

## National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? A missed opportunity

Several decades ago, Rene Levesque, Canada's first separatist premier, replied to questions from what he saw as a hostile media by commenting that if he decided to walk across the St. Lawrence River from Levis to Quebec City, the headline would be ?Levesque can't swim.?

Enter U.S. President Donald Trump. In many respects, of course, his negative press is his own fault, but even when he does something good ? or even neutral ? the rabidly anti-Trump media finds fault.

As for our guy, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, it's almost the opposite. To be sure, he's been subject to some criticism ? his flip-flop on voting changes and the current dispute about tax reform come to mind. But overall, his so-called ?sunny ways? approach has been viewed favourably through a left-leaning media lens.

Take last week's appearances at the United Nations for example.

Trump went there, if not to bury the UN, certainly not to praise them. His message was that it's about time ? indeed, well past time ? that the world's largest gathering of politicians and bureaucrats actually did something concrete about some of the world's worst rogue regimes, particularly North Korea and Iran, rather than sitting around congratulating themselves on their own self-importance. Much of the media reaction to his tough-talking speech was, as you'd expect, completely negative. The Toronto Star, for example, didn't cite any positive reviews from other political leaders ? even though there were some ? but did manage to find a former security advisor for former president Barrack Obama to dump on Trump's approach. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for example, who is used to the UN passing anti-Israeli resolutions ? while ignoring horrible human rights abuses elsewhere ? said, ?In over 30 years in my experience with the UN, I never heard a bolder or more courageous speech.?

But that doesn't matter. It's Trump after all, so any self-respecting journalist or liberal politician can't be seen being positive, which is likely why our newspapers reported that some people were upset with Trump's undiplomatic terminology, but couldn't find room in their publications to report that within days of his tough talking about North Korea, China, that regime's biggest enabler, announced new banking crackdowns against doing business with them.

Our man Trudeau, on the other hand, spent pretty much his entire speech apologizing to the world for this country's treatment of its aboriginals, the type of mea culpa that many UN members simply love to hear from Western leaders, conveniently ignoring the fact that this bloated body is doing virtually nothing about many of the world's current problem spots.

It is certainly true that Canada has not always treated its indigenous population well, but Trudeau's insulting inference that all previous governments were part of an evil cabal to destroy them ? which is essentially what he was saying ? is a deliberate distortion of our real history. Governments continue to spend billions of tax dollars hoping to improve the lives of our First Nations. That it often doesn't work is self evident. But the effort has been there and for Trudeau to arrogantly suggest that he's the first prime minister to attempt to right historic wrongs is absolutely in keeping with his own gargantuan sense of self-importance.

According to Trudeau, ?For Indigenous peoples in Canada, the experience was mostly one of humiliation, neglect and abuse.?

While there certainly was a lot of that, it's simply not true to say that all governments who came before his enlightened gang were bent upon destroying the aboriginal way of life.

But Trudeau's approach, as we've said, is absolutely the type of empty rhetoric UN potentates love to hear. Why? Because they can shake their heads knowingly, pretend they give a damn, and not have to do anything about it.

Trump's direct call for action against various rogue regimes, on the other hand, forces them to look at their own record and actually make decisions, the sort of thing any self-respecting UN official hates to face.

By portraying Canada as a cold, heartless haven of anti-indigenous creeps, however, Trudeau absolved himself of even paying lip service to many of the urgent issues currently facing the rest of the world. He ignored North Korea and Iran, didn't mention Canada-U.S. relations and the current free trade talks. He said nothing about our current refugee/immigration problems, where so-called ?refugees? are streaming over our borders, and also ignored international security and terrorism, including grave problems in Syria and Iraq. Worse, given that Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi holds an honorary Canadian citizenship ? and while held in captivity before emerging as leader, was a heroine of liberals everywhere ? Trudeau avoided any mention of the Rohingya crisis, where Suu Kyi is complicit in the horror of some 400,000 Rohingya Muslims being forced to flee to Bangladesh. Oh sure, he had sent her a note a few days before, but apparently this human rights crisis wasn't worth a line in his speech.

He didn't even mention Canada's long-awaited decision to meet its announced plans to NATO and UN peacekeeping forces, or our current involvement in the Ukraine, Iraq or Syria.

It was the kind of speech you'd expect a prime minister to make in Canada, since it dealt only with domestic issues, rather than using a UN platform to shed some light on his thinking outside this country's borders, a decision so obvious that even the Star quoted

academic Stephanie Carvin saying she was 'baffled' by its domestic focus given that Canada is campaigning for a seat on the UN Security Council. She called it 'haphazard' and 'a missed opportunity.'

But he looked pretty delivering it, and, unlike Trump, who was growling at them, that's apparently what counts the most

