

MARK WESTBY COMPANY

The Freedom Convoy

While trying to help a customer here in Oklahoma ship a load to Ontario Canada, I became more interested in the ongoings up there. It really is not just about vaccine mandates. It's bigger than that. First, some geography.

During the Convention of 1818 and onto the Oregon Treaty of 1846, the U.S. and British Empire settled on dividing the U.S./Canadian territories along the 49th parallel. At 5,525-miles, it is the longest and straightest international border in the world. Fourteen of the 24 Canadian-U.S. truck crossing points are on the Ontario borders. Ottawa is Canada's capital city, home to their federal government. It is in southern Ontario along with the three busiest crossing points representing 70 percent of all Canadian/U.S. truck cargo. That's why most of the news video and reports are from there. Although these are the largest gatherings of parked trucks and protesters, smaller groups have been lining up at all road and bridge crossings.

On November 19th, the Canadian government announced that effective January 15th, any foreign trucker entering their country would have to prove they were vaccinated. A Canadian trucker could return home but would have to enter a 14-day quarantine. Meanwhile, our government announced that effective January 22nd, any foreign trucker wanting to cross our borders would have to prove they were vaccinated. At the same time, our government was attempting to empower OSHA to enforce a mandate for all U.S. truckers. However, on January 13th...just two days before the Canadian's started enforcing their mandate, the U.S. Supreme Court called our government's attempt "Unconstitutional."

About 90 percent of Canadian truck drivers were already vaccinated. For them, it was not a huge change. One can guess Canadian truckers may resent the U.S. forcing them to be vaccinated when we don't make our own truck drivers get a shot. However, the group's spokespeople point more to a general overreach by their government and a growing dislike for their Prime Minister.

The economic destruction is immeasurable. The Canadian carriers are parking...often abandoning their trucks at a financial hardship even to them. Many in Ontario are only in business for freight to and from the U.S. Canada-bound freight in the U.S. is obviously piling up. Canadian truckers are not coming down to get it, and American truckers are sure not going to cross an international picket line even if they are vaccinated. Only 50% of American truckers are vaccinated.

Similar protests are being organized in our country. A Facebook group called "Convoy to DC 2022" was organizing an event for next month. It had grown to 100,000 members before being removed by Meta...Facebook's parent company. Meta claims the group is affiliated with QAnon. I report. You decide.

Stay safe,
Mark

