

June 10, 2018  
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Dear Mr President:

I am concerned about diplomacy. Trade negotiation between countries is most effective when carried out with the motivations of all players in mind. Every national leader has home audiences to play to: a need to appear strong for those who know nothing of trade while getting protections for certain goods whether for nostalgic nationalist reasons or regional economic ones and of course keeping their own vanity in tact. Traditionally this is done quietly by knowledgeable unknowns with a bit of theater by the principles now and then. You seem to have mistaken the theater for the negotiations and the resulting uncertainty will be economically damaging. The same is true of military negotiations where your show in Singapore this week will no doubt be entertaining theater but not effective negotiation. Frighteningly, Mr Kudlow today conflated the two leaving you looking ludicrously lost on both fronts.

Please assure me that you will defer negotiations to diplomats.

I am very proud to be a US resident and a large part of that derives from our diplomatic power.

Sincerely,  
Eric Babson