

# An Outsider's View: Lessons from an Immigrant

Peyman Askari, February 28, 2025

The Purple Wave – Issue 172



## An Outsider's View: Lessons from an Immigrant

I arrived in Canada in 1989, a wide-eyed child stepping into a world that seemed familiar in appearance but utterly foreign in practice. Over time, I came to appreciate how being

an outsider gave me a unique perspective on this country—one that has only sharpened with age.

### **The First Culture Shocks**

The first thing that stood out to me was the way children behaved. In grade four, I watched in stunned silence as a girl called her mother a b\*\*\*\*. My reaction wasn't rooted in morality or empathy; it was sheer disbelief—like watching someone levitate. Where I came from, disrespecting my mother would have been as impossible as defying gravity. It would have ended with my father punting me like a football through a wall.

I saw this same disconnect in the way Canadians approached food. Some of my earliest memories involve wandering through the bazaars of Iran with my mother, watching her carefully select produce, instruct the vendors on what she wanted, and pay with physical cash after they tallied the total on an abacus. The transactions were personal, deliberate. When we came to Canada, the entire process seemed automated—grocery stores stocked everything in sterile aisles, as if food grew straight from the shelves.

When I started making Canadian friends, I eventually got invited over to their homes. I remember thinking how much cooler they were compared to us. They had Doritos and pretzels and M&Ms on their tables, whereas my family had pistachios, figs, and fruits. I always felt self-conscious inviting them over, worried that they would judge our backwards ways. In hindsight, it should have been the opposite, as many of the chronic illnesses we are seeing today are the result of processed foods.

Growing up in Vancouver in the late 90s was heaven. Most business was either cash, or if it was through banking, it was through a system that was not as heavily regulated as it is today. The roads and highways were essentially the same, but with a population a fraction of what it is now, transportation was far easier. Even in Whistler, where I currently live in a cabin built in the 80s, the road infrastructure is surprisingly wide for such a sparsely populated area. If a small community could afford such expansive roads back then, why can't we build a new bridge or tunnel in Vancouver today?

During one summer, my uncles came to visit us, and we took a road trip to Banff. My two uncles had a convertible and wanted to see how fast it could go. They hit around 180 km/h when they saw a police officer in the rearview mirror. Not speaking any English and with the police officer unable to communicate that they were going way too fast, the officer simply took my uncle's finger and placed it on the speedometer where it read 100. Then, he let them go. Fast forward to 2023, an Ontario Provincial Police officer fined me several hundred dollars for going 20 km over the limit in the middle of nowhere, and he made sure I acknowledged that he was doing me a favor. That sense of community policing, where officers served rather than punished, is long gone.

### **The Political Indoctrination of Youth**

By grade five, I began to notice how teachers, knowingly or not, influenced our political views. I remember one incident where our social studies teacher declared that Pierre Trudeau was the greatest prime minister in history. When I asked why, she confidently responded that he had done things like performing a pirouette behind the Queen. The confused look on my face must have made her realize how ridiculous her answer was.

This pattern continued in subtle ways. When describing the castle doctrine, teachers framed it as if Americans were sitting on their porches with rifles drawn, waiting for an innocent pedestrian to step onto their property so they could shoot them. Similarly, discussions about the American legal system made it sound as though lawsuits were the national pastime, rather than an integral check-and-balance within a democracy. Fast forwarding a few decades, we have seen a rural Saskatchewan farmer charged with second degree murder for defending his property after four thieves trespassed on it, and we have also had a Prime Minister suggesting that Canadians have no right to self defense with a gun.

As a third example, I remember how our grade 5 teacher would tell us stories of the nasty Australians who hated foreigners and refused to help them. Of course, they were referring to Australia's strict policy towards refugees. This liberal open borders mentality had crept in even back then, and we see it metastasizing today with the Deputy Mayor of Toronto calling for a path to citizenship for people here illegally or with expired visas.

As a final example, around grade seven, other political issues started to creep into my school curriculum, specifically euthanasia. They tried to present it as fair and balanced, so they had to present both sides of the argument, but looking back, it is clear to me now that their goal was to normalize what we today call Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID). This shows that the problem with our education system is that we look too far into the future with this progressive mindset of building the type of society we strive to live in, and not enough into the past to understand how we got here.

### **University, Work, and the Global Perspective**

After graduating in 2001, I pursued studies in the STEM fields, which at the time had not yet been touched by the growing woke culture. This insulation from ideological indoctrination allowed me to focus purely on knowledge and technical skills. My career took me around the world—five years in Toronto, another five in the UK, and countless experiences in different urban centers. Being absorbed into the fast-paced lifestyle of major cities, I softened into believing that government should take care of us from cradle to grave. It's strange, but the roughly dozen years I spent in university were some of the most useless, least consequential years of my life as I learned no life experiences and gained no wisdom.

### **The Freedom Convoy and My Awakening**

Then in 2022, two remarkable protests sprung up. The first, and more famous one, the Freedom Convoy in Ottawa, I will not speak to. I will, instead, focus on the Coutts border protests where some proud Albertans made a stand at the Canada-US border. I rented a camper van, bought some supplies, and along with my trusted associate Max, made my way over there. The people I met were incredibly friendly and open to political discussions. They offered me food and welcomed me to their makeshift bars and restaurants set up on the back of their pickup trucks.

At the Coutts border, there is a four lane highway, with a roughly 100m patch of grass between both sides. All the protestors, including myself, had parked their cars and RVs in this central patch and spent the night right there in the middle of the highway. How cool is that! This was the first moment in my life when I realized that that highway which we

paid for, and which we helped maintain, was **our** highway, not the King's highway, not the Crown's highway and certainly not the government's highway.

The other thing that really struck me was how resourceful these simple folk were. There were crane operators that helped with the lifting of heavier items, like porta-potties, which they themselves provided. They had brought in those stacks of hay as make shift benches. They had set up an entire barbecue station. Contrast this with urban lifestyles, where little girls get kicked out of a public park by the police just for setting up lemonade stands.

### **Conclusion**

My little immigration story may have started in 89, but Canada's story peaked in the 60's, and it was all down hill from there. With the birth of the sexual revolution and feminism, we started seeing the erosion of the family unit. This erosion was carried out through the family court system with the embrace of no fault divorce, it was carried out through the education system with an emphasis on compulsory state run education, and it was carried out through an assault of Christian roots of this nation through, among other things, urbanization and the introduction of the Charter in 82.

With the steady erosion of our nationhood, our culture started to become eroded as well. This erosion was carried out through movements like the Bilingual & Bicultural Commission of 63, the drift of power away from the individual provinces to the federal government, and eventually the adoption of the Charter. With the Charter, common law started to become eroded. This erosion was carried out through activist judges, but also through a misunderstanding of what the Charter was meant to be. The provinces seemed to forget that Sec 33: the Notwithstanding Clause was meant to keep the provincial parliaments sovereign. The judges seemed to conveniently forget that the Charter was meant to be a lens through which Common Law would have to pass through, not a brand new, parallel system, divorced from Common Law. Meanwhile, no one really knew how much of a mistake it would be to include the Section 1: Reasonable Limits clause, especially since the word 'demonstrably justified' was open to interpretation. In 1982 we went from God given, inalienable rights afforded to us through centuries of British Common Law, stretching back to the English Bill of Rights, to reasonably limited rights, or in other words, permissions, granted by the state.

Finally, Canada's economy has been on a trend towards centralization of wealth and power. The corporations use that power to lobby government to enact more laws which ensure them more wealth. With the restaurant industry, for example, the large restaurant chains lobby for better fire suppression systems knowing that their locations can take the \$300k hit, but small, family owned ones cannot. With less competition, they make more profit, and can lobby for more regulations to ensure no one can break into their market. With the medical industry, large hospitals and clinics lobby for more paperwork and more bureaucracy because they can take the hit. Private practices then cannot afford all the paperwork and so they just go work for clinics. A similar thing has happened with small architecture and engineering firms as well as with foreign exchange offices. The only things really remaining are extremely low hanging fruit like notaries which can be conducted in the lobby of someone's apartment.

All of the above can be characterized as a loss of individual sovereignty and the loss of the concept of property rights. When I came to Canada in 89, people decided what speed to drive at; people decided who to hire and for how much and for how long; people transacted with one another directly through cash; people decided where they would live and what education to provide their children and what values to raise them with and how to keep them healthy and safe; people decided how to run their businesses, when and in what industry. We've lost the concept of individual sovereignty and have instead replaced it with a government that believes it is God, and operates above the concept known as the rule of law. We've lost the concept of property rights and instead there is a perception in the public that government ensures our energy supply, our food supply, and manages our roads and sanitation, so it should also manage our businesses.

The People's Party is by far the best national movement in Canada, and its platform is 100% spot on. It has, however, moved the nation forward as far as it can. It now rests on the shoulders of the citizenry to step up and fill the one void that a political party is not well situated to fill: self education. I am calling on all Canadian citizens to put their differences aside and to come together in search of the truths that ensure a healthy society. As I operate principally in the realm of the internet, I will offer my suggestions for online podcasters and social media influencers, which I am calling Peyman's Rules of Podcasting:

- 1. Attack the message, not the messenger.** We don't have time for cancel culture and purity tests. If someone is saying something true, it doesn't matter who they are.
- 2. Ignore public attacks from social media influencers.** Let's stop getting caught up in ego-driven drama. We must adopt the digital version of "turning the other cheek."
- 3. Cross-promote.** Go on each other's shows. Work together. The U.S. did this before their historic 2024 victory—we need to do the same.
- 4. Encourage others to start their own platforms.** The goal is a decentralized, grassroots media ecosystem—not another Juno News-style top-down structure.