



THE HILL TIMES

TWENTY-NINTH YEAR, NO. 1498

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2018 \$5.00

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News Andrew Scheer

Scheer should define himself, say observers, before he's pinned as a 'fuddy-duddy' stuck in the '50s'

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The Conservative Party's policy convention is still eight months away, but leader Andrew Scheer is under pressure to define himself and his revamped party for the Canadian public.

Mr. Scheer's (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) leadership has come under attack in opinion columns in *The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, and *iPolitics* recently, with headlines

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News Senate

ISG Senators won't call for Sen. Beyak's ouster, after pushing for ethics, spending probes

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

Independent Senators appointed by the Trudeau government say they aren't trying to get Senator Lynn Beyak kicked out of the Senate—yet—after calling for investigations into her conduct by the Senate ethics officer and Internal Economy Committee last week.

"I'm not at that point yet," said Ind. Sen. Frances Lankin (Ontario).

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News Prime Minister

PM Trudeau should offer better explanation for Boyle meeting, otherwise he looks 'foolish,' House should launch review of PMO screening process, say political players

Opposition parties vow to raise questions about Justin Trudeau's now controversial meeting with Joshua Boyle when the House returns.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told a Halifax radio station last week that he tries to meet with Canadians who have been released from difficult situations, from foreign countries and would not say that he regretted meeting Joshua Boyle. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

BY ABBAS RANA

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau should reveal all the facts surrounding his now controversial meeting with former Afghan captive Joshua Boyle last month on the Hill because without a clear explanation the prime minister looks "foolish," say political players, who also say the House should launch an inquiry to review the PMO's screening process.

"I don't know how someone with a clearly worrisome record was able to get into the Prime Minister's Office, it's hard for many, many Canadians to get five minutes with the prime minister," said NDP MP Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C.) in an interview. "How Mr. Boyle was permitted into the inner confines of the Prime Minister's Office is worrisome to me. It calls into question their screening process for anybody who is getting

face-to-face time with the prime minister. I don't understand how it happened, and I don't understand what his motivation was in meeting with Mr. Boyle."

Mr. Boyle, 34, and his American wife Caitlan Coleman, 31, who got married in 2011, were abducted in Afghanistan by the Taliban-affiliated Haqqani network. They were back-packing in the war-ravaged country at the time of their abduction in

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News MMIW inquiry

Calls for reset continue as MMIW national inquiry requests more funding, time

BY ABBAS RANA

With less than a year to go, calls for a reset of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women continue, and while some are concerned that a reset could be the inquiry's doom, Indigenous activist Ellen Gabriel says as it stands, it's "failing anyway."

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News Liberal caucus

Rural ridings offer potential for Liberals in 2019, and PMO's paying attention, says rookie Liberal MP Harvey

BY ABBAS RANA

Rural ridings will offer potential growth areas for the federal Liberals in 2019 and the PMO and cabinet are paying close attention, says Liberal M.P.T.J. Harvey, chair of the Liberal rural caucus, but the Conservatives say they're also targeting rural ridings and expect to win seats from the Grits in the next federal election.

"The Prime Minister's Office has been very diligent in working

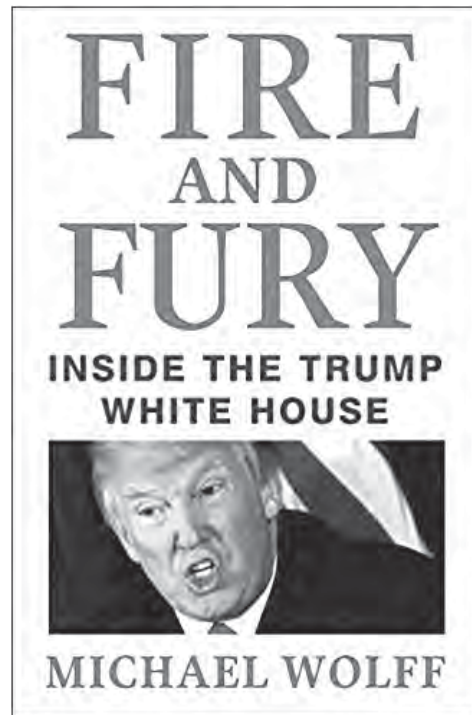
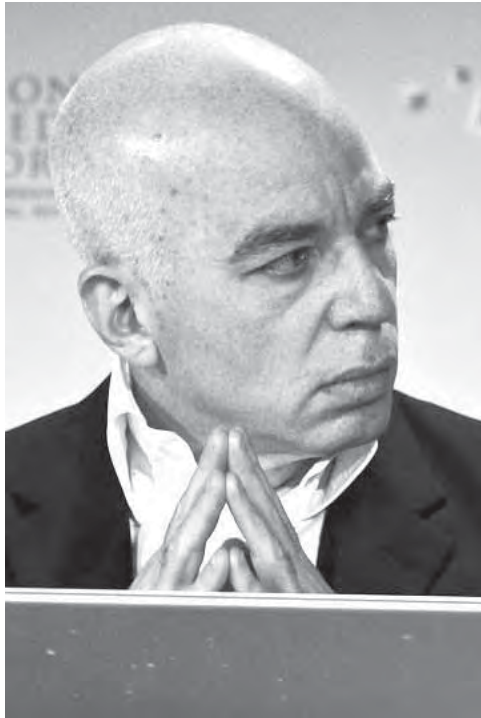
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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Shruti Shekar

Fire and Fury selling out fast in Ottawa



Michael Wolff's book *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House* soared to the top of Amazon's bestselling list of books in 24 hours. *Photograph courtesy of Creative Commons*

If you want a hardcopy of **Michael Wolff's** book *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House*, good luck trying to find it in Ottawa.

The highly anticipated tell-all about U.S. President **Donald Trump's** first year in office was released early to the public after it made political waves. It was pushed from its initial publication date up four days from Jan. 9 to Jan. 5 because of "unprecedented demand," said Henry Holt & Co., the book's publisher.

The day the book was released, CNBC reported it held the No. 1 spot on Amazon's best-sellers list for books.

The Wall Street Journal reported one million copies had been sold.

In Ottawa, the book can be found in most Chapters, Indigo, or Coles book stores, but might be a bit more difficult to track down at independent stores, calls by *The Hill Times* last week revealed.

Chapters, Indigo, Coles, reported brisk sales of the book. The Coles at Billings Bridge Plaza was sold out, along with Chapters at South Keys, Indigo at Pinecrest. All the other bookstores had between two and eight copies left.

Singing Pebble Books on Main Street said the book didn't "fit into our realm," but decided to order a few copies after customers asked about it.

Benjamin Books on Osgoode Street said it wouldn't be ordering the book because it was about Mr. Trump.

Black Squirrel Books, a used bookstore and café on Bank Street, said its only copy was sold the same day.

The Library of Parliament has ordered two books and five people are on the waiting list.

The Ottawa Public Library, meanwhile, has 903 people on its waiting list and 150 on order. It also has 20 e-books copies, all being used, and sadly holds are not allowed on e-books.

Mr. Wolff's book clocks in at 336 pages and is published by Henry Holt & Co., but when you're out looking for it don't mistake it for *Fire and Fury: The Allied Bombing of Germany, 1942-1945* by Canadian author **Randall Hansen**.

The book, which sold well when it was initially published, is now back on the best-seller list, all thanks to Mr. Wolff's book, the CBC reported.

Mr. Hansen, a political science professor at the University of Toronto, said in a Jan. 9 *New York Times* story that he also has been having trouble landing a copy of Mr. Wolff's book.

"I don't know how much of this is a mistake and how much of this is from new interest created by free advertising," Mr. Hansen told CBC. "There might be some returns."

Mr. Hansen's book was published 10 years ago by Penguin Random House.

Feschuck and Allan pen book for millennial parents



Former *Maclean's* columnist **Scott Feschuck** and ex-journalist **Susan Allan**, who are married, are writing a book for adults about babies, and it's hilarious. *The Hill Times* file photograph

Former columnist at *Maclean's*, **Scott Feschuck**, and ex-journalist **Susan Allan**, who are married, are writing another book together titled *Baby's First Hashtag* which promises to break down the

millennial-lingo that many people might not understand.

The abecedarian board book, a book that is arranged alphabetically, has 26 Instagram style photos. Each photo includes "sharp and witty rhyming couplets." While the book is colourful, it's not really a book for babies and young kids and is more of a "shower gift to amuse soon-to-be parents as they make the painful-yet-rewarding transition from skinny jeans and flights of craft beer to burp cloths and pureed yams."

Mr. Feschuck wrote for *Maclean's* for 12 years and was the speechwriter to former prime minister **Paul Martin**.

Ms. Allan works for WE, a non-profit organization that empowers children and families. She previously was a journalist for *Maclean's*, *iPolitics*, and *The Ottawa Citizen*.

Mr. Feschuck and his wife had previously written the book *How Not to Completely Suck as a New Parent*.

Their new book is expected to be released in April and is published by Douglas & McIntyre.

Mike Moffatt joins Canada 2020

Economist and Western University professor **Mike Moffatt** joined think-tank Canada 2020 as its director of policy and research on Jan. 8.

Mr. Moffatt will be in charge of "expanding Canada 2020's original research capacity, with an eye to bringing new and emerging voices to Canada 2020's platform, as well as diversifying the organization's contributions to the public policy conversation," a Jan. 8 press release said.

Last year, Mr. Moffatt was the chief innovation fellow at the department of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development. In the role he helped and advised deputy ministers on innovation policy and emerging trends.



Mike Moffatt, joins Canada 2020 as director of policy and research. *Photograph courtesy of Western University*

Rideau Canal closes temporarily after being open for five days



Nearly one million people visit the Rideau Canal Skateway every year. The canal has finally opened for the season, but closed again for a short period of time due to weather. *Photograph courtesy of Creative Commons*

The Rideau Canal finally opened for the skating season on Jan. 5, however, on Jan. 10 it was shut down due to bad weather conditions.

The National Capital Commission said in a release that seven-kilometres, from Rideau Street to Dow's Lake, will be closed due to weather conditions, including rain and freezing rain on Thursday and Friday.

"Snow, freezing rain, or water on the ice surface may hide serious deterioration of the ice surface. For this reason, the NCC urges the public to refrain from venturing onto the Rideau Canal Skateway," the release said.

Separated at birth, eh?



Indigenous Services Minister **Jane Philpott**, right, looks like actress **Kate Flannery**, who plays **Meredith Palmer** on NBC's *The Office*. News of the show being revived for a potential tenth season surfaced on Dec. 20. The network has not confirmed any details as of yet. The show ended after nine seasons in December 2013.

The world's largest skating rink is a popular destination for tourists and residents. It receives close to one million visitors every year and on average 20,000 visitors per day, another press release from the NCC noted.

The number of days the Rideau Canal has been open in the last two years have been shorter than in other years.

In 2017, it was open for 36 days and the year before that only 34, the shortest number of days since 1971, according to stats from the NCC. It was open for 90 days, from Dec. 26, 1971 to March 25, 1972, it noted.

Brodie, Harper's former chief of staff pens book

Former prime minister **Stephen Harper's** chief of staff, **Ian Brodie**, has written a book titled *At the Centre of Government: The Prime Minister and the Limits on Political Power*, and it's coming out in April.

Mr. Brodie gives a first-hand account of the "inner workings" of the federal government, and at the same time provides comprehensive research on the structure of political power.

The book synopsis said Mr. Brodie "argues that the various workings of the Prime Minister's Office, the Privy Council Office, the cabinet, parliamentary committees, and the role of back-bench Members of Parliament undermine propositions that the prime minister has evolved into the role of an autocrat, with unchecked control over the levers of political power."

Mr. Brodie uses examples from his time in politics, which was from 2004 to 2008, to provide context to readers.

Prior to becoming chief of staff, he was the executive director of the Conservative Party.

He was a senior counsellor at Hill & Knowlton Strategies, was also the strategic adviser at the Inter American Development Bank, and later went on to work in academia from 2013 onwards.

He is currently the graduate program director at the Centre for Military Strategic and Security Studies at the University of Calgary.

The short read, of just 200 pages, will be published by McGill-Queen's University Press.

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Former chief of staff to prime minister Stephen Harper, Ian Brodie, has penned a book about the inner workings of the federal government. *The Hill Times* file photograph

House should rewrite rules for pregnant MPs, it's about time

Women are at the behest of their parties and peers to negotiate time away from the House or risk being penalized. It's a position no woman relishes and it has to change.



Nancy Peckford

Equal Voice

OTTAWA—In October, after a hard-fought leadership race, NDP MP Niki Ashton gave birth to twin boys. Little has been made of it because, after all, women give birth every day in this country. While remaining an active Member of Parliament, Ashton has also been adjusting to life with not one, but two young infants while also serving the needs of her constituents.

In October, federal Democratic Institutions Minister Karina Gould announced she was expecting a baby in March. Gould, as has been widely reported, will be the first federal minister to give birth while holding a cabinet position. In an interview last week, Gould said that, even though she plans to take six weeks away from the House, something her party supports, the formalization of a maternity leave policy would make sense for female MPs in the future.

Otherwise, despite the fact that in recent years, expectant MPs have worked out leave arrangements with the House—and while there is no doubt that this prime minister is very supportive of such women—women are nonetheless at the behest of their parties and peers to negotiate time away from the House or risk being penalized. It's a position no woman relishes.

Currently, House rules stipulate that after a 21-day absence from parliamentary sittings, MPs will be docked pay for every subsequent day they miss. However, exceptions are made for sickness, military duty and official Parliamentary business. In other words, if it's your gall bladder that's got to come out, no problem. Take the time you need. A good recovery is imperative.

A baby, however? Well, let's talk. That's clearly more complicated, and as a woman, you've obviously brought it on yourself.

It's no surprise that these parliamentary rules were written at a time when women's participation as elected officials wasn't contemplated, let alone foreseen. This is because MPs' very presence in the House remains crucial to a party's capacity to maintain or oppose the government because it all comes down to votes.

The Liberals were reminded of this last spring after they came perilously close to losing an unexpected confidence vote, and barely squeaked by. The opposition was invigorated, the Liberals spooked. There's a good reason House leaders are so assiduous about ensuring their MPs are in Ottawa when the House is sitting.

But, none of this fits neatly into the realities of childbirth and care-giving of young infants. Yet, increasingly, voters want the choice to vote for more women, and talented younger women across party lines are demonstrating that they are both compelling and competitive candidates and caucus members. Prime Minister Trudeau, as well as former prime minister Harper, have intuitively understood the value of leveraging some of the fresher female faces, many of whom have proved to be high performers and party stalwarts.



NDP MP Niki Ashton gave birth to twin boys in the fall and took three months of leave. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

This Parliament is no different, except that a few of these younger women are smack in the middle of their childbearing years and don't regard politics as an impediment to motherhood.



Democratic Institutions Minister Karina Gould, pictured at House Affairs Committee meeting with Conservative MP Scott Reid, will be the first person in Canadian federal political history to have a child while working as a cabinet minister. *The Hill Times* by Andrew Meade

So democracy, the living and evolving thing that it is, must adapt. And adapt it can to these "new" realities. Just as Parliament introduced, in the 1980s, a House calendar so that MPs could properly anticipate weeks in the riding and those in Ottawa. Clear stipulations regarding the kind of short term leave available to a female MP who gives birth to a child simply make sense.

Let's not kid ourselves. It's not that the work ever stops, and any MP keen on re-election doesn't want it to. But some explicit language about reduced travel while a woman is recovering, and the use of widely available technologies like video-conferencing so that female MPs

can continue to engage in committee and related House work while recovering are reasonable to inscribe on paper.

This would reduce the guessing game and avoid having expectant MPs appealing to their counterparts to set the terms of their work. If female MPs opted to not take leave, that would be their call. Not their parties, or the Speaker's.

Further, such modest changes would clearly signal to an emerging generation of young women leaders that Parliament isn't just for women whose kids are well on their way to being raised or out the door already. If male leaders can

serve at the highest levels of politics while also being the dads of young children, don't they owe their female counterparts the same opportunity?

Otherwise, we are asking women wanting to have families to abstain from pursuing public life because our national legislature can't seem to get its head around it. And, by extension, we are telling Canadians that representative democracy has its limits because of gender. Because, clearly, men, by virtue of how the system is designed, are, naturally, more suitable for elected office.

The message this sends to aspiring women under 45 is that unless their childbearing years are over (or non-applicable), they need not apply. Take your aspirations, talent, commitment, and go home. Consider coming back later when Parliament no longer has to contend with your reproductive talents that, incidentally, keep humanity going. Despite the immense value of this contribution, you'll need to take the hit on that. It's 2018 after all.

We dearly hope that, in this day and age, Parliament can find the wisdom and courage to recognize the value in modernizing its 150-year-old traditions so that the simple fact of female MPs having babies isn't a disruption or a distraction, but an opportunity to build a more inclusive legislature. And, as a nation, we can share in the birth of a new and exciting era in Canada's democracy.

Nancy Peckford is the national spokesperson for *Equal Voice*, which advocates for electing more women in Canada.

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News Tim Horton's & Politics

Protests or not, federal politicians aren't dumping Tim Hortons

The shine has come off the iconic Canadian brand, but don't expect MPs to start holding court in a local Starbucks.

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

Picketing, nasty headlines, and a boycott campaign so far haven't been enough to break up the love affair between federal politicians and Tim Hortons.

Federal MPs offered their opinion on the controversy rooted in a decision by some Tim Hortons franchises in Ontario to cut paid breaks for employees, after the provincial government imposed a steep increase to the minimum wage timed to come into effect before the summer's election campaign. Some took aim at the provincial Liberals and the restaurant's Brazilian-owned parent company, while other MPs criticized the franchise owners.

But would they put down their Tim's, or stop using the restaurants for regular sit-downs with constituents?

"I'll be in Tim Hortons first thing tomorrow morning," said Conservative MP Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.) in an interview last week.

"If there are protesters there, I'll tell them why they should probably take their placards somewhere else."

Canada's coffee chain of The People has long been used by Canadian politicians to connect with voters. Former prime minister Stephen Harper famously skipped a United Nations meeting to deliver a speech at a Tim Hortons plant in Oakville, Ont. in 2009. Mr. Harper scored a photo op at a Tim Hortons restaurant opened for Canada's military in Kandahar, Afghanistan in 2006, and Liberal leaders, including prime minister Justin Trudeau, have made a point of stopping in at Tim Hortons locations during cross-country tours. Former Liberal minister Sheila Copps even launched her party leadership campaign at a Timmie's.

MPs, including Mr. Kent, often use Tim's as a place to sit down with constituents and get the lay of the land—and build some goodwill—in their riding as well.

"That's where real people go for coffee," said Liberal MP Kevin



Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Man.), who meets his constituents at a McDonald's, but sometimes buys coffee and doughnuts from Tim Hortons to hand out to seniors in his riding.

Nearly 200 MPs claimed reimbursement for purchases at Tim Hortons in 2015-2016, the *National Post* reported, including Mr. Lamoureux.

A decision by the children of one of the founders of Tim Hortons, Ronald Joyce, earlier this month to stop paying employees on break at two of their franchises in Cobourg, Ont., in response to the Ontario government's minimum wage hike is at the root of the Tim Hortons controversy. The franchise owners and the parent company, Restaurant Brands International, have each placed blame on each other for the mess.

Calls to boycott Tim Hortons in response to the worker cutbacks are circulating on social media, and the Ontario Federation of Labour has publicly taken up the cause, sending a highly critical open letter to Daniel Schwartz, the head of Restaurant Brands International, which owns Tim Hortons, and is in turn owned by Brazil's 3G Capital.

Mr. Kent called protests against the franchise owners who cut the workers' breaks "misguided and misdirected."

"The problem is with the parent corporation, which has seen this coming and has not done anything to diminish the franchisees' cost obligations to the parent company" or allow the franchisees to raise prices, he said.



Tim Hortons has long been a meeting place for MPs and constituents, and favourite stage for photo ops by prime ministers and party leaders. *The Hill Times* file photograph

NDP MP Charlie Angus (Timmins-James Bay, Ont.) spread the blame around a little more than Mr. Kent. The former party leadership contender and musician said he regularly stops at Tim's during long commutes to and from Ottawa, meets constituents in the restaurants, and has even sung at a Tim Hortons in his riding as part of fundraising event.

"The damage that they've done is they had this political brand that, that's where the national leaders went, to Tim Hortons, to show they are a man of the people. And what they've really drawn attention to is a very large corporate chain that, when being forced to pay higher wages, is targeting people who just, are not even getting by," he said.

"To target their staff in such a vindictive manner has really trashed the brand."

Mr. Angus said he would not be participating in the boycott, however, or stop working with his local Tim Hortons for fundraising events in the future, though he hoped the chain would "get its act together."

NDP MP Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C.) said Tim Hortons has "wrapped itself in the Canadian flag for some time," and now seemed "vindictive" towards its employees. Still, he said he didn't have anything against the company—though it isn't his first choice for a cup of joe. He said he wasn't sure if he would participate in a boycott of the restaurant chain.

"Boycotts are sometimes tricky things, because they sometimes hurt the people you're trying to help."

Liberal MP Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Ont.) said she was not aware of any picketing of Tim's restaurants in her Toronto riding. She said the controversy had created a "healthy discussion" in public over the minimum wage, and how it affected business and low wage earners.

"Is it stopping me from going to Tim Hortons? No, not yet. Am I aware of the conversations on all sides? Absolutely."

Mr. Lamoureux also said he wouldn't participate in a Timmie's boycott (he doesn't drink coffee, but enjoys their steak submarine sandwich.)

"I'm not going to boycott it because you have a few franchises that philosophically argue [against the minimum wage increase.]"

Still, the chain's "iconic image" has become tarnished, said Mr. Lamoureux, who laid the blame for the episode on the franchise owners.

"I suspect that Tim Hortons' reputation as a national icon is diminished because of some of the things that we hear from some of the franchisees. I really do think it's diminished," he said, adding, "I think they'll live through it."

Tim Powers, a consultant at Summa Strategies and former adviser to Conservative politicians, agreed. Tim Hortons will remain popular for consumers and the politicians who represent them after the fallout over the minimum wage debate, and the pugilists at the centre, Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne and Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown, fade away, he said.

"In certain areas, there may be a little bit of caution" among

Conservative politicians picking a coffee joint to associate with.

"But I think the overall brand power of Tim Hortons has significantly more wattage than that of Kathleen Wynne or Patrick Brown. I think Tim Hortons will make it through this just fine."

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Vox Populi

Conservative MP Peter Kent
Thornhill, Ont.



"I'll be in Tim Hortons first thing tomorrow morning. If there are protesters there, I'll tell them why they should probably take their placards somewhere else."

Tim Powers
Conservative pundit

"In certain areas, there may be a little bit of caution. But I think the overall brand power of Tim Hortons has significantly more wattage than that of Kathleen Wynne or Patrick Brown. I think Tim Hortons will make it through this just fine."



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Liberal MP Julie Dzerowicz
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"Is it stopping me from going to Tim Hortons? No, not yet. Am I aware of the conversations on all sides? Absolutely."



CBC *The National's* still can't break top 30 in national ratings, but digital audience up 77 per cent since revamp

'We have a good foundation, and we're continuing to build,' says Rosemary Barton.

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Ten weeks into the CBC *The National's* revamped newscast, host Rosemary Barton says the program continues to evolve, but internal numbers already show growth in younger demographics and digitally.

"I don't think we're satisfied yet, but I think we're moving in the right direction, and by that I mean we're trying to push the boundaries a little bit, we're trying new things. We just keep saying to ourselves, 'just try it, see what happens.' I think that's still a good place to be this early on," said Ms. Barton in an interview with *The Hill Times* last week.

"That means a fairly relentless pace for all the journalists working on the show. So, I would say we have a good foundation, and we're continuing to build."

The first edition of the CBC's revamped *The National* aired on Nov. 6. Previously hosted by CBC stalwart Peter Mansbridge, who officially retired in July after anchoring since 1988, the new *National* now features four anchors—Ms. Barton, former CBC Vancouver anchor Andrew Chang, CBCNN host Ian Hanomansing, and former senior correspondent Adrienne Arsenault—based in Toronto (Ms. Arsenault and Mr. Hanomansing), Ottawa (Ms. Barton), and Vancouver (Mr. Chang).

The overhaul was aimed at attracting new audiences, increasing digital reach and presence, and overall updating *The National* for today's 24/7 news grind.

A number of commentators were quick to criticize the revamped *National*, in particular panning the perceived clutter of a four-anchor team.

While there was a "natural" need to showcase the program's new hosts during the first couple of weeks, Ms. Barton said there's since been a shift back to more focus on reporters during the newscast, and to having just two or three anchors on at a time.

"It was never going to be four of us all the time," she said.

Moreover, she said there are benefits to the four-anchor arrangement.

For one thing, Ms. Barton—formerly the host of CBC's live political show, *Power & Politics*—noted it's allowed her to travel more to do field reporting and interviews, and has made story meetings more rigorous.

"Especially that first one in the morning. There are lots of different people, with lots of different ideas—it's not just us, there's all the producers and senior producers too—but it's sort of like because there's not one person who's the voice of the show I feel like there's better representation of stories. The influence that would come with being a host is a bit more diffused," she said.

"You have to sort of win over people ... which I think is actually a really healthy way to deliver newscasts, because there's a much better chance that you're going to cover off more perspectives and engage with more people."

The National team is spread across three cities and two time zones. Each day, an initial story meeting call takes place around 9:30 EST, with another at 12:30 via Google hangout, before a call "later in the day" to determine the lineup, said Ms. Barton. In Ottawa, she works closely with producer Phil Ling to develop ideas and content.

CBC's *The National* failed to break the top 30 for Canadian TV programs once again in the latest numbers from Numeris, covering Dec. 18 to Dec. 24. CTV National News was the top such newscast, at No. 12 on the list, with an average minute audience of 989,000 viewers. Global National, meanwhile, sat at No. 16, with an average minute audience of 826,000.

But looking at Numeris' numbers from the year prior—covering Dec. 19 to Dec. 25, 2016—when Mr. Mansbridge was still anchor, *The National* similarly did not break the top 30 list: CTV National News was again the top national newscast, at No. 5 with an average minute audience of 1,043,000, followed, again, by Global National at No. 11 with an audience of 795,000.

Little over two months in, Ms. Barton said she doesn't think CBC heads "have an expectation that we're suddenly going to be attracting millions of viewers overnight," and noted that internal data indicates the newscast has seen growth among a younger demographic, and "a lot of growth digitally," including through a digital newsletter *The National* puts out, linking content on Instagram and Twitter, and enabling streaming on

Facebook and YouTube "for all the people who don't have cable."

"We are trying to look at other measurements than just strict TV ratings, because this was always about trying to find growth digitally," she said.

Ms. Barton also noted that the show's lead-in programming is another factor to be considered: "We don't have an American show that everybody watches every day ... if we have Coronation Street as the lead-in we're usually doing really well that night."

According to Numeris and Adobe Analytics numbers provided by the CBC, digital live streaming of *The National* has increased 77 per cent since its re-launch, from 31,179 average views per week to 56,039 under the new format. The show had a 525,000 average minute audience during its full 2016-17 season, compared to 473,000 between Nov. 6 and Dec. 22.

Criticisms of new *National* remain

Carleton University journalism professor Paul Adams, a former CBC reporter and a current columnist for *iPolitics*, weighed in on the new *National* after its re-launch in a Nov. 7 column.

In his piece, Prof. Adams wrote that with "fewer, larger, deeper stories and a proliferation of anchors," the network's "retinue of less well-established talent" would "inevitably" be pushed aside the program. But overall, he said it "represents a serious attempt to update an elderly format and double-down on the strengths the CBC has always had."

Speaking to *The Hill Times* last week, Prof. Adams said he continues to watch the revamped *National* "several times a week," but that it hasn't evolved "quite as quickly" as hoped, and sees issues with it both in terms of presentation and substance.

On the presentation side, Prof. Adams said having four or even three anchors on the roster on a given night is too many, and leads to too much time spent in hand offs and "chit-chatting back-and-forth."

It also creates a need to give each anchor "something to do," which often seems to be handled by pulling out material ahead of packaged items, something he said "often" has the effect of stealing thunder from the actual field piece.

While he noted there's a need to introduce the new anchors to the public, and it "may take some time" to do that, he said he thinks there should be no more than two



Ms. Barton's co-hosts, starting from the left: Ian Hanomansing, Adrienne Arsenault, and Andrew Chang. Photographs courtesy of the CBC and Wikimedia Commons

anchors each night, with the others working on anchor interviews or field pieces.

Asked for her response to such criticism, Ms. Barton said she thinks the anchor chit-chat is "pretty limited," but moreover, is something the network's audience research indicates people like and allows for real moments, so "you're not just some auto-bot speaking from a teleprompter."

In terms of substance, Prof. Adams said he thinks the show is too often confusing background information or context with real depth. For example, as part of a December story about the Bronx fire that left 12 dead, after the standard news item the show offered up of a graphic on the history of fires in New York City, highlighting how the number has dropped, and why.

"I thought really that's a misunderstanding of what a Canadian viewer wants from that story," he said. "Just slapping on kind of more backstory, what would be the 14th or 15th paragraph in a long print story, isn't really information that people need or are likely to be interested in."

"It's information, but it's not necessarily depth," he said.

Asked to grade *The National's* revamp, Prof. Adams said he'd give it a 'B': "I think it has a lot more potential for progress."

It's not the first revamp for CBC's *The National*. Prof. Adams was working at the public broadcaster in 1992 when the network opted to merge *The National* with *The Journal*, turning it into a 9 p.m. show, *Prime Time News*, co-hosted by now Pamela Wallin, who's now a Senator, and Peter Mansbridge.

But when the *Prime Time News* "experiment" was panned, facing "criticism and public rejection," Prof. Adams recalled

"frantic" efforts to retool the show in response.

"We used to joke by the end of the week it's going to be a game show, because it seemed like every day there was this frantic attempt to reinvent the show," he said.

Prof. Adams noted there doesn't seem to be that same panic to reconceptualize the new *National* amid criticism, and instead he thinks they've largely taken the "appropriate approach" by making smaller tweaks over the weeks.

But he said he's concerned the show is settling into the wrong pattern in terms of substance—though perhaps understandably, he said, as routine offers some security amid the "sheer effort" required to put together an hour-long, daily show.

That warning in mind, he said: "Barring kind of a ratings disaster, I think that they've established a path and they should try to make it work. I don't think that two or three months is enough to establish [success or failure]."

Warren Kinsella, president of Daisy Consulting Group, also penned a column after *The National's* re-launch, titled, "10 Reasons Why The New CBC 'National' Flopped."

In it, he said the show lacked gravitas, felt "chaotic" and "dis-jointed," with too many anchors, graphics that were "too big and too simplistic," and too much of journalists interviewing journalists.

Last week, Mr. Kinsella said he's caught snippets of the show since its launch, and his opinion hasn't changed.

"The problems they had they've still got," said Mr. Kinsella. "The big problem with it is it doesn't feel like one show, it feels like four different shows."

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The Hill Times



CBC *The National's* Rosemary Barton says four news anchors means more rigorous story meetings and the traditional anchor's influence is 'more diffused.' *The Hill Times* file photograph

ISG Senators won't call for Beyak's ouster, after pushing for ethics, spending probes



Senator Lynn Beyak, left, has been expelled from the Conservative Senate caucus after refusing to remove offensive letters about Indigenous people from her Senate website. Senators Yuen Pau Woo, Frances Lankin, and André Pratte of the Independent Senators Group are among those who have called for further investigation into her actions. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade and file photographs*

Getting kicked out of caucus won't cut it for the public, and how it perceives the Senate, says Independent Senator Frances Lankin.

Continued from page 1

Sen. Lankin and four other ISG Senators signed a letter last week calling for new Senate ethics officer Pierre Legault to investigate whether the now-non-affiliated Sen. Beyak (Ontario) violated the Senate ethics code by posting to her Senate website comments from supporters that disparaged Indigenous people in Canada, and were called "racist" by Conservative leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) when he made public her removal from the Conservative caucus earlier this month.

However, Sen. Lankin said more sanctions may be required to show the public that the Senate's reputation is worth defending.

"Being removed from committees and being removed from caucus are not solutions that the public would see as having a consequence for actions that they think are wrong on behalf of a Senator," she said.

"Those are internal mechanisms important only, really, to the Senator involved, but not to the image of the Senate, and not to the responsibility by Senators to the role of the Senate."

ISG Senate leader Yuen Pau Woo (B.C.) also issued a press release last week highlighting the letter to Mr. Legault, and saying ISG members had asked ISG Senator Larry Campbell, as chair of the Senate Internal Economy Committee, "to table a discussion at its next meeting on whether the posting of such materials on a website hosted by the Senate, and paid for by public funds, constitutes a misuse of Senate resources."

Sen. Lankin said she had since been sent private messages of support for the letter to the Ethics Office by a dozen other Senators, including two from Conservative Senators whom she declined to name.

However, Sen. Lankin, Sen. Woo, and ISG Senator André Pratte, who also signed the letter to the Senate ethics officer, all told *The*

Hill Times they were not prepared to call for Sen. Beyak's removal from the Senate.

"We are a long way from removal," said Sen. Woo, adding the Senate ethics officer had not yet examined the matter.

"If her conduct has been in breach, if her behaviour has been in breach of acceptable Senate conduct, then the next question obviously is appropriate remedies and sanctions," he said.

Mr. Legault's office said it had no comment on the matter, but confirmed that it had received the letter. The Senate Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code requires the Senate Ethics Office to conduct a preliminary investigation if he or she receives a request from a Senator "who has reasonable grounds to believe another Senator has not complied with his or her obligations under the Code."

Sen. Woo, Sen. Lankin, and Sen. Pratte each questioned whether Sen. Beyak's actions had harmed the credibility of the Senate, and the ISG press release said the Senate ethics officer should determine whether she failed to "uphold the highest standards of dignity inherent to the position of Senator."

However, each said their goal was only to have Sen. Beyak's behaviour evaluated through a fair and formal process.

"This is not a clear-cut issue, it's a complex issue...that's why we're asking for an investigation," said Sen. Pratte.

"There is a line," said Sen. Lankin. "Senators are not above and beyond being accountable for their actions."

Internal Economy should wait for Legault's report: Lankin

No Senator has ever been expelled from the Upper Chamber. Don Meredith perhaps came closest last year, when he resigned after the Senate Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest recommended that he be expelled for harming the reputation of the Senate after he had an affair with a teenage girl.

Canada's Constitution allows for the expulsion of Senators who become bankrupt, commit serious crimes, fail to meet the property requirements for Senators, fail to attend two consecutive sessions of Parliament, or pledge allegiance to another country. However, in the case of Mr. Meredith, the Senate was considering an interpreta-

tion of another clause in the Constitution that may give Senators the ability to simply vote that a member be expelled.

Sen. Beyak was removed from the Senate Conservative caucus after refusing to remove offensive letters of support displayed on her Senate website, including one that said Indigenous people in Canada would only "wait until the government gives them stuff" and another that said Indigenous people should be "grateful" for the residential school system imposed on them by Canada's government.

She blasted Conservative leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) after he issued a press release implying that he had personally instructed Sen. Beyak to remove the letters from her website, saying she never spoke with him or anyone from his office, and that "we deserve better leadership."

Conservative Senate leader Larry Smith (Saurel, Que.) removed Sen. Beyak from all Senate committees last year after she said that First Nations people should "[t]rade your status card for a Canadian citizenship, with a fair and negotiated payout to each Indigenous man, woman and child in Canada, to settle all the outstanding land claims and treaties, and move forward together just like the leaders already do in Ottawa." She also said residential school survivors should be compensated by the government.

In December, before the latest controversy and her removal from caucus, Sen. Smith told *The Hill Times* that the Conservative Senate leadership had "set up a plan" with Sen. Beyak to re-evaluate placing her on committees in the new year—presumably barring further controversies.

The Senate Internal Economy Committee will resume meeting when the Senate returns in February. However, Sen. Lankin said she believed the committee should wait until Mr. Legault makes a determination before it digs into the issue.

"I would await the ethics commissioner's determination about whether or not this is a breach of the code, because that would be a prima facie reason for the [Internal Economy Committee] to look at whether there needs to be any sort of response around the website," she said.

Sen. Beyak and Sen. Smith declined to comment for this story through their offices.

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Anatomy of the Lynn Beyak controversy



April 2017: Interim Conservative leader Rona Ambrose removes Sen. Beyak from the Senate Aboriginal Peoples Committee after the Senator gave a long speech in the Senate about the residential schools system, defending the "remarkable works" and "good deeds" of those who worked in the schools, and lamenting that they were overshadowed by "terrible mistakes" in the schools.

September 2017: Sen. Beyak is removed from all Senate committees after writing in a letter posted on her website that First Nations people in Canada should trade in their status cards, receive a settlement from the government, and move forward.



December 2017: Conservative Senate leader Larry Smith says there is a plan in place between Sen. Beyak and the leadership regarding when or whether she would return to serving on Senate committees.



Jan. 4, 2018: Conservative leader Andrew Scheer issues a press release announcing Sen. Beyak's removal from the Conservative caucus, saying he demanded that she remove "racist" letters from supporters posted on her Senate website, and she refused. Conservative spokesperson Jake Enwright tells the press the conversation took place over the phone.

Jan. 8, 2018: Sen. Beyak issues a press release calling Mr. Scheer's statement "completely false," and saying she never spoke to Mr. Scheer or anyone from his office, and only discovered she had been kicked out of caucus through his Jan. 4 press release. The statement also says that Sen. Beyak's website had given Canadians "a voice for free speech," and criticizes Mr. Scheer as an "inexperienced leader," who "does not adequately consider other viewpoints."



Jan. 9, 2018: Sen. Yuen Pau Woo, the facilitator of the Independent Senators Group, issues a press release stating that several ISG Senators had asked the Senate Ethics Officer and Senate Internal Economy Committee to determine whether or not Sen. Beyak's posting of those offensive letters to a Senate website constituted a violation of the Senate's code of ethics.

Trudeau should offer better explanation on Boyle meeting, otherwise he looks 'foolish,' House should launch review of PMO screening process, say political players

Opposition parties vow to raise questions about Mr. Trudeau's meeting with Mr. Boyle when Parliament returns.

Continued from page 1

2012. The couple had three children during their five-year captivity. They were rescued in October following a raid by the Pakistani Armed Forces.

Prior to marrying Ms. Coleman, Mr. Boyle was married to Zaynab Khadr, daughter of Egyptian-Canadian Ahmad Khadr, an al-Qaeda financier with links to Osama bin Laden who was killed in a shootout with the Pakistani forces near the Afghanistan border in 2003.

Mr. Boyle was charged on Dec. 30, 13 days after his meeting with the prime minister, by the Ottawa Police on 15 criminal charges of assault, sexual assault, illegal confinement, uttering threats and public mischief. The alleged offences are said to have taken place between Oct. 13 and Dec. 30 after the family returned to Canada. None of the charges has been proven in court. Mr. Boyle is scheduled to appear in the Ottawa courthouse on Jan. 15 via videoconference. A publication ban prevents the alleged victims from being identified.

The family met with Mr. Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) on Dec. 18 in the prime minister's Parliament Hill office on the request of Mr. Boyle. There were no official PMO photos released and the meeting was not publicized, but it became public after Mr. Boyle tweeted photos of the meeting.

Asked last week by Halifax radio 95.7 FM host Sheldon MacLeod if

he regretted meeting with Mr. Boyle, the prime minister said: "We've been very, very active on consular cases. We've had a number of successes in bringing people who were stuck in difficult situations overseas home, bringing them to safety, and the engagement, which my office has directly with those cases, has led me to meet with a number of people who have been released," he said.

"So these kinds of things are something that I do. I always try to defer to meeting with more people rather than fewer people, and particularly people for whom we've been working hard over the past years. I think that's something that's important to do."

Asked if the meeting showed a lack of judgment on his part or bad advice from his PMO staff, Mr. Trudeau said he followed all applicable advice. "We make sure we follow all the advice that our security professionals and



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on Dec. 18, 2017, with Joshua Boyle, his wife Caitlin Coleman and their children, meeting in Mr. Trudeau's Parliament Hill office. Photograph courtesy of the Boyle family's Twitter

intelligence agencies give us and that's exactly what we did in this case," Mr. Trudeau told Halifax's 95.7 FM.

But the prime minister's judgment is being questioned by pundits, politicians, and political insiders who are still questioning the motivation for meeting with the family. They have also raised questions about the screening process in place for people who meet with the prime minister.

"I don't know what the motivation was? What was this serving exactly in the prime minister's agenda, I have no idea. [It's] truly hard to get time with the prime minister but not if you are somebody who is like Mr. Boyle, apparently," said Mr. Cullen.

"It's a judgment thing. What judgment does the prime minister have? What judgment his key staff has with regards to who comes in the door. I just don't know how they've been silent on this."

Nelson Wiseman, a University of Toronto political science professor, agreed.

"The only reason the prime minister meets people is because he thinks of two reasons, off the top of my head: it can advance Canadian interests or burnish his image, like he wants to be seen with popular people like Bono and Paul Martin did," Prof. Wiseman said.

"In this case, was it in Canada's interest to meet with him

[Mr. Boyle]? I don't know what was the interest involved here?"

Prof. Wiseman said that without any proper explanation from the PMO, the incident is reflecting poorly on the prime minister's judgment.

"He now looks foolish," Prof. Wiseman said. "It now looks like bad judgment that he was ill-informed, or misinformed, or uninformed. Any of those, all of those things, I don't know which one. It could be a combination."

The PMO has not released any details publicly surrounding the meeting, first citing privacy, and later saying the case is before the courts.

Chantal Gagnon, press secretary to the prime minister, provided the same response that the prime minister did in his media interviews last week and declined to say if the PMO has launched any investigation.

"As always, we simply do not comment on any matters relating to PM's security," Ms Gagnon said.

Pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research said the meeting does not appear to be a case of "lapse of judgment" on the part of Mr. Trudeau, but it looks like a case of "lapse of process." He said it's unlikely the prime minister would meet someone like Mr. Boyle had he known about his background.

"This is probably more a lapse in process, than a lapse in judgment," said Mr. Nanos. "It would be hard to believe that the prime minister would knowingly and purposefully meet any individual whose background was questionable."

He said the right course of action now for the Liberals to fix this mistake is first to acknowledge it and later put in place processes that would ensure this kind of incident wouldn't happen again.

Conservative political insider Tim Powers described Mr. Trudeau as an "empathetic" man but said it appears that by successfully seeking a meeting with Mr. Trudeau, Mr. Boyle appears to have used Mr. Trudeau, which is not good optics for the prime minister. So, he said, the PMO should release more information about why this meeting was granted to someone who was under police investigation for alleged criminal offences.

"For their own purposes, they need to do that to have people have a better understanding of why this took place," said Mr.

Powers, vice chairman of Summa Strategies. "If you're the prime minister, you don't want to be used in that manner, and Joshua Boyle, arguably, tweeting as he did and showing those images was given the opportunity and took advantage of the prime minister to do that and that's worrisome."

Conservative MP Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.), his party's foreign affairs critic, declined a comment saying the issue is before the courts.

Conservative MP Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.), in an interview with *The Hill Times*, also declined a comment but said the issue will be raised in the Question Period when the House resumes sitting on Jan. 29.



Conservative MP Peter Kent says his party will raise the issue of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's meeting with Joshua Boyle in the Question Period when Parliament returns later this month. *The Hill Times* file photo.

"We will be discussing that in the House of Commons with the prime minister in Question Period. Don't want to comment on it now while it's before the courts," said Mr. Kent.

Mr. Cullen also said that the NDP will ask questions in Question Period when the House returns.

Meanwhile, prior to Mr. Trudeau's meeting with Mr. Boyle, the prime minister was on the receiving end of the criticism for vacationing along with family and friends at the Aga Khan's private island in Bahamas in late 2016. Last month, Ethics and Conflict of Interest Commissioner Mary Dawson said in her report that by vacationing at the billionaire Ismaili Muslims' spiritual leader's island, Mr. Trudeau contravened the federal ethics act. Mr. Trudeau is the first prime minister who has been found in breach of the act, which came into effect in 2006, under then-prime minister Stephen Harper.

All political insiders interviewed for this article said that polls in the last few weeks have not shown any negative reaction for Mr. Trudeau meeting with Mr. Boyle and breaching the act. But, they said, it could become a problem for the Liberals if the opposition parties kept on hammering the Liberals on these two issues.

"I see these issues as future political risks, not necessarily political risks today," said Mr. Nanos. "If you think politics is a ledger entry, things are starting to add up. Once people start focussing on the next federal election, that's when we're going to have a full understanding of how much of a negative impact these things will have."

The Hill Times



NDP MP Nathan Cullen. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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THE HILL TIMES

PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY BY
 HILL TIMES PUBLISHING INC.
 246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4

PUBLISHERS Anne Marie Creskey,
 Jim Creskey, Ross Dickson
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Editorial

Lynn Beyak's racist letters test Senate's free speech, public tolerance

Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides Canadians with the right to express themselves, free from persecution by the government—within limits.

The Criminal Code does bar expression that incites hatred against an identifiable group outside of private conversation. It is rare for Canadians to be prosecuted under it: just 68 cases of public incitement of hatred were reported by police in 2016, according to Statistics Canada.

Being limited to the state-citizen relationship, the Charter does not give Canadians the right to express themselves free from criticism from, or punishment by, other Canadians, within the bounds of the law.

What does all of this have to do with Senator Lynn Beyak?

Sen. Beyak was turfed from the Conservative Senate caucus for refusing to remove from her Senate website letters from supporters that essentially called Indigenous people in Canada lazy, and argued they should be grateful for the residential school system in which so many Indigenous children died or were abused in myriad ways. Sen. Beyak had previously gotten in hot water twice for comments she herself made about Indigenous people, and the residential school system.

Fellow Senator Lillian Dyck has said she thinks Sen. Beyak's posting of the racist letters is enough to qualify as criminal hate speech, but there has been little other talk of such charges coming.

The bar for criminal hate speech prosecution should be high; allowing the state to crack down on free expression starts us down a slippery slope. For many Canadians, however, there are other serious ramifications for promoting grossly

offensive viewpoints to the public: losing their job, for example.

Senators, however, are a special case. The very nature of their job is that it be secure, and less dependent on public opinion, thereby allowing Senators to do what they feel is right, and not popular.

The past several years have proven, if nothing else, that it is very difficult to have a Senator removed from office for having done wrong, so long as they are not convicted of a serious crime.

Sen. Beyak has refused to take down the worst of the letters, and now that she has been removed from committees and her former political caucus, there is less incentive than ever before to refrain from posting more offensive content on her website in the future. But Sen. Beyak should take down the letters from her parliamentary website.

Sen. Beyak's case will, if nothing else, prove a litmus test of what the Senate will accept from one of its members when it comes to offensive—or, as Conservative leader Andrew Scheer put it, racist—speech.

If speech for Senators is limited by the Criminal Code, and nothing else, then Sen. Beyak and others in the future will be free to use their publicly funded office to disseminate viewpoints that denigrate others in Canadian society.

A 2015 Angus Reid poll found 41 per cent of Canadians thought the Senate should be abolished. The current government has tried to reform the Senate, the previous government talked of doing the same—before appointing Sen. Beyak.

Can the Senate's reputation survive taking on the role of a testing ground for the limits of free speech? If Sen. Beyak carries on as she has in the past, we may find out.

Letters to the Editor

Decision to legalize cannabis complex, based on many different considerations

Re: "Sen. Unger relies on incomplete representation to argue her case against cannabis legalization," (*The Hill Times*, letter to the editor, Jan. 8, p. 8). Stephanie Lake and Rebecca Haines-Saah take Conservative Senator Betty Unger to task for incomplete representation of the effects of legalization on cannabis use by youth in Colorado. Unfortunately, the same criticism can be made against Ms. Lake and Ms. Haines-Saah themselves. They state that the percentage of Colorado youth who uses cannabis increased by only one per cent after legalization, but they make no reference to studies showing a considerably more substantial increase.

It is true that the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) did report an increase from 19.7 per cent the year before legalized sale was put into effect to 21.2 per cent the year after, and the same information was also reported in the *Scientific American*. The increase was for the first observation period after legalization. It matters a great deal whether it occurred only for that period, or continues at the steeper rate of rise for two, five or 10 additional observation periods, and we don't yet know that. More importantly, however, Ms. Lake and Ms. Haines-Saah fail to cite the findings of the U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health conducted annually by the Substance Abuse and Mental

Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

As described in the October 2017 report of the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, the SAMHSA data for the same time frame showed a 16.7 per cent increase for 12 to 17 year olds in Colorado while the national average actually decreased by 3.5 per cent. Colorado had a 16.5 per cent increase for 18 to 25 year olds, versus a 2.3 per cent increase nation-wide. Colorado youth jumped from fourth-highest percentage of users in the country the year before legalization to become the highest after legalization.

The most credible explanation of the difference between the HKCS and the SAMHSA figures is an important difference in the methods used in the two studies. The SAMHSA survey uses a structured representative sample for each state, whereas the HKCS sample was not a representative one, and did not include the areas of Colorado that have the highest levels of use. The decision about legalization is a complex one that must rest on many different considerations, but it is not made any less complex by selective omission of contradictory findings.

Harold Kalant
 Professor emeritus, Department of
 Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine,
 University of Toronto

Does columnist Crane know something we don't?

Re: "Trudeau's biggest challenge over next several years will be to cut GHGs," (*The Hill Times*, David Crane, Jan. 8). Many thanks for David Crane's recent opinion piece which highlighted the significant gap between the ambition of the federal government's climate change rhetoric and its present policy.

The sad fact is that the escalating carbon price floor set out in the 2016 Pan Canadian Framework for Clean Growth and Climate Change lacks teeth. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development says as much by noting that "The highest effective carbon prices in most OECD countries in 2012 were already twice as high as the highest effective price that is proposed for Canada in 2022."

What's needed, and soon, is a resolutely increasing national fee on GHG pollution that

is big enough to spur low-carbon innovation in the energy and transportation sectors, while at the same time providing an incentive for Canadians to shrink their individual carbon footprints by shifting to low carbon products. That means a carbon price two to three times higher than the current policy!

I found it interesting that Mr. Crane wrote that "There's probably no more difficult challenge facing the Trudeau government over the next several years..." which is not the same thing as "over the next couple of years." Does your columnist know something that we don't?

As well, in the second last paragraph of the article, you have "rising to \$50 by 2020," which I think should rather be "by 2022."

Frank Grossman
 Willowdale, Ont.

Canada won't make progress on GHGs if expansion of oil sands continues

Re: "Trudeau's biggest challenge over next several years will be to cut GHGs," (*The Hill Times*, David Crane, Jan. 8). There is no denying it. Canada will not make progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions if exploration and expansion of the oil sands continues, including new pipelines to export bitumen to foreign markets. Reports from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Oil Change International, and others show that emissions from new fossil fuel projects in Canada are inconsistent with our plan to cut emissions by 30 per cent from 2005 levels. And yet oil sands projects continue to be approved.

Meanwhile, New York City announced on Jan. 10 that it will divest \$5-billion from fossil

fuels and sue major oil companies for damages associated with climate change. France has banned all oil and gas exploration on its territory. The World Bank has ceased funding fossil fuel projects. And, the price of renewable energy continues to fall. The writing is on the wall.

Canada too can be a leader in the global transition to a clean energy economy, guided by its Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. But instead of expanding fossil fuel production it has to start managing a just transition.

Beth Lorimer
 Ecological Justice Program Co-ordinator
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circulation@hilltimes.com
 613-288-1146

THE HILL TIMES

Published every Monday and Wednesday by Hill Times Publishing Inc.

246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4
 (613) 232-5952

Fax (613) 232-9055
 Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
 www.hilltimes.com

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Comment

Iconic Canadian Tim Hortons takes a hit

The ugly showdown between Unifor and Tim Hortons shows just how far this iconic donut shop has drifted from its humble beginnings on Ottawa Street in east Hamilton.



Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—What could have been more Canadian than Timmies. That is until last week.

The ugly showdown between Unifor and Tim Hortons shows just how far this iconic donut shop has drifted from its humble beginnings on Ottawa Street in east Hamilton.

So revered was the initial location that locals used to joke that the tiny outlet should be included on the national list of historic sites and monuments of Canada.

When I was Canadian Heritage minister, we even plaqued the building because it was the first among hundreds of doughnut diners across the country that were as Canadian as hockey. Three years ago, the business was expanded to a two-storey shop and museum, feature memorabilia dating back more than a half-century.

Former defence minister, Senator Art Eggleton, so loved the brand that he got a department of defence special Tim Hortons outlet in Kandahar, to support our troops' long-term stint in Afghanistan.

Hockey and Tim's were equally linked because the original locations, all located in the Hamilton area, were co-owned by famed NHL defenceman Tim Horton.

He lived life fast and furious and eventually perished when his speeding sports car slid off the road and hit a culvert at a reported speed of 140 km/h. His original business partner, was former Hamilton police officer Ron Joyce, who quit the force to launch the partnership. He offered his police buddies Hortons shares for \$500 apiece.

Local legend has it that one sergeant refused to participate, saying he earned \$20,000 a year in uniform so what would he want with doughnuts. Others reaped thousands from their initial paltry investment.

When Horton died, Joyce bought his widow out. But she quickly soured on the terms of the deal and sued Joyce in a case that went all the way to the Supreme Court. Joyce won.

Joyce parlayed that local presence into a national goldmine. Stores were popping up everywhere. He established drive-thrus and gas station doughnut stops to the point where there seemed to be a Timmies on every corner.

Joyce also managed a national branding campaign that

equated Timmies with everything Canadian.

Yuppies drank at Starbucks, but ordinary working people bought their coffee at Tim Hortons.

Drawing on that narrative, I was the first politician to hold a press conference at Tim Hortons. I launched the second of my two Liberal leadership bids at the original shop on Ottawa Street in my riding. Joyce was a strong Conservative but his office was quick to approve the announcement.

I had a secondary reason for launching there. My 2003 bid was a mercy mission against juggernaut prime minister-in-waiting Paul Martin. It was tough to attract a crowd to a suicide mission and that Tim's would only hold a couple dozen people.

Prime minister Stephen Harper fully understood Tim Hortons' populist power.

He once skipped a United Nations General Assembly meeting to make an announcement at the Oakville Tim Hortons headquarters.

But multiple demonstrations across the country last week have done irreparable damage to that truly Canadian brand.

The decision by franchise owners to cut benefits after the Ontario government hiked the minimum wage was a huge mistake.

In a Tim Hortons franchise model, the franchisee pays labour costs. Head office sets the prices and is paid by the franchisees on all counts. The frozen doughnuts

are prepared in Brantford, by a head office contract bakery, which ships them all over the country.

The corporation put out a statement last week blaming rogue, reckless franchisees for the mess, after two Cobourg local shops blamed the government minimum wage increases and lack of company support for their decision to cut employment benefits. They also now force employees to buy their own uniforms and formerly free coffee at the end of shift has also been chopped.

The ringleaders in the move to reduce employee remuneration happen to be the children of the original Horton-Joyce partnership. Joyce's son married Horton's daughter and they own the infamous Cobourg franchises. They should be ashamed.

Timmies has been a golden cow for both families for a half century. Too bad the lowest paid of their employees cannot share a little bit of their fleece.

Franchisees may have a legitimate complaint against corporate headquarters. But the damage done to the Tim Hortons brand will cost them all dearly.

Canadians who care about a decent living wage for the working poor should vote with their feet.

There are plenty of good Canadian coffee and doughnut shops in Canada.

Sheila Copps is a former Jean Chrétien-era cabinet minister and a former deputy prime minister.

The Hill Times

The politics of political messaging

Nowadays you're basically compelled to micro-target your message. That means, for example, you have figure out what demographic you're trying to reach and then you must figure out which media is the best way to reach that demographic.



Gerry Nicholls

Post-Partisan Pundit

OKAVILLE, ONT.—If I were asked to give quick advice

on how to create an effective political message, I'd say make it concise, make it direct and make it easy to understand.

Of course, the problem with offering "quick advice" is it usually oversimplifies the process.

In fact, coming up with an effective and persuasive message for a political campaign is a lot more involved than just dreaming up a snappy slogan.

It takes a lot of work; it takes a lot effort.

And part of what makes it so difficult to create a political message, is the average voter out there isn't really paying too much attention to the issues.

Or to put that more bluntly, most voters don't know anything about anything.

That means, as a consultant friend of mine once explained it to me, "the job of a political strategist is to tell people things they don't need to know, want to know or care about knowing."

That isn't easy.

At any rate, just for fun, let's look at what's involved in creating a political message.

The first step in coming up with a message is figuring what you want to say.

Will you have an anti-tax message, will you be pro-environment, will you pro- or anti-free trade; in other words, you have



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has more credibility when talking about an issue like the environment than he has when talking about an issue like national security. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

to figure out what you're for and what you're against.

After that, you have to figure out which, if any, of your views actually resonate with voters.

This is where polling comes into the picture.

You basically commission a bunch of polls which ask Canadians to rate and judge your ideas.

And to get worthwhile answers, you need a pollster who knows how to ask the right questions, to the right people, to elicit the right responses.

It's a science; it requires expertise.

To give you an idea as to why polling matters, I was once involved with running a media campaign that was going to rail against Calgary's municipal tax rate.

But when we polled the people of Calgary, we discovered, much to our surprise, that they were okay with the city's tax rate, so had we gone ahead with our anti-tax campaign, it would have flopped.

The idea is you want to eventually come up with a message that reflects the hopes and concerns of voters.

Another key component of a message is the messenger.

Who is saying the message?

That matters because a person's background could give or take away from the message's overall credibility.

For instance, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has more credibility when talking about an issue

like the environment than he has when talking about an issue like national security.

So basically, you want to make sure that whatever message you dream up, suits the personality of the messenger.

The message has to sound real. Another important component of a message is the distribution system, knowing how to reach the voters, you want to reach.

Now, this used to be a relatively simple matter. In the old day, you'd place a full page ad in *The Globe and Mail* or run TV spots on CTV, and you'd be sure to reach your audience.

But the fragmentation of media over the past decade or so, along with the emergence of social media, has changed the picture.

Nowadays you're basically compelled to micro-target your message.

That means, for example, you have figure out what demographic you're trying to reach and then you must figure out which media is the best way to reach that demographic.

Anyway, this is still oversimplifying the process, but you get the idea; politics can be hard.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

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The Hill Times

Opinion

Trade policy, negotiations to test Trudeau government's mettle this year

How well, or poorly, Canada handles each of these negotiations may very well determine whether it wins the 2019 federal election—and whether the much-vaunted middle class faces a richer or poorer future. Trade policy will test all of the government's skills, or lack thereof.



David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—Trade policy—and trade negotiations—will test the mettle and competence of the Trudeau government this year far beyond any big tests it has faced to date. The risks are high, with big implications for exports, the dollar, jobs and investment. How well, or badly, the Trudeau government handles the trade files could also determine the outcome of next year's election—will the

government be seen as a successful and competent trade negotiator or will it be blamed for any failures or setbacks and the resulting economic damage?

In question are both the future of NAFTA and the goal of increasing trade with Asia, the world's fastest-growing market. Yet in the trade negotiations facing Canada this year, the government's bargaining power is limited—in all of them we face larger economies—the U.S., Japan, and China—which will all bring significant pressures for concessions, with a need for some hard choices that mean both winners and losers.

NAFTA is first up, and the signals coming out of Ottawa are not optimistic. In a sign that Ottawa has lost confidence in the NAFTA negotiating process, and finds itself against the wall in aggressive U.S. trade actions against Bombardier aircraft, softwood lumber, newsprint, and the risk that other industries will also be targeted in pursuit of "America First," the Trudeau government has seriously upped the ante by directly challenging the abusive use by the U.S. of anti-dumping and countervailing duty penalties at the World Trade Organization.

Canada claims that U.S. policies are illegal under WTO rules and is inviting other countries to join its systemic challenge to core U.S. trade practices. "No more Mr. Nice Guy," seems to be the new Ottawa policy after quieter diplomacy seems to have accomplished little.

So the future of NAFTA is the first big test. The Trump administration's approach to NAFTA remains unclear, though the next set of negotiations in Montreal, from Jan. 23-28, should provide a much clearer indication of whether a new deal acceptable to all three countries is possible. The three countries cannot keep on meeting if the U.S. simply continues to press unacceptable demands. There is growing concern that the Trump administration is quite prepared to ditch NAFTA.



Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland, pictured on the Hill on Dec. 19, 2017, with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who was in Ottawa for bilateral trade talks. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

But the Trudeau government faces the task of not being blamed if NAFTA collapses. So one question is: what industries or interests is the Trudeau government prepared to sacrifice in order to negotiate a new NAFTA? While Canada is talking about "progressive" chapters on feminism and aboriginal issues, these are a sideshow to the really hard issues on the auto industry, intellectual property, the digital economy, dispute settlement, foreign takeover rules, telecommunications, government procurement and agriculture, for example.

To counter the risks to trade relations with the U.S., Ottawa is looking to Asia as a way to reduce dependence on the U.S. and to capitalize on growing markets in Asia. But the prospects for a revised Trans Pacific Partnership trade deal with Japan and other Asian nations suffered a setback when in Vietnam last November, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau deeply offended the leaders of Japan, Australia and New Zealand, by failing to show up at a summit of the 11 TPP leaders to announce an agreement on the future of the pact.

The government's prospects are being further tested by its pursuit of what it calls a "progressive" trade policy, which seeks to include in trade pacts chapters dealing with feminism, aboriginal rights, and the environment and labour standards. While the goal of a more inclusive globalization is important, it's not obvious that trade agreements are the best place to deal with feminist or aboriginal issues. Will Canada walk away from trade negotiations where it is unable to get support for including such issues in a trade pact?

The next set of negotiations on a revised Trans-Pacific Partnership—renamed the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership—will get underway soon though Global Affairs Canada would not disclose when or where the next negotiation would take place. The risk for Canada is that it could get left out; once six of the 11 members ratify the pact it comes into effect, leaving the others—

Canada?—to then negotiate their way in. One of Canada's concerns is the impact of CPTPP on the auto industry, with the prospect of increased auto and auto parts imports displacing Canadian production and jobs.

In fact, a key Canadian concern in all three of its trade negotiations—NAFTA, CCTPP and China—is how to deal with trade in autos and auto parts, our most important manufacturing industry in value-added and exports, and a hugely important part of the Ontario economy. The industry is undergoing massive change and Canada's future role in the industry is not clear. We represent a declining share of the world auto market and world auto production.

China is the other big question mark. The Trudeau government does not appear to have decided whether to pursue a free trade agreement with China—or if it has, it hasn't told us. Canadians appear to be sharply divided—we want to sell more to China but fear Chinese imports and are uncomfortable with the political impact in Canada of such a deal. There are also concerns on China's human rights practices. Canada and China have had at least four negotiating sessions and are working on a joint feasibility study, which the Trudeau government has promised to make public. But Global Affairs would not answer questions on the timing of this report. Most likely, key decisions on the future of trade relations with China have yet to be made.

Each of these trade negotiations will have major implications for Canada's future. Today, there is much uncertainty over each. How well, or poorly, Canada handles each of these negotiations may very well determine whether it wins the 2019 federal election—and whether the much-vaunted middle class faces a richer or poorer future. Trade policy will test all of the government's skills, or lack thereof.

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The Hill Times



Navigating Precarious Employment in Canada Who is Really at Risk?

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18-0023

When city hall becomes a terrorist target

Is the Ottawa City Hall plan to put up barriers a good one and is it justified to use tax dollars in this way? The answer, as always, is complicated.



Phil Gurski
Terrorism

OTTAWA—There are many reasons why citizens dislike city hall. You might have a beef

over the taxes you pay. Perhaps you are not happy with snow removal or garbage collection. You may even have a bone to pick with a parking ticket you received. These are all petty issues and not ones you would normally associate with terrorism. I cannot imagine a disgruntled Ottawa strapping a suicide vest on and heading to Marion Dewar Plaza to protest a council vote on rezoning. And yet the manager of security and emergency management at Ottawa City Hall is seriously considering putting up security bollards to as an 'anti-terrorism move'. City hall boffins have carried out a security assessment and determined that "we have to do a lot more" to ensure the safety and security of patrons.

Is this really necessary?

I recall that in the wake of 9/11, hundreds if not thousands of grants and disbursements were handed out like candy in the U.S. candy including, I kid you not, the Keene (New Hampshire) Pumpkin Festival, to protect against future terrorist attacks. We have not had the same silly requests



Ottawa mayor Jim Watson, pictured in this file photo, told CBC Ottawa Morning last Thursday that he supports the move to put up security bollards around Ottawa City Hall. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

in our country, to the best of my knowledge, nor the sheer number of requests. Then again, 9/11 did not happen here.

But all this leads to a very relevant question: is the Ottawa City Hall plan to put up barriers a good one and is it justified to use tax dollars in this way? The answer, as always, is complicated.

There is no doubt that there has been of late a scourge of terrorist attacks against public spaces using weapons that most of us park in our driveways—yes, cars. Whether we are talking about London or Barcelona or Nice or Edmonton the terrorist flavour of the day appears to be a race to the bottom of simplicity. Why hijack a plane and fly it into a building, which takes a certain skill level after all, when you can drive a car into a Canada Day crowd with no prior training? So,

yes, this is the current trend although it will be very interesting to see if it continues (that is the thing with trends—they end).

My initial views were that this is a gross over-exaggeration to a very low terrorist threat level. I know that ITAC—the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre—ranks the overall threat at medium (halfway on its five-point scale) but it is hard to argue that the actual threat, as measured by investigations and arrests, is really that high. It is certainly real but probably significantly lower than that of most of our allies in the West. Is Ottawa City Hall really likely to be the target of a vehicular attack? Probably not.

In the best case scenario you bolster security where your intelligence tells you to do so. Unfortunately, intelligence is never perfect, even in Canada which has

some stellar intelligence and law enforcement agencies. You can never be 100 per cent confident that you have all eventualities covered and citizens do not want to hear "but we didn't know" from their protectors in the wake of a successful plot.

In this light then, I have come to accept that this may be a necessary move on the part of those that run city hall. There are conditions though that should be met before this plan is implemented. Whatever design those in charge of security settle on must be both unobtrusive and esthetically pleasing (or neutral) while at the same time retain its functionality. It has to be cost effective—did anyone do a cost-benefit analysis of threat vs. investment in new structures? And security measures cannot ratchet up in the future, as they often do, to include serious-looking men with automatic weapons patrolling the site on a regular basis. We cannot allow our fear of terrorism to force us to accept a securitized state.

I recognize that much has changed over the last two decades and that terrorism has morphed from a phenomenon that only happens "over there" to one that has invaded our every day lives. It is highly unlikely that we will ever get back to the way things were. We can, however, temper our responses to terrorism in a measured, mature way and not give in to panic and despair.

Phil Gurski is president and CEO of Borealis Threat and Risk Consulting.
The Hill Times

Communists takeover in Nepal and nobody cares

Whether their new government will serve the Nepalese well remains to be seen, but Nepal's Communists are publicly committed to respecting the rules of parliamentary democracy, and a majority of Nepalese clearly believe them.



Gwynne Dyer
Global Affairs

LONDON, U.K.—The Communists are taking over in Nepal, and nobody cares. Thirty years ago, it would have caused a grave international crisis; 50 years ago there would even have been talk of foreign military intervention. Today—nothing. Outside Nepal, it has barely made the news at all.

In the grand old Marxist tradition, Nepal's Communists have split and split again over fine points of doctrine and strategy. Recently, however, the Communist Party of Nepal—Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) managed to form an electoral alliance that swept the recent national elections, the first since 1999.

Various Communist leaders have held office in the revolving-door coalitions, none lasting much more than a year, that have governed Nepal since it began its democratic transition a dozen years ago, but you couldn't truthfully have said that "the Communists are in power."

Now you really can say it. The CPN-UML and the CPN (Maoist Centre) ran a single joint candidate in every constituency in Nepal, and won two-thirds of the seats (174 out of 275). The two parties are pledged to unite within six

months, and they will form a government without non-Communist members that will rule Nepal, if all goes well, for the next five years.

They are real Communists, too, unlike the namby-pamby "Eurocommunists" who sought popular support in Western Europe by disavowing violent revolution in the final decade before the collapse of Communist power in Eastern Europe in 1989-91. Nepal's Communists fought a ten-year 'revolutionary' guerilla war that killed 17,000 people before a ceasefire was signed in 2006 and the democratic transition began.

Nepal is not some tiny, irrelevant backwater. It is a country with more people than Australia (although much less land or money), and it takes up half of the Himalayan border between China and India. In the self-serving definition of the world's think-tanks and "strategic studies institutes," it is important strategic territory. Yet Washington doesn't really care that the Communists are taking over, and neither does Moscow.

New Delhi and Beijing care a little bit, because of their inevitable rivalry as Asia's and the world's two biggest countries (1.3 billion people each). Both see their relations with Nepal as a

zero-sum game, and India's traditionally dominant influence there (all Nepalis live on the Indian side of the Himalayas) is threatened by the presumed preference of Nepalese Communists for fellow Communists in China.

But the lights are not burning late either in South Block or in Chaoyang. The fact of the matter is that Communists coming to power in Nepal in 2018 makes no more difference to the rest of the world than Communists coming to power in South Vietnam did in 1975.

Well, you knew where I was going with this, didn't you? South Vietnam had about the same number of people in 1975 as Nepal does now, and it was just as 'strategic'—which is to say, not very strategic at all.

When the Communists won in the South and reunified Vietnam, it may even have changed the lives of most South Vietnamese for the better, although that depends on what you mean by "better." It certainly didn't change anybody's domestic policies elsewhere in Southeast Asia, or change the calculations of the major powers in any way.

You can't even blame the Cambodian genocide on the Communist victory in South Vietnam. Cambodia, like Vietnam, was likely to end up under Communist rule anyway, because it had also been part of French Indochina and it was the Communists who led the anti-colonial resistance.

But it was Henry Kissinger's savage and illegal bombing campaign in Cambodia, not the war in

Vietnam, that turned the Khmer Rouge into genocidal monsters. And it was the Vietnamese Communists who finally invaded Cambodia in 1978 and put an end to the genocide.

The whole Vietnam War, which killed 58,000 American soldiers and about three million Vietnamese, was founded on the delusion that there was a monolithic Communist bloc that threatened 'freedom' all over the world. ("If we lose in Vietnam, California will be next.")

Certainly there were Communist fanatics who dreamed of spreading their ideology (which prioritized equality over freedom) all over the world, but the reality was geopolitics as usual. The Soviet Union and Communist China fought a border war in 1969 to demonstrate that fact, and for slow learners Communist China and Communist Vietnam fought their own border war in 1979 to drive the lesson home.

Now, mercifully, the "domino theory" is dead (or at least dormant), and the arrival of Communists in power in Nepal through entirely legal and democratic means is causing no panic whatsoever. Whether their new government will serve the Nepalese well remains to be seen, but Nepal's Communists are publicly committed to respecting the rules of parliamentary democracy, and a majority of Nepalese clearly believe them.

Gwynne Dyer is an independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.
The Hill Times

Opinion

Open doors to a Canadian progressive trade strategy

There are lots of open doors for real progress on a progressive trade strategy that works for Canada and its trading partners. It's time to walk through.



Phil Rourke

Trade agenda

OTTAWA—If Trade Minister François-Philippe Champagne makes new year's resolutions, he's probably thinking work-wise of trying to find a new approach to implementing his progressive trade agenda. Decoupling this agenda from his trade negotiations strategy and focus-

ing on other trading partners will open up new opportunities with better prospects for success.

Canada successfully negotiated a progressive trade agenda with the EU because the issues were already an integral part of Europe's trade agenda. Some have even argued it was the Europeans who led the Canadians to adopt a progressive trade agenda, not the other way around. Either way, the door to progressive trade was open on both sides.

Canada was able to agree to a chapter on trade and gender in the modernization of its longstanding free trade agreement (FTA) with Chile because Chile had already previously agreed to such a chapter in its FTA with Uruguay. This door was also already open.

Success, however, is proving elusive in Canada's trade negotiations strategy for NAFTA, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and China.

The flaw in Canada's progressive trade strategy in these three cases is not in its emphasis on labour and environmental standards, greater participation for all in the benefits of trade, and finding more and better jobs for everyone. Governments worldwide are concerned about these issues.

The problem is that trade agreements are not the best vehicle for quick wins on non-traditional trade issues. The problem is compounded when one side does

not agree that such issues should be included in trade agreements. The strategy becomes unworkable when Canada is the demander and does not have the market power or political influence to convince the other side to address such issues in trade negotiations.

The following are three points to consider in a reboot of Canada's progressive trade agenda.

First, repackage Canada's trade negotiations strategy as part of a broader set of agreements that, together, form a progressive trade agenda. Environment Minister Catherine McKenna's recent clean technology trade mission to China and related announcements have better prospects—and sooner—for increasing bilateral trade than an environmental chapter in an FTA that will take at least a decade to negotiate. Closer bilateral cooperation on air linkages to promote tourism and business—announced in China by Prime Minister Trudeau—is an efficient way to increase Canada's services exports with China.

The cultural and educational exchanges that were also announced during the December trip will help change attitudes on both sides about each other. The announcement about cooperation on rule of law and labour, while modest, could also be considered a start toward a progressive trade agenda with China.



Environment Minister Catherine McKenna's recent clean technology trade mission to China and related announcements have better prospects—and sooner—for increasing bilateral trade than an environmental chapter in an FTA that will take at least a decade to negotiate. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Second, focus the progressive trade agreement strategy on two partners: the Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Peru); and the United Kingdom. Canada already has labour and environmental agreements with all four Pacific Alliance (PA) members through existing FTAs with each of them. Canada and Chile have already agreed on a trade and gender chapter, and is negotiating one with Mexico. Such a chapter will not be a stumbling block for discussions with Colombia and Peru. The PA negotiations have already started. On all other issues, including commercial issues, the doors are already open.

The U.K. is a trade agreement outlier right now, but it won't be after March 2019 when the U.K. is scheduled to leave the European Union. Canada and U.K. negotiators are already discussing how to reframe the Canada-EU agreement into a bilateral agreement post-Brexit. Each side has reasons to conclude an agreement. They will find common ground on social issues to complement existing agreements on labour and the environment. Another opened door.

Finally, Canada does not necessarily need to use a trade

agreement to achieve its progressive trade agenda. Having chapters such as on trade and gender in a trade agreement are useful if the goal is to have firm commitments with sanctions for noncompliance.

But that is not what Canada is negotiating. Its current trade and gender chapter model has no firm commitments except to elect a chair for a working committee and to have one meeting. The chapter is also clear that there is no sanction for noncompliance.

The chapter is a cooperation agreement inside a trade agreement. If this is the goal, the strategy should shift to negotiating cooperation agreements. Fortunately, there are more potential partners for Canada for cooperation on progressive trade priorities than on launching trade negotiations. Finding those partners is a good next step.

There are lots of open doors for real progress on a progressive trade strategy that works for Canada and its trading partners. It's time to walk through.

Phil Rourke is executive director, Centre for Trade Policy and Law at Carleton University and the University of Ottawa.
The Hill Times

Minimum wage increase will also affect tipping

I have nothing against tipping if it is considered a monetary evaluation of the service received, left completely at the customer's discretion.

Unfortunately, the tip is becoming the substitution, not the supplement, to the server's salary.



Angelo Persichilli

Politics

TORONTO—There's a lot of talk these days about the increase of the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. This legislation will affect all industries, but we're mainly focusing on the restaurant industry.

I would like to talk about another aspect of the restaurant industry, the tipping, and how, or

if, this new legislation will have an impact on this increasingly unacceptable tradition.

I have nothing against tipping if it is considered a monetary evaluation of the service received, left completely at the customer's discretion. Unfortunately, the tip is becoming the substitution, not the supplement, to the server's salary.

Misleading advertising is not legal, but restaurants' menus are misleading. For instance, the actual cost of an advertised \$50 dish is between \$65-\$70 because in addition to the price, there is the 13 per cent increase of the HST, and a 15 per cent to 20 per cent tip as well.

It's unfair to the waitresses and waiters because it generates more cash money not subject to taxation, and removes the discretion of the customer to exercise a judgment on the quality of the service received.

Many times, tips are not money for the waiters, but tax-free money for some owners using the waiters to collect them. The increase in tips often coincides with the lowering of waiters' salaries. One waiter once told me that his tips were his salary, not an extra bonus for good service. This procedure leaves the workers financially vulnerable

and their salary to be negotiated between them and the customers, not the owners.

Furthermore, customers have no means to express their judgment on the quality of the service received. And this should be the real purpose of the tip. The only discretion left to the customer is to choose between 10, 15, 18, or 20 per cent.

Once I had to wait for almost 20 minutes for the waiter to take my order and another 45 minutes for the meal to be served. The waiter, busy like hell, didn't even have the time to bring us water, despite repeatedly being asked, and we had to wait 15 minutes to get the bill.

I decided not to leave a tip. The waiter looked at the receipt and gently said, "Sir, you forgot to leave the tip." Very politely I told him that I didn't forget, I just didn't want to leave a tip because I didn't like the service. The owner approached me, apologized for the service, but he said that the tip "is a must" and not related to the service. I felt upset with him for his arrogance, but also bad because I realized I was punishing the waiter for the decision of the owner not to hire more people.

In fact, the waiter was punished twice because he was working more and making less money,

while the restaurateur benefited twice because he could reduce the salary for his workers, and not pay the tax on it.

Other restaurateurs don't even ask you to choose the percentage. When there is a large group, the 20 per cent tip is automatically included.

This story is not about the amount of the tip and, of course, there are honest and fair restaurateurs treating their workers properly. But some decide unilaterally to put their hands in our pockets by exploiting the waiters and without telling the customers, in advance, the real costs of the meal.

If they need more money to run the business they should increase the prices and inform the people, in the menu. Misinforming the customers with a hidden, not taxable, surcharge is not acceptable.

The question is how the minimum wage legislation will impact this legalized abuse by some restaurateurs of the waitresses, waiters, and the customers.

Angelo Persichilli is a former director of communications to prime minister Stephen Harper and the former political editor of Corriere Canadese, Canada's Italian-language daily newspaper.
The Hill Times

Providing benefits not burdens

Why is the Canada Revenue Agency denying the Disability Tax Credit to those who need it most?



Stephanie Dunn & Jennifer Zwicker

Opinion

CALGARY—“Providing benefits not burdens” is how former health minister, Judy LaMarsh once described the vision for disability policy in Canada.

Unfortunately, this vision is not a reality when it comes to one of the main benefits open to Canadians with disability: the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC). Administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), the DTC is designed to recognize some of the higher costs faced by people with severe disabilities and their caregivers.

Yet reports from Autism Canada and disability groups across the country suggest recent CRA decisions have resulted in people diagnosed with autism and intellectual disability having their eligibility to the DTC suddenly revoked or denied—against the CRA’s own rules.

This is unsettling news for families caring for children with disability, given three in four children with disability identify as having a cognitive or mental health-related disability. This issue goes beyond the credit itself, given that DTC eligibility is frequently used for access to additional federal and provincial disability benefits.

Revoking DTC eligibility means a family with a child with a severe disability can no longer receive up to \$2,730 through the Child Disability Benefit and \$4,000 or more in federal and provincial disability-related tax credits (depending on income and where they live).

They also must close their child’s Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSP), forfeiting contributions from the government of up to \$70,000 over the lifetime of the plan.



Revenue Minister Diane LeBouthillier, pictured on the Hill in a scrum. There are issues that the CRA can—and should—address immediately, such as amending eligibility criteria to better align with the Income Tax Act. It is time the federal government started taking this seriously. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

We commend the recent announcement by Revenue Minister Diane LeBouthillier that a Disability Advisory Committee will be reinstated next year. The committee’s mandate of advising on the CRA’s administration and interpretation of laws and programs relating to disability tax measures is sorely needed, as are efforts to improve awareness of the DTC and related benefits.

However, the committee has its work cut out for it. Recent concerns about people having their DTC eligibility revoked are only the tip of the iceberg.

Research tells us the DTC is already underutilized, meaning most Canadians with qualifying disabilities are not accessing the described benefits and credits. Of those who do claim the credit on their tax returns in any given year, only half of all claimants (including caregivers) actually receive value from the DTC.

In addition to awareness, three major barriers to accessing the DTC need to be addressed.

Firstly, the DTC is a non-refundable tax credit, which means that the credit itself is only valuable to those earning enough taxable income. This means it would be of little or no direct benefit to the one in

five families in Canada with a child with a severe disability living in low income.

Secondly, eligibility criteria are poorly operationalized. Criteria have been criticized for lacking clarity, being open to interpretation, failing to accurately reflect the practicalities of living with a disability and requiring people with impairments in mental functions to meet a higher bar than for those with physical impairments. The CRA have even departed from wording in the Income Tax Act in tests of impairment in the DTC application form, which can impact whether a person receives DTC eligibility or not.

Finally, the application process is burdensome. The CRA’s public consultations in 2014 demonstrated that the application process was not user-friendly, resulting in a shorter form. However, access to help and information from the CRA has been reduced in recent years, with the Auditor General findings this month showing that two in three calls to the CRA’s call centers go unanswered.

The absence of a clear and transparent appeals process is also a problem.

Consequently, some seek paid professional support to access the tax credit, including people with limited resources

to spare. Third-party companies to help people apply for the DTC, many with hefty fees, are commonly used, necessitating laws to limit the amount they could charge applicants (something else that’s been on the government “to do” list for years).

The good news is that these are problems an empowered and transparent DAC can advise on. But this is a lot to take on for a committee of 12 voluntary unpaid members meeting three times a year.

The CRA is the gatekeeper to several key federal disability benefits underutilized by eligible Canadians. There are issues that the CRA can—and should—address immediately, such as amending eligibility criteria to better align with the Income Tax Act.

It is time the federal government started taking this seriously.

Dr. Jennifer Zwicker is an expert advisor with EvidenceNetwork.ca, a director of health policy at the School of Public Policy and assistant professor in the department of kinesiology at the University of Calgary. Stephanie Dunn is a research associate in the health policy division at the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary.

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Opinion

Time for Parliament to legislate control over Canada's military criminal justice system

The interim report on the court martial comprehensive review does not instil confidence that the military justice system is working, and this should bring tremendous concern, and a sense of urgency, to Parliament that significant reform is required.



Joshua Juneau & Michel Drapeau
Military justice

OTTAWA—The cornerstone of Canada's constitutional democracy is the separation of government powers. As the artisans of law and with a complete oversight duty over the executive, the legislature arguably wields the greatest power. If there is public demand for a policy shift, it is the legislature that exercises control over the executive to ensure that the public interest is maintained. This includes control over all government departments, including the Canadian Armed Forces.

Despite its oversight duty, Canada's legislature has arguably not made a meaningful contribution to the development of military law since 1967, resulting in the unification of Canada's Army, Navy, and Air Force. In this way—save for legislative reform in 1997 as a result of the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of the Canadian Airborne Regiment to Somalia—this current Parliament is an absentee landlord, currently more concerned with legalizing marijuana than in reforming an ancient justice system that so often fails our men and women in uniform.

And the time for the legislature to exercise control over the military has never been more urgent. Last week, an interim report on the court martial comprehensive review was made public, and demonstrates that there is a strong and uniform lack of confidence in the military justice system. In interviewing those in Command roles, senior officers advocate for significant reform to address shortfalls of the military justice system, including civilianization of the prosecution services and the judiciary. These commanders give clear examples where military lawyers have undermined their command function.

Canada's minister of justice is also 'absent in office' on the military justice file. Yet, Sec. 4 of the Department of Justice Act gives the minister responsibility as superintendent over "all matters connected with the administration of justice in Canada," including the military justice system. The Minister of Justice, Jody Wilson-Raybould, is also the official adviser to the governor general—Canada's commander in chief—and is the legal member for the Queen's Privy Council.

Not only is the minister passive and uninvolved in military affairs, her legislation goes out of its way to exclude application over the military. It is almost as if there were a line of demarcation between laws intended for civil society and laws enacted for the military. The corollary to this is that the military is being granted a sort of independence of decision and actions within a widening sphere of competence. To the informed observer, the lines between legislative and military affairs is sharp and clear as if both sides must abstain from transgression.

The need for civilian oversight of our military has never been clearer.

The Summary trial

Among advanced democracies, Canada's military is the last bastion of the ancient summary trial. The ancient summary trials system in Canada is frozen in time and largely unchanged in 328 years.

Nearly 800 military members in Canada face summary trial each year. These disciplinary proceedings, which are heard by that soldier's commanding officer, could lead to a sentence with "true penal consequences" such as

incarceration, demotion, a large fine, or a reprimand. A summary trial conviction may also result in a criminal record.

Amazingly, however, there is no right to legal counsel at a summary trial even if an accused is being tried on Canadian soil, during peace time; nor is there a transcript of proceedings or a right of appeal. Moreover, the commanding officer hearing the summary trial has no legal training.

The summary trial disciplinary procedure is also devoid of any rules of evidence, meaning there is no protection for an accused being compelled to be a witness against himself, there is no protection against self-incrimination, no right to spousal privilege, and adverse inferences may be drawn from the accused's silence, and hearsay evidence may be taken and fully relied upon.

No other Canadian faces such a one-sided penal justice process. The summary trial process, as practised in Canada, has been all but abolished among all our NATO allies. Canada's system is still used in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

In 2015, Canada's Parliament introduced Bill C-71 which was aimed at modifying the military's summary trial. However, the authenticity for such reforms is questionable, because with the dissolution of Parliament prior to the last federal election, the bill died on the Order Paper, and nearly two years since, there is no indication that it will be reintroduced.

No impetus for change

As it stands, Canada's military justice system needs comprehensive reform—a task that requires independent oversight.

Since 1998, there have been two independent reviews of Canada's military justice system. The first review was conducted by Antonio Lamer in 2003. The second review was conducted by Patrick J. LeSage in 2012. The recommendations of these two reports were mostly geared at protecting the status quo and not towards significant reforms.

In 2016, Canada's Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan ordered a review of the National Defence Act, and asked stakeholders to make submissions on how to improve their policy and governance process. A separate and parallel internal review, was also

launched by the judge advocate general on the court martial system. That review is spearheaded by a senior lawyer with the Office of the Judge Advocate General.

Though a wall-to-wall review of the National Defence Act is desperately required, meaningful reform can only be achieved by external review. Most surprisingly, despite assembling a team and having them conduct extensive consultations with 10 countries globally, at a May 2017 conference, the senior officer leading the JAG review stated it is possible "the report just gets put on a shelf and becomes a reference for future folks examining and looking at options for reform of the court martial system." Predictably then, there is no real impetus for meaningful change.

Procedurally, a confidential draft report on the court martial system has been produced and provided to the judge advocate general for approval. However, despite permitting broad input from all Canadians, the military lawyers will seemingly only give weight to positions and ideas penned by members of the defence establishment because, as stated by the same senior JAG officer at the same May 2017 conference, "no one can understand military justice unless they have worked in it."



In 2016, Canada's Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan ordered a review of the National Defence Act, and asked stakeholders to make submissions on how to improve their policy and governance process. A separate and parallel internal review, was also launched by the judge advocate general on the court martial system. That review is spearheaded by a senior lawyer with the Office of the Judge Advocate General. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

This is troublesome.

More troublesome is that, according to CAF's defence ethics teachings, it is impermissible for a serving member to criticize the current operational framework. In the June 2016 edition of *Maple Leaf Magazine*, the Defence Ethics Program published an ethical scenario concerning Albert, who sadly disagreed with his chain of command on a policy decision. The ethical dilemma is: What should Albert do?

After some time, the DND's Ethics Program released its rubric response: If you disagree with departmental policies, a member's only options are to keep quiet or release from service. The answer and rationale provided by the ethics advisors reads as follows: "If professional servants of the state choose to undermine the governance process when they disagree with decisions, then they render the institution incapable of serving the state. ... If Albert felt this issue was important enough, he had the option of respecting his professional obligations by resigning from the institution."

The CAF policy is seemingly, therefore, that if a member

disagrees with current governance policies, the only recourse is to resign, or else they will be violating their professional oath. According to the Defence Ethics Program, for a member to make a submission to assist the JAG review, would be to undermine the governance process itself. The member would be necessarily forced to resign. Given this reality, there is no reason to expect anything but submission to the status quo. Perhaps the senior JAG officer's prediction—that his report will merely get "put on a shelf and becomes a reference" is more truth than fiction.

Past likely to repeat itself

It is not reasonable to expect military lawyers to review and recommend substantial changes to their own policies. It will undoubtedly lead to a predictable outcome—another report of the self-aggrandized "best" justice system, with broad recommendations that will never be fully implemented.

This cynical opinion is grounded in very recent history. Consider Bill C-15: An Act to Amend the National Defence Act. Bill C-15 was tabled by the Conservative government in June 2011—more than six years ago. It received royal assent on June 19, 2013. Despite the passage of more

than four years since assent, more than half of this bill has yet to be put into force, including all provisions aimed at strengthening the archaic military justice system.

Bill C-15 was the subject of more than two years of extensive consultation, including eight separate meetings of the Standing Committee on National Defence, and five full meetings of the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Bill C-15 received Her Majesty's approval, and the approval of the judge advocate general who was directly involved in the consultation process.

For reasons unknown, Bill C-15, a very important legislation, has been forgotten and left to collect dust in the annals of Parliament. Bill C-15 should be the starting point for any defence review. Particularly concerning is that the contents of the bill that were ignored are specifically aimed at improving the rights of members of the CAF, and strengthening the military justice system such as the scope of sentencing principles, absolute discharge, intermittent sentences, restitution, and allowing victim impact statements.



Canada's Minister of Justice Jody Wilson-Raybould is also 'absent in office' on the military justice file, write Michel Drapeau and Joshua Juneau. Yet, Sec. 4 of the Department of Justice Act gives the minister responsibility as superintendent over 'all matters connected with the administration of justice in Canada,' including the military justice system.
The Hill Times file photograph

If Bill C-15 cannot reach its full maturity after all the effort that went to its final product, and more than four years since being signed by the governor general, it is predictable that any work prepared by the JAG's most recent internal review will find equal outcome—just another reference text, as he has foreshadowed.

Military self-governance

There is a growing shift towards the military becoming completely insulated and self-governing, and the military take every opportunity to exclude themselves from civilian society. In doing so, they act in stark contrast to the people they serve.

Consider that victims of crimes investigated or prosecuted under military jurisdiction have been patently excluded from the recently enacted Canadian Victims Bill of Rights. Sec. 18(3) of that law specifically excludes a victim whose assailant is tried under the National Defence Act from being kept apprised of their case as it advances, including victims of sexual assault or violent crimes.

Consider also that in 1998, the National Defence Act was amended to remove sexual assault as a criminal offence excluded from military jurisdiction. Now any sex-based crime may be tried and prosecuted before a military court. The reason for the military doing so was its belief that it's more capable of doing so. One has to ask: how is the prosecution of sexual assault or aggravated sex-based crimes, connected to the discipline, efficiency, and morale of the military? It is not.

A review of the Defence establishment should not be left to the military to act alone, and in accordance with their own interests. History is replete with examples of how a military, left to their own, ends in catastrophe, some which will be chronicled below. Unfortunately, it is only when facing a crisis, and public pressure mounts, that Parliament actually gets involved. Despite its vast resources, it is surprising that Parliament rarely exercises any foresight to try and prevent catastrophe through meaningful and independent military justice reform.

Somalia

Following the torture-killing of Somali teenager Shidane Arone and political pressure, a royal commission of inquiry was undertaken to investigate the Deployment of the Canadian Airborne Regiment to Somalia.

The final report chronicles a litany of failures and, more significantly, leadership shortcomings by the military chain of command and significant failures of the military justice system, whether in theatre or at National Defence Headquarters. It also revealed the existence of a climate of coverup as well as deep moral and legal failings.

The report made hundreds of findings and provided 160 recommendations, 45 of which dealing exclusively with the restructuring of the military justice system. It was only in response to this tragedy that the legislature was compelled to introduce sweeping reforms to the National Defence Act, in 1998 by introducing Bill C-25. Among the changes were: abolish the death penalty; strengthen the indepen-

dence of military judges relating to their appointment, powers and tenure; clarify and limit the functions of the minister of National Defence; and create new positions within the military justice system, such as the director of military prosecutions.

The Fynes inquiry

In March 2008, Corporal Stuart Langridge—a veteran of the Bosnia and Afghanistan conflicts—committed suicide in a barracks room at the Canadian Forces Base Edmonton. He was 28 years of age.

What followed the death of Langridge was horrific. The military police were led by investigators, who made careless mistakes and have left Langridge's parents feeling "deceived, misled, and intentionally marginalized." This included withholding the fact for more than 16 months after Langridge's death that he had left a suicide note for his mother.

The treatment that the Fynes family suffered at the hands of the Canadian Forces Administration and leadership left them deeply scarred and resulted in a very public inquiry by the Military Police Complaints Commission into 32 allegations of wrongdoing by several military police members. The MPCC considered testimony from 92 witnesses, through 62 days, which straddled nearly six calendar months. Testimony has uncovered unusual, dramatic and disturbing events both in the lead up and the aftermath of Langridge's unfortunate passing.

The final report of the MPCC has been ignored by the military police with no meaningful changes being made.

The Deschamps review

In response to media reports of widespread sexual misconduct within Canada's military, on July 9, 2014, the Department of National Defence announced that there would be an external review on sexual misconduct in the Canadian Forces. The review was undertaken by Madam Justice Marie Deschamps, a highly qualified, and recently retired Supreme Court judge.

Disappointingly, the military only provided Deschamps with a limited mandate, and she was therefore unable to probe too deeply into the military justice system to determine whether or not there was disconnect between the military policies and, more importantly, the application of these policies.

On April 29, 2015, Deschamps' report was released. The findings detailed an epidemic of sexualized behaviours and attitudes. Specifically, Deschamps concluded that abuse of recruits at Royal Military College of Canada (RMCC) is "endemic." She writes that many college students she spoke with: "reported that sexual harassment is considered a 'passage obligé,' and sexual assault an ever-present risk. One officer cadet joked that they do not report sexual harassment because it happens all the time.

The military did not fully accept the findings of this report. Instead, with much fanfare, the current Chief of Defence Staff, General Jonathan Vance, initiated Operation Honour. His stated mission is

"To eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour within the CAF."

The following year, Vance commissioned a Statistics Canada survey to re-evaluate the data set. What embarrassment he must have felt when this new report showed that nearly 1,000 members of the military reported being sexually assaulted within the previous 12 months. His Operation Honour Order had been directly and flauntingly ignored. The Statistics Canada survey further found that soldiers, sailors, and aviators are far more likely than other Canadians to be violated sexually. It also suggests that military leaders have a long way to go in their efforts to change a culture in which sexual assault is tolerated.

Operation Honour is ongoing, and will not be concluded until "all CAF members are able to perform their duties in an environment free of harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour." How this is to be measured and victory declared is uncertain, particularly since there will be no external review of the results of this operation.

Role of courts and tribunals

Civilian courts and tribunals in Canada are largely not willing or able to intervene concerning issues of military justice. There are a few examples worth noting:

Women were only permitted aboard Naval ships and the infantry in 1989, thanks to a decision of the Human Rights Commission forcing it upon them. The CAF and Department of National Defence argued against this modernization.

The unconstitutional right of a criminal accused to select the mode of trial was only abolished in 2008 by order of the Court Martial Appeal Court in *v. Trépanier*; and

Security of tenure for military judges was not recognized until 2011, by order of the Court Martial Appeal Court in *v. Leblanc*.

The judiciary is cautious not to interfere with what it perceives as the will of Parliament. Indeed, the separation of powers may prevent them from doing so. Disappointingly, however, when given the chance to influence the military justice regime, the Supreme Court of Canada seems consistently reluctant to do so.

Canada's Constitution permits a law to be struck if the breadth of a law greatly exceeds the legislative intent. Most recently, in *R v. Moriarity*, the Supreme Court of Canada considered whether incorporation of Criminal Code offences as military disciplinary offences was overly broad.

The Moriarity case was an opportunity for the Supreme Court of Canada to clarify the historical 'nexus' test, and the required restriction for the military to assume jurisdiction over offences committed in Canada, particularly in peace time. A central question was as follows: to retain jurisdiction over criminal offences, is it necessary for military prosecutors to show a connection to the maintenance of discipline, efficiency and morale of the military?

The Supreme Court of Canada answered the question emphatically: there are no limits to prosecutorial discretion, and any changes to this discretion would have to be legislated. The historical 'nexus' test was quashed. The issue must be addressed by Parliament, not the courts.

Conclusion

The legislature is trusted with ultimate responsibility for a country's strategic decision-making, including control and oversight of the military. Historically, the military has resisted oversight, conducting internal reviews and only truly responding to crisis as they arise, and in response to public outrage. The result is that Canada's military operates in isolation, as a nation within a nation.

Civilian oversight is required over the military justice system. Operation Honour, which was designed, run, and controlled by the military for the military, has failed to bring about a counter-culture to address the harmful sexualized environment. The 2016 comprehensive survey conducted by Statistics Canada shows that the problem is both enduring and deep-seated. Yet, military leaders continue to bumble in search of solutions.

As a result, millions of dollars have been spent in military solutions: travel, pointless surveys, wallet sized reminder cards, and call-in centers that are closed on weekends. It is clear that the military is unable to fix this socio-cultural problem on its own.

Operation Honour is unlikely to rank as a success in military annals. It will most likely instead be yet another illustration of the disconnectedness between the military and the expectations of civil society whom they serve, and the Department of National Defence's ability to "control the message."

The interim report on the court martial comprehensive review does not instill confidence that the military justice system is working, and this should bring tremendous concern, and a sense of urgency, to the legislature that significant reform is required. We will have to wait for the publication of the final report by the Office of the Judge Advocate General to find out how these urgent pleas for reforms by the rank and file are addressed.

It is the duty of our legislature and the minister of justice to be vigilant and not allow our military to operate in a vacuum. Former French prime minister Georges Clemenceau once famously quipped: "War is too important a matter to be left to the military." Perhaps there is a conventional wisdom to this statement, and military justice, accordingly, is also to important a matter to be left to the military.

Michel W. Drapeau and Joshua M. Juneau are administrative lawyers focusing on military law and veterans law. They acted as co-counsel for the Fynes family during the MPCC public inquiry process, and represent members of the Canadian Armed Forces, nationally, in both legal matters and internal administrative matters.

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Calls for reset continue as MMIW national inquiry requests more funding, time

Indigenous activist Ellen Gabriel says the inquiry was flawed from the get-go, and while ‘we all want it to succeed,’ as it stands now she has ‘very little faith’ it will bring about the fundamental changes needed.

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“The TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] got reset twice, why is this not being reset? It’s going to come under criticism anyway, but there’s valid concerns by family members about how this is being conducted,” Ms. Gabriel told *The Hill Times* in an interview last week.

The national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women requested additional funding in its November interim report—no specific figure was indicated—in part to compensate Indigenous organizations providing support to its work. Chief commissioner Marion Buller has also indicated the inquiry is working to file a formal request for an extension by “early 2018,” reportedly seeking a two-year extension, pushing the current Nov. 1, 2018 deadline to 2020.

The Liberal government announced its terms of reference and mandate for the independent national inquiry in August 2016, after a pre-inquiry process that began in December 2015.

Along with Ms. Buller, four other commissioners were named in the terms of reference: Michèle Audette, Qajaq Robinson, Marilyn Poitras, and Brian Eyolfson. Ultimately, the inquiry was allocated a \$53.8-million budget.

It’s been a consistently bumpy road for the national inquiry since its launch. Advisory hearings that were originally pursued were quickly scrapped after criticism that the inquiry was duplicating the work of the pre-inquiry process.

The use of western, legalistic approaches, rather than Indigenous laws, customs and practices, in the set-up of community hearings and the terms of participation, among other things, have also been major sources of criticism to date.

The inquiry held its first community hearing in Whitehorse between May 29 and June 1, 2017, and it last took place in Thunder Bay, Ont. in December. It is set to begin ‘institutional hearings’ focused on systemic causes of violence, including examining policing practices, in early 2018. In an emailed response to *The Hill Times* last week, the inquiry indicated a “calendar” for these hearings “is not yet available.”



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Oct. 4, 2017, on Parliament Hill for the Families of Sisters in Spirit Vigi to honour the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

“We have been entrusted with a sacred responsibility and we only have one chance to get it right. That is why we are in the process of consulting with the National Family Advisory Circle, National Indigenous Organizations and other valued stakeholders,” she emailed statement said.

To date, 1,183 people have registered to participate in inquiry hearings, it said, with 597 of them having “shared their truths in one of the eight community hearings.”

But Ms. Gabriel said from feedback she’s received, the national inquiry is proceeding in a “very discriminatory way” in terms of who is able, and enabled, to participate. In large part, she thinks problems with progress come down to the government’s choice of commissioners, along with a mandate that was “too broad.”

“It was flawed to begin with,” she said, adding the government should have had offices and other resources in place, so the inquiry could “hit the ground running.”

Ms. Gabriel said that while it’s always “easy to criticize” and the inquiry’s task is a “tough” one—even for those with a background in related issues—she thinks the inquiry “now is scrambling” and questioned, “How much hope can we put into it?”

“Is it going to be another box that is ticked by the government to say, ‘well, look, we did an inquiry, what more do you want us to do?’” she said.

“The people that they chose to be commissioners really don’t have any of the experience or background needed to already come into it educated... we all want it to succeed, but I have very little faith that anything they do will make a fundamental change in the quality of human rights that we should be enjoying as Indigenous people,” she said.

Since its launch in September 2016, the inquiry has seen roughly 20 people resign or be fired, including inquiry staff, two executive directors, and a commissioner.

In her July 2017 resignation letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), Ms. Poitras said she felt it clear she was “unable to perform my duties as a commissioner with the process in its current structure.”

In a subsequent interview with CBC News, Ms. Poitras said her “main concern” was that the commission was “going down a tried road,” and using a commission-driven hearing process, rather than the community-driven process called for during the pre-inquiry.

“If it’s a commission set up for hearings, to hear family stories, it’s going to be successful,” said Ms. Poitras when asked if the inquiry was set to fail. “But it’s not going to get at the roots of systemic violence.”

In December, chiefs at the Assembly of First Nations voted 48 to 15 in favour of a resolution calling on Ms. Buller to resign as chief commissioner.

The national inquiry released an interim report on Nov. 1, 2017, as scheduled. It highlights a number of “significant challenges” faced, among which are: delays in hiring and office set-up; the need still to establish a “comprehensive legal case-management system” to analyze information, testimony and other input gathered; and the federal government’s inability to share contact information for participants in the pre-inquiry process.

The interim report also makes 10 recommendations for immediate action, including calls for additional funding and for the government to assess the feasibility of restoring the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

Ms. Gabriel said before the government grants an extension or commits more funds, the inquiry needs to be reset. “It’s nothing personal against them, it’s just their record so far. I would give them an ‘F’ because there is nothing to show for what they’ve done, other than a report that says what’s already been said.”

If there’s no reset, Ms. Gabriel said there should be a push for an independent, international inquiry.

And in the meantime, Ms. Gabriel said the government should be working to create an action plan to address violence against Indigenous women based on existing studies and recommendations.

Ms. Gabriel also said she thinks too much focus has been put on the commissioners, and defending them from criticism,

rather than the issues at hand and “we’re really losing sight of why this inquiry was made.”

Not long after her appointment, on Oct. 12, then-new executive director Debbie Reid sent an email to all inquiry staff, directing them to “ensure that our commissioners are not exposed to criticism or surprises and that they are fully confident that we have their backs.” On Jan. 11, CBC News reported that Ms. Reid had exited her post.

Conservative MP Cathy McLeod (Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo, B.C.), her party’s Indigenous affairs critic, said resolution for families and a path forward are the two main things desired of the inquiry, but there’s no “sense that we’re on a direction that’s going to get us there,” based on the inquiry’s interim report.

“Certainly for me, there were not new things in this report that aren’t in the 40-plus studies that are already out there,” she said, adding though that she’s more

concerned by criticisms and “red flags” raised by Indigenous organizations and the grassroots, including the AFN’s call for Ms. Buller to resign.

“I haven’t seen the government sort of acknowledge those red flags and what they’re going to do to course-correct,” said Ms. McLeod.

Asked her thoughts on the inquiry’s request for additional funding, Ms. McLeod said she’s wants to first see more details on what’s being requested, and on how the \$53.8-million budget already allocated has been used so far, but noted that the TRC completed its five-year mandate with a \$60-million budget.

“[The TRC] did significant, important work, had hearings across the country, had a very powerful final report, and did it on a budget that’s not that much different, and so I think that’s something we need to look at,” said Ms. McLeod.

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The Hill Times

A look at the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women’s interim report

On Nov. 1, 2017, the national inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women released its interim report.

It starts off with a note from the commissioners; reviews the inquiry’s “vision,” mandate, scope and structure, and past lessons learned through the pre-inquiry phase, advisory meetings and past reports; and outlines why a national inquiry on the issue was needed and how it came to be established.

Past related reports are summarized in the interim report, which notes it has analyzed the 98 existing reports related to violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada, containing 1,200 recommendations in all, “most” of which haven’t been implemented.

The inquiry uses the interim report to highlight how it’s “doing things differently,” including regularly seeking elders’ advice through the commissioners’ community hearings and visits, community outreach to strive to make the process inclusive, and identifying and following “culturally specific protocols when working with communities,” among other things.

It also highlights some “significant challenges” for the inquiry to date, including, among other things: the difficulty of balancing the federal jurisdiction with the corresponding inquiry work in 13 provinces and territories; the federal government’s failure to get consent to share contact information for participants in the pre-inquiry process; hiring and office set-up delays; work still underway to have a “comprehensive legal case-management system” in place to analyze what’s being gathered; the need to adhere to federal procurement and contracting rules, which can take more time and lack flexibility; and short timelines.

Finally, the interim report includes 10 recommendations, or calls, for immediate action:

That the TRC’s 94 calls to action, in particular those related to Indigenous women and kids, be implemented, and that the full implementation of the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples take place, including a federal action plan.

That the government achieve full compliance with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal’s 2016 ruling regarding the government’s racial discrimination against First Nations children.

That the government find a way to share contact information of participants in the pre-inquiry process, or to provide those participants with information on how to take part in the national inquiry.

That federal, provincial and territorial government allocate additional project funding to support Indigenous organizations participating in the inquiry.

That the federal government, in collaboration with Indigenous organizations, family coalitions, and others, establish a commemoration fund.

That additional federal funding be provided to Health Canada’s resolution health support program to help it meet increased needs resulting from the national inquiry’s work, “at a minimum for the duration” of the inquiry.

That Health Canada’s Resolution Health Support program in turn provide funding to Indigenous organizations and other service providers to ensure health support for participants.

That the federal government assess the possibility of restoring the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

That the federal government work with provinces and territories to create a national police task force to which cases and investigations can be referred, assessed, and potentially reopened.

That the government “provide alternatives and options to its administrative rules” so the inquiry can fulfill its mandate in the “short timeframe” set out.

—Compiled by Laura Ryckewaert

Rural ridings offer potential growth for Liberals in 2019 and PMO's paying attention, says rookie rural Liberal MP Harvey

Atlantic provinces, and rural ridings are on the target list for the Conservatives, and will win back seats from the Liberals in 2019, says five-term Conservative MP Tom Lukiwski

Continued from page 1

with rural caucus to ensure that they're taking into consideration the thoughts and views of rural members," said Mr. Harvey (Tobique-Mactaquac, N.B.), chair of the 55-member Liberal rural caucus.

The Liberal rural caucus meets every week on Parliament Hill when the House is in session. Mr. Harvey said some PMO staffers also come to the meetings to hear what rural MPs have on their minds on issues important to rural Canadians such as economic development, infrastructure, quality middle-class jobs, agricultural innovation, high-speed internet, trade issues and forestry. He declined to identify the PMO staffers, but said the rural caucus has spoken with Gerald Butts, principal secretary to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) and other senior PMO staffers.

"He would be one of the people in PMO that rural membership would speak with but there are a number of other people as well," said Mr. Harvey, who worked as a farmer and owned a construction business before getting elected to the House, in the last election.

Asked if he meets regularly with Mr. Butts, Mr. Harvey declined to comment.

As a member of the House Indigenous and Northern Affairs Committee and the Natural Resources Committee, Mr. Harvey won with 46.6 per cent in 2015 as part of the Liberal red wave that helped the party win all 32 Atlantic

Canada seats. He won by a margin of 9.6 percentage points. The riding he won was previously held by Conservative MP Mike Allen for about 10 years, who did not seek re-election in 2015.

Mr. Harvey said he expects the Liberals would not only win again in the Atlantic provinces, and the rural seats they won in 2015, but will make gains in rural Canada. He declined to identify any specific seats the Liberals are hoping to win. Mr. Harvey specified the government's plan to invest \$500-million to provide high-speed, broadband internet access to rural areas, and a \$2-billion investment to support infrastructure projects in rural Canada, are some of the key projects that the Trudeau government has started for rural Canadians, and will do more in the coming months.

"We're absolutely going to show to Canadians that not only have we listened to Canadians in rural ridings, but we've formulated policies," he said. "When the next election comes, we're going to be able to show definitively that we formulated policies that work for rural Canadians and reflects their interests and needs."

Based on Statistics Canada's 2016 numbers, 6.5 million or 18.7 per cent of the 35.1-million total Canadian population, live in rural areas. In comparison, 81 per cent or 28.5 million live in urban areas.

According to Elections Canada, an electoral district entirely formed by rural polling divisions is considered as a rural riding. Only three of the 338 ridings across the country meet the criteria. A riding consisting entirely of urban polling divisions is considered urban. There are 166 ridings like this out of the maximum 338. There are 71 rural/urban ridings where most of the polling stations, but not all, are considered rural. And there are another 98 mixed ridings where the balance goes more toward the urban side, and they're considered urban/rural.

Of the 71 rural/urban ridings, the Conservatives won 37, the Liberals 28, the NDP five and Bloc one.

In the 2015 election that won Trudeau Liberals a majority

government, there were 33 mixed ridings nationally that were won by a close margin of five percentage points or less. Of these, 11 are rural/urban and 22 urban/rural. Out of the 33, the Liberals won 15, Conservatives eight, the NDP seven, and the Bloc Québécois three.

Of the 338 total ridings across the country, the Liberals won 184 seats; the Conservatives won 99 seats, the NDP 44, the Bloc 10, and the Green Party one seat. To form a majority government, the winning political party needed 170 seats.

Five-term Conservative MP Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw-Lake Centre-Lanigan, Sask.) said the reason Liberals won seats in rural areas and Atlantic Canada in the last election was because NDP supporters voted for the Liberals to stop then-Conservative leader Stephen Harper from becoming prime minister again. Now that Mr. Harper is not the leader anymore, he said, the Liberals would not have the same level of support they did in 2015. Mr. Lukiwski said he expects the seats the Liberals won by five per cent or less margin in rural and Atlantic provinces would be in "considerable jeopardy" in 2019.

"Many of the seats Liberals won in 2015 were because of the abandonment of the NDP vote that went straight to the Liberals to try and stop Stephen Harper," said Mr. Lukiwski who represents a rural riding. "I think a lot of the NDP vote will go back home, and therefore a lot of the Liberal seats that were won with less than five per cent of the vote are in considerable jeopardy this time."

Mr. Lukiwski said rural and Atlantic ridings are the areas the Conservatives will target in 2019. In the 2011 election, his party won 14 of the 32 seats in the Atlantic provinces and will want to win these and more in the next run. In 2011, the Conservatives won eight seats in New Brunswick, four seats in Nova Scotia, one seat in Prince Edward Island, and one seat in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"We're going to be extremely competitive and looking to regain many of those seats again," said Mr. Lukiwski.

Since 2015, Mr. Lukiwski said his party has been making a number of outreach efforts in Atlantic Canada. Besides others, he pointed out that the Conservatives held their national summer caucus retreat in Halifax, N.S., in 2016, and the party delegates from across the country will meet there for their national policy convention in August in Halifax.

Liberals are also making their presence known in Atlantic Canada. In early 2016, the Trudeau cabinet held a retreat in New Brunswick, and then held another cabinet retreat in Newfoundland and Labrador last year. The Trudeau Liberals are also holding their national policy convention in Halifax, N.S., in August.

Former Conservative MP Rob Moore is not a sitting MP, but is a member of the Andrew Scheer's (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) shadow cabinet, and is the point person for the Conservative Party's 2019 election strategy in the Atlantic region.

Former Liberal MP Joe Jordan, who represented the Ontario rural riding of Leeds-Grenville from 1997-2004, agreed that rural ridings are a potential growth



Liberal MP T.J. Harvey, centre, pictured with Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, right, and Liberal MP Will Amos, left. Mr. Harvey, chair of the Liberal rural caucus, says that rural ridings are a potential growth area for his party in 2019. *The Hill Times* file photograph

area for the Liberals, but he said that to achieve this objective, the leadership will have to look at all policies through the rural lens.

"If you think about it politically, that's an area of potential growth for the Liberals," Mr. Jordan said who also served as parliamentary secretary to former

prime minister Jean Chrétien from 2000-04.

As of deadline last week, no one from the NDP had returned phone calls and emails from *The Hill Times* to discuss the party's efforts to win seats in rural and Atlantic regions in 2019.

The Hill Times

Rural/Urban ridings across Canada

Rural/Urban	Winning Candidate	Votes Obtained (%)	Vote Margin (%)
Bonavista-Burin-Trinity	Liberal MP Judy M. Foote	81.8	71.7
Coast of Bays-Central-Notre Dame	Liberal MP Scott Simms	74.8	56.5
Labrador	Liberal MP Yvonne Jones	71.8	57.4
Long Range Mountains	Liberal MP Gurdie Hutchings	73.9	61.7
Cardigan	Liberal MP Lawrence MacAulay	65	48.9
Egmont	Liberal MP Bobby Morrissey	49.3	20.3
Cape Breton-Canso	Liberal MP Rodger Cuzner	74.4	59.9
Central Nova	Liberal MP Sean Fraser	58.5	32.7
Cumberland-Colchester	Liberal MP Bill Casey	63.7	37.3
Kings-Hants	Liberal MP Scott Brison	70.7	52.2
South Shore-St. Margarets	Liberal MP Bernadette Jordan	56.9	34.4
West Nova	Liberal MP Colin Fraser	63	36.9
Acadie-Bathurst	Liberal MP Serge Cormier	50.7	11.3
Beauséjour	Liberal MP Dominic LeBlanc	69	53.9
Fundy Royal	Liberal MP Alaina Lockhart	40.9	3.8
Madawaska-Restigouche	Liberal MP Rene Arseneault	55.7	29.8
Miramichi-Grand Lake	Liberal MP Pat Finnigan	47.3	13
New Brunswick Southwest	Liberal MP Karen Ludwig	43.9	5.4
Tobique-Mactaquac	Liberal MP T.J. Harvey	46.6	9.6
Argenteuil-La Petite-Nation	Liberal MP Stephane Lauzon	43.3	18.5
Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapedia	Liberal MP Remi Masse	39.5	18.5
Beauce	Conservative MP Maxime Bernier	58.9	36.6
Berthier-Maskinonge	NDP MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau	42.2	16.4
Gaspésie-Les Îles de la Madeleine	Liberal MP Diane Lebouthillier	38.7	6.2
Joliette	Bloc MP Gabriel Ste-Marie	33.3	5.1
Megantic-L'Érable	Conservative MP Luc Berthold	35.4	7.3
Montmagny-L'Islet-Kamouraska-Rivière du Loup	Conservative MP Bernard Généreux	29	0.6
Pontiac	Liberal MP William Amos	54.5	32
Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing	NDP MP Carol Hughes	39.9	5.8
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Conservative MP Larry Miller	46.7	7.8
Chatham-Kent-Leamington	Conservative MP Dave Van Kesteren	41.7	4.5
Durham	Conservative MP Erin O'Toole	45.1	9.4
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Liberal MP Francis Drouin	53.3	16.9
Hastings-Lennox & Addington	Liberal MP Mike Bossio	42.4	0.5
Huron-Bruce	Conservative MP Ben Lobb	44.9	5.2
Kenora	Liberal MP Bob Nault	35.5	1.6
Kitchener-Conestoga	Conservative MP Harold Albrecht	43.3	0.5
Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston	Conservative MP Scott Reid	47.9	14.1
Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands & Rideau Lakes	Conservative MP Gord Brown	47.4	6.8
Northumberland-Perth-Perth South	Liberal MP Kim Rudd	42.5	3
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Conservative MP Toney Clement	43.3	4.4
Perth-Wellington	Conservative MP John Nater	42.9	5.4
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conservative MP Cheryl Gallant	45.8	13.2
Simcoe North	Conservative MP Bruce Stanton	43.5	3.7
Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry	Conservative MP Guy Lauzon	51.1	12.5
Brandon-Souris	Conservative MP Larry Maguire	50.3	13
Churchill-Keewatinook Aski	NDP MP Niki Ashton	45	3
Dauphin-Swan River-Neepawa	Conservative MP Robert Sopuck	46.3	16.8
Portage-Lisgar	Conservative MP Candice Bergen	60.8	35.1
Provencher	Conservative MP Ted Falk	56.1	21.4
Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman	Conservative MP James Bezan	51.9	20.5
Battlefords-Lloydminster	Conservative MP Gerry Ritz	61	43.3
Cypress Hills-Grasslands	Conservative MP David Anderson	69.2	54.3
Desnethé-Missinipi-Churchill River	NDP MP Georgina Jolibois	34.2	0.3
Carlton Trail-Eagle Creek	Conservative MP Kelly Block	64.7	4.1
Moose Jaw-Lake Centre-Lanigan	Conservative MP Tom Lukiwski	55.5	31.7
Prince Albert	Conservative MP Randy Hoback	49.8	21.3
Regina-Qu'Appelle	Conservative MP Andrew Sheer	44.7	14.5
Souris-Moose Mountain	Conservative MP Robert Gordon Kitchen	70.1	56.5
Yorkton-Melville	Conservative MP Cathay Wagantall	59.2	39
Battle River-Crowfoot	Conservative MP Kevin Sorenson	80.9	71.5
Bow River	Conservative MP Marton Shields	77.4	63.7
Foothills	Conservative MP John Barlow	75.7	62.3
Fort McMurray-Cold Lake	Conservative MP David Yurdiga	60.6	32.2
Lakeland	Conservative MP Shannon Stubbs	72.8	59.1
Peace River-Westlock	Conservative MP Arnold Vierson	69.4	55
Sherwood Park-Fort Saskatchewan	Conservative MP Garnett Genuis	63.9	43.5
Sturgeon River-Parkland	Conservative MP Rona Ambrose	70.2	54.7
Yellowhead	Conservative MP Jim Eglinski	72.3	58
Skeena-Bulkley Valley	NDP MP Nathan Cullen	51.1	26.3
Northwest Territories	Liberal MP Michael McLeod	48.3	17.9

News Andrew Scheer

Scheer should define himself, say observers, before he's pinned as a 'fuddy-duddy stuck in the '50s'

Conservatives need to align their policy with Andrew Scheer's brand, says pollster Nik Nanos.

Continued from page 1

declaring that he is "going nowhere" and his selection as leader was "a mistake," for reasons including a failure to strongly define himself for the public, and his own socially conservative beliefs.

The Conservatives remain about 10 points behind the Liberals in public opinion polls nationally and have not gained ground among voters over the past several months, despite hammering the government over real and supposed ethical shortcomings, including a finding by the federal ethics commissioner that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) violated a conflict of interest law during his 2016 vacation on the private island of the Aga Khan.

Conservative insiders dismissed the polls and pundits as standard fare for a new opposition leader. But Mr. Scheer—who was elected leader on May 27, 2017, on the 13th ballot with 50.9 per cent of the vote—and his team should begin matching his newly positive, family-friendly persona with fresh policy positions while they work to define themselves in the months ahead, says pollster Nik Nanos, who has been tracking Canadians' political preferences every week since before the last election.

"It seems that one of the things that Andrew Scheer is trying to accomplish is to portray himself as very family-oriented, a nice and approachable guy, [having] a different style of politics than the previous leader of the Conservative Party of Canada," said Mr. Nanos.

"What we've seen out of the House of Commons and from the Conservatives are policies that are very similar to the previous administration. They've focused on issues such as security, immigration and refugees. And it's hard to build a brand as a nice guy if you've got policies that have a harder edge," he said.

"Conservatives need a strategy where their policy priorities that they want to put in the window

align with the brand priorities that they want to advance for Andrew Scheer."

Mr. Nanos is chair of the polling firm Nanos Research, which had the Conservatives trailing the Liberals by 10 points on Jan. 5, after closing to three points in mid-October.

Conservative pundits Tim Powers and Yaroslav Baran disputed Mr. Nanos' assessment that the Conservatives had been unduly focused on negative politics or border policies.

Under Mr. Scheer, the federal Conservatives have devoted much of their time in Question Period to grilling the government on proposed taxation changes, and Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) over potential conflicts of interest and ethical violations. The Conservatives have also hammered the government over its handling of the influx of refugee claimants crossing into Canada illegally from the United States.

Conservative MP Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, Alta.), her party's immigration critic, has called on the government to "close the loophole" in Canada's Safe Third Country Agreement with the United States, which allows would-be refugee claimants who illegally cross the border away from a regular border checkpoint to make a claim for refugee status to the Immigration and Refugee Board. Under the Safe Third Country Agreement, those who try to claim refugee status at an official border checkpoint on the U.S. border are sent back into the United States.

Beyond responding to government decisions or ministerial



Nik Nanos is the chair of Nanos Research, which polls Canadians on their political preferences every week. *The Hill Times* file photograph



Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer has been criticized in opinion columns recently for not defining himself well enough for voters. Conservative politicians in Ottawa say that is standard fare for new opposition leaders. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

missteps, the Conservatives under Mr. Scheer have taken positions on peacekeeping in Ukraine, a U.S. missile defence system, the Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement, and some other issues.

"He has been coming out on policy. What he doesn't have yet is a comprehensive platform," said Mr. Baran, a consultant at Earncliffe Strategy Group.

Mr. Scheer campaigned for the Conservative Party leadership on a platform that pledged a fight against "radical Islamic terrorism," carbon taxes, deficit spending, and corporate welfare, and promised to "prioritize real refugees"—Christians, in particular—a tax credit for home schooling, removal of tax on energy bills, protection of free speech on university campuses, a focus on the protection of religious freedom around the world, lower business taxes, and support for supply management.

Mr. Scheer's leadership campaign platform website was taken down immediately after he won the contest, however.

Mr. Powers said that Mr. Scheer's team hadn't taken many policy stances since he took over as leader, but that would likely change in the coming months.

The federal Conservatives have their policy convention in Halifax from Aug. 23-25.

"He's going to want to roll out his ideas and the party's ideas, as he believes them to be, at the right time," said Mr. Powers.

Getting it right is important; parties can run into trouble if they don't have a clear policy direction, and members of caucus start "opining" about it publicly, he said.

The Conservative caucus is squarely behind Mr. Scheer, said Conservative MP Kent (Thornhill, Ont.), who characterized the negative columns about Mr. Scheer's leadership as "advice from people who are not members of the Conservative Party or supporters of the Conservative Party."

Between now and the August policy convention, the Conservatives will focus on taxes, the economy, the spring budget, and take aim at the government over deficit spending, an "unproductive legislative schedule," broken promises, flaws in legislation, ethical lapses and poor judgement, said Mr. Kent.

As for the gap in the polls? "Poles are for dogs," said Mr. Kent, echoing former Conservative prime minister John Diefenbaker's comparison of opinion polls to the treatment man's best friend gives to lampposts and other upright objects.

Mr. Scheer will continue to try to build his profile by travelling across the country, said Mr. Kent. New NDP leader Jagmeet Singh is taking the same approach, and Mr. Trudeau undertook his own cross-country tour before stopping in London for a cabinet retreat last week.

Mr. Scheer, who personally holds some socially conservative beliefs—he is religious and personally against abortion and same-sex marriage—will have to define himself for many voters while his opponents try to pin him as a "fuddy-duddy stuck in the '50s," said Mr. Powers.

"Don't put up with intolerance, don't allow people who look to

change or step back into a different era of the social fabric of Canada to have the opportunity to do that," said Mr. Powers. "Allow people to speak but...be clear—and I think he's tried to—you're not revisiting gay marriage. You're not revisiting the abortion debate."

Mr. Scheer has previously vowed not to reopen a debate on either subject. He also left two strongly social conservative leadership candidates out of his caucus critics roles, in Conservative MP Brad Trost (Saskatoon-University, Sask.) and Pierre Lemieux, and did the same with Conservative MP Kellie Leitch (Simcoe-Grey, Ont.), who ran for the leadership on a platform that included a pledge to bring in a "Canadian values" test for immigrants.

Mr. Scheer's office declined to comment on Mr. Nanos' comments and the negative opinion columns.

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Nanos Weekly Tracking: ending Jan. 5, 2018

Ballot: The latest Nanos federal ballot tracking has the Liberals at 40.9% support, followed by the Conservatives at 30.7%, the NDP at 19.5%, the BQ at 3.7% and the Greens at 4.8%.

Accessible voters: Asked whether they would consider voting for each of the federal parties, 57.3% of Canadians say they would consider voting Liberal while 45.8% would consider voting Conservative. Four in 10 Canadians (42.2%) would consider voting NDP while 24.0% and 28.7% of Canadians would consider voting for the BQ and Green parties respectively.

Preferred Prime Minister: Nanos tracking has Justin Trudeau as the preferred choice as PM at 45.6% of Canadians followed by Andrew Scheer (20.3%), Jagmeet Singh (9.0%) and Elizabeth May (4.1%). Twenty per cent of Canadians were unsure who they preferred.

Qualities of a Good Political Leader: Two in three Canadians (65.6%) believe Trudeau has the qualities of a good political leader while 37.5 per cent believe Scheer has the qualities of a good political leader. Four in ten Canadians (39.5%) say Jagmeet Singh has the qualities of a good political leader, while 37.9 per cent believe the same about May. One in four (27.7%) said Martine Ouellet has the qualities of a good political leader (QC only).

Nanos Party Power Index: The Nanos Index, which is a composite of a series of measures including ballot and leadership impressions, has the Liberals with 62.8 points, the Conservatives 49.9 points, the NDP 46.8 points, the Greens 34.4 points and the BQ 25.9 points (QC only). The weekly tracking figures are based on a four-week rolling sample comprised of 1,000 interviews. To update the tracking a new week of 250 interviews is added and the oldest week dropped. The margin of error for a survey of 1,000 respondents is ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Who will bear the blame for Donald Trump?

What we in the media are doing in respect of Donald Trump's new dark ages, we are doing wrong. We can do more, and we should do more. We need to re-evaluate the way we cover Trump, and we need to change our ways.



Warren Kinsella

The War Room

TORONTO—Who's to blame? When the United States of America regains its sanity—when the political equivalent of a Nuremberg war crimes trial is convened—who will bear the blame for Donald Trump? Who is responsible?

There will be plenty of blame to go around. Russia, of course, for interfering in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, so as to give Trump an extra 79,646 votes and an illegitimate Electoral College “victory.” The Republican Party, for embracing a “man” who admits to groping women—and who called Haiti, El Salvador, and Africa countries “shithole countries,” and should not be allowed to set foot in the United States. Several million Americans, who are apparently just as racist and misogynistic as their man.

But we in the media will be in the metaphorical prisoner's dock, too. We deserve to be.

We in the media share in the guilt for the chaos and division unleashed by Trump. We mocked his candidacy before he won the Republican nomination. And then, when he won,

we swore that he'd never become president. And when he topped the electoral college—aided and abetted by the aforementioned Russia—we said he'd be swiftly impeached.

But a year later, Donald Trump is still president of the United States. And some of us bear responsibility for that.

This writer has a book coming out from Dundurn Press next year, loosely about the Trump era. It is called *New Dark Ages*. In a couple of passages I try to explain how those of us who ostensibly predict political events have gotten rather bad at it.

“The press called [him] a bigot and a white supremacist, and everything in between. But, to Republicans, it didn't matter. The media didn't understand that the Republican faithful weren't gravitating towards his campaign *despite* his racism—they were supporting him *because* of it.

“... the mainly-rural, high-school-educated, angry old white guys loved [Trump], wasn't just because of what he said. They worshiped him because of how he said it—the way he said it.

“They loved him because he talked like they did, when they were in the privacy of a dark room in a trailer park somewhere. They loved that he didn't use \$20 words when \$2 words would suffice. They loved that he said outrageous, offensive things, and that the queers on TV couldn't resist reporting on what he said, and then analyzing it over, and over, and over. He stirred up the elites and the intellectuals.

“And when they did that, they were letting [Trump] control the agenda. They were letting him dominate the dialogue. And, in some cases, [Trump] was therefore literally getting as much as a thousand times the coverage his more-experienced rivals were getting.”

Many of us in the media privately (and not-so-privately) despise Trump, but we can't stop talking about him. We chase every shiny silver ball he rolls past us.

Since he has become president, the media's inability to understand Trumpism has only grown worse. Facebook, for instance, last week announced that it would start minimizing real

news stories on its platform—and, apparently, encouraging photos of kittens and birthday parties instead. Twitter has announced it's cracking down on racists who post hateful comments—but has continued to let the Hater-in-Chief, Donald Trump, thumb out whatever foul thing that pops into his miniscule cranium.

What we in the media are doing in respect of Trump's new dark ages, we are doing wrong. We diagnosed the disease wrongly—and, now that the pandemic is fully underway, we are merely advising a couple of aspirin and some bed rest.

We can do more, and we should do more. We need to re-evaluate the way we cover Trump, and we need to change our ways.

Because whatever we are doing is working only for *him*. And it's not working for the people we serve—our readers and listeners and viewers.

Warren Kinsella is a former Jean Chrétien-era cabinet staffer and a former national campaign war roomer.

The Hill Times

By Laura Ryckewaert *The Spin Doctors*

“The House of Commons may be on break but news never sleeps. What do you think has been the most important political story over the holidays?”



CAMERON AHMAD
Liberal strategist

“The most important story over the holidays was surely welcome news for millions of Canadians, whose hard work has paid off and has resulted in our country's lowest unemployment rate in decades. Moreover, our economy added hundreds of thousands of new jobs in the last year alone. At this midway point in our government's mandate, we can all be proud of the progress we have made together to support families and grow the middle class.

“Earlier this month, Statistics Canada released new jobs numbers. Canada's unemployment rate, at 5.7 per cent, is at its lowest level since the Labour Force Survey began over 40 years ago. Alberta and Quebec led the way in job creation last month. Since our government was elected, nearly 700,000 new jobs were created (422,000 in the last year alone—the best job creation in a single year since 2002!).

“We know that monthly figures come and go, which is why our plan is long term, and focused on targeted measures to ensure equality of opportunity for all Canadians and create jobs that will grow the middle class. The prime minister is kicking off the new year with a national town hall tour—hearing directly from Canadians on issues that matter to them, like how we continue creating lasting economic growth.”



CORY HANN
Conservative strategist

“Justin Trudeau certainly ended 2017 with a bang. He is proudly the sole owner of the title of ‘First Canadian prime minister to break a federal law while in office.’ Congratulations Liberals, you did it! Entitlement and a complete lack of ethics have made a roaring comeback to the top of your party almost as if it never left to begin with. Shocking!

“Do you or somebody you know believe the rules shouldn't apply to people like them? Wow, have I got the perfect political party for you—a Liberal Party with a finance minister who has been fined for breaking rules, and a prime minister who has been found to break federal laws.

“It's unbelievable it took Justin Trudeau a full year to come clean to Canadians over this whole mess. If he truly was sorry, he would repay the more than \$200,000 he charged to taxpayers for this unethical vacation, and disclose whom else he met with while he was accepting this inappropriate gift. He needs to recognize that it's his job—nobody else's—to ensure he's following the law.

“Every additional day with this Liberal government just makes it clearer they have learned nothing from Liberal governments of old, and this sense of one set of rules for Liberals and their friends, and another set of rules for everybody else, pollutes their party hierarchy to its core.”



SARAH ANDREWS
NDP strategist

“This government's record on ethics has been top of many people minds over the Christmas period, just as it has been ever since the media found out that the prime minister had taken a trip on a private island in the Bahamas with the Aga Khan.

“The ethics commissioner found that the prime minister had broken the law. And despite the report, the prime minister has yet to apologize for taking a trip, which would be out of reach to the majority of Canadians, let alone the fact that the trip was offered by someone who was linked to an organization lobbying the government for funding.

“Canadians expect accountability and transparency from their government; this just doesn't make the cut. Just like his finance minister, who misled Canadians about his assets, which it turns out were never in a blind trust, the prime minister's inability to acknowledge that it was inappropriate for him to accept this vacation is symptomatic of a government that is out of touch with Canadians.”



MATHIEU R. ST-AMAND
Bloc Québécois strategist

“I'd like to start the new year off by wishing all of our readers a healthy and happy 2018, success in your endeavours, and a little of love (it's always good). Like many Quebecers, I was particularly struck by the extreme cold that gripped us over the holidays for nearly a week. I'm not bringing up the weather as a bit of news, but as a political issue.

“The scientific community agrees that natural disasters and extreme temperatures will increase as a result of climate change. Quebec, the Maritimes and the eastern United States have seen record-breaking cold this year, while Australia is roasting under a heat wave—2018 must be the year that we take the environment seriously.

“We need to adopt the highest environmental standards. Canada's high-minded rhetoric on the international stage is not enough. It's 2018, natural disasters are increasing, and our future is at stake. The government must act now.”



DEBRA EINDIGUER
Green strategist

“As vast swathes of North America dipped into frigid winter weather—colder than the daytime temperature on the surface of Mars in some areas—the usual stories of terrible commutes and delayed flights dominated the news. But missing from almost all of this coverage was the connection of extreme weather events to the melting Arctic and climate change.

“Typically, Rex Murphy used his column last week to lambast Elizabeth May and other climate champions, painting the bitter weather as a ‘gotcha’ moment against anyone who would be so foolish as to believe in climate science. It's shocking that in 2018 we still have to push back against institutional voices who choose ignorance over fact.

“It may seem counterintuitive, but scientists have shown how these severe and more frequent cold snaps—and many other extreme weather events—are connected to melting ice caps and a warming planet. By the time these verified facts finally sink into the likes of Rex Murphy, the majestic spectacle of Iceberg Alley off the coast of his beloved Newfoundland may be nothing more than a distant memory.”

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Iranian-Canadian Liberal MP expresses concern about Iranian protests but defers on re-establishing diplomatic ties

‘It’s important going forward, that all governments are in solidarity with the Iranians, that we judge the Iranian government not by their words but by their actions,’ says Liberal MP Ali Ehsassi.



Liberal MP Ali Ehsassi. Photograph courtesy of the House of Commons website



Liberal MP Majid Jowhari. Photograph courtesy of Facebook

BY JOLSON LIM

Iranian-Canadian rookie Liberal MP Ali Ehsassi says the heavy-handed response to massive street protests against the government in Iran is “heart-wrenching” to watch, though remained tight-lipped on whether he continues to support efforts by the Trudeau government to reopen diplomatic ties with the country.

In an interview, Mr. Ehsassi (WilLOWdale, Ont.) told *The Hill Times* he’s closely following the situation in Iran, and believes that the interests and narratives propagated by the Iranian regime are different from those of the Iranian people.

“It’s important going forward, that all governments are in solidarity with the Iranians, that we judge the Iranian government not by their words but by their actions,” he said, noting that since the protests began, he has spoken to Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) and members of the Iranian-Canadian community about the ongoing unrest.

Asked whether he supports his party’s view that Canada should re-establish formal diplomatic ties with Iran, Mr. Ehsassi said only that it’s “important” to reach out to members of the Iranian community in Canada.

“I think it’s important that Global Affairs Canada consults closely our allies around the world. I think it’s important to not jump to any conclusions prematurely,” he said, calling the protests against the Iranian government as “one of those moments where we may have to take stock of things.”

Mr. Ehsassi lived in Iran for five years as a child and comes

from a family of Iranian diplomats and statesmen associated with Pahlavi dynasty. Following the 1979 Iranian revolution that toppled the Pahlavi dynasty and brought to power a theocratic republic, his parents left the country and settled in Canada.

The first-term MP attended a rally in Toronto on Jan. 7 expressing solidarity with the protesters and their demands that also brought out Liberal MP Michael Levitt (York Centre, Ont.) and Conservative MP Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.). The protests, which began late last year, have seen thousands of Iranians take to the street to express anger with deteriorating economic conditions and government restrictions against public expression.

The Iranian government has responded by detaining demonstrators, censoring media coverage, and limiting access to social media channels that could potentially be used to help organize rallies, drawing stern criticism from the West. At least 21 people are believed to have died in the protests, while about 3,700 demonstrators have been detained, according to media reports.

Amid the protests, fellow Iranian-Canadian Liberal MP Mr. Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Ont.) drew criticism for posting a photo last month on Twitter of a statement from Ms. Freeland expressing hope that the protesters would be able to freely air their grievances with “support of its elected government.”

Conservative MP and party foreign affairs critic Erin O’Toole (Durham, Ont.) called Mr. Jowhari’s actions “inappropriate,” and

said the tweet was “a preposterous presentation.”

When reached, the office of Ms. Jowhari said he was unavailable for an interview and did not respond to requests for an email statement. The rookie MP represents a suburban Toronto riding that has the highest percentage of Iranians-Canadians.

It’s not the first time Mr. Jowhari has weathered allegations of supporting the interests of the Iranian regime.

He attracted criticism for meeting last year with an Iranian parliamentary delegation at his constituency office without the involvement of Global Affairs Canada. The meeting was purportedly about forming a Canada-Iran parliamentary friendship group, according to reporting by a Richmond Hill Liberal newspaper.

He was also slammed for allegedly stacking a meeting with then-Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion and members of the Iranian-Canadian community with delegates supportive of Canada restoring diplomatic ties with the country, rather than those critical of the existing regime.

“I really worry when it appears that there’s positions taken with respect to foreign countries that aren’t within our national interest, that are being advanced by our MP, that’s inappropriate and the prime minister should call him on the carpet, I think, to see where his loyalty lies,” Mr. O’Toole told *The Hill Times*.

“There’s now been enough things that I’ve heard over the last year or so, mainly from Iranian-Canadian community that causes a lot of MPs’ concern.”

Iranian Canadian Congress (ICC) president Bijan Ahmadi defended Mr. Jowhari, arguing the tweet was taken “out of context.”

He told *The Hill Times* that recent media coverage has unfairly portrayed Iranian-Canadians as a “monolithic community,” and claimed there haven’t been enough pro-diplomacy viewpoints in the public debate.

Ever since Mr. Jowhari began pushing for re-establishing diplomatic ties after he was elected in 2015, he started “getting these attacks from certain political groups, especially groups whose sole agenda is to isolate the Iranian government,” according to Mr. Ahmadi.

Mr. Ehsassi said he was out of the country during the holidays when Mr. Jowhari’s posted his tweet and couldn’t “shed light on what exactly he meant by his statement,” adding that he hasn’t spoken to him.

Asked about whether he and Mr. Jowhari had differences in opinion, Mr. Ehsassi said “I’m truly not aware of any individual who has identical views with me on any given issue. We all have different perspectives on issues.”

He wouldn’t say whether he believed criticisms hurled at Mr. Jowhari are unfair.

“What I can say, as an MP, I think each and every single one of us is supposed to try the best to their ability to talk to our constituents. I never try to pass my own judgement onto others. Our job is to advocate on behalf of our constituents,” he said.

Canadian government denies Iranian media report hinting at new meetings.

Last month, Iranian media quoted a senior government official saying that the country would be sending a delegation “at the directorate general level” to Canada in the new year.

However, Global Affairs Canada spokesperson Brittany Venhola-Fletcher told *The Hill Times* there are no plans for any future meetings with Canadian and Iranian officials in Canada.

“There are ongoing discussions, but no timeline has been established and no meetings have been confirmed. Discussions have taken place among officials and at the ministerial level. Minister Freeland has spoken with Foreign Minister Zarif, including at the UN General Assembly in New York,” she explained.

She also stated that there had been no meetings to discuss re-establishing diplomatic ties ever held in Canada.

In October and May, Canadian officials travelled to Tehran to hold talks with the Iranian government. However, the Canadian government cautioned that many issues needed to be addressed before Canada could open an mission in the Persian country.

Five rounds of talks have already been held between the two countries at the expert level, Mr. Keshavarzadeh, the general director of American affairs in the country’s foreign ministry, told Mehr news agency on Dec. 16, though Global Affairs Canada has not confirmed that.

When asked about the effect of the protests on negotiations, Ms. Venhola-Fletcher referred to Mr. Freeland’s previous statement calling direct engagement with the Iranian regime as the “most effective tool to hold Iran to account,” though expressing concern about the government’s crackdown of freedom of expression and support of known terrorist organizations.

Opponents of diplomatic engagement have decried the Iranian regime for its litany of human rights abuses, suggesting the recent unrest serving as an example of why Canada should back out of re-engagement. Supporters have argued that the Iranian-Canadians are cut off from much-needed consular services and that it’s more productive to engage with the regime diplomatically than not.

Colin Robertson, a former Canadian diplomat, told *The Hill Times* that protests against the Iranian government wouldn’t threaten to derail the dialogue on re-establishing diplomatic ties because the government sees human rights and diplomatic re-engagement as “two separate tracks.”

“It’s consistent with the Trudeau approach to engagement and commitment to multilateralism,” he said, noting that Canada, despite applying sanctions on Russia, still has diplomatic relations with the Kremlin.

Mr. O’Toole called on Canada to reassess any decision towards re-establishing diplomatic ties, saying it would be used by the Iranian regime in “propaganda efforts” to further its interests in the Middle East.

However, Mr. Ahmadi said if there is any reassessment by Canadian officials, it would only “re-confirm that we need to be in Iran.”

jlim@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Protests against the Iranian government in Kermanshah, Iran, on Dec. 29. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Feature Events

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to attend Liberal Party fundraising event in Vaughan

Parliamentary Calendar



MONDAY, JAN. 15

The House Is Not Sitting—The House of Commons is not sitting this week after adjourning for the traditional holiday break on Dec. 13. The House will sit for 26 weeks in 2018. It is scheduled to resume sitting Jan. 29 and will sit from Jan. 29 to Friday Feb. 16. It will break Feb. 19-23 and will sit Feb. 26-March 2. It will take a two-week break, March 5-March 16, and will resume sitting March 19-March 29. It won't sit on Friday, March 30. The House breaks from Thursday, March 30, until April 13. It resumes sitting for four consecutive weeks, from April 16 to May 11. It will then break May 14 until May 22. It is scheduled to sit for five weeks before it breaks for the summer, from May 22 to June 22, but it could rise earlier. It will then resume sitting Sept. 17-Oct. 5, followed by a one-week break, Oct. 8-Oct. 12. It will sit again Oct. 15-Nov. 9, followed by a one-week break, Nov. 12-Nov. 16. It will then sit four consecutive weeks, Nov. 19-Dec. 14. It adjourns on Dec. 14 until 2019.

TUESDAY, JAN. 16

An Evening with Justin Trudeau—The Liberal Party of Canada is hosting a fundraiser featuring Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Chateau Le Jardin, 8440 York Regional Road 27, Woodbridge, Ont. 6 p.m. \$250-\$1,000. Media coverage is being facilitated for this event and the names, city, and province of guests in attendance will be listed online. events.liberal.ca.

FRIDAY, JAN. 19

Seminar: Social Media and Parliament—The Canadian Study of Parliament offers this seminar. It will bring together technical, parliamentary, and academic experts to explore the ubiquitous presence of social media in the parliamentary milieu and how the presence of various social media platforms has changed the way Parliamentarians interact and perform their respective function. Includes breakfast and buffet

lunch. \$150 members; \$200 non-members; \$25 students/retirees. For more information, visit cspg-gcep.ca, or contact the CSPG Secretariat at 613-995-2937 or info@cspg-gcep.ca.

TUESDAY, JAN. 23

NAFTA Negotiations—The sixth round of negotiations is set to be held from Jan. 23 to 28, in Montreal, Que.

Immigration Policy in the Era of Politics Polarization: The Riddell Forum on Political Management—Leading experts will discuss immigration policy-making in an era of political polarization at this event hosted by the Clayton H. Riddell Graduate Program in Political Management at Carleton University. The panellists are Jennifer Ditchburn (moderator), editor-in-chief of Policy Options magazine, Rachel Curran, senior associate with Harper & Associates, *Toronto Star* immigration reporter Nicholas Keung, Jamil Jivani, visiting professor with the Osgoode Hall Law School, and Andrew Griffith, fellow with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute and the Environics Institute. Event starts at 5 p.m. with a cocktail reception (cash bar). Discussion begins at 6 p.m. National Arts Centre, Ottawa. The event is free to attend. Register at <http://bit.ly/2miAXJU>.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24

Conservative National Caucus Meets in Victoria—The national Conservative caucus is meeting in Victoria, B.C., from Jan. 24-25, in advance of the start of the winter session of Parliament on Jan. 29. Conservative leader Andrew Scheer will deliver opening remarks at 9:30 a.m. on Jan. 24. His speech will be open to the media. The caucus will break for the day at 5 p.m. Mr. Scheer will hold a media availability at the end of the caucus meeting on Jan. 25. The Fairmont Empress, 721 Government St., Victoria, B.C.

THURSDAY, JAN. 25

Trumpocracy: The Corruption of the American Republic, with David Frum—*Maclean's* writer Paul Wells hosts this Ottawa Writers Festival event featuring author, former White House speechwriter, and *The Atlantic* columnist and media commentator David Frum, who explains how he says U.S. President Donald Trump has undermined America's most important institutions in ways even the most critical media have missed. He'll speak to his new book, *Trumpocracy*. Southminster United Church, 15 Aylmer Ave., Ottawa. 7 p.m. Prices vary, up to \$20. writersfestival.org.

Community Liaison Officers' Group Ottawa—The CLO Group is hosting a 2017/2018 series of information sessions for foreign diplomatic missions' personnel responsible for welcoming new embassy staff members and their families. The group involves networking and sharing information essential for a smooth transition and settlement of new families to Ottawa/the National



Last stand: Mary Dawson, pictured Jan. 10, 2018, when she testified before the House Ethics Committee to discuss her report finding Prime Minister Justin Trudeau broke ethics rules by accepting a vacation on the Aga Khan's private island in 2016. The report, released last month, was one of the final acts of Ms. Dawson's nearly decade-long tenure as Canada's ethics and conflict commissioner, which ended on Jan. 9. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Capital Region. Monthly meetings feature guest speakers. January's topic is taxes and banking. 2:30 p.m. To join the group or participate in the meeting, please contact andjelka.vidovic@embassyservices.org.

SATURDAY, JAN. 27

Saskatchewan Party Elects New Leader—The next premier of Saskatchewan, taking over from Brad Wall who announced his resignation in the summer, will be elected today by party membership at a convention in Saskatoon. saskparty.com.

MONDAY, JAN. 29

The House Resumes Sitting—The House of Commons begins the winter and spring session today after returning from the traditional holiday break. The House is sitting every weekday until Feb. 16. It will then take a one-week break from Feb. 19-23 before returning Feb. 26. The House will break again on March 2, and take a two-week break from March 5-16. After returning March 19 and sitting every weekday for the next nearly two weeks, the House will again break from March 30 to April 13. It will resume sitting April 16 and sit every weekday until leaving for a one-week break from May 14-21. After returning on May 22, the House is scheduled to sit every weekday until adjourning for the summer break in late June. The Senate will largely follow the same schedule, though the Senate traditionally only sits Tuesday to Thursday, and is scheduled to break a week later in the spring, on June 29.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31

Arctic Inspiration Prize Awards Ceremony—This is an event honouring the 2017 laureates of the \$3-million Arctic Inspiration Prize, which encourages, enables, and celebrates the inspiring achievements of northerners. Hosted by CBC Igloolik's Madeleine Allakariallak, the event will feature a performance by the cast of *Kiviuq Returns*, produced by 2015 Arctic Inspiration Prize Laureate Qaggiavut, and a special announcement by Natan Obed, president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. 8 p.m. Shaw Centre, Ottawa. No charge, advance registration required. For more information, visit arcticinspirationprize.ca or aip@national.ca.

Prime Time in Ottawa 2018—The Canadian Media Producers Association is hosting the 2018 edition of its annual conference for the Canadian media industry from Jan. 31 to Feb. 2 at the Westin Ottawa. Prime Time is the national networking event for business leaders from Canada's television, interactive media, feature

film, broadcasting, and telecommunications industries. Actor, director, writer, and producer Jay Baruchel is the closing keynote speaker. His recent credits include acting roles in *Goon: Last of the Enforcers*, *Man Seeking Woman*, *This Is the End*, *Tropic Thunder*, and the *How to Train Your Dragon* franchise. For more, visit primetimeinottawa.ca.

Canadian Catastrophe Conference—CatIQ is hosting the third annual Canadian Catastrophe Conference from Jan. 31-Feb. 2 in Gatineau, Que., at the Hilton Lac-Leamy. The goal of the conference is to bring government, insurance industry, and academia together to discuss Canadian disasters and how to better prepare and respond to them. It is also hosting a national disaster mitigation workshop in collaboration with Public Safety Canada on Jan. 31. For more information, www.catiq.com.

SATURDAY, FEB. 3

British Columbia Liberal Party Elects New Leader—Voting will take place online, with a telephone option, on Thursday, Feb. 1, Friday, Feb. 2, and Saturday, Feb. 3. The party will hold a leadership convention for the announcement of the new leader on Feb. 3. For more info: bcliberals.com/leadership.

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental event in a paragraph with all the relevant details under the subject line 'Parliamentary Calendar' to news@hilltimes.com by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper. We can't guarantee inclusion of every event, but we will definitely do our best. Events can be updated daily online too.

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HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

Tommy Desfossés leaves post as EA to Prime Minister Trudeau, Philip Proulx steps into job



This just in: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's former executive assistant Tommy Desfossés, pictured far left on July 21, 2016, with the PM on Parliament Hill. Mr. Desfossés recently exited the role after two years. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** recently said goodbye to his executive assistant for the last two years, **Tommy Desfossés**.

After nine years working for Mr. Trudeau overall, Mr. Desfossés departed the Hill at the beginning of January and is said to be currently taking some time off. No doubt much-needed after a busy last two years.

Philip Proulx has already stepped in to replace Mr. Desfossés as Mr. Trudeau's new executive assistant. He had been working in the PMO as a special assistant in the office's senior adviser unit under **Mathieu Bouchard** since early 2017, and before that was press secretary to Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Minister **Navdeep Bains**.



Philip Proulx is the prime minister's new executive assistant. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Before coming to Ottawa to work for the new Liberal government in early 2016, Mr. Proulx was press attaché to then-Quebec Liberal minister for culture and communications **Hélène David**.

A former communications coordinator for the Quebec Liberal Party's youth wing, Mr. Proulx has also previously worked in then-Quebec premier **Jean Charest's** office

as an assistant adviser on youth issues. That experience could come in handy as Mr. Trudeau is also the minister responsible for Youth Affairs, and for Intergovernmental Affairs.

Amongst other past experience, Mr. Proulx has also previously been a project manager at National Public Relations, and a communications assistant to then-Quebec Liberal labour minister **David Whissell**, as indicated by his LinkedIn profile.

As executive assistant to the prime minister, Mr. Proulx can expect to be at the leader's side during lots of travelling, in Canada and abroad, and to be the proverbial fly on the wall for plenty of high-level meetings.

His predecessor, Mr. Desfossés, first began working for Mr. Trudeau in 2009 as an intern and later part-time assistant in the then rookie MP's constituency office in Papineau, Que., and later served as a special assistant to Mr. Trudeau as leader



Mr. Desfossés pictured bearing gifts in photo tweeted out by Mr. Doyle during the PM's July 2017 trip to Ireland. *Photograph courtesy of Twitter*

of the third party Liberals during the last Parliament. A political science graduate from the University of Sherbrooke, he was on the leader's tour through the 2015 campaign.

Mr. Desfossés caught some international media attention during his tenure as the prime minister's body man. A picture of him loaded down with gifts for Mr. Trudeau, including, of course, socks, during the PM's trip to Ireland in July, tweeted out by Independent News political editor **Kevin Doyle**, went somewhat viral, and, among others, got picked up by *In Style* magazine, *Marie Claire*, and *Time*.

"He's not a full-blown internet sensation yet. But give it time," read the *Time* piece from July 2017, which also highlighted some of the online banter between Mr. Desfossés, PMO official photographer **Adam Scotti**, and Liberal MPs, including a tweet from Quebec Liberal MP **Marc Miller** of Mr. Desfossés asleep in his suit, box in lap, while seated beside Mr. Trudeau on a plane.

The two even look a bit alike, with a January 2017 *La Nouvelle* story and interview with Mr. Desfossés noting some have asked if he was Mr. Trudeau's brother.

Mr. Desfossés and Mr. Scotti had also been running an Instagram account, @LegoTommy, since the 2015 with shots of their Lego doubles—with Mr. Desfossés' fittingly toting a messenger bag—first on the campaign trail and later on the road with the PM.

As indicated by online travel expense disclosures for Mr. Desfossés, as the PM's executive assistant since 2015 he's had the chance to visit Turkey, the Philippines, England, Malta, France, the U.S., Japan, Israel, China, Belgium, Poland, Ukraine, Cuba, Peru, Argentina, Liberia, Madagascar, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Scotland, and Vietnam, along with plenty of trips to cities across Canada. The year just passed, 2017, was his most expensive travel year, with a total of \$21,122.88 in travel expenses claimed.

Fisheries and Oceans Minister LeBlanc hires new regional adviser for the Pacific

Fisheries, Oceans, and Canadian Coast Guard Minister **Dominic LeBlanc** has a new source of regional advice for the Pacific in his ministerial office, following the recent departure of **Ashraf Amlani**.

Ms. Amlani marked her last day as a special assistant for the Pacific and Western regional affairs desk on Jan. 5.

She's now joined a Vancouver-based consulting firm, Zark Corporation, with a focus on supporting clients with interests in public health, the environment, and Indigenous relations.

She's also been appointed to serve on the District of North Vancouver's community services advisory committee, and plans to get involved in the upcoming Vancouver municipal election, set for October 2018.

"I hope to increase participation and voter turnout in the 2018 civic election by engaging residents of the North Shore," said Ms. Amlani in an email to *Hill Climbers*.

Around the same time as her departure for B.C., **Mark Knudsen** came over from the province to work for Mr. LeBlanc on the Hill as a new policy adviser for the Pacific to the minister.

Mr. Knudsen previously spent a number of years working for the former B.C. Liberal government in a number of capacities.

He was most recently an assistant to then-B.C. Liberal environment minister **Mary Polak**, and before that worked for then-agriculture minister **Norm Letnick**; then-jobs, tourism, and skills training minister **Shirley Bond**, and for then-aboriginal relations and reconciliation minister **John Rustad**.

A graduate of the University of Victoria, Mr. Knudsen also previously spent time as a communications officer for the B.C. Liberal caucus.

Sheldon Gillis is a special assistant for the Atlantic region in Mr. LeBlanc's office, which is run by chief of staff **Vince MacNeil**.

Alexis McIntyre is director of policy to the minister; **Sharon Ashley** is director of parliamentary affairs; **Kevin Lavigne** is director of communications; **Laura Gareau** is press secretary; **Lucie Giroux**, **Barry Lacombe**, and **Samuel Yorke** are senior special assistant; **Mark O'Halloran**, **Dylan Wooley-Berry**, and **Caitlin Mullan-Boudreau** are special assistants; **Joanne Denis** is parliamentary affairs analyst; **Diane Mathé** is assistant to the chief of staff; and **Vincent Hughes** is assistant to the minister's parliamentary secretary, Liberal MP **Terry Beech**.

In early December, Mr. LeBlanc made public the fact that he has been diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia and was soon to be treated. He has indicated he will continue to serve as both a minister and as the Liberal MP for Beauséjour, N.B. during treatment.

Employment Minister Hajdu down one adviser

Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour Minister **Patty Hajdu** recently bade farewell to staffer **Jean-Bruno Villeneuve**, who officially marked his exit from her ministerial office on Jan. 5.

Mr. Villeneuve first joined the Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour minister's office in November 2016 under then minister **MaryAnn Mihychuk** as a director of communications.

Ms. Hajdu was shuffled in to replace Ms. Mihychuk, who is no longer a member of the federal cabinet, in January 2017, and while Mr. Villeneuve remained in the office, he subsequently took on the title of communications adviser and special assistant for Quebec.

He's now joined the federal public service as deputy director of media relations for the new Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs department, for which **Carolyn Bennett** serves as the political minister.

Before joining the employment minister's office, Mr. Villeneuve had been an issues manager and press secretary to then democratic institutions minister **Maryam Monsef**, starting in February 2016. He's also previously been an assistant director of media relations at Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, amongst other past experience.

Other regional advisers in the office are: **Tahiya Bakht**, special assistant for Ontario; **Annie Morrison**, special assistant for Atlantic Canada; and **Laura Pennell**, special assistant for Western and Northern Canada.

Matthew Mitschke is chief of staff to Ms. Hajdu. The rest of minister's political staff team includes: **Simon Robertson**, director of policy and parliamentary affairs; **Leah Van Houten**, director of operations; **Carlene Variyan**, director of communications; **Matt Pascuzzo**, press secretary; **Hersi Hujaleh**, senior policy adviser; **Kelly Bryant**, policy assistant; **Emily Harris**, communications adviser; **Samantha Nault**, legislative assistant; **Julia Van Drie**, special assistant; and **Daniel McKenzie**, policy adviser and assistant to the minister's parliamentary secretary, Liberal MP **Rodger Cuzner**.

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