

In a world where power increasingly trumps law, Canada must keep a sane perspective

Paul Heinbecker

Globe and Mail, January 26, 2019

Ours are the best of times, as Charles Dickens would likely tell us, and the worst of times. But these days, Canadians are mostly preoccupied with the latter. Headlines report on episodes of Chinese hostility, American bullying, British distemper, Russian truculence and Saudi brutality – all of which remind us how bad things can get and how vulnerable we could be in a world where power trumps law. Such jungle law is in the interest of the largest predators, but not always. It is definitely not in Canada's best interest.

But it is not inevitable, our fate. The country does not have to choose between vassal status and dangerous isolation. We are not alone among countries in wanting to preserve and reform a system that has helped avoid war among the major powers for almost 75 years and brought breathtaking improvements to the human condition. Previous generations worked diligently to create international rules of the diplomatic road and underpinned them with co-operative institutions. But times change and those rules need updating and reinforcing, particularly as regards China's stubborn intransigence and the United States' disappointing retreat from leadership. Successful reform of the global governance system requires leadership, co-operation and, above all, sound perspective. It will also require us to assimilate some hard truths.

The most troubling truth to absorb is the fact that the President of the United States and his West Wing bobbleheads really are a danger to world peace. This President, who has apparently been investigated by the FBI on suspicion of being a Russian agent, seems bent on dismantling NATO, ripping up the United Nations Charter and undermining the Bretton Woods system, especially the World Trade Organization, the pillars of multilateral co-operation that have helped preserve peace between the major powers since 1945 and promoted nearly uninterrupted global economic growth. We saw in the North American free-trade agreement renegotiation and the imposition of steel and aluminum tariffs that the U.S. leader had no patience for facts and enjoyed bullying his allies more than confronting his country's adversaries, while his acolytes sought to replace the postwar order with a Washington-centred hub-and-spokes system.

Whether Donald Trump's presidency proves to be an aberration or a secular change remains to be seen; he has clearly tapped into a deep if narrow vein of grievance. In any case, for Canada as for others, geography is destiny. While we can and should exploit the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the free-trade agreement with Europe, out of sheer proximity the United States is destined to remain our dominant and, at times,

domineering economic partner. That fact alone calls for a relentless, full-court diplomacy by Team Canada – federal, provincial, business and labour – on Congress, state governments, business and union leaders, trade groups and the media. We need all the American friends we can get.

A related, enduring truth is that for all of our legitimate criticism of the Americans, a Pax Americana, however checkered, is vastly preferable to any plausible Chinese or Russian alternative. Recent events, including especially vis-à-vis Canada in the Chinese case and Britain in the Russian case, reveal how thuggish these regimes really are and how utterly empty is their commitment to the rule of law. President-for-life Xi Jinping and neo-Czar Vladimir Putin don't have to fret about impeachment.

Still, it is distressing but regrettably not shocking that neither the President nor Congress nor even the American media has manifested much concern that Canadians face extreme jeopardy in Chinese courts because of a U.S. extradition request whose legitimacy we are taking on faith. Our U.S. allies are content to let Canadians bear the brunt of Chinese reprisals for an initiative they took. Better it be Canadians than Americans, in their minds. America first, after all. White House attitudes toward Canada have regressed to those of the 19th century.

A further truth of current events is that the Chinese have “outed” themselves as too brutal and dangerous to be a formal diversification partner. They have kidnapped Canadians off the street for barter, all the while uttering ad hominem insults about our Prime Minister that would be laughable if the victims' lives and liberty were not at stake. If Huawei really were just another private business and not an agent of the Chinese government, why would the Chinese ambassador be threatening such reprisals by the Chinese state? Thanks to an aggressive communications strategy by Ottawa, we are not the only ones criticizing China's outrageous behaviour, as this week's open letter to Mr. Xi from 100 former ambassadors, senior officials and scholars demonstrated.

Whatever China's immediate actions, it is also evident in current events that China is playing a long game. Through its Belt and Road policy, China is buying influence in Africa and Asia especially, creating debt traps for its impoverished clients as it goes along, shearing foreign investors in China of their profits and intellectual property, stealing technology from abroad and flexing its muscles at its more immediate neighbours.

In another part of the global jungle, Russia is behaving murderously toward its domestic and foreign critics, openly threatening Ukraine and others, blatantly interfering in foreign governance including the United States' and ours, and endlessly facilitating slaughter in Syria in the service of Russian interests in the eastern Mediterranean. Saudi Arabia, too, has “outed” itself, detonating its self-promoted brand as a Middle Eastern moderate. Having put itself in the dock of global opinion for the horrific state-perpetrated murder of a journalist in its Istanbul consulate, Saudi Arabia's silence thus far on Canada's granting refugee status to the young Saudi-born woman Rahaf Mohammed is telling. Saudi Arabia, for its part, has inadvertently taught Canada a happier lesson, one that some Canadian pundits and former leaders would be wise to

internalize – that is, with a GDP more than double theirs, ready access to major world markets, values-based alliances, a highly advanced education system and very large oil reserves (the third-largest in the world, albeit land-locked), it is clear Canada does not need to concern itself overly with Saudi censure.

There is another truth to derive from current events, one that hits closer to home for Canadians: Canadian travellers and expatriates abroad need more than ever to be concerned with their security and the need to protect themselves. Kidnapping is a global growth industry and seems likely to increase as terrorists and criminal gangs seek to make a fast buck. That said, hostage-taking by states, as China has done, is medieval diplomacy and seems unlikely to proliferate. As China is finding out in the Canadian case, bad publicity is bad economics. Hostage-taking scares foreign investment, burdens Chinese investment abroad (e.g., Huawei), deters tourism and damages China's brand. Still, for the estimated 2.8 million Canadian expats living abroad and the many millions more travelling each year, danger awareness and risk management should become increasingly important lifestyle calculations.

A final, different truth to be drawn from current events is that for all our preoccupations about shrinking geopolitical options and growing security dangers, we are, in fact, living in Dickens's "best of times." One hundred years ago, about 70 per cent of the world's population lived in poverty, many in extreme poverty. Now only about 10 per cent do. A century ago, a large majority of people worldwide were illiterate. Today, the numbers are reversed; about 85 per cent of the world's population can read and write. One hundred years ago, most women could not vote. Now most can.

Thanks to technologies and industries that scarcely existed even just a generation ago – Microsoft, Amazon, Apple, Samsung, Google, Twitter, Facebook, etc. – the world is vastly better connected and informed. Half of the world's population now has a mobile-phone subscription and more people have access today to a phone than to a flush toilet.

Levels of physical well-being are also vastly improved. People everywhere are living longer, healthier lives than ever before, according to the World Health Organization. Infant mortality has declined by half in the past 25 years. Measles deaths have decreased by almost 75 per cent. And in the space of two generations polio has been all but eliminated worldwide.

As we consider the challenges of a shifting international order and shrinking options, we need to keep a sane perspective. Humanity has come a very long way from Thomas Hobbes's depiction of the natural state of humanity as one of "continual fear, and danger of violent death; And the life of man [was] solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short." For all our anxiety about our place in the world, Hobbes's and Dickens's contemporaries would have traded their situations for ours in a heartbeat.

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The End of Britain as We Know It

Jeremy Kinsman

Open Canada.org, January 30, 2019

There is one modest relief in spending time in the UK these fateful days of political confusion and chaos over Brexit: hardly anyone ever mentions US President Donald Trump. Few welcome his ignorant intrusions into the British debate behind the cause of Brexit.

The obvious reason Trump gets less notice is that Brits' anxiety over their own affairs doesn't leave much room to think about the toxic atmosphere in America. But another is that the contemplation of American polarization, its abandonment of the notion of national unity in the name of partisan antagonism, and the ensuing government standstill is a scary look into what could be Britain's own future if it doesn't get its act together.

Parliamentary democracies share obvious characteristics and component parts. Factions within parties often try to control the agenda and even the party's leadership in the interests of their root causes. But rarely in democracies have governing parties — the Republicans in the US, and the Conservatives in Britain — been so attacked from within by single-minded nationalist and ideological groupings such as the Freedom Caucus in the US and the pro-Brexit "European Research Group" of anti-European Tories in Britain.

The respective elected leaders, Trump and Theresa May, each deferentially bestow outsized influence on these extremist wings — Trump because they constitute his loyal "base," essential to his survival, May because her party's radical nationalist right is actively disloyal and actually hopes to displace her.

These factions share a central feature: the abandonment of compromise with opposition parties, and even compromise within their own party. That suits Trump, for now, though as his poll numbers erode, he may change. For May, whose leadership is more precarious, the uncomfortable political reality is that she needs her rebels' support to stay in office. On Tuesday, January 29, they fell into line behind her as she made further concessions to them. Both US and UK leaders count on moderate members to put up with such distorted influence of hard-liners out of fear that partisan disunity would enable the opposition party to oust them from power.

Ultimately, without compromise, the parliamentary situation in both countries has become increasingly dysfunctional, with little in the way of legislative achievement. However, in the US, the November midterm elections produced a split government in which Democrats, under strong legislative leadership, increasingly have the upper hand. Moreover, Trump's "base" is not mathematically sufficient to carry him much further electorally. He will sooner or later, one way or another, be replaced. Though America will have been changed, internal and external policies can revert to more familiar mainstream perspectives.

Britain's situation is graver because its factional disarray is part and parcel of the existential national disagreement over Brexit. Once Britain leaves the EU, it will be changed forever. The UK quandary is over how much the UK disengages from the EU. The hard Brexit proponents want the UK completely out on March 29, come hell or high water, with a no-deal Brexit if necessary.

A move a long time coming

Those proponents don't have anywhere near majority support in the public (probably about 20 percent) or in Parliament (even less), but they have been able to intimidate May, who is now risking the national interest by deferring to the extreme wing of her party.

These right-wing, nationalist Conservatives didn't come up with the Brexit motif overnight. They related to Margaret Thatcher's Euro-skeptical leadership in the 1980s, but steamed over John Major's more moderate leadership in the internationally cooperative 1990s. As the EU deepened and widened cooperation after the fall of the Berlin Wall, their anti-European rancor spawned an outright "independence" party, UKIP, whose electoral successes began to roil the political landscape in rural England, making the Conservatives nervous.

Major's successor, New Labour's Tony Blair, was pro-European (and a "Third Way" bridge figure within Britain), but even he acknowledged the exceptionalist sentiment in Britain and opted out of the EU's major initiatives, the Euro, the borderless movement of people under the Schengen Agreement, and the EU's system for adjudicating human rights. Moreover, while the UK multiplied its global influence through its leadership in the EU's cooperative political and security reach, Blair couldn't resist getting privileged British access to American strategic power, that on the crucial and catastrophic decision to co-invade Iraq, separated Britain from major EU partners and ultimately ruined Blair's legacy at home.

By the time David Cameron became prime minister in 2010, it was increasingly evident that the UK's divisions were less about differences with Europe, and more to do with differences within Britain itself. The Scottish referendum in 2014 seemed to awaken a kind of aggrieved "English" nationalism within rural and Northern England. The dissident Conservative back-benchers (whom Major had called "bastards") were a thorn in Cameron's side, ostensibly over Europe and "runaway immigration," instead of historic identity issues in the UK at a time of social and economic transformation.

Rural and Middle England were falling behind as the manufacturing base collapsed under the pressures of globalization, and with it, small town centres and the self-confidence of "ordinary people" who didn't relate to London's cosmopolitan affluence and style. The adverse effects of the 2008 financial crisis further eroded confidence in governance. It was easy to target "Europe" as responsible for these woes, and as UKIP began to siphon away Conservative support in rural constituencies, Conservative

backbench disquiet caused Cameron to take the fateful decision to run an election in 2015 on a promise of a referendum on EU membership by 2017.

“[May] repeated facetiously that ‘Brexit means Brexit,’ which we all know now means nothing at all.”

Cameron’s fateful error

Far from believing there was a chance of the government losing a referendum to stay in the EU, Cameron reportedly didn’t believe he’d have to hold one, expecting to remain in a coalition government with the Liberals (the UK’s first in many decades), who would veto the referendum project. But he won a majority (largely by targeting the Liberals’ own seats) and was stuck with the referendum promise to his party.

For anybody with experience with separation referenda (e.g., Canadians) in parliamentary democracies, the UK’s conceptual and organizational decisions were dangerous. Instead of making the outcome advisory to Parliament, the Conservative majority chose to make it decisive. Instead of choosing to make such a transformative decision by super-majority, they chose 50 percent plus one. Rather than seeking a mandate to negotiate an exit from the EU on favourable terms, they chose a simplistic binary question, “Leave” or “Remain,” without specifying what “Leave” might actually entail.

Moreover, for the referendum, Cameron permitted his Cabinet to choose their individual positions, diluting the government’s authority. He ran a desultory and passion-free campaign, seldom stating the truth. The “Leave” side, in a mendacious if passionate daily onslaught, slandered membership in the EU as responsible for all of England’s ills. To great surprise, when the vote took place in June, 2016, the “Leave” side won 52 percent to 48 percent.

Cameron walked away from the damage he had caused, and in a shambolic succession contest, was replaced by May. She will almost certainly be seen as a terrible choice.

A “Remain” supporter in the vote, though not a campaigner for it, May promised to deliver on the “the vote of the British people.” When asked what “Brexit” meant, she repeated facetiously that “Brexit means Brexit,” which we all know now means nothing at all.

To reinforce her personal political position, she called a snap election for June 2017. She was a dreadfully wooden figure on the campaign trail, easily outperformed by Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, a socialist throwback to the class-resentful old Labour party Blair had displaced. May lost her majority, emerging dependent to govern on a small party of Northern Ireland Protestant UK-loyalists.

All eyes on March 29

May precipitously launched the separation timetable under Article 50, calling for the UK's withdrawal by March 29, 2019. The terms of withdrawal, the extent of withdrawal and the extent of remaining ties were negotiated painfully with the EU's 27 other members in a 600-page document over two years, with little consultation with Parliament. It was accompanied by a generalized statement describing the future UK-EU partnership in areas where continued cooperation was not specified in the main paper, what May has termed "my deal."

Having barely survived a challenge to her leadership from the hard Brexiters in her own party, the prime minister finally put her "deal" to Parliament, which rejected it massively earlier this month, as dissident hard-liners joined Conservative Remainers and Labour as well as Liberals to vote against, for some because it retained too much of a tie to the EU, others because it didn't retain enough.

Asked to return to Parliament with a "Plan B," the prime minister came back days later with a repeat of already rejected positions.

What now?

The UK needs a deal defining its trade and other engagement with the EU by March 29 or it will crash out of the customs union with the bloc that represents 44 percent of its markets. The UK government must retain membership in the EU free trade area, if not in a full customs union that also obliges the free movement of labour, or sink or swim in the trading and economic world as a no longer very large, autonomous, single economy.

Moreover, in a hard Brexit, the UK would have to accede to a "hard" border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, thereby erasing one of the achievements of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement that ended decades of deadly conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. May's "deal" on the other hand provides a "backstop" to permit free trade across that border, subject to some inspections of goods coming into Northern Ireland from the UK, objectionable to the small number of protestant unionists from Ulster who hold May's minority government in power. To the more than a hundred-strong Brexiter hard-line Conservatives, that backstop could keep the UK in an EU customs union indefinitely, thus killing their dream (or fantasy) of the UK negotiating beneficial replacement bilateral trade agreements around the world. They call for concessions from Ireland and the EU.

Both Dublin and Brussels have made it clear further EU concessions are unavailable. The Europeans have held their unity during these trying negotiations. They have protected the EU by not enabling the British to leave the EU on terms any other EU member would wish to emulate. But as a senior EU figure **allowed recently**, their firm line has been a "catastrophic success," in that the UK could now crash out without a

transitional or replacement deal March 29 to almost certain chaos and deep cost, including to the EU itself.

May is testing Parliament's patience in deferring to the "bad boys at the back of the class," as Trades Union Congress head Frances O'Grady put it. She has to face down the dissident hard-liners to force them to support her deal, or she has to ditch them and work with the rest of the House of Commons. This week, she agreed to go back to the EU to seek further changes, including to the problematic "backstop," to the rejected deal in order to win their support. She was acting out her role as a life-long Conservative partisan who would never agree to split her own party. The risk and danger is that she will come up empty.

"[Brits] need a wrenching effort to re-align themselves positively looking forward, with realism and without the hubris of gilded memories."

'The end of themselves as they were'

Parliament is increasingly asserting itself, with the support of enough Conservatives who abhor the danger of a no-deal Brexit. An amendment calling on the prime minister to reject a no-deal Brexit in fact passed Tuesday. There will be further pressure in Parliament to seek via a free vote on an extension of Article 50 to provide more time for negotiation. An amendment to do that failed Tuesday but will undoubtedly recur as the clock runs out toward the March 29 deadline. The EU will only grant it if the UK has a clear and convincing plan.

May stubbornly believes she can still get her "deal" (however tweaked) through if people are scared enough by the horrific damage of a no-deal Brexit and also by the alternate possibility of the "betrayal" of there being no Brexit after all.

She has got nothing right yet. But who knows what this crisis will produce? The UK is divided, separated in toxic antagonism by a division of the country's self-concept into differing imagined realities.

It had been thought that a follow-up second referendum would be a way to resolve the issue, not to ask the same simplistic "in" or "out" question, but to consult on how to proceed now that the complications are apparent. However, May, and especially her hardline backbenchers, are opposed, as they see it as a means of undoing the 2016 referendum result, which, in substance it might well be. So, it is more likely that it will be in Parliament's hands to define the future. But Parliament needs strong and unifying leadership.

There is an old British adage: "Cometh the hour, cometh the man," or now "the woman." Who could it be and how would it happen? There is no one obvious apt to be able to attract broad cross-party support and unify the country. Or can Parliament itself pull it off? Might this be the beginning of the end of the system of political party domination of

politics? Could a new patriotism, to defend contemporary Britain's achievements and the aspirations of young people for a European vocation, forge a new coalition of interests, or will classic English nationalism carry the day?

The spectacle thus far has been a distressing view of the democratic process, deeply injurious to Britain's image, and as I heard repeatedly in discussion with people who supported all options, to the embarrassment of Brits themselves. They are fed up with their leadership and their choices and they are deeply worried. No wonder they have no space in their worry-box for the American flim-flam man Donald Trump.

There is in Britain an over-abundance of immersion in the past. Novelist **Paul Scott**, in his *Raj Quartet* about the expiry of British imperial occupation of India, wrote that the British had come "the end of themselves as they were."

So it is again today. They need a wrenching effort to re-align themselves positively looking forward, with realism and without the hubris of gilded memories. They need to play a leading role in Europe in the twenty-first century by whatever institutional arrangements and ties are effective. Whoever can convince them of the substance and urgency of such a plan, over the tinsel of a remembered past, might indeed make Britain great again.

Letters

Globe and Mail, January 30, 2019

The removal of Canada's Ambassador to China has been a dramatic highlight in the diplomatic dust-up between Canada and China. But it hides an issue of potentially greater concern, namely, the erosion of Canada's once formidable diplomatic capability.

Successive governments have moved away from Westminster tradition to an Americanization of ambassadorial appointments by assigning political colleagues and party stalwarts to head Canadian missions abroad.

The primary argument in favour is that these appointees have political connections unavailable to non-partisan career diplomats. The arguments against are that they often lack foreign language skills, knowledge of the history and culture of other countries, experience on the ground, an understanding of international systems and insight regarding what works and doesn't work in life abroad.

At the same time as the sidelining of senior career professionals, governments have been hollowing out the core rotational Foreign Service, through abandoning direct national recruitment of the best and the brightest, limiting training and promotion opportunities and flat-lining resources for the delivery of international relations management and

foreign policy development.

Merging aspects of the Foreign Service with the domestic Public Service may seem to make sense on some levels, but the resultant homogenization puts Canada at a disadvantage in the international arena where our global partners and competitors continue to develop and support their own highly trained and specialized diplomatic professionals.

Canada is confronting radical changes in global affairs. To ensure we have the means to protect and advance our multiple interests abroad in this shifting landscape, the Canadian Government needs to urgently re-assess its foreign policy capacity.

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Canada must practice strategic patience with its relations with China

Colin Robertson

The Globe and Mail February 12, 2019

Strategic patience. That's what's needed now with China.

Canada did the right thing in acceding to the U.S. Justice Department's request to extradite Huawei's Meng Wanzhou. We long ago allied ourselves to the United States, and this partnership serves Canadian interests.

Unfortunately, our China relationship is now as much hostage to the outcome of the Sino-American trade dispute as are our hostages: Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig. The affair does demonstrate to Canadians a different face of China: the 'claws of the panda' – the descriptive title of Jonathan Manthorpe's book outlining Chinese efforts at intimidation and influence in Canada.

Like the rest of the West, successive Canadian governments were dazzled by Chinese growth. The lure of contracts mostly turned a blind eye to its authoritarian excesses. The Harper government had reservations, but most Western governments were willing to give China the benefit of the doubt over its authoritarianism and human-rights abuses.

The prevailing belief was that economic progress would inevitably lead to political liberalization.

It turns out that Western democratic liberalism is neither easily transferable nor inevitable. Like Mao Zedong, Chinese President Xi Jinping has achieved personal rule through the Chinese Communist Party. Mr. Xi is reverting to **state control of the economy**.

U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to confront China over its trade practices is long overdue. The forced transfers of technology from companies that partner with Chinese companies, intellectual-property theft, subsidies to state-owned enterprises and dumping steel has hurt Canadians as well as Americans.

The Sino-American tariff war is set to resume in March when U.S. rates are scheduled to rise. The tariffs have disrupted the markets and supply chains. They are also **hurting** the Chinese economy, but the Chinese show no signs of making the necessary structural changes, nor are we anywhere near the verification and enforcement provisions the United States deems **foundational** to any China deal.

The Trump approach is awkward. But bringing along the trading partners and using multilateralism is not the Trump way.

Our hostages, meanwhile, are **two months** into their Chinese captivity. We need to continue rallying international support for their release. It's a sad reflection on the West that our allies required encouragement, and even then not everyone **stood up**.

Chinese ambassador Lu Shaye describes Canadian actions as "**white supremacy**." He wants us to stop. We must not. We need to keep the public spotlight on our hostages. We should raise their plight in the United Nations Human Rights Council, where Chinese treatment of minority Uyghurs has already come under **condemnation**.

It's also time for a strategic shift in Canada's Asia-Pacific policy. We need to move away from its overriding emphasis on China and focus more on developing markets and shoring up trade and security relations with our democratic partners in the Pacific.

The "**window is open**" says Japanese Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane. The Japanese have not always been so forthcoming, so we should take up their offer to expand trade and investment with the world's **third-largest** economy.

We also need to make sure we are taking full advantage of our free-trade agreement with South Korea.

Above all, we should prioritize the new Comprehensive and Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) with resources and attention. The new partnership, with its high standards and enforcement provisions on intellectual property, labour and the environment, is now our main entrée into the Pacific. We need to encourage the

remaining ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and other Pacific countries to join up. With a different president, the United States will likely rejoin the pact. In different circumstances, China might also come aboard. As a recent Peterson Institute report argues, membership offers China a chance “to shape the global innovation economy while signalling clear commitment to outward-oriented reforms and global norms.”

As long as China wants regional dominance with kowtowing tributaries, Canada’s relationship with the Middle Kingdom will be difficult.

China wants to influence our thinking on China, but we need to be sure that its efforts are transparent. We need to practise **constructive vigilance** in our dealings. This means close attention to Chinese involvement with our businesses, elected officials and academic institutions. We must resist any effort to undermine our democracy. The rule of the law is what differentiates our system from theirs.

Once our hostages are returned, we need a public debate before resetting the relationship. For now, with our trade ambitions in the deep freeze, the best approach to China is strategic patience and a focus on our democratic Pacific partners.

Global Economy Under Siege

The International Economic Forum of the Americas Magazine

Ferry de Kerckhove, February 2019

<https://forum-americas.org/politics-global-economy-under-siege/>

Canada-Saudi Arabia, Older Pieces from David Chatterton

David Chatterton,

Toronto August 14, 2018

We should focus on changing Saudi behaviour – not on punishment

While it is unlikely that we shall ever learn the whole truth about the killing of Jamal

Khashoggi, many observers have concluded the killing had to have been sanctioned at

the highest level of the Saudi Royal Family and therefore requires strong censure if not strong sanctions. As a former Canadian Ambassador to the Kingdom, I hope Canada's response involves more than our usual practice of occupying the moral high ground. Rather than announcing some sort of ineffective "punishment", I would hope that we instead can express our abhorrence of this killing while advancing Canadian interests and helping the Saudi people change the behaviour of their rulers.

In developing an effective Canadian response, we should not ignore Saudi Arabia's reality and role. The deeply religious and extremely conservative desert Kingdom is undergoing tumultuous change under a brash, impetuous and young Crown Prince intolerant of criticism or dissent. At the same time, the Kingdom's oil reserves and production; wealth and development needs; importance to Islam; regional influence and competition with Iran and Turkey for regional supremacy; 7-decade long alliance with the United States and its close ties to President Trump have resulted in the desire of many to move quickly beyond this tragedy and return as soon as possible to a "normal" situation.

In terms of our response, there have been many calls for Canada to occupy the moral high ground as we so often do and censure Saudi Arabia, apply economic sanctions and end our arm sales. These actions would respond to Canada's collective sense of outrage and make many of us feel we are standing up for what is right. Unfortunately, these actions would do nothing to alter the Crown Prince's views or influence his future behavior, at least not in the direction we want. They would, however, significantly harm our commercial, economic and security interests and their ineffectiveness would demonstrate to the world our limited influence. Canada would be worse off. And if we

pursue this course of action, we should be prepared to pursue the same actions against China, Russia, North Korea, Vietnam, Egypt, Bangladesh, Turkey and a host of other countries, as they all have arrested, imprisoned, or killed their critics.

We could work with our Group of Seven counterparts, and like-minded countries, to develop a coordinated response of similar statements and actions. While this would have a not insignificant impact on the Kingdom's already bruised international reputation, something that does matter to the Royal Family, it would do little to discourage other countries from rushing in to fill the vacuum created.

Furthermore, in the likely absence of similar actions by the Kingdom's most important (by far) security partner, the United States, our collective actions would have minimal impact on Saudi Arabia's future behavior.

Diplomacy 101 – Be Diplomatic, and Smart

David Chatterson

Globe and Mail, October 26, 2018

The purpose of Canada's diplomacy is simple - influence the behavior of other countries and advance the interests of Canadians. The diplomatic brouhaha we are having with Saudi Arabia suggests improvements are necessary.

Many would consider the unprecedented Saudi response to a tweet to be more the consequence of an impetuous thin-skinned Crown Prince than the result of a calculated cohesive strategy. While the tweet alone is not responsible for the extreme response, it has clearly not advanced Canadian interests.

In my view, the tweet was misguided, unprofessional and counterproductive as it failed

to achieve any of our objectives. It failed to improve the circumstances of the rights activists; it failed to encourage Saudi Arabia to better respect human rights; and it failed to advance the interest of Canadians, which is, after all, the purpose of foreign policy. Most unfortunately, we may have lost our best opportunity to influence the development of human rights in the Kingdom with the departure of tens of thousands of students and their families who have been experiencing life in our diverse tolerant society and building life-long ties with Canada and Canadians.

So, what went wrong?

Tweeting is not diplomacy - Diplomacy cannot be conducted effectively through tweets.

Effective diplomacy is a complex undertaking requiring an understanding of the interests

and motivations of one's counterpart; a concerted sustained effort to effect change; collaboration with like-minded countries; and a dialogue based on respect.

Gratuitous sanctimonious preaching is not dialogue - We need to understand that other countries are not waiting for us to extol our values to them or tell them what they should believe or how they should behave. Gratuitous criticism from what we believe is high moral ground may make us feel virtuous, but it does not change behavior abroad and only damages our relations and the interests of Canadians.

Naiveté - Saudi Arabia is a conservative, traditional monarchy viewed by many Canadians as a severe autocracy that behaves in ways inimitable to our morals, ethics and sensitives. It is also a regional power in a volatile neighborhood vying with Iran for regional influence and the home to the two holy cities for 1 billion Muslims. As a G20 member with the largest economy in the Gulf region, it is the largest exporter of oil in the

world and has a burgeoning economy with a very young population. The other G7 countries see Saudi Arabia through the lens of their much larger commercial and security interests, not just human rights.

Hubris and Ignorance - Saudi Arabia is a Kingdom and a kingdom is different than a democracy. There are few checks and balances and absolute rulers rule absolutely. Its people are subjects, not citizens with rights and a say in how they are governed. The

immediate and draconian measures taken by the Kingdom are unimaginable in the context of a democracy like Canada. The absence of any domestic criticism of these decisions, notwithstanding the enormous impact on thousands of Saudi students, doctors, patients and their families, reflects a very different system and society. While Saudi Arabia's actions will certainly damage further its reputation, interests and its people, it behooves us to understand that, whether we like it or not, public criticism of the Saudi legal system, however valid, will be taken as a criticism of the Royal Family's legitimacy and right to rule.

Most importantly, however, is that the approach Canada has taken toward Saudi Arabia, and in many other of our important relationships, reflects a trend dating back at least 10 years – the politicization of our foreign policy. Canadian politicians have developed a tendency of pandering to the sensitives of certain electorally-important constituencies and of acting without a clear understanding of our interests and how to advance them.

During my time as the Canadian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and to South Korea, I discovered the influential political and communication advisors working for the Minister

and Prime Minister too often knew and cared far too little about how to advance

Canada's substantive interests abroad as their overarching focus was on how our actions or inactions could provide their Party with political or electoral advantage. The current Government unfortunately appears to be continuing these practices.

We need to get back to having our foreign policy contain more policy and less politics so that it can advance the interests of all Canadians - be they farmers, business people, educators or civil society activists – and not just the temporary interests of whichever Party is currently in power.

CBC January 13, 2019

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1425016387535>

CBC August 28, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hk51exZ850>

Links

Jeremy Kinsman

CTV News, January 29, 2019

Huawei/US/Canada and Venezuela

<https://www.facebook.com/CTVNewsChannel/videos/333367050608686/>

Paul Meyer

Prime Time Politics, CPAC Ottawa, February 1, 2019

INF Treaty

<https://youtu.be/zpe2KqDTlx8>

Canada Answered the Call

James Bissett
Esprit de Corps, January 2019

While serving as Canada's ambassador to Yugoslavia in the early 1990s I was asked if I might unveil a plaque honoring the memory of the hundreds of Canadians who came to Serbia during WW1 to serve with Canadian medical missions. It was then that I discovered the amazing story of the manner with which Canadian medical personnel responded to Serbia's call for help.

The plaque was unveiled at the entrance of the Serbian Medical Society Museum in Belgrade. After the ceremony I was accompanied by an interpreter to meet and talk to a small group of WW1 veterans. The grizzled old veterans with rows of medals, and some with large white drooping mustaches, were articulate and dignified and especially proud to have been recognized at the event. They all spoke favorably about Canada and its remarkable WW1 record. It will always be one of the most memorable days of my life.

The plaque was erected by the Serbian Heritage Academy of Canada and is a twin to another similar plaque erected at the Memorial Hall of the Medical Services Building University of Toronto. These two plaques are symbolic of how deeply Serbians still honour those Canadians who traveled to help Serbia during the that time of conflict and devastation. The contribution Canadian medical mission made was critical and played a major role in enabling the Serbian military and other allied troops in the Salonika Campaign to carry on the fight against a powerful enemy.

In addition, there were many individual doctors and nurses who went to Serbia to offer their professional services to the Serbian people in response to an appeal by the Serbian government in 1914 and 1915 for help in dealing with an outbreak of a typhoid epidemic. Doctors from all parts of Canada responded to that appeal. As only one example, in response to an appeal by the Serbian Legation in London, 34 doctors from across Canada volunteered to serve in Serbian hospitals. Many more were to follow.

In 1914, Canadian women doctors were prohibited from serving in war zones, so curiously enough, only nurses were considered eligible to do so. The result was that many individual female doctors from Canada joined the Scottish Women's Hospital Units that were active in Serbia. One of the first to arrive in Serbia in 1915 was Dr. Irma Levasseur of Quebec City, who took charge of the Red Cross hospital in Kragujevac. Later, she joined the Serbian army's exodus across the Albanian mountains to Corfu.

Another woman doctor, Dr. Ella Campbell Synge of Vancouver formed her own medical unit and took it to Serbia. Later, she refused to be evacuated with the approach of German forces and was taken prisoner. Fortunately, she was later repatriated to Canada. There were many more women doctors from Canada who responded to the Serbian call for help but their story has yet to be written.

The major contribution of Canadian medical services to Serbia was through the Canadian Medical Missions under command of Major General Guy Carleton Jones who was asked in 1915 by the British Director of Army Medical Service to send medical help to the Salonika front. It was a desperate plea for help because the allied forces there were without even the basic elements for caring for the sick and wounded soldiers.

Major General Carleton, to his credit agreed to do so ,even though there no Canadian were involved in the Salonika campaign. In late 1915, No.4 and No.5 Canadian General Hospitals were sent to the war zone. No,1 Canadian Stationary Hospital soon followed. All of these hospitals were self- supporting with a full complement of doctors, nurses, orderlies, drugs, medicines, and every thing needed to operate a modern day hospital, including 1040 beds.

No.1 General Hospital was formed in Valcourt, Quebec and its 104 nurses were mostly graduates of McGill, Laval, and Queen's universities. No.4 hospital was contributed by the University of Toronto. It was staffed entirely by University of Toronto students and alumni. Its 1040 bed capacity was later increased to 1,540 and then to 2000 in 1917. No.5 hospital was formed in Victoria sponsored by the province of British Columbia. It had 30 doctors and 72 nurses plus all the other staff and equipment essential for a functioning hospital.

The Canadian Medical Missions provided care to thousands of Serbian, British, French and other combatants during the Salonika campaign, without them the wounded would have had to be transported by sea at a dreadful cost of lives. Before their arrival there were no adequate hospitals in the war zone until a later stage in the war. In 1917 the Canadian government decided to transfer all of the hospitals to the Western Front where they would be able to care for Canadian troops. However, their contribution has never been forgotten by Serbia.