

The Biden-Trudeau 'Joint Suicide Pact'

The two liberal leaders embrace inflationary economic policies, and, on climate policy, ineffectually shake their fists at the clouds like King Lear.



by Conrad Black

Last week's meeting at Ottawa between Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden must rank as one of the most platitudinous encounters of recent world history. It was also a prodigious demonstration of the utter intellectual bankruptcy of the contemporary social democratic left.

Almost every official sentence from the two leaders was bunk. We had had no state visit from an incumbent president of the United States in Canada for approximately seven years,

something that it has not been possible to say since President Roosevelt's visit in 1938 when he famously said that the United States "would not stand idly by" if Canada were attacked by a power from another hemisphere.

Yet it is not clear what was the purpose of this 24-hour swing. It virtually shut down central Ottawa as if the truckers were back in greater strength, and severely disrupted air traffic. We were assured by the Prime Minister that "We've made progress on... growing the middle class, strengthening the economy, making life more affordable for people, fighting climate change and protecting the environment, protecting our citizens and our values..."

Plus he threw in that "economic policy, climate policy, and security policy aren't just connected; they are one and the same. Both the president and I agree on this, and that's why we launched our Joint Energy Transformation Task Force."

If one whit of credence could be attached to anything either of these two men said, the combined population of the two countries of 370 million would have to contemplate the implications of the fact that our elected leaders have effectively signed a joint suicide pact. The enunciated goals of expanding the middle class, promoting affordability, and fighting climate change while advancing shared values are nonsense.

The economic policies both men and their governments have been pursuing have contributed importantly to the highest inflation we have had in 40 years which is the greatest possible impetus for unaffordability. The only way in which either of them is enlarging the middle class is that the combination of measures of reduced equity values, increased consumer prices, and the shrunken workforces they have induced, are generally propelling people in upper income groups downwards into the middle class on a trajectory that is the economic confirmation of Isaac Newton's Law of Gravity.

Both men and their governments have attacked a leading industry in both countries, oil and gas, to the jubilant stupefaction of our rivals in China. Mr. Biden has fumbled away the status built by his predecessors of the United States as an energy self-sufficient country.

Net U.S. oil imports, which peaked at over 12 million barrels a day under President Clinton, 10 million barrels a day under President George W. Bush, 5 million barrels a day under President Obama, and were completely eliminated under President Trump, have now flopped back into the importation of oil, including from hostile countries and reprehensible regimes, such as Venezuela, while American production is suppressed.

In Canada, which when heavy oil reserves are included is probably the most oil-rich country in the world, because of the antics of our eco-zealots and claims that the entire territory of Canada is sacred ground that would be desecrated by a pipeline, we import oil from abroad in the eastern provinces while effectively discouraging its export from the West.

If the premier of Quebec were as interested in lower oil and fuel prices for Quebec as he is in extirpating the English language there, he would confer a double benefit on the Québécois. We are the supreme chump in energy matters in the world, though under the incumbent administration, the United States is gamely trying to keep pace with us.

The implications of the prime minister's statement are that our economies are well served by increased importation of oil when we could easily supply ourselves, that our national and continental security are increased by greater dependence on oil from politically volatile or hostile areas, and that we are somehow empowering ourselves to assure that the cycle of climate change will be benign if we only replace domestic sources of energy with foreign sources.

The joint task force Mr. Trudeau announced will be extremely costly, will raise energy prices, and do nothing to benefit the middle class, continental security, the environment, or opposition to climate change. Greater research, careful monitoring, and aggressive but rational pollution reduction measures are called for.

Pompous pretensions to saving the planet while inflicting terrible economic damage upon ourselves, (particularly the middle class they are trying to expand), are not part of the solution of any identifiable problem. Messrs. Trudeau and Biden are “fighting” climate change, not researching it; they are shaking their fists at the clouds like King Lear.

Mr. Trudeau’s reference to “conserving biodiversity and building strong net zero economies” was also disquieting. On the formula he provided, “net zero economies” is more likely to refer to economic and per capita income growth than to carbon emissions. Mr. Trudeau declared that both countries “believe in safe fair and orderly migration, refugee protection, and border security,” and pledged “to make our borders secure (and) to disrupt the cross-border movement of ... fentanyl.”

This is a reassuring statement on behalf of the American president who has willfully allowed over 3 million migrants to flood across its southern border, to put the United States government in direct cooperation with the most ruthless slave and drug trafficking gangs in the world in northern Mexico.

It has facilitated the importation into the United States of tons of fentanyl, which, along with other illicit drugs, annually kills more than 100,000 Americans, more than have perished in all the wars of the U.S. since the Second World War combined.

The prime minister illustrated his purposeful aversion to nasty people by announcing: “We will also impose additional

sanctions on two other members of the Haitian elite who are benefiting from insecurity and violence.” This does not even qualify as tokenism.

The previous American administration oversaw a substantial drop in illegal immigration. I am old enough to remember when summit meetings of the leaders of important countries discussed serious issues, reached important agreements, and ended with newsworthy communiqués.

Unless the voters of Canada and the United States have taken a prolonged leave of their senses and even their instinct of national self-preservation, what we saw in Ottawa last week was just a joint selfie with banal audio of two placemen in high office running out the clock to the end of their terms: a decayed servitor and a politically agile young man with a pleasant countenance and a famous name but not the slightest conception of the public policy needs of this country. It was a sobering spectacle.

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