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When will Parliament reciprocate commitment to veterans? p. 2

**News** Ethics probes

**Ethics czar** working 'diligently' to complete Trudeau investigation, promises to report 'in the near future'

BY ABBAS RANA

Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson, who started investigating last January Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's stay at the Aga Khan's private island in the Bahamas, is "working diligently" to complete the report and make it public in the "near future," says a spokeswoman for the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner.

'The commissioner is working diligently towards making her report public in the near future," said Alison Zinni, communications and media adviser to ethics and conflict of interest

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**News** Officers of Parliament

Officers of Parliament appointment process should be similar to Supreme Court justices appointments, say opposition justice critics

BY ABBAS RANA

The government should use the same ■ process it uses to appoint Supreme Court justices to appoint officers of Parliament because it involves all federal political parties and stakeholders at the federal and provincial levels, and legal stakeholders.

"These are important players in our democracy," said NDP MP Murray Rankin (Victoria, B.C.), his party's justice critic in an interview with The Hill Times. "These people wield

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#### House harassment policy has 'weaknesses,' 'potential for abuse,' say MPs, after Bezan-Romanado controversy

MPs urged careful use or a re-examination of the House of Commons' relatively new and lightly-tested harassment policy, after a kerfuffle over a lewd remark from one MP spilled into the House last week.





A controversial apology by Conservative MP James Bezan in the House of Commons last week for an off-colour joke made towards Liberal MP Sherry Romanado last May prompted MPs to reflect on the House of Commons' sexual harassment policy, and the intersection of politics and sexual harassment. The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia, The Hill Times file photograph

BY PETER MAZEREEUW, ABBAS RANA & LAURA RYCKEWAERT

MPs are split over whether the House's sexual harassment policy could be misused for political gains, with some dismissing the idea and others warning of the risks in play.

'We're living in a political environment, and so any kind of process could be subject to abuse," said NDP MP Murray Rankin (Victoria, B.C.).

"We have to be very careful. If you start using it [for partisan reasons] as a political issue, it will backfire both for the victim and everybody," said Conservative MP Deepak Obhrai (Calgary Forest

Lawn, Alta.). None of the MPs interviewed by The Hill Times suggested a sexual harassment policy was not needed on the Hill, or that the recent sexual harassment controversy

News Conservatives

Conservatives have 'brand problem' among female voters, pin hopes on Scheer, star women MPs to reverse trend

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The Conservatives continue to trail badly among women and have what one pollster is calling a "gender issue," despite pulling nearly even with the federal Liberals among male voters in polls over the last few months.

Weekly polls from Nanos Research show a double-digit advantage for the Liberals over the second place Conservatives, nearly every week since the 2015 election. As of Dec. 1, the Liberals were up 16 percentage points on the Conservatives among female voters, 42.2 to 26.2 per cent, while trailing by just two and half points among men, 35.3 to 37.8, according to Nanos Research.

Nanos Research chair Nik Nanos called the Liberal advantage over the Conservatives among women a "default phenomenon"in history, though his polls show the gap has closed at times before, with the two parties pulling even (and the NDP surpassing both) among women at times



Andrew Scheer. The Hill Times file photograph

in the spring and summer of 2015. He isn't the only pollster to track that trend. Greg Lyle, the founder of Innovative Research Group, has also studied the electoral preferences of Canadian men and women. The cause of the prolonged polling gap isn't clearcut, but Mr. Lyle pointed at the Conservatives to explain it, noting that the Liberals are polling roughly evenly

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#### **HEARD ON THE HILL**

by Shruti Shekar

## Sgro and Sgro, possibility of first mother-daughter duo in the same riding





If Deanna Sgro wins the Ontario provincial election, she will represent the riding of Humber River-Black Creek, Ont., which her mother Judy Sgro represents federally. According to Deanna, it would make for the first mother-daughter duo in a riding in Canadian political history. The Hill Times file photograph and Deanna Sgro's Twitter

This just in: Deanna Sgro will be running in the Ontario provincial race for the riding of Humber River-Black Creek, Ont., which happens to be the riding her mother, Liberal MP Judy Sgro, represents federally.

Judy Sgro has represented the riding since 1999, which was renamed from York West as a result of the 2013 electoral boundary redistribution.

Judy Sgro's office confirmed that if Deanna is elected then it will be the first mother-daughter duo for the area.

"There have been plenty of father-son duos in Canadian politics," Deanna Sgro said in a July 27 press release. "I think this says something rather nice about how far women have come in politics, and the work we continue to do to ensure equality and to inspire young girls to know that any role is open to them."

There are other duos.

New Democrat MP **Daniel Blaikie** currently represents the riding of Elmwood-Transcona, Man., which his father **Bill Blaikie** represented from 1979 to 2008.

Former Liberal MP **Joe Jordan**, currently a senior associate at Bluesky Strategy Group, represented the riding of Leeds-Grenville, Ont. from 1997 to 2004. His father, **Jim Jordan**, represented the same riding from 1988 to 1997.

Liberal MP **David McGuinty** has represented the riding of Ottawa South, Ont. since 2004 and his brother **Dalton McGuinty**, former Ontario premier, was the MPP for the same riding from 1990 to 2013.

There's also current Conservative MP Mark Strahl, who represents Chilliwack-Hope, B.C., the same riding his father, former Reform Party-turned-Democratic Representative-turned Canadian Alliance-turned Conservative MP Chuck Strahl represented in the House from 2004 to 2011, although the riding was called Chilliwack-Fraser Canyon.

#### Is it David vs. Goliath...or is it Gerard Comeau vs. New Brunswick?

The "free-the-beer" case has reached the Supreme Court of Canada, but that's no reason not to take in a few brews, right?

The night before the first day in court, Comeau litigators headed to Play Food & Wine in the ByWard Market in downtown Ottawa to connect and mingle. The event was hosted by the Canadian Constitution Foundation, with the support of the Canadian Vintners Association, which showcased some of the alcohol that is at stake.

Let's backtrack a bit first: back in 2012 **Gerard Comeau**, a retiree from New Brunswick, crossed the border to Quebec and decided to buy alcohol to bring back to his province.

That was a problem. Mr. Comeau didn't know there were laws against the interprovincial trade of alcohol. So when he tried crossing the border with 14 cases of beer, two bottles of whisky, and one bottle of liquor, RCMP stopped him at the New Brunswick-Quebec border, slapping him with a \$292.50 fine for violating the New Brunswick Liquor Control Act.

The act limits the amount of alcohol that can be brought over the border to about 18 cans or bottles of beer, or one bottle of either wine or any spirit.

Okay, now that we've got you up to speed let's get back to the party.

Howard Anglin, executive director of the Canadian Constitution Foundation, one of the interveners in the case, said it will be a pivotal decision for interprovincial trade laws for alcohol in Canada. Mr. Anglin, who previously served as a senior adviser and deputy chief of staff to former prime minster Stephen Harper, said the case tells the story of returning Canada to the original version of Confederation.

"In 1867 the U.S. had just torn up its free trade agreement with Canada called the Reciprocity Treaty ... [at the time] Canada wanted to be one country, one market, one economic unit," said Mr. Anglin, adding that when prohibition hit Canada, rules on interprovincial trade went into effect limiting alcohol from being transported freely within borders.

"It's your classic David and Goliath, [the Supreme Court] can't enforce these unconstitutional barriers to trade, which end up oppressing a retiree like Gerard Comeau who just wants to save a few dollars on beer," he said.

The arguments were heard in the Supreme Court on Dec. 6 and Dec. 7.

New Brunswick lawyers presented their case on Dec. 6, while Mr. Comeau's lawyers, together with interveners who represent owners of small to large businesses across the country, presented on Dec. 7.

#### Goodbye Joyce, the press gallery will miss you!

After more than three decades working on the Hill, Parliamentary Press Gallery clerk **Joyce Kingston** is going to retire.

The affable Ms. Kingston started working in the House of Commons five years before she joined the press gallery's personnel staff. The Parliamentary Press Gallery's 13 staff coordinate all press conferences, scrums, send out press releases and run the Hot Room in Centre Block



Joyce Kingston will retire from the press gallery on Dec. 15. Photograph courtesy of the press gallery

#### Separated at birth, eh?



But can he act? If Hollywood's ever looking for actor Harvey Keitel's double, Conservative MP Harold Albrecht is their guy. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade and courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

and the press gallery in the National Press Building for the estimated 350 members of the gallery on the Hill.

"It has been a privilege to work at the gallery, there is never a dull moment," Ms. Kingston said. "I wish to sincerely thank every one of you as well as my co-workers and will miss you all."

Her last day at the gallery will be Dec. 15.

#### 'Sorry regular Canadians,' only MPs can play hockey on the Parliament rink

It looks like the anonymous House of Commons Twitter user has revealed several MPs might play hockey on the newly opened Parliament Hill ice skating rink.

"#Canada150 skating rink closed to Canadians for hockey. Just got an email from Lib MP @stephanelauzon5 inviting MPs to play hockey on Dec. 14 at 10am. Sorry regular Canadians," the twitter user @HoCStaffer tweeted Dec. 7, tagging Liberal MP Stéphane Lauzon.

But what our HoC Staffer didn't know is that Mr. Lauzon's office is recruiting MPs and Senators while Heritage Minister **Mélanie Joly** is recruiting the members of the press gallery for a hockey match. Mr. Lauzon's office confirmed Ms. Joly was working on the recruitment.

#### NDP, Tories, Grits party it up for the Xmas season



NDP leader Jagmeet Singh was hoisted during the annual NDP caucus Christmas party. Photograph courtesy of Joshua Berson

Tis the season to be jolly and the NDP sure looked it when the party hosted its Christmas bash on Dec. 5 in Centre Block, and it looks like NDP leader **Jagmeet Singh**'s glamorous veneer has not worn off.

"Riding high @theJagmeetSingh is hoisted on the shoulders of @NDPHoc\_NPDCdC MPs & staff at Season Party #ndp #Cdnpoli," photographer Joshua Berson, tweeted Dec. 5.

The Conservatives had their annual caucus party on Dec. 7 at the Sir John A Macdonald building ballroom.

And from what *The Hill Times* has heard from around the block, the Liberal caucus party will be on Dec. 13 at the Shaw Centre located in downtown Ottawa.

sshekar@hilltimes.com @shruti\_shekar



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The Canadian Health Food Association is pleased to announce the Appointment of **Adam Gibson: Director, Policy and Regulatory Affairs** 



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#### Mining ombudsman announcement coming; stakeholders eyeing powers, independence of new watchdog

The Liberal government is expected to fulfill one of its campaign promises, after months of delay, and take another crack at overseeing Canadian companies abroad.

#### BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The federal government is on the verge of announcing the creation of an ombudsman for Canada's extractive sector, and fulfilling a Liberal election promise after years of talks between government officials, extractive sector lobbyists, and human rights advocates.

A spokesperson for Trade Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice-Champlain, Que.) confirmed widespread rumours among those close to the issue that an announcement on the ombudsman would be coming soon. Several non-profit advocacy groups following the issue have been told that the announcement could be made this week, or shortly after Parliament's winter break.

The spokesperson for Mr. Champagne declined to provide any details about the ombudsman in advance of the announcement. Some of those following the talks say they expect the new watchdog post will be created through an order in council, rather than the introduction of new legislation, which would have to wind its way through scrutiny in both Chambers of Parliament.

The Liberal Party campaigned on a promise to create the position of ombudsman for the extractive sector in 2015 after years of complaints from human rights advocacy groups, who pointed to a string of human rights abuses tied to Canadian-owned extractive companies, most in the mining sector, at or near mine sites in the developing world. The previous Conservative government and the mining sector took steps to curb those abuses, though some human rights advocates criticized those moves as weak or ineffective. Allegations of human rights abuses against people who oppose mining operations owned

by Canadian companies—by employees of the mines, or local police, military, security forces, or militias—and environmental degradation have continued.

Human rights advocates visited Ottawa last week to warn of "potential"human rights and environmental abuses tied to a Canadian mining company's operation in Mexico. The United Steelworkers Union also called for federal intervention last month after two striking workers at another Canadian-owned mine in Mexico were allegedly murdered at a roadblock set up as part of a protest of labour policies there. Other incidents have been documented with connections to Canadian-owned mines in Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and Tanzania in recent years, according to advocacy group the Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability. Another non-profit, Above Ground, plans to release a report this week on incidents tied to a Canadian mining operation in Brazil, including some this year.

Reaction to the announcement will likely hinge on the details of the ombudsman's mandate, powers, and reporting structure. The Mining Association of Canada, a lobby group for the industry, has come out in support of the idea of creating an ombudsman, as have Canadian human rights NGOs. They differ on how the ombudsman should operate, however. The industry group has advocated for a "joint fact-finding" mandate, in which the ombudsman would work with the implicated company and those who have been negatively affected by the mining operation, to get to the bottom of and resolve the conflict. The non-profit advocacy groups have asked for a very different model, however, giving the ombudsman powers to investigate and make findings of wrongdoing on its own.

"It's really important that the entire ombudsperson's office is independent, from beginning to end, in order to be able to effectively do its job," said **Emily Dwyer**, a spokesperson for the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability.

The Liberals promised to create an extractive sector ombudsman during the 2015 election campaign. The government's efforts to do so were set back by a January cabinet shuffle that moved **Chrystia Freeland** (University-Rosedale, Ont.) out of the trade portfolio to foreign affairs, and Mr. Champagne into

trade to take over the ombudsman file, Liberal MP **John McKay** (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.) told *The Hill Times* in October.

The ombudsman should have powers to independently investigate and make findings about what happened and what an appropriate remedy would be, and to make recommendations about how to prevent harm in the future, said Ms. Dyer. The ombudsman should be able to compel documents and testimony from the parties involved as well, she said.

The problem with joint fact-finding, she said, is that companies would have a disproportionate amount of power in any such process when compared to the individuals on the other side of a dispute. There are also times when it could be inappropriate to ask individuals to "sit down and negotiate" when their human rights have been infringed upon, she said.

In an interview in October, Mining Association of Canada president and CEO Pierre Gratton and vice-president Ben Chalmers told The Hill Times that a joint fact-finding model—bringing the parties together, treating them as equals, and helping them work through the issue—would avoid making disputes even more adversarial, as could be the case, they said, under a system in which an ombudsman undertakes unilateral investigations.

#### Third time's a charm?

The previous Conservative government tried to address issues tied to the behaviour of Canadian companies overseas through its Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy in 2009, later amending it in 2014.

The first strategy established the office of the CSR counsellor, and tasked it with investigating the cases of wrongdoing. Extractive companies mostly refused to cooperate with the first counsellor, **Marketa Evans**, however, who had limited powers to pursue her mandate.

The updated strategy redefined the counsellor's role, emphasizing informal co-operation with the mining sector and other stakeholders, and heading off potential conflicts before violence occurred. It also allowed the government to cut off financial or diplomatic support to mining companies that didn't adhere to CSR principles or engage with the counsellor or another disputeresolution outlet, the Canadian





Trade Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne, left, is expected to announce the creation of an ombudsman for Canada's extractive sector in the coming days, making good on a 2015 campaign promise by the Liberals led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade, The Hill Times file photograph* 

National Contact Point for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Canadian courts have also begun in the last few years to

hear lawsuits brought against Canadian mining companies by members of communities negatively affected by the mines in other countries.

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#### **Status of Government Bills**

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS Second reading:

- S-5, An Act to amend the Tobacco Act and the Non-smokers' Health Act
- C-5, An Act to Repeal Division 20 of Part 3 of the Economic Action Plan 2015
- C-12, An Act to amend the Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Reestablishment and Compensation Act
- C-27, An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985
- C-28, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (victim surcharge)
- C-32, An Act related to the repeal of section 159 of the Criminal Code
   C-33, An Act to amend the Canada
- C-33, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act
   C-34, An Act to amend the Public
- Service Labour Relations Act
- C-38, An Act to amend an Act to amend the Criminal Code (exploitation and trafficking in persons)
- C-39, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (unconstitutional provisions)
- C-42, Veterans Well-being Act
- C-43, An Act respecting a payment to be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to support a pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy
- C-52, Supporting Vested Rights Under Access to Information Act
- C-56, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and the Abolition of Early Parole Act
- C-62, An Act to amend the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act and other Acts
- C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (harassment and violence)
- C-66, Expungement of Historically Unjust Convictions Act

#### Committee:

- C-47, An Act to amend the Export and Import Permits Act and the Criminal Code (amendments permitting the accession to the Arms Trade Treaty)
- C-48, Oil Tanker Moratorium Act
   C-55, An Act to amend the Oceans Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act

- C-57, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act
- C-59, An Act respecting national security matters
- C-64, Wrecked, Abandoned, or Hazardous Vessels Act

#### Report stage

- S-2, Strengthening Motor Vehicle Safety for Canadians Act
- C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act
   C-24, An Act to amend the Salaries Act and the Financial Administration Act
- C-50, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (political financing)
- C-51, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Department of Justice Act

#### SENATE

#### Second reading:

- C-45, Cannabis Act
  C-46, An Act to amend
- C-46, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (offences relating to conveyances)
   C-49, Transportation Modernization Act
- C-49, Transportation Modernization A
   C-58, An Act to amend the Access to
- C-58, An Act to amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act

#### Committee

- C-17, An Act to amend the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act
- C-25, An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, Canada Cooperatives Act, Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and Competition Act
- C-61, Anishinabek Nation Education Agreement Act
- C-63, Budget Implementation Act, 2017, No. 2

#### Third reading

C-36, An Act to amend the Statistics Act
C-67, Appropriation Act No. 4, 2017-18

#### AWAITING ROYAL ASSENT S-3. An Act to amend the Ind

- S-3, An Act to amend the Indian Act (elimination of sex-based inequities in registration)
- C-23, Preclearance Act
- C-60, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act

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#### Hill security officers, PPS to meet to discuss wages as labour dispute hits seven-month mark

'All I want for Christmas is a new collective agreement,' read pamphlets handed out on the Hill last week by House of Commons officers and detection specialists.

#### BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

After seven months, House of Commons security officers are still protesting and all three unions representing security officers on the Hill are set to sit down with their Parliamentary Protective Service employers in Ottawa on Dec. 18 to discuss wages.

Roch Lapensée, head of the Security Service Employees Association (SSEA), which represents the roughly 240 House of Commons security officers on the Hill, said he's "skeptical" about how fruitful these talks will be.

"I'll be very honest with you, I don't feel confident at all. I mean, we've been very disappointed multiple times in the past," he told *The Hill Times*, adding that he'll wait and see what's put on the table before making further judgment but that, "right now, we're skeptical."

"A discussion on wages could mean a lot of things. It could mean a basic increment of the cost of living, to let's look at the overall classification of all of our members. So, I'm not even sure what they're going to be proposing at the table, but we'll see on Dec. 18," said Mr. Lapensée.

The Dec. 18 meeting is the latest development in a labour stand-off that first kicked off on May 1, when SSEA officers on the Hill began wearing lime green baseball caps—and soon after matching stickers calling for 'respect'—as part of protest actions launched after their employer, the Parliamentary Protective Service (PPS), declined to negotiate a new collective agreement with the union.

The old agreement for House officers expired March 31 and remains in place until a new one is reached.

But, as Mr. Lapensée has noted, the union has a list of grievances and complaints that it's eager to see addressed, including over pay, job classifications, overtime hours, leave for officers, and with regard to the RCMP's security clearance process.

Currently, House protective officers make less than their



A House security officer on the Hill pictured last week wearing a lime green toque calling for 'respect,' standing beside a colleague wearing a matching sticker. Protest actions by House of Commons security officers have now been ongoing for seven months. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

RCMP counterparts. Based on the rates of pay effective April 1, 2016, House security officers at the constable level make between \$50,249 and \$63,581; at the corporal level between \$56,088 and \$70,969; and at the sergeant level between \$62,135 and \$78,620. By comparison, RCMP members at the constable level make between \$53,144 and \$86,110; at the corporal level between \$90,842 and \$94,292; and at the sergeant level between \$99,790 and \$102,775.

The PPS, however, has said, based on legal advice, it has to wait on a decision from the Federal Public Service Labour Relations and Employment Board (FPSLREB) on its 2015 application over whether it can merge the three unions currently under its oversight into one collective bargaining unit.

It's something the unions do not want. Security officers on the Hill are currently divided between three unions: House officers are represented by the SSEA; Senate officers are part of the Senate Protective Service Employees Association (SPSEA); and the detection specialists who screen Hill visitors are part of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC).

The first hearings on this application took place at the beginning of November, with all three unions, the employer, and their respective legal teams present, but more meetings are set to take place in the new year with no conclusion yet in sight.

Mr. Lapensée speculated it could take until the fall of 2018 to sort out, after which collective agreement negotiations would still need to take place—not to mention the potential setup work required if the FPSLREB rules that the unions can be merged.

Detection specialists have been without a contract since March 2014, while the contract for SPSEA members expired in September.

The new, integrated Parliamentary Protective Service was created in 2015 following a secu-

rity review undertaken after the October 2014 shooting on the Hill.

Previously, House and Senate officers were separately responsible for their respective areas inside the Parliament buildings, with RCMP officers in charge of the Hill grounds. While the House of Commons and Senate Speakers provide general policy direction for the PPS, the head of the service is designated to be a member of the RCMP.

SSEA members suspended their protest actions during the summer after agreeing to hold mediation talks with the PPS shortly before Canada Day. But ultimately, nothing came of it.

Mr. Lapensée has since said he doesn't think the employer went to the table in good faith and that the summer talks were "only a tactic to waste time."

However, PPS director and RCMP chief superintendent Jane MacLatchy has said that while no agreement was reached, these talks were "absolutely" done in "good faith."

House officers are once again donning their green apparel—toques now, in the case of officers positioned just outside building entrances—and stickers calling for 'respect.'

PPS extended an invitation to discuss wages all three unions representing security officers on the Hill on Nov. 30.

In response to questions from *The Hill Times* last week, PPS administrative and personnel officer Robert Graham said the employer anticipates and welcomes subsequent meetings with the associations following the Dec. 18 meeting, saying, "we recognize that these are complex issues."

"PPS understands that wages are a significant concern for the union and the associations. At recent town halls [with officers], there were a number of salary related questions from employees so we thought it would be a good topic for both parties," explained Mr. Graham.

Mr. Graham said the PPS is "just as frustrated" by the lengthy process at the labour relations board as its employees, but noted, "the length of the process is out of our control."

"We are disappointed with the job action that one association has decided to undertake, and we empathize with the difficult position some of our employees are in," said Mr. Graham in the email.

Around mid-October, PPS managers began calling in SSEA members individually to meetings to hand out written reprimands over their participation in protest actions, which Mr. Lapensée said remain on an officers' file for two years.

As of last week, Mr. Lapensée said almost 90 SSEA members have so far received a written reprimand, with such meetings put on pause last week as he was out of town to attend a conference in Toronto on public sector bargaining put on by Lancaster House. He said these meetings would resume on Dec. 11.

"They've been doing this on a daily basis, wasting operational personnel, including management, sitting down eight hours a day in disciplinary hearings. It's a big waste of money," said Mr. Lapensée.

"The morale is so low, people are tired," he said.

House of Commons officers and detection specialists on the Hill were handing out a green pamphlet last week, titled "All I want for Christmas is a new collective agreement."

"Together, we play a key role on the Hill, keeping you and everyone else safe," reads the pamphlet.

"Our employer, the Parliamentary Protective Service (PPS) is refusing to negotiate, making the far-fetched excuse that it must wait for the labour board to rule on a separate matter, which may only happen next summer. Our two unions have come together this Christmas to say enough is enough!"

It asks recipients to tell the PPS to "stop using the labour board as an excuse to not negotiate," to "show us some respect and give us new contracts," and to "stop intimidation tactics."

Globe and Mail recently reported that a majority of security personnel on the Hill—including House and Senate protective officers and detection specialists—have not gone through the RCMP's security clearance process, imposed after all security services on Parliament Hill were merged under the PPS.

In its Nov. 23 story, *The Globe* reported that roughly 100 non-RCMP security officers on the Hill have gone through that screening process, which has since been stopped following objections from the officers' unions.

But Mr. Lapensée told *The Hill Times* that in terms of operational officers—as opposed to administrative personnel—he estimates that the number of those who have com-

pleted the RCMP's security screening process is even lower, closer to between 20 and 30 members.

The RCMP's clearance process involves fingerprinting, financial and background checks, involving the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), and, as described in the Treasury Board Secretariat's policy, can include in-person interviews.

Mr. Lapensée said the RCMP clearance process that was being imposed was "totally illegal" as it involved a 10-year background check, rather than five years, and because the PPS was "systemically giving interviews to every single one who applies for clearance."

"They scrapped everything when we filed official complaints, and we also filed multiple grievances on it," he said.

PPS confirmed that security clearances have been "put on pause until a PPS-specific security clearance policy and procedure is put in place."

"We intend to launch this revised security clearance process early in 2018," said Mr. Graham.

Mr. Lapensée said PPS has indicated it would share a draft version of a new process "some time in December" for review, but he had not yet received one last week. He said it's not a question of not wanting to take part in security clearances, but rather wanting the employer to recognize that clearances took place before the PPS was created.

"Some of us have been working [on the Hill for] 15, 20, 25, 30 years—why is the employer not recognizing those years of service and the clearance that we had at the time? That's the big issue," said Mr. Lapensée.

"The RCMP are trying to impose a culture, their culture, upon us. We have our own culture, we've been here for over 100 years, so we don't need the RCMP to tell us what to do," he said.



NDP MP Don Davies, far left, and NDP MP Fin Donnelly, far right, pictured wearing lime green ties in solidarity with House of Commons security officers. Along with the NDP, Green Party Leader Elizabeth May has also spoken out in support of officers in the House. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Mr. Lapensée has also criticized the PPS for the way it's handled the force's operating budget, using it to hire more administrative staff, rather than hiring more, much-needed, operational personnel.

In response to such criticism, Mr. Graham said in PPS's early months, "the focus was on integrating operations, communications, and procedures," and that the force's "support resources are in line with organizations of similar size and complexity."

"We are looking for ways to improve employee wellness and operational excellence while executing strong stewardship of public funds," said Mr. Graham.

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#### **Editorial**

### Secret sexual harassment reviews not the only option for MPs

Though she hasn't said so, Liberal MP Sherry Romanado would be justified in feeling let down by the House's process for dealing with sexual harassment complaints between MPs.

Ms. Romanado followed rules in the Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Commons on sexual harassment, which required that she stay silent about being the subject of an unwelcome sexual joke by Conservative MP James Bezan last May while a lengthy review process by an external investigator and the House administration was underway.

For her trouble, her complaint was determined to be unfounded, Mr. Bezan delivered an apology in the House over the remark when she wasn't there to receive it, and she has been deluged with atrocious messages from obnoxious members of the public who learned of the dispute through media headlines.

Mr. Bezan and Ms. Romanado have given conflicting accounts of when and whether Mr. Bezan tried to apologize for the remark beforehand. Some media commentators have questioned whether that remark, a joke about a "threesome," warranted a formal complaint in the first place.

The story could have played out in much the same way with a much more serious case of harassment, however. The sexual harassment review process keeps nearly the whole process out of sight from the public. All parties involved must keep the details confidential. If the review determines that sexual harassment has occurred, it starts a back-and-forth between the MPs involved, the House

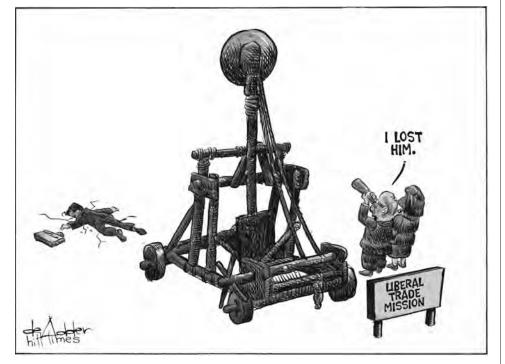
administrator in charge of the review, and the party whips over what punishment will be handed down—all out of the public eye.

If that doesn't satisfy the complainant or accused harasser, the Procedure and House Affairs Committee meets behind closed doors to determine if further action should be taken. All documents related to those in camera discussions must be kept secret for five years, and then, unless the committee directs otherwise, destroyed. If that committee determines that the harasser should be sanctioned, he or she can finally be named in its report, and will then have a chance to make a statement about the incident in the House.

Members of Parliament on the receiving end of inappropriate behaviour may look at Ms. Romanado's example and decide they're better off skipping the secrecy and bureaucracy. Some may simply stay silent, but they have a better choice: use their voice and status in the House of Commons to call out the harassment and harasser.

That isn't a one-size fits-all solution: victims of the most serious harassment may not be comfortable putting themselves and the details of their abuse under the public microscope. Others may not want to harm their own party, if the harasser comes from within their caucus.

But if an MP is embarrassed by one of their peers in public, as Ms. Romanado was, perhaps the simplest solution is the best one: skip the months of secret human-resource wrangling, and publicly name and shame their harasser right back.



#### **Letters to the Editor**

#### How green has Canada become in 20 years?

Monday, Dec. 11 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kyoto Protocol, the world's first collective response to the growing threat of climate change. Although Canada subsequently withdrew from that treaty, we continued to track our greenhouse gas emissions and stand again with all other nations (except one) to reduce our carbon footprint.

Most GHG emissions are the result of energy consumption, but Canada does a very dismal job of making this link obvious, preferring exhortations to keep the global temperature rise to less than 1.5°. The official government website for energy information contains details on how we consume energy across the country, and some of these data suggest an interesting picture of where Canada is heading in terms of energy consumption and the resulting emissions.

The 'Comprehensive Energy Use Database' is maintained by Natural Resources Canada to track all sources of energy, their end use applications, and the resulting GHG emissions for five sectors: residential, commercial-institutional, industrial, transportation and agriculture. It also monitors important changes in heating degree days, building floorspace, kilometres traveled and other variables which have a direct influence on whether we use less or more energy.

The database shows that gross energy consumption between 1997 and 2014 (the latest year available) is 17 per cent higher than when we agreed with the low-carbon goals of Kyoto. Electricity use has increased 12 per cent and natural gas has soared by 34 per cent but, when all sources of renewable energy are combined (wood, ethanol, and biodiesel, as well as hydroelectricity, wind, and solar), the data suggest there has been almost no increase

and renewables are losing market share compared to other fuels. Part of this is explained by the transition of forest biomass to more sophisticated non-renewable fuels, and the common misperception that 'electricity' is the same as 'energy' although the former contributes only one-fifth of our total energy. New buildings and new cars are supposed to be more efficient, yet the 2014 data show that, on a per-capita basis, every person in Canada is responsible for the consumption of 70,000 kWh a year. Knowing how much of this is clean energy and how much is dirty energy, is the basic prerequisite to any real action plan.

Governments want less GHG emissions and more low-carbon fuels, but they first need to quantify how much energy we consume now, and how much we can (and must) reduce. The One Tonne Challenge with Rick Mercer never told us where a tonne of carbon came from, nor how many tonnes we emitted; now we are being told to limit global temperature rise with, again, no details on how.

As Kyoto marks its platinum anniversary, Canada has taken some important baby steps towards lower energy use and greener energy content but, until our federal, provincial and municipal governments tell us how to eliminate a lot more of our 70,000 kWh of personal energy baggage and how to clean up the lower balance, there is little chance that our ambitious energy goals or lofty environmental targets can be reached by the next Kyoto anniversary.

Bill Eggertson
Executive director
Canadian Association
for Renewable Energies,
International Ground Source Heat
Pump Association
Ottawa, Ont.

#### Protecting health and safety top priority on legalizing cannabis, says Grit MP Serré

As you are aware, our government has developed an approach to legalizing, taxing, regulating, and restricting access to cannabis that aims to keep it out of the hands of kids and keep profits out of the hands of criminals.

That is why, after extensive consultation with the provinces and territories, law enforcement, and health and safety experts, our government introduced legislation to legalize, strictly regulate and restrict access to cannabis by no later than July 2018.

Now, we are taking the next step toward the legalization of cannabis with the development of a tax framework designed to keep prices low enough to put criminals out of business, while offsetting the costs of education, administration and enforcement.

The proposed tax framework is part of our ongoing work with the provinces and territories and other partners to legalize, regulate and restrict the sale of cannabis. We will con-

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tinue to work with provinces and territories to ensure a coordinated approach. In support of these goals and the broader legalization efforts, on Nov. 10, 2017, the Department of Finance Canada published a proposed excise duty framework for cannabis products for the purposes of informing and generating a broad public consultation on the taxation of cannabis products.

Protecting the health and safety of Canadians is a top priority for our government. Legalizing and regulating cannabis will allow us to better protect youth, take business away from criminals, and put public health front and centre when it comes to educating Canadians on the potential harms of cannabis use. Our government welcomes feedback on the taxation of cannabis products, and I look forward to discussing this matter with my constituents.

Liberal MP Marc Serré Nickel Belt, Ont.

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#### Comment

# AFN throws wrinkle into rollout of legalizing pot

Last week, the AFN announced the formation of a committee to study how aboriginal territories will implement their own regulations.



Sheila Copps Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—As the date for legal pot nears, the Assembly of First Nations has thrown a new wrinkle into the rollout.

Last week, the AFN announced the formation of a committee to study how aboriginal territories will implement their own regulations. Regional chiefs from Quebec and Ontario share committee duties, and are expected to report on all aspects of their own proposals for legalization of cannabis.

Ontario chief Isadore Day suggested the committee may want to raise the age for legal consumption on their own territories, based on studies that show young brains are still being formed into the early twenties.

As with the provinces, there is no unanimity on how the new laws will apply. But there is unanimity on one issue, First Nations say that they will determine the rules around the use and sale of marijuana on reserves and will not be governed by any federal or provincial laws.

Many of the points raised at the AFN annual meeting last week are certainly worthy of consideration.

If the Government of Canada is committed to a nation-to-nation approach, then any move which has a direct impact on Indigenous communities needs to be based on some form of agreement.

But when push comes to shove, just which government will take precedence?

Another sticking point, which has also been the main bone of contention with the provinces, is around revenue sharing.

Currently, cigarettes manufactured and sold on multiple reserves across Canada are free of tax, ostensibly to be available to those on the territory who enjoy tax-free status. In reality, many points of sale are adjacent to large urban areas, and cigarettes are also sold to those who come to the reserve to avoid the hefty "sin" taxes currently levied on tobacco by all governments.

Presumably, on-reserve marijuana dispensaries would enjoy similar tax treatment, and the temptation to sell the product to neighbouring residents who do not enjoy tax-exempt status would be huge.

The current proposed patchwork of provincial regulations appears seamless in relation to the multiple regulatory changes that could be involved when laws are developed by more than 600 First Nations and 3,000 reserves across the country.

It seems unlikely that the outcome of any AFN committee findings will be implemented before the July 1 deadline set for legal pot.

But aboriginal business leaders are already moving in to take advantage of the potential pot of gold expected to materialize with legalization.

Even former AFN chief Phil Fontaine is reported to have joined the movement, by partnering with a licensed marijuana producer to create Aboriginal Roots, an on-reserve marijuana franchise grow-op initiative.

In many remote communities, the potential for economic growth is minimal so the financial lure of marijuana businesses is also attractive.

But as Day suggested, there are also potential health and social costs attached to overuse or abuse of the drug. Not surprisingly, AFN leaders across the country are not unanimous in their view of how pot legalization should be carried out.

All this is happening just six months before the implementation target date.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cannot afford to back away from his commitment to legalize marijuana on the next Canada Day.

His government is midway through its mandate, and his surprise victory was largely the result of a surge in support by pot-smoking, next-gen voters, who would not take kindly to a delay. Given the commitment by Trudeau to reconciliation with First Nations, the prime minister has no option but to negotiate on this issue as a sign of good faith.

Both commitments may seem contradictory.

Some First Nations, like some provinces, are already calling for a delay in the implementation date

Given the current involvement of organized crime in the illegal drug trade, law enforcement officials will, no doubt, be concerned about the potential for criminality and how that will be managed.

Many questions loom, with few answers.

At the end of the day, the financial windfall that comes with legalization will ensure that all parties come to the table.

The AFN has its work cut out for itself, with the requirement to reach consensus quickly enough to be ready for the July 1 deadline.

So does the government.

As one of the first countries in the world moving to legalize cannabis across the board, Canada is being closely watched by other jurisdictions considering a similar move.

Controversy cannot overshadow the launch of the new pot law. Trudeau and his team need a smooth rollout on legalization. Their re-election may depend on it.

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

The Hill Times

### Can nice guys finish first?

Prime Minister
Justin Trudeau
possesses a genial,
affable, charming
personality—he's
nice. That's why
voters like him. And
once voters make the
emotional investment
of liking a politician,
it's exceedingly
difficult to get them to
change their minds.



Gerry Nicholls

Post-Partisan Pundit

AKVILLE, ONT.—Politically speaking, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau enjoys a lot of key advantages: he's an incumbent, he presides over an economy that's humming along, and he usually compares favourably to U.S. President Donald Trump.

But I'd say the biggest advantage currently working in Trudeau's favour is that Canadian politics is overflowing with niceness.

Of course, when I say "niceness," I mean that in a relative sense; politics will always be a nasty, callous business.

My point simply is this: compared to what's happening in other countries and compared to what's happened here in the past, Canada's political stage is populated with a cast of extremely nice characters.

First and foremost, there's Prime Minister Trudeau, who, as I think everybody would acknowledge, possesses a genial, affable, charming personality—he's nice.

That's why voters like him. And once voters make the emotional investment of liking a politician, it's exceedingly difficult to get them to change their minds.

It's this likability, or niceness, that puts Trudeau in a good position to survive scandals, gaffes, or missteps.

In fact, there are really only two ways to defeat a nice politician.







One way is to launch a fullblown "negative" ad campaign aimed at making a likable politician, less likable.

In other words, you relentlessly hurl buckets of mud; it's crude, but effective.

The other way to take down a nice politician is to turn his or her niceness into a political liability.

That's to say, you make the case that nice leaders lack the moral strength it takes to tackle the tough problems facing the country.

In short, you equate niceness with weakness.

For this to work, you need to present as an alternative leader, a "Mean SOB," i.e. someone who might be unlikable, but who's also effective.



either strategy
will ever be
implemented,
mainly because
both Conservative
Party leader
Andrew Scheer
and NDP leader
Jagmeet Singh are,
like Prime Minister
Justin Trudeau,
nice guys. The Hill
Times photograph
by Andrew Meade

It's highly unlikely

Former prime minister Stephen Harper more or less played this "Mean SOB" card, as does President Trump.

This strategy, by the way, works best in times of anxiety or distress, when worried voters are looking for a "strong" leader.

At any rate, either of these two strategies could theoretically inflict damage on Trudeau.

Yet, it's highly unlikely either strategy will ever be implemented, mainly because both Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer and NDP leader Jagmeet Singh are, like Trudeau, nice guys.

Indeed, both politicians have made "positivity" a big part of their respective brands.

In terms of strategy, this means neither Singh nor Scheer will have the willingness to wage a vicious ad war against the prime minister.

True, they could rely on "third parties" to do the dirty work, but that hardly seems like a real option.

For one thing, the only "thirdparty" group with the resources to take on the prime minister in any meaningful way is Big Labour, and it's pretty much on Trudeau's side.

And even if there was some sort of well-funded organization out there that actually wanted to go after Trudeau with an attack ad campaign, Canada's strict (some might say "draconian") election spending laws makes it virtually impossible for any non-political party to have an effective voice.

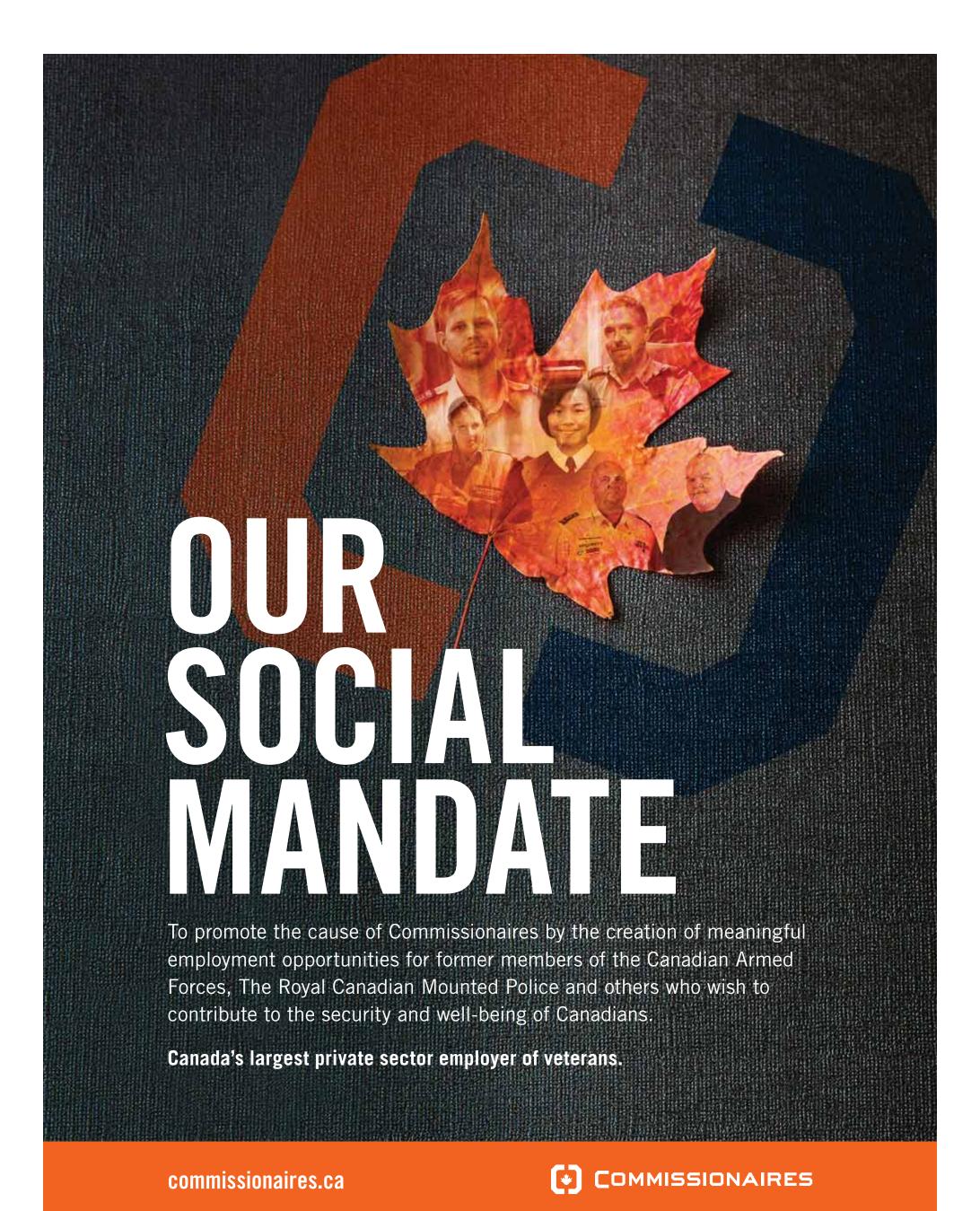
So bottom line: any sort of negative ad campaign designed to make Trudeau less likable seems to be off the table.

And it should go without saying that Scheer, with his "I'm just middle class dad" routine or Singh with his "I should be on the cover of *GQ* magazine" shtick, could never in a million years of trying, ever pass themselves off as "Mean SOBs."

Anyway, what all this niceness means in terms of Canada's political dynamic is that Trudeau will retain his likability advantage, which for the Liberals, is nice.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

www.gerrynicholls.com The Hill Times



#### The end of Ali Abdullah Saleh

And the war will go on until Mohammed bin Salman gets tired of it, or the Saudis get tired of him.



**Gwynne Dyer** 

Opinion

L ONDON, U.K.—Ali Abdullah Saleh seized power in Yemen in 1978 when he was only 36 years old. He lost it in 2012, when the 'Arab Spring' was in full spate and had been trying to get it back ever since. Thirty-four years was not enough. But last Monday, his truly astonishing ability to switch sides got him killed.

Saleh was Saudi Arabia's man in Yemen for a long time, but when Riyadh turned against him in 2012 and put his vice-president, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, in power instead, Saleh went rogue. A lot of the army was still loyal to him, so he made an alliance with the powerful Houthi tribes in the north (exactly the same people whom he had attacked six times in the past), and started working his way back.

In 2014, the Houthi militia and Saleh's forces seized control of the capital, Sanaa, and Saudi Arabia's new placeman, President Hadi, fled south to Aden, the country's second city. Later Hadi fled to Saudi Arabia, and the Houthi-Saleh alliance took over most of the country.

Yemen matters a lot to the Saudis, because it is the other big country in the Arabian peninsula, with 27 million people (same as Saudi Arabia), but it is very poor and very unstable. The fact that almost half the Yemenis follow the Shia branch of Islam (in their own Zaidi variant) is of particular concern to the Saudi regime.

Such distinctions didn't stop the Houthis (who are Shia) from getting together with Saleh's people (who are mostly Sunnis), because Yemenis are not much troubled by such things. But the Saudi Arabian regime, all Sunnis, is obsessed by the 'Shia threat.'That mostly means Iran, their rival across the Gulf, but the Saudis see Iranian plots everywhere, especially if there are Shias involved.

The current Yemeni civil war is about the 20th such power struggle in the past 1,000 years,

and little different from all the others. Iran no doubt enjoys the Saudi Arabian panic about it, but there is no evidence that it is sending the Houthis anything except good wishes. Whereas Riyadh and its allies are sending bombers.

In March 2015, Saudi Arabia and eight Arab allies launched a bombing campaign against the Houthis and Saleh's forces, with the United States and the United Kingdom both providing political, logistical, and propaganda support to the operation. More than 8,000 Yemenis have been killed by the coalition's air strikes and around 50,000 wounded, but the lines on the ground have scarcely shifted in the past two years.

The air war has been very costly for Saudi Arabia both in money and in reputation, and it has been getting increasingly embarrassing for the man who started it, Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. So Ali Abdullah Saleh calculated that this was the right time to change sides: he could get a good price for ratting on the Houthis, and maybe even recover the presidency he had held for so long.

He pretended to be driven by humanitarian motives. In a televised speech on Saturday, he called on "the brothers in neighbouring states and the coalition to stop their aggression, lift the siege, open the airports and allow food aid and the saving of the wounded, and we will turn a new page by virtue of our neighbourliness."

The bit about "aggression" was meant to placate his Yemeni audience, which does not love the Saudis, but he was actually offering to change sides. The Saudi-led coalition immediately responded, welcoming Saleh's decision to "take the lead and to ... free Yemen of ... militias loyal to Iran."

The Houthis, however, had seen his treachery coming. They accused Saleh of staging a coup against "an alliance he never believed in," and Sanaa was engulfed by heavy artillery fire as the Houthis went to war against their former ally. Despite Saudi air strikes to help Saleh's forces, the Houthis had fought their way to within 200 metres of Saleh's house by Monday morning.

Reports differ about what happened next. Some say Saleh died in the wreckage of his house, which was blown up by Houthi fighters. Others say he made a run for it in his car, which was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. What the internet images show is a fatal wound in his head. The old fox is definitely dead, and the civil war within the civil war is probably over.

Bits of Saleh's army may fight on for a while, but without him to bind them together most of Saleh's soldiers will eventually either go



Ali Abdullah Saleh seized power in Yemen in 1978 when he was only 36 years old. He lost it in 2012, when the 'Arab Spring' was in full spate and had been trying to get it back ever since. Thirty-four years was not enough. But last Monday, his truly astonishing ability to switch sides got him killed. *Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons* 

over to the Houthis or go home. The Houthis will be a bit weaker without Saleh's support, but so long as the coalition's members are not willing to put large numbers of their own troops in the ground in Yemen—and they are not—the Houthis will probably keep control of most of the country.

And the war will go on until Mohammed bin Salman gets tired of it, or the Saudis get tired of him.

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

The Hill Times

## Death to terrorists if necessary, but not necessarily death

Surely by now we have advanced to the point where our default position is to avoid war, not wage it.



Phil Gurski

Opinion

OTTAWA—All is fair in love and war, or so the saying goes. Except that nothing is usually fair in either, especially when it comes to war. We ought to have learned over the several millennia that we have been killing each other on the battlefield, that war is anything but fair. Results are rarely clearcut,

wars beget wars (WWI led directly to WWII), and the effects on those on the periphery of the warring parties—what some euphemistically call "collateral damage" nowadays—should be known to all. Wars may be inevitable at times and maybe there is still some value in an Augustinian or Thomistic notion of a "just war" but surely by now we have advanced to the point where our default position is to avoid war, not wage it.

The same can be said for the "war on terror," an unfortunate term if there ever was one. There are good reasons to use military, lethal force against terrorist groups in State (IS) would qualify here as the organization had created what could be seen as a state—and if so one assumes the international laws of war would apply. The provisions of these laws call for proportionate use of force, avoiding civilian casualties, and some way of ending the conflict through parley between the combatants (the refusal of most terrorist groups to negotiate underscores why we really should not see this as a war). There are rules, even in war.

What then should we make of news that some states are compiling lists of terrorists they seek to kill who happen to be their own citizens? According to the CBC, a few countries would rather kill their fellow citizens than see them return to possible carry out attacks at home. There is some support for this as who wants to allow a terrorist to successfully come back in order to kill and maim? Furthermore, these people chose to become terrorists: no one held a gun to their heads or 'brainwashed' them. Given the heinous record of IS terrorists (beheadings, rapes, murders, immolations) would anyone really object to

Unfortunately, there are obstacles to creating "hit lists." As citizens of our countries they enjoy due process and in Canada at least there are Charter considerations (the right to life clause). This is why our country has not engaged in this practice and does not appear to be open to doing so at any point in the future. Furthermore, if a Canadian joins the IS, that is in itself a criminal offence and that individual should be tried



in a court of law here if necessary. There are, of course, challenges to such an approach: how to amass enough evidence to lay charges, how to capture them alive to bring back to Canada, whether we can use intelligence/evidence collected in theatre or shared by another nation (anyone want to collaborate with Syria?). Nevertheless, in theory there is a perfectly legal and transparent way to go about this.

On the other hand, our military does have the authority to use lethal force on the battlefield. This applies both to traditional 'combatants' as well as to 'non-combatants' who elect to take part in hostilities. While the latter are normally considered civilians and hence afforded protection, their choice to take up arms nullifies that protection and they become 'fair game'.

I, too, experience some discomfort in seeing "kill lists" drawn up for

terrorists, Canadian or otherwise. If a Canadian dies in an airstrike or in a gun battle while engaged with our military or that of one of our allies I will not shed a tear. A dead terrorist is a good terrorist, after all (by that I simply mean that he or she no longer poses a threat and our protectors can shift limited and overstretched resources to other investigations, of which there are already far too many). But I don't think we have to create itemized dossiers that we tick off one by one.

Luckily a lot of terrorists intend to die anyway and never want to come back to a land they see as rife with apostasy. Should they fulfill their goal, so much the better for the rest of us. There is no need to go out of our way to target them for killing.

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

## Canada must redirect public financing away from fossil fuels

Canada should work with its allies to put a carbon tax on international transport fuels and earmark the revenue to help meet international climate financing commitments.



Dale Marshall

Opinion

On Dec. 12, French President Emmanuel Macron will be hosting a climate change summit in Paris. The summit will focus on redirecting financing away from fossil fuels and towards climate solutions such as clean, renewable energy and green infrastructure. This will be an important opportunity for the Canadian government to make progress on two challenges: phasing out the subsidies it gives to oil and gas companies and increasing its assistance to poor, developing countries so they can address the severe climatic impacts they face.

More than 50 presidents and prime ministers are expected at the Macron summit. Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine McKenna will be representing Canada.

The minister's mandate letter from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau includes the task to phase out Canada's fossil fuel subsidies. Back in 2009, Canada and other G20 countries committed to getting rid of those subsidies. Eight years later,

the federal government still gives an estimated \$1.6-billion in tax breaks to oil and gas companies every year. (Provincial governments give an equivalent amount.)

In addition, the recently released Paradise Papers showed that there are 11 Canadian petroleum companies using subsidiaries in tax haven countries to avoid paying full taxes. The list includes corporate giants Suncor, Enbridge, Canadian Natural Resources Ltd., and TransCanada. So closing tax loopholes is also a challenge for the federal government.

Another issue that will be tackled at the Macron summit in Paris is providing financing for developing countries to assist them to address climate change. Under the Paris Agreement, rich, industrialized countries committed US\$100 billion every year so that poorer countries can adapt to the more intense climate change impacts they experience, and to help them to undertake low-carbon development.

The Trudeau government confirmed it will provide \$800-mil-

More than 50
presidents and
prime ministers
are expected at the
Macron summit.
Environment and
Climate Change
Minister Catherine
McKenna, pictured in
a recent Hill scrum,
will be representing
Canada. The Hill
Times photograph by
Andrew Meade

lion in climate financing in 2020, the first year of the commitment. But that's far from Canada's fair share, estimated at close to CAN\$4-billion per year, based on our historical contribution to the problem of climate change and the high wealth of our country.

So how can the federal government fill the gap? Using the billions it now gives to oil and gas companies would be a good start. The federal government should also review the estimated \$12-billion that Export Development Canada gives in public financing to oil and gas companies. Shifting billions in subsidies and financing for fossil fuel companies to climate solutions can provide a double dividend for the planet.

But there's another source of financing that the Canadian government should consider: work with international allies to apply a tax to fuels used for international aviation and maritime shipping. Carbon emissions from those fuels have never been included in any global climate deal, including the Paris Agreement. Those emissions are equivalent to a Top-10 emitting country and growing quickly.

Canada should work with its allies to put a carbon tax on international transport fuels and earmark the revenue to help meet international climate financing commitments. A bilateral agreement with the European Union to put a tax on flights between Canada and the EU could be particularly fruitful, given many European countries' support for such a mechanism.

This week is an important opportunity for Canada to make progress on oil and gas subsidies and work towards innovative sources of financing for international climate commitments. Doing so can help back up the Canadian government's rhetoric on the international scene with concrete action.

Dale Marshall is national program manager for Environmental Defence and is attending President Macron's climate summit this week in Paris.



# This just in: Justin Trudeau is doing a good thing

Despite this unfinished business, the signals Trudeau keeps sending on equality, generally, are consistent, strong, and immensely popular outside the indifferent bubble of Ottawa. Many Canadians want to show a socially progressive face to the world.



Susan Riley

Impolitic

ATINEAU, QUE.—To give credit where credit is due—not an approach to be encouraged in journalism, normally—Justin Trudeau has, so far, made good on his promises to women. He has proclaimed himself a feminist, perhaps a tad righteously, at times, but he has behaved like a man who regards women as equal.

He has talked the talk all the way to China—where he interrupted his recent trade mission to light candles for victims of the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre—and to Washington, Davos, New York, and Manilla.

"We shouldn't be afraid of the word feminist,"he told a high-powered crowd at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland in 2016. "Men and women should use it." To a group of adoring youth at a New York rally recently, he talked to young men, in particular, about "shutting down some of those negative conversations we get in locker rooms, in bro culture. We need to know we are better than that." And he frequently strikes an idealistic note: "We know that if kids grow up in an equal world, it is a better world—more open, more prosperous, more peaceful."

That may raise cynical eyebrows among political insiders—not to mention outright rejection from China's leaders and, no doubt, utter disinterest from the creepy "bro" currently in the White House—but it is music to the ears of a generation of older feminists

and a statement of the obvious to the generation that followed them.

Trudeau has also walked the walk. He has appointed an equal number of women and men to his cabinet and women—Jane Philpott, Catherine McKenna, Patty Hajdu and Chrystia Freeland to name the most prominent—are among his strongest performers. There have been disappointments, too; gender alone doesn't

will likely achieve gender parity, long before the Commons does.

Nor do Trudeau's recent appointments smack of tokenism. As with Martin, both new Senators have impressive resumés. Cole, 63, has been an activist for women's equality and the rights of Indigenous people and also helped set up micro-financing projects in Bolivia and with First Nations in Nova Scotia. McCallum, 65, is an indigenous dentist and a









Justin Trudeau has also walked the walk. He has appointed an equal number of women and men to his cabinet and women—Jane Philpott, Catherine McKenna, Patty Hajdu and Chrystia Freeland to name the most prominent—are among his strongest performers. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade* 

guarantee personal virtue or political skill. Mélanie Joly, Maryam Monsef, and Diane Lebouthillier have all fumbled their files at times. But not all of their male counterparts have been flawless. (The lamentable Sport and Disabilities Minister Kent Hehr is in trouble for, of all things, insulting thalidomide victims.)

Meanwhile, last week, Trudeau appointed the wildly accomplished Sheilah Martin to the Supreme Court of Canada, maintaining female representation at four women and five men. Martin is not indigenous, as many hoped, but she brings a distinguished history of working for women's equality, for residential school survivors and for the wrongly accused to her new job—along with an open mind. As she has written: "Even though I had studied equality rights, I was confronted (in her work with survivors) from being fully aware of what truly happened in residential schools."

That news was followed by the naming of two new Senators—both named Mary, by coincidence—Mary Cole of Nova Scotia and Mary Jane McCallum of Manitoba, both of whom will sit as Independents. That brings representation in the Upper Chamber to 43 women of 94 members, with 11 vacancies still to fill. By the time Trudeau leaves office, the Senate

survivor of residential schools, and she arrives in Ottawa at a moment when dental care for First Nations people is a hot issue. She will join an activist group of Indigenous senators who are slowly making headway on long-standing injustices.

The Liberals have been criticized for moving too slowly to fill hundreds of vacant positions—from lower court judges, to members of various boards, to Senate seats. The search for gender balance is probably delaying the process, not because qualified women don't exist, but because many are reluctant to step forward. Trudeau himself has cited studies suggesting women are 50 per cent less likely than men to consider themselves credible candidates for challenging jobs.

Trudeau also moved early, and firmly, to banish accused sexual harassers from his caucus and has made it clear that no mercy will be shown to transgressors. It is a fraught issue as the curious case of Liberal MP Sherry Romanado and Conservative James Bezan suggests, but Trudeau's sympathies are clearly with victims.

Particularly now, his approach stands in sharp contrast to the situation in the United States, which is witnessing an avalanche of accusations and accounts of repulsive behaviour by male titans of media, Hollywood, high-tech and, of course, politics.



To give credit where credit is due—not an approach to be encouraged in journalism, normally—Justin Trudeau has, so far, made good on his promises to women.

The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

In fact, nothing makes Donald Trump look as feeble, and lamentably out of touch, as his undisguised hostility to accomplished women, his lascivious interest in younger ones, and his dismissive attitude to those who don't meet his standards of beauty. Instead of deploring sexual harassment, he denies and covers up his own misdeeds. No wonder so many American women—including Ellen DeGeneres, who recently called Trudeau "inspirational" for his apology to LBGTQ Canadians—look longingly north of the border.

Trudeau's unwavering and long-standing support for LGBTQ rights, the addition of transgender rights to the Charter with barely a whisper of opposition-especially compared to the "bathroom debate" in the U.S.—also underscore a generational shift that is winning Trudeau, and Canada, friends around the world. Australia, for instance, only approved gay marriage a month ago, while it has become such a non-issue here, that even the Conservatives barely mention it any more. In fact, leader Andrew Scheer endorsed Trudeau's recent apology to Canadians fired, harassed and shunned by earlier governments for being gay or lesbian without reservation.

Trudeau's insistence that gender equality be part of any trade deal—including one with China—has been called counter-

opposition to fully excising vestigial elements of sexism from the Indian Act. The new law, which originated in the Senate, means the descendants of indigenous women who lost status in the past when they married non-indigenous men, will be now eligible to claim standing. However, the new law doesn't take effect until after an unspecified period of consultation-more justice delayed, in the view of indigenous activists. (Previously, governments opposed the change for fear that up to one million people might claim indigenous status at a potential additional cost of \$408-million a year, in direct financial and social supports. Some native bands also worry about the demands on scarce resources from an influx of newcomers.)

Despite this unfinished business, the signals Trudeau keeps sending on equality, generally, are consistent, strong, and immensely popular outside the indifferent bubble of Ottawa. Many Canadians want to show a socially progressive face to the world. That is evident in the muted opposition response to Trudeau's social justice evangelism. There is a sense that the social conservative war against sexual minorities, and gender equality, is fading. Even Scheer conspicuously surrounds himself with able and confident women MPs.

On the left, Jagmeet Singh would be well-advised to tackle Trudeau's real vulnerability—his







There have been disappointments, too; gender alone doesn't guarantee personal virtue or political skill. Mélanie Joly, Maryam Monsef, and Diane Lebouthillier have all fumbled their files at times. The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade

productive, even irrelevant, to agreements that are essentially about business, not righting social wrongs. These critics may be proven wrong, however, as populist opposition to trade agreements that largely benefit corporate interests, grows. In the meantime, Trudeau's attempt to introduce "progressive" elements to these deals mutes criticism from the left at home.

There are some inconsistencies, and delays, in Trudeau's pursuit of gender equality. In recent weeks, the Liberals finally dropped their hypocrisy on the environment. And Conservatives will continue to focus on Trudeau's economic record (although things are going disturbingly well, there, too) and various ministerial fumbles.

But on women's equality and social justice generally, Trudeau is doing the right things. He deserves credit for that.

But just this once.

Susan Riley is a veteran political columnist who writes regularly for The Hill Times.

## Canada and China not ready for a free trade deal

While Canada and China may reach future agreements on specific issues, such as those already negotiated on tourism or investment, it would be surprising to see a comprehensive free trade agreement any time soon, at least not before 2025, if then. Neither country is ready.



David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—As Prime Minister Justin Trudeau departed for his recent visit to China, government officials in a briefing for journalists made it clear that there were no plans to launch free trade talks during the visit.

Canada, the officials said, was still contemplating "the challenges associated with pursuing a free trade deal between the two countries,"The Canadian Press reported in an account carried by many media outlets. A decision on pursuing a free trade agreement, the officials said, had yet to be made.

Yet almost every report on Trudeau's China trip stated that the prime minister was expected to announce the launch of formal free trade negotiations during the visit. When this failed to happen, it was variously described as a "snub" or "brushoff" by the Chinese leadership or a rejection by the Chinese of Trudeau's ambition to include chapters dealing with labour rights, the environment, and gender issues.

"Beijing ambush nixes trade deal," the National Post headlined. Trudeau, the paper reported, had "fully expected to announce the launch of formal free trade talks" but "left empty-handed—which is going to make a very long week for the prime



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured in this file photo in Ottawa. There is another reason to be skeptical about the formal launch of negotiations: Canada has only a limited number of skilled trade negotiators and their priorities for the coming year, and perhaps even into 2019, are to work on the NAFTA negotiations and the revisions to the Trans Pacific Partnership. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade* 

minister as he's asked to elaborate on what went wrong." The failure to announce the start of negotiations, the *National Post* report said, had left "the future of Canada's trade relations in disarray," asking "at what cost to the Canadian economy?"

The Toronto Star reported that "expectations that Canada was primed to launch formal free trade talks with China crashed" when Trudeau and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang announced they were still exploring the possibility of formal free trade negotiations. And The Globe and Mail headlined "Canada, China free-trade talks fail to launch," even publishing a lengthy editorial arguing that the surprising failure to launch free trade talks "may come to be seen as less of an embarrassment and more of a blessing." Canada, it said, should be cautious entering a free trade deal with China.

The buildup to the visit even reached urgent tones. Declaring that Trudeau "is fully expected to launch free-trade negotiations with China during his visit," Derek Burney, who led the final negotiations for the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement, and Fen Osler Hampson, a trade professor at Carleton University, argued in an article

in *The Globe and Mail* that Canada had no time to lose.

What is "patently evident is that by debating among ourselves, Canada has fallen behind countries such as Australia—our natural competitor in the region—leaving us little more than a bystander observing the most consequential global change in this century [the emergence of China as the world's largest economy],"they wrote. Apparently a free trade agreement with China would suddenly make us big players in China rather than the modest player we currently are—last year just four per cent of our merchandise exports went to China while 12 per cent of our imports came from China, resulting in a \$45-billion trade deficit with China.

In fact, if journalists, professors, and business commentators had done their homework they would have discovered in a government report released late last month on public consultations over a free trade agreement with China that no decision had yet been made on whether Canada would pursue an agreement.

Canadian and Chinese officials held four meetings this year—two in Ottawa and two in Beijing—to explore what might be included in such a negotiation, the report said, portraying these meetings as a chance to "test the waters" and assess whether there is "sufficient common ground to engage in trade discussions that will have reasonable prospects to bring about meaningful economic benefits for Canada."

As part of the exploratory discussions, Canada and China were conducting a joint feasibility study that the government said, "will provide factual overviews of Canada and China's respective policies for trade and investment and will estimate the possible economic impact that a hypothetical FTA could have on both economies."The results of the study would be made public once it was complete, the government said, indicating it was still a work in progress.

So why would anyone expect Trudeau to announce formal free trade negotiations during his visit to China? And when the speculation began, Trudeau's own media people appeared to do little to discourage it.

There was another reason to be skeptical about the formal launch of negotiations— Canada has only a limited number of skilled trade negotiators and their priorities for the coming year, and perhaps even into 2019, are to work on the NAFTA negotiations and the revisions to the Trans Pacific Partnership. Even if we started formal negotiations in late 2019, they would take several years. So there's a need to be realistic.

There's also a need to be realistic about the negotiations themselves. Canada, with about 36 million people, would be negotiating free access to a country of about 1.4 billion people—so what would Canada have to deliver to China to balance off what we would be expected to gain economically from improved access to the Chinese market? There's not much discussion of that.

The government document outlining consultations with Canadians contained a huge list of expected Canadian changes in Chinese practices, laws and regulations, market access, investment opportunities, labour practices, the rule of law, legal and regulatory transparency, human rights, the environment and much more. But it's hard to imagine China making the sweeping changes Canadian expect just to satisfy us.

Yet "a potential Canada-China FTA would be judged by its ability to create meaningful and stable market access for Canadian businesses, while simultaneously avoiding negative impacts on Canadian people, jobs, resources, environment, innovation, and public policy," the report said. That's quite a challenge.

While Canada and China may reach future agreements on specific issues, such as those already negotiated on tourism or investment, it would be surprising to see a comprehensive free trade agreement any time soon—at least not before 2025, if then. Neither country is ready.

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#### China trade deal would be a boon for the Canadian economy

Be vigilant about more trade with China but don't shy away from a trade deal that offers real gains to Canadian companies and consumers. This isn't your grandfather's (or even your father's) China.



Phillip Day
Opinion

Manilla—Those who cheered last week when it looked like formal talks with China on a trade deal wouldn't happen are misguided at best and malicious at worst. The future of NAFTA aside, Canada needs to make a deal.

It's true that Canada would be the first G7 country to venture into such an agreement with China, but the territory is far from virgin. Australia has been there already; Australia, which hasn't had a recession in 25 years thanks in large part to its trade with China; Australia, which sees its position as a key trade partner as enhancing, not compromising, its criticism of China on nontrade issues. That criticism often causes blowback from China, to be sure, but the trade agreement does not extinguish the fundamental differences Australia has with China over security, human rights, and other non-trade issues.

Australia laid out the need to maintain its critical role in a government white paper released last month. While urging even closer ties with China, its largest trade partner, the paper acknowledged that "closer engagement will be accompanied by friction arising from our different interests, values and political and legal systems."

As though to emphasize the point, the paper went on to strongly chastise China over its aggressive territorial claims in the South China Sea. China's Foreign Ministry quickly condemned the comment as "irresponsible" before acknowledging that on balance the paper was "an objective look at the China Australia relationship."

Surely the Australian example is one that Canada could emulate under its own trade deal.

Critics of the potential deal warn that a Chinese agreement would mean opening Canada to companies which are essentially the arms of a hostile government. China doesn't just want trade, they suggest, it would use its companies to spy on Canada. Allow a Chinese technology company to operate in Canada and it will report back to Central Party headquarters on what it learns, is the basic message.

That the government maintains a firm grip on the Chinese economy and many of its companies is true. But it is a mistake to think of the Chinese government as a monolith and all its companies as shills for the Communist Party.

For one thing, some of those companies have become hugely successful without close government control and now serve as examples for the economy as a whole. That success isn't something the government would casually threaten. The main role of the government in the growth of technology giants such as Alibaba, Weibo, and Tencent (loosely the eBay/Paypal, Twitter and Facebook of China) was to block foreign competition. Now some of those companies dwarf the western firms they initially copied. They operate under Chinese rules, it is true, but they also provide cuttingedge communications, payment systems and technological knowhow to its citizens.

Do Chinese technology companies report what they learn about Chinese citizens to the government? Undoubtedly. Just like western technology companies were secretly forced by the U.S. government to provide virtually unlimited access to their services. But the Chinese government must toe a careful line on any restrictions to the technological freedoms its people now enjoy. Social unrest is the biggest worry for the party

and few threats could be bigger to that than to snatch away the Chinese version of Facebook from the hundreds of millions who use it.

A trade deal would be a boon for the Canadian economy but the Canadian government, and consumers as well, would have to be vigilant as more Chinese investment flowed into the country. Chinese companies would need to be watched closely, closer perhaps than the U.S.-based companies we now know served as a conduit for U.S. spying.

The thought that their posts and other social media activities have been monitored doesn't seem to have led to Canadians using them any less. Even evidence that public opinion in the U.S. and U.K. (and likely in Canada as well) was swayed by Russian meddling in social media hasn't led to a mass of dropouts from Facebook and the like.

So yes, be vigilant about more trade with China but don't shy away from a trade deal that offers real gains to Canadian companies and consumers. This isn't your grandfather's (or even your father's) China.

Phillip Day is a veteran Canadian journalist who has worked in Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Singapore before his current posting in Manila. He was an editor at Bloomberg and a deputy bureau chief at The Wall Street Journal before setting up and running Asia operations for Market News International, a financial wire service. He spent the Mulroney years as a reporter at The Canadian Press in Ottawa.

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**Opinion** 

## Budget 2018: a litmus test for the future of Canadian research

Restoring Canada's international prominence in research will take several years of steadily increasing investment, ongoing improvements in governance, and steadfast leadership by the Government of Canada. But the rebuilding process must start now with the 2018 budget. The success of Canada's young researchers—vital to our country's future prosperitydepends upon it.

BY DAVID NAYLOR, JEREMY T. KERR, JULIA K. BAUM

Canada needs research and the people who practise it. From 2006 to 2015, however, federal government erosion of support for independent research nearly hamstrung the community's capacity to meet these needs. Research grants faded away. As Canada tries to build a knowledge-based economy, the demand for bright, creative minds with cutting-edge skills is growing rapidly. At the same time, early career researchers who have spent years honing those skills increasingly find that the only way for them to pursue their dreams is to take their ideas elsewhere.

Minister of Science Kirsty Duncan convened a panel of Canadian research leaders from every sector to assess this situation and suggest solutions. The Fundamental Science Review (FSR) is the first report of its kind in a generation and it urgently recommends reinvestment in academic research. An independent analysis of fundamental research released this summer by Canadian researchers and published by the Global Young Academy (GYA) drew a similar conclusion: over the Harper years, research support for social sciences and humanities declined by 30 per

cent and science, medical, and engineering research funding declined by 35 per cent.

If funding were to be restored, it makes sense that accountability must also be strengthened. Fortunately, since these reports were released, the government has been working actively to improve the administration and governance of Canada's research granting councils, the main conduits for research funding to researchers. The stage is set now for reinvestment, and hopes are high for budget 2018.

We bridge generations, disciplines, and perspectives from the FSR and GYA reports—and we too have high hopes. But hope reflects only the possibility of a good outcome, not a guarantee. Here's why we're still worried and why many of our younger colleagues are losing sleep.

1. The foundations have crumbled. Investigator-led grants at Canada's health, natural sciences and engineering, and social sciences research councils are the foundation of Canadian discovery and future innovation. These grants—awarded only to excellent research proposals after rigorous peer review-fund discoveries in every kind of research endeavour and help train the next generation of Canadian innovators. In the natural sciences, engineering, social sciences and humanities, more than 50 per cent of these funds are used for small stipends that enable graduate students to get by as they complete their training. Since the average grant in these disciplines is less than \$40,000 a year, the remaining funds are often insufficient to cover the core operating costs of research, like equipment and materials.

Indeed, our reports show that the hole in science budgets from the Harper years for these core grants alone is around \$500-million per year. Canada's total investments in R&D now sit at just 1.6 per cent of our GDP, well below both the G7 and OECD averages. The U.S. is well above us at 2.8 per cent.

2. There's lots of good will, but nowhere near enough money. Canadians value scientific discovery and research in all its forms, as demonstrated in recent polling by Universities Canada. Our prime minister says that his is "a government of science," placing a premium on evidence for policy-making. We admire those sentiments. And we're grateful for the progress made in budget 2016, when \$76-million was reinvested in the research councils' annual budgets and another \$19-million for institutional research support. However, that down payment accounts for less than 15 per cent of the accumulated research deficit in core operating grants alone. As the FSR report showed, many other elements in the research ecosystem were flat-lined or cut during a decade of neglect.

The result has been a steady decline in the Government of Canada's share of research spending at universities, insticademic hospitals. Less \$1 out of \$4 spent comes from the federal government-making Canada a very low outlier in comparison to the vast majority of industrialized nations. Meanwhile, other governments are investing heavily in R&D, and Canada is falling further behind. It's essential and urgent for the federal government to back up their encouraging words with serious reinvestment in research. Only with several years of significant increases to the base budgets of the research councils can Canadian research become competitive again on the world-stage. Only then

will the up-and-coming generation of young researchers have a fair shot at succeeding.

3. Shoring up research councils isn't glamorous. Governments of all stripes love new initiatives—the shiny objects that generate media buzz and make it easier to distinguish their track records from the opposition. If governments flow enough money to a new research initiative, it will generate neat things that give governments brief bragging rights. But such "boutique" research programs funnel limited resources into a tiny number of star researchers and facilities embedded in research ecosystems that are still starving for support. The allure of spinning out new programs has distracted successive governments over the years from the less glamorous but vital task of making sure the foundations for Canadian research are sound.

When it comes to building foundations, there is no substitute for the core work of Canada's granting councils. The councils ensure funding is directed to excellent research programs and high-quality training of the next generation. They support the coal-face of research, education, and training, ensuring that hundreds of thousands of students at our universities graduate with an understanding of how scientific and scholarly methods are used to solve hard problems. That skill underpins innovation in every facet of our society.

4. Research is hard to do and harder to explain. We are fortunate on two counts. The Government appointed an outstanding researcher, Dr. Mona Nemer, as Canada's chief science adviser. And the cabinet includes ministers who have been leaders in research and scholarship, not least Minister of Science Duncan herself. However, decisions about reinvesting in science will require support from more than just a few cabinet champions. Most government decision-makers have never held a research grant, trained students, or published research.

Without first-hand experience in research, it's harder for ministers and MPs alike to understand the damage done by previous government decisions or the desperation that young researchers in particular are now feeling. Desperation is the operative word. For instance, success rates for open competitions at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research are now only 14 per cent, half what they were a decade ago. Among the CIHR grant proposals ranked as "excellent" by peer review panels, almost half go completely unfunded. Canada's best and brightest health researchers are left wondering whether they're writing research grants or buying lottery tickets.

The good news is that Canadian researchers are working harder than ever to help government decision-makers and the general public understand that research provides extraordinary benefits and inspiration for Canadians. Many Canadian researchers have turned out to be gifted communicators and passionate champions for their research missions. And Duncan and Nemer have been doing their part, taking Minister of Finance Bill Morneau on a tour of research labs at the University of Ottawa just this week.

In sum, the evidence for a massive and damaging shortfall in research funding is clear, and so is the way forward. The public believes in the value of research, and we have growing confidence that the challenges confronting researchers—and the benefits of restoring research funding-are being communicated with ever-greater effectiveness. All this suggests that Budget 2018 could be a watershed moment for researchers. Restorresearch will take several years of steadily increasing investment, ongoing improvements in governance, and steadfast leadership by the Government of Canada. But the rebuilding process must start now with the 2018 budget. The success of Canada's young researchers—vital to our country's future prosperity—depends upon it.

Jeremy T. Kerr is at the University of Ottawa, Julia K. Baum is at the University of Victoria, and David Naylor is at University of Toronto.

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## Active transportation needs a federal champion

Mandate letters, used to set priorities for federal ministers, make no mention of active transportation. This is a problem for so many reasons.



Judi Varga-Toth, Kim Perrotta

Opinion

TORONTO—Canada needs a federal champion for active modes of transportation such as cycling and walking. At present, no federal minister has been assigned responsibility for supporting active transportation in this country. Mandate letters, used to set priorities for federal ministers, make no mention of active transportation. This is a problem for so many reasons.

Active transportation is good for health. Chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes affect one in five Canadians and are the cause of 65 per cent of all deaths in Canada. They cost Canadians about \$200-billion per year in lost-time and health-care costs. And the rate of chronic diseases is rising rapidly; by about 14 per cent per year.

Physical inactivity is one of the leading risk factors for chronic diseases. Today, only one in five Canadian adults and one in 10 Canadian children get the levels of physical activity needed to maintain good health. Active transportation is an effective way to increase levels of physical activity because it allows people who have little free time to accomplish two tasks at one time. They can "get exercise" while commuting to work or school.

People who walk or cycle to work live longer, healthier lives. A five-year study conducted in the U.K. found that people who walk to work reduce their risk of dying prematurely from cardiovascular disease by 36 per cent. It found that people who cycle to work reduce their risk of dying prematurely from cardiovascular disease, cancer, and all causes by 40 to 46 per cent. There is no drug in the world that can deliver that kind of health benefit.

Active transportation reduces emissions of air pollutants. Air pollution kills tens of thousands of Canadians each year. In cities, vehicles are often the most significant source of air pollution. In Toronto, for example, it is estimated that 440 people will die prematurely and 1,700 people will be hospitalized each year because of traffic-related air pollution. By encouraging people to replace short car trips with walking and cycling trips, we can reduce air pollution, and the heart and lung diseases, hospital admissions, and early deaths related to it.

Active transportation reduces greenhouse gases (GHGs) that contribute to climate change. Climate change has been declared the most significant public health threat of the 21st century by the World Health Organization. This summer, 45,000 Canadians were evacuated from their homes by wildfires that have grown in frequency and intensity because of higher temperatures and longer droughts related to climate change. Active

transportation can reduce GHGs by reducing the number of vehicles on the road. One study estimated that GHGs from vehicles in San Francisco could be reduced by 14 per cent if people in the community increased the number of minutes spent walking and cycling for shorter trips from 4.5 to 22 minutes per day.

Investing in active transportation will produce many other co-benefits. It can reduce sedentary behaviour and obesity in children. It will reduce traffic injuries and deaths among pedestrians and cyclists. It can increase social equity by making it easier for women, teenagers, seniors, and people who live on low incomes, to access jobs and services. It can boost the economy by promoting tourism and local retailers. It can reduce traffic congestion. It can reduce health care costs.

There are many things that federal government could and should do to foster active transportation in Canada. It should: share gas tax transfers for active mobility; identify a modal share goal for Canada; create a dedicated active transportation infrastructure fund; and invest in cycling tourism; mandate side guards on large trucks; direct Statistics Canada to improve the data collected on cycling; incent the use of e-bikes; address unfair import duties affecting our bicycle industry; invest in cycling infrastructure for our national parks; ensure that the Trans Canada Trail and other trails are safe for cycling and walking.

The federal government has already recognized its role in protecting vulnerable road users. It must now step up and inspire Canadians to make our communities, large



Kent Hehr, minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, pictured Nov. 22, 2017, on Parliament Hill. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade* 

and small, places where people of all ages and abilities can get around actively on a daily basis. We need a federal champion!

Kim Perrotta is executive director of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE). Judi Varga-Toth is executive director/directrice générale of Vélo Canada Bikes.



#### **Opinion**

# It's time the PBO take the Canada Revenue Agency to court

Allowing the
Parliamentary Budget
Office to provide an
independent estimate
of the tax gap is long
overdue, and if the
Canada Revenue
Agency will not
provide the necessary
data, it must be
compelled to do so.



**Senator Percy Downe** 

Opinion

The time has come for the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) to take the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to court in order to compel them to provide information necessary to calculate the tax gap, the difference between what is owed in taxes and what has actually been collected.

The CRA is required, under the Parliament of Canada Act to supply the PBO with: free and timely access to any financial or economic data in the possession of the department that are required for the performance of (the PBO's) mandate.

By refusing to supply the information the PBO has requested, the Canada Revenue Agency is in violation of both the spirit and the letter of the law. It is important to note that the PBO is only requesting raw data, not the personal information of any taxpayer.

Other countries regard an estimate of the gap between taxes owed and taxes collected as a valuable tool in measuring the scale of the problem of uncollected revenues. It also serves as a benchmark against which the effectiveness of both a nation's tax policies as well as its revenue agency can be measured. The United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Den-



Revenue Canada Minister Diane Lebouthillier, pictured in a recent Hill scrum. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

mark, Australia along with a host of other countries see the value of measuring the tax gap.

There is a long established method of resolving such disputes, it is called the court system. As it stands, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has little choice but to pursue legal action against the Canada Revenue Agency in order to compel them to provide the information he requires—and for which CRA is obliged to provide him—in order to execute his duty to Parliament. All this time and expense can be avoided, of course, if Prime Minister Justin Trudeau directs his revenue minister to have the agency provide the information to the Parliamentary Budget Office.

Regrettably, years of stonewalling by the Revenue Agency have prevented the PBO from making any progress in measuring the tax gap. Canadians deserve to know what citizens of other countries already know, that is, the size of their country's tax gap, and how much money their revenue agency should

be collecting. The Conference Board of Canada in its February 2017 report, estimated the tax gap to be up to \$47-billion. If the CRA collected that money, Canada would have no deficit, taxes could be reduced and new programs funded.

The reason an independent analysis is required, separate and apart from any report prepared by the CRA, is quite simple: given their recent track record, Canadians cannot trust the Canada Revenue Agency.

For example, a recent investigation by the auditor general of the agency's call centres revealed that their claimed 90 per cent rate of successfully connected calls (to an agent or the automated help line) was only accomplished by hanging up on 29 million calls. When that factor is taken into account, the "success" rate drops to a staggering 36 per cent.

Similarly, the revenue minister has claimed that "we have invested nearly \$1-billion over the past two years" to fight tax evasion. However, the minister neglects to mention the amount is to be paid out over

six years and that, as of March 31 of this year, less than \$40-million has actually been spent.

Even praise from ostensible outside sources must be regarded with suspicion, as was the case earlier this year when a series of media articles describing the CRA's tough stance on tax evasion turned out to have been commissioned by the agency itself, at a cost of \$288,497.36—money that could have been used to actually fight tax evasion.

There are many hard-working, conscientious employees at CRA, and it must be very discouraging for them to have a management team that operates in this consistently misleading manner.

Allowing the Parliamentary Budget Office to provide an independent estimate of the tax gap is long overdue, and if the Canada Revenue Agency will not provide the necessary data, it must be compelled to do so.

Percy Downe is a Senate Liberal from Prince Edward Island. The Hill Times

#### Bill promoting boardroom and senior management diversity lacks teeth

There's no denying that 'leadership qualities' are often still defined by white men, for white men. It seems all too apparent that for businesses to leave their comfort zones and widen their searches for talent, government will need to push a little harder.



Senator Paul J. Massicotte

Opinion

Despite the world's perception of Canada as a leader on women's rights and multiculturalism, this country's corporate leadership remains overwhelmingly dominated by white men.

And even with a government elected with a strong mandate on feminist and diversity issues, it has taken them almost a year to introduce legislation addressing this deficit.

But its proposed solution, Bill C-25, which is currently under review at the Senate, is far too timid to put a dent in the problem.

The proposed regulations include a "comply-or-explain" approach, where federally registered, publicly traded corporations are asked to disclose to shareholders their diversity numbers and policies. But "asked" is the key word here. If they choose not to, they only have to explain why not

Optional, self-regulation does not work.

In fact, this is already the practice for corporations listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX)—and unsurprisingly, it has had little effect.

Three years after the TSX moved forward with its own comply-or-explain rule, board seats occupied by women only rose from 11 per cent to 14.5 per cent. As to women in senior management roles, their percentage

sits at 15 per cent—and has since 2015. If gender balance is truly the goal, this isn't good enough.

And regarding non-gender diversity, the numbers are in fact sliding. According to the Canadian Board Diversity Council, from 2015 to 2016, the rate of Financial Post 500 directors belonging to visible minorities decreased from 7.3 per cent to 4.5 per cent, while the rate for Indigenous Canadians slid from 1.3 per cent to 0.6 per cent.

If Canada wants to make real progress during the next decade, the adoption of diversity policies should be made compulsory, not optional, and there should be penalties for corporations that don't comply. Furthermore, these policies will need to provide a clear path forward with detailed objectives.

While imposed quotas often get a bad rap, they've actually shown convincing results in a number of European countries. In Canada, corporations should at least be required to set clear target percentages of women and diversity on their boards and for senior management.

Moreover, an inclusive approach is just good business. With 60 per cent of university graduates being women, the pool of qualified women to pick from will continue to expand. Other forms of diversity also demonstrate proven performance benefits.

However, while addressing non-gender diversity is more complex, making progress on this front remains both ethical and feasible.

Corporations should be compelled to set targets for three core categories of non-gender diversity in Canadian society: visible minorities, people living with disabilities and Indigenous peoples. They would still have the option to expand targets to other types of diversity reflecting their markets and communities.

But governments alone can't tackle the gap in diversity in the corporate world.

Deeper cultural change will be needed.

Mentorship for instance is key to encouraging the next generation of women and visible minorities to take up senior roles. Flexible work arrangements and, of course, a more equal share of domestic duties are also critical to prevent women from sacrificing their paths to leadership.

There's no denying that "leadership qualities" are often still defined by white men, for white men. It seems all too apparent that for businesses to leave their comfort zones and widen their searches for talent, government will need to push a little harder.

Paul J. Massicotte is a Senator from Quebec.

#### **Opinion**

## Why hasn't #MeToo movement claimed any creeps crawling in Ottawa's corridors of power?

Not every man in Canadian political life is a scumbag. But, in Ottawa nowadays, the silence is deafening. It is impossible that #MeToo stories can't be found on Parliament Hill. So why isn't anyone telling them?



Warren Kinsella

The War Room

 $T^{ORONTO}-It's \ hit \ Hollywood. \ It's \ taken \\ down \ big \ names \ in \ the \ media \ and \ it's \ all \\ over \ Capitol \ Hill \ in \ Washington, too.$ 

So why hasn't the #MeToo movement claimed any of the creeps crawling through Ottawa's corridor of power?

Because, God knows, there's plenty of dirty old (and young) men up there. The stories are legion. So, where is the #MeToo coming out of political Ottawa? Where are the men of Parliament Hill, solemnly pledging #HowIWillChange?

We are in the midst (hopefully) of a profound transformation: Matt Lauer; Harvey Weinstein; Al Franken; Kevin Spacey; Mark Halperin; Charlie Rose; Glenn Thrush; Louis C.K.; Roy Moore; Russell Simmons; Steven Segal; Dustin Hoffman, and dozens more—accused of, and in some cases guilty of, everything from rape to inappropriate sexual remarks.

It is extraordinary, it is positive, and it is overdue. As jarring and as unpleasant as the details may be, we seem to be on the cusp of an actual change in the culture.

Everywhere but Ottawa, that is. Here's a tale, in which the names have been omitted to protect the victim. It's not by any means recent, but it is still relevant.

Way back when, when I was student council president, a friend at Carleton University's journalism school told me that a prominent broadcast journalist was sexually harassing her and threatening her. He told her she would never work in journalism if she didn't give him what he wanted. She was very upset; she was crying. I believed her.

I called his boss to complain—and to say, as student council president, I didn't want this man on campus. I told him what my friend had told me. I told him my friend would not make this up. The boss told me someone would get back to me.

No one ever did. Instead, I later ran into the prominent broadcaster at a political event I'd organized. He looked at me, almost with delight. "Ah, the famous Warren Kinsella," he said. That night, he and the broadcast did a venomous, one-sided hatchet job on my candidate, and me.

The broadcaster? He stayed employed and later got a plum political appointment.



Female panellists, pictured Oct. 25, 2017, at the French ambassador's residence in Ottawa at an event to celebrate women in diplomacy called, 'What does a feminist foreign policy mean?' Former prime minister Kim Campbell also participated in the event. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia* 

My friend? She never ended up fulfilling her dream.

And me? I learned a lesson: powerful men in Ottawa have power, and they know how to use it. They know how to get what they want.

There are other such stories, much more current. Not long ago, I was told of allegations made by some young people about a very, very powerful man in Ottawa. I did not see the statements, so I do not know the specific allegations made therein, as the lawyers would say.

But these allegations—which were confirmed to exist, by multiple people who would know—describe a profound imbalance in power. They describe how this very, very powerful man used his power to get what he wanted sexually.

There are many other such stories, involving elected men and male staffers in all the political parties. All of us who work or who have worked on the Hill have come across these stories. We have seen some of the evidence. We have heard from the victims.

In my case, I tried. I did what I could. It didn't work out.

But that doesn't mean we should give up. That doesn't mean we should look the other way, either.

Young people occasionally come see me to get advice about how to get involved in campaigns, or how to work for a particular candidate. I always tell them the same three things: one, work only for those who share your passion for an issue. Two, work only for those who believe in something other than power. Three, work only for those who treat their own families—and strangers—with the utmost respect.

Because, I tell them, if they treat their wives like dirt, they will treat you like you are less than dirt.

Personally, I have had the great fortune to work for three men who married their high school/university sweethearts—Jean Chrétien, Dalton McGuinty, and John Tory.

All three men always treated strangers, and their wives and their families, with respect. All three have conducted themselves with decency and probity. Always.

Such men still exist. Not every man in Canadian political life is a scumbag.

But, in Ottawa nowadays, the silence is deafening. It is impossible—impossible—that #MeToo stories can't be found on Parliament Hill.

So why isn't anyone telling them? Warren Kinsella is a former Jean Chrétien-era cabinet staffer and a former election war roomer.



## Site C, Muskrat Falls and pitfalls of short-circuited project assessments

Federal and provincial assessment and review processes need to ensure that there are meaningful, public evaluations of the economic rationality, and social and environmental impacts of energy and resource projects before they proceed.



Mark Winfield

Opinion

TORONTO—The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recently announced a public inquiry into how the economically disastrous Muskrat Falls hydro-electric project was approved. In reality, there is little mystery. The project was strongly supported by the governments of former premiers Danny Williams and Kathy Dunderdale. A very limited economic review was permitted by the province's Public Utilities Board and the federal-provincial environmental review panel established in relation to the project was barred from examining the economic viability. Both the board and panel, to their credit, questioned the need for the project, but their advice was ignored.

A similar story is unfolding on Canada's West Coast. The new British Columbia government of premier John Horgan finds itself faced with the question of whether to continue the construction of the controversial Site C hydro dam project. The story behind Site C is very similar to that around Muskrat Falls. The project was strongly supported by the government of former premier Christy Clark, and the normal economic review process before the BC Utilities Commission by-passed. The joint federal-provincial environmental assessment process that did occur was deeply constrained, and remains the subject of long-standing criticism from the affected First Nations and communities.

The stories of these projects in British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador stand in contrast to the story that unfolded in Manitoba over the same time period. That province had proposed a massive hydro project of its own—the 1,485MW Conawapa Dam.

However, Manitoba's approach was fundamentally different from that taken in British Columbia and Newfoundland. Rather than short-circuiting the normal assessment and approvals processes for these types of projects, the Government of Manitoba undertook a substantial



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government was elected two years ago in part on promises to reform the federal environmental assessment and regulatory review processes which apply to these types of projects. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade* 

public review of the economic rationale and environmental and social impacts of the project. This included consideration of the need for the project, and the availability of alternative ways of meeting the province's electricity needs.

Given the opportunity for a proper review, the Manitoba Public Utilities Board determined that there was no economic justification for the project. Although several smaller related projects did still proceed, the result saved Manitoba residents from the kinds of catastrophic costs now faced by British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The story, however, does not stop there. In Central Canada, the Government of Ontario has embarked on an energy mega-project of its own—the reconstruction of 10 nuclear reactors at the Bruce and Darlington nuclear power plants. If everything goes according to plan, the projects are estimated to cost in the range of \$26-billion. Many critics suspect, based on the outcomes of the province's previous nuclear refurbishment projects, that things will not go according to plan. The costs could be tens of billions of dollars more than the province's estimates.

Surprisingly, particularly in a province where rising hydro rates are the No. 1 political issue, Ontario's nuclear reconstruction projects have been subject to even less meaningful public review than either the Site C or Muskrat Falls projects. There have been no public hearings before the province's energy regulator on the need for these projects, likely costs, or the availability of alternatives. It has been reported, for example, that Québec-Hydro has offered Ontario firm long-term electricity exports at a fraction of the best-case estimates of the costs of the nuclear refurbishments. There has been no formal public examination of this option.

The lessons that flow from the experiences of these four provinces seem clear. Had British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador followed by the type of comprehensive public review undertaken by Manitoba for its hydro mega-project, they might well have avoided the disastrous

situations they now find themselves in regarding Site C and Muskrat Falls. There is even less excuse for the behaviour of the Government of Ontario, which seems poised to condemn its residents to decades of massive electricity debt as well.

The federal government is not without blame in these stories. All these projects were subject to some form of federal approval and environmental assessment. In each case, the federal government deferred to the wishes of the projects' provincial sponsors, limiting the scope of federal reviews, and avoiding unwelcome questions about need, alternatives, and economic viability.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government was elected two years ago in part on promises to reform the federal environmental assessment and regulatory review processes which apply to these types of projects. So far, the Trudeau government has produced a discussion paper, which in large part proposes to leave the existing processes, established in their current form through former prime minister Stephen Harper's 2012"responsible resource development" initiative, in place.

The situations that are now emerging in British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador make it clear that those approaches are not good enough. Federal and provincial assessment and review processes need to ensure that there are meaningful, public evaluations of the economic rationality, and social and environmental impacts of energy and resource projects before they proceed. It remains to be seen whether Canadian governments will draw the same conclusion. Canada's taxpayers and energy ratepayers should hope that they do.

Mark Winfield is a professor of environmental studies at York University, and co-chair of the University's Sustainable Energy Initiative. The author thanks master of environmental studies students Amanda Gelfant and Susan Morrissey Wise for their assistance with this article.

The Hill Times

#### Torstar-Postmedia deal an evolution towards paperless media

If Postmedia and Torstar don't change their approaches and adapt to the new media reality out there, this will be one of the last few acts of these once almighty print media powerhouses.



Angelo Persichilli

Politics

TORONTO—The recent deal Torstar-Postmedia may have appeared to be an important business deal, but it was really a strategic deal to kill off local newspapers and build barricades around their main publications. However, if Postmedia and Torstar don't change their approach and adapt to the new media reality out there, this will be one of the last few acts of these once almighty print media powerhouses.

After the Torstar-Postmedia announcement, people were calling it the death of journalism and local journalism. Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly called it "cynical and disappointing." Others called it another step towards the destruction of the social fabric of local communities and the eventual loss of our Canadian identity.

But let's say we hit the pause button. This deal is just a further sign of the approaching end of print media, both locally and nationally.

The question is if we are able to cope with these changes. From what I see, the answer is not encouraging.

The Torstar-Postmedia announced they would trade 41 newspapers and close 36, mainly in Ontario regions with multiple publications, was hardly a surprise. It's an evolution towards a paperless media. New generations don't read print and local papers have mostly become containers for flyers.

Small community newspapers normally don't do hard core journalism and their owners don't believe in local journalism.

We complain that local news departments are closed, jobs lost, and we criticize governments because they don't help.

Help to do what? Ask taxpayers to pay money for papers that they don't even read for free? Throw taxpayers' money into a black hole just to help print-media to survive for a few years more? Stop the new technology?

Postmedia CEO Paul Godfrey told the Financial Post last week that more Canadian newspapers will close in the next few years, but print news will still exist 10 years from now.

"I think newspapers, the numbers will shrink, but I think there will still, in the next decade, be print on paper," Godfrey said.

The government can and should give money to help for the transition, but media organizations must provide a plan about that transition; not because we should consider print media a protected race. But just closing down local papers to protect their main dying outlets doesn't cut it.

Angelo Persichilli is a former political editor at Corriere Canadese, Toronto's Italian-language daily newspaper. He's also a former GTA citizenship judge and a former Stephen Harper-era PMO staffer.

# Softly falling snow Excited children Busy shopping malls Old familiar tunes

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#### News









**The commissioners:** In the coming months, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will appoint a new ethics and conflict of interest commissioner to replace Mary Dawson, left,; the chief electoral officer to replace Marc Mayrand; the commissioner of official languages to replace Graham Fraser; and the access to information commissioner to replace Suzanne Legault. Opposition MPs say the prime minister should bring in the same process to appoint officers of Parliament as he uses to appoint Supreme Court justices. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade and file photographs* 

#### Officers of Parliament appointment process should be similar to Supreme Court justices appointments, say opposition justice critics

Opposition MPs accuse Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of failing to seek their input before appointing officers of Parliament.

Continued from page 1

the same kind of powers if not more than our judges do. So we should treat them with the same seriousness."

The eight officers of Parliament who help Parliamentarians to hold the government to account are: the auditor general, the chief electoral officer, the commissioner of official languages, the information commissioner, the privacy commissioner, the conflict of interest and ethics

commissioner, the commissioner of lobbying, and the public sector integrity commissioner.

All report to Parliament and work outside the sphere of influence of government. They perform their duties as specified in legislation and report to one or both Chambers of Parliament.

In the coming months, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) will appoint a new ethics and conflict of interest commissioner, the chief electoral officer, the commissioner of official languages, and the access to information commissioner.

According to the current "open," "transparent," and "merit-based" appointment process in place, anyone can apply online for the vacant officers of Parliament positions. Once the review process is done, the Privy Council Office puts together a short list, and the prime minister makes the final decision. The prime minister

is required to consult opposition parties before making these appointments. But, in most cases, opposition parties have no or very little involvement, except for getting a heads-up from the prime minister a few days before the announcement.

Following the appointment, the nominated candidate then appears before relevant parliamentary committees to answer questions. The appointments are confirmed after approval of the appointment by resolution of the Senate and the House of Commons.

But opposition MPs complain that instead of engaging in "meaningful consultations," the prime minister only informs party leaders who the new nominated candidate is going to be. They say the appointments process is neither "open" nor "transparent," and they should have a say in the process as officers of Parliament work for all Parliamentarians not just for the governing party.

In the daily Question Period, NDP MPs took shots at the Liberals on Wednesday, Dec. 6 on the appointment process.

"The process continues to be cloaked in secrecy. We remember the time when the Liberals promised to be open and transparent, the time when they promised to do better," said NDP MP Karine Trudel (Jonquière, Que.). "When will they show true transparency and when will they

establish an open appointment process?"

Later, NDP MP Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C.) said in the House: "When I am hiring somebody, I never pick from a list of one candidate," said Mr. Cullen, his party's ethics critic. "That is exactly what the Liberals are trying to force on Parliament. It is not consultation they are doing, it is an insult to this Parliament."

In June, the Trudeau government faced embarrassment when its choice for the commissioner of official languages withdrew her name after fierce push back from MPs and Senators who said it was patronage. Madeleine Meilleur, a former Ontario Liberal cabinet minister, dropped her bid to be the languages commissioner after facing tough questions from Parliamentarians over her ability to discharge her duties impartially. As a Liberal MPP, Ms. Meilleur, in the past, had served as attorney general, and minister for francophone affairs. She was a donor to the federal Liberal Party and to Mr. Trudeau's successful leadership campaign. Ms. Meilleur also admitted in the Commons Official Languages Committee that she had conversations with Gerald Butts, Mr. Trudeau's principal secretary and Katie Telford, the chief of staff, before applying for

In contrast to the appointment process of officers of Parliament, opposition MPs say the Supreme Court justices appointment process is much more inclusive and that opposition parties can offer their input on potential candidates.

The Supreme Court appointments are made on the nonbinding recommendations of an Independent Advisory Board currently chaired by former prime minister Kim Campbell. After the Advisory Board shortlists three to five candidates, the federal minister of justice consults with the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, relevant provincial attorneys general, opposition justice critics, members of the House Justice Committee, and members of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. Following the conclusion of the consultations, the justice minister provides the recommendations to the prime minister who then chooses the successful candidate.

Conservative and NDP MPs told *The Hill Times* that if the Trudeau government chooses to come up with a new process similar to the Supreme Court appointment process, they would support the change.

"With respects to officers of Parliament, they have to do whatever process will open it up and get the input from all the political parties is what the government has to do," said Conservative MP Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, Ont.), a former federal justice minister in prime minister Stephen Harper's cabinet and now his party's justice critic. "If this process is similar to the appointment of Supreme Court justices, if they're prepared to do that, let's do it. But come up with a system where you get people involved and you make the appointments."

But Liberal MP Kevin Lamou-

But Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Man.) said he doesn't see any need for change in the appointment process of the officers of Parliament. He said the government is using an open process and if MPs know of any qualified candidate, they should encourage potential candidates to apply.

"I'm quite satisfied the way these appointments have been made. If MPs know of good candidates, they should encourage those candidates to apply. I encourage people to apply," said Mr. Lamoureux, parliamentary secretary to the Government House Leader Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Ont.).

"At the end of the day, we've got a government and a prime minister that has consistently made appointments based on credentials and merit. He's opened up a process which we have never seen before to the degree in which it has. The government has done an outstanding job on its appointments. Where there's a need to consult, consulting occurs."

Without getting into details, Mr. Lamoureux disagreed that the Liberals do not consult opposition parties.

"General rule of thumb, you can never please the New Democrats," he said. "The Conservatives at times need to look in the mirror, and upon doing that, they might say that, 'Yes, we do have a more open, and transparent system especially compared to them on the issue of merit based."



Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux is parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. *The Hill Times file photograph* 

## When will Parliament reciprocate the commitment veterans have given to Canada?

The ruling means bureaucrats can continue to write laws which Parliament is manipulated into passing that create an increasingly complex class and caste system of veterans forced to negotiate a labyrinth of bureaucratic injustices. Yes, it's that bleak.

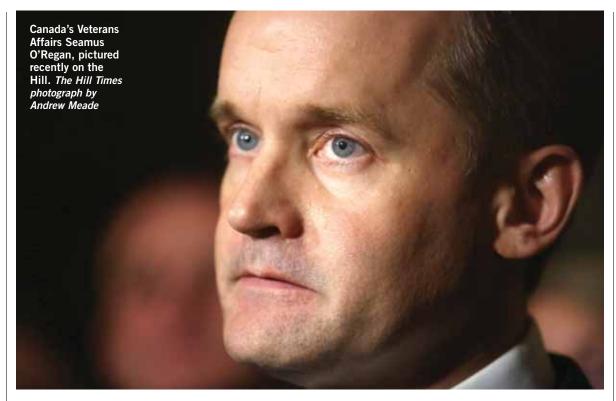


Sean Bruyea
Opinion

Canada's serving and retired military members were recently handed a most devastating defeat. However, Ottawa should reign in any festive celebration. This ruling shows Ottawa has been wooing men and women into military uniforms for over a century with empty promises and platitudes.

A group of six veterans have been fighting, on and off, a five-year legal battle to declare unconstitutional a program legislated under the Liberals in 2005 to unilaterally replace lifelong payments for pain and suffering with a one-time lump sum.

Known as Equitas, the veterans' legal action seeks to certify their claim as a class action while also



arguing the government has constitutional and other legal obligations to veterans. Principal among those is the assertion there exists a longstanding social covenant between Canada and those who serve or have served in military uniform.

On Dec. 4, a panel of three judges from the B.C. Court of Appeal unilaterally struck down all legal aspects of the claim.

The judges noted the "unwieldy," and tediously lengthy nature of the claim containing "rhetorical excesses," which have been characteristic of the Equitas messaging in the media. However, contrary to some expectations raised by such rhetoric, the court decision was not about "determining whether the government is providing adequate compensation to members of the Armed Forces who are injured in the course of their duties."

Instead, the judges ruled whether there were constitutional or other legal obstacles preventing Parliament from having the "authority to enact legislation fixing and limiting compensation" for injured veterans.

This ruling has far more implications than whether benefits for injured veterans under the lump sum program are unfair. In short, there exists no special legal obligation that Canada has to its veterans.

That means bureaucrats can continue to write laws which Parliament is manipulated into passing that create an increasingly complex class and caste system of veterans forced to negotiate a labyrinth of bureaucratic injustices. The result for many is humiliation and disempowerment. For some, it is one more push down a tragic path to suicide.

Yes, the ruling is that bleak. Inspirational speeches and promises by the most powerful offices of the land are nothing more than words. It is difficult not to be cynical. What a great deal for government and Canadians to be protected and defended by the most weighty of human sacrifices while being obligated to provide absolutely nothing in return.

This is not the court's fault. This is about the law and there exists no Canadian law for a "sacred obligation" or "social covenant."

Ironically, it has been exactly one century since prime minister Robert Borden spoke his oft-quoted words of commitment to care for those in uniform. Since then, the very politicians inundating us with endless rhetoric about an eternal gratitude and great debt owed to veterans are the very individuals who have the power to pass laws to create a legally binding obligation to veterans.

The first kick at the can is underway. Conservative MP John Brassard's Bill C-378 merely seeks to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs Act with three subsections and this is not, as Brassard claims, a "Military Covenant Act" but more a customer service commitment.

A true covenant would exist independently of any other act. It would be comprehensive and would stipulate both all-encompassing and specific legal obligations of government to care for serving military, veterans, and fam-

ily members. It would base those obligations upon the multitudinous demands that military service makes upon Canadians in uniform, including the profound changes in person that result from the most potent tools of manipulation available to reshape an individual.

It would need to involve more than just six veterans and two teams of battling lawyers. It would have to involve as many veterans and serving members, and their families as possible. It would have to be open and transparent in the most idealistic ways. It must inspire participation, and compassion while satisfying the expectations of all touched by and who safeguard that democracy. This is essential because a military exists to protect and defend all that, and all those, we hold dear in our nation.

That is what politicians and bureaucrats need to do. Veterans would benefit from shaking the deeply indoctrinated deference to authority. They have to stop looking for a knight in shining armour to rescue them. They also need to say no to secretive trysts and commitments of confidentiality with government behind closed doors.

Ottawa has no commitment to veterans, why are veterans so eager to commit to government?

Government has been the perennial playboy, charming men and women into uniform with sweet nothings. Once out of uniform, when veterans press government for a commitment, to go on bended knee with a ring, government leaves veterans at the altar, only to court another priority.

Was the ultimate sacrifice not enough? Veterans then blame themselves in most tragic ways as if they somehow deserve such abandonment.

The big question: will this heart-breaking dance go on for another

Sean Bruyea, vice-president of Canadians for Accountability and author, has a graduate degree in public ethics, is a retired Air Force intelligence officer, and frequent commentator on government, military, and veterans' issues.

The Hill Times





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# Ethics czar working 'diligently' to complete Trudeau investigation, promises to report 'in the near future'

Conflict of Interest Act and Conflict of Interest Code for MPs are 'silent on the approach for continuing an investigation under a new Commissioner,' says a spokeswoman for Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson.

Continued from page 1

commissioner in an email to *The Hill Times*, but declined to say exactly when the report will be made public.

Ms. Dawson's last day of work is Jan. 8 but it's unclear if the report will be public by that time.

If Ms. Dawson doesn't finish her ongoing conflict-of-interest investigations into Trudeau and Finance Minister Bill Morneau by Jan. 8, it is up to the new conflict of interest and ethics commissioner to decide whether to continue the investigations, start over, or drop any or all probes altogether.

"The Conflict of Interest Act and the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons are silent on whether an examination or inquiry started under one commissioner may be continued by another," wrote Alison Zinni, communications and media adviser to Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson in an email to *The Hill Times*. "It would be up to a new commissioner to decide what approach to take."

Ms. Zinni declined to say if Ms. Dawson would be able to complete her investigations by Jan. 8. She also declined to provide an estimated time frame for the completion of the investigations.

Ms. Zinni said the amount of time an investigation requires depends on the availability of witnesses, receiving relevant documents, putting together the draft report, editing, and the translation process. She declined to say how many people are working on both investigations.

"Our office is required to conduct all examinations and inquiries in confidence, so we cannot provide you with any information

except to confirm that the examinations and inquiries are ongoing and public reports will be issued as quickly as possible,"said Ms. Zinni.

When asked specifically if the new commissioner could choose to drop investigations against Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Morneau, Ms. Zinni stated: "Since the Conflict of Interest Act and the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons are silent on the approach for continuing an investigation under a new commissioner, it would be up to a new commissioner to decide what approach to take."

Ms. Dawson initiated an investigation into Mr. Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) in January under the Conflict of Interest Act in relation to his stay at the Aga Khan's private island in the Bahamas. The investigation is looking into whether the prime minister breached the ethics code by accepting a free Christmas vacation from the Aga Khan, a multimillionaire and spiritual head of Ismaili Muslims, and by flying aboard a private helicopter from Nassau to the private island. The prime minister, cabinet ministers, and parliamentary secretaries are prohibited from accepting free travel on charter or private aircraft without permission from the ethics commissioner, under the Conflict of Interest Act. Moreover, public office holders are not allowed to accept gifts from anyone who has business dealings with the government.

During the vacation last year, Mr. Trudeau and his family were accompanied by then-Liberal MP, now Veteran Affairs Minister Seamus O'Regan (St. John's South-Mount Pearl, Nfld.), the Liberal Party President Anna Gainey, and their spouses. Over the years, the Aga Khan Foundation has received tens of millions of dollars from the Government of Canada for its international humanitarian work. The ethics commissioner started the investigation on Jan. 16.

Ms. Dawson is also investigating if Mr. Morneau breached the Conflict of Interest Act by tabling Bill C-27, the pension bill, when he held about \$20-million worth of shares in his family owned company Morneau Shepell, a human resources and pension management company. Since the issue made national headlines, Mr. Morneau has sold all his shares and has made a significant dona-



Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson, pictured Oct. 17. 2017, at the House Affairs Committee, will leave office on Jan. 8. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

tion to a charity called the Toronto Foundation. He did not disclose the exact amount of the donation, but in the past had said that he would donate all the profits he made from these shares since becoming cabinet minister in Nov. 2015.

Ms. Dawson started the Morneau investigation on Nov. 10.

First appointed to the position of ethics commissioner in 2007, Ms. Dawson's term in the office ended in the summer of 2016. Since then she has received three six months extensions and is not expected to accept a fourth.

The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's Office was first created in 2006. Stephen Harper was the first prime minister to be investigated by thencommissioner Bernard Shapiro.

Mr. Harper was investigated after the 2006 election for offering "inducement" to then-Liberal MP David Emerson to cross the floor to the Conservatives, and join prime minister Harper's cabinet. After conducting a preliminary inquiry, Mr. Shapiro concluded that neither Mr. Emerson nor Mr. Harper breached the code of conduct, and dropped the investigation.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister's Office told *The Hill Times* that four senior PMO staffers have recused themselves from the appointment process of the next ethics commissioner because they're working to defend the prime minister in Ms. Dawson's investigation, including principal secretary Gerald Butts; chief of staff Katie Telford; senior adviser Mathieu Bouchard; and Ryan Dunn, director of issues management.

Mr. Trudeau has also recused himself from the appointment of the new ethics commissioner and has designated Government House Leader Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Ont.) to oversee the process in his place.

"Yes, a screen was applied to that small group of employees at PMO who are responsible for preparing materials related to the ethics commissioner's investigation," stated Eleanore Catenaro, press secretary to Prime Minister Trudeau, in an email. "You'll remember that the prime minister has recused himself from all matters related to the appointment of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner."

Ms. Catenaro declined to say if the new ethics commissioner will be appointed by Jan. 8. She also declined to say if Ms. Dawson could receive a fourth extension.

"We are committed to carrying out this process as quickly as possible through the government's open, transparent, and merit-based approach to GIC appointments," said Ms. Catenaro. "At the same time, respect of the parliamentary approvals process is paramount as it is a fundamental element in the appointment of the most qualified person for the position.

Mark Kennedy, director of communications to Ms. Chagger, also declined to say if the new ethics commissioner will be appointed by Jan. 8. "All I can say at this point is

"All I can say at this point is that this government has been following the new appointment process it put in place," said Mr. Kennedy. "That process is open and transparent and it supports a merit-based selection of the next conflict of interest and ethics commissioner."

Mr. Kennedy also declined to comment on the possibility of the new ethics commissioner restarting, picking up, or dropping the investigations.

Conservative MP Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.) told *The Hill Times* that Ms. Dawson told him last month that she would not accept a fourth extension. He said that if the new commissioner decided to start the investigations from scratch, or drop it, it would be "unsatisfactory" to Canadians and would cause a "significant outcry."

"Canadians would be very unhappy and would not accept that sort of outcome," said Mr. Kent, his party's ethics critic. "It's hypothetical. I don't think we should assume the worst, but the expectation certainly is that these investigations should be concluded, and in fact the investigations of the prime minister are long overdue."

Mr. Kent said he hoped that Ms. Dawson would conclude both investigations prior to leaving office.

"I would expect the sitting commissioner to deliver her report on the prime minister and the finance minister before she walks out the door," said Mr. Kent.

NDP MP Murray Rankin (Victoria, B.C.) told *The Hill Times* that it would be "terrible" if the new ethics commissioner decided to start the investigations all over, or chose to drop the investigations.

"That would be terrible," said Mr. Rankin, his party's justice critic. "From a position of a taxpayer, as well as for people who take seriously the role of the commissioner, for a new person to simply say, 'We're going to wash our hands of what has already been undertaken, because we have a new commissioner,' would seem to me to be Canadians would find that very disturbing."

Mr. Rankin suggested that if Ms. Dawson has already done most of the work of the investigations, she should be given time to complete the process. At the same time, he said, Mr. Trudeau could appoint the new commissioner.

Former Senate ethics officer
Jean Fournier said he doesn't find
it "unreasonable" that Ms. Dawson's
successor would review the matters and decide, based on the facts,
whether the investigations should
be started again, draw on the work
already done, or be dropped.

"When a new person comes in to a new job, whether it's the ethics commissioner or the prime minister of Canada, he or she [new ethics commissioner] reviews the files and makes certain decisions with respect to what he or she will pursue and what the priorities are and what he or she may not pursue," said Mr. Fournier, who is also a former senior public servant and diplomat.

Rob Walsh, a former House of Commons law clerk, told *The Hill Times* that instead of restarting the investigations, the new commissioner could use some of the information that has already been collected by Ms. Dawson and may decide to do some of his or her own interviews. He also said that the outgoing ethics commissioner may have taken a long time to conclude Mr. Trudeau's investigation, but the new commissioner could complete the process sooner.

"The new ethics commissioner has the responsibility of making a judgment on the case. [He or she] Will have to inform him or herself on the facts. They can't just take the previous ethics commissioner's view of the matter and act on it," said Mr. Walsh. "He or she will have to inform himself or herself. In that sense, he'll have to do his own investigation. But, I don't see why he couldn't use the information that the outgoing ethics commissioner's investigation has produced, and take that into account."

# House harassment policy has 'weaknesses,' 'potential for abuse,' say MPs, after Bezan-Romanado controversy

MPs urged careful use or a re-examination of the House of Commons' relatively new and lightly-tested harassment policy, after a kerfuffle over a lewd remark from one MP spilled into the House last week.

Continued from page 1

involving Conservative MP James Bezan (Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, Man.) or Liberal MP Sherry Romanado (Longueuil-Charles-LeMoyne, Que.) had been a political play.

Green Party leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.) said she was not concerned that sexual harassment reviews in the House would be used for political gain in the future, saying she believed there was "a basic level of fundamental decency" among MPs.

Women in this context are keenly aware that using a claim for partisan purposes is completely inappropriate given the scale of sexual harassment and violence against women. There are large-scale threats to women who don't have our privilege that we have here. So to exaggerate or do something for politically partisan reasons would be, I think, so egregious ... but I think we are, as women who are sufficiently selfconfident to run for Parliament and get elected, I'd be astonished if that were to happen," she said.

"My concern is, this is a sensitive workplace, high stress levels, a lot of partisanship flowing through the air. The [harassment review] process needs to work for this kind of workplace," she said.

The MP sexual harassment policy, which was created in late 2015, needs to be "reworked," said Ms. May, to make clear how and when apologies for sexual harassment should be given publicly,





A controversial apology by Conservative MP James Bezan in the House of Commons last week for an off-colour joke made towards Liberal MP Sherry Romanado prompted MPs to reflect on the House of Commons' sexual harassment policy, and the intersection of politics and sexual harassment. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia, The Hill Times file photograph* 

in order to avoid a repeat of the controversy that spawned out of an apology by Mr. Bezan in the House last week over a remark he made to Ms. Romanado, the parliamentary secretary to Veterans Affairs Minister Seamus O'Regan (St. John's South-Mount Pearl, N.L), in May.

Mr. Bezan had joked about a "threesome" involving the two of them while they posed for a photo with a veteran at an event at Ottawa City Hall on May 2.

Mr. Bezan apologized for his remark in the House on Dec. 4. Ms. Romanado responded in the House a few hours later, calling the "threesome" remark "humiliating" and saying it caused her "great stress" and negatively affected her work. Mr. Bezan later said he had attempted to apologize to Ms. Romanado. Ms. Romanado disputed that account in an interview with CTV News, saying she had not spoken to Mr. Bezan for months after the incident, and that his written apology was directed to a House official in charge of a review of the matter, not herself. She said she had asked for a public apology, but she did not know in advance that

Mr. Bezan was going to apologize in the House that day, and was not in the House when the apology was made

Ms. Romanado said repeatedly in her CTV interview that she had not publicly discussed the incident or details of the harassment review in the past few months because she wanted to respect the confidentiality of the review process. She said she believed the process was fair, but there was room to improve it.

Chief human resources officer, Pierre Parent, told Mr. Bezan that he had reviewed the incident and had not found it to be a case of sexual harassment, *The Globe and Mail* reported.

#### Process led to 'loss of trust' by MPs

Ms. May said she did not believe either Mr. Bezan or Ms. Romanado had politicized that incident.

"The more I look into it, the more I think that the timing of James Bezan's apology, and how clear it would be to Sherry Romanado, wasn't really covered by the way the policy works. So we need more precision so the person who

is the complainant feels some sense of having been heard, and there's a sense of closure," Ms. May said.

"I think that resolution piece was what was missing in [that] incident," she said. "Suddenly, both became alarmed that it might be being used in public politically, and that led to a loss of trust in the confidentiality of the process they were going through."

That wouldn't have happened if the harassment review process was properly regulated, if it was more predictable, and included timelines for dealing with the results of the review by the House administration, she said.

Mr. Rankin said he was "happy' that there was now a harassment process in place for MPs, as well as another for staff, on the Hill. He said he hoped that those in charge of the process handle matters "in accordance with the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness—and I have no reason to think that they won't."

"I hope the people who administer it are well aware of the potential for abuse, and administer it with that sensitivity in mind," said Mr. Rankin, adding though that it was early days and "as with any new process, one has to wait and see the experience."

Mr. Rankin said he hopes the House of Commons' new harassment process "isn't subject to any abuse"

Mr. Obhrai said that "we should be absolutely sure that the process is there to address issues of sexual harassment. And if a complaint is confirmed, then action should be taken because sexual harassment is not acceptable on the Hill."

Conservative MP Cathy
McLeod (Kamloops-ThompsonCariboo, B.C.) said that MPs should
give the current process a couple of
years to see if it fulfills the purpose
that it's supposed to. Changes
could be brought in if MPs feel they
are needed after that time.

"We need to give this process a good opportunity," said Ms. McLeod. "We have a process in place, there was a lot of thought put into it, and we need to let it continue. If after a couple of years, we recognize that we need to modify it, then we should do so, but in the meanwhile, let's let it do its job."

NDP MP Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, B.C.) said that education and awareness about sexual harassment is critical for all who work on the Hill. She said that it should be clear to all that they are expected to behave professionally when it comes to serving as an MP or a staffer. Ms. Kwan declined to comment on the recent cases of sexual harassment on the Hill. But she said that the current harassment review system on the Hill could be updated if MPs find an example of a better process in another workplace.

"We should always be looking at different processes to see how we can improve on it. There's no question," said Ms. Kwan.

Rookie Liberal MP Kyle Peterson (Newmarket-Aurora, Ont.) agreed.

"No, I don't think [harassment reviews could be used for political reasons]. We can always improve lots of processes. We always have to find ways to do things better, for sure."

news@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

#### House sexual harassment policy for MPs

The House of Commons brought in a code of conduct for MPs regarding sexual harassment in 2015. It prohibits sexual harassment between members, and bars MPs from disclosing what is said during its resolution process for sexual harassment complaints. The resolution process can be led by the chief human resources officer of the House administration, currently Pierre Parent, or by a party whip, if the complaint involves two members of the same caucus. The process can involve informal mediation if both sides agree, a formal complaint investigation, or both. The chief human resources officer finds an external investigator to conduct the review, and pass his or her findings back to the officer.

If the review concludes there was sexual harassment, the complainant can then indicate if they wish for further action to be taken, at which point the human resources chief contacts the whip for the party of the harasser, and the whip must in turn report back with a proposed punishment within 15 days.

The review can also conclude that there is insufficient evidence to support a sexual harassment claim, or that the complaint was "frivolous or vexatious or was not made in good faith." If it finds the latter, the MP accused of harassment can ask for the complainant to be disciplined by their party's whip.

#### MPs on politicizing sexual harassment



"I'd be astonished if that were to happen."—
Green
Party
leader Elizabeth May

"We have to be very careful. If you start using it [for partisan reasons] as a political issue, it will backfire both for the and everybody."—Co

backfire both for the victim and everybody."—Conservative MP **Deepak Obhrai** 



living in a political environment, and so any kind of process could be

subject to abuse."– NDP MP **Murray Rankin** 

## "What do you think of the strategy of going after Bill Morneau every day in the House?"



Let's remember what we were debating before the last election, after a decade of short-sighted Conservative policies: whether the Canadian economy was about to be heading into another recession.

"It's understandable that the opposition doesn't actually want to talk about how our plan for Canadians is working, or how Canada's economy is performing better than any other G7 country. While they focus on baseless attacks toward Minister Morneau, Minister Morneau is focused on Canadians.

"Since we were elected, Canadians have created more than 600,000 jobs and unemployment is the lowest it's been in a decade. Canadian families who need help with the high cost of raising their kids can now count on more money every month, tax-free, from the Canada Child Benefit. Low-income workers will get to keep more of their paycheques, the Canada Pension Plan is stronger, and our government has cut taxes for both middle class Canadians and small businesses. On top of that, we recently announced Canada's first-ever National Housing Strategy, an ambitious vision for affordable housing from coast to coast to coast.

"It's my wish this holiday season that we can cut the silliness and focus on what matter most—delivering a better Canada for all Canadians."



othing screams middle class more than Liberal millionaires threatening to unleash their Bay Street lawyers on opposition MPs who dare ask them questions they don't like.

"Newsflash for the Liberals: that's not how an open and accountable government works. Opposition holds government to account, we ask questions on behalf of Canadians, and sometimes those questions aren't going to be 'tell us how great you think you are.' Using personal family fortunes to threaten lawsuits aimed at silencing your critics is the opposite of a democracy, and it's frankly shocking that the Liberals have so quickly lost sight of that in just over two years.

"There are legitimate questions that should be asked surrounding the finance minister's decisions that could affect his own personal interests and assets that he maintained control of despite what he led Canadians to believe. There are legitimate questions surrounding the finance minister's judgment, his ethical lapses, and his tax hikes on the middle class.

"Throwing around veiled and not-so-veiled threats of litigation as a means to not answer hard questions is a poorly contrived deflection tactic by the Liberals to silence opponents by using their own vast amount of wealth against opposition members who weren't nearly fortunate enough to be born into such financial success. And that should worry every Canadian."



RICCARDO FILIPPONE NDP strategist

"When the Liberals were first elected, the prime minister issued his cabinet with a guide to an open and accountable government. In it, it stated that, 'ministers and parliamentary secretaries must act with honesty and must uphold the highest ethical standards so that public confidence and trust in the integrity and impartiality of government are maintained and enhanced.'

'Yet the finance minister has spent a lot of time talking with the ethics commissioner about his activities since he has taken office. And while he has important questions to answer to the ethics commissioner, he also has to answer questions from Canadians. Question Period plays an important role in holding the government, namely ministers, responsible for their actions. Unfortunately, the Liberals have resorted to hurling insults at the opposition, instead of giving straight

"Asking tough questions is part of the opposition's duty as elected officials. It is unfortunate that the finance minister is failing to do the right thing and give clear answers. This Liberal government set a high ethical standard for itself and, so far, it is missing the mark."



**66** The minister of finance  $oldsymbol{1}$  owes the public explanations and, until he provides them, we have good reason to keep asking questions. Don't forget that had Bill Morneau put his shares in a blind trust from the beginning, there wouldn't be any distractions. The Morneau case is but one example of the many ethics scandals the Liberal government is embroiled in; they are right back to their old tricks. After all, it was their questionable ethics that earned them a 10-year time out on the opposition benches, where they didn't even form the official opposition.

"It is not only the minister of finance who is caught up in conflicts of interest: the prime minister is too. The Bloc Québécois pointed out that 40 Chinese donors from the Vancouver area donated \$62,828 to the Papineau riding in the 48 hours sandwiching the approval of a Chinese bank in the region—the same bank involved in the cash-for-access scandal that made headlines last year.

"Once again, the Liberal government is refusing to answer the Bloc Québécois' questions, and refusing to answer to the public. If they keep refusing to address ethical issues, the Liberals will suffer the consequences—again."



Finance Minister Bill
Morneau has shown poor
judgment on several issues
related to his vast personal
fortune and its intersection
with the responsibilities of his
position, no doubt.

"However, it's interesting that those media sources that are generally cheerleaders for the Conservative Party—people like Terence Corcoran and other columnists at *The Globe and Mail* and *Financial Post*—aren't singing from the same songbook. In fact, many pundits are questioning the seriousness of the accusations levelled against the finance minister without evidence. A smoking gun can rarely be twice pointed out on the same issue.

"If the Conservatives can't get the newspaper editorial boards and columnists who uniformly endorsed them (minus Stephen Harper) in the last federal election to join the cheerleading, then perhaps it's time to change the channel. Pierre Poilievre would do well to remember his evasive and offensive conduct in the House over the Mike Duffy-Nigel Wright affair, which was not so long ago."



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# Conservatives have 'brand problem' among female voters, pin hopes on Scheer, star women MPs to reverse trend

Despite Justin Trudeau's feminist rhetoric, pollster Greg Lyle pins the polling gap on the Conservatives.

Continued from page 1

among both genders, but the Conservatives are not.

"There's a gender issue for Conservatives," he said.

#### Don't expect a Conservative 'Pink Book'

The Conservatives are counting on their new leader and star female MPs as the solution to the problem in the next election campaign.

Several prominent Conservative women on and off the Hill said more women voters will identify with the Conservative Party once they become familiar with leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) and the party's front-benchers in the House, including deputy leader Lisa Raitt (Milton, Ont.), House leader Candice Bergen (Portage-Lisgar, Man.), and immigration critic Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, Alta.)

"I think that as people get to know Andrew Scheer, they're going to see he's a person who promotes women. We've seen him put Lisa Raitt in as deputy [leader], Candice Bergen as House leader on credentials. And I think that the policies that he will develop will promote equality of women," said Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia-Lambton, Ont.).

Former Conservative MP Stella Ambler also pointed to a higher profile for Mr. Scheer as part of the solution, calling him "genuine" and "relatable." "You can picture him at a backyard barbecue. He's a good dad. He hasn't got that ... Liberal entitlement attitude going. He's just a real guy. And I think women will like that when they see it approaching the election," said Ms. Ambler, now a consultant at Earnscliffe Strategy Group.

There are no "women's issues" in politics, the Conservative insiders said, and the days of, as Ms. Bergen put it, "talking down to women" through gender-specific policy platforms—she pointed to the Liberal "Pink Book" of 2006 as an example—ought to be over.

Mr. Lyle's polling supports that notion in most, but not all, cases. He said he had not seen a significant difference between genders on questions related to authoritarianism, nativism, or whether the government should focus on creating equal opportunity or redistributing wealth, and the latter is "definitely the most important value in terms of the ongoing value space in politics that happens in Canada."

However, there were significant differences when it came to government overspending and identity issues, he said. When asked whether the government should focus on providing only services it can afford, or on fulfilling the public's needs, men leaned towards the former (47 to 45 per cent), women strongly towards the latter (52 to 35 per cent).

latter (52 to 35 per cent).
Generally speaking, "women are clearly spend over ability to pay," said Mr. Lyle.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) surprised some by running on a promise to ring up a \$10-billion deficit—a number that tripled after the Liberals took office—to implement his promised social programs, while outgoing Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper and NDP leader Tom Mulcair promised to balance the budget.

Women also poll differently from men on issues that could be







Conservative MP Michelle Rempel, Conservative House leader Candice Bergen, and Conservative deputy leader Lisa Raitt are among the most high-profile members of Andrew Scheer's Conservative caucus, and may be part of the solution to its polling woes among women, say Conservative insiders. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade, file photographs* 

considered part of "identity politics," for example questions about the role of women in society, abortion, or same-sex rights, said Mr. Lyle, but none of the polling differences are large enough to explain the gap between the Conservatives and Liberals among women now, he said.

"It seems to be more about party brands than about values, per se," he said.

"There's something about being a Liberal that seems more appealing to women beyond values, and the Tories seem to have more appeal with men, beyond values."

"The Tories have a brand problem that goes beyond values."

Mr. Lyle agreed that raising the profile of the top Conservative Parliamentarians should be part of the strategy for solving that problem.

"I think actually having strong, capable women seen to be leading the party is actually a good way to show women that you care, and that there's room for women within the Conservative Party. When you associate the Conservative Party with strong women, that can only help," he said.

"The bigger question is, to what degree does the Conservative Party care about issues of concern to women. What does Andrew Scheer think about daycare? Does Andrew Scheer agree that there are still significant barriers to women participating equally in Canadian society? Most women agree with that. If they don't think he does, they're not going to vote for him."

#### Tax cuts won't cut it

Ms. Ambler, who served as a Conservative MP from 2011 to 2015, and also worked as a federal Conservative staffer and deputy director of operations for the Ontario Progressive Conservatives, said she recalled more women telling her, "I don't want lower taxes if it means I'm giving up social programs," during her door-knocking days as a politician.

Women don't care less about money or more about social programming than men, but "they're looking for more than, 'we'll lower your taxes,'"she said.

"It's definitely more complicated than saying, 'we're going to throw money at this, and lower all of these taxes, and prove everything will be better."

"I happen to believe that there aren't a certain set of issues that are just women's issues," said Ms. Bergen. "I think the best thing that we can do to continue to engage women and include women in the process is speak about the issues that concern all of us, which are across gender lines, whether it's the finances of the country, jobs, the economy, safety and security of Canadians."

#### Liberals lose without edge among women: Marzolini

Without an advantage among women voters, the Liberals are in trouble, said former Liberal Party pollster Michael Marzolini, who ran numbers and devised strategy for hundreds of electoral campaigns during his role with the party and time at the head of Pollara Strategic Insights.

"When the Liberals are healthy, they always do have a double-digit advantage among women over men. This goes back to the 1980s and perhaps earlier. When they lose this advantage, they lose the election, simple as that. Loss of that advantage was responsible for the Liberal near defeat in 2004, and the losses of 1984, 2006, 2008 and 2011,"he wrote in an emailed statement.

"To win, the Liberals need 10-20 points in [the] pocket among women."

"The gender gap is based on values, not opinions. It would require generational change to remove or reverse the gap," wrote Mr. Marzolini.

Laura D'Angelo, a former Liberal Party organizer, thinks Mr. Trudeau's feminist rhetoric and focus on gender equality is a big part of the reason for the gender gap in the polls.

"I think that does penetrate outside the political bubble," said Ms. D'Angelo, who now works as a consultant at Ensight Canada.

peter@hilltimes.com @PJMazereeuw



Stella Ambler, centre, pictured here alongside Conservative MPs Kelly Block, left, and Kellie Leitch, represented Mississauga South for the Conservative Party between 2011 and 2015. *The Hill Times file photograph* 

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- the status of softwood lumber negotiations with the United States:
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# Sports Minister Hehr plucks press secretary from his former Veterans' Office



Sports and Persons with Disabilities Minister Kent Hehr, who found himself in hot water and fielding media questions last week, did so with the help of a brand new press secretary, Annabelle St-Pierre Archambault.

Ms. St-Pierre Archambault officially started on the job as press secretary to Mr. Hehr on Dec. 4—the day before recent comments the minister is reported to have made to Thalidomide survivors, described as degrading and insulting, came in focus and under fire.

The minister has since read a statement in the House, noting that, "As someone with a disability myself, it was certainly not my intention to offend anyone," and indicated that he had "immediately" contacted and apologized to the organization involved, the Thalidomide Survivors Task Group, after learning his comments were "felt to be offensive"

Previously, Ms. St-Pierre Archambault was working in Veterans Affairs and Associate Defence Minister Seamus O'Regan's office as a special assistant for Quebec, and assistant to the minister's parliamentary secretary, Liberal MP Sherry Romanado. She originally began working in the Veterans Affairs Minister's Office during Mr. Hehr's time in the portfolio, in February 2016, and before that was an

Securities.
Amongst other past experience,

associate with

**RBC** Dominion

she's a former vice president for youth for the Liberal Party in Quebec and studied a bachelor of commerce degree in international business at Concordia University.

Now in Mr. Hehr's new office as the minister for sports and persons with disabilities, she's working closely with director of communications **Jane Almeida**.

In other office staffing news, **Chris Cohoe** also officially joined Mr. Hehr's ministerial staff team on Dec. 4 as a special assistant for policy. He has previously worked as a constituency assistant to Mr. Hehr, who was elected for the first time in 2015 as the Liberal MP for Calgary Centre, Alta.

Mr. Cohoe joins another former aide to Mr. Hehr in his capacity as a Liberal MP: special

assistant Vincent St-Pierre, who was previously a member's assistant to Mr. Hehr on the Hill.

Director of parliamentary affairs and issues management **Jude Welch** is currently also acting as chief of staff to Mr. Hehr.

Natural Resources
Minister Jim Carr recently bade farewell to
one of his staffers, with
Erik Mistal no longer
working in his office
as assistant to the minister's parliamentary
secretary, Liberal MP

A former field organizer for the Liberal Party in Ontario and a former special as-

Ontario and a former special assistant for communications to then status of women minister **Patty**  Hajdu, Mr. Mistal first began working as a parliamentary assistant to Mr. Carr as the Liberal MP for Winnipeg South Centre, Man., in the summer of 2016. He switched over to work in Mr. Carr's ministerial office this past summer, but marked his exit last month

A new assistant to Ms. Rudd as parliamentary secretary has yet to be hired in the office, but stay tuned to **Hill Climbers** for any update.

Zoe Caron is chief of staff to Mr. Carr. Other senior staffers currently working in the office include: Sandra Schwartz, director of parliamentary affairs; Michael Rau, director of policy; Laurel Munroe, director of communications; and Alexandre Deslongchamps, press secretary.

Finance Minister **Bill Morneau**, meanwhile, recently hired a new assistant to his parliamentary secretary, Liberal MP **Joël Lightbound**, who represents Louis-Hébert, Oue.

Christina Lazarova officially joined Mr. Morneau's team on Dec. 1, arriving straight from the office of Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor where she'd been working since January 2016, starting off as a special assistant for Quebec and the Atlantic regions.

Earlier this year, Ms. Lazarova instead became a special assistant for Quebec and assistant to the Health minister's parliamentary secretary, currently Liberal MP **Bill Blair**, who is currently also a parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice. Up until this past September, Mr. Lightbound had been parliamentary secretary to the health minister.

**Samar Assoum**, who had previously been a special assistant to Mr. Morneau's parliamentary secretary, is now a special assistant for parliamentary affairs and stakeholder relations in the office.

**Richard Maksymetz** is chief of staff to Mr. Morneau.

#### Former Liberal budgets director Asselin now at BlackBerry in Kanata

Robert Asselin, who exited his former role as director of policy and budgets to Mr. Morneau early this fall, has landed in the private sector and recently announced he's been made a senior director, global, for public policy at BlackBerry.

He marked his first day on the job on Dec. 4, announcing his new post in a tweet the same day, noting

he's "thrilled" to join the company.

"Lots of travel ahead and challenging global policy work in the innovation space," he said in the tweet.

Reached by Hill Climbers last week, Mr. Asselin said that while his role with the company will see him based in Ottawa, and working out of BlackBerry's QNX autonomous vehicles office in Kanata, he'll be spending much of his time on the road visiting "all over" from Asia, to

South America, to the U.S., to Europe. Mr. Asselin said he'll be responsible for "all public policy linked to BlackBerry's interests," including around intellectual

property, privacy issues, and innovation.

"All the policies that governments think about and want to put in place that could have an affect on companies such as BlackBerry. So, it's a very broad mandate," he said

BlackBerry has re-focused its operations from phone manufacturing to become a software and security company. While it's no longer in the hardware business, the Canadian company has licensed device production to Chinese manufacturer TCL Communications.

After years of public policy work, Mr. Asselin said he was interested in getting into the tech sector as it's one "at the forefront of the new economy and where really the world is going."

"I'm very happy to work for the Canadian icon that is BlackBerry," said Mr. Asselin

As a former political staffer with the Liberal government, Mr. Asselin confirmed he had to clear his new role with the federal conflict of interest and ethics commissioner's office, but noted as it's global in nature, rather than focused on dealings with the Canadian government, he doesn't "anticipate any problem."

Mr. Asselin was policy and budgets director to Mr. Morneau for almost two years, having started in the minister's office in late 2015. Before that, he was vice president of policy and research for Canada 2020, associate director of the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs; and a visiting public policy scholar with the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars.

He first began working for the Liberals on the Hill in 2001, when he, fresh of out university, landed a gig as a policy adviser to then intergovernmental affairs minister **Stéphane Dion**—later becoming a senior strategic communications adviser to Mr. Dion when he became Liberal leader.

Mr. Asselin also previously served as chief of staff to then democratic reform and associate defence minister Mauril Bélanger under Paul Martin's Liberal government. Even during his years off the Hill, Mr. Asselin lent a hand speechwriting for then Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff, among others, and was an adviser to now-prime minister Justin Trudeau during his 2013 Liberal leadership campaign. He again served as an adviser to Mr. Trudeau during the 2015 federal election.

Now having exited the Hill for a second time, Mr. Asselin ruled out a return to politics, saying, "I've given all I had, and it was a great time."

"I enjoyed every minute of it, but now I've really moved on," he said.

"I was a young staffer in the Chrétien government, and I was there in the beginning with Trudeau ... and I've done two years in government in a very important and difficult position at finance. I felt really rewarded by that, and I just felt it was time for me to move on in my career."

As previously reported by Hill Climbers, since leaving the Hill Mr. Asselin has been named a senior fellow with the University of Toronto's School of Public Policy and



Asselin is now working for BlackBerry. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Robert

Governance. He's also been appointed a senior fellow with the Public Policy Forum.

Asked how he'll balance all three roles, Mr. Asselin said he's "used to busy jobs," noting that "finance is pretty crazy."

"I guess I'll just be more busy,"he said, adding that with Toronto being a "central place for business"he expects to be spending plenty of time there anyways. BlackBerry's are a staple in the arsenal of all staffers on Parliament Hill, and Mr. Asselin noted he's now traded his in for brand new one.



#### PARTY CENTRAL

by Shruti Shekar

#### CWTA hosts annual Christmas party to celebrate holiday season at Ottawa's Riviera

rd Towns and Alex Esguerr

The abnormally warm and rainy weather in Ottawa last week didn't stop those on the Hill from stepping out Tuesday night for a chance to mingle, drink a cocktail, and eat some food at the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association's party at the highend Riviera restaurant on Sparks Street.

By the time **Party Central** got there the room was packed with nearly 80 people, and telecom industry people were mingling and having a good time.

If you remember on Oct. 25, news broke of the Riviera's illustrious Ottawa chef, **Matt Carmichael**, admitting to sexually harassing with with inappropriate comments and handed over the operation of his business. Following Mr. Carmichael's statement, **Stelios Doussis**, the general manager of the restaurant, resigned. Mr. Doussis' husband is Veterans

Affairs Minister Seamus O'Regan.

But despite the scandal, Riviera was still packed and flourishing with tons of people enjoying the night.

Party Central caught up first with Jason Kerr, the director of government relations at Canadian Automobile Associa-

tion, who chatted about the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which recently was renamed as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership on Nov. 11 during the Asia-Pacific Economic Corporation (APEC) forum hosted in Da Nang, Vietnam.

CWTA's CEO and former P.E.I. premier **Robert Ghiz** was there chatting away with guests.

Quebec Liberal Senator **Dennis Dawson**, who is also the deputy chair of the Senate Transport and Communications Committee, was chatting with Summa Strategies' newest lobbyist **Alik Angaladian**.

Ms. Angaladian said it's an incredibly busy time of year for Summa Strategies, between the work for clients and the networking events and parties. That's true for a lot of people.

There were a lot of hors d'oeuvres, including vegetarian options. There were fried mushrooms mixed with cheese balls and zucchini cheese fritters. And, yes, cheese does make everything better.

Walking around the room, Party Central noticed Liberal MPs Kyle Peterson and Don Rusnak enjoying their evening.

Liberal MP **Sean Casey**, who is also the parliamentary secretary to Heritage Minister **Mélanie Joly**, chatted with about the work he's been doing while sitting on the House Heritage Committee.

The Riviera didn't have that many Christmas decorations, but there was definitely a festive mood in the room.

Party Central spoke with Allison Street-Fortier, corporate services officer, Michele Benson, procurement manager, and Susan Nolan, corporate services officer, all at the British High Commission who talked about their time working with Susan le Jeune d'Allegeershecque, the new high commissioner who handed her letter of introduction from British Prime Minister Theresa May to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the end of August.

Ms. Benson, who said she had been

working there for a very long time, noted that Ms. Le Jeune was extremely openminded and often said things no other high commissioner would.

Mike McKeon, director of business development at Nokia, said he really loved reading *The Hill Times*' online sister publication *The Wire Report*. He was chatting with his colleague **Ric** 

Herald, the Canadian market head for Nokia, and Susan Winter, president of the Canadian Electronics and Communications Association

In the room, **Party Central** also noticed **Emma Carver**, litigation and policy adviser, who was chatting with **William Horne**, policy and parliamentary affairs adviser, both to Justice Minister **Jody Wilson-Raybould**.

Former Conservative MP **James Rajotte**, who is currently the vice-president of provincial and municipal government relations for Rogers Communications, was also there.

Anne Julien, Quebecor's senior adviser, was also at the party with her colleague Patrick Désy, regulatory affairs officer at Quebecor, and Ursula Grant, senior director of industry affairs at the CWTA.

Mr. Désy told **Party Central** that he also likes to write about wine, but that night he had his media hat on and had to mix and mingle with the telecom crowd.

Before leaving **Party Central** chatted briefly with **Kirk Wrinn**, adviser at Moore Wrinn Financial, **Mike Brown**, director of finance, and **Katherine Winchester**, director of operations, both at the CWTA.

sshekar@hilltimes.com @shruti\_shekar

#### **CWTA throws swishy shindig**

The Hill Times photographs by Shruti Shekar





















#### Voters to elect four new MPs in byelections on Dec. 11



#### MONDAY, DEC. 11

The House is Sitting—The House of Commons is sitting this week and will sit every weekday until adjourning for the traditional holiday break on Dec. 15, or possibly earlier.

Film Screening: World Premiere of *The Law of Survival*—This film is the story of Polina Gelman, the only Jewish woman awarded the Gold Star Hero of the Soviet Union. From 1942-45, Gelman's flight log with the Red Army recorded 869 combat flights and 1,300 hours in the air. The 40-minute documentary is premiering at Congregation Machzikei Hadas, 2310 Virginia Dr., Ottawa. It will be followed by wine and cheese. 7:15 p.m. \$10 per person. Register online or by contacting office@cmhottawa.com.

Federal Byelections—Voters in the ridings of Bonavista-Burin-Trinity, N.L., Scarborough-Agincourt, Ont., Battlefords-Lloydminister, Sask., and South Surrey-White Rock, B.C., are heading to the polls to elect new MPs.

#### TUESDAY, DEC. 12

The Great Canadian Debates: Should Canadians Be Worried about Getting Too Cozy with China?—The Macdonald-Laurier Institute presents its latest debate probing whether Canadians should be concerned about fostering closer ties with China. On the Yea side, *The Globe and Mail* editorial pages editor Tony Keller, while Earnscliffe Strategy Group principal Robin Sears represents the Nay side. Former House Speaker Peter Milliken is the moderator. Barney Danson Theatre, Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Pl., Ottawa. 7 p.m. Buy tickets (\$0-\$20) via eventbrite.ca/e/great-canadian-debates-canadians-should-be-worried-about-getting-too-cozy-with-china-tickets-39880434453.

Laurier Club Holiday Reception with Justin Trudeau—
The Liberal Party of Canada presents a reception with
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. For current Laurier Club
donors only. Great Hall, National Gallery of Canada,
380 Sussex Dr., Ottawa. 6-9 p.m. Pre-registration
is required and will close on Dec. 10. The party will
facilitate media access and post online after the event
attendees' names.

#### WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13

What the Hell is Happening? Inside U.S. Politics— Canada 2020 will host John Heilemann, best-selling author, award-winning producer, and frequent political commentator for a free, public event. 4:30-6 p.m. The Westin Ottawa, 11 Colonel By Dr. Register via Eventbrite

Christmas Reception for the Parliamentary Press Gallery at Stornoway—Leader of the official opposition Andrew Scheer is hosting a Christmas reception for members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery at Stornoway. In keeping with last year's tradition, the Opposition Leader's Office is participating in the Shoebox Project, and requests that attendees bring one or two of the following items: mitts, scarf, or a toque (for women), specialty teas, nut-free chocolate and candy (not alcohol-filled), body or hand lotion, soaps, toothbrush, brush or comb, nail polish, mascara, eye shadow, lipstick, purse-sized Kleenex, small cosmetic bag, bus tickets, or gift cards. 6:30-8:30 p.m. PPG members may RSVP by Dec. 8 to cpcleaderrsvp@parl.gc.ca.

#### THURSDAY, DEC. 14

Stephen Poloz at the Canadian Club Toronto—Stephen Poloz, governor of the Bank of Canada, gives his last public address of the year, discussing some of the issues that keep him awake at night. Fairmont Royal York, 100 Front St. West, Toronto. Speech starts at 12:40 p.m. For more, visit www.canadianclub.org.

#### FRIDAY, DEC. 15

Press Conference for Retiring Supreme Court Chief
Justice Beverley McLachlin—Chief Justice of the Supreme
Court of Canada Beverley McLachlin will be holding a
press conference at the National Press Theatre in Ottawa
to mark her retirement. 10 a.m. The press conference
is only open to journalists with accreditation from the
Canadian Parliamentary Press Gallery.

#### TUESDAY, DEC. 19

The Future of Retail—Join the Canadian Club of Ottawa and prominent members of the local retail community for lunch and a panel discussion on the future of retail in the digital age. Moderated by Catherine Clark. Panelists: Jeff York, CEO of Farmboy, David Segal, co-founder of Mad Radish, Lisa Delorme, cofounder and CEO of RentfrockRepeat.com. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m at the Chateau Laurier. For more, visit www.canadianclubottawa.ca

#### FRIDAY, JAN. 19, 2018

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, 2018

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

#### THURSDAY, JAN. 25, 2018

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



Elizabeth Mongrain, Donald Johnston, Gowlings' Jacques Shore, and Mr. Shore's daughter, Victoria Shore, pictured last week at the Metropolitan Brasserie in Ottawa at Mr. Johnston's launch for his book, Missing the Tide: Global Governments in Retreat, published by McGill-Queen's University Press. The Hill Times photograph by Jean-Marc Carisse

#### Canada 150 Rink Opens on the Hill

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade









If we build it, they will come: Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly, Sport and Disabilities Minister Kent Hehr, and other officials opened the Canada 150 Rink on Parliament Hill on Dec. 7 and are inviting Canadians to come for a skate. People will have to make reservations for the 40-minute passes which are free and available online two days in advance. The rink, which was originally supposed to be open in December, will now be open until Feb. 25, 2018. People can book up to six tickets at a time, on a first come, first serve basis. The rink was built and run in partnership with the Ottawa Senators and the Ottawa International Hockey Festival. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade* 

and settlement of new families to Ottawa/the National 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, 2018**

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.

#### SATURDAY, FEB. 3, 2018

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, 2018. The party will hold a leadership convention for the announcement of the new leader on Feb. 3. For more info: bcliberals.com/leadership.

#### THURSDAY, FEB. 8, 2018

Manning Centre Networking Conference—This annual conference for conservatives and libertarians will take place in Ottawa, Feb. 8-11. Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr. manningcentre.ca/manning-networking-conference.

#### TUESDAY, FEB. 13, 2018

Macdonald-Laurier Institute Canada-U.S. Dinner—The MacDonald-Laurier Institute is hosting is annual dinner, 5:30 p.m. at the Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Pl. Buy tickets via macdonaldlaurier.ca.

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 16, 2018

NDP Federal Convention—The party is set to hold this policy convention Feb. 16-18, 2018 at the Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr., in Ottawa. To become a del-

egate or for more information, visit ottawa2018.ndp.ca.

#### THURSDAY, FEB. 22, 2018

Conference on Security and Defence—The Conference of Defence Associations Institute presents this annual conference Feb. 22-23. Fairmont Chateau Laurier, Ottawa. cdainstitute.ca/events/2017-annual-ottawa-conference.

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

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2018



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