

What's Next?

Canadian American Relations in the Age of Trump

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Structure of the Presentation

- A) Introduction: The Three Questions
- B) History of Canadian American Relations
- C) Trump Redux
- D) How Should Canada Respond?
- E) Conclusion

A) The Three Questions

1. What is Trump's End Game?
2. Is this an aberration or a new phase in Canada-US relations?
3. How should Canada respond to the Trump challenge?

A) A History of Canadian American Relations

“Geography has made us neighbours. History has made us friends. And necessity has made us allies. Those whom nature hath so joined together let no man put asunder”

John F. Kennedy, May 17, 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbcPUxNoF18>

I will immediately begin the overhaul of our trade system to protect American workers and families. Instead of taxing our citizens to enrich other countries, we will tariff and tax foreign countries to enrich our citizens.

Donald Trump, Inaugural Address, January 20, 2025



Speaking to the House of Commons



Phase 1: Battling and Building Two Different Societies in North America 1608-1828

For over 200 years, the relationship was characterized by military threat from South to North.



The US invaded Canada in 1775-6, 1812, 1813 and 1814



The Battle of Lundy's Lane

PHASE 2 Manifest Destiny 1828-1914

“And that claim is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the great experiment of liberty.”

John L. O’Sullivan, 1845

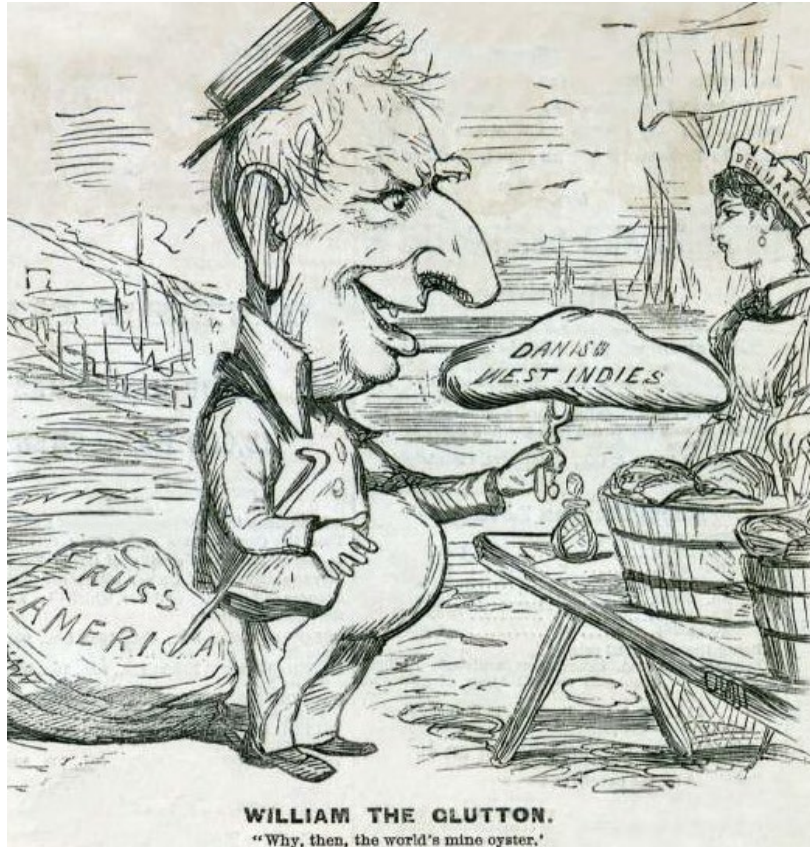


54-40 or Fight

Influential senators in 1845-46 urged President Polk to expand the US by taking all the Pacific territory up to Alaska which resulted in the slogan 'Fifty-four Forty or Fight'.



American Threats Lead to the Formation of Canada



Manitoba and much of the Prairies would be 'excellent states to be hereafter admitted to the American Union'.
William Seward, Secretary of State, 1860



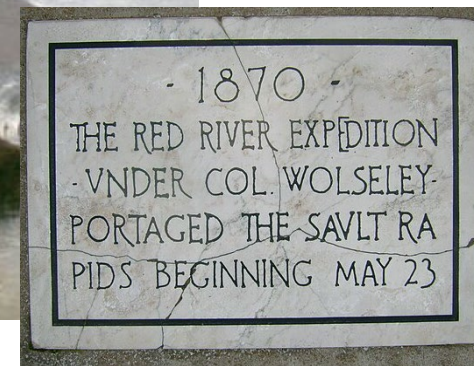
In 1866 the US cancelled the Reciprocity Treaty, believing the imposition of tariffs would cripple the British colonies of North America. Instead, the Fathers of Confederation created the new state of Canada.

Britain's last military action is to defend Manitoba in 1870

The last armed US intervention in Canada was in Manitoba in 1871

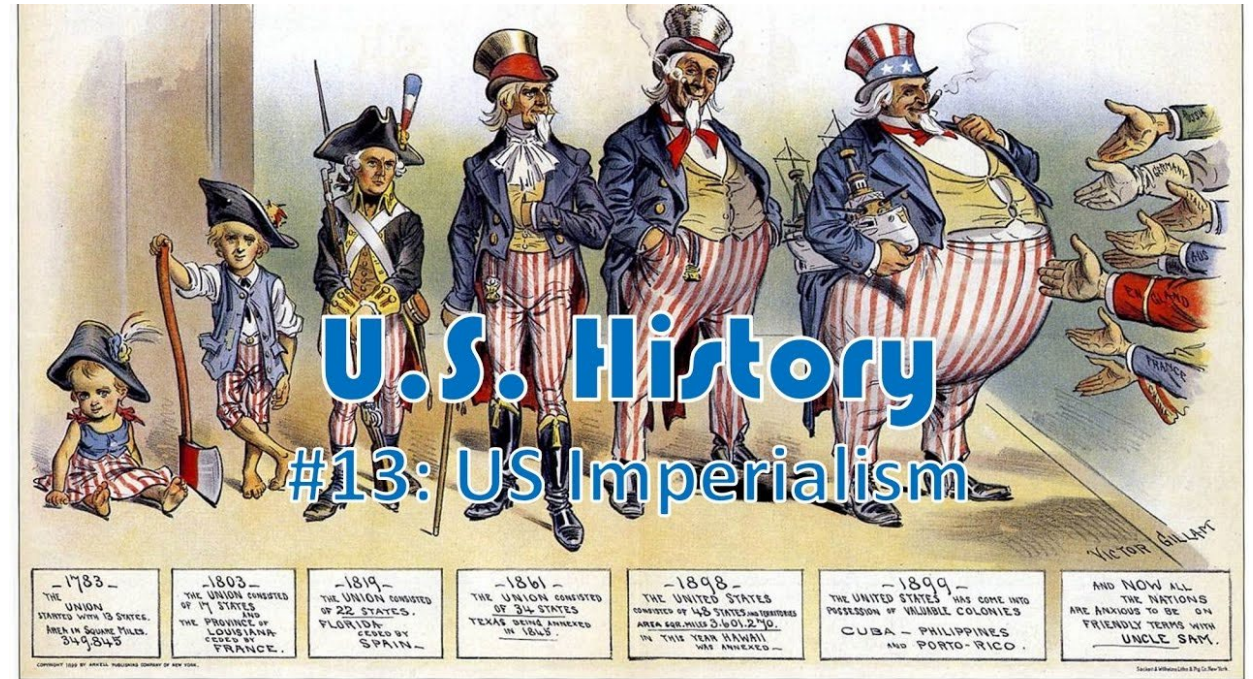
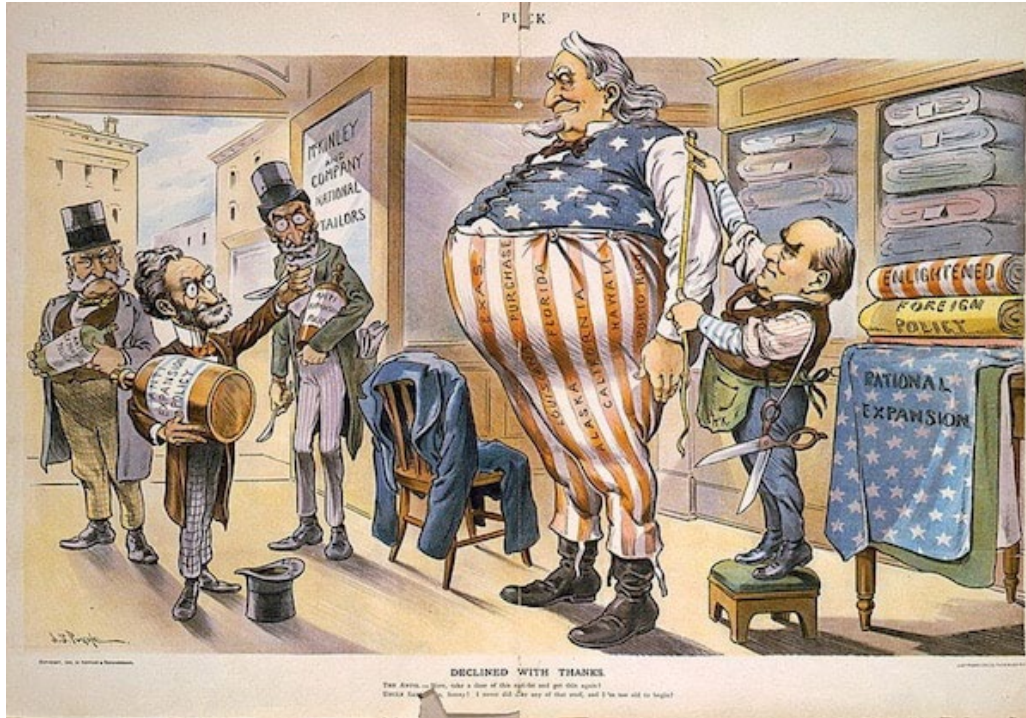


Louis Riel Provisional Government



Wolseley Expedition 1870

The McKinley Tariff of 50% in 1890

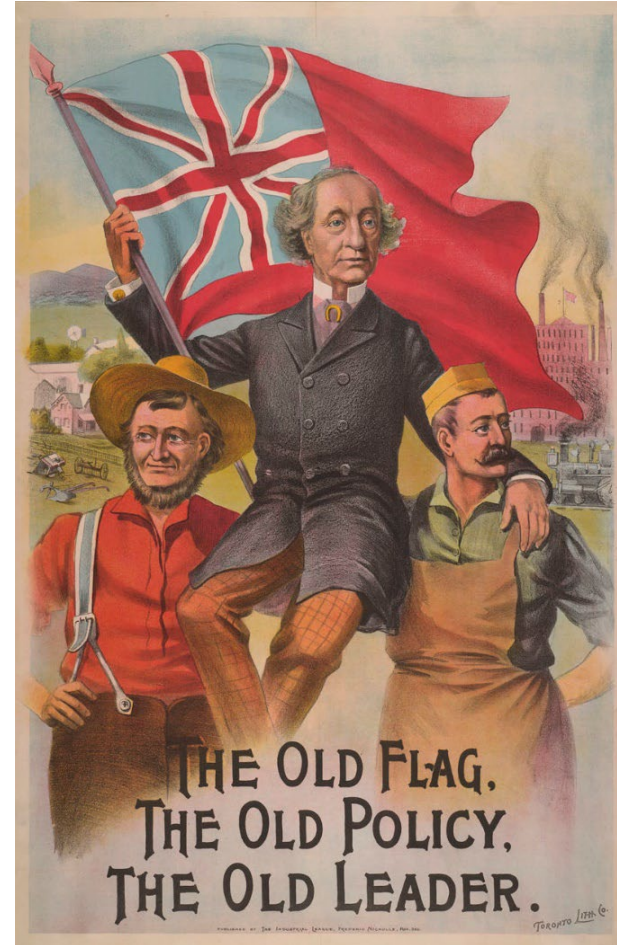


James Blaine, Secretary of State, who worked with McKinley said he was “opposed to giving Canadians the sentimental satisfaction of waving the British Flag... and enjoying the actual renumeration of the American markets.” He believed the 50% tariff would make Canada “seek admission to the Union.”

Sir John A Responds

Four pillars of the 1878 National Policy

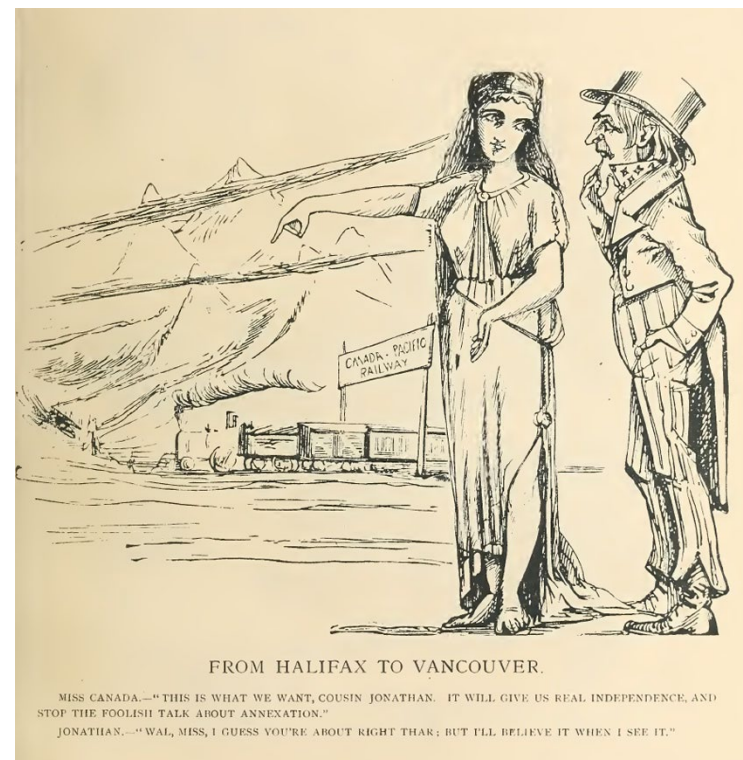
- East-West Trade
- Tariff Retaliation
- Infrastructure/CPR
- Defense/The Royal Navy



Canadians supported the National Policy

Sir John A won elections in 1878, 1882, 1887 and 1891 on the platform of his National Policy

When Laurier promoted reciprocity with the US in 1911, the Conservatives won again, especially after Speaker Champ Clark said, "I look forward to the time to the time when the American flag will fly over every square foot of British North America up to the North Pole."



Phase 3 The Age of Interdependence 1914-2024

Interdependence is characterized by multiple channels of interactions between states and societies leading to reciprocal exchanges that benefit both parties.

“For 80 years Canada and the United States have been partners, allies and friends. We’re neighbours by the grace of nature. We are allies and friends by choice.”

Bill Clinton, February 23, 1995



Roosevelt Comes to Queens

In his speech at Queens on August 18, 1938,
President Roosevelt declared:

"The Dominion of Canada is part of the
British Empire. I give to you assurance that
the people of the United States will not stand
idly by if domination of Canadian soil is
threatened by any other empire."



Roosevelt Comes to Queens

[https://www.google.com/search?q=FDR+speaks+at+Queens&rlz=1C1ONGR_enCA1072CA1072&oq=FD
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Risk and Vulnerability

“Canadians ask themselves whether they have become free of Britain’s colonial influence only to fall under the spell of United States economic imperialism”.

Walter Gordon,
A Choice for Canada 1966



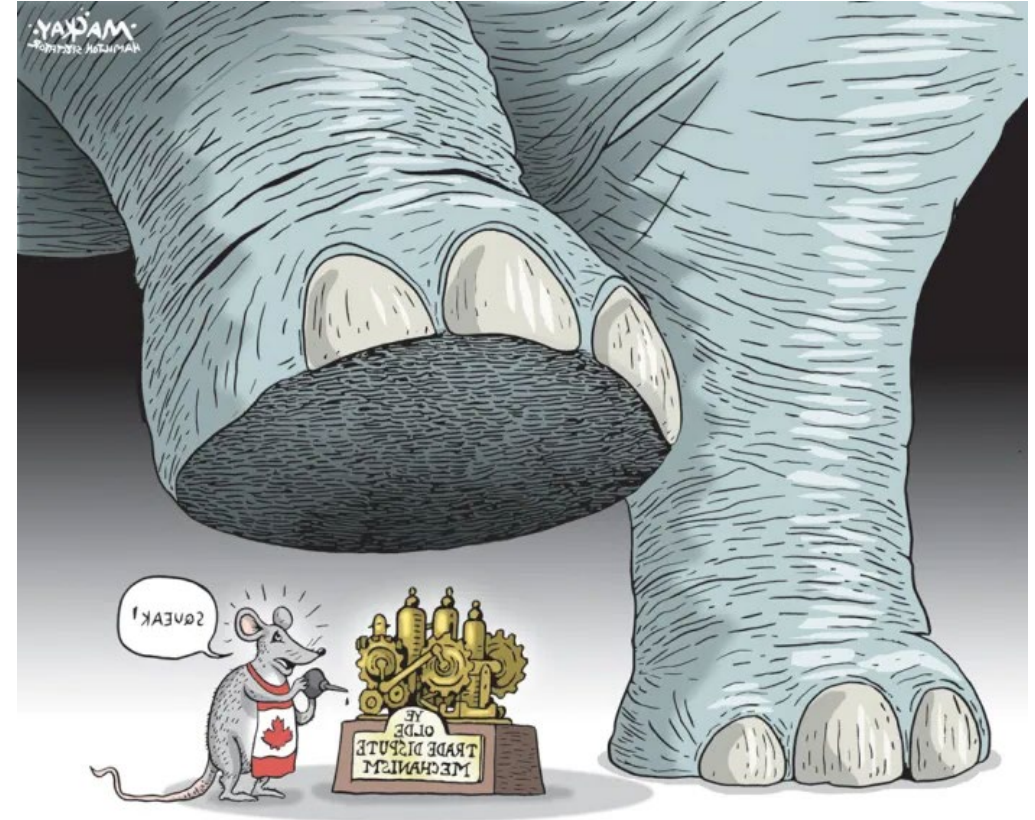
Walter Gordon

Risk and Vulnerability

Vulnerability is an actor's ability to suffer costs imposed by foreign states or external events.

“Living next to you is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even tempered is the beast, if I can call it that, one is affected by every twitch and grunt”

Pierre Elliot Trudeau,
Washington Press Club, 1969



The Leap of Faith: Free Trade Agreements



Canada-US free trade agreement was signed in 1989. Mexico joined in 1994, establishing NAFTA. With 77% of Canadian exports going to the US, 19% of Canada's GNP depends on American access.

B) Trump Redux



Donald J. Trump

@realDonaldTrump

Oh Canada!



Trump Re-elected

Trump won a solid but not overwhelming mandate in 2024:

He won 312 electoral votes, including all the battleground states, versus 226 for Harris, winning 49.8% of the vote (77M) to 48.3% for Harris with (78.3M)

The Republicans carried the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Trump increased his support from young black and Hispanic men.



Trump re-elected with the help of Elon Musk.

C) The Trump Blitzkrieg

Trump has used the technique of '*shock and awe*' and '*flooding the zone*' with a blizzard of domestic and foreign policies that does not allow the media, political opposition or foreign governments the opportunity to respond or organize effectively.

In 2025, unlike 2016, Trump has a detailed 180-day action plan developed by Project 2025 and an alliance with Elon Musk, the richest man in the world.

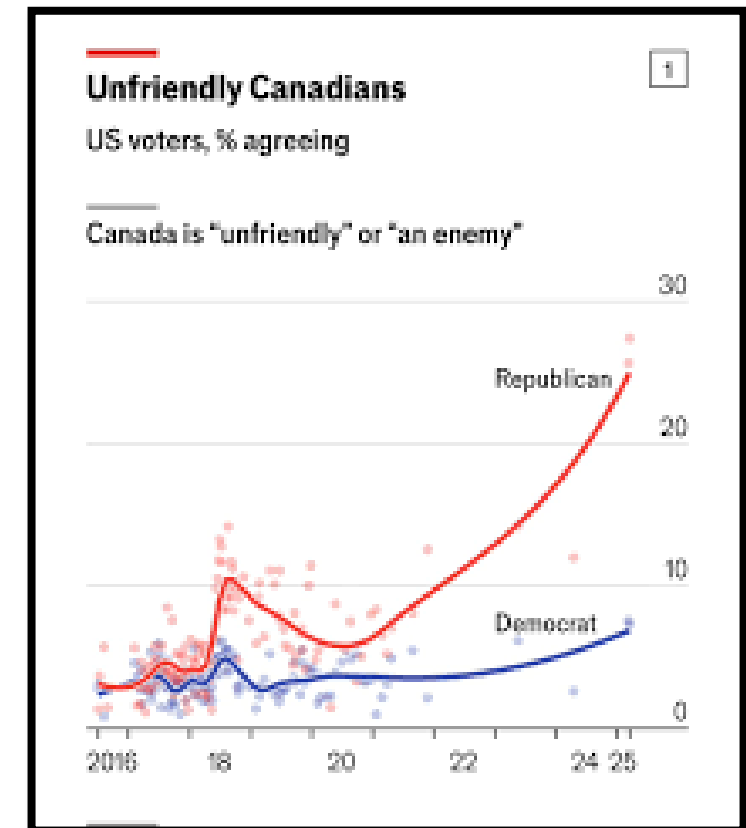
The MAGA disinformation machine is effective in changing Republican perceptions: 27% of Republicans now dislike Canada or see us as an enemy compared to 12% before the election.

CBS NEWS POLL | YouGov

MOE: +/- 2.5 PTS
FEBRUARY 5-7, 2025

NEW U.S. TARIFFS ON GOODS FROM...

	FAVOR	OPPOSE
CHINA	56%	44%
MEXICO	44%	56%
EUROPE	40%	60%
CANADA	38%	62%



C) King Trump – What will he decide about Canada?



“He who saves his country does not violate any law”

Donald Trump, February 2025

C) Trump's potential objectives

1. US tariff announcements against Canada and the world are temporary and Trump will eventually settle for acceptable changes.
2. US tariff changes are permanent as Trump engages in a world-wide trade war and tries to make Canada into a vassal state.
3. He is serious about annexing Canada and will use whatever powers he has to make Canada the 51st state.



C) How Should Canada Respond? The Stegosaurus Defence



Build up your armor until the attacker goes away

C) Unite for the Fight

“Trump has accomplished one thing,” Chretien wrote. “He has unified Canadians more than ever before! All the leaders of our country are united in their determination to defend Canadian interests.”

Jean Chretien,
January 13, 2025



“Canada should accept any level of damage to fight back against Donald Trump.”

Stephen Harper
February 11, 2025



C) Take Action

1. Concentrate on key priorities and do not become distracted by Trump's tactic of flooding the zone. Encourage the mass of Canadians to buy Canadian and engage citizens in common tasks.
2. Continue to work together with the Premiers and Parliament to maintain a united front.
3. Create a National Security Council to monitor events and brief the Prime Minister, Premiers and Parliament.
4. If the crisis intensifies, be prepared to form a government of national unity with all parties.

C) Take Action

5. Retaliate intelligently, do not make unilateral concessions, seek allies within US political system, influence American public opinion.

6. Strengthen the East-West economy with national infrastructure projects like a national electrical grid and by working with Premiers to eliminate interprovincial barriers.

7. Diversify trade by working with the European Union to get full ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. Ten European countries have still not ratified the agreements.

8. Defence must be strengthened as Trump and many in Congress see Canada as a security freeloader, incapable of defending the Arctic from Russia and China.

Canada should cooperate with the Nordic nations to create an Arctic command within NATO.

C) Take Action

9. Reach out to the rest of the world to coordinate responses to the Trump agenda and with them fill the gap of Trump's withdrawal from world institutions.

10. Prioritize available financial resources to assist workers and industries hit by tariffs, increase defence readiness, make Canada competitive for businesses so they will stay in Canada and build needed infrastructure for an East-West economy.

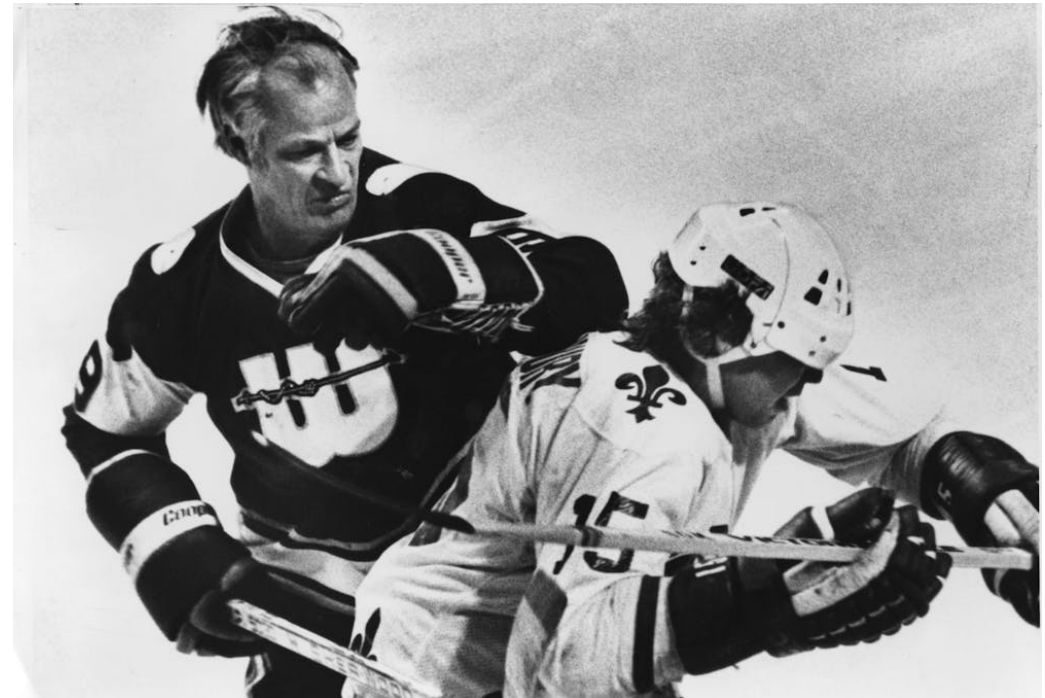
11. Prepare for a long fight.

D) Conclusion



“We can’t be a punching bag...We have to get our elbows up”

Wab Kinew



Thank you.