

RANDOM REFLECTIONS: Dealing with Difficulties!

By Kathryn Wishlow

With the elections behind us, the hard work can now begin. Trying to navigate the tricky and ever-changing tariffs (taxes) will be a challenge that affects every single one of us. I do not envy the new Prime Minister's difficult future in dealing with an inconsistent administration that already ignored and broke the last free trade agreement they negotiated.

From where I sit, the similarities between Canada and the country south of our border, and Ukraine and Russia are obvious. It seems to me that we represent another smaller country with all of the water, wood, rare earth minerals and large coastal exposures that a larger, needier, greedier and more aggressive country next door desires. Canada's vulnerability makes me feel wary and uncomfortable. With conversations I have had with many others in the last three months, I know I am not the only one who is concerned. The frustration becomes ... what can an individual do?

I sure wish I had an easy solution because I would stand on top of the CN Tower and shout it out to the whole country. Probably anyone

with clear answers, who is not afraid of heights would! There are so few of us (our country's population is smaller than the state of California) and we live so far apart, that I don't believe we could stand side by side touching hands and even reach across Canada from coast to coast. Hmmmm ... that was an interesting picture in my imagination!

Of course, carefully buying local, Canadian made or other friendly country products helps. Encouraging interprovincial trading likely means federal intervention in standardizing quality and production procedures. That will not be easy, will incur costs and may take time, but surely it would be worth it? Our best neighbours and trading partners SHOULD be ourselves, with surpluses going to friendly trading partners that can supply our off-season needs. Or maybe we need a huge national investment in greenhouses to effectively provide for the fresh fruit and vegetable necessities we still have in harsher seasons?

Answers and solutions are available. I am convinced that many creative minds in this country each

have at least one piece of the puzzle that can help us solve our problems through these difficult times. Usually "chaos is the harbinger of change" and changing things is how they can be improved upon to fit our current needs. I know, nobody really likes change! But, it is inevitable and participating in voicing our opinions plus sharing ideas, will keep promoting the fine tuning we always need to do to shape our country's better future.

It is my hope that we don't get discouraged by the enormous changes that need to happen to keep our "true north strong and free". I shudder at ANY talk of separation within Canada! That is NOT the best solution! We already have 50 separate states south of us that cannot find common thought, standardize and unite long enough to accomplish any strengthening goals. We certainly do not need to become the 51st UN-United State!

(Kathryn Wishlow belongs to White Pine Writers Inc., a local group of like-minded authors who encourage and support all facets of writing and publishing literary efforts. Follow them on FaceBook or www.whitepinewriters.ca)