

National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? Troops followed their training

It was Albert Einstein who quipped, 'The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits.'

Which brings us to NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair and Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau.

In what should have been a classic no-brainer, a proud moment to celebrate our courageous Canadian armed forces personnel risking their lives against ISIS terrorists in Iraq, these two partisan doughheads callously (ab)used the occasions hoping to score some cheap political points.

They are either too stupid to understand what they are doing or too cynical to care.

Both were responding to news that in the course of helping Iraqi troops in the fight against ISIS ? which is precisely why Prime Minister Stephen Harper dispatched them to the area ? our troops came under direct fire from the enemy.

And guess what they did ? heaven forbid? They shot back.

Rather than sending some warm blankets or seeking a pleasant little chat with these Islamic extremists ? which apparently is what the opposition leaders would prefer ? our troops did what they have been trained to do when coming under direct gunfire.

Happily, no Canadian was injured in the exchange and it seems to have frightened off the ISIS temporarily from their positions.

Yet, rather than congratulate our brave troops, Mulcair and Trudeau trotted out the old 'gotcha' moment, claiming Harper essentially lied to Canadians when he said our forces were going there to act as advisors and not to engage in ground combat.

It is beyond stupidity to think that anybody can be involved in a war and magically avoid, well, being involved in a war.

It's one thing to launch direct attacks against the enemy.

But it's quite another to be offering assistance and defend yourself when fired upon. Duh.

Both opposition leaders screamed 'mission creep,' while accusing Harper of lying to Canadians. It is hard to believe these two are too dumb not to understand that. Which leaves the other option: they're so cynical they don't care if they besmear the bravery of our soldiers in their own partisan pursuit of votes.

All politicians, of course, attempt to score against their opponents. Certainly Harper does as well.

But surely there is a line between attempting to hurt your opponent and consciously demeaning the courage of our troops who are out there bravely risking their lives against one of the worst scourges the earth has seen in decades.

For his part, Mulcair has been opposed to the mission from the outset. Fair enough. Although he does argue that instead of sending military advisors we should use diplomacy and more aid to help out, as if being involved militarily means you can't send aid as well. (And since Canada is already doing that, his argument becomes even more species.)

As for Trudeau, well, as usual he seems to be on all sides of the issue at the same time.

The mainstream media, for the most part, does what it can to pump him up in the eyes of the public, but his recent slippage in public opinion polls may indicate that the more Canadians get to know him the less enamoured they are with his ability.

In a radio interview last week at a local London radio station, Trudeau was asked by host Andrew Lawton that if he were prime minister what circumstances would warrant military intervention.

'I think it's warranted if there is a reasonable chance of success,' said Trudeau. 'if there's a way than Canada can offer expertise the rest of the world is unable to provide.'

Does Trudeau mean there is 'no chance of success' against ISIS, to which the Trudeau replied, 'Oh, I'm saying, this is going to be a very long, long challenge against ISIS, and Canada's role in engaging with that needs to be best suited to what we can do better than other countries.'

As often happens when Trudeau sticks his feet in his mouth, most of the media ignored it (although they all ran big stories about Harper 'lying' to Canadians about Iraq). Ironically, veteran Liberal operative Warren Kinsella jumped on it, writing, 'you don't need to be a military historian to see the problem here. The conditions Trudeau has imposed would render it impossible for Canada to participate in any military effort, ever. Because most of our allies, militarily, can do what we do. Because we aren't ever completely certain we are always going to triumph.'

Both Trudeau and Mulcair apparently think the fight against Islamic extremism isn't our fight ? despite the recent murders of two Canadian soldiers in Ottawa and Quebec. But an online al-Qaeda video appeared the same day the two opposition leaders tried their gotcha trick, calling on western Muslims to play an 'effective role' by waging 'individual jihad' within their own country.

And Canada ? that's us, dear hearts ? was one of the countries specifically named.

