00>) / Shutterstock.com. (<http://www.shutterstock.com/editorial?cr=00&pl=edit-00>)

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's October election victory speech invoked the "sunny ways" philosophy of one of the country's most prominent PMs, Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

"Sunny ways, my friends. Sunny ways," he said after winning the election in which the Conservatives tried sharply divisive tactics, like a proposed ban on the niqab.

The promise of positive politics caught on so well the Liberals posted a dedicated explainer (<https://www.liberal.ca/the-sunny-way/>) to the sunny ways school of thought in January.

"While more than 120 years have passed, Prime Minister Trudeau shares Laurier's belief that the 'sunny way' remains essential to solving the complex problems facing our country," it concludes.



But as Canada approaches the one-year anniversary of the campaign, some critics are saying the sun isn't shining on their shoulders.

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They allege Trudeau has left a trail of broken promises and misguided policy.

If the watchdog website TrudeauMetre (<https://www.trudeaumetre.ca/>) is accurate, the Liberals made 219 promises during last year's federal election campaign.

TrudeauMetre said 18 of the promises have been broken, and 32 fulfilled. It counts 63 as in progress and 106 still waiting to be started.

But critics are focusing on some prominent promises on which the Liberals appear to have changed course.

Bill C-51 still allows online spying on Canadians. Canadians are still being arrested for marijuana infractions even though pot will be legal next year. And other issues have critics shaking their heads.

Defending human rights abroad?

The Liberal government has allowed the sale of Canadian-made military equipment to Saudi Arabia despite the country's human rights record, claiming the deal couldn't be undone.

The Globe and Mail's Steven Chase revealed (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/liberals-quietly-approved-arms-sale-to-saudis-in-april-documents/article29612233/>) that was not true and that Foreign Minister Stéphane Dion had signed the required export permits.

Saudi Arabia has drawn criticism for its treatment of dissidents, women and the country's LGBT community.

Imtiaz Popat of Salaam Vancouver, a LGBT Muslim association, said he's concerned about all aspects of human rights in Saudi Arabia and questioned Canada's indifference to those rights when money is involved.

"When it's advantageous, we'll do business with them or sell arms to them," Popat said. "It's a huge problem."

Popat said the Liberal approach to trade with Saudi Arabia has been no different than the Conservatives despite the "sunny ways" philosophy.



Canada's desire to partner with other nations with poor human rights records, such as China, is also a concern, he said.

Late Tuesday, Global Affairs Canada issued a release announcing it was sending Vancouver MP Pamela Goldsmith-Jones to Uruguay for a conference on the rights of the LGBTI people.

"Canada is a strong, vocal and forceful advocate for the rights of LGBTI [lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex] persons, both at home and abroad," read the release. "The Government of Canada has committed to working with Canadian civil society organizations and grassroots LGBTI organizations around the world to combat discrimination, violence and unjust laws."

Popat said in Saudi Arabia, homosexuals face the death penalty by beheading.

Temporary Foreign Worker program not 'scaled back'

The Alberta Federation of Labour argues the Liberals have broken promises to reduce the controversial Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

The organization points to a 2014 opinion piece

(https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/05/05/how_to_fix_the_broken_temporary_foreign_worker_program_justin_trudeau.html) Trudeau wrote for the Toronto Star suggesting the program should be scaled back.

But since being elected, the Liberals have actually eased restrictions on temporary foreign workers.

Changes to the seasonal worker program made it easier for fish processing plants in the Maritimes and resorts to hire TFWs. The Liberals also scrapped a regulation due to take effect this year that would have limited the number of TFWs to 10 per cent of a company's work force. It will remain at 20 per cent.

Earlier this month federation president Gil McGowan called the Liberal shift the “worst kind of bait and switch” and criticized (<http://www.thetyee.ca/News/2016/07/04/Temporary-Foreign-Worker-Review/>) the government’s current review of the program, saying it was catering to those who want it expanded.



AFL leader Gil McGowan: Liberal shift on TFWs ‘worst kind of bait and switch.’ Photo: Facebook.

Meanwhile, Syed Hussan of the Migrant Workers Alliance says it’s “hard to pin down” the Liberal position on his group’s concerns, which include giving migrant workers permanent status and improving worker rights to protect them against abuse by employers.

(</News/2016/07/04/Temporary-Foreign-Worker-Review/>)



Temporary Foreign Worker Review Is Skewed, Says Alberta Labour Leader

[read more \(/News/2016/07/04/Temporary-Foreign-Worker-Review/\)](/News/2016/07/04/Temporary-Foreign-Worker-Review/)

Hussan said the Liberals have promised to address the issues, but taken no action.

Lukewarm reception from veterans

Military veterans’ advocate Tom Beaver, who was behind the Anyone But Conservative (<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/veterans-group-starts-anyone-but-conservative-campaign-plans-to-picket-pro-harper-events-in-uniform>) campaign during the last election, said the Liberals’ performance on the veteran’s file has been mediocre.

“They’re not communicating with anybody,” Beaver said. “I used to be able to send a letter in and I’d usually get an answer back within three weeks, that’s not happening lately.”

The relationship between some military veterans and the Harper government was adversarial and resulted in Ottawa facing off in court arguing Canada doesn’t have a “sacred obligation” to veterans.

That case was over pensions for disabled soldiers, which were changed from a lifetime pension to a lump sum system in 2006. The Liberals are continuing the case, and critics accused (<https://ipolitics.ca/2016/05/18/federal-government-mum-on-bringing-veterans-back-to-court/>) them of breaking their election promise.

The Liberal government did increase compensation for wounded veterans in the March budget, but also took flak for how the changes were implemented, (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-imposes-unequal-increases-to-benefits-for-injured-veterans/article30227709/>) as the new program effectively demoted some injured veterans to ensure their payments were below the pay of serving members of the forces.

Beaver said although he's lukewarm to the performance of the Liberal government so far, he is willing to wait a bit longer before becoming too dismayed.

"Give them another year, give them till the next budget," he said. "If they're not on by the next budget -- sink them."

Charity audits continue

The Liberals promised to end a Canada Revenue Agency audit program targeting charities, but Gareth Kirkby, a researcher who has dug into the case, said the commitments aren't being fulfilled.

During the campaign, the Liberals said charities wouldn't have to worry about being harassed by the Canada Revenue Agency as it searched for evidence organizations were using too much funding for political purposes.

"We will allow charities to do their work on behalf of Canadians free from political harassment," the party website (<https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/canada-revenue-agency/>) promised.

But the Liberals have allowed audits already under way when they took over to continue. More than 50 organizations have been audited under the program.

Kirkby said only a handful of audits that had not yet begun were cancelled.

"When they announced the program it was just to abandon the five or six that hadn't taken place," Kirkby said. "That's deeply puzzling, why they wouldn't stop all those that are currently underway."

The Liberal government has said it won't cancel the audits that were under way because that politicized the CRA. But Kirkby maintains that if the audits were political to begin with, as the Liberals argued during the election campaign, then stopping them is the right course of action. 🍌

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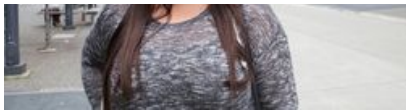
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The Tyee looks at post-work plans and worries of an employee, contractor and entrepreneur.



Canada's Plan to Stop Violence Against Women 'Has to Come Right about Now': Minister

Patty Hajdu will spend her summer collecting stories across the country.

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In 'The Shoe Boy,' Duncan McCue recalls a formative trip spent hunting in northern Quebec's wilds.

(<http://thetyee.ca/Culture/2016/07/21/Shoe-Boy-Trapline-Memoir/>)

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Nuclear Safety Warnings Demand Independent Review: Mulcair

Anonymous letter listing concerns about Canadian nuclear generating stations can't be ignored, says NDP leader.

(<http://thetyee.ca/News/2016/07/21/Canadian-Nuclear-Safety-Warnings/>)

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What to Do When Anonymous Trolls Throw You Hate? Heed Leslie Jones

Like the Ghostbusters star, I too received sexist, racist screeds as a female newspaper manager.

(<http://thetyee.ca/Mediacheck/2016/07/20/Anonymous-Troll-Hate/>)

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(<http://thetyee.ca/TyeeNews/2016/07/20/Tyee-New-Hires/>)

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salal • 7 days ago

A quote from the eloquent Premier of BC, "Sometimes you say things to get elected."

13 ^ | ▾ • Share ›



Ignatius Kizoo → salal • 7 days ago



...and then you say things to avoid admitting that you said things to get elected...and then you erase your email so you can deny ever having said anything...but that doesn't stop your nose from growing.

9 ^ | v • Share ›



Steve → salal • 6 days ago

Or, as Junker of the EU stated in a moment of truthiness: "When things get serious you have to lie."

If we all weren't so indoctrinated by the propaganda of our education system and mainstream media to believe that the political system is meant to serve the citizenry (rather than the oligarchs and deep state), we would know better than to believe any word that escapes a politician's mouth...

2 ^ | v • Share ›



positively4thstreet • 7 days ago

Wow the new format sucks. I had to scroll through 9 (nine) screens on my PC to read one article and one photo takes up the entire screen. I don't know who thinks this was a great format and one article scrolling through 9 screens is as many articles as I care to scroll through.

And you don't use paragraphs anymore? Most of your 'paragraphs' are one line. This is ridiculous.

"What is a paragraph?"

A paragraph is a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic. Learning to write good paragraphs will help you as a writer stay on track during your drafting and revision stages. Good paragraphing also GREATLY ASSISTS YOUR READERS IN FOLLOWING A PIECE OF WRITING. You can have fantastic ideas, but if those ideas aren't presented in an organized fashion, you will lose your readers (and fail to achieve your goals in writing).

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu...>

10 ^ | v • Share ›



cloudburst → positively4thstreet • 7 days ago

This format strains my eyes. Exhausting to read.

7 ^ | v • Share ›



Ignatius Kizoo → positively4thstreet • 7 days ago

I think.

You.

May be onto.

Something with the paragraph.

THING. ;-)

7 ^ | v • Share ›



positively4thstreet → Ignatius Kizoo • 7 days ago

Thank you.

It's like driving.

Over a bumpy road.

With flat tires.

WTF???

Can't even.

Focus.

5 ^ | v • Share ›

**anne cameron** → positively4thstreet • 6 days ago

and how interesting to now have to go past all that bump just to get to the comments...which, so far, is the best part of the experiment.
Para....whut?

1 ^ | v • Share ›

**Corvus** → positively4thstreet • 7 days ago

It's true. I can't even read past the first screen.

6 ^ | v • Share ›

**Jon Lutjen** → positively4thstreet • 7 days ago

[Comment removed for violating guidelines. -MOD]

1 ^ | v • Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → Jon Lutjen • 7 days ago

Well, I might care, and I might care deeply Jon-but remind me, what's a paragraph again?

^ | v • Share ›

**Jon Lutjen** → Ignatius Kizoo • 7 days ago

Really? word police? I am not looking for a job writing and besides I excel better in math thanks. Your complaints don't add up.....LOL. And a pair of graphs is what's used on the Trudeau meter in this story.....LOL

^ | v • Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → Jon Lutjen • 7 days ago

I agree actually-In this case I'd rather look at the bobbing dial on the falsometer or be mesmerised by the increasing frequency of the ionic BS detector as it's brought close to PM Sunny Ways.

BTW-anybody in the room who believed that his nibs would give us "Real Change" and/or keep his promises please raise your hand...we can get you help

^ | v • Share ›

**Corvus** • 7 days ago

I have very little confidence in this government and that is saying something when having to endure 2 terms of the Harper government.

Trudeau plays to the headlines by being in parades and taking selfies but on the issues that counts he is basically the same as the last emperor.

One thing Jeremy has left out is that Trudeau has stated he will be exporting arms to the Ukraine so they can be used on the Ukrainian people in that civil war. Sunny ways indeed.....

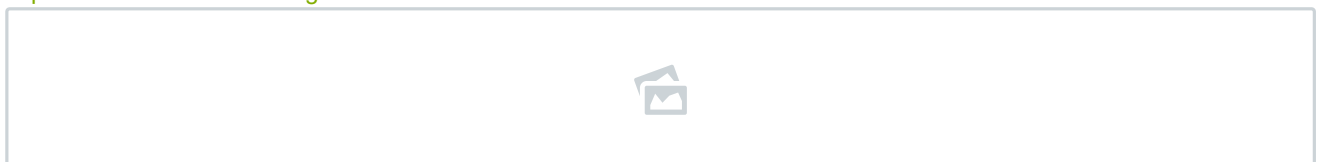
7 ^ | v • Share ›

**robertjb** • 7 days ago

Trudeau needs a wake up call on his blind support of NATO as it tries to provoke a war with Russia

The world has to wake up to the fact that NATO is no more than a stalking horse for America's wars.

<http://www.informationclearing...>



10 ^ | v • Share ›

**NEW NDP** → robertjb • 7 days ago

Sure nothing like the good old days of the USSR and Warsaw Pact.

^ | v • Share ›

**Richard Weatherill** → NEW NDP · 6 days ago

And now folks, we have the stupid reply. Keep up the good work, "new" ndp.....

^ | v · Share ›

**Angry Canuck** · 6 days ago

Dear Tyee,

The idea behind making a website "phone friendly" is NOT to make *everything* look like it's on a phone. As in, just as hard to read, navigate, and otherwise interact as if it was on a small-screen phone. Responsive design is about making it look good on a regular computer screen AND a phone, not just the phone.

Whoever created the new design was obviously someone who doesn't use a regular computer. Ever.

I find the new design unreadable.

6 ^ | v · Share ›



This comment was deleted.

**Angry Canuck** → Guest · 6 days ago

Anyone who reads the Daily Mail UK for "news" deserves whatever they get served.

^ | v · Share ›

**Lawrence** · 7 days ago

Yep, the cops continue to make 60,000 criminals out of Canadian citizens over pot, per year, but there is a lot more to it. Americans with a pot bust are not allowed in Canada. Over the years we've missed a lot of music up here because one or two members of hundreds of bands have had a pot bust.

But wee Justin has plenty of time for photo ops...wee Justin is really starting to piss me off...

4 ^ | v · Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → Lawrence · 7 days ago

Lawrence - if he's just beginning...you've got some catching up to do ;-)

^ | v · Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** · 7 days ago

Meet the new boss, same as the old boss...just with better hair.

Looks like the apple hasn't fallen too far from the tree either except the old man was a better speaker when he delivered his deceptions...more like "Sonny ways" I think.

6 ^ | v · Share ›

**Corvus** → Ignatius Kizoo · 7 days ago

The old man wasn't as big on sending our military to rattle or sabres in the world also.

6 ^ | v · Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → Corvus · 7 days ago

True enough...but mini-PET is just taking the opportunities he's given as fodder for his spin...he's just playing with the toys he found in the sandbox when he stepped into it.

2 ^ | v · Share ›

**gmfcobourgon** · 7 days ago

Gloomy days for Cons for sure. As for comments about restoring Post Office services, it is almost impossible to restore such services when cancelled because of many factors, i.e. the NAFTA agreement that stipulates quite clearly that once a public service is cancelled, it becomes the domain of the private sector and cannot be reversed. Go figure!

6 ^ | v · Share ›

**Corvus** → gmfcobourgon · 7 days ago

"Gloomy days for Cons for sure."

I would say gloomy days for all Canadians.

8 ^ | v · Share ›

**Richard Weatherill** → gmfcobourgon • 7 days ago

Some aspects of the postal service have been eliminated (or are in the process thereof), but the PO itself is extant.
 Re: NAFTA - this might well be something for \$1500/hr lawyers to argue.....

1 ^ | v • Share ›

**anne cameron** → Richard Weatherill • 6 days ago

Just pull out of NAFTA.

1 ^ | v • Share ›

**Richard Weatherill** → anne cameron • 6 days ago

But.....trade deals are all the rage among the movers 'n' shakers!

^ | v • Share ›

**anne cameron** → Richard Weatherill • 5 days ago

Maybe we should shake the movers and move the shakers.
 Not even any Vaseline.

1 ^ | v • Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → gmfcobourgon • 7 days ago

It was gloomy days for the Cons when they were in power as well-they're a generally a gloomy bunch that won't be happy 'til we're all hooked on and bloated with the same kool-aid they drink with every meal - then they'll raise the price of kool-aid.

^ | v • Share ›

**Danne k** • 6 days ago

White cats, black cats. They're still just cats. If we keep electing cats, we'll keep getting the same behaviour. (see Tommy Douglas, The Story of Mouseland.)

3 ^ | v • Share ›

**Ivan Hadanoff** → Danne k • 5 days ago

That was really good! ;)

^ | v • Share ›

**Ted Bunce** • 7 days ago

All those who are against the corporately driven immigration program TFW and employer sponsored visas should email John McCallum, Justin Trudeau, employment minister Maryann Mihychuk, and the members of the standing committee looking at the TFW program.

John.mccallum at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:john.mccallum@parl.gc.ca)Justin.trudeau at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca)Maryann.mihychuk at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:maryann.mihychuk@parl.gc.ca)niki.ashton at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:niki.ashton@parl.gc.ca)bob.bratina at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:bob.bratina@parl.gc.ca)gerard.deltell at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:gerard.deltell@parl.gc.ca)jenny.kwan at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:jenny.kwan@parl.gc.ca)wayne.long at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:wayne.long@parl.gc.ca)bryan.may at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:bryan.may@parl.gc.ca)yves.robillard at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:yves.robillard@parl.gc.ca)dan.ruimy at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:dan.ruimy@parl.gc.ca)ramesh.sangha at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:ramesh.sangha@parl.gc.ca)mark.warawa at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:mark.warawa@parl.gc.ca)bob.zimmer at [parl.gc.ca](mailto:bob.zimmer@parl.gc.ca)

I'm not against immigration, but it should be to help people, not for the benefit of wealthy and cheap business owners trying to drive down wages

3 ^ | v • Share ›

**NEW NDP** • 7 days ago

Liberal Promises. Who thought strategically, that rearranging the deck chairs at the Rideau Club was going to make much of a difference? TPP, Bill C51, supertankers in Vancouver harbour etc. All looking very Liberal.

3 ^ | v • Share ›

**Richard Weatherill** → NEW NDP • 6 days ago

And you want the mighty Canadian military to face off against Russia! Very Lib AND Con of you!

^ | v • Share ›

**Dave Constable** • 7 days ago

The Prime Minister showed a fair amount of flexibility going from Auschwitz to do deals with the characters we put in power in Kiev. In that same part of the other side of the planet, we seem gung ho to put our people to work with NATO's military build up in East Europe putting the decades long squeeze on Russia. I think that the interest of such as China and India in the Northwest Passage and the changing arctic suggests we might want to cooperate a bit more with Russia.

The stunts with the changes to federal voting have no, to me, been stumbles or accidents; they are signals that the Liberals have already written that script.

3 ^ | v • Share ›

**windship** • 5 days ago

Sunny Ways to Nuclear War? Sad to see the Liberals fall for the same old NATO neo-con hogwash about "Russian aggression", and send mis-informed troops to loiter within a few miles of St. Petersburg.

Where does this cold war nonsense end - with frayed tempers and a split-second technical error that takes out the entire northern hemisphere?

2 ^ | v • Share ›

**Pat Wilmot** • 7 days ago

"If the watchdog website TrudeauMetre is accurate, the Liberals made 219 promises during last year's federal election campaign.

"TrudeauMetre said 18 of the promises have been broken, and 32 fulfilled. It counts 63 as in progress and 106 still waiting to be started."

And some of the "broken" ones on the TrudeauMetre include delays, such as fulfilling the Syrian refugee commitment a couple of months after they said they would. So at most 18 broken and at least 95 done or in progress. Not a bad showing for eight months. As for the 106 still waiting, well, there's this thing called time. If they continue at this pace, those should all be done sometime during their third year in office.

2 ^ | v • Share ›

**Posilutely** • 7 days ago

36 million Canadians know those so-called Senators were fund-raising for the Conservatives, on the tax-payers dime.

The Supreme Court arbitrarily decide to ignore that.

The Mike Duffy trial was designed to vindicate the Senators - not convict.

The Supreme Court lost all credibility in that trial.

They should all quit.

2 ^ | v • Share ›

**Corvus** → Posilutely • 7 days ago

I see no difference between any of the senators regardless of their party affiliations. The senate should be abolished and our representatives should be voted in by Direct Democracy.

4 ^ | v • Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → Posilutely • 7 days ago

but if they quit I think they should all fall under Canada Post's defined contribution pension plan-that could save us a fortune

^ | v • Share ›

**Overseas_ted** → Positively · 7 days ago

Well, it was Ontario provincial court, but hey....

^ | v · Share ›

**Corvus** → Positively · 7 days ago

They should all be fired and the senate abolished but.....that has little to do with the story line does it?

^ | v · Share ›

**CT** · 7 days ago

We get some idea of the machinations of the Harper mind, when we consider all the charges brought against senators, which are now dropped. What was all that nonsense about Mike Duffy being charged with fraud, for accepting a cheque from Nigel Wright, but Wright was not charged with anything? It probably cost \$10 million to mount the cases against Brazeau and the other senators, but nothing came of it.

Perhaps Trudeau isn't fulfilling all his promise, but at least he isn't actively undermining the Fisheries Act and plotting against people he appointed to high office. He is fairly benign; we can live with him. He is not a cancer we must excise. Remember that.

2 ^ | v · Share ›

**Ignatius Kizoo** → CT · 7 days ago

So, if I may ask you to confirm my reading of your argument...you seem to be saying "So what if he's a liar, he's not as bad as the last liar, so he's OK by me." Is that about right, or have I missed some subtle nuance?

2 ^ | v · Share ›

**Corvus** → CT · 7 days ago

"plotting against people he appointed to high office."

When the focus of your assessment of a government's performance is on how they treated their bag men then you have truly savoured the kool-aid.

2 ^ | v · Share ›

**CT** → Corvus · 7 days ago

Corvus:

I don't get your drift at all. Harper was a malicious piece of trash and we are well rid of him and his party. Trudeau may not be perfect but he is not actively dismantling good legislation like the fisheries Act. Stop using cliches like "drank the kool-aid". They are facile comments and an insult to Kool-Aid.

4 ^ | v · Share ›

**Corvus** → CT · 7 days ago


Honestly I think Trudeau and Harper are basically the same in the way that they govern. You can make mention of the fisheries act but since that has not been in the news at all no one including myself know what you are talking about. Your deviation to issues that are not in the headlines suggests that you are a party man on damage control.

1 ^ | v · Share ›

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