

A COLD FRONT FROM CANADA



It may be a time in our rapidly evolving country to do some re-inventory of the Canadian psyche and see how it fits with our personal view. The public actions of the Government supposedly reflect the will, character and attitude of its constituents. And with some of the more recent portrayals there's a concern with how accurate it truly is.

Have we become as frightened, disloyal and badly mannered as we appear? Shaming ourselves and embarrassing the Queen of England was one thing, a poor distasteful thing at that. Mr. Manley's appalling manners show that he cannot represent this country except in the backroom of a legacy spending, lame duck government. Prime Minister...I don't think so.

Of much more concern recently has been the pervasive anti-American demeanor in Canada that may reflect a material change in who we are as a people and a nation.

In writing this piece I am still numb at the actions and attitude that is prevalent in this country towards our friends to the south. We are the same in so many ways. Both nations built out of the combination of the unwanted and adventurous. Both offering a share in whatever piece of future one could forge for themselves and their families. Both committed to peace and above all freedom, even at the price of our shared blood.

I wonder if it is because they rose to the top of the world and we didn't. Is it jealousy? I am sure that neither our Canadian Government, nor the people, want the weighty responsibility that comes with the Presidency. But someone has to lead.

It is fair to say that our Prime Minister and the President have not been playing

nice lately, so allow me to present for your consideration some of the salient facts that are immediately present.

First, and on a minute-by-minute basis the United States is our economic lifeline. They purchase 83% of our exported merchandise. That's up from when it was at 75%. In the year ending 2001, there was \$675 Billion (that's a B) dollars spent in north/south trading. This represents \$1.85 Billion per day*. We share an 8000- km largely unprotected border. They are clearly the world's largest economy, and they are at our doorstep. Could we be more blessed?

We as Canadians are quick to complain about the aggressive style of the American entrepreneur, often calling them greedy and money hungry. Interestingly, they are the single largest foreign investors in our land. Canada is a creative place for ideas and inventions, but unfortunately that seems to be where it ends. You can be the judge of this very small sampling of interesting and real life, world-changing transactions. It may

explain the great "brain drain" we suffer in this country.

Henry Woodward and Matthew Evans patented the

electric light bulb in Canada in 1875. However to move the opportunity along, they had to sell the rights to American entrepreneur Thomas Edison for \$50,000. History credits Thomas Edison with the work. Elijah McCoy, a black Canadian born in Colchester Ontario, invented a continuous oil cup for steam engines, but could not arrange financing here in Canada and was forced (for the sake of the deal) to sell the rights to US businessmen. Mr. McCoy was then hired by an American firm and went on to invent 57 more items for the transportation industry. His products were so good they coined the phrase the "Real McCoy"...a Cana-

dian who had to go back to the same country that enslaved his parents to reach his potential. Something wrong here. Basketball ...invented by James Naismith born in Almonte Ontario. Mr. Naismith invented and taught the game at McGill University as part of his duties as PhysEd teacher. The game became famous and is reported invented in Springfield College when he was asked to teach there and develop his new invention. Hockey ...we won't go there. I could go on and on. Peter Jennings, Celine Dion, Shania Twain... the list is forever. As Canadians we don't invest in one another, because we don't believe. Our hope is thin and our vision myopic. It appears that everything from vaccines to the arts, to your children, must go through the American process of venture capital to reach their full potential.

Let me utter this next point very quietly. We are defenseless. Since the early days of Mr. Trudeau, our armed forces have been quite purposely diminished. We really cannot protect ourselves at all. Our contribution, by and large, to the world stage is to go in after the big boys have fought the fight, and peacekeep. No shame in that and it is dangerous work, but it is not the front line. Someone has to be the front line...agreed? This is real warfare. Well trained, sometimes technological, sometimes guerilla, sometimes terrorist warfare, all these threats are around us all the time. In a military sense, this is much more than we (Canada) can fathom, let alone handle. Especially when we review in comparison with our most recent front line military incursions were with the reluctant aboriginal "Lasagna" at Kanasatake and a snowdrift in Toronto.

What about these Americans? Who are they and how have they handled things in the past? Decisions should be based on history (facts) and our best judgement. Gordon Sinclair, the famous Canadian journalist, took exception to the poor

treatment of America after Vietnam and said these words:

“This Canadian thinks it is time to speak up for the Americans as the most generous and possibly the least appreciated people on all the earth. Germany, Japan and, to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy were lifted out of the debris of war by the Americans, who poured in billions of dollars and forgave other billions in debts. None of these countries is today paying even the interest on its remaining debts to the United States. When the franc was in danger of collapsing in 1956, it was the Americans who propped it up, and their reward was to be insulted and swindled on the streets of Paris. I was there. I saw it.”

“When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries in to help. This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped. The Marshall Plan and the Truman Policy pumped billions of dollars into discouraged countries. Now newspapers in those countries are writing about the decadent, war-mongering Americans.”

“When the railways of France, Germany and India were breaking down through age, it was the Americans who rebuilt them. When the Pennsylvania Railroad and the New York Central went broke, nobody loaned them an old caboose. Both are still broke. I can name you 5000 times when the Americans raced to the help of other people in trouble. Can you name me even one time when someone else raced to the Americans in trouble? I don't think there was outside help even during the San Francisco earthquake.”

“Our neighbors have faced it alone, and I'm one Canadian who is damned tired of hearing them get kicked around. They will come out of this thing with their flag high. And when they do, they are entitled to thumb their nose at the lands that are gloating over their present troubles. I hope Canada is not one of those. Stand proud, Americans!”

End of Sinclair quote. It is interesting to note that by far and away, this was the sentiment in this country and most people agreed with Mr. Sinclair.

Most things spoken in a derogatory manner about the US have been inconsequential. Up until recently it usually came from the uninvolved, unemployed and unhappy. These are the kinds of people who walk around with blank “placards” looking to write their “protest du jour” -

today “save the whales”, tomorrow “more money for the lazy”, the day after “down with America”. But that is not the case this time.

I was home in Vancouver on Sept 11th when my daughter woke me up to tell me that America was being attacked. I turned on the TV just as the second plane was approaching the second building. As this huge plane disintegrated into the building and this surreal event unfolded before my eyes, I knew, as you all did, that the world would never be the same. I admittedly watched too much of this event for the following days and I remember on the second day breaking down in uncontrollable tears for these people and their great nation.

Weeks later when I arrived in Toronto, I was sure that the mood would be the most somber here. There is no city in Canada that benefits from the American experience as much as they do. Aside from the undeniable corporate commerce, the Americans flock up here on the weekends to fill the hotels and the streets with life, laughter and US dollars. I have never witnessed a problem with their presence, as they add the complimentary ingredient that makes Toronto, Toronto. Yet I began hearing disparaging remarks about the Americans tied to their imperialist efforts in the world, intimating that they were not surprised at the action taken by the terrorists, and that somehow it might be a wake up call for America to change. And this wasn't the unwashed. These were educated businessmen and women. When I then listened to a man in an upscale Toronto restaurant say that the Americans were behind the attack themselves, and his three associates shook their head in the possible belief of this insanity, I have to admit I was out (cold) on my feet. The shame and anger that I feel when I hear such tripe is unspeakable. What have we become? These are not isolated incidents. You hear more antiAmerican dialogue these days than ever before. And at the highest levels of Government...are we crazy?

Who would we side with? We must side with someone. We can't go it alone. It can't be Britain, they are solidly behind the US. It can't be Israel, we already know about that. Should it be the French? Dr Phil would ask, “how's that working for you so far”? Arafat is clearly a terrorist sending children into crowded public places loaded with bombs especially created for the “jihad”. And if this last round of experiences with the UN hasn't

incontrovertibly proved their redundant uselessness, what could? Can you say ...League of Nations? There is little difference between the UN and the Olympic Committee.

The world has changed. No country can guard its borders for certain, especially countries who encourage freedom and opportunity for all. If one pail of a chemical warfare substance were put in the drinking water of Toronto, there wouldn't be enough people left living to bury the dead. We need pre-emptive strikes when we already know that out there exists generations of uneducated, armed, young angry people full of hateful propaganda, taught to them by their fathers and religious leaders that believe they will go to heaven and have 70 odd virgins to themselves if they kill us. You can't rehabilitate that kind of mind. Some of the Saudis who performed 9/11 had lived in and enjoyed the United States for over a year while they planned the assault on New York. If you lived in another cultural environment for that much time, and lived with them, ate with them, and watched their children and families of another culture interact, you would come to love them ...even if it was just enough not to kill them. That did not happen.

The change we need must come from the inside out. If nothing changes... nothing changes...

Afghanistan is much better off now and will continue to improve over the years to a place they could not even dream of one year ago. And I mean not even

dream of. Because if you were caught even thinking or speaking of living with the Great Satan (America), you were taken to a football field and shot in front of your cheering relatives for your sin.

I am concerned for Canada these days. We seem to be taking on the pall of our leadership in this country that is angry, bitter and feeling betrayed. It happens. A family can often take on the character of the father.

May God continue to Bless America with health, prosperity and good friends.

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* My Vision of US – Canada, John Manley, May 15/02