

# Leaders I Have Known

Thomas S. Axworthy

Where there is no vision, the People Perish",  
Proverbs 29: 18

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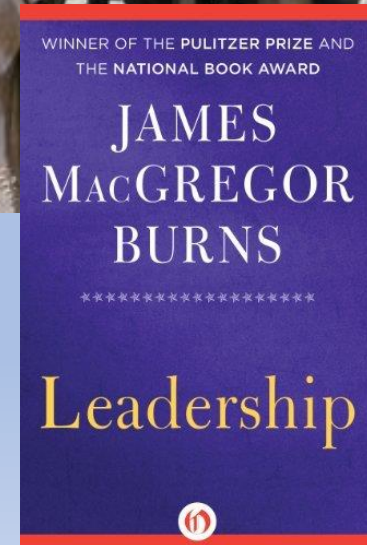
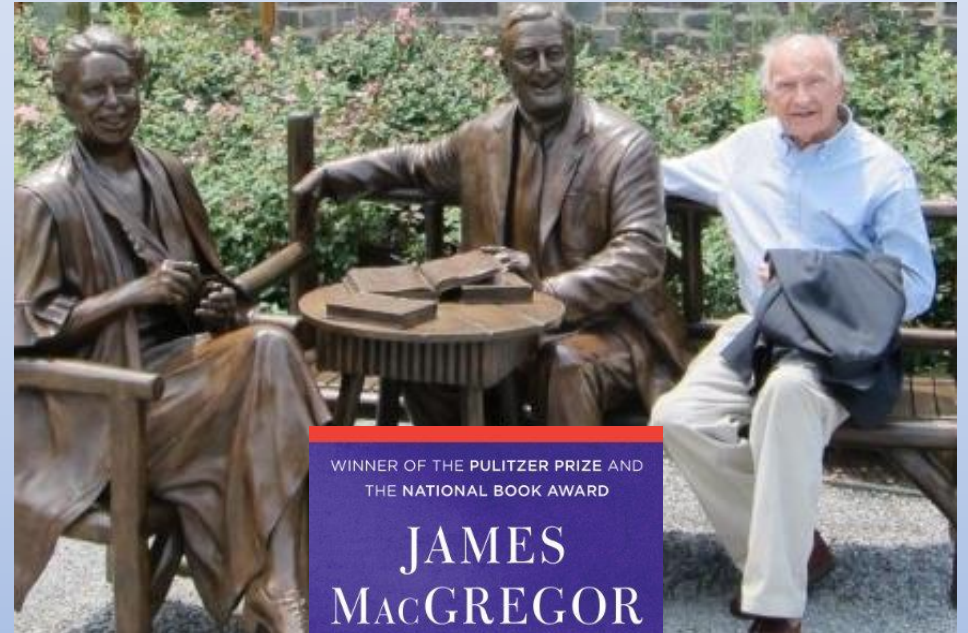
# Definition of Leadership: Transactional, Re-Defining and Transformational

James MacGregor Burns, author of the seminal book *Leadership* and biographer of Franklin Roosevelt defines leadership:

*“Leadership is leaders influencing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations-the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations-of both leaders and followers”.*

He goes on:

*“Leadership is nothing if not linked to collective purpose: that the effectiveness of leaders must be judged not by their press clippings but by actual social change measured by intent and by the satisfaction of human needs and expectations.”*



# Evaluating Leaders



Richard Neustadt meeting his boss,  
Harry S. Truman

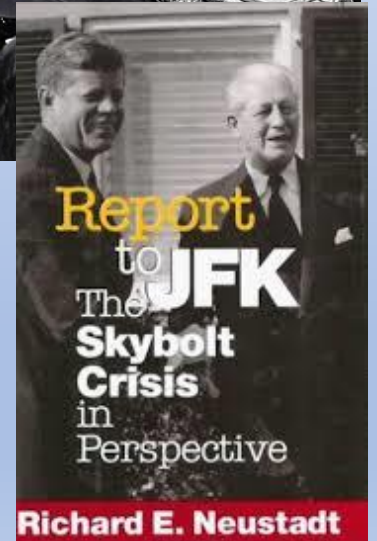
# Neustadt's Questions in Evaluating Leaders

Richard Neustadt, founder of the Kennedy School of Government and adviser to Presidents Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy, asked:

- What were the Leader's primary purposes, and did they run with or against the grain of history?
- What was the legacy or the Leader's impact, and what remained by way of public policies adopted?
- What was the Leader's management style(feel) and ability to use power to achieve results?
- Did the Leader have the ability to persuade or inspire?
- Could the Leader handle the inevitable crises that would come His or Her's way?



Neustadt founding the Kennedy School





# Lesson 1: Helmut Schmidt, Understanding the Past to Create the Future

“The Past is Never Dead, Its Not Even Past,”

William Faulkner



- Helmut Schmidt(1918-2015) , Chancellor of West Germany (1974-1982) helped build his country into an economic powerhouse, then used that power to lead Europe to create the European Monetary System which led to the Euro, The European Central bank and the European Union.
- Born in Hamburg, Schmidt served in World War 11 on the Eastern Front and dedicated his post war political career to the goal of a united Europe in which France and Germany would never fight again.



After his active political career concluded in the 1980s , he founded the InterAction Council of former world leaders and personally worked on how ethics should serve as a frame for political life.

“It is time to talk about human responsibilities "he said. Under his leadership IAC produced *A Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities*.





## Lesson 2: Margaret Thatcher The Lion, Setting a New Course

“If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman”



Margaret Thatcher(1925-2013), first female British Prime Minister and the longest – serving of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, became known as the “ Iron Lady”, as she transformed the Great Britain of her time.

Rejecting the post war Keynesian consensus of expanding government services with the resulting taxes, she emphasized reducing the influence of trade unions, privatizing state-owned companies and deregulating many sectors, especially finance. Her policies caused high unemployment especially ,in Northern England and Scotland, but Thatcher said” The Lady’s not for Turning”.



On April 2, 1982, the Argentine Junta of generals invaded the Falklands islands, but they had picked the wrong Prime Minister. In only 3 days the British fleet sailed from Portsmouth on April 5 half- way around the world to retake the islands which they did on June 14, 1982. Thatcher was the first woman to lead the country into battle since Elizabeth.

Thatcher was a very controversial PM even decrying” Who is society? There is no such thing...no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first” but there is no denying her impact on Great Britain as subsequent governments, even Labour, largely continued her policies and the Britain of the 1970s with its Winter of Discontent and trade union power was a thing of the past.



# Lesson 3: Jean Chretien the Fox, Getting it Done

“A Prince ought to choose the lion and the fox because the lion cannot defend himself against snares and the fox can not defend himself against wolves”

Niccolo Machiavelli

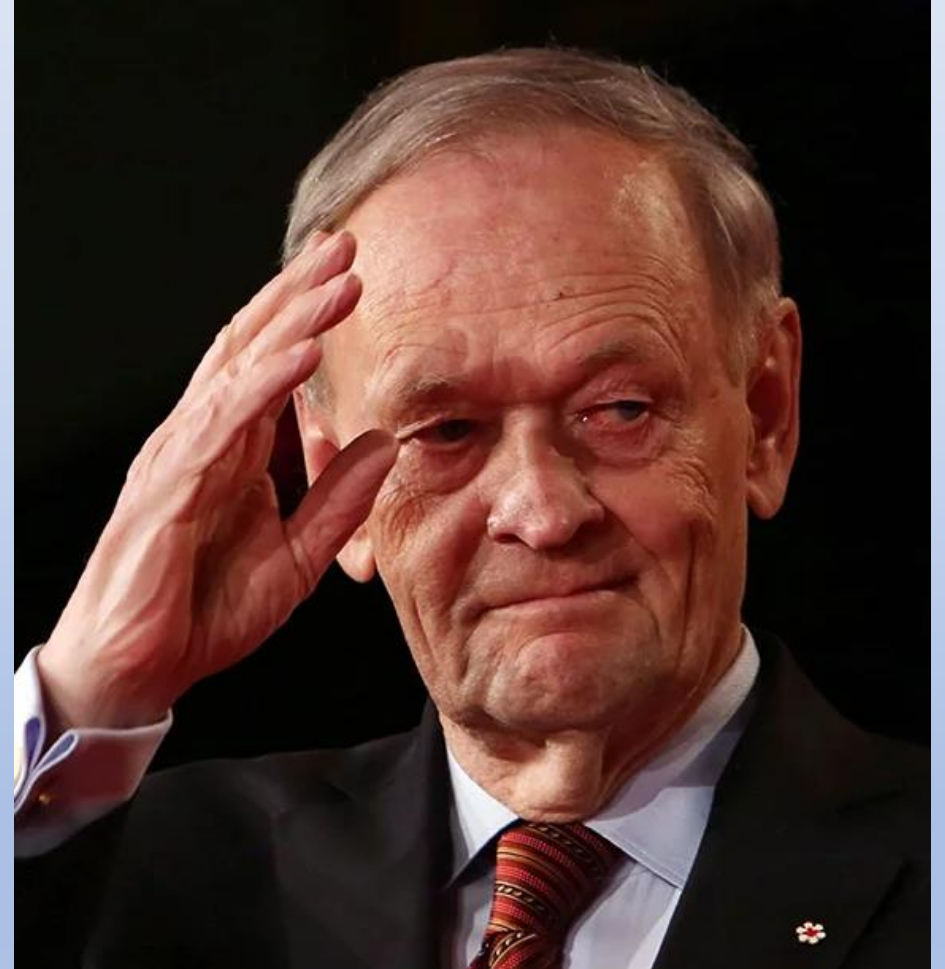




- Jean Chretien(born 1934) is one of Canada's most successful Prime Ministers, winning three majority governments in a row, balancing the budget for the first time in a generation, keeping Canada out of the war in Iraq and passing the Clarity Act to discourage provincial governments from the inclination to indulge in referendums threatening the country's unity.



- Chretien had held every significant office in government before becoming prime minister and his experience was put to good use as he delegated issues to his ministers, was not constantly in the public eye, expressed a genuine optimism about the future, used humour to deflect opposition and thought the public was more interested in results than ideology.
- Using his tremendous political instincts Chretien was a problem solver, not an ideologue. He may be the only Canadian Prime Minister to leave office as popular as when he arrived.



# Lesson 4: Ronald Reagan, The Power to Persuade

“All of the great leaders have had one characteristic in common: it was the willingness to confront the major anxiety of their peoples in their times”.

John Kenneth Galbraith



- Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) was known as the *Great Communicator* and it is an apt description.
- He delegated the day to day working of his administrations to his Cabinet and to his outstanding White House Staff led by James Baker but in speaking to the American people his style was all his own.





His speeches commemorating the Normandy landing(1984), comforting the nation after the Challenger Disaster(1986) and challenging the Soviet Union over the Berlin Wall(1987) are among the most effective communication efforts in modern times.

Reagan honed his speaking style in radio, Hollywood movies and television but what truly stands out about his career is his ability to connect with an audience. He could take a complex subject, relate it to basic values, and through anecdote and parable make his point understood. He knew that a great leader takes a people where they usually don't want to go but ought to be.



# Lesson 5: Pierre Trudeau, Crisis Management/ Grace Under Pressure

“Anyone can hold the helm  
in a calm sea”

Publilius Syrus



- Pierre Trudeau(1919-2000) faced two major crises during his time as Prime Minister: the 1970 October Crisis when Quebec extreme nationalists went on a violent spree involving bombings, kidnapping and eventually the murder of a Quebec cabinet minister and the more peaceful but perhaps even more dangerous threat to the survival of Canada of the 1980 Quebec referendum on separation led by the charismatic Premier of Quebec, Rene Levesque.
- Bad things happen and when a crisis hits you hope the leader is calm, confident, brave, questioning, wise enough to seek the best advice and skilled enough to reassure a rattled public.
- In 1970, to combat the FLQ ,Trudeau sent 12,000 troops to Quebec in “aid of the civil power” to assist local police forces and controversially invoked the War Measures Act. By January 1971 the crisis was over: civil liberties were undoubtedly breached with innocent people taken into custody but the FLQ cells were discovered



- In February 1980, when Pierre Trudeau returned to office, according to the polls, the separatist option was favoured in the upcoming May referendum. Trudeau assigned Jean Chretien to run the “ No” federal campaign day-to-day.
- He reserved for himself for three specific interventions in the campaign including a pledge to reform the Constitution by bringing in a Charter of Rights and Freedoms to guarantee minority language rights in education and administration across the country. In May 1980 the No side won the referendum 60-40 and by April 1982 Canada had a new constitution with the Charter Trudeau had promised. It was one of the greatest performances of sustained prime ministerial will and skill that Canada ever witnessed.





# A Short Reading List On Leadership

- Richard E Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: the Politics of Leadership*, 1990. Neustadt was both an experienced presidential advisor and an innovative academic who changed the way we viewed presidential power.
- James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*, 1978, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and inventor of the popular paradigm of transactional and transforming leadership.
- Martha Piper and Indira Samarasekera, *Nerve: Lessons on Leadership from two women who went first*, 2021, an engaging book on university leadership and management with special attention to gender issues.
- Peggy Noonan, *What I saw at the Revolution*, 1990 by Ronald Reagan's best speechwriter
- Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision* , 1971, an examination of crisis management in the Cuban Missile Crisis
- Ron Graham, *The Last Act: Pierre Trudeau, the Gang of Eight, and the Fight for Canada* 2011, how the Constitution came home.
- Jean Chretien, *My Stories, My Times*, 2018, funny and insightful and in Mr. Chretien's own voice.
- Tony Just, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*, 2005, the story of how Europe rose from the ashes of the Second World War
- Archie Brown, *The Myth of the Strong Leader*, 2014: a noted British historian compares leaders and finds listening and delegation are under-appreciated strengths.

Thank you