Liberals prepared to sit on trade bill, recall Parliament in summer if needed; some Senators warn Bill C-100 shouldn’t be rushed in Upper Chamber

The government is prepared to sit on its bill to implement Canada’s trade agreement with the United States and Mexico until those countries are ready to ratify the deal, even if it means letting it stay in the House after Parliament is dissolved for the fall election campaign, a government official confirmed to The Hill Times.

The government introduced Bill C-100 to implement the CUSMA trade deal with Mexico and the U.S. in the House on May 29, but has yet to bring the bill back up for debate and advancement in the Chamber in the time since. Just 10 sitting days remain before Kenney’s federal campaigning should be limited to carbon tax and pipelines, or else he should run federally: Conservative MP Tilson

Fight over nuclear waste dump getting political, but Liberals downriver standing behind the project—or staying quiet

A plan to bury low-level nuclear waste at a site near the Ottawa River is raising opposition from municipalities and environmentalists. The company behind the project, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, says it’s safe. The Near Surface Disposal Facility proposal is in year three of an environmental assessment handled by a regulator the Liberal government is on the verge of stripping of that responsibility.

Environment Minister Catherine McKenna, right, pictured with Liberal MPs Will Amos and Mona Fortier, make their way to an event related to the Ottawa River watershed at the Rideau Canal on May 28. The Ottawa River flows past all three of their ridings. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

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Rodger and me: friends and colleagues roast and toast departing Rodger Cuzner

On June 5, MPs, Senators, and friends gathered at Brigids Well to roast retiring MP Rodger Cuzner and celebrate his extraordinary 19-year career representing the residents of Cape Breton-Canso, N.S.

The roast was emceed by fellow Nova Scotian Liberal MP Sean Fraser, who opened the night on the bagpipes.

Mr. Cuzner cited Employment, Workforce Development and Labour Minister Patty Hajdu’s roasting of him as a highlight. She called out Mr. Cuzner for his discomfort during a conversation between the two about Ms. Hajdu’s proposal to make menstrual products free in federally regulated workplaces. Her roast ended with Mr. Cuzner taking a shot out of a Diva Cup, though he didn’t realize what it was until the next day.

Liberals must be defeated, that’s known. "The Tory nation was cocky, they came out in full force; “But like the F-35 contract, they backed the wrong horse. “Liberals must be defeated, that’s known,” Mr. Cuzner said in an interview.

Though Tories heavily outnumbered the Liberals at the fight, Mr. Trudeau ultimately prevailed, raising over $200,000 for the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation. "We went to the fight, it was pretty much all Tories, and they boosed Justin when he came in,” Mr. Cuzner said. “He got stung in the first round, Brazeau landed a couple of big ones, but you know [Trudeau] fought back and the fight. So I did a poem on Sunday, and our whip’s office, Patrick Du-rocher tracked down twenty pairs of boxing gloves. You’re not allowed to have props in the house.”

After Mr. Cuzner recited the poem, the surrounding Liberal caucus members jumped up and shook their fists, cheering as the House laughed. –by Nina Russell

Social media fuming over latest Château Laurier addition plans

The latest designs for a planned addition to the historic Château Laurier hotel was panned by many Ottawans on social media.

Local Ottawa artist Andrew King sketched an addition that mirrors the original designs of the Château Laurier. Image courtesy of Andrew King/Twitter

The modernistic addition came under fire, as it departs from the architectural style of the original design.

"It is entirely wrong, though, for the romantic skyline at the core of the capital, and it will wreck the experience of walking through Major’s Hill Park to Parliament Hill, and mars the lovely view from the bridge,” Hill reporter Stephen Maher wrote in Maclean’s. "It is just a cheap, ugly afterthought, which looks to have been designed to please accountants.”

The Château Laurier was constructed together with the Ottawa’s former train station – now the Senate of Canada Building - prior to the onset of the First World War and has dominated the Ottawa skyline ever since.

Local artist Andrew King offered his own sketch for the addition, which was met with much fanfare on Twitter. His addition, which mirrors the design of the original hotel, received 250 retweets and more than 1,000 likes.

“"This concept will cost more than [a] glass and steel box, but it represents the durability and longevity of Ottawa, and [its] landmark buildings downtown... The Château being the crown jewel, so it’s worth it!” Mr. King tweeted.

Under Parks Canada’s guidelines for the conservation of historic buildings, additions have to be “physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to, and distinguishable from the historic place.”

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Opinion

Study as a form of action is no longer marketable on this immense and shameful problem

No more inquiries are needed to redress the monstrous injustices against Indigenous peoples that have been laid out for all to see. Extending justice to Canada’s Indigenous people doesn’t require a manager. It cries out for a leader. Despite all the ballyhoo, that person has yet to emerge.

The authors want a national action plan, and a policy to deal with violence against Indigenous women and girls, and under- diverse people. They call for a National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson, and annual reports to Parliament on the implementation of the inquiry’s demand for “justice.” It is a hope- ful cry for long overdue action to recognize the value and improve the lives of Canada’s Indigenous people.

The problem is that white poli- ticians have been wearing out the patience of this same group for a very long time. Indigenous people keep waiting for governments to live up to their words. With- out reference to any particular political party. Ottawa’s collective record on this file is dismal; full of apologies, full of resolve, and full of business as usual or broken promises.

Indigenous peoples have been cast as extras in the political equivalent of Ground Hog Day, having to re-tell the same story over and over again. In the report that bore his name, anthropologist Harry Hawthorne reported to the federal government back in the 1960s that Indigenous people in this country were “citizens minus.” They still are. Why?

Back then, there was a Trudeau government too—led by Pierre Trudeau. In 1969, the Liber- als put out a white paper purport- ing to fix the perennial inequalities facing Indigenous people on a host of issues; from education, to child mortality.

But the Trudeau senior’s blue- print for change was an exercise in removing the question, rather than answering it. The govern- ment would end the special legal relationship between the Canadi- an state and Indigenous peoples; Indian “status” would disappear; Indian Affairs would be abolished after five years; and Canada’s original occupants would miracu- lously become the “equal” of all other Canadians.

The idea went over like a pipe- line proposal through a sacred burial ground. The late Harold Cardinal, a Cree political leader and writer, insisted on behalf of his people that Indigenous people have “the right to be the red tile in the Canadian mosaic.” As for the Trudeau government’s white paper, this is what Cardinal had to say: “In spite of all the gov- ernment’s attempts to convince Indians to accept the white paper, their efforts will fail, because Indians understand that the path outlined by the Department of Indian Affairs, through its mouthpiece, the Honourable Jean Chrétien, leads directly to cultural genocide.”

That was said almost 50 years ago. As Canadians found out with the release of the MMIWG in- quiry’s report, that dreaded word echoes to this day.

Great expectations were again raised in Indigenous communities with the massive Royal Commis- sion on Aboriginal Women— the 4,000 page tome published in 1996. But after causing an infor- mational blip on the country’s cultural radar, it too faded into the fog without bringing about essential policy change.

Then came the emotional punch of the Truth and Recon- ciliation report, which produced 10 volumes of information after 300 days of public hearings and 7,000 recorded stake- holders from survivors of the infamous Indian Residential Schools. Former commissioner Justice Murray Sinclair had this to say to the Senate when the report was unveiled over a century, the central goals of Canada’s aboriginal policy were to eliminate aboriginal governments, ignore aboriginal rights, terminate the Treaties, and through a process of elimi- nation, cause aboriginal peoples to cease to exist. Land is seized, populations are forcibly trans- ferred, and their movement is restrained.”

Though Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured June 3, 2019, at the release of the final report on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, has rhetoric- ally bested the Conservatives on the Indigenous file, his actions have belied his claim that there is “no relationship more important” to Canada than this one. These days it looks more like SNC-Lavalin has his heart.

Michael Harris

Halifax—When it comes to the federal government, the lesson for Indigenous peoples in Canada is surely this: the more the words, the less the action.

But the Liberals can’t maintain the faux patriotism that has been going on for over a century, the central goals of the federal government back in the 1960s that Indigenous people in Canada’s Indigenous people is the principal reasons a reluctant Cardinal, a Cree political leader and consultant to the Prime Minister’s Office, turned into the colonial status quo he fought for as a regional chief in British Columbia.

Verdi did it better. The revered feminist and Indigenous rights’ supporter, that Canada’s first Indigenous minister and attorney general had to resign from cabinet rather than suffer improper interference from the PM and his office in the SNC-Lavalin criminal case. A judge has now confirmed Wilson-Raybould’s position that the gravity of the company’s offences justified a criminal trial, not a sweetheart deal.

Michael Harris is an award- winning journalist and author.

The Hill Times
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Senators drafting ‘corridor’ amendments to tanker ban bill, despite Garneau’s warnings

Senators on both sides of the aisle are mulling ways to amend Bill C-48, Transport Minister Marc Garneau’s, centre, 2016, to formalize a ban on oil tankers carrying unrefined oil to and from ports along the northern B.C. coast. The bill has big implications for the government’s environmental record, overseen by Environment Minister Catherine McKenna, left, and Canada’s natural resource sector, overseen by Resource Minister Amarjeet Sohi, right. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Independent and Conservative Senators are drawing up amendments to create a shipping corridor for oil tankers along the northern B.C. coast, despite the Transport minister’s rejection of that idea last month.

BY PETER MAZEREUE

Independent and Conservative Senators are working on amendments to the government’s controversial bill to ban oil tankers from ports along most of the B.C. coast, despite Transport Minister Marc Garneau’s signal to the Senate in May that the government didn’t want to compromise on the core elements of the bill. Independent Senators Andre Pratte (De Salaberry, Que.), Paula Simons (Alberta), Yuen Pau Woo (B.C.), and Murray Sinclair (Manitoba) are among those working on amendments to Bill C-48, while Conservative Senator Dennis Patterson (Nunavut) is drafting amendments for the Senate Conservatives. Bill C-48 advanced to third reading in the Senate late last week after a majority of Independent Senators voted to defeat a contentious report from the Senate Transport Committee—endorsed by only half of the committee members—that recommended the Senate kill C-48.

Both the Independents, some of whom are collaborating on their proposed amendments, and Sen. Patterson—the Conservative critic for the bill—were working on amendments to carve out a “corridor” for oil tankers to travel through the banned area of the coastal waters to one or more ports along the coast. Mr. Garneau (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount, Que.) had rejected that idea during testimony before the Senate Transport Committee last month, arguing that any oil spilled in the corridor could spread through the water to other coastal areas, undermining the purpose of the bill.

Any amendments passed by the Senate would—if C-48 also passes third reading in the Senate—be returned to the House of Commons, where the government would have to decide whether to accept or ignore them.

Sen. Pratte said the Independents were examining more than one option for tanker corridors that could be tucked onto the bill, including creating one at the northernmost tip of B.C. He said they were also considering amendments that would add a three or five year sunset clause after which the ban would expire, since the government has sold the bill as a temporary “moratorium” despite the fact that, as currently written, it would make the ban permanent.

“A corridor has to be a corridor, and not half of the region open to tankers,” said Sen. Pratte.

“We have to try and propose that compromise solution to the government and see what they do with it,” he said.

Sen. Patterson said he was also working on an amendment to create a corridor for oil tanker traffic within the banned zone, as well as another that had to do with the date the ban would come into force. He said he was not ready to provide more detail on the amendments, but that the date of the upcoming election “would certainly be a factor in mind” in crafting an amendment to the coming into force date.

Bill C-48 would bar oil tankers that carry crude oil or “persistent” oil from mooring in the waters along the northern B.C. coast, and from loading, unloading, or tran-
For our jobs, our communities and the coast
PASS THE OIL TANKER BAN

IT’S TIME TO PASS BILL C-48

The pristine and remote waters of our home, the north coast of British Columbia, are the foundation of a sustainable economy; they support unique ecosystems that are a global treasure. There is too much at stake to introduce oil supertankers.
Trolls have no place in the offices of our premiers

Shortly after Independent Senators voted down a report from the Senate Transport Committee calling on them to kill the tanker ban bill, C-48, last Thursday, the government’s representative in the Chamber, Sen. Peter Harder, tweeted about the vote, calling it an example of “sober second thought.”

About an hour later, the Twitter account for Alberta Premier Jason Kenney’s office retweeted Sen. Harder’s message, with the sort of agitation language more commonly used by the trolls who cruise the social media platform for opportunities to disparage and demean.

“Justin Trudeau’s ‘independent’ senators just slapped Alberta in the face and betrayed the national interest of Canada by ignoring the Senate’s own committee which studied this toxic legislation in depth, and voted to kill it. This is a bad day for all of Canada,” screeched the premier, reiterating a point no one was making.

The tone was markedly different from the tweets from Mr. Kenney’s personal Twitter account after the Senate gave a thumbs-up to Bill C-48, the ban on Alberta oil exports to the United States.

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The decision of Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer to keep Michael Cooper in his caucus will cost him dearly.

Scheer says the case is closed because Cooper apologized and was removed from the House Justice Committee. But it is inexplicable display of bad judgment, Scheer kept Cooper on as the deputy justice critic in the House of Commons.

That kind of responsibility is usually conferred on a Member of Parliament, maybe by his leader because he or she has the makings of a minister.

Cooper’s potential ministerial aspirations should serve as a red flag to thousands of visible minority Canadians who wonder about the Conservatives’ real commitment to diversity.

The intention of a shadow cabinet is to showcase those who might eventually hold ministerial positions if the official opposition forms the government.

By keeping Cooper as deputy critic, Scheer sends the wrong signal.

Cooper’s recent public meltdown, where the Justice Committee made it painfully clear that he possesses neither the temperament nor the judgment to be considered ministerial material.

His posted apology read as though it had been written while he was under house arrest. One wonders whether Cooper actually believed his own words.

His attack was not just an off-the-cuff retort to an inflammatory comment. The Alberta MP came to the committee loaded for bear.

Cooper knew the question of all right wing commentators would likely be the subject of discussion for a parliamentary committee review of online hate crimes.

He calculated and accepted the risk when he deliberately highlighted a manifesto of a hate-motivated madman who had one wish—to murder Muslims.

Keeping Cooper in caucus can only damage the leader.

Only two weeks ago, in launching his immigration policy, Scheer claimed that he would show the door to any member of his party who put one religion ahead of another.

His tough words left no room for interpretation: “I would like to be absolutely crystal clear. There is absolutely no place in a peaceful and free country like Canada for intolerance, racism, and extremism of any kind … if there’s anyone here who disagrees with that, you’re not welcome here. There’s the door.”

Yet when he had clear evidence of intolerance with Cooper’s parliamentary attack on a Muslim leader from his own home province, Scheer refused to act.

What Faisal Khan Suri, the president of the Alberta Muslim Council, said to provoke the outlash was all provable.

Scheer, speaking of the Quebec City Muslim murder rampage, said “The evidence from a committee at the mosque showed he repeatedly sought content about anti-immigrant, all-right and conservative commentators, mass murderers, U.S. President Donald Trump, and about Muslims, immigrants living in Quebec.”

Cooper disagreed: using the New Zealand banned manifesto to buttress his assessment that murderous incitement comes primarily from communists, not conservatives.

His claim was reminiscent of United States President Donald Trump’s reaction to the racist march of pro-Nazi torchbearers, in Charlottesville, North Carolina. Trump said there were “very fine people on both sides.”

In Cooper’s apology, he said he was sorry because he “quoted the words of a white supremacist anti-Muslim mass murderer in an ill-advised attempt to demonstrate that such acts are not linked to conservatism.”

The decision of Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer to keep Michael Cooper in his caucus will cost him dearly.

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WE ARE PET FRIENDLY!
MMIGW’s finding of ‘genocide’ will be a problem for Trudeau

Justin Trudeau should have said there was no state-sanctioned genocide. He should have said Canada has been negligent, and wrong, and to blame.

But much of this was forgotten once the Liberals came to office. Rather than deliver evidence-based policies and pursue open and transparent government, the Trudeau government has adopted a secretive approach to public business, making efforts to learn what analysis—if any—lies behind major policy decisions. Nor does Duncan appear to suspect there is little serious analysis, for example, behind most innovation policy announcements.

Take Science Minister Kirsty Duncan’s recent cancellation of the Network of National Centres of Excellence program.

The Trudeau government is indifferent to a beautiful nation—indifferent for 150-plus years. It will not rest until we get justice for Indigenous women and girls for whom it never felt it was a word that must be used with great care.

The head of the inquiry said that Canada, and Canada’s committed genocide. You, reading this newspaper, committed genocide. Me—the proudest father imaginable, to a beautiful girl—committed genocide.

You didn’t. I didn’t.

We are—as a people, as a nation—indifferent for 150-plus years? Yes. Were we inattentive? Yes. Were we ignorant? Yes. Were some of us racist and cruel and simply evil? Yes, yes and yes. All those things.

But the murder of thousands of Indigenous women and girls was not a state-sanctioned, state-led, state-mandated act of genocide. It was a series of murders, committed by individuals, not the state. Fully deserving of investigation and prosecution, still, because there is no statute of limitations on any murder.

When the national inquiry’s report was handed to him, Justin Trudeau did not say this: “Was it state-sanctioned genocide? No. But we were negligent. We were wrong. We to blame. So, today, I’m announcing the creation of a fully-funded national police task force to investigate and prosecute these many murders. We will not rest until we get justice for these women.”

That’s what Trudeau should have said. He didn’t.

Why’d Duncan cancel the Network of National Centres of Excellence program?

TORONTO—Genocide is one of those words that one does not toss about, like confetti. One does not treat “genocide” like it has no meaning. It has a very specific meaning. Justin Trudeau knows it is a serious word because of what he has said in the recent past. He knows that the word “genocide” describes a very specific crime: murder on a massive scale, by a state power, targeting citizens because of their religion or race or ethnicity.

He knows that.

So, go to Ottawa in September 2016, as prime minister, Trudeau said: “This government recognizes that acknowledging genocide should be done on the basis of extraordinary facts and wise counsel internationally, not just on political grandstanding by members like the member opposite.”

That’s what he said. Earlier, in June of that year, the Liberal prime minister said this: “Mr. Speaker, we feel that determinations of genocide need to be done by objective sources and through proper research on the international stage. We will not trivialize the importance of the word ‘genocide’ by not respecting formal engagements around that word.”

In the same month, Trudeau also said that his government “understands[] how important it is not to trivialize the word genocide” and to give it the international legal weight it deserves. That is why we are asking the international community to examine the facts and make an objective determination. We do not want to play petty politics with this issue and these atrocities. Canadians expect better than that from this government.”

And, again in June 2016, when the Conservatives were hounding him about the Islamic State and genocide: “We do not feel that politicians should be weighing in on this first and foremost. Determinations of genocide need to be made in an objective, responsible way.”

And so on, and so on. You get the point. He knows what genocide means. He knows it is a word that must be used with great care.

Last week, Justin Trudeau said that Canada, and Canadians—and every government that has reached this number, they said they couldn’t tell me and that there is: murder on a massive scale, committed genocide. You, read this newspaper, committed genocide. Me—the proudest father imaginable, to a beautiful girl—committed genocide.

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That’s what Trudeau should have said. He didn’t.

Instead, he spent the morning in China at some weird gymnastics, trying to avoid acknowledging that genocide had taken place. To be fair to him, he got to Vancouver, however, he had reversed himself. “It was genocide,” he said to a conference, to some applause.

The international community—the rest of the world—Canada belongs to, and which we regularly give pious lectures about things like genocide and crimes against humanity—immediately took note. Within a matter of hours, the head of the Organization of American States formally wrote to Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland, requesting Canada’s compliance in an investigation of the allegations of genocide committed by Canada against Indigenous peoples.

Trudeau, being an actor before he is anything else, knows the importance of words. He knows the impact they can have on one’s audience. That is why, until last week, he was always careful with the word, never using it above all. He knew its power. “Genocide.”

The power of that word will now be used against him.

He won’t like how it turns out.

Warren Kinsella is a former Jean Chrétien-era cabinet staffer and a former provincial and federal election campaign manager.

The Hill Times
Why make it harder for exempt staff to join the public service?

Recently, Maria Dion, the commissioner of conflict of interest and ethics, quietly made a ruling that is truly astonishing. Without any consultation or public discussion, he erected a significant new barrier to exempt staff in ministers’ offices joining the public service, writes Geoff Norquay, The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade.

Without any consultation or public discussion, Mario Dion erected a significant new barrier to exempt staff in ministers’ offices joining the public service. People seek jobs in ministers’ offices for different reasons. Some come to Ottawa simply to build their political resumes, others to pursue the policy objectives of the government they support. Levels of experience among exempt staff differ as well. Some bring little more than a shiny new degree and a passion to learn, while others have already begun a career in law, science, business, journalism, or academia by the time they join a minister’s office.

Being an exempt staffer is not a lifetime occupation—you know going in that at some point, your government will be thrown out and you along with it. Most ministerial staffers spend two, three, or four years in Ottawa before moving on with the rest of their lives, going home to join the family business, back to the law, or university, or out to start a new career.

But a few exempt staffers are transformed by their experience working for a minister. They discover a set of policies, a sector, or a challenge that intrigues them; they fall in love with public policy. They see an opportunity to apply what they have learned at the political level by building a career as a public servant.

Until about a decade ago, exempt staff wishing to join the public service were actually given priority hiring, but the Harper government ended it in 2006 when they brought in the Federal Accountability Act. The changes meant that qualifying exempt staff would have to compete through the public service’s internal hiring processes.

In addition, the Federal Accountability Act introduced new restrictions for private-sector hiring into in the Conflict of Interest Act. At Sec. 35 (1), it states: “No former reporting public office holder shall enter into a contract of service with, accept an appointment to a board of directors of, or accept an offer of employment with, an entity in which he or she had direct and significant official dealings during the period of one year immediately before his or her last day in office.”

The prohibitions set out in Sec. 35, known as the cooling-off period, apply to staffers for one year after leaving office. Practically speaking, this section had meant that an exempt staffer could not be employed by a private sector entity or other non-government entity they had engaged with just prior to leaving office.

Recently, the conflict of interest and ethics commissioner announced a new interpretation of the post-employment rules that enormously expands Sec. 35: “I am of the view that the prohibitions set out in section 35 apply to all entities, including federal public sector entities,” (emphasis in original). So, henceforth, a former exempt staffer who was a “reporting public office holder” can only be hired by departments with which they did not have “direct and significant official dealings” in the past year. In some cases, this may leave virtually no parts of government at all.

While a one-year restriction may not seem like much, for political staff with shallow roots in Ottawa and fickle career paths, it may be enough to ensure they never work in government again. No rationale was offered for this new interpretation, and no public consultation preceded its announcement. I am left to wonder if I understand the point of this change.

Former political staffers bring serious skills to the public service. Those who have worked in ministers’ offices learn to think several steps ahead in the interface between policy and politics; many become valuable experts in issues management. They come to understand the essential contributions of stakeholders to public policy formation and the value of consultation. Knowing how ministers and their staff appraise issues leads to much more perceptive analysis of options and more useful briefings from the public service.

Canada already has weaker rules on conflict of interest or ethics compared to many other western countries, but when those pathways are followed, they produce some exemplary results:

The current Leader of the Government in the Senate, Peter Harder, started his career as a foreign service officer, then joined Flores (a MacDonald’s) office at then External Affairs in 1979. After additional senior political jobs in the Mulroney government, he rejoined the public service. By 1991 he was a deputy minister and served in that capacity at Treasury Board, Solicitor General, Citizenship and Immigration, Industry and Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Recently, the prime minister appointed Ian Shugart as the clerk of the Privy Council. The first decade of Shugart’s career was spent in several policy and political jobs in Joe Clark’s office when Clark was opposition leader and then with a senior minister in the Mulroney government. After joining the public service, he built experience in several agencies and departments, before spending the last 11 years as deputy minister at Environment Canada, Employment and Social Development and Foreign Affairs.

It is worth mentioning that each of these individuals was promoted in their public service careers by prime ministers who were not of the party they originally worked for in their earlier political roles. Obviously, skill and capability counted for more than past political lineage, and prior political identification was no barrier to advancement.

Today, there are many more former political staffers moving up in the public service, and that’s why this latest discouragement is so hard to comprehend. What exactly is it that we are trying to prevent by erecting these barriers? What potential abuses do we want to forestall? What issues of conflict of interest or ethics are raised by former political staff entering the public service? What exactly are we afraid of here?

Given the current challenges, I doubt the federal government is particularly focused on this issue, but it should be, if only for the following reason: my reading of the recent reinterpretation of Sec. 35 is that it could have made Stéphane Dion and John McCallum ineligible to be appointed as ambassadors.

Geoff Norquay is a principal with the ScotiaLife Strategy Group. During the 1980s he was director of research to the leader of the opposition and worked in the Prime Minister’s Office of prime minister Brian Mulroney.

The Hill Times
Sudan: no surprise

The Sudanese Professionals Association, which spearheaded the nationwide protests, is calling for a campaign of ‘sweeping civil disobedience to topple the treacherous and killer military council,’ but unless it can take back control of the streets, it’s all over.

When we throw out terms like genocide for what is happening now in Canada we dilute the concept.

Ottawa—Boy am I ever going to get some flak from this post.

I intend to take issue with some of the findings of the Canadian inquiry into the murder and disappearance of Indigenous women, more specifically the use of the term “genocide.” For those who are not Canadian, or who are not following this issue, the

They may just be soldiers you bring in from out of town, who have had no previous human contact with the protesters before the order to kill is given. That’s what the Chinese regime did before the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989.

Omar al-Bashir, Sudan’s dictator since 1989, originally created them to carry out a genocide in the separatist western province of Darfur, a crime for which he has been indicted by the International Criminal Court. They were never seen in the capital in those days, but now they have uniforms of a sort and they are new Khartoum.

They are doing the job that the soldiers of the regular army might do, but without the authority. The ordinary soldiers’ reluctance was often on display in the early days of the Sudanese revolution, when they sometimes intervened to protect the protesters from the RSF.

The generals who have now unleashed the RSF never felt that reluctance was an excuse. Unlike the private soldiers, they have profited greatly under Bashir’s rule and have no intention of giving up their own privileges and power. They were happy enough to sacrifice Bashir to the protesters (by the way, under arrest and awaiting trial), but they don’t do self-sacrifice. So they played for time, negotiating a ‘democratic transition’ with the protest leaders while waiting for the support to flow in from other Arab tyrannies. It duly arrived: an immediate gift of $3 billion from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt to help Bashir’s military heirs buy back support, and the promise of political support for any killing that they saw as a necessary part of the process.

The military junta, calling itself the ‘Transitional Military Council,’ kept up the facade of power-sharing with the opposition Alliance for Freedom and Change, but such an election in two years, and civilians would have a majority of the seats on the interim council.

Then last Monday morning the Rapid Support Forces (Janjaweed) went in shooting and cleared the square in front of army headquarters that had been occupied by pro-democracy forces for the past two months. The TMC’s head, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, declared on state television that the military had decided to ‘stop negotiating with the Alliance for Freedom and Change and cancel what had been agreed on.’

What had changed? Nothing.

The military were never negotiating in good faith; they were just buying time.

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Credibility and integrity of prime minister in question with veterans’ community

Not only has the veterans affairs portfolio been deprioritized, but the prime minister has also betrayed a formal commitment he made to Canada’s veterans and their families during the 2015 election campaign.

Given recent tumultuous events with respect to the resignation of two prominent federal cabinet ministers surrounding the conduct of the government in relation to the SNC-Lavalin matter and the significant political concerns emanating from the Vice-Admiral Mark Norman debacle, it is readily apparent that the integrity and credibility of the prime minister and his government have been placed in serious question.

From the perspective of the veterans’ community, there remains a substantial parallel concern. Not only has the veterans affairs portfolio been negligently deprioritized in this process, but the prime minister has also betrayed a formal commitment he specifically made to Canada’s veterans and their families during the 2015 election campaign.

In the context of the Equitas class action lawsuit, the prime minister made a promise to Canada’s veterans that, should his party be successful, it would not be necessary for the disabled veterans to continue such a lawsuit as his government would re-establish the life-long pensions as an option to the lump sum disability award. It was clearly understood that this commitment would specifically address the basic discrimination that existed between the Pension Act and the New Veterans Charter/Veterans Well-Being Act disability benefits, where disparity has been from the outset at the fundamental core of the class action claim. It remains our position that there is much to do in improving veterans’ legislation so as to address the financial and wellness requirements of Canada’s disabled veterans and their families. This is particularly so with respect to the pension-for-life provisions originally announced in December 2017 and emanating from Bill C-74, Part IV.

It is self-evident that only a circumscribed number of seriously disabled veterans and their survivors may benefit from the new legislation when compared to the level of entitlement available under the present New Veterans Charter/Veterans Well-being Act—some seriously disabled veterans are actually worse off. However, the greater majority of disabled veterans will not be materially impacted by the legislation in that the new benefits under these legislative and regulatory amendments will have limited applicability.

This failure to satisfy the prime minister’s 2015 election commitment to address the inequities and injustices in the New Veterans Charter and continues to ignore the “elephant in the room” which has overshadowed this entire discussion.

As stated in our many submissions to Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and Parliament, the government has not met veterans’ expectations with regard to this fundamental mandated commitment to “re-establish lifelong pensions” under the charter so as to ensure that a comparable level of financial security is provided to all disabled veterans and their families over their life course. This financial disparity between the Pension Act and New Veterans Charter/Veterans Well-being Act, producing a form of lifetime pension in a much more realistic manner in order to secure the financial security for those veterans who need this form of monetary support through their lifetime.

It remained our hope through this period and more particularly the 2019 federal budget that VAC would have the necessary financial means to avoid arbitrary discrimination suffered by disabled veterans since the enactment of the New Veterans Charter in 2006. The alienation of the veterans’ community in an election year does not make for good politics, particularly given the perceived large swing vote of veterans to the Liberal Party in 2015, largely based on the prime minister’s campaign promises.

It will be of significant interest to the veterans’ community as to the positions to be adopted by the government and the opposition parties to remedy this longstanding injustice and inequity impacting Canada’s disabled veterans and their families.

If the “one-veteran-one-standard” philosophy advocated by VAC has any meaning, this glaring disparity between the Pension Act and the New Veterans Charter/Veterans Well-being Act benefits for disabled veterans requires that the government seize the moment and satisfy the financial needs of Canadian veterans and their dependants. The new legislation has missed an opportunity to recognize that the longstanding social covenant between the Canadian people and the veterans’ community demands nothing less.

Brian N. Forbes is chair of the National Council of Veteran Associations and chair of the War Amps Executive Committee.
Is the Navy missing a great opportunity?

Hydrographic surveys are required to produce nautical charts, and updated surveys allow for safer and more efficient marine transportation in Canada’s northern waters.

I was also concerned with the fact that only approximately eight per cent of the Canadian Arctic has been surveyed to modern standards and only a total of about 14 per cent is done to a modern or adequate standard. Hydrographic surveys are required to produce nautical charts, and updated surveys allow for safer and more efficient marine transportation in Canada’s northern waters.

To assist the Canadian Hydrographic Service increase the percentage of Arctic oceans that are under construction now, the government attempted to resolve the management problem rather than the systems installed. The modern iteration of the DND leadership put forward what it believed to be the best speed. Accurate charts would bring significant benefits for the resupply of communities will reduce the cost for operators and reduce the environmental impact by reducing ship emissions. It would allow those vessels to circumvent ice blockages safely using alternative routes surveyed and charted. Search and rescue could be done faster by allowing coast guard vessels to proceed more directly to the area needed, while patrolling in Arctic waters?

I offe was the third cruise ship to contribute to reduce the possibility of more grounding. The Akademik Ioffe was the third cruise ship to run aground in the Canadian Arctic after the MV Clipperton Adventurer in 2010 and Hanjin in 2015. With increasing activity in poorly charted areas, our luck may soon run out.

When Coast Guard vessels are dispatched for a search and rescue mission they may not be available to support the operations of the Canadian Arctic. A delay in delivering the annual sealift for a lack of icebreaking support will cost the shipping companies. If the sealift cannot take place there will be significant impacts. Last summer, when a multi-year ice plug delayed by one year and the cost of airlifting the essential goods was in the millions of dollars.

The AOPS will be patrolling the Arctic. Would it not be great if they could carry out both opportunistic and targeted hydrographic surveys while patrolling in Arctic waters? When operating in poorly surveyed areas, those ships could be proceeding forward at slow speed. It seems to be one of the tailor-made tasks for those ships.

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Next election shaping up to be a much more contested affair than originally predicted

It looks like a minority government is a real possibility. But we still have a long way to go and election campaigns are not concepts. Campaigns are a thick gruel of policies, people, communications, media, manipulation, money, luck, skill, events, and timing. How that political alchemy plays, and interplays, will be what determines the electoral outcome.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberals currently hold 177 seats and can only afford to lose eight seats before drifting across into minority territory. They are facing several challenges, including the resignation of a high number of incumbents, some high-profile issues that are increasing public backlash and the need to adjust their overall mindset and strategy to that of the hunted, as opposed to the hunter. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer’s Conservatives hold 97 seats and seemed to have moved forward by simply standing still. Given the trends identified in current polling, their objective needs to shift from a negative campaign, designed to inflict as much damage to the Liberals as possible, to a more balanced narrative that positions Mr. Scheer as a potential prime minister. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

The Liberals currently hold 177 seats and can only afford to lose seven seats before drifting across into minority territory. They are facing several challenges, including the resignation of a high number of incumbents, some high-profile issues that are increasing public backlash and the need to adjust their overall mindset and strategy to that of the hunted, as opposed to the hunter.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, hold 97 seats and seemed to have moved forward by simply standing still. Given the trends identified in current polling, their objective needs to shift from a negative campaign, designed to inflict as much damage to the Liberals as possible, to a more balanced narrative that positions Scheer as a potential prime minister. In a very real sense, their greatest strength, a solid core of skill, events, and timing. How that political alchemy plays, and interplays, will be what determines the electoral outcome.

So, to run the risk of a dangerous brush with honesty, I would humbly offer the following advice to our federal politicians:

The Green Party finds itself in a situation where Canadians are finally catching up with it, don’t let yourself be marginalized as a minor player. The legislative experience May has gained will ensure that there is a constructive role for the party in the next Parliament, especially if we end up with a minority House.

The NDP needs to right the ship and return to its roots. They have a legitimate claim to the heart of Canadians and the campaign turns ugly that will be an important element of the debate.

The Conservatives need to move the perception of their party toward the middle and come with a message that is fairer to discredit a position than it is to actually have the debate. Facts don’t operate on a consensus and having the debate sits squarely in the middle of their road forward. Scheer will also need to determine the relative value of his very focal provincial counterparts; enforcing some message discipline on that lot might actually be his biggest challenge. Essentially, run a campaign on not being Trudeau if you want to show, run on being Andrew Scheer if you want a chance to win.

The Liberals must understand that realism is just the business of making the world a better place, it is also the business of convincing people that you are making the world a better place. They need a narrative that connects the dots and an organization that works backward from that objective. They also need to realize that the sustained opposition attacks are leaving marks and “when they go low, we go make sure we have a decent and consistent response.”

Finally, the rest of us need to turn down the politics of incitement because all virtue does not reside on any one side. The more you know about how government functions the more you understand that governing is the ongoing unscientific process of trying to determine exactly the level of incomplete knowledge required to make a decision. If someone has all the answers, they are not asking anything close to the right questions.

Now, more than ever, Canadians need the responsible leadership that results from an engaged and informed electorate. What we need are politicians, and political parties that inspire us to believe that we can be more than we thought we could be. What we don’t need are any more intellectual loafers, rage merchants, and keypunchers. If we are intent on telling us who to blame for failing short of our expectations. I fear that is the role of the opposition parties don’t adjust to that reality then the eventual results will fall far short of what is deserved.

Let’s hope I am wrong, or right. Joe Jordan, who is a former Liberal MP, is now at Bluesky Strategy Group in Ottawa. The Hill Times
The people of the North are a proud people

Building a new Arctic strategy for Canada

International interest in the Arctic continues to heat up. Is Canada ready?

Northwest Passage: status quo persists
DAYS after the report into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was released, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett addressed northern food insecurity and the MMIWG report in an email exchange with The Hill Times.

“As a result of consultations and work with Indigenous organizations and the NNC Indigenous Working Group as well as engagement with northern communities and other program stakeholders, several changes to the Nutrition North Canada program as well as other food security initiatives have been announced. One of these initiatives was the new Harvesters Support Grant that will help lower the high costs associated with traditional hunting and harvesting activities, and will make country/traditional food more readily available to Northerners living in remote isolated communities. Announced in the 2018 Fall Economic Statement, the government of Canada committed $48 million over five years and $8 million ongoing towards this initiative. We are currently co-developing the details of the Harvester’s Support Grant with the NNC Indigenous Working group and the Inuit-Crown working group on Inuit Food Security.

"Announced on December 10, 2018, this working group was created to focus on food security and work towards a sustainable food system in Inuit Nunangat. The underlying principle guiding the co-development of the initiative is to deliver the support into the hands of those who need it with little administrative burden as possible; and ensure that local control and decision making are priorities and that the program is as flexible as possible. Over the coming months, we will continue to work in partnership with survivors, the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, LGBTQ and two-spirit people, as well as with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments and organizations. One of the recommendations in the MMIWG report was elevating Indigenous languages to official language status. Does your government support such a policy? Why or why not? On February 5 our government introduced Bill C-91 to revitalizing and protect Indigenous languages. "On once passed, it will recognize Indigenous languages as a constitutionally-protected right under section 35. Furthermore, it will establish measures for the provision of long-term, sustainable funding of Indigenous languages, advance the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and support the reclamation, revitalization, strengthening, and maintenance of Indigenous languages in Canada.

"We know that revitalizing Indigenous languages is vital to advancing Reconciliation, and we will continue to work with provinces, territories, Indigenous representative organizations and Indigenous governments to create effective support for Indigenous languages in Canada through a variety of mechanisms; and, establish an Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages."

Could you provide a potential timeline as to when the federal government will release its action plan to address the issues laid out in the MMIWG report? "We look forward to announcing our initial response to the final report as well the first steps to formally develop a National Action Plan. "This National Action plan will build on the efforts our government is already taking to address this ongoing national tragedy, including reforms to child and family services that recognize the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples, protecting Indigenous languages under section 35 of the Constitution and investments in women’s shelters, housing, education, and safety on the Highway of Tears."

Canada continues to ‘strongly’ defend sovereignty in the North-west Passage, Global Affairs says The House Foreign Affairs Committee in its report, “Nation-building at home, Vigilance Beyond” says an unforeseen shock to the global trading system could make Arctic shipping routes more attractive. While the word ‘unforeseen’ suggests you can’t say with precision the kind of shock you are referring to, could you provide more information on what the government thinks a potential ‘unforeseen’ shock would look like and how it would make Arctic shipping routes more attractive? "The government of Canada is committed to advancing its national and international Arctic interests, including by strongly defending Canadian sovereignty in the North-west Passage. “This means circumpolar cooperation and advocating for the rights of Northern voices, including those of Arctic Indigenous communities, as part of the international conversation. Canada’s Arctic foreign policy has been co-developed in partnership with provinces, territories, Indigenous governments to create effective support for Indigenous languages in Canada through a variety of mechanisms; and, establish an Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages. The Hill Times

THE HILL TIMES
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Inuit Nunangat policy space would

Acknowledging Inuit Nunangat’s unique political and cultural primacy and expertise within our existing democratic governance structure is paramount to us in the North. It would be cost-effective, efficient, and a sign of genuine reconciliation.

Despite U.S. reluctance, MPs hope Arctic Council forges ahead on climate change

At the most recent Arctic Council meeting, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo opposed the Council taking a strong tone on climate change.

BY ALIAN CHAMANDY

In the face of the U.S.’s unwillingness to support the Arctic Council’s declaration on climate change-related challenges in the region, MPs are hoping to keep the Council focused on environmental issues. Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.) said the U.S. position “is consistent with a head-in-the-sand attitude toward climate change.” Regardless of the U.S. stance, however, Mr. McKay said the Council “should do the right thing, whether or not the U.S. cooperates.”

NDP MP Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, Alta.) struck a similar tone. “For the United States to say ‘we’re not going to participate’ really is beyond me. It is the critical issue. As Iceland takes over the chairmanship of the Council until 2021, Ms. Duncan said she’s hoping the Council can “figure out a way that all the countries that are willing to cooperate can cooperate in continuing the research and continuing to address the changes in the Arctic.”

Liberal MP Larry Bagnell (Yukon) serves as vice-chair of the International Committee of Parliamentarians from Arctic Nations. He said that even though the U.S. is opposed to climate action, the Council has still made progress on key climate-related issues. Specifically, he referenced the work done by the Council to study and set limits on the amount of black carbon emissions. Like Ms. Duncan and Mr. McKay, he believes the Council should continue working on climate change issues even if the U.S. chooses not to cooperate.

The foreign ministers from each of the eight Arctic Council member-states met from May 6 to 7 in Rovaniemi, Finland. The 11th ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council was initially intended to outline an agenda for balancing climate change challenges with sustainable development of the Arctic’s vast mineral reserves, and publish a joint declaration. The Arctic Council was formed in 1996 and is composed of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. Six organizations representing Indigenous Arctic peoples also have a spot on the table as permanent participants. This was the first time the member states have failed to reach a joint declaration, normally a routine effort.

Instead, the Council produced a “ministerial statement” signed by each of the eight foreign ministers, including U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. The ministerial statement, a short one-page document, spoke in generalities. It referenced maintaining “peace, stability and constructive cooperation,” making the Arctic Council more efficient, and consulting with Indigenous peoples.

The only passage that referenced the environmental challenges facing the Arctic “reaffirmed” the Council’s commitment to the well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic to sustainable development and to the protection of the Arctic environment.

Timo Soini, the Finnish foreign minister and Council chairman, also penned a statement. It used lightly-coded language to express displeasure with the U.S.’s position on climate change. On seven occasions Mr. Soini wrote “a majority of us” recognized and stressed the importance of taking action against the various manifestations of climate change in the Arctic.

As the seven other members of the council were focused on the increasing threat climate change poses to the region, Mr. Pompeo downplayed the potential impact, instead suggesting that the Council look past “environmental research into events that may or may not occur in 100 years.”

Mr. Pompeo instead chose to focus on resource development and potential threats from countries such as China, which is seeking a larger role in Arctic affairs according to its 2018 “China’s Arctic Policy” white paper. Mr. Pompeo said “steady reductions in sea ice are opening new passageways and new opportunities for trade,” and that he could see “Arctic sea lanes become the 21st century Suez and Panama Canals.”

Mr. Pompeo also took a dig at Canada’s Northwest Passage policy, saying “Russia is not the only country making illegitimate claims.”

The disagreement marks the end of Finland’s two-year term as chair, which began in 2017. Each of the eight countries rotates through the chairmanship on a two year cycle. Iceland is set to take the top spot until 2021. Canada was the first chair of the Arctic Council, after it was established by the Ottawa Declaration, heading the body from 1996 to 1998, and again from 2013 to 2015.

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The Hill Times
be a sign of genuine reconciliation

Nunangat is a distinct geographic, an

The Government of Canada can enhance the efficiency and impact of specific federal programs, initiatives, and investments that are intended to benefit Inuit by adopting and implementing an Inuit Nunangat fiscal policy. Such a policy is necessary to ensure that Inuit can fully access federal programs, initiatives, and investments that are intended to benefit our people through an approach that respects and supports our right to self-determination. Inuit are the most knowledgeable about the challenges within our communities and are best positioned to develop and advocate for strategies to address them.

Implementing an Inuit Nunangat fiscal policy fosters a culture of trust, transparency and accountability. The impacts of federal investments, programs, services, and initiatives directed towards Inuit would be better understood, as Inuit would have an integral role in policy creation. Bilateral Inuit-Crown agreements and funding arrangements benefit all Canadians because they prevent provincial and territorial governments from withholding, delaying, or absorbing Inuit taxpayer dollars that are intended to benefit Inuit. Implementing an Inuit Nunangat fiscal policy can improve the efficiency and impact of such investments throughout Inuit Nunangat.

Canada’s regional initiatives for addressing things like climate change are managed by federally established areas such as Quebec, Atlantic Canada, and generally something called “Northeast.” For Inuit, Nunavut and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region would be included in the “Northern” region. Nunavut is lumped in with the province of Quebec, and Nunavut with Atlantic Canada. In contrast, ITK recently released a National Inuit Climate Change Strategy that recognizes the unique priorities of Inuit Nunangat.

Implementing this groundbreaking document and advancement of expertise within our existing democratic governance structure is not only beneficial for Nunavut's people but also in creating some stability for the community. With the new Inuit Crown Partnership Committee, we are seeing an acceptance by officials in Ottawa in co-developing priorities and jointly establishing solutions to complex problems. For example, in October 2018, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans made the decision that the region was inclusive of Inuit Nunangat. It consulted with Inuit leadership throughout an 18-month process to realign its regions within an Inuit Nunangat policy space. That means for the first time the Inuit Nunangat coastline will be treated as an important focal point in the way DFO organizes its work. Inuit were integrated into the conception, drafting, completion and consultation of this process. Inuit Nunangat, and Canada, is better off for it.

There is a space in Confederation for Inuit governance with Inuit land claim agreements as a central part of the framework of that relationship. Acknowledging Inuit Nunangat’s unique political and cultural priority and expertise within our existing democratic governance structure is not only beneficial for Nunavut’s people but also in creating some stability for the community. It is currently studying the feasibility of wind energy there. Though most isolated communities have to contend with fixed costs, such as generators that keep the town running, he says that there is room for renewable energy to counteract some of the negative environmental impacts of diesel.

“What you can do is offset the amount of fuel you are shipping in and reduce the overall impact of burning all that fuel,” Mr. Dares said in a phone interview. “Renewable [energy] is a way to take down some of that cost, especially as you start getting into renewable where the maintenance can be done in the community and it’s close to technology, and also in creating some stability for the community.”

Meanwhile, Canada’s five-year moratorium on oil and gas production in the Arctic, which was part of a 2016 joint announcement by former U.S. President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), has prohibited the development of energy infrastructure projects. One example of its impact was the Polar Silk Road initiative, which seeks to expand China’s influence in the Arctic, includes an investment in Russia’s Yamal liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project, in which China holds a twenty per cent stake.

Meanwhile, Canada’s five-year moratorium on oil and gas production in the Arctic, which was part of a 2016 joint announcement by former U.S. President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), has prohibited the development of energy infrastructure projects. One example of its impact was the Polar Silk Road initiative, which seeks to expand China’s influence in the Arctic, includes an investment in Russia’s Yamal liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project, in which China holds a twenty per cent stake.

By Nina Russell

In a report addressing Canada’s involvement in the Arctic, CEO and chair of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Duane Smith described energy insecurity for remote communities in the North as “a cycle of pollution and poverty.”

Inuvialuit, a region in the western Arctic, suffers from extremely high costs of living due to the price of energy, despite sitting on vast natural gas reserves. This is a prevalent problem for many other Northern regions, some of which are forced to pay exorbitant costs to import diesel and natural gas from B.C.
Our government will continue to work with our territorial, provincial, and Indigenous partners to co-develop priorities and solutions for the North to help grow the northern economy, protect the Arctic environment and enable northerners to reach the quality of life that they rightfully deserve.

The people of the North are a proud people. They have survived thousands of years and many generations on pure strength and determination. Northerners carry a superior knowledge of the lands, waters, and environment in which they have lived for millennia.

As a proud Arctic nation, the North has always been significant in defining who we are as Canadians. They have shaped our national conscience. Symbols like the inukshuk and phrases like ‘We the North,’ are integral to our identity.

The North is not just symbolic to our identity. We often forget that the northern territories cover nearly 40 per cent of Canada’s landmass, and offers unparalleled opportunity for advancement, growth, and prosperity. It is a resource-rich region with breathtaking landscapes. It is home to settlers and Indigenous peoples, who understand the value of the land.

For too long, the decisions made for northerners were made in the south. Our government committed to working with territorial, Indigenous, and local residents in partnership to co-create solutions and initiatives for the North—and that’s what we are doing.

We are working on multiple programs and services to target not only the cost of food but all of the other factors that affect food security. Budget 2019 includes $15-million to establish the Nutrition North Community Initiatives Fund, which will support community-led projects to increase access to nutritious food in northern communities where elders and community members are able to access traditional foods that they otherwise couldn’t.

We know that the challenges facing northerners require a comprehensive solution. Access to affordable, nutritious food is a real challenge for many families in northern isolated communities. The Nutrition North program is only the first step in addressing insecurity in the North. It was designed to reduce the price of nutritious, perishable food in northern isolated communities, and under our government, it has begun to achieve this. Nutrition North alone cannot fix food insecurity. This is why we have added and are continuing to develop other complimentary programs.

If I have learned anything from living in the North and talking to those who call it home, it is that it is not enough to simply close the gap between the North and the South. We must support northerners, their families, and communities, so that they can thrive. That’s why budget 2019 invests $700-million in the North for infrastructure, climate change adaptation and preparation, food security, education, internet access, and more.

Canada’s North is defined by its people, and it is only by investing in people that these regions will thrive. This means that we must continue to invest in innovative health care solutions and mental health initiatives, focusing on building a post-secondary education infrastructure, improving access to education and learning, and protecting the environment from which Indigenous peoples harvest their traditional foods. It means ensuring that people access the quality of life that they deserve and the tools they need to flourish. This is what our government is striving towards, and we understand that this can only be accomplished by working hand-in-hand with all our northern partners.

The Nutrition North program is an example of how we are working with territorial, Indigenous, and provincial partners to co-develop priorities and solutions for the North to help grow the northern economy, protect the Arctic environment and enable northerners to reach the quality of life that they rightfully deserve.

The North has played a significant part in Canada’s history, where all Canadians are beginning to see and embrace the richness of the land and tremendous opportunity that the North brings to this country. As northerners have done for thousands of years, we will continue to move forward with determination, and determine that we have a government that is willing to walk this path alongside us.

Our government will continue to work with our territorial, provincial, and Indigenous partners to co-develop priorities and solutions for the North to help grow the northern economy, protect the Arctic environment and enable northerners to reach the quality of life that they rightfully deserve.

As a northern and Indigenous woman, I truly believe that this is a pivotal moment in Canada’s history, where all Canadians are beginning to see and embrace the richness of the land and tremendous opportunity that the North brings to this country. As northerners have done for thousands of years, we will continue to move forward with determination, and determine that we have a government that is willing to walk this path alongside us.

The people of the North are a proud people. They have survived thousands of years and many generations on pure strength and determination. Northerners carry a superior knowledge of the lands, waters, and environment in which they have lived for millennia.

As a proud Arctic nation, the North has always been significant in defining who we are as Canadians. They have shaped our national conscience. Symbols like the inukshuk and phrases like ‘We the North,’ are integral to our identity.

The North is not just symbolic to our identity. We often forget that the northern territories cover nearly 40 per cent of Canada’s landmass, and offers unparalleled opportunity for advancement, growth, and prosperity. It is a resource-rich region with breathtaking landscapes. It is home to settlers and Indigenous peoples, who understand the value of the land.

For too long, the decisions made for northerners were made in the south. Our government committed to working with territorial, Indigenous, and local residents in partnership to co-create solutions and initiatives for the North—and that’s what we are doing.

We are working on multiple programs and services to target not only the cost of food but all of the other factors that affect food security. Budget 2019 includes $15-million to establish the Nutrition North Community Initiatives Fund, which will support community-led projects to increase access to nutritious food in northern communities where elders and community members are able to access traditional foods that they otherwise couldn’t.

We know that the challenges facing northerners require a comprehensive solution. Access to affordable, nutritious food is a real challenge for many families in northern isolated communities. The Nutrition North program is only the first step in addressing insecurity in the North. It was designed to reduce the price of nutritious, perishable food in northern isolated communities, and under our government, it has begun to achieve this. Nutrition North alone cannot fix food insecurity. This is why we have added and are continuing to develop other complimentary programs.

If I have learned anything from living in the North and talking to those who call it home, it is that it is not enough to simply close the gap between the North and the South. We must support northerners, their families, and communities, so that they can thrive. That’s why budget 2019 invests $700-million in the North for infrastructure, climate change adaptation and preparation, food security, education, internet access, and more.

Canada’s North is defined by its people, and it is only by investing in people that these regions will thrive. This means that we must continue to invest in innovative health care solutions and mental health initiatives, focusing on building a post-secondary education infrastructure, improving access to education and learning, and protecting the environment from which Indigenous peoples harvest their traditional foods. It means ensuring that people access the quality of life that they deserve and the tools they need to flourish. This is what our government is striving towards, and we understand that this can only be accomplished by working hand-in-hand with all our northern partners.

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International interest in the Arctic continues to heat up, is Canada ready?

The Northwest Territories knows and understands the Arctic and the stakes better than most. We are ideally placed to help Canada strengthen its position in the Arctic, like so much this government do no further harm. Secondly, Canada needs to know the North, not just know about it. As a northern nation, Canada should make it a priority to ensure that more of its citizens have an opportunity to experience and know the North first hand, writes N.W.T. Premier Bob McLeod. Photograph by Commons Wikimedia

The Arctic has always been an important symbol for Canada, a geographic statement of place and status in the world as a northern power. Unfortunately, Canada’s interest in and attention to the Arctic has often been just symbolic.

Generations of Canadians and their governments have grown used to thinking of the Arctic as ‘up there somewhere.’ They have been content to let the Arctic take care of itself, secure in the belief that it is a harsh and isolated place which only the local people are interested in. This is a mistake—one that could have significant national and international consequences for Canada.

Canada is alone when it comes to inaction in the Arctic. With enormous opportunities for shipping, research, and resource development, many countries have a vested interest in being able to influence—if not set outright—the terms for what happens in the Arctic, and they are deliberately positioning themselves to be the beneficiaries of whatever rules and policies in the region.

Global powers like China, Russia, the United States, and the European Union are moving fast to extend their influence and control in the Arctic through massive investment, increased marine traffic and partnerships with traditional and non-traditional allies to advance Arctic projects and positioning.

This is not happening by accident. This is the result of deliberate government planning and decisions, often at the highest executive levels, intended to enact national policy in the Arctic.

Canada needs to know the North, not just know about it. As a northern nation, Canada should make it a priority to ensure that more of its citizens have an opportunity to experience and know the North first hand, writes N.W.T. Premier Bob McLeod. Photograph by Commons Wikimedia

Canada needs to know the North, not just know about it. As a northern nation, Canada should make it a priority to ensure that more of its citizens have an opportunity to experience and know the North first hand. Government policy makers need to be headed towards the territories if they want to truly understand the geopolitical and economic dimensions of national policy and decisions. Researchers and scientists must work with willing partners nationally to develop a visionary, long-term plan to turn our northern ambitions into a global reality.

NDP House Leader Peter Julian

Opinion

There were two problems with Justin Trudeau’s recent apology to the Inuit for the federal government’s treatment of tuberculosis patients. Firstly, it left the Dene and others who suffered under similar policies feeling for forgotten again. An apology should do no further harm. Secondly, like so much this government does, the apology was a symbolic gesture without any of the action a real apology demands. An apology that doesn’t address the North’s current tuberculosis crisis is hardly an apology at all.

The chronic housing shortage in Nunavut is the cause of Nunavut’s current tuberculosis crisis. Firstly, it left the tuberculosis patients. Secondly, it left the federal government more than $10 million a year treating tuberculosis, but the Nunavummiut living in crowded homes are put at risk of contracting the disease. The Liberal response has been to announce amounts of money to be spent over long periods of time, amounting to band-aid levels of annual spending.

The other two territories haven’t been spared a housing crisis. In the Yukon, vacancy rates can be as low as 1.9 per cent for single bedroom apartments. Residents of Whitehorse have said that unless you earn a government salary, you are priced out of the rental market and put in a situation of housing insecurity.

The Northwest Territories has 928 people on a waiting list for public housing. This represents more than two per cent of the territory’s population. One of those waiting was a man named Emmanuel Vachon, from the hamlet of Fort Providence. He froze to death last November, while sleeping in a tent.

Many of this government’s failures spring from their unwillingness to generate needed revenues by eliminating the tax advantages the wealthiest Canadians enjoy. When it comes to northern issues, however, the problem goes deeper. This government has no vision for the North. A University of Toronto study recently showed that 46 per cent of households in Nunavut were experiencing food insecurity in 2016, up from 33.1 per cent in 2011, when Nutrition North was introduced. Yvonne Jones, the MP responsible for the program has acknowledged that Nutrition North won’t solve food security on its own. But the government has failed to articulate any plan to meaningfully supplement the program.

This paucity of ideas and resolve from the government is particularly dispiriting because it is out of step with the wealth of creativity and determination from Northerners themselves. Talk with any Northerners and you will hear fantastic solutions for building environmentally and financially sustainable communities to help end the North’s food insecurity. Too often however, the federal government acts as a barrier to innovation.

In 2011, Liberal MPs like Justin Trudeau, Dominic LeBlanc, and Yukon MP Larry Bagnell voted for NDP MP Dennis Bevington’s bill to create a set formula for the amount of deficit the government of the Northwest Territories is able to run in a given year. Ever since, however, these MPs have maintained a system which the territories endure without complaint and the federal government fails to use. The territorial governments have responded by having resulted in the troubling practice of the territorial governments turning to public-private partnerhips to get major infrastructure projects built. Yellowknife’s new Stanton Hospital will be financed, designed and operated by a for-profit company—something many in Canada’s south would never dream of under our public health-care system.

Northerners have also been some of the strongest advocates for meaningful action to mitigate climate change. Sheila Watt-Cloutier and others sounded the alarm. We know that northern communities are particularly at risk from the impacts of climate change, with the North warming at a higher rate than the rest of Canada. Northerners are anxious to reduce their own carbon emissions, but the government has offered little help. The NDP understands that the federal government must work with Indigenous and Northern communities to help end the North’s dependence on diesel and secure a more sustainable future.

The Liberals love to invoke the North, symbolically: it’s the holy grail of speeches. But when it comes to implementing a vision and making government work for the people’s lives, this Liberal government is absent above the 60th parallel. NDP House Leader Peter Julian, who represents New Westminster-Burnaby, B.C., is his party’s energy critic and deputy finance critic.

NDP House Leader Peter Julian

Opinion

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured May 8, 2019, in Ottawa. NDP MP Peter Julian says there were two problems with the prime minister’s recent apology to the Inuit for the federal government’s treatment of tuberculosis patients. The Hill Times

Liberal action absent North of the 60th

People sustain economies and are important to global policy, but within only 115,000 people spread across all three territories, Canada does not have the population or physical presence to turn the North’s resource and trade potential into national wealth and prosperity. Climatic changes and increased marine traffic requires a larger and more nimble Coast Guard and rescue presence locally.

Finally, Canada needs to know the North, not just know about it. As a northern nation, Canada should make it a priority to ensure that more of its citizens have an opportunity to experience and know the North first hand. Government policy makers need to be headed towards the territories if they want to truly understand the geopolitical and economic dimensions of national policy and decisions. Researchers and scientists must work with willing partners nationally to develop a visionary, long-term plan to turn our northern ambitions into a global reality.

Bob McLeod is the premier of the Northwest Territories

The Hill Times

Policy Briefing North

Liberal action absent North of the 60th

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured May 8, 2019, in Ottawa. NDP MP Peter Julian says there were two problems with the prime minister’s recent apology to the Inuit for the federal government’s treatment of tuberculosis patients. The Hill Times
Agreeing to disagree has worked well for decades and decades; there is still no compelling reason for this stance to change. Mike Pompeo is simply restating, perhaps loudly and brashly, the status quo.

The Northwest Passage: status quo

Andrea Charron, PhD
Opinion

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced in early May 2019 that Canada’s claims to the Northwest Passage were illegitimate. While perhaps less than tactfully expressed, this is the U.S.’s official view of the Northwest Passage. Canada’s perspective is different of course, but the impasse of perspectives is long-standing. There are still no conditions or circumstances compelling a change in either position to date.

The Northwest Passage is made up of several channels. Some are far less suitable to vessel traffic than others because they are narrower or shallower or perpetually ice jammed. The Northwest Passage does join two high seas (the Beaufort and the Atlantic) but it is not “an international waterway” as expressed by Pompeo—legally, this has no meaning. The U.S. tends to use this expression to mean a strait used for international navigation or waters in which navigational rights exist. Canada disputes that the Northwest Passage is a strait because it has seldom been “used” for international navigation; maritime traffic simply isn’t yet in the numbers to support the U.S. position.

Underlying the impasse are two different ways to calculate maritime boundaries both of which are enshrined in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The U.S. prefers to calculate maritime boundaries using a normal baseline method. Essentially, one draws an imaginary line from the low water-line mark that matches the undulations of the coastline and then this line becomes the reference point to measure out 12 nautical miles (M) from the land to establish territorial waters and from the baseline out to 200 M to establish the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Canada (indeed 80-plus states) prefers the “straight baseline” method meant for coastlines that are deeply indented and cut into, or if there is a fringe of islands along the coast. By joining appropriate points along the coast, one can accommodate unique geography. The waters enclosed within the baselines become the internal waters of the coastal state.

The U.S. may complain about excessive straight baseline use by Canada, but its straight baselines, which enclose the Arctic Archipelago, are not “straight baselines,” per se. The baselines drawn indicate the outer limit of Canada’s claimed historic waters, with the additional assertion that as historic waters, there exists no navigational rights. The historic part hinges on indigenous use and also the authority that Canada has exercised over the Northwest Passage and the acquiescence by other states to that authority. When Canada made NOR-DREG—a maritime vessel traffic reporting system—mandatory in 2010, this was an example of exercising authority. Prescribed vessels (domestic or foreign) must submit information and seek authorization by Canada prior to entering the NORTREG area. It is therefore not surprising that the U.S. protested this change to the mandatory nature of NOR-DREG given that it challenges the U.S.’s insistence that the Northwest Passage is a strait and that coastal state authorization is, therefore, not required.

The U.S. has never agreed to or liked the straight baseline method of calculation and there are many legal scholars who decry the excessive claims of straight baselines, but this is not particular to the Northwest Passage. Further, the U.S. has never said that the Northwest Passage is not Canadian. Indeed, however one references the Northwest Passage, it does not, change the Canadianess of it or the responsibility of Canada to ensure the protection of its people and ecosystem from pollution. Canada is wise to plan for more shipping especially beginning in 2020. The new mandatory international code of safety for ships operating in polar waters (Polar Code) came into effect Jan. 1, 2017, but ships were given a year’s grace period to abide by the new regulations; hence the voyage of the Crystal Serenity through the Northwest Passage in the summer of 2016 and 2017, but no longer. Vessels are now obliged to meet the safety codes and so the expectation is that only polar-compliant ships, especially cruise ships like the purpose-built Crystal Endeavor, will seek to transit the Northwest Passage in the summer of 2020.

Transport Canada, with support from research conducted by Dr. Jackie Dawson, is working to establish Arctic corridors (a sort of marine highway) and regulations to limit damage to the environment and to communities (for example the eroding effect of bow waves, noise pollution and disruption to fishing and hunting roots of Indigenous peoples) and to allow for the prioritization of navigational aids. Such precautions, in addition to continuing to chart the NWP and provide better bathymetric data, are necessary regard less of how one categorizes the NWP.

Despite the categorization impasse, Canada and the U.S. continue to manage this disagreement. The 1988 Agreement on Arctic Cooperation negotiated by Mulroney and Reagan after the USS Polar Sea transited the NWP in 1985 was the example, but it is limited to Canadian and American icebreakers only. It includes five very short paragraphs of which the final one states: “Nothing in this agreement of cooperative endeavour between Arctic neighbours and friends nor any practice thereunder affects the respective positions of the governments of the United States and of Canada on the Law of the Sea in this or other maritime areas or their respective positions regarding third parties.” Agreeing to disagree has worked well for decades and decades; there is still no compelling reason for this stance to change. Pompeo is simply restating, perhaps loudly and brashly, the status quo.

Andrea Charron, PhD, is director of the Centre for Defence and Security Studies (CDSSS) and associate professor of political studies at the University of Manitoba.

The Hill Times

500 million reasons to build the Grays Bay Road and Port.

The proposed Grays Bay Road and Port is the game-changer Nunavut needs. It will open up the Kitikmeot region and finally give us access to rich, Inuit-owned mining deposits. Economic studies project the road and port will provide over 1200 construction jobs for 6 years and over 1400 operations jobs for 11 years. Moreover, it will lead to an increase in our Gross Domestic Product of over 500 million dollars per year. That’s right—500 million dollars. That means the creation of many jobs—not just in mining, but in virtually every other sector, across the territory.
Kenney’s federal campaigning should be limited to carbon tax and pipelines, or he should run federally: Conservative MP Tilson

I was clear in the campaign that if the Trudeau government continues with its current policy direction on these issues, like C-48, C-69, the imposition of the federal carbon tax et cetera, that we will work openly to have a new federal government, to defeat the Trudeau government,” says Jason Kenney in an email to The Hill Times.

Continued from page 24

Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney, who is also a former Conservative MP and minister in Stephen Harper’s cabinet. So, Mr. Tilson said, he won’t be part of Mr. Kenney’s campaign team.

“My view is if you are in the province [a premier of any political stripe], if you want to run on a policy issue, you shouldn’t have your friends in the federal cabinet,” Mr. Tilson said.

It’s not unusual for premiers to campaign and support their federal cousins in federal elections. The most recent example is the last general election, when then-Onario premier Kathleen Wynne helped out Justin Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) Liberals in the vote-rich province of Ontario, home to more than one-third of the House’s seats. In Ontario, all federal and provincial ridings have the same geographical boundaries. Also, riding association members, executives, and volunteers for the three major national and provincial parties are almost the same, which provided a huge boost to the then-third place Liberal party in 2015. In media interviews and speeches, Ms. Wynne stressed the importance of federal elections, especially if the Conservatives win.

In the 2008 election, Newfoundland and Labrador’s then-PC premier Danny Williams, ran an “anyone but Harper” campaign in his province. Mr. Williams made national headlines arguing that the then-prime minister could not be trusted, and that he betrayed the province by helping on a promise as opposition leader that he wouldn’t claw back equalization payments from royalties on petroleum resources.

Since his election as Ontario premier with a majority government last year, Doug Ford has been blasting Mr. Trudeau on the carbon tax and other policy issues. Last week, the Ontario legislature extended its summer recess by one month and now will return only after the October federal election. With this move, the provincial Progressive Conservatives are facing criticism from opposition parties that the premier has made this manoeuvre to help out the federal Conservatives in the fall, by freeing up MPs and staff to stuff them.

Meanwhile, the United Conservative Party won a thumping majority government in the Alberta election in October, and the environment were some of the key issues in the election. In the provincial campaign, Mr. Kenney blamed the federal government and then-premier Rachel Notley’s provincial government for the downturn in the economy, resulting in thousands of job losses, the imposition of the carbon tax, and the delay to the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline.

Through his spokesperson, Mr. Kenney told The Hill Times that he promised in his provincial campaign that if the Liberals did not change the position of the carbon tax, and its legislative provisions such as C-48, the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act, and C-69, the environmental assessment reform bill, he would campaign to help defeat the Liberals in the federal election.

“Obviously, my primary responsibility has to be to get Alberta’s economy back on track,” said Mr. Kenney in an email through his deputy director of communications, Christina Myatt. “But I was clear in the campaign that if the Trudeau government continues with its current policy direction on these issues, like C-48, C-69, the imposition of the federal carbon tax et cetera, that we will work openly to have a new federal government, to defeat the Trudeau government. As I said in the campaign, if they continue on that policy track, the consequences would be devastating for Alberta.”

Ms. Myatt told The Hill Times that she couldn’t comment as to why specifically Mr. Kenney was planning on doing in terms of campaigning in the October federal election.

“No determinations have been made about the extent of Premier Kenney’s major urban centres, especially in the GTA, and the Greater Vancouver Area, attending community cultural events, and thereby building valuable contacts in these communities. He’s credited with playing a key role in the surge in voter support from visible minority communities for the Conservatives that helped the then-governing party win more seats in the 2008 election, and later on a majority government in 2011. In that election, then-Conservative MP Rahim Jaffer nicknamed Mr. Kenney the “minister for carry in a hurry.”

After the last federal election, Mr. Kenney quipped the federal political arena to move to Ottawa to urge the province’s major right-of-centre parties, as that division had played a critical role in winning a majority government in the province. His efforts at merging the provincial PCs and the Wildrose Party yielded fruitful results in the April election, when the United Conservative Party won a majority government.

Conservative insider Tim Powers said in an interview that Mr. Kenney could prove to be a valuable asset for the federal Conservatives, as the premier has a national network of connections, especially in different cultural groups. He said because of his past work in the federal arena, Conservatives view Mr. Kenney as “a serious politician,” and this will provide more credibility to Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-QAppellee, Sask.).

He said the premier campaigning would also help the Conservative leader consolidate his support base internally amongst “doubters” who weren’t previously sure if Mr. Scheer could form government after the election.

“It may also sew up doubters in the Conservative Party who weren’t previously sure if Andrew Scheer was the person to lead them. To have Kenney proselytizing on that is probably helpful for Andrew Scheer,” said Mr. Powers, vice chair of Summa Strategies, and a veteran political commentator. “So, it helps him.”

Mr. Powers said it remains to be seen if stewards who played an important role in the United Conservative Party’s election win in Alberta will also take time off from work in the lead up to or during the campaign to help out their federal cousins.

As for any political gains for Mr. Kenney, Mr. Powers said being the premier of Alberta, Mr. Kenney is one of the most influential premiers in the country, but a role in the federal election could give him more clout in negotiating with Ottawa on federal-provincial issues. With the possibility of some of the provinces bringing in the federal election could give him more leverage in negotiating with Ottawa on federal-provincial issues. With the possibility of some of the provinces bringing in their own carbon taxes, the Conservative leader could also benefit by bringing in the federal Conservative Party to power by defeating the Liberals.

“Empowers him and his negotiations with the federal government,” said Mr. Powers.

He enjoys campaigning. He believes in the work he put into the federal Conservative Party, he wants to try and help.”

In 2015, the Trudeau Liberals won four seats in Alberta: two in Calgary and two in Edmonton. In 2017, Darshan Kang (Calgary Skysview, Alta.) was elected as a Liberal, resigned from the caucus to sit as an Independent after facing allegations of sexual harassment from one of his female staffers. An investigation substantiated some of the allegations.

Mr. Kang, who had won his riding by a 6.1 per cent margin, is not running in October. Another Alberta Liberal MP won their ridings by razor-thin margins. Liberal MP Kent Hehr (Calgary Centre, Alta.) won by 1.2 per cent; Liberal MP Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Alta.) won by 2.2 per cent; and Natural Resources Minister Amarjeet Sohi (Edmonton Mill Woods, Alta.) carried his riding by a margin of 0.2 per cent of the vote.

Of the 34 federal ridings in Alberta in 2015, the Conservatives won 29, the Liberals four, and NDP one. In 2011, the federal Liberals failed to win any seat in the province, and the Conservatives won all but Linda Duncan’s seat in Edmonton Strathcona. Ms. Duncan, the lone NDP MP in the province, is not seeking re-election.

Considering the Liberal Party’s current unpopularity, partly due to the delay to the start of the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline, senior Liberal insiders appear resigned to the strong possibility they could lose all four ridings in the upcoming election.

Meanwhile, Conservative MPs interviewed were in agreement that Mr. Kenney would remain in Alberta to campaign for the fall election. They said his connections in Alberta and in other provincial centres could help them win close ridings, especially if they bring an increase in support from different cultural communities.

“Every Canadian has the right to campaign for whatever party they feel like,” said Conservative MP John Nuter (Peachland-West Bench, B.C. Ont.) in an interview with The Hill Times.

“As a great Canadian when he was part of our team and he has so much to help with,” said Ms. Vecchio. “We’re talking about building Canada, having strong provincial and federal relationships, I’m totally cool with it.”

Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia-Lambton, Ont.) said Mr. Kenney could be of help to the federal Conservatives in the GTA area, where the former MP has extensive contacts.

“It’s a free country. I know that Jason has a lot of communities that he interacted with, especially ethnic communities around the 905 area, and so all help is appreciated,” said Ms. Gladu.

“He’s passionate about getting the Conservatives elected federally,” said Mr. Jaffer. “He is clear in the campaign that if the Trudeau government continues with its current policy direction on these issues, like C-48, C-69, the imposition of the federal carbon tax et cetera, that we will work openly to have a new federal government, to defeat the Trudeau government,” says Jason Kenney in an email to The Hill Times.

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Liberals prepared to sit on trade bill, recall Parliament in summer if needed; some Senators warn Bill C-100 shouldn’t be rushed in Upper Chamber

The Senate won’t ‘stand in the way’ of the ratification of the new NAFTA, says Conservative Senate Whip Don Plett.

Opposition once it reaches the Senate. The bill’s sponsor, Independent Senator Peter Boehm (Ontario), said he expects it to go through the Red Chamber ‘fairly quickly.’ Conservative Senator Don Plett (Landmark, Man.), his party’s Senate whip, said his party won’t block the bill when it arrives.

Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) told reporters May 31 that Canada wanted to “move in tandem” with the U.S. and Mexico to ratify the deal. Speaking on a not-for-attribution basis, a government official told The Hill Times that the government would not advance Bill C-100 before the U.S. and Mexico were ready for ratification. The official said Ms. Freeland’s office has held meetings with House leaders and Senate leaders to discuss the bill.

U.S. Democrats have not yet worked out a deal to support ratifying the trade deal with President Donald Trump’s executive. The Trump White House started the clock on a minimum 30-day consultation period on legislation to ratify the deal on May 30, Bloomberg reported. Democrat House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi has criticized the lack of enforcement mechanisms on labour provisions in the new NAFTA.

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has asked the House of Commons, the slower it should go through the Senate,” Sen. Griffin said.

“If something’s hurried through the House, we do have a duty in the Senate to have a sober second thought,” she added, citing remarks by veteran Liberal Senator Percy Downe (Charlottetown, P.E.I.).

Sen. Downe said the Senate needs to find the appropriate balance between rushing and delaying legislation in an April 11 speech.

“Over the years, Senators have been urged, pleaded with, and otherwise encouraged by members of successive governments to pass legislation as quickly as possible,” he said. “Sometimes, many times, it is precisely our job not to rush.”

Sen. Downe told The Hill Times that he isn’t concerned the government will want Bill C-100 to go through the Senate, saying he thinks Senators will be given time to review it.

It took Bill C-79—the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) implementation bill—six sitting days to pass through the Senate last year, including three Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee meetings over three sitting days.

Sen. Plett told The Hill Times last week “We have no indication at all that [C-100 is getting here before some time mid-summer.”

Clearly the Conservative Party believes that the new trade agreement is not as good as the old one. But a trade agreement is a trade agreement, and I don’t think the Senate is going to stand in the way of having it move forward,” he said.

If we get called back [in the summer], we will be here,” Sen. Boehm said he expects C-100 to proceed through the Senate “fairly smoothly and fairly quickly,” given that trade implementation bills cannot be amended in Parliament.

He said the looming end of the sitting could factor into the speed with which the bill goes through the Senate.

Recalling the Senate is something that Senators want to avoid, Sen. Boehm said, but he added Bill C-100 is “very important” and should be ‘dealt with.’

Independent Senator Raymonde Saint-Germain (De la Vallière, Que.), the deputy leader for the largest group in the Upper
For over two decades, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA) has remained an internationally-recognized model for public-Indigenous co-management of lands, waters and other resources in the Northwest Territories.

The proposed amendments to the MVRMA in Bill C-88 will further improve this world-class system, increase clarity around responsible resource development, and reaffirm Canada’s Treaty commitments.

The implications of not passing the bill are significant: undermining reconciliation efforts across the North and continued economic uncertainty for all NWT residents.

We urge all Parliamentarians to take swift action and see this legislation passed as soon as possible.
**Fight over nuclear waste dump downriver standing behind the**

**News Ottawa River**

**BY PETER MAZEREUW & BEATRICE PAZ**

A proposed dump for low-level nuclear waste near the Ottawa River has stirred up opposition from community groups, environmentalists, and municipalities worried the waste could leach into the river that flows past about 50 federal ridings, including Ottawa Centre, the home of Parliament Hill and Canada’s environment minister, Catherine McKenna. Members of Parliament from riverside ridings closest to the site of the proposed dump at the sprawling nuclear laboratories at Chalk River, Ont., are largely staying out of the fray. That includes Ms. McKenna, who has the final say over an environmental assessment for the project that is being conducted through a Harper-era assessment process, which she and an independent review panel have discarded.

While concerned citizens groups fret about what they see as a risk to their health and the environment, the company behind the project, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, says it is safe. The low-level radioactive material that would go into the dump isn’t powerful enough to pose a threat to human health or the environment once it is contaminated—naturally flows away from the Ottawa river, not toward it, and does so very slowly, allowing the company to intervene, and clean it if need be, she said. Several Liberal MPs from ridings just downstream of the site declined to comment on, or be interviewed about the proposed project, and Natural Resource Minister Amarjeet Sohi (Edmonton Mill Woods, Alta.) also turned down an interview. Two other Liberal MPs organized or held information sessions on the subject for their constituents.

Ms. McKenna told The Hill Times during a press conference that she “heard” concerns from her constituents about the project, but didn’t say whether she shared them. Her office did not respond to numerous interview requests on the subject.

The Ottawa Riverkeeper environmental group and the NDP candidate in Ottawa Centre, Emilie Taman, are among those who say they will raise the issue during the upcoming election campaign. Municipal politicians in Montreal and Gatineau, Que., have already expressed their opposition. CNL staff, meanwhile, are trying to spread the word about the safety and safeguards planned to keep the proposed dump from harming the environment, or people around and downstream from Chalk River.

No ‘public trust’ in assessment system

The Near Surface Disposal Facility to hold the low-level nuclear waste is being proposed by Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL). It is part of a complicated arrangement of private and public organizations created under the previous Conservative federal government, which privatized the operation of the Chalk River nuclear facilities that had been run by Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL), a Crown corporation, in 2013.

Under the new model, the part of AECL that ran the labs was shrunk down to a shell of its former self, with most of its employees transferred to CNL. The government pays CNL to run the Chalk River facilities, and AECL—and by extension, the federal government—keeps both the assets and liabilities tied to the site.

CNL is owned by a consortium of companies that mounted a bid for the right to run Chalk River. It includes Quebec’s SNC-Lavalin and U.S. engineering firms Fluor and Jacobs, which call themselves the Canadian Nuclear Energy Alliance.

The Near Surface Disposal Facility, commonly abbreviated as NSDF, is three years into an independent impact assessment overseen by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC), a regulator for the nuclear industry.

It started the assessment in 2016, months after Ms. McKenna was sworn in as chair of CNSC officials would still play a role, occupying some of the seats on review panels. The project maintained that CNSC be stripped of its role conducting assessments on nuclear projects.

Ms. McKenna tabled a bill in Parliament, C-69, which did just that. An omnibus bill that has been subject to consultation by Conservative politicians, industry, and some environmentalists, C-69 would put the power over assessments into the hands of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, which would rename it to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada. CNSC officials would still play a role, occupying some of the seats on review panels.

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In the meantime, however, the NSDF nuclear dump proposal is being evaluated under the old assessment system. When asked about the project at a press conference on the banks of the Ottawa River in late May, Ms. McKenna didn’t take a position on whether the proposed dump posed a threat to public health or the environment, or on whether it should undergo a new assessment under the system laid out in her bill.

“I’ve heard those concerns from residents of Ottawa Centre and more broadly,” she said, when asked about concerns raised by some of her constituents.

“I know there’s been consultations, and that this is being run by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. This is part of the reason I believe that there are concerns, has to go to the history,” she said, referencing Bill C-69 and the previous Conservative government’s role in introducing the current assessment process.

“I think, in the longer term, we need to rebuild trust, but certainly, this is a file I’m watching closely. It is in the hands of an independent regulator, but certainly, making sure that people’s concerns are heard and are addressed from a science perspective is something very important to me,” she said.

When asked whether the NSDF project should be put through the new assessment process laid out in Bill C-69, once it passes into law, Ms. McKenna was noncommittal, calling the bill a top priority for her government.

“This [proposed project] is under the old process. That is the law. But as I say, this is something both as minister of Environment and Climate Change [Kathleen Wynne] and also as Minister of Parliament, Ottawa Centre, that I’m looking at very closely,” she said.

When asked whether a new
getting political, but Liberals project—or staying quiet

Continued from page 28

review process was in store for the project, CNL spokesperson Pat Quinn told The Hill Times, during a tour of the facilities. “That’s up to the minister.”

“We will follow whatever regulations are in place at the time,” said Ms. Vickerd.

More transparency needed on what CNL considers low-level waste, experts say

In the face of public concerns that one per cent of the waste in the engineered mound would be intermediate-level waste, Ms. Vickerd said, CNL has since toned down its public statements, limiting it to low-level waste.

According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a near-surface disposal facility doesn’t have the capacity to safely contain and isolate intermediate-level waste, which, by its definition, has long-lived radionuclides. Such waste, it says, has to be buried underground, by up to a few hundred metres.

Michael Stephens is a former AECL employee whose career in the nuclear industry spanned 25 years, including 16 years at the Chalk River labs, where he helped oversee the decommissioning of nuclear waste. He is one among several retired AECL employees who have decried the project as environmentally unsound.

Mr. Stephens said his main contention with NSDF is the criteria CNL is using to determine what the mound can hold. “What bothered me from the outset was originally the proposal [called] for intermediate-level waste [to be dumped],” he said. “That, by definition, is a non-starter.”

Gordon Edwards, president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, a non-profit organization that aims to educate the public on nuclear-energy issues, said the lab seems “meticulously” characterizes “all the waste that is expected to be generated.”

CNL, he said, “will develop characterization plans that comply with the proposed NSDF waste acceptance criteria.” Its criteria, which the company said conforms to regulatory guidance, is still pending approval from CNSC.

What qualifies as low-level waste, Mr. Stephens said, should be limited to materials that are “only slightly [more] radioactive than the world is normally.”

“They’re trying to make this facility do too much by allowing a wide range of contaminants,” he said. “They seem to be trying to put long-lived, quantitatively more radioactive material in there.”

Another concern for him is the plan to transport and dump the waste of other decommissioned plants, including from Whiteshell.

The mound itself will be filled in over a period of about 50 years, before being capped off and closed over an additional 30 years. Within about 10 years after that—roughly 2130—the radioactive materials in the mound will have decayed to roughly the same level of radioactivity as is in the bedrock in the surrounding countryside, according to CNL.

Put another way, someone could, in theory—this would not be allowed under the plan—start a farm on top of the dirt covering the waste dump in the year 2130, raising crops and drawing water from a well, without receiving an unhealthy dose of radiation, said Ms. Vickerd.

Metro Montreal.

Gatineau oppose project

Much of the opposition to the proposed waste dump is material contaminated from being in the presence of radioactive material, including parts of old, demolished buildings where decades of nuclear research took place; safety clothing worn by scientists handling nuclear materials; and sand and dirt from sites where nuclear waste was, and remains, buried in trenches in years past.

About five per cent of the waste will be brought in from other sites where nuclear work is being done in Canada, all of it classified as low-level by Canadian guidelines, say CNL officials.

Metro Montreal.

Gatineau oppose project

The mound will also include earth and sand used to cover nuclear waste dumped into trenches on the Chalk River grounds in years past, when safety guidelines weren’t as stringent. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Some of the waste that would end up in the NSDF mound includes gloves and other protective gear worn by scientists handling radioactive materials, which get dumped temporarily into red bins like this one, in one of the CNL labs. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

operate a wastewater treatment plant to purify water flowing away from the dump. Few companies in Canada carry on operations for a hundred years or more; if CNL folds, the Government of Canada—which is already funding CNL—will be responsible for dealing with the dump.

CNL has been roughly 200 information sessions for members of the public concerned about the project, said Mr. Quinn.

Still, concerns persist among groups of citizens and city councilors with an eye on the project. The Montreal Metropolitan Community, including 82 local mayors, unanimously adopted a motion opposing the NSDF last year, over concerns that it could pollute the Ottawa River, which feeds into the St. Lawrence that flows through the city, CBC reported.

The City of Gatineau did the same.

Some citizen groups have voiced concern about the possibility of nuclear waste from the city, CBC reported.

The mound being washed into the river if extreme floods spill over its banks. That’s almost impossible, according to CNL; the proposed site of the mound
Fight over nuclear waste dump getting political, but Liberals downriver standing behind the project—or staying quiet

Continued from page 29

who will be running against Ms. McKenna, said the issue has come up during canvassing, and is of concern to constituents, even as many likely “don’t have a deep understanding of the issue.”

“You can have every safety precaution in place, but, because the consequences of an unforeseen leak or contamination of the river are so catastrophic, I think it’s fair for the public to be asking questions,” she said. “I would have questions about the independence of the regulator. … It seems to be very close with the industry.”

When constituents approached her with concerns about the proposal after it was announced, Conservative MP Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, Ont.)—who represents the ridings that host Chalk River and many CNL employees—said she reached out to CNSC’s president, Mark Lesinski, for answers.

“They were concerned that there would be waste coming to the industry. Ms. Gallant said, she isn’t concerned about the regulatory process. “I would be more confident in CNSC having the final say, because the whole nuclear industry is dependent on their doing their job,” she said.

Liberal MP Greg Fergus, whose riding, Hull-Aylmer, Que., is situated along the Ottawa River, said he held two town hall meetings on the project in response to constituents’ concerns. Some 200 people attended overall. CNSC officials were called to field their questions, many of which centered on the technology that would be used to ensure radioactive chemicals would not leak into river.

Asked whether he’s concerned about whether the CNSC will only conduct a formal environmental assessment process over a final project proposal, “he said.

While Mr. Fergus said it’s more than a vocal minority that has concerns over the proposal, Mr. Amos said it’s too early to tell whether it will figure as a ballot-box issue. Liberal MP Andrew Leslie (Orleans, Ont.) sent a statement to The Hill Times in response to emailed questions about the CNSC project.

“The health and safety of Canadi ans and the protection of the environment are our top priorities. “As part of the ongoing process, members of the public, as well as local communities and elected officials have been engaged and informed. All of the input received is being carefully considered.

“Our nuclear regulator, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is peer-reviewed and world-renowned. It always puts safety first. “The CNSC will only approve projects if it concludes that they are safe for people and the environment, both now and in the future.”

Bloc Québécois MP Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, Que.) said her party’s environment critic, said the idea of constructing a mound of radioactive waste close to the river poses an “unacceptable” risk to the water supply.

Though the issue isn’t on the radar of many of Ms. Pauzé’s constituents, her concerns stem from the fact that the Ottawa River feeds into the St. Lawrence River, which is located near her riding in a suburb in Montreal.

What’s more, she said, the project is being overseen by a private consortium, whose profits are driven by profit first, rather than public safety considerations. Mr. Sohi, who, as natural resources minister, is responsible for oversight of the nuclear industry, was not available for an interview view of the CNSC, according to spokesperson Vanessa Adams.

Liberal MP Karen McCrimmon (Kanata-Carleton, Ont.), whose riding sits just downriver from the site declined to comment via her office.

Emailed questions about the project sent to Liberal MPs Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West-Nepean), Mona Fortier (Ottawa-Vanier, Ont.), and Anthony Drouin (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, Ont.) were received, their offices confirmed, but not answered.

Liberal MP Steven MacKinnon’s (Quebec, Que.) office responded to the questions about his views on the project by saying he was not available for an interview. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission did not respond to questions emailed by The Hill Times.
Conservative Leader Scheer makes changes to his OLO communications team

Former Doug Ford staffer Veronica Green and Simon Jeffries have now officially joined Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer’s communications team.

Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer recently made some changes to the communications team line-up in his Official Opposition Leader’s Office, with two former advisers to Ontario Premier Doug Ford marking their first day on the job last week.

News that two of Mr. Ford’s communications aides—Veronica Green and Simon Jeffries—would be making their way to Ottawa to work in Mr. Scheer’s OLO first broke over Twitter on May 16, when Larissa Water, executive director of communications to the premier, tweeted that she was “happy that our amazing team members” would be joining the “future PM @AndrewScheer’s office to help play their part to get our country on track.” The OLO “couldn’t have picked a better date to join their office,” she added.

Ms. Green and Mr. Jeffries both officially started on the job in the Conservative OLO as associate director of strategic communications and associate director of media relations to Mr. Scheer, respectively, on June 3. Ms. Green had previously been deputy director of communications to Mr. Ford at Queen’s Park since October 2018, and before then was a strategic communications consultant for Blueprint Public Relations in Toronto. She’s also previously done research work with consumer intelligence firm Manu/Matchbox’s public affairs team, and briefly worked as a junior policy officer with Transport Canada in 2014 and as a junior communications officer for Public Safety Canada.

She’s got a bachelor’s degree in political science from Queen’s University and a master’s degree in journalism from Carleton University.

Mr. Jeffries, meanwhile, had been director of media relations to Mr. Ford since June 2018, starting right after Ontario’s Progressive Conservative government was elected to power. During the campaign, he’d been part of the war room’s rapid response and media relations team.

Mr. Jeffries first began tackling communications for the Ontario Progressive Conservatives in 2015, when he joined then-Ontario official opposition leader Patrick Brown’s office at Queen’s Park as a communications and rapid response adviser. In January 2018, after now-Ontario Finance Minister Vic Fedeli became interim leader following Mr. Brown’s resignation amid sexual harassment allegations, he was promoted to the title of press secretary in the office. Mr. Fedeli was elected a party leader in March 2018.

In other experience, Mr. Jeffries was also previously part of the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservative Party’s 2015 campaign war room’s rapid response team. He studied for a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies and international development at the University of Waterloo. While at the school, he served for a term as president of the Waterloo University Conservatives association.

Kelsie Chlason, who previously held the title of associate director of media relations in Mr. Scheer’s OLO, is now associate director of rapid response. A former director of communications and issues management to then-Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency minister of state Rob Moore, she’s been in the Conservative leader’s office for a number of years, starting as a communications officer under then-interim leader Rona Ambrose.

Vincent Rousseau, previously both assistant director of media relations and French press secretary to the leader, is now solely focused on his latter duties. A former Quebec regional affairs adviser in Stephen Harper’s office as prime minister and a tour organizer for former Conservative Quebec lieutenant Denis Lebel during the 2015 election, Ms. Rousseau returned in the OLO as a policy adviser under Ms. Ambrose.

She’ll be working in tandem with Daniel Schow, who is Mr. Scheer’s English press secretary. Mr. Schow also previously wore two hats in the office, as both press secretary and executive assistant to the leader. In turn, caucus liaison and regional adviser for Ontario Charlie Boldman has switched roles and is now Mr. Scheer’s new executive assistant.

Mr. Boldman joined the OLO team last fall and was previously Mr. Scheer’s parliamentary assistant in his capacity as the Conservative MP for Regina-Qu’Appelle, Sask. For his part, Mr. Schow first joined Mr. Scheer’s leader’s office in August 2017 and before then was a constituency assistant to Conservative MP Garnett Genuis, who represents Sherwood Park-Fort Saskatchewan, Alta.

Matthew Clancy and Meye Fung remain in place as press secretaries for the Conservative shadow cabinet (its critic roster). All of these changes report to Brock Hinson, director of communications in the OLO.

Marc-André Leclerc is chief of staff to Mr. Scheer, while Kenzie Poter is principal secretary and deputy chief of staff, and Martin Belanger, deputy chief of staff, senior Quebec adviser and senior strategist to the leader.

by Laura Ryckewaert
Hot Room used to run ‘biggest

Back in the 1940s, ‘50s, and ‘60s, the Hot Room was a hard-drinking, smoking, and gambling place. Don Newman, now 78, who first got a job on the Hill as a young reporter for ‘The Globe and Mail’ in 1969, remembers having to push past the crowd of drinkers in the Hot Room to file his stories.

BY KATE MALLOY

Back in the old days, clerks in the Parliamentary Press Gallery operated a “blind pig,” out of the Hot Room in Centre Block, known at the time as the “biggest bootlegging joint in Canada,” according to Peter Dempson’s sensational book, Assignment Ottawa: Seventeen in the Press Gallery, published in 1968.

Dempson, who worked for the Regina Leader-Post out of the Hot Room from 1945 to 1962, said everyone knew about it, including prime ministers, cabinet ministers, and House officials, but no one shut it down. The Hot Room, which was on the third floor in Centre Block overlooking the Ottawa River, was the office space for reporters from newspapers, news agencies, and radio stations from across Canada and the U.S. Dempson described it as a “combination news centre and bootlegging concession,” which began during the Prohibition days.

“The gallery itself has never cut in on the profits. The clerks, who run the dispensary, split the earnings,” Dempson wrote. “Every one on Parliament Hill pretends that the illegal liquor emporium doesn’t exist. It is handy to have around in case MPs—even cabinet ministers, on occasion—should require a bottle in a hurry to entertain visiting fermen. A former clerk of the House of Commons, the late Dr. Arthur Beauchesne frequently sent up to the gallery to replenish his supplies when he had guests in his quarters.”

Rye cost 50 cents a “generous ounce,” scotch 75 cents, and bottles of liquor cost 75 cents more than in a government liquor store. Beer was 25 cents a bottle and came out of coin-operated coolers, according to Dempson.

“Huge rubber-tired office supply trucks wheeled the beer, or soft drinks up the corridor to the gallery. Often, MPs have to stand aside, sometimes even a cabinet minister, to let them roll by. Seldom is there a complaint,” Dempson wrote.

As a reporter on the Hill in the 1940s, ‘50s, and ‘60s, Dempson described the Hot Room as a hard-drinking, smoking, gambling spot. Built in the 1920s after a fire destroyed most of Centre Block in 1916, the Hot Room was supposed to accommodate 35 members. But there were 130 people in the Hot Room at one point. It was so crowded the excess of reporters had desks, files, and piles of newspapers out in the hallway.

There was one “huge oval, leather-covered table,” and smaller card tables around the room and Dempson said the tables were “continually in use.”

When Don Newman, now 78, first got a job on the Hill as a young reporter for ‘The Globe and Mail’ in 1969, he remembers having to push past the crowd of drinkers in the Hot Room to file his stories.

“My boss, the editor, was a drunk. He had guests in his quarters.”

As the cocktail hour progressed and, if it was a snowy night, you’d have to kind of push your way by the people having their cocktails to get to the guy who sent the stories to CNCP,” said Newman.

CTV’s Craig Oliver, now 80, who started on the Hill in 1973 after 15 years with the CBC, said in those days, mostly everyone worked out of the Hot Room because the House Chamber proceedings weren’t televised.

Reporters had to be inside the Commons every day to watch the daily debates, do their interviews in the hallways, and then quickly file their stories.

“A small smoke hung in the air in the Hot Room, since most people smoked, and the room buzzed with the clatter of typewriters, calls for drinks orders, and lively conversations. Press gallery clerks, who kept the money from the drinks, delivered mixed drinks to reporters at their desks. MPs, Senators, and staffers would come up to drink in the Hot Room just as reporters were filing their stories.

‘It was pretty much all men and it was a racy drinking environment and a fairly hard-drinking environment,’ Mr. Oliver said in an interview. ‘I don’t exaggerate that, but it was like a really old-fashioned newsroom. It’s unbelievable, looking back.’

A non-smoker, Mr. Oliver described it as “a bit of a putrid environment. And there were these great big tubs that wire copy went into and, because the environment was so putrid, some people would spit into these big tubs. Occasionally, somebody would dive in looking for a piece of copy, and the print guys would have blue all over them from all the copies they had to make’ of their stories on their typewriters.”

But Mr. Oliver said, despite the fact that “everyone was knocking back the Scotch,” the reporters were professionals and “got the work done.” They were influenced by a number of the influential reporters and columnists in the gallery at the time who had been in the Second World War, he said, including the ‘CNCP’s Newman DePoe and John Drewery, or covered it, like Southam News’ Charles Lynch, and all who took Canadian democracy seriously.

‘The important point is that these guys were pros. They had seen the world and they knew the importance of a democracy that, in a way, I think is a present generation of Canadians does not appreciate,’ Mr. Oliver said. ‘I don’t want to give the impression that these were just drunken guys. They were guys, who drank a lot that got their jobs done and they were good reporters. They were experienced people.’

In those days, Mr. Oliver said there was a “very” collegial relationship between the press and the politicians—probably too much so—but there was also

Continued on page 33
bootlegging joint in Canada’

Continued from page 32

It wasn’t until women became major players in the parliamentary press gallery in the 1970s, ‘80s, and ‘90s that things changed for the better, creating a far more professional environment, Mr. Oliver said. The beer machine in the Hot Room was removed in 1999 after the Sun published a story about the beer machine in the MPs’ exclusive gym in the Confederation Building.

“So the values are 100 per cent better now and that’s why the Press Club died when the women’s revolution came along and men were expected to pitch in,” after work at home, said Mr. Oliver.

The annual press gallery dinner, meanwhile, which started before World War I, was mostly held on Parliament Hill because people wanted to drink and not have to worry about leaving, according to Dempson. He said when it was held down the street at the Château Laurier Hotel in 1935, for instance, it was apparently a flop.

Then-prime minister Pierre Trudeau, pictured Sept. 17, 1968, pretending to struggle with a Press Club tie given to him as he was presented with honourary membership in the National Press Club in Ottawa. PETER BREGG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Don Newman, pictured in 2012 at a Canada 2020 event in Ottawa. Newf. Mr. Newman first got a job on the Hill as a young reporter for The Globe and Mail in 1969, he remembers having to push past the crowd of drinkers in the Hot Room to file his stories. The Hill Times file photograph

Liberal Sen. Jim Munson, left, pictured in October 2012 with Douglas Rowland and Jean-Jacques Blais at a Former Parliamentarians Association dinner at the Château Laurier Hotel. The Hill Times file photograph

CTV’s Craig Oliver, pictured with CTV’s Roger Smith, at a party at the Metropolitan Brasserie in Ottawa. Mr. Oliver, who started on the Hill in 1973 after 15 years with the CBC, said in the old days, most reporters had to be inside the Commons every day to watch the daily debates because they weren’t televised. They’d do their interviews in the hallways and then quickly file their stories. The Hill Times file photograph


“Whose’s said about it is the kind of conviviality and almost camaraderie in the gallery; we were all in the gallery together, and the gallery was always much more effective in dealing with the political parties and that kind of thing because there was a camaraderie about it,” said Mr. Newman.

A version of the story was published in Oliver Wis & Busy Pens: 150 Years of Canada’s Parliamentary Press Gallery, published by Hill Times Books in 2016. Copyright ©Canadian Parliamentary Press Gallery

Kate Mallory is editor-in-chief of The Hill Times. kmallory@hilltimes.com The Hill Times
Hundreds flock to The Hill Times’ Party on the Hill

The Hill Times’ annual Party on the Hill brought politicos together for the last big party before the October election.

Forget Politics and the Pen, or the Press

Gallery Dinner; Parliament Hill’s best
dinner of the year took place on Tu-
essday, June 4, in the Sir John A. Macdonald Build-
ing.

The Hill Times’ Party on the Hill, at-
tended by nearly 900 Hillites, was one of
the last opportunities for politicos to booze
and schmooze before the election cam-
paign brings out the worst in us all.

Some 15 MPs, seven senators, a cabinet
minister, and throngs of Hill staffers, jour-
nalists, lobbyists, and diplomats packed the
historic building.

The Hill Times’ unparalleled collection of archival news photos
rolled across the fi ve projector screens,
evoking bittersweet memories of old
friends and colleagues for some in atten-
dance.

Proof’s Greg MacEachern and Strategy-
corp’s Garry Keller reminisced on Tu-
nessday and implored all to raise a glass to absent
friends.

Party Central can assure both men
that countless glasses were in fact raised.
Cheers, procrast, saluté, slainte, mabuhay,
ganebi, minndomowin nigockodadowin,
take your pick.

Beer Canada provided the liquid confi-
dence, setting up three stations that helped
to split up the crowded room. There were
local beers from Eastern, Western, and
Central Canada. For those who were unable
to sample from each region,
Party Central
 took his job very seriously and did it for
you. Creemore remains the gold standard.

The six-piece band took to the stage
around 6:45 p.m. Science Minister
Kristy
Duncan

and former CTV reporter
Roger
Smith

took to the fl oor, and put
Pablo Ro-
driguez

on notice. Sticking with tradition,
Ms. Duncan and Mr. Rodriguez must now
compete for the prize of best dancer in
cabinet. Global News’

David Akin

should be the judge.

The catering, by My Catering Group,
was superb. So good, in fact, that you’d
want to take it home (joke courtesy of pub-
lisher Anne Marie Creskey).

Continued on page 35
The Hill Times | MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2019

Continued from page 34

One anonymous attendee thought it would be wise to sneak an entire block of cheese into his suit jacket. Sources with firsthand knowledge of the incident tell Party Central he was trying to impress a female colleague. He had clearly never stolen anything before; it was not a slick operation. Not sure if he had an escape plan, but hiding a whole block of cheese is difficult. The shape is awkward, the size is unmanageable, and the smell is pungent. MPs spotted included: Green Party Leader Elizabeth May; Conservative MPs Marilyn Gladu and Kerry Diotte; Liberal MPs Mark Eyking, Wayne Easter, Michael Levitt, David Graham, Francis Douin, Fawzi El-Khoury, and Raj Saini; Independent Senators Raymond Saint-Germain and Ted Pappas; NDP MP Linda Duncan; and CCF MP Tony Clement.

Those from the Red Chamber included: Liberals Dennis Dawson (no bowtie joke this time) and Jim Munson, QC’s Raymonde Saint-Germain, Pierre Dalphond, Marie-Francoise Megie, Yuen Pau Woo, and Rosa Galvez. House Speaker Geoff Regan, his communications director Heather Bradley and director of events Anthony Carricato were also in attendance, fully recovered from the Speaker’s Monday night garden party. Karl Bélanger, former press secretary to the late Jack Layton, informed Party Central that he had recently sampled McDonald’s new fish and chips offering—he said it tasted like High Liner. I don’t know which company that reflects worse on.

Representing our national public broadcaster were Rob Russo, Elizabeth Thompson, David Thurtton, Julie Van Dusen, and Emily Haws. Ms. Haws, currently with Power and Politics, formerly of Hill Times fame, was the last Party Central columnist. Other scribes spotted include: CTV’s Rachel Aiello (also formerly of The Hill Times), CPAC’s Amen Jafari, Winnipeg Free Press’ Dylan Robertson, Journale de Montréal’s Chris Nardi and Montreal’s Guillaume St-Pierre, Reuters’ David Ljunggren, Ottawa Citizen’s Ken Rubin, iPolitics’ Jolson Lim (also of the Bad and Bitchy podcast) and Bloomberg’s Erik Hertzberg.

Rounding out the Hillites were lobbyists John Delacourt, Hill and Knowlton’s new addition, Compass Rose’s Bea Vongdouangchan and Calian Group’s Simon Doyle—two more Hill Times alumni—Earscliffe’s Etienne Rainville, and HEXO Corp’s Laura Korkimaki.

The Hill Times
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Scheer to host annual garden party for Hill media June 11 at Stornoway

Gordon Lightfoot returns to Ottawa, sharing his music legacy with the capital

Parliamentary Calendar

**Gordon Lightfoot never stops drawing a crowd. Drop him into the reception circuit at the foot of Parliament Hill and watch MPs, Senators, and staffers drop by for a photo and chat with the Canadian pop legend. Mr. Lightfoot was in town to celebrate the launch screening of the documentary of his career, which covers the gamut of his small-town Ontario sets to big-time stadium sellouts and everything in between.**

**Conservative Party Leader Andrew Scheer, pictured on March 23, 2019, at the Manning Networking Conference in Ottawa, will be hosting his annual garden party on June 11 at Stornoway. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade.**

**MARCH 23, 2019, AT THE MANNING NETWORKING CONFERENCE IN OTTAWA**

**MONDAY, JUNE 10**

**House Sitting**—This is it. The House is sitting from June 3-June 21, the final three weeks before it adjourns and Parliament is later dissolved for the October 2019 election. For more information, please contact the House of Commons Media Relations Office at media@canada.ca.

**Senate Sitting**—The Senate will sit June 4-June 6, and could sit on Friday, June 7. It could possibly sit on Monday, June 10, but is scheduled to sit June 11-June 13, and could sit on Friday, June 14. It is scheduled to sit June 17-June 21 and June 25-June 28.

**Indigenous Environmental Justice, Knowledge and Law**—Deborah McGregor presents the 2019 Katherine A.H. Graham Lecture on Indigenous Policy. The event takes place from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. and is preceded by a reception (5:30-5:45 p.m.). The event takes place at Carlton University’s Richcraft Hall Conference Rooms and is free to attend and open to the public. More information and registration is available at carleton.ca/pga.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 11**

**We are EnPOWERED to fight cancer**—The Canadian Cancer Survivor Network (CCSN) is hosting the breakfast event WE are EnPOWERED to fight cancer on June 11 from 8:30 a.m. on Parliament Hill in Room 325 of the Wellington Building. Join CCSN, CARP, and the cancer community to discuss how to build our health system so that older Canadians, who are disproportionately affected by cancer, have the care and treatments they need to get better. Please RSVP to jnahome@gmail.com.

**Andrew Scheer Hosts a Garden Party**—Conservative Official Opposition Leader Andrew Scheer welcomes members of the media to his official residence on June 11 for a garden party. “The strictly off-the-record’’ event takes place at Stornoway, 541 Acacia Ave., from 6-8 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12**

**Liberal Caucus Meeting**—The Liberals will meet in West Block on Parliament Hill. For more information, please contact Liberal Party media relations at mediarelations@liberal.ca or 613-627-2384.

**Conservative Caucus Meeting**—The Conservativeswill gather for their national caucus meeting in West Block. For more information, contact Cory Hains, director of communications with the Conservative Party of Canada, at cory.hains@conservative.ca.

**NDP Caucus Meeting**—The NDP caucus will meet from 9:15 a.m.-11 a.m. in West Block. For more information, please contact the NDP Media Centre at 613-232-2951 or media@ndp.ca.

**Bloc Québécois Meeting**—The Bloc Québécois caucus will meet on Wednesday morning starting at 9:30 a.m. in Room 241A in the West Block.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 13**

**Ork idiots End-of-Year Concert**—Come celebrate the joy of music with ORK. Sit down in on Thursday, June 13 for ORK’s second end-of-year concert. Tickets not required. Donations welcome. Thursday, June 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Carlton Dominion Chambers on 355 Cooper St., Ottawa. ORK’s mission is to empower kids and build community through music. These concerts will feature an array of classical, jazz, world music, and other artists’ favorite. The Canada-Korea Dialogue Series on the Hill. The Canada-Korea Interparliamentary Friendship Group (CIKFG) and the Canada Korea Society (CKS), in partnership with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea (ROK), are hosting the eighth annual Canada-Korea Dialogue Series on the Hill. This year’s theme is Future Prospects for Security and Prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in Asia. Speakers include International Trade Diver- sification Minister Jim Carr and South Korean Ambas- sador Maeng Ho Shin. The event begins Thursday, June 13, with registration beginning at 5:30 p.m., dinner, opening remarks, panel presentations and a Q&A at 6 p.m., followed by a Korean buffet dinner and reception at 7:30 p.m. in Room C118. Tickets $30, by invitation only, RSVP by June 9.

**Women on the Ballot & Social Media**—A discussion on women on the ballot in this year’s general election and the role of social media especially as experienced by women politicians. The speakers will include: social media industry representatives, an All-Party panel of MPs and scholars. Co-hosted with the All-Party Women’s Caucus, House of Commons and the participation of Famous 5 Ottawa; 7:30 to 9 a.m., Wellington Build- ing, 197 Sparks St., Ottawa. RSVP is required by June 10. Send your name and affiliation to rsvp@thepearsoncentre.ca. Info: Anne Clarke, anne@thepearsoncentre.ca or www.thepearsoncentre.ca

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19**

**The Democracy Project: Race and Politics**—You are invited to Race and Politics, a live event hosted by The Hill Times and CPAC. The Democracy Project. What happens to democracy when the people in power don’t reflect the people they’re supposed to represent? Come be inspired, entertained, and challenged when The Hill Times’ managing editor Charille Evelyn sits down with some of the most interesting and provocative guests in Canada to talk about race and politics today, including Independent MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes, Indigenous Reconciliation Group CEO Rose LeMay, and former senior political staffer Alykhan Velshi. What are the bar- riers and what are the solutions? June 19, 2019, 7-8 p.m. (doors open at 6:30) at the National Arts Centre (Herndorf Place). Register via Eventbrite.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 28**

**Japan Hosts G20 Summit**—On June 28 and 29, the leaders of the G20 will gather in Osaka as Japan hosts its first-ever G20 summit. Along with the leaders’ summit, the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors’ meeting, the foreign ministers’ meeting, and other ministerial meetings will also be held at eight different locations throughout Japan this year. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is expected to attend the leaders’ summit.

**SATURDAY, JULY 27**

**Protect the Ottawa River Paddle Flotilla**—Old Fort William Cottagers’ Association, Pimawan Point Cottagers’ Association, and Concerned Citizens of Renfrew County and Area will hold a protest flotilla on Saturday, July 27, 2019, at the Old Fort William Dock in Sheenboro, Qc., 12 noon. Information, Facebook.com/OFCWARadioactive or RSVP to johana@OFWCA.org.

**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 13**

**Canadian Science Policy Conference 2019**—This is like science policy is coming back to Ottawa on Nov. 13-15, 2019, at the Westin Hotel. The conference will bring together scientists, entrepreneurs, policy-makers, politicians, journalists, students, and many others from across the country to discuss, exchange ideas, and mobilize knowledge regarding the present and futures of Canadian science, technology, and innovation policy.

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or govern- mental event details with all the relevant data under the subject line ‘Parliamentary Calendar’ to nroy@thehilltimes.com. By Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper. Do not send content every event but we will definitely do our best. Events can be updated daily online too.
What happens to democracy when the people in power don’t reflect the people they represent?

Come be inspired, enlightened, and challenged when The Hill Times’ managing editor Charelle Evelyn sits down with Independent MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes, the CEO of Indigenous Reconciliation Group's Rose LeMay, and former Harper government senior adviser Alykhan Velshi to talk about race and politics today.

What are the barriers and what are the solutions?

**Moderator**
Charelle Evelyn  
*The Hill Times* managing editor

**Speakers**
- Celina Caesar-Chavannes  
Whitby, Ont.  
Independent MP
- Rose LeMay  
CEO, Indigenous Reconciliation Group
- Alykhan Velshi  
Former senior adviser in the Harper government

**Live Event**
6:30PM - 8PM  
June 19, 2019  
National Arts Centre  
1 Elgin Street, Ottawa, Peter Herrndorf Place

**Special Report**
The Hill Times  
June 19, 2019
RSVP now, seating is limited  
https://raceandpolitics.eventbrite.com

Tweet questions to #DemocracyRacePolitics to get the conversation going before the event.