**Trump Joked that Canada Should Become the 51st State – Alberta and Saskatchewan Should Do It Now!**

 When I was a kid in the 1970s, my dad, and his friends, all would rant about how the west should leave Canada and join the US where we would be much better off. At the time, I thought he was out of his mind I knew better as what could be better than being in Canada. Fast forward 50 years, I now believe that his friends and he were absolutely right all along, and I would be all over at least Alberta and Saskatchewan leaving Canada and become Americans tomorrow!

I’m now a dual citizen living in California though still spending a great deal of time in Canada, experience life on both sides of the fence, and all I see is upside for Alberta and Saskatchewan to join the US. Alberta and Saskatchewan have been Canada’s cash cow my entire life. Alberta and Saskatchewan have never really had a seat at the table politically at the federal level, and have been repeatedly abused by Canadian federal governments.

I graduated from the U of Alberta business program in 1982, and there was virtually nothing for jobs available in Alberta as a result of the 1980 National Energy Policy that devastated Alberta for the good the eastern Canada for several years. This all too familiar scenario looks to be replayed over the next several years with potentially even more devastating consequences for the west.

The federal govt has always been delighted to take the money from the west, principally from Alberta and Saskatchewan but perpetually refuses to provide the two provinces much of a say how that money is spent. I say its time for Alberta and Saskatchewan to say adios to Canada, let Ontario and Quebec deal with the broke welfare state that has lost whatever culture Canada had, that they have created, while Alberta and Saskatchewan can thrive as US states.

At a very high level, there are several considerations where I believe Alberta and Saskatchewan would tremendously benefit seceding from Canada and becoming the 51st state in the US.

**Economic Opportunity, Taxation and Debt**

Alberta has contributed a net of $67 billion to the federal government during the past nine years, and Saskatchewan a much smaller but positive net contribution. Alberta and Saskatchewan contribute 21.5% of Canada’s GDP while representing 15% of Canada’s population.

The federal Liberal government has continually ramped up crushing taxation and wealth transfer to the point that tax to GDP ratio in Canada is 33% vs 25% in the US. Canada's national debt has more than doubled in these nine years, rising from approximately $616 billion in 2015 to over $1.2 trillion as of 2024…about $285,000 per every man, woman and child in Canada today. The federal government has grown 40%, and now close to 50% of Canadians either work directly or indirectly for Canadian governments. Governments generate little GDP and don’t innovate and make anything. This will be a herculean task to unwind the disaster that has unfolded in Canada.

Canada is now an economic disaster of colossal proportions. What has Alberta and Saskatchewan gotten out of their economic contribution to Canada and this massive deficit spending? That’s a rhetorical question.

*What changes becoming the 51st state?*

Integration with the U.S. economy would provide direct access to the world’s largest consumer market, reduce trade barriers, and attract foreign investment. This would be huge for Alberta and Saskatchewan.

U.S. states retain control over resource royalties, enabling greater economic self-determination. The money would stay in Alberta and Saskatchewan. This means the massive wealth transfer from Alberta and Saskatchewan to the rest of Canada ends with a much fairer division of wealth between the US federal government and the state. Transitioning to the American system would eliminate carbon taxes, reduce income taxes, and eliminate equalization payments.

The cash cow would just get bigger, stay local and certainly not be squeezed by the rest of Canada like it is now.

**Representation**

Alberta elects 34 MPs and Saskatchewan elects 14 MPs. This is 48 MPs out of 343 MPs in Parliament. This has historically provided the two provinces little to no voice in how Canada is run. Until the age of the internet, election coverage would only start the moment the polls closed in Alberta at 8 pm, and the first thing Albertans would see at 8:01 is that the election has already been decided by Ontario and Quebec, and that their votes were meaningless. This lack of a real voice in Canada remains today.

Many in Alberta and Saskatchewan were especially alienated by Federal government actions during Covid with mandatory lockdowns and vaccine mandates, the Emergencies Act enacted targeted at protesting truckers with hot tubs and bouncy castles, while Gaza protestors continually destroy property, green warriors blow up gas plants, indigenous people block critical rail lines for extended periods et al with seemingly impunity.

*What would change becoming the 51st state?*

Representation in the U.S. Congress and the US Senate would give Alberta and Saskatchewan a stronger voice in national policy. Alberta and Saskatchewan would each have two Senators in the Senate, and Alberta would have an estimated six Representatives in Congress while Saskatchewan would have two Representatives in Congress. It would be a voice vs essentially no voice now.

**Green and Climate Change Policies**

Canada’s federal government’s green energy policies attack the core of the Alberta and Saskatchewan economies, and this Canadian golden goose that provides healthy transfer payments to have not provinces and funds an ever increasing spend on social programs. The goose is being pushed into a precarious position where the health of the goose is becoming challenged and may die if the federal government carries on as they are.

Alberta and Saskatchewan weren’t consulted regarding federal government green policies, but instead these policies have been imposed upon the two provinces. The result will be tremendous economic harm for questionable environmental gain. There is obviously tremendous debate regarding what the world needs to do to protect the environment, but there is little debate that effectively killing the energy industry in Alberta and Saskatchewan alone will have virtually no impact on the world’s environment.

*What changes becoming the 51st state?*

The US federal government has green policies, but nothing nearing the burden that Canadian green policies are. Alberta and Saskatchewan would align with U.S. energy policies, reducing regulatory hurdles on oil and gas projects and gaining direct access to American infrastructure and markets.

The US federal government would not do everything their power to significantly curtail or shutdown the energy industry that is the lifeblood of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and has long been cash cow for Canada.

Alberta and Saskatchewan would be free to develop their own green and climate initiatives and not have them mandated by the Federal government.

**Immigration**

The Canadian federal government has unilaterally ramped up immigration since Covid without significant consultation with the provinces. The arguments for immigration are valid. Canada needs an influx of young workers to fund the costs of an aging population. There is also the notion that Canada also needs more workers to fund the actual infrastructure required to maintain the enormous landmass of Canada, and that Canada really needs 60 to 80 million people to create the economies of scale to afford this required infrastructure.

Regardless, it’s the haphazard management of immigration that is the issue. Alberta has been flooded with immigrants partially driving a housing crisis and overwhelming infrastructure starting with local schools and housing. That $67 billion that Alberta sent to the federal government would sure come in handy to fund all the infrastructure that is suddenly needed resulting from the significant immigration increase.

There is also a question of whether the skill sets of the immigrants that Canada is welcoming is a match for the labour force needs of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and is the result growing provincial social safety net burdens vs growing the workforce, and funding the costs of an aging population?

Illegal immigration and the burden that places on taxpayers in the US is still problematic though we are now discovering that there may close to 500,000 illegal immigrants in Canada. There are an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the US or 3.3% of the population. The potentially 500,000 illegal immigrants in Canada represent 1.2% of the Canadian population.

*What changes becoming the 51st state?*

Immigration as a percentage of the US population, even with illegal immigration which is now in flux to say the least, is at a much lower pace. Fewer than a million new Americans become US citizens per year. Alberta and Saskatchewan wouldn’t have the influx of immigrants that they have now with Canada accepting approximately 500,000 new Canadians per year who are locating in Alberta and Saskatchewan in significant numbers due to employment opportunities.

**Social Safety Nets**

Canada has an ever-growing social safety net which comes at a cost. Canada’s robust social programs, including unemployment benefits, welfare, housing supports, childcare subsidies, and parental leave to name a few.

Pension systems would face significant disruption, with Canadian contributors potentially losing benefits accrued under the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Social Security and Medicare are funded differently in the US, and would require significant negotiation and re-structuring to bring Alberta and Saskatchewan into the fold.

There is growing support for Universal Basic Income (UBI) national wide at the federal level in Canada. Pilots for UBI programs, though intended to reduce poverty, raise concerns about creating dependency and discouraging workforce participation.

Implementing UBI in a country that already has doubled the national debt to $1.2 trillion over the past nine years seems asinine, and I don’t believe residents of Alberta and Saskatchewan who would be paying a significant portion of the costs are agreeable with this.

*What changes becoming the 51st state?*

There is misconception in Canada that Canadian social net programs are so much better than those in the US. Canadians, including me, were very smug claiming we didn’t have people living in tents or under freeways. That all changed in Canada since Covid, and the Canadian homeless problem is now indifferent from the US homeless problem and getting worse. Fentanyl sadly knows no boundaries. The federal government policies legalizing more and more narcotics and implementing safe supply and injection sites appears to be a failure to address and drug issues in Canada.

Social security is federally managed in the US, and may actually be better in the US and pay more to recipients than OAS and CPP in Canada.

Unemployment Insurance, Workers Comp and welfare are all state-run programs in the US and vary significantly by state, some better and some worse than the Canadian equivalents. Alberta and Saskatchewan would run their own programs and determine their own rules and benefit schedules.

UBI hasn’t gained significant traction in the US, and isn’t a threat to taxpayers at this point.

**Healthcare**

Canada's universal healthcare system, funded through taxes, contrasts sharply with the U.S. system of private insurance and out-of-pocket costs. U.S. healthcare spending averages about $12,000 per person compared to Canada’s $8500 – 9000 per capita. Healthcare in Canada is obviously provided by government and funded by taxes. The US model is a combination of private insurance and government programs for seniors and poor people, Medicare and Medicaid. Every state also supplements Medicaid for poor people to a greater or lesser extent.

*What changes becoming the 51st state?*

There are numerous studies regarding healthcare outcomes comparing the two countries, but the results seem inconclusive, and there seems to be a great range of outcomes, depending where one lives in each country. While only anecdotal, my personal healthcare experience in southern California with adequate insurance has been exponentially better than the care that my friends, family and myself have ever received, and continue to receive, in Canada. If I’m seriously ill or injured, I sure want to go to a hospital in SoCal vs anywhere in Canada.

The benefit is that the cost burden is moved away from government for those who don’t qualify for Medicare or Medicaid. The risks in transitioning to the U.S. model would risk gaps in coverage for those without insurance (about 8% of the US population chooses not to purchase insurance), more administration dealing with the rat’s nest of payers and policies, and the loss of prescription drug price controls which is certainly a big one as the US subsidizes the rest of the world regarding pharmaceuticals.

This comes at a cost, and the savings in taxes are partly made up in healthcare premiums regardless of the form of employment group plans, individual plans, pay as you go et al schemes.

**LGBT and Gender Rights**

Progressive LGBT policies have been embraced nationally the federal governments, and several provincial governments, but much less so by the Alberta and Saskatchewan governments. Some provinces allow children to choose genders and not notify parents, have become very supportive of underage affirmative care, fund drag events for children normalizing transexuals and gender change, and allow transexual men to compete in women’s sports. Residents of Alberta and Saskatchewan to date haven’t supported such extreme policies and are at odds with the federal government regarding LGBT policies.

*What would change becoming the 51st state?*

There are national protections for LGBT rights in the US regarding human rights and national labour laws et al. Beyond that, the Supreme Court has ruled that transgender issues are a state issue, so Alberta and Saskatchewan would be free to develop their own policies around LGBT and transgender issues, and would not be unilaterally imposed on them by the US federal government.

**Loss of Canadian Culture – First Post-National State**

This is a big one for me. Canada has continually moved to the left on a national level, and clashes with the largely conservative values of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

It horrifies methat Justin Trudeau did make a statement about Canada having a post-national identity. In a 2015 interview with the New York Times, he said, "There is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada," and described Canada as the world's first "post-national state," and this statement reflects his view, and that of the federal government on Canada's multiculturalism and diversity.

Who gave Trudeau the mandate to pursue this goal of making Canada the world’s first post-national state? I want Canada to have the core Judeo Christian identity that I grew up with, and believe that the majority of residents in Alberta and Saskatchewan would agree with me.

The result of this has been the erosion of Judeo-Christian traditions and values has been those public celebrations of Christian holidays like Christmas, Easter and similar have been downplayed or secularized, reflecting a shift toward a more secular and multicultural identity. We even saw one school request that military personal not wear their uniforms on Remembrance Day as it would be triggering for new Canadians measures as a rejection of national traditions in favor of hyper-sensitivity.

*What would change becoming the 51st state?*

I’m pretty sure the majority of residents of Alberta and Saskatchewan don’t want a more secular and multicultural identity, and would like to say Merry Christmas, Happy Easter et al and not be called a racist and be told they are insulting Canadians that don’t have a Judeo-Christian background.

Alignment with conservative political values and reduced influence from Canada’s progressive provinces would resonate with many Prairie residents.

**Conclusion**

Alberta and Saskatchewan becoming the 51st state offers numerous advantages. Alberta and Saskatchewan would be economically far better off and have lower taxes, have greater resource development freedom, have greater political representation, not be devasted by green crusaders, not be overwhelmed by immigrants, and not be in a country determined to lose their Judeo-Christian values and traditions and unilaterally impose progressive left-wing policies that have alienated Alberta and Saskatchewan residents on a wide-ranging basis.

There are obviously a tremendous number of issues to resolve to consider succeeding from Canada and join the US, including Canada’s massive national debt, moving from OAS and CPP to US Social Security, the healthcare transition, indigenous treaties are managed et al. These issues can all be managed though.

What started as a joke may turn into an opportunity and an invitation. The Canada that I grew up seems to be no more and has become the post national state as Trudeau describes it that I don’t recognize. It makes more economic sense than ever for Alberta and Saskatchewan to “get out of Dodge” and join the US for their resident’s prosperity, and let the rest of Canada deal with the broke welfare state that they have created. Quebec opened the door with the establishment of an exit clause, and Alberta and Saskatchewan may just want to exit right through that door.