

The Purple Wave Issue 170

The Art of Negotiation



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Introduction

A corner stone of “Free Enterprise” is that two parties come together to find a mutually agreeable solution. One where, in the end, both parties are happy. The seller is happy with the proceeds received and the buyer is happy with the product received at an acceptable price. There is skill required on both sides to ensure that there is no remorse afterwards. Diplomacy is an example of making sure negotiations between sovereign nations go smoothly as there are egos to be taken into consideration as well as financial benefits. A key tool is knowing your opponent on the other side of the table, especially their strengths but also their weaknesses.

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Feature Article

You Magnificent Bastard!



With the title of my article I am not referring to any politician, alive or dead. Do not read some simple insults into this article but follow my thinking on how Maxime Bernier is a thinking politician while the others do not know what they are doing. Let me demonstrate this with the following.

In the film *Patton* (1970!), the scene unfolds in the North African desert, where American and German forces are engaged in a fierce battle. General George S. Patton, wearing his signature helmet and field jacket, stands atop a ridge, surveying the battlefield through his binoculars. As the camera cuts between his intense gaze and the chaotic, dust-covered engagement below, it becomes clear that the American forces are overwhelming the Germans. Tanks explode, infantry advances, and the German lines begin to falter.

Brimming with excitement, Patton delivers the now-famous line with a triumphant grin: "Rommel, you magnificent bastard, I read your book!" His voice is filled with exhilaration and admiration as he watches his strategy unfold precisely as planned. The camera lingers on his expression—a mix of satisfaction and competitive joy—before cutting back to the battlefield, where the German forces are in full retreat. The moment perfectly captures Patton's aggressive confidence, deep respect for military strategy, and sheer joy in outmaneuvering a formidable opponent.

If you are interested, that [scene can be found at this link from YouTube](#). George C. Scott plays a better Patton than Patton.

Patton's exclamation is an acknowledgment that he had used Rommel's own principles against him. By reading [Infantry Attacks](#), Patton gained insight into Rommel's tactics—how he approached battle, deployed his forces, and exploited weaknesses. This allowed Patton to anticipate and counter Rommel's strategies effectively in the North African campaign.

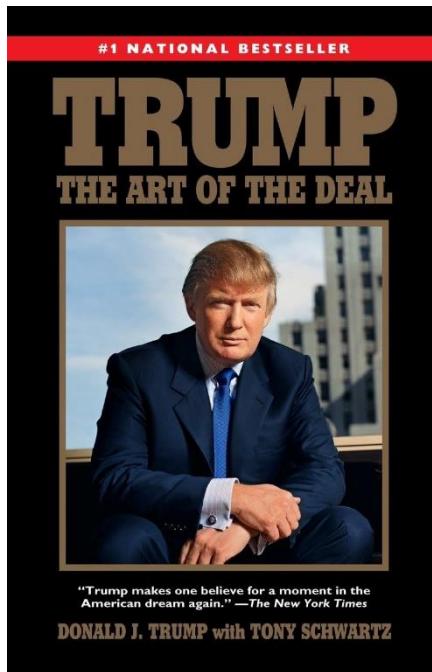
Turning knowledge into victory, Patton's deep study of warfare meant he could pre-emptively counter the strategies Rommel was likely to use. Essentially, he was beating Rommel with Rommel's own playbook. The phrase "magnificent bastard" is a mix of admiration and triumph—Patton respected Rommel as a brilliant strategist but revelled in having outmaneuvered him.

While the line is iconic in the film, historically, Rommel was not actually present at the battle (the Battle of El Guettar in March 1943). By that time, Rommel had left North Africa due to illness. However, the scene's essence remains true—Patton was a meticulous student of his adversaries and used that knowledge to achieve battlefield success.

This moment in *Patton* is one of the most famous cinematic depictions of military strategy at play, showing how a deep understanding of one's enemy can be just as powerful as having superior numbers or firepower.

Why is any of this important? Donald Trump also wrote a book, [The Art of the Deal](#). In his book Donald Trump outlines several negotiation tactics he has employed in various situations. One prominent technique is using bold proposals to unsettle counterparts and gain leverage. This bold proposal anchors the beginning of the negotiations. A recent example of this is his suggestion that Canada could become the 51st state of the United States, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau serving as its governor. While not serious, this proposal disrupts the status quo and places the other party on the defensive. By introducing such an audacious idea, Trump shifts

the focus of negotiations, potentially making other demands seem more reasonable in comparison. This approach aligns with his strategy of keeping opponents off balance and creating opportunities to achieve his objectives.



Outside of his book Trump's negotiation techniques are no secret because they have often been written about in the media. [The Wall Street Journal](#), [The Times](#), and finally, [Politico](#) are three of the many media outlets commenting on this. Over the years, media outlets have analyzed his actions through the lens of his book. For instance, in 1991, *The New York Times* journalist [John Tierney](#) observed that Trump "*appears to have ignored some of his own advice*" from the book, referencing challenges he faced with his banks at that time. This suggests that as early as the early 1990s, media discussions were linking Trump's real-world decisions to the principles outlined in *The Art of the Deal*.

From a completely different perspective, consider how [Bonnie Tyler's Holding Out for a Hero](#) encapsulates a longing for strength, virtue, and resolute leadership—qualities Canada is lacking in its negotiations with Donald Trump. Her lyrics, "*Where have all the good men gone, and where are all the gods?*" evoke a deep yearning for a hero who can rise to the occasion, someone with the foresight, strategy, and sheer force of will, to stand toe-to-toe with a figure like Trump. In contrast to Canada's current leadership, Patton was not just a warrior—he was a strategist. He read Rommel's *Infantry Attacks*, anticipated his enemy's moves, and turned the tables in battle. This is precisely what Canada needed in its dealings with Trump: a leader who has studied *The Art of the Deal* and absorbed its principles and used them to counteract Trump's aggressive negotiation style. However, instead of a shrewd tactician, Canada had Justin Trudeau—a man who, rather than outmaneuvering Trump, reacts to him, if not outright capitulating. I would wager that Trudeau did not even know that negotiations were beginning.

True to his *Art of the Deal* playbook, Trump began negotiations with a classic tactic: making an absurdly bold opening gambit to seize psychological control. His suggestion that Canada become

the 51st U.S. state and that Trudeau assume the role of governor was not meant as a literal offer. Instead, it was a disruptive maneuver designed to put Trudeau on the defensive, forcing him to engage with the premise of U.S. dominance rather than setting his own terms. Patton would have recognized this as psychological warfare—an attempt to define the battlefield before the first move was even made. Taking control in a potentially heroic manner is the nexus of Patton's strategy and what Bonnie Tyler considers in a hero.

Nevertheless, Canada has no Patton leading the counterattack. No calculating leader ready to counter Trump's tactics with a bold move of their own. Instead, Trudeau was caught flat-footed, left scrambling to deflect rather than dictate the pace of negotiations. No evidence he has ever studied Trump's book. It should be necessary reading when dealing with Trump. The book would allow any Canadian to understand the power of leverage and—most importantly—recognize that Trump respects strength above all else. Instead of projecting strategic dominance, Trudeau is often hesitant, deferring to conventional diplomatic niceties while Trump bulldozes ahead. The negotiations could have unfolded differently if Canada possessed a leader of Patton's calibre—someone willing to engage in the game with equal audacity. Imagine a Canadian leader who had read *The Art of the Deal*, understood Trump's tactics, and was prepared to counteract them with confidence, humour, and strategic brinkmanship. Such a leader would have turned Trump's proposal back on him, using it as a springboard to demand major concessions—perhaps even flipping the script to suggest a reciprocal merger of influence.

Instead, the moment passed, and Canada remained locked in a passive role. Tyler's lyrics echo the political vacuum: "*Isn't there a white knight upon a fiery steed?*" Canada needed a fighter, a strategist, a hero who could stand in the negotiation arena and outmaneuver Trump at his own game. Nevertheless, there was no such figure, so Canada was left without a hero to lead the charge.



At the risk of repeating myself, Bonnie Tyler's *Holding Out for a Hero* encapsulates a longing for strength, virtue, and resolute leadership—qualities Canada lacks in its negotiations with Donald Trump. Did not one person on Trudeau's staff not read the work? Did not one person raise his hand and say: "PM, why don't we"?

The negotiations could have unfolded very differently if Canada possessed a leader of Patton's calibre—someone willing to engage in the game with equal audacity. Imagine a Canadian leader who had read *The Art of the Deal*, understood Trump's tactics, and was prepared to counteract

them. Someone like Maxime Bernier, who I believe has read the book, and is familiar with the ideas.

Let me illustrate my thinking. During his tenure as Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2007 to 2008, Maxime Bernier engaged in several negotiations with the United States. One notable instance was in April 2008, when he participated in a [trilateral meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice](#) and Mexican Foreign Secretary Patricia Espinosa. The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation among the three nations and addressing trade, security, and regional stability issues. Bernier's contributions were noted for their clarity and commitment to advancing [Canada's interests within the North American partnership](#).

Additionally, in April 2006, Bernier agreed with the United States to end the longstanding softwood lumber dispute while serving as Canada's Minister of Industry. This agreement significantly resolved trade tensions and was a positive step in Canada-U.S. trade relations.

These instances highlight Bernier's involvement in negotiations with the U.S., where he represented Canada's positions on key bilateral and trilateral issues. [He knows what he is doing](#). Bernier is the Patton we need. He is the leader Tyler sings about – without the horse. How do we get other Canadians to see this need? How do we get them to do their part? How do we get people to vote for the only person and the only party, the Peoples Party of Canada, that, together, represent the only “hero” currently available on the Canadian political landscape? Willing and able to partake in the art of the deal to Canada’s net benefit.

By: Leo Oja

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