

Drip, Drip . . . UNDRIP!

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There is something wearying about a persistent drip. It gets on the nerves. It demands action. In politics, there can be a frequently recurring demand or a call for action on a particular issue that is like a constant dripping. It eventually wears down resistance and results in change . . . sometimes very dramatic change. Persistence can be seen as a virtue when the legislative objective appears to be tied to a human rights issue. But not every policy change is beneficial. The persistence of the demand does not prove the value of the result. It only proves that persistence is often rewarded.

We have been frequently reminded in recent decades about Canada's shameful mistreatment of indigenous peoples. These discussions have raised awareness but have not resulted in the legislative changes envisioned by activists. We've seen this movie before. When socialist politicians cannot achieve their goals using the standard methods (courts, legislation, media), they employ another tactic: an edict from the United Nations. By enlisting the support of First Nations leaders in their appeal, they gain a credibility they would not otherwise possess. In September of 2007, they succeeded in getting the UN General Assembly to pass UNDRIP.

UNDRIP is the acronym for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.¹ It purports to explain and demand that every country on earth must rearrange its laws and structures to comply with the UN's new enlightened standards. Where did these standards come from? How were they developed? In large part from Canadian delegations to various UN conferences . . . delegations made up of an assortment of indigenous organization, social planners, environmental activists and other advocacy groups seeking to replace Canada's existing governance structures with others more compatible with their goals.²

Let me say at the outset that I fully recognize the injustices suffered by the peoples who first occupied various territories across what is now the nation of Canada. Some of those wrongs have been recognized and various attempts have been made both to apologize and to compensate for them. It hasn't been enough. The cultural damage and upheaval experienced by Canada's First Nations is not a minor bruise that can be brushed off and forgotten. The wounds are deep and require serious efforts at restitution and reconciliation.

However, the reliance on the UN for the justification of any course of action indicates that there would have been insufficient political will or public opinion to warrant the changes demanded without the interference and the clout of an international body perceived to represent the solemn and universal thought of the peoples of the world. This is a tragic misconception of the makeup and goals of the current UN body. The idealistic concept of a world body that would prevent war, improve health outcomes, decrease poverty and generally usher in an age of justice, equality and cooperation was a nice idea. The failures to live up to its billing are many.

Having China seated on its Human Rights Council while currently engaged in the brutal persecution of the Uyghurs, the Falun Gong and various Christian groups is one example. The failure of the World Health Organization (WHO), another UN agency, to properly and adequately respond to the COVID-19 challenge is another, made more troubling by the various levels of power and control evident in the connections

between the WHO and the Chinese Communist Party (CPP).³ The UN has its fingers in many pies and the interactions of its member-states are not free from military threats, medical deficiencies, and crippling trade sanctions.

Canada has been both a contributor to the development of UN policies as well as a cooperative recipient of their pronouncements. Social conservatives like us have long decried the negative aspects of Canada's influence on international agreements regarding abortion, gender and sexual attitudes, etc., and we applaud the efforts of various educational and advocacy groups within Canada who have used their influence to balance and restrain Canada's leftist proposals at the UN. When, however, the UN chooses to issue an edict demanding that Canada implement a particular policy goal, our politicians should have the courage and integrity to resist that outside influence and instead develop our own appropriate and just policies reflective of our shared national heritage and our commitment to long-term racial equality for all Canadian citizens.

Canada has much work to do to find a path forward that acknowledges and addresses the unjust actions of former governments toward indigenous peoples. Finding equitable solutions—solutions that satisfy all citizens—may be the most difficult challenge we face as a nation. Until we find those solutions, Canada cannot rise to achieve its full potential . . . and current and future generations will continue to struggle to reconcile the past. However, allowing the UN to dictate terms for us is irresponsible and morally wrong.

On December 3, 2020, Liberal Justice Minister David Lametti introduced government bill C-15, which would basically make UNDRIP¹ the law of the land. You need to read through this long, boring and repetitive document to grasp the dangerous implications of C-15 and how its implementation would further divide Canada along racial lines. The benefits and protections are completely one-sided, but the responsibility for achieving its goals rest entirely on the Canadian government (read taxpayers). Instead of uniting Canadians of all ethnic backgrounds, it would embed racial division for generations to come. Interestingly, not even all indigenous organizations are enthusiastic about C-15. Some feel it actually could be used to restrict individual and tribal sovereignty.⁴

Canada is either one nation or an assortment of many smaller nations. Recognition of cultural heritage and historical land occupancy is important. But entrenching special status and privileges based on racial ancestry is a recipe for tribal conflict, not only between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, but also between other demographic cohorts based on racial, sexual, intellectual, and religious affiliations. No house divided against itself can stand. When Canadians are divided by race and ethnic background—or any other identifier—we can never achieve the social outcomes we all desire: freedom, prosperity, safety and strong communities.

It's time to speak out against Bill C-15. It's time to help the CHP elect fair-minded and far-seeing MPs who can address the issues of inequality and injustice.

Footnotes

¹ www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/decl_doc.html

² www.canadianlawyermag.com/practice-areas/indigenous/bill-c-15-to-affirm-undrip-as-human-rights-instrument-applicable-to-canadian-law/336059

³ www.cnn.com/2020/02/14/asia/coronavirus-who-china-intl-hnk/index.html

⁴ tworowtimes.com/opinion/bill-c-15-and-the-debate-around-undrip-becoming-canadian-law/

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