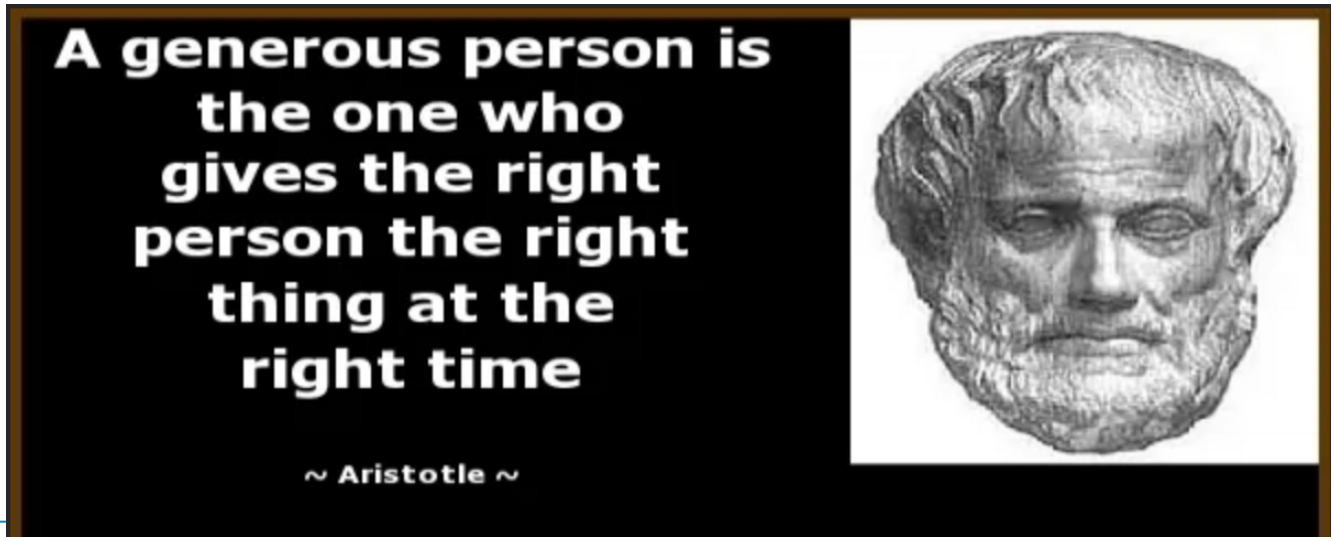
THE TYRANNY OF FOREIGN AID

Leighton B. U. Grey, KC—Creator & Host of The GreyMatter Podcast



What is generosity? Perhaps its best philosophical treatment is found in Aristotle's "Nichomachean Ethics", which holds that when generous persons give appropriate things in proper measure at the best times in proper ways and for the appropriate reasons, they do so for the sake for what is divinely beautiful. Generosity, therefore, is a human excellence, and those who develop it as a habit excel as humans. Accordingly, generosity cannot tyrannize.

What is tyranny? Perhaps its most authoritative treatment is found in Aristotle's "Politics", which states that tyrants tend to arise when the same person becomes leader of both the people and the military, and then disregards the common interest of his own people unless it happens to coincide with his own. Aristotle asserts that of all forms of government, tyranny is the most dangerous to its subjects, since tyrants make it their purpose to accumulate wealth and to undermine the excellence of others, all of whom they see as rivals. A tyrant is thus incapable of generosity.

It is not always easy or appropriate to be generous. Every decision we make influences the choices and life circumstances of others. When we engage in political activism, we seek to sway public opinion. Organizations for which we volunteer do not always meet our best expectations. Even our purchasing decisions exert influence over the employment opportunities of others. Each choice entails its own set of risks. We are, as Aristotle declared, social and political creatures, bound tougher in a complex socio-political tapestry rendering us responsible to and for each other; meaning that we are always implicitly shaping one another's lives.

Given a choice between a world in which potential donors are paralyzed by fear that their well-intentioned gifts will undermine democracy and one where donors, mindful of the responsibility they bear, still extend a helping hand, sensible people will choose the latter option. Sincere efforts offering support are no more fraught with moral peril than any other actions in life, and because they are grounded in a desire to serve others, they deserve as large a sphere of liberty as any human action. Rather than sow seeds of suspicion, we ought therefore to strive for generosity's enrichment.

Aristotle thought so highly of generosity that he regarded it as one of the principal arguments for the existence of private property. If people have nothing to call their own, then they can have nothing to choose to share with others. Yet we have so much more than property; treasure is in so many respects not so great a philanthropic resource as time, talent, and testimony. As Thomas Acquinas put it, none are so poor as to lack the means to be generous. The planned, egalitarian society is not the only just or good one, and a community in which generosity thrives is the very antithesis of tyranny.

Prime Minister Trudeau is committed to providing even more support for Ukraine with the release of "Sovereignty Bonds". Trudeau, whose net worth is estimated to have ballooned by over $300M since 2019, stated in a 29 October 2022 press release that:

"We will continue to use every tool at our disposal to support the government and people of Ukraine, and hold Russia accountable for its brutal, unjustifiable invasion…Canada and Ukraine are united—not just by the strong ties between our peoples, but also by our fundamental belief in freedom, in democracy, in justice, and in the triumph of light over darkness…As Russia continues its illegal and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine, Canada will continue to support the Ukranian government and people. In standing up for themselves, Ukranians are standing up for democracy everywhere."

The Government of Canada will therefore issue Ukraine Sovereignty Bonds "which will help the government to continue operations and provide essential services to Ukranians", such as supporting pensions and purchasing fuel during Winter. This new financial commitment is in addition to the $2B in assistance that Canadians have already extended to Ukraine this year, on top of an additional $1.5B in military aid, and $320M committed to humanitarian response efforts. Trudeau also announced that Canada is allocating $55M in previously announced funding to support "winterization initiatives" including shelter, heating appliances, fuel, and other essential items.

Finally, Trudeau also announced that Canada will impose more of the sanctions that have been so effective at enriching Russia. These new measures will target 35 senior officials of energy entities across six energy sector entities involved in Russia's ongoing violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Since February of this year, Canada has committed more than $600M in military assistance to Ukraine, including 39 armoured combat support vehicles that are now beginning to arrive in Europe. Meanwhile, none of this valuable material and weaponry is being replaced into the Canadian arsenal, because we simply cannot afford to do so, let alone meet even our basic financial obligations to NATO.

Canadian families face the reality of a Winter every bit as cold as the one in Ukraine. Yet the Liberal government refuses to provide any income tax relief to the Canadians whose generosity has already been tyrannically enforced by their government. The Liberals have caused historic inflation and rising interest rates due to their complete mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic and other inept domestic economic policies, the effects of which are

being borne by Canadian workers and their families. The Trudeau government and its NDP sycophants voted down a Conservative proposal to provide income tax relief to Canadians. The Trudeau government further plans to double and triple carbon taxes on Canadians this Winter, many of whom are struggling just to keep the lights on, buy groceries, and heat their homes. There are no "winterization initiatives" being offered to Canadians for shelter, heating, fuel, or other essential items. The Trudeau government is instead increasing all of these costs for us. As for freedom, they are about to pass a Bill that will essentially make it illegal for us to even complain about all of this in the public square that is social media and the internet.

To add insult to all of this injury, the Liberal government has been singularly responsible for the dismissal of tens of thousands of Canadian workers who simply refused to participate in an experimental drug trial. Many thousands more private sector workers also lost their jobs because their employers followed the Trudeau government's example. Most employees put out of work by vaccine mandates are still looking for new jobs and remain disqualified from eligibility for employment insurance because they now comprise a sub-class of human beings known as "the unvaccinated". What about their entitlement to "freedom, democracy, and justice"? Their leader is oblivious to the needs of Canadians suffering under the oppressive yoke of a tax and spend government that collects and surrenders the public purse to virtue signal globalist causes through the World Monetary Fund.

So now, after Canadians have shouldered a huge financial burden to pay for a war that is not theirs, to provide support that will never be reciprocated, we are expected to give even more? To buy government bonds with after-tax dollars, which for most Canadians represent less than half of our gross incomes? To determine whether this is generosity or tyranny, we need only apply Aristotle's definition:

Is our government generous? Not to Canadians.
Is the gift appropriate? Clearly not. We cannot afford it. Not all.
Is the gift in proper measure? No. It is excessive. It is asks far too much of us.
Is it the best time for this? Absolutely not.
Is the gift for the right reasons? No. This is only supports Trudeau's globalist agenda.

Nor is there any reason to suspect that providing more $ to Ukraine will do anything but extend the war and make it more expensive. Russia has demonstrated its resolve and even threatened use of nuclear power against the West to both defend itself and to secure victory. Largesse to Ukraine thus threatens global extinction via nuclear Armageddon. It has also been clearly shown that all so called sanctions against Russia have simply enriched that nation, especially Mr. Putin. They are sitting on massive oil reserves right now, even as President Biden begs OPEC for oil and the U.S. is forecast to exhaust its supply of diesel within scant weeks.

The best foreign aid that Canada could possibly provide to Europe is to make Canadian petroleum and natural gas products available to Germany, Ukraine, the U.K., and other nations dependent upon Russian energy. That would be generous. However, the Trudeau government has decreed such action to be environmentally immoral, and has therefore demonstrated quite clearly that even as it virtue signals generosity, it gives away public $ and military support without our consent and against our own interests. This is occurring because where our interests conflict with those of our autocratic political and military ruler, his prevail. Whereas the Aristotelian concept of generosity derives its meaning from the donor's ability to hold private property and give it voluntarily to others in need, the Liberal government exerts its executive power to disentitle and disenfranchise Canadians in order to achieve the 2030 UN Agenda, i.e. that we will own nothing, and be happy.

According to Aristotle, this is both antithetical to generosity and the very definition of tyranny.