

Canada Provides Itself “Wiggle Room” for China’s Huawei Case

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Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou was arrested at Vancouver International airport in December by Canadian authorities at the request of the U.S. government. Canada at first maintained a position of not wanting to make the case “political” and to continue with the extradition process as Canada works with the “rule of law.” Unfortunately for Canada it is an obvious political move on the part of the U.S.; and anytime a western government uses the “rule of law” phrase, I have learned it means something shady is going on, but it does fit within the technical definition of rule of law.

But as indicated by Canada’s ambassador to China as reported on CBC this morning (Wednesday, January 23, 2019) the political aspect is fully fledged and the “rule of law” may not be all that it seems to be. From another aspect, it could be argued that McCallum’s presentations is giving Canada some room to avoid a worst case scenario, being an actual extradition to the U.S.

Canada’s ambassador to China, John McCallum actually gave a well reasoned response to Canada’s potential actions that could defeat the extradition request by the U.S. First off he noted interference from the White House (aka Trump). He then noted that U.S. laws were being applied extraterritorially, in other words out of their jurisdiction. Finally he noted that the supposed criminal action occurred because Huawei executive Meng had dealt with a country under U.S. sanctions – sanctions not supported by Canada as they result from the U.S. abrogation of the Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed along with Russia, France, Germany, China, and the U.K.

I have read the JCPOA and it is truly comprehensive; and with China as a signatory, the combination of the arrest and the abrogation of the treaty gives the Chinese very understandable reasons to be fully pissed off at the U.S.

John McCallum was sort of called out by Canada PM Trudeau who rebutted the comments once again relying on the tried (and tired) and true neoliberal platitude about the “rule of law.” But one has to wonder if McCallum acted on his own integrity and volition, if he vetted his statements through the government, or if the government provided the impetus for his statements. Regardless, the reasoning seems sound as his comments are on the mark – true, not fake news. Watch and see if McCallum remains as ambassador to China...

When the U.S. places a formal request for extradition the news location moves into the Canadian court system. It could be a long haul as at the extreme the case could be argued all the way to Canada’s supreme court, a process that could take years. In the meantime it is reported that Meng Wanzhou has applied at the University of British Columbia to take an

academic program – a good use of her house arrest time. In the best case scenario, the courts will accept the three arguments presented by John McCallum and release her from detention.

I am no lawyer, but presumably that might mean an appeal by the U.S. government, but if Canada is intelligent at that point in time it can then invoke its precious “rule of law” and stand back from preventing Meng from flying home.

But that is all speculation, nothing I have ever held to be terribly worthwhile. Overall it appears on the surface that Canada has perhaps found a way out from between a rock and a hard place, saving face but not winning any bonus points with anyone. So, thank you, Mr. McCallum for putting a touch of sanity into the current situation, may your career prosper.

...and just coming in as I type, Maduro has broken off relationships with the U.S. and Trump’s team has responded with an “all options on the table,” perspective. For Trudeau, who has supported the U.S. attitude on Venezuela by giving validation to the opposition leader as being the actual president, it will be interesting to see how far he goes in supporting any and all U.S. overt or covert schemes to dislodge another government.

Canada and its political leaders of all stripes are fully complicit, full vassals of the U.S. empire. As much as they try to deny this it is obvious from what they do rather than what they say that Canada is truly a pawn for the empire. There will probably be no surprises as once again they trumpet (sure, pun intended) their rule of law mantra as the U.S. in its quest for global military domination (for the corporations of course) overthrows another government that defies hegemony.

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