

Canada should not be pushed around

EDITORIAL

Canada is infuriated, and rightfully so.

John McCallum, Canada's ambassador to China told Chinese press there was a solid legal case that could help Meng Wanzhou avoid extradition to America, according to the Toronto Star.

Wanzhou, chief financial officer of Huawei, was arrested by Canadian authorities for allegedly lying to American financial institutions to do business in Iran despite U.S. sanctions on that country.

McCallum's comments subsequently led to his dismissal, four days after, at the request of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Canada has persistently pushed back at China but McCallum's comments contradicts that. His words just made the federal government's position even more confusing as ambassadors should discuss the official perspective of their regime. This undermined the integrity of the entire legal process and makes Canada look like they don't know what their doing.

McCallum essentially went off the rails speaking his own opinion making it seem like a hostage take over. He surely stepped out of line.

Chrystia Freeland, minister of foreign affairs said McCallum was fired as ambassador to China because he expressed views that were contrary to the federal government, according to the Globe and Mail.

McCallum should have stick to the script instead of speaking his mind on an already tense relationship between the two powerful nations.

His comments made it seem like Canada was going to send Wanzhou home to China, which is not the case.

Canada and China's relationship was already complicated by United States President Donald Trump declaring a trade war with Beijing. This whole debacle just added more fuel to the fire.

Further, McCallum was also quoted in Vancouver's Star Metro saying it would be great for Canada if the U.S. dropped the extradition request and said that if a deal was made with the U.S. it should include the release of two Canadians detained overseas.

Former diplomat Michael Kovrig and entrepreneur Michael Spavor were both arrested after the Chinese government was aggravated with the with the arrest of Wanzhou. They were reportedly accused of endangering China's national security.

This followed the Chinese government decision to impose the death sentence on Canadian Robert Schellenberg, who had previously received a 15-year prison term for drug smuggling.

Canadian officials are working to overturn the death sentence of Schellenberg and release Kovrig and Spavor. Jim Nickle is now Canada's acting ambassador in Beijing.

Canada's ambassador to the U.S., David MacNaughton told the Globe and Mail that Canada has voiced anger and resentment at being caught in the middle, with its citizens suffering for American actions. Canada is walking on egg shells, stuck in a dispute that primarily involves the Americans and China. They need to stand up to both sides.