

WALLIN  
*Pamela*

**The Pilgrims of the United States**

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**New York**

**“The first act of all persuasion is clarity of purpose.”**

**Rex Murphy**

Please check against delivery

## THANK YOU'S

1. Jim Zirin –whom I have come to know and respect. I had the opportunity to be on his TV show –a turning of the tables for me – and his genuine interest in the relationship between our two countries was music to the ears of this unlikely diplomat – thank him for this opportunity

2. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO pay my respects and thanks to your late President Henry Luce III – with whom I had a lovely lunch in this very building - we discussed journalism and politics and New York and diplomacy –and I appreciate that he extended a hand in friendship to me.

And I want to thank all of you for this honour. I am humbled by impressive list of those who have come before me...including a former Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson who, when he addressed the Pilgrims in 1963, said, that friendship, friendly visits, and a friendly atmosphere could not resolve all our differences.

“These things can help, and help greatly,” he noted, “ but our relations are too complicated and too deep-rooted for that.”

He was right then, and now, more than 40 years later, his words are truer still. We need a reality check on our relationship.

In 1963- Canada did about \$ 8 B dollars worth of trade with the U.S. each year. Today, we do that much business in less than a week.

\*a truck crosses our shared border every 2 and half seconds as do some 200 million people each year.

\*one and a half billion dollars worth of goods and services cross the border everyday.

\*there's more two way trade across a single bridge -the Ambassador Bridge between Windsor and Detroit than the US does with any other country.

This relationship is about more than trade ties –it's about the integration of business and family and culture.

Thomas Paine, an American philosopher and journalist, once wrote that we must all learn to think thoughts other than those we are used to thinking –to hear with other's ears - and to try to see the world through the eyes of others.

I hope we can all do a little of that tonight through my remarks and with the conversation and questions they may provoke. To follow the Pilgrim's motto: "Here and Everywhere" the conversation between must go on.

We hope to be the answer to your needs....

We have what you need:

- The black gold –the oil
- The blue gold –the water
- The green gold –the wood

So let's look at the state of the relationship.

It is said that each person's life is lived as a series of conversations. For me that is quite literally true. I've had thousands of those exchanges professionally – in the glare of the TV lights. Now those conversations happen –discreetly – and mostly behind closed doors.

From each conversation I've gleaned some insight about the instinctive curiosity and generosity of the human spirit.

There was the late Al Purdy, the poet who announced that I, as a broadcaster, had the best job in the world – except.... for that of the poet.

"How could "poet" be the best job," I asked. "You make no money, there's little respect or fame in literary circles – and your books are seldom bestsellers?"

Poets, he said, are observers who see with their eyes and their hearts –and this allowed him to live by his mantra, which was simply to "STAY STUPID" – which, he explained, meant "keeping your mind open."

Then there was the conversation with the late scientist Stephen Jay Gould who evoked the words of the British writer G.K. Chesterton. Gould was talking about science as art. Roughly paraphrased, Chesterton had argued that the most important part of any painting is its frame –it tells us what we are looking at and which side is up....

His point: that the essence of art is limitation.

We must learn to recognize that there are boundaries on what we can do in life too - we must know our limits.

Framing your world – then focusing on where you can make a difference.

Where I choose to try to make a difference is on the frontline of the largest economic relationship in the world

The Canada/US “relationship” is the frame for my world.

Diplomacy is - very much like politics – the art of the possible.

And..... “The first act of all persuasion is clarity of purpose.”

It is the task of the journalist – simply put – to without fear or favour, inform minds and provide perspective so that others can choose wisely.

And, as it turns out, that is precisely the job of the diplomat.

Because without perspective, context, a sense of history and a knowledge of the present – how can we have an accurate and informed picture of ourselves or our neighbours? It’s a pre-requisite to any relationship.

In journalism, you always hit the ground running, becoming the “instant expert”, filing reports based on a quick study, a gut reaction and a daily deadline.

The diplomat’s job is the reporter’s unrequited dream: the chance to live, and breathe another place – to come to know it – its nuance, its nature...

I have this extraordinary opportunity to witness history on the run -- to see a different country - one that is still healing and grieving; and to *hear* it debate the balance between hard won civil liberties with the need for security in the wake of 9/11; and to *watch* it decide the fundamental question of who is best arbitrate that debate.

America is also a country at war; we know that crisis tests - and often defines character...Americans and America itself are being tested. And so are its friends.

What is rarer still, however, is the privilege of seeing my own country –Canada – not just through the eyes of others (and that’s quite a view!) but through my own – yet, from a very different vantage point. And this time, more as participant than observer.

You know I feel a little like Dr. Phil these days. I’m forever talking about “the relationship.”

But we know this from our own lives, that all relationships –between husbands, wives, siblings or friends, need maintenance and that the most important tool is an ability to listen – and actually HEAR what’s being said by the other.

This is no less true for countries so closely connected. And no less difficult.

Historian Bartlett Brebner was on to something with his assessment of the challenge at hand:

“Americans are benevolently ignorant about Canada, while Canadians are malevolently well informed about the US.”

It's true that 9 out of 10 of us live within a few hundred miles of the border – the opposite ratio would be true for Americans.

But proximity is no guarantee of understanding.

We need a dispassionate sense of how Americans think and work and feel and see the world and see us. Both the facts – and the truths.

So that brings us back to the question of diplomacy – and how we are to go about influencing our powerful neighbour to the south - - - well, how about the obvious?

*To win influence in the U.S., why not – first- try understanding the place?*

Too often, Canada has sought to relate to America by proclaiming Canadian values, policies and political systems as superior.

This strategy, not surprisingly, doesn't work. In the first place, I find that Americans are quite rightly proud of who and what they are and the values that represent them. I have found no evidence that you want to *be* us. And so it begs the question - why do we want you to be just like us when we don't want to be just like you –and why do Canadians tend to think our system is inherently superior –rather than simply different.

As Henry Kissinger once told a young American diplomat who went off to tell the Chinese a thing or two and to wag his finger at the Chinese –“The Chinese have run their system for 3,000 years without advice from the U.S. – they don't like to be lectured by a country that's 200 years old.”

And as Mr. Kissinger once told me in an interview:

“In diplomacy, you don't want total victory because you have to keep dealing with these people again and again and so your opposite – your counterpart – should feel that he has achieved something as well.”

And we also need to get beyond the stereotypes and the myths that persist, despite the proximity –

You know....Americans –the big, brash, arrogant bullies..... The Canadians – those timid, but oh so nice, Park Rangers, who dwell in the northern wilderness.

As NYT columnist David Brooks put it: Americans love to buy products that shout “I am large – I’m loud –I’m ready for anything.” He calls it “*getting in touch with your inner longshoreman.*”

An American, giving a speech stateside about Canada/US relations gave his version of the Canadian stereotype:

Canada, he said, is just like vichyssoise –cold, half-French and hard to stir!

Of course we are different – and independent –countries with different political systems - try explaining the US electoral college system to a Canadian or minority government or separatist federalists to an American!

But if I have gleaned something during my short tenure that is useful to begin the process of understanding, it is that the guiding principles of America are: patriotism, faith and traditional family ties.

There was a wonderful stat in a Pew Research poll --91% of Americans describe themselves as “very patriotic” and a slightly higher number believe that given the opportunity, anybody regardless of race, religion, creed or colour would move to the USA if given a chance.”

Many –including me - envy that pride and patriotism –others, in many capitals around the world, of course, see it as arrogance.

The anti-Americanism that has spread across Europe – and our own country as well – is not a very useful or constructive response.

And we express these views at our peril –not for fear of some punitive American retaliation – but because it is the antithesis of what we purport to be.

And even a fundamental disagreement over the war or disdain for a President, personally or politically, should not blunt our sensitivities to the true nature of the violation Americans have experienced with 9/11 – or to the reality of our own vulnerability.

And while some may be disdainful of the difficult road the Americans are now walking, we should realize that there but for the grace of God go all of us ---

Remember Air India, Bali, Madrid, Beslan - London ....the terrorist does not just target the USA.

In the post 9/11 world we can't risk operating in a world of simplistic or ideological reactions, smug moral superiority or outdated stereotypes – there is simply too much at stake.

For all of us in the business of relationship building -We need to understand the profound and continuing effect of 9/11 – the memory of that heinous act is seared on the collective consciousness and the individual scars have not yet healed...*it is your frame for the world*; the context for decision-making;

At best, anti-Americanism is a defence mechanism – at worst, it is prejudice, fuelled by envy or anger or naïve view of the world.

That said -Getting along doesn't always mean going along. A relationship is not a zero sum game.

And in my view “not being Americans” does not qualify as an affirmation of sovereignty – but that is a message best delivered at home.

And it is time for us to look at our responsibilities in the new world, not because the Americans have demanded it of us – but because it is in our own self-interest to define what role we are willing to play on the global stage.

We do not want to be a “spectator” nation.

And the reality is that our economies are “integrated”.

It is also true that the relationship is asymmetric because of the relative size of the two economies, period. That asymmetry does not imply that we are subservient, just smaller.

The fact of the matter is that the US is our largest economic partner - and we are yours. We need to strengthen, not walk away from trade deals because we have an economy to manage and it's easier when there are rules.

We want to run budget surpluses - not to claim our economic superiority --but because running a surplus gives us the freedom and finances to ensure an independent country that can make choices about healthcare, or education or helping the have-nots.



We too want to advance democracy and civil society and ensure our values can one day be shared by those who live in poverty or under tyranny or in failed states.

Sometimes we will choose to advance those causes with America at our side (or we at theirs) and other times we will choose an independent course. Either way, understanding the complexity of the constantly morphing global players – like China or India but particularly the US - is essential.

But the most important tool in our relationship with the US is honesty. Honesty builds trust. And trust is at the core of any relationship.

The reality is: We ARE friends and relatives - we play on each other's hockey teams, attend each other's universities, work for one of the thousands of cross border companies;

We invest in each other's entrepreneurship; and vacation in each other's backyards.

Our comedians, songwriters and authors entertain and our journalists deliver the news to American homes and we all – on both sides of the 49<sup>th</sup> –readily consume the culture that Canadians have helped create.

Now, this is not to say we don't have important and costly differences on everything from security to same sex marriage to softwood lumber, not to mention borders closed to our beef - but we need to be honest about the problems too. And focus not just on trade disputes but also on shared values. We may well have very different means to a desired end!!

Call it constructive engagement: an ability to confront and challenge one another but without the need to establish moral superiority. For example, we need our friends to recognize and respect our concerns about sovereignty if we are to help them address their concerns about security.....

Because we both want and need the trade to continue because it is our economic lifeline:

\* In fact, 25% of all American exports come to Canada –we are the largest market for 39 of the 50 states.

\* Canada sells more of its output (87%) to the US than we consume at home, making us our own second largest trading partner! This trade is generates 38% of our national income.

\* And we do more trade with Home Depot head office in Atlanta than we do with the country of FRANCE.

And on energy, it's Canada – not Saudi Arabia or Iraq –that is the largest supplier of oil, natural gas and electricity.

So open borders are crucial – provided those open borders are SECURE ones.

And we are doing that with a National security Strategy, a new Public Safety Dept and since 9/11 we have been working on Smart Borders Accord...

In the end, it's all about communication and understanding – about a willingness, as Mr. Paine would say, to hear with other's ears, and think thoughts we are not used to thinking

And let us also remember the words of the late great American journalist Sydney Harris:

“An idealist,” he said, “ believes the short run doesn't count.  
A cynic believes the long run doesn't matter.

A realist believes that what is done or left undone  
in the short run DETERMINES the long run.”

Please join me in doing what needs to be done!

Consul General Pamela Wallin  
JANUARY, 2006