

United States President Donald Trump
is no friend of ours p. 15

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isolation p. 6

These unprecedented times
require unprecedented measures p. 11



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News Parliament

COVID-19 can't end parliamentary scrutiny, say experts

BY NEIL MOSS
& PETER MAZERREUW

With a unprecedented crisis, Canada could see an unprecedented Parliament. But despite the crisis, there still remains a place for Parliamentarians to scrutinize the government, experts say.

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News Spending

Budget 2020, election promises in question amid COVID-19 global pandemic crisis, says McKay, Delacourt

BY PETER MAZERREUW

The COVID-19 crisis will derail the government's legislative agenda for the 43rd Parliament, says veteran Liberal MP John McKay, and may spike the government's 2020 budget entirely, says Liberal-connected lobbyist John Delacourt.

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News Prime minister

Trudeau should pay 80 per cent Canadians' salaries to protect them from the 'psychological trauma' of COVID-19, says Liberal strategist Herle

Canadians are going to judge Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handling of the COVID-19 crisis by how fast his government could deliver the financial assistance to the ones in need, says Nanos Research founder and chief data scientist Nik Nanos.



According to last week's Angus Reid Institute poll, 64 per cent of Canadians approve of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handling of the COVID-19 crisis. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

BY ABBAS RANA

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who announced a major increase to the wage subsidies for

small and medium-sized businesses on March 27 by boosting it to 75 per cent up from the 10 per cent previously promised, should also consider following the lead of some

European countries currently paying 80 per cent of all private sector salaries amid the COVID-19 pan-

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News Media

Guilbeault announces support for media; *Winnipeg Free Press* publisher blasts feds, saying 'no new support' forthcoming

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

The federal government announced long-awaited support on March 25 for media organizations suffering significant losses

Continued on page 4

News Lobbying

Federal lobbyists' registry sees crop of new COVID-19 filings, as groups grapple with pandemic

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN
& BEATRICE PAEZ

Since mid-March, more than 35 organizations have updated their federal lobbying filings, signalling plans to have a say in

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Editor's Note: how the coronavirus global pandemic will affect The Hill Times

BY KATE MALLOY

OTTAWA—These are extraordinary times and the global COVID-19 pandemic crisis has affected *The Hill Times*, just like it has everyone else in the world. At first, it knocked us off our feet, and after going through the initial and incredible shock of realizing what was happening, we've picked ourselves up and pushing through.

People are dying, the economy has tanked, and no one knows what lies ahead. Political leadership is critically important right now and it can save lives.

We want to cover the biggest story in the world from our corner of the world and we want to shine a light specifically on how this is affecting Canadian democracy and federal government policy. We also want to have a positive influence in these extraordinary times and as we face this awful threat.

We are continuing to cover MPs, Senators, staffers, cabinet ministers, the PMO, the PCO, the government, the bureaucracy, lobbying, federal party politics, public policy, foreign policy, the Parliamentary Precinct, Hill life, Hill media, and Hill people.

We're a *Hill Times* news family of 28 and, like any other newsroom, ours is marked by quite a lot of banter, a surprising amount of singing, swearing, and lots of humour. But the newsroom is largely empty right now, with the few people coming into the office and who are working at a safe distance.

Most of our reporters are working remotely, including deputy editor Peter Mazereeuw, who had to self-isolate after returning from a trip to Mexico, and assistant deputy editor Abbas Rana, whose family had just returned from a trip overseas. Two reporters—online editor Beatrice Paez and online reporter Palak Mangat—are now working from Toronto and the rest of us are here in Ottawa, including Aidan Chamandy, Mike Lapointe (who's holed up in a hotel room), Samantha Wright Allen (the singer), and Neil Moss. Our photographers Andrew Meade and Sam Garcia are still filing photos and Andrew Meade has been covering most of the prime minister's daily briefings as well as the ministerial daily briefings on the Hill. Tessie Sanci, from *Hill Times Health Research*, has also been going to some of the daily briefings. Our managing editor Charelle Evelyn and deputy editor Laura Ryckewaert, who were coming in to produce our Wednesday papers, are now also doing this job from their respective homes.

Wire Report editor Anja Karadeglia and reporters Michael Lee-Murphy and Adam Langenberg are working from home with focused reporting on how the pandemic is affecting Canada's rapidly shifting communications landscape, and Jesse Cnockaert, Christina Leadlay, and Jordan Gowling are covering the intense world of government advocacy and government procedure for *The Lobby Monitor* and *Parliament Now*.

Publisher Anne Marie Creskey is regularly in the office. General manager Andrew Morrow, human resources manager Tracey Wale, and our receptionist Kelly More are all working from home. Our advertising sales vice-president Steve MacDonald, and account managers Craig Caldbick, Martin Reaume, Erveina Golsalci, and Ulle Baum are in and out and working the phones at a time when many advertisers are worried about keeping their own doors open. Our readership engagement gurus Chris Rivoire and Dan Lahey are riding herd on a vastly increasing number of online and PDF e-print subscriptions, which are free during the horrible crisis, and are finding new and innovative ways of getting our print edition delivered. We are now printing in Montreal after our Gatineau plant shut down. Subscription and licensing executives Sean Hansel, Darryl Blackbird, and Lakshmi Krishnamurti are not letting their home phones cool off.

I was in the office every day up until last Monday, but I'm now working at home at the dining room table, alongside my two daughters and my husband, John Crupi, CTV Ottawa's assignment editor, who has been working the phones from home for the last two weeks. It's driving him nutty that he can't be at work, but he's a cancer survivor with a weak immunity system.

Normally, there's a lot of talking that goes into producing a newspaper. We've switched to meeting on Zoom, and communicating by emails, texts, and phone calls. Although, we're remote, there's a stronger sense of purpose and camaraderie. The newspaper is also physical and visual. Normally, I'd be talking a lot to our art direction and production team—Benoit De-neault, Serena Masonde, and Joey Sabourin—about the layout of the paper, and to our web developers, Jean-François Lavoie and Ian Francis Peralta, who keep our hefty website and daily on-line news and email alerts working. It's all remote now.

Our email distribution list has been significantly expanded and both Monday and Wednesday electronic PDF issues will be sent to thousands of more readers. We're also offering more robust daily coverage of the coronavirus story online daily and in our *Politics This Morning* daily newsletter. We're burning the midnight oil to offer deeper and better coverage.

There are a lot of people behind *The Hill Times*, including a long list of regular columnists and op/ed writers, some of the most savvy in the country, along with the many people in administration, human resources, and newspaper delivery.

I've been at *The Hill Times* since it started in 1989, and, over the years, we've produced papers through power outages, website failures, a few small ceiling floods, a lack of heat in the middle of winter, a lack of air conditioning in the dog days of summer, and, in the very beginning, we used to put the newspapers together with X-Acto knives, line tape, and waxers, but there's one thing about *The Hill Times*: we don't give up.

We do consider ourselves an essential service and we may be tired right now, but we're dedicated. This is a family-owned, independent business, whose founders and owners Jim Creskey, Anne Marie Creskey, Ross Dickson, and his daughter Leslie Dickson, will fight for *The Hill Times* to be here for you, no matter what.

Kate Malloy is the editor-in-chief of *The Hill Times*.

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The Hill Times

Nobody mention universal basic income

BY GWYNNE DYER

LONDON, U.K.—When you lock the people down (to save their lives), you inevitably close down a lot of the economy as well. And the lockdown will definitely have to last in most countries until May or June: Donald Trump's promise of a 'beautiful timeline' to reopening the US economy just two weeks hence is delusional. So where's the money coming from in the meantime?

The majority of people still have jobs they get paid for: people in essential services who have to go to work, people who can do their work from home, and quite a few others as well.

However, between a third and quarter of the employed population has been left idle as their employers, from airlines to retail businesses, downsize or shut temporarily. If you leave these people without income, then you are reproducing the conditions of the Great Depression of the 1930s, when unemployment peaked at 24 per cent in the United States and the country's GDP shrank by almost half.

Adolf Hitler came to power when German unemployment reached 30 per cent: misery and desperation can lead to violence. Nobody wanted to see that movie again, so after the Second World War every developed country created a welfare state to shelter its population from the worst effects of the business cycle.

The welfare state has served us well for most of a century (including in the United States, whose rudimentary welfare state was first in the field with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930s). But it is not enough to keep the wheels turning when a huge chunk of the workforce had dropped out for reasons that are not economic but health-related.

That's why governments, including deeply orthodox right-wing ones like the Conservatives in Britain and the Republicans in the United States, are turning to what economist Milton Friedman first named helicopter money half a century ago.

The idea is that a government can reboot an economy in which spending power has collapsed (because so many are out of work) by simply giving the penniless consumers free money—as if throwing it out of a helicopter. After all, it's free money for the government, too: they just ask the central banks to print it for them.

At this point traditionalists will begin to mutter about inflation, and the risk of undermining the work ethic, and various other shibboleths, but the governments in all the bigger Western economies—the U.S., the U.K., Germany, France—are in conservative hands at the moment, and they are all doing it.

As Robert Chote, director of Britain's comically named Office for Budget Responsibility, said last week: "When the fire is large enough you just spray the water and worry about it later." So get in the chopper and start dropping the money.

Sweden has guaranteed laid off workers 90 per cent of their incomes until the health crisis is past, France is offering partial unemployment benefits equal to 84 per cent of the workers' incomes, and Britain is offering 80 per cent. In every case the employers (who are also getting government aid) are expected to hold their employees' jobs open for them when normal service is restored.

Even the self-employed, including the gig workers who now make up around 10 per cent of the workforce, are not being left out. Norway is giving them 80 per cent of their income based on their last three years of tax returns (tough luck if they understated it), and most other European countries will follow suit.

The United States government is less generous, of course, and would be even under a Democratic administration: the

free-market ideology is the real national religion. President Trump is talking about \$1,200 per person (the same as Hong Kong is giving its citizens), but only for one month or at the most two. And the proposal is still stuck in Congress.

Nevertheless, what all these governments (and others elsewhere in the world) are really playing with is the idea of a guaranteed national income that nobody can fall below. Only temporarily, you understand. Once the Covid-19 virus is tamed, we'll go back to the dog-eat-dog, devil-take-the-hindmost economy we all know and love.

Really? You think that after six months or a year of this we will just go back tamely to the old economic rules? I rather doubt it.

The political and economic rules do not evolve gradually in modern societies; they shift in sudden great lurches. The First World War drew millions of women into the factories and kick-started women's emancipation.



Finance Minister Bill Morneau says the feds' multibillion-dollar emergency response benefit, a wage subsidy, will likely be rolled out the week of April 6. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The rise of fascism and the Second World War required the creation of the full welfare state (which was previously restricted to meagre old age pensions) to avoid a replay the next time the economy tanked.

The current emergency may be fostering

the rise of ideas previously seen as too radical to contemplate, but nobody say universal basic income yet. You'll frighten the horses.

Gwynne Dyer's latest book is *The Future of Democracy (and Work)*.

The Hill Times

Virtual solutions are changing the way we access health care

Demand for virtual care will grow as outbreaks like COVID-19 make face-to-face appointments impractical

By: Michael Green

In the past number of weeks, physical distancing and self-isolation have been mandated by most public health officials across the country and health professionals are responding by offering virtual care alternatives to patients. This care delivery model will be paramount to our ability to flatten the pandemic curve, which is the primary focus in Canada right now.

The use of technologies which allow for virtual consultations between patients and clinicians via video, text or email, is an effective way to help prevent the spread of the virus. Virtual visits also provide peace of mind to those recovering at home and those who are at risk and don't want to venture to a doctor's office or hospital. While it may seem like just a convenience to some, for those who have limited mobility, complex health issues, multiple encounters with the health system, and/or live in rural and remote areas, the ability to visit their care team virtually is extremely valuable.

PrescribIT®, Canada Health Infoway's national e-prescribing service, can also be a significant asset when in-person visits with health care professionals are not possible, or not recommended. It reduces the need for in-person physician or nurse practitioner visits and enables vulnerable populations to limit their time outside thereby reducing their risk of infection. For prescribers offering virtual consultations with patients, prescriptions can be sent electronically to the patient's pharmacy of choice and pharmacies can request prescription renewals from a patient's prescribing doctor electronically.

Outside the current health crisis, in 2018 alone, virtual care helped patients living in rural and remote communities avoid more than 280 million kilometres of travel. This represents more than \$420 million in avoided costs and more than 70 thousand metric tonnes of avoided CO2 emissions. Virtual care also has high patient satisfaction rates.

Opting for virtual care solutions can also be a boon to the health system. For example, for every \$1 spent on telehomecare, we



generate \$4 in health system value through avoided use of precious system resources, like reduced hospital stays and emergency room visits.

Canada is a world leader in telehealth, delivering over a million care visits via telehealth every year. And these numbers will grow as more virtual care options become available and outbreaks like COVID-19 make face-to-face appointments impractical.

Society is changing, there's no doubt. COVID-19 has accelerated the need for and use of virtual solutions and Infoway will continue to work closely with our federal, provincial and territorial government partners to advance these solutions.

Infoway is also spearheading ACCESS 2022, a social movement to create a new day for health care in Canada, one where all Canadians have access to their health information and digitally-enabled tools and services to better manage their care and improve health outcomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic reminds us of the need for continued innovation in Canadian health care. Over the coming weeks and months, we're sure to see virtual care evolve and grow, as more people come to rely on it during these unprecedented times. No doubt, when we make it to the other side of this crisis, we will see a new day in health care.

If you'd like to be a part of moving Canada's health care into the future, join the ACCESS 2022 movement at access2022.ca.

Michael Green is the President and CEO of Canada Health Infoway, a federally-funded not for profit organization, and has long been a visionary for the way digital health solutions can make public health systems more sustainable and improve the patient experience.

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News Media

Guilbeault announces support for media; *Winnipeg Free Press* publisher blasts feds, saying 'no new support' forthcoming

Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault says he has spoken with representatives from media groups and trade unions representing journalists, and the government is doing 'everything we can to help them make it through this crisis.'

Continued from page 1

of revenue, after news media organizations in Atlantic Canada and Quebec joined the long list of businesses laying off employees across Canada.

Winnipeg Free Press Publisher Bob Cox, however, says the announcement contains "absolutely no new support whatsoever" for journalism.

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, Que.) said he has personally spoken with a number of representatives from media groups and trade unions representing journalists, and the government was doing "everything we can to help them make it through this crisis."

"We are working on additional measures as we speak, and we have been for the last two weeks," said Mr. Guilbeault. "As you can imagine, there are crises coming left, right and center from all sectors of Canadian society and the Canadian economy. So the government is trying to adopt measures."

The government is also launching a \$30-million public health advertising campaign that will be deployed in media "in every corner of the country" and in 13 or 14 different languages, according to Mr. Guilbeault.

"The vast majority of that \$30-million would go to Canadian media," said Mr. Guilbeault. "We will reserve some money for online platforms—of course if someone goes online and does some research on Google, we want them to be able to have access to information that is relevant to them, in terms of public health in their locality or region, so we will be putting some money for that campaign on those platforms, but the vast majority of that money will be for Canadian media," said Mr. Guilbeault.

Mr. Cox is also the chair of the Journalism and Written Media Independent Panel of Experts, which provided recommendations to the government for the implementation of tax measures in support of Canadian news media last year.

He blasted the government in an interview with *The Hill Times* on Thursday. When asked for his reaction to the government's announcement, Mr. Cox called it "absolute, utter garbage" and said both Minister Guilbeault and the prime minister were lying.

"I have never seen such blatant lying—stand in front of a bloody nation in front of a microphone, thank journalists, say you're going to support them and then do nothing," said Mr. Cox. "I'm astonished that they've done this. They have done nothing. There is absolutely no new support whatsoever for journalism that was announced yesterday. [Minister] Guilbeault is lying, there was no acceleration of any program."

Mr. Guilbeault announced that the government had finished assembling a panel responsible for advising the government on which journalism organizations should benefit from a controversial \$595-million media bailout fund, in the form of tax credits, that was first announced last year.

A previous panel struck by the government recommended that "in the interests of moving quickly," the tax credits be implemented and administered directly by the CRA.

Panel members also recommended that the government appoint an advisory body made up of faculty from journalism schools across Canada, who would be turned to when the CRA has questions about whether an application meets the journalistic criteria of the program.

That panel has now been appointed, according to the government, and will be tasked with helping to accelerate the deployment of monetary relief.

The government will be speeding up its processing of the applications for tax credits, said Mr. Guilbeault, responding to applicants in a number of weeks, instead of in the fall as initially planned for new applicants.

"We are accelerating the deployment of monetary resources for organizations that have applied, and those include some media organizations that will be receiving money in the coming weeks as opposed to the coming months," said Mr. Guilbeault. "We understand that in many cases, liquidity is an issue, so we are trying to accelerate the deployment of our program for the year 2020 and 2021."

"We understand how dire the situation and we are working day and night, seven days a week to find solutions and get them out the door as quickly as possible," said Mr. Guilbeault.

Liberal MP Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan Woodbridge, Ont.), who is parliamentary secretary for Minister of National Revenue Diane Lebouthillier (Gaspésie-Les Îles-De-La-Madeleine, Que.), told *The Hill Times* that the announcement of the panel on March 25 was the "final step" in the process to be able to designate organizations as Qualified Canadian Journalism Organizations.

The panel is composed of current and retired faculty members from post-secondary journalism schools across Canada, according to heritage Canada's press release. The members are chairperson Colette Brin, co-chair Kim Kierans, Margo Goodhand, Pierre-Paul Noreau and Karim H. Karim.



Minister of Canadian Heritage Steven Guilbeault, pictured speaking with reporters on the Hill in Ottawa on Feb. 3, 2020. Mr. Guilbeault says the government is working on additional measures to bail out struggling media organizations 'as we speak.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

"These are obviously very extraordinary circumstances," said Mr. Sorbara. "And what we would need to do on our side with this last step is to get these individuals trained. And as you can imagine, that is presenting very unique circumstances in order to do that."

"Usually you would want these individuals to probably travel to Ottawa and meet for hours, go through all the details and so forth. But the current conditions are proving to be very unique, very challenging. So it's very difficult to give a specific date of when all these dominoes can come into place."

"We remain steadfast in supporting Canadian journalism, we've outlined and implemented and are implementing a program that is there to support Canadian journalism. We were very happy to see the final step in the process being the appointing of the panel members. And we're very happy to see this. But obviously, you know, due to these current very extraordinary, unique circumstances, there's going to be some fluidity and with how we the last part is determined and how the panel members can receive the training that they need in order to execute and operate the program."

Mr. Cox said that programs that the government announced

to provide help for journalism, "which they announced 16 months ago in November of 2018," have not paid out a single dollar to any news outlet in the country.

"And they won't, because they're riddled with problems," said Mr. Cox. "Legislation is written incorrectly. Most newspaper companies actually don't qualify under the way the legislation was written and they have not promised to change that to try and accelerate payments."

Mr. Cox said Mr. Guilbeault has not consulted him or asked for his comments. Mr. Guilbeault was not available for a follow-up interview following *The Hill Times*' interview with Mr. Cox.

"He's scared, because I know how these things work and I

know the truth. And he doesn't want to confront anybody who knows the truth and knows actually how these programs work," said Mr. Cox. "All he wants is an announcement that tries to make his own government look good. And it doesn't look good. It looks bad, bad, bad."

"I understand that there are a lot of businesses in exactly the same boat I'm in, they're facing ruin. Publishers

across this country are facing ruin. So are lots of businesses, I realized that there is an absolute avalanche of need out there right now. And I'm not suggesting that we should somehow be singled out or that we should somehow be given special treatment, but I don't expect to be insulted by a government that promised help 16 months ago and never delivered," said Mr. Cox.

Mark Lever, president and CEO of SaltWire Network, told *The Hill Times* that his first reaction to the government's announcement was "disappointment."

SaltWire laid off nearly 40 per cent of their staff on March 24, according to a letter to their readers published that day.

"It's money that was promised to us in in [2018] for the [2019] fiscal year that we were all hoping to really use that money as investments to maintain our newsrooms in in 2019," said Mr. Lever.

"My reaction more broadly is the lacking support for, for the economy and for business in Canada, beyond what was just offered the media in terms of media solutions."

Mr. Lever said his organization is incredibly reliant on print advertising and door-to-door insert distribution business, which is all being challenged.

"And I get that, and that's why I think a broader economic aid package focused on businesses, I've been incredibly supportive. That, yes, the first thing's first, like health and safety, and then financial safety nets for individuals affected, but it's time now for the Government of Canada to support businesses so there's an economy to come back to," said Mr. Lever. "If you compare it on a per GDP basis with what the Americans just passed yesterday. We're 10 times behind in real dollars."

John Hinds, president and CEO of News Media Canada, told *The Hill Times* that his organization's "overwhelming response" to the government's announcement was "disappointing."

"There was nothing new. Everything that they announced was a rehash of announcements from 2018. And it was helpful in 2018 when there were challenges there, but...it certainly doesn't respond to the reality of the current crisis."

"We need to get money into the hands of publishers, or they're going to close the doors," said Mr. Hinds. "This is a business that does not have vast cash reserves to sustain a slowdown of this magnitude for very long. Advertising remains our core pillar of revenue [and] is down over 60 per cent and it doesn't look like it's going to come back next week, and nobody has any cash."

"So if people are going to continue to actually run their business, there's going to have to be some cash inflow in there," said Mr. Hinds. "Obviously, the advertising campaign helps with that, it puts money into publishers' pockets and allows them to continue to run for a while."

"The tax credit is a mechanism that we've supported for a long time," said Mr. Hinds. "The trouble... is that it was announced in November of 2018, and still not one dollar has flowed from it."

"So they appoint the panel yesterday, but they still haven't addressed the issues around qualification for the QCJO, because as it stands, because of legislative problems, 75 per cent of Canadian media isn't eligible for the tax credit."

When asked what task is ahead of the panel, Mr. Hinds said he hopes it's "efficient."

"It's a fantastic panel—they are probably the best group that you could ever pick to do this, because they represent the best of Canadian journalism media," said Mr. Hinds. "Kudos to the government on the panel, it's just really, really late."

"The problem with that panel is, until they get the legislation—if it goes forward now, and they have to reject 75 per cent of the claimants, that's not going to look great. And part of it is, they have to establish their procedures, and I have faith they're going to do this, but they're going to need support from CRA and from finance to get up there and get this moving."

"It strikes me that in the current climate, it's kind of hard to onboard panels and get them up to speed and work collaboratively with CRA officials," said Mr. Hinds.

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Government should be careful in using cellphone data to track COVID-19, advocates say

'In normal times, most Canadians would respond to the collection and use of sensitive health and location information with a hard no. But these are not normal times,' says professor Michael Geist.

BY ANJA KARADEGLIJA

Privacy experts and the Conservatives are warning the federal government that if it follows the lead of other countries and begins using cellphone location data to track the spread of COVID-19, it should do so under strict limits and safeguards for Canadians' privacy.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) said on March 24 the federal government isn't currently considering using location data from Canadians' phones to trace the path of the virus that has forced most of the country to effectively shut down. But, Mr. Trudeau said, it's not an option he would rule out for the future, either.

One way the government could use that information is by asking for anonymized, de-identified bulk data, as countries like Italy, Germany, and Austria have done. That kind of data would be useful if a health authority wanted to know, for example, whether travel between provinces had slowed down, or how many people were in a specific foreign country last week and are now in Canada.

Halifax-based privacy lawyer and advocate David Fraser said companies could provide anonymized data without legal restrictions. "And frankly, should they? Yes, I think so, if it would be helpful," he said in a phone interview.

Using personally identifiable data—for instance using location information to trace individuals, as Israel, China, and South Korea have done—is more complicated and potentially fraught.

"Anything that's [at the] personal level—that says David was here and is now there—has to be legally compelled" in Canada, Mr. Fraser said.

There are two main ways to do this: going through the courts to obtain a production order or warrant, or through emergency legislation.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner (OPC) spokesperson Valerie Lawton said in an emailed statement that in general, organizations subject to Canada's private-sector privacy law, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, "could potentially be authorized to release personal information during a health crisis under section 7(3) ... combined with an order made under provincial or federal emergency legislation."

But, she noted, it is "likely such collection and disclosure of personal information would be challenged under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would have to be justified as a reasonable limit to these rights."

Leah West, a lecturer who specializes in national security law at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University, said that whether it would be challenged "would depend on how narrowly tailored the collection was, what the purpose of the collection was, and then how they were handling the data. There would be all kinds of things you'd want to consider."

The government could collect location information from either Canadian wireless providers, such as Bell, Rogers, and Telus, or from tech companies like Google or Apple. But neither would be able to hand it over voluntarily; the OPC said Canada's private sector privacy legislation applies to both and would forbid such a move.

Mr. Fraser noted that the tech companies which operate on a model where users opt-in to have their data collected—like those who have mapping apps—have information that is more precise than cellphone location data. But most of those companies are based in the U.S. and can't hand over that information to Canadian authorities in a personally identifiable form without a U.S. court order, he said.

Most governments mum on data collection plans

If the Canadian government were to turn to telecoms, it would have to work with cellphone location data, which might be less helpful than many think.

"Telecommunications companies aren't in the business of tracking people to any particular precision, other than the default of knowing who connected to what cellphone tower at what particular time," Mr. Fraser said.

For instance, law enforcement use tower dumps—in which police request records about activity involving certain towers over a specified period of time—to narrow down potential suspects.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured speaking to the media on March 23, 2020, outside of Rideau Cottage, says he wouldn't rule out using location data from Canadians' phones to trace the path of the novel coronavirus. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Mr. Fraser gave the example of a case in which Peel Regional Police were looking for a suspect in connection with multiple robberies, and asked for data on who was connected to cell towers nearby. They received more than 60,000 names, he said.

Ms. West noted that "usually you need multiple sources of GPS to really pinpoint where a person is."

She added that there are scenarios where cellphone location data could be useful.

"If you thought someone was a superspreader, and you were trying to figure out who that superspreader was, then you get a bunch of tower dumps from the location of where outbreaks have occurred, and you look for the cellphone number that

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COVID-19

Some isolated thoughts during my isolation



The COVID-19 crisis has 'shaken the box', nature has hit the reset button, meaning the entire world is now entering a dark room. We don't really know what lies ahead. All we do know is everything is going to be different. So there you have my random isolated thoughts, writes Gerry Nicholls. *Photograph courtesy Commons Wikipedia*

How the ongoing battle against COVID-19 will impact on Canadian politics.



Gerry Nicholls

Post-Partisan Pundit

OAKVILLE, ONT.—Like just about everybody else in the country, I've put myself into self-isolation, meaning I'm stuck in my house all day, binge-watching old *Star Trek* episodes on Netflix. And if nothing else, being socially isolated in a time of crisis gives you plenty of time to sober-

ly reflect on all sorts of thought-provoking ideas: the meaning of life, the nature of happiness, the future of humanity.

Unfortunately for me, however, I'm neither smart nor deep enough, to actually contemplate such lofty philosophical notions, hence, what I'm doing during my quiet, isolated times is thinking about how the ongoing battle against COVID-19 will impact on Canadian politics.

So for your entertainment, I thought I'd share some of what I've come up with:

Short-term political impact

Polls are showing that Canadians overwhelmingly support the way their leaders, at both the provincial and federal levels, are handling the COVID-19 crisis. This isn't surprising. Typically during scary times, the public will rally around leaders. After all, we want to believe those people in charge will protect us; we want to believe they will do everything they can to keep us safe. It's

also likely reassuring for many Canadians that our leaders are taking strong and decisive measures to try to alleviate economic suffering, while at the same time they're trying to stem COVID-19. Makes it a tough time hard to be an opposition politician.

Long-term political impact

Once the "We're-all-in-this-thing-together" mood starts to wane and we come to grips with the fact that we're possibly facing a deep economic recession, public attitudes might start to sour. Finger pointing might begin. Questions will be directed at our leaders such as "Why didn't you do more to stop the virus in the first place?" And then, when, out of economic necessity, our leaders are forced to make tough and unpopular fiscal decisions, anger against governments could erupt. That will make it an easier time to be an opposition politician.

Even longer term political impact

Some people are reacting to this crisis by pushing the idea of "Fortress Canada," that's to say they want to create a country that's economically self-sufficient with secure borders. This notion might take off. Indeed, I'm wondering if one day, there'll be a movement to create a "Fortress North America," a new political entity that will combine Mexico's labour, Canada's space and resources with American industrial might.

Impact on conservatism

The conservative movement has always been split between optimists and pessimists. The optimists believe free markets and individual freedom will inevitably lead to an ever more prosperous and happy society; the pessimists believe human nature is fundamentally flawed, and the best that can be hoped for is that society's inevitable decent into barbarism will be somewhat slowed down. I suspect that, after what we're going through right now, the pessimists will prevail.

Impact on socialism

I suspect this virus scare combined with the resultant economic downturn might cause progressives to re-evaluate their priorities. That's to say leftists might veer away from cultural and environmental issues and focus more on economic concerns and on matters related to health care. In other words, progressives might go back to Marxist-style basics.

Impact on pondering future impacts

The COVID-19 crisis has "shaken the box"; nature has hit the reset button, meaning the entire world is now entering a dark room. We don't really know what lies ahead. All we do know is everything is going to be different. So there you have my random isolated thoughts. Now if you'll excuse me, I have some old *Star Trek* episodes to watch. *Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant. The Hill Times*

It's now or never—Canadian leaders must step up to fight COVID-19



Dr. Theresa Tam, chief medical officer, and her deputy, Howard Njoo, address reporters on March 24, during which they said community transmission of the coronavirus is increasingly becoming the main source of infection. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Urgent action remains needed to ensure an adequate supply of protective equipment that our front-line workers need to protect them from infection.



Faiz Ahmad Khan & Salmaan Keshavjee

Opinion

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Canada is grappling with unprecedented circumstances. As we hear news of exponential increases in the number infected and high mortality rates—lessons from Italy, Spain, and the United States—it is clear that time is running out for Canada's leaders to take actions to bolster our fight against COVID-19 on two fronts: stemming

the spread of the virus, and preparing our health-care system for the tidal surge in demand from those infected.

It is now evident that a key measure to limit viral spread at this phase of the epidemic is physical separation through social distancing. Because the more people who get the virus, the more it spreads, social distancing is a way to stop the exponential increase in COVID-19. But in order for social distancing to be feasible and temporary, we must ensure that it is accompanied by some additional interventions.

The first is testing. Testing is critical to finding out who is infected and contagious, and when using the right test, who has already been sick and may have become immune. It could also enable us to eventually get the uninfected and the recovered back into the workforce. While there is not yet consensus with regards to how wide a net to cast, we must act quickly. Do we test only those sick enough to seek medical care? Or take the alternate approach of community-wide screening? While questions remain, Canada must make testing more available, accessible, and efficient. We need mechanisms in place to ensure that supply chains, as well as material and human resources are available to scale up testing massively and within the quickest delays.

Second, is the deployment of an unprecedented social safety net. In light of how critical social distancing is at this moment, federal and provincial governments must

provide Canadians with the support they need to continue to make this tremendous personal sacrifice as part of our collective fight against COVID-19. This means suspending all mortgage, rent, utility (including telecommunications), and debt payments. If social distancing is required for extended durations, serious consideration must be given to implementing temporary universal basic income and pharmacare.

Third, is prevention and treatment. While we applaud the federal government's decision to inject \$192-million in funding to Canadian companies in the race to develop a vaccine and medical treatments, and the \$52.6-million in research grants awarded to university-based researchers since the beginning of March 2020, it isn't sufficient. Catalyzing progress in identifying medical solutions for COVID-19 will require even greater funding for research and development, as well as implementing mechanisms for accelerated approval of clinical trials for vaccines and therapeutics.

Canada's universal health-care system—a great source of pride for our country—is now the front line of the battle against COVID-19, where those affected are literally fighting for their lives. The tidal surge in demand due to COVID-19 is challenging this system as never before—hence it needs to be protected as never before. Across the country, health-care professionals are raising concerns about supply shortages. While we also applaud the federal government's steps in engaging with

industry to increase the number of ventilators, we underscore that urgent action remains needed to ensure an adequate supply of protective equipment that our front-line workers need to protect them from infection. It will take concerted action with the private sector to provide the resources to support this effort. This is also a time to think about how to re-organize aspects of our health system to alleviate the burden of hospitals. This is an opportune time to accelerate the implementation of models of providing health care outside of hospital settings, in community clinics or people's homes.

Now, more than ever, Canadians need to see that our leaders have not dispensed with social solidarity, and that our health system is capable of caring for them and their loved ones in this time of need. This is a historic opportunity to sow the seeds of a stronger, more compassionate and resilient Canada. Those in the health-care profession stand ready to fulfil their duty. It is now up to leaders across our country to seize the moment for us all.

Faiz Ahmad Khan is a respirologist and public health researcher. He is an associate professor of medicine at McGill University and the associate director of the McGill International TB Centre.

Salmaan Keshavjee is an internist and health care delivery researcher. He is a professor of global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School.

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Editorial

COVID-19 crisis bringing out the best in government and opposition

For perhaps the first time in recent memory, Canada's political leaders are preoccupied first and foremost with leading.

From Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to rank-and-file MPs, federal politicians have responded to the unprecedented global COVID-19 pandemic crisis by doing their best to steer the public in the right direction, and act with the big picture in mind.

Mr. Trudeau's government was late to respond to the crisis as the novel coronavirus spread across the world, acting a few weeks too late to stem the tide of travellers into the country and to put proper screening measures in place at the borders. So were nearly all other world leaders, except perhaps for those in Japan, South Korea, and a few other countries that have best weathered the storm.

Over the past two weeks, that has changed. The Liberal government has quickly refocused squarely and almost entirely on the crisis. The borders were shut, the stimulus taps were turned on in an unprecedented way, and nearly everything else has taken a back seat for the foreseeable future.

Just as importantly, Mr. Trudeau hasn't minced words as he addressed Canadians and the media, every day, about the crisis. He has delivered the message, again and again, that people should stay in their homes, and do what is needed for the public good. That is what political leadership looks like.

Unfortunately, Mr. Trudeau's government put a permanent stain on their handling of the affair by trying to hoodwink the opposition into giving them a vast range of powers, without parliamentary oversight, until the end of 2021, far longer than is necessary or reasonable.

Perhaps that was an effort to give the government all of the tools and flexibility possible to address the crisis. Perhaps it

was done with an eye to sidelining the opposition for much or all of the time until the next election.

Given the speed at which Parliament can act when good faith presides, it is too far a stretch to argue that the government would be constrained by having to go back to Parliament to renew its powers every few months.

Thankfully, the parties currently in opposition have been at their best amid this crisis as well. The ever-present sniping at and torquing of government missteps has been reduced to the minimum needed to keep the public abreast of their government's performance. Opposition MPs have devoted most of their energies to keeping constituents informed about the crisis and the ways the government is offering help.

Most importantly, when the Liberals did cross the line and reached for too much power, the opposition—led by outgoing Conservative Party Leader Andrew Scheer, House Leader Candice Bergen, finance critic Pierre Poilievre, MP Scott Reid, and many unsung staffers—dug in to stop them.

It wasn't without risk: the Conservatives, and Mr. Reid in particular, were momentarily cast by some as villains blocking the government's emergency response to the crisis. In fact, they were demonstrating precisely the value of the opposition in our parliamentary system, a value that, no matter who is in power, can be harder to find in the more partisan political atmosphere that has become the norm.

If the Liberals learn a lesson from their mistakes, and the opposition parties remain confident that the public will reward them for their own leadership from the sidelines, Canada will be well served by its federal politicians as this crisis carries on.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

We'll need a national strategy for the next phase of our COVID-19 response, writes Vancouver reader

First, I would like to thank all our political and public health leaders for the great leadership they have shown through the COVID-19 crisis so far. Canadians have been well-served by their political and public health leaders; and, as a result, we have fared better than many other nations during the pandemic. I have full confidence in their ability to continue to navigate our country through this most challenging time.

The purpose of my letter is to ask about their planning for the post-lockdown phase of our pandemic strategy; and, to advocate for a strategy that will minimize the negative effects on our economy while keeping Canadians safe.

Recently, there have been a few thought-provoking opinion pieces in *The New York Times* that advocate for a more targeted approach to COVID-19 containment, so that that economic and social activity can return to close to normal levels, including "Is our fight against Coronavirus worse than the disease?" by David Katz, and "Will our economy die from Coronavirus?" by Paul Romer and Alan Garber.

The main premise of these op-eds is that social distancing measures and the elimination of non-essential economic activity is required for a duration of weeks, maybe months, in order to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, so that the health-care system is not overwhelmed; but, social distancing cannot be a long-term solution, as the harm to the economy and citizens' health will exceed the harm from the coronavirus. That is, we risk the cure becoming worse than the illness.

I want to state clearly that I believe social distancing and isolation are absolutely required at this phase. Without draconian isolation measures, the virus will spread freely, there will be

an exponential increase in cases, and death rates will soar as our health-care systems become overloaded. This scenario must be avoided at all economic costs. But what should we do when the virus is under control and transmission rates are well below one, as happened in Hubei province? What is our social distancing exit strategy?

In his well-researched paper 'Coronavirus: The Hammer and the Dance,' by Thomas Pueyo outlines the case for a dramatic lockdown of society to stop the coronavirus spread (the Hammer), followed by a period where economic and social activity can be restarted (the Dance). Like Katz and Romer, Pueyo proposes widespread testing, quarantining of the infected, and measures to protect vulnerable populations (older persons, people with immunodeficiency disorders), along with the continuation of less draconian social distancing measures such as limiting gathering sizes. The judicious application of these targeted strategies could enable most Canadians to return to near normal activity, which would enable our economy to return to near normal levels.

We need a national strategy for the next phase of our COVID-19 response. This strategy needs to include measures that will enable Canadians to return to normal economic and social activity to the degree possible while still maintaining COVID-19 transmission to levels that can be managed within our health care systems. Canadians need to know and understand this strategy, so that they can more fully commit to the social distancing phase (knowing it is temporary) and begin preparing for the return to near normal.

Harry Henderson
 Vancouver, B.C.

It's time Prime Minister Justin Trudeau get tougher, more draconian: Vancouver reader

The word dictator is not a nice title to have or to hear. But when a country is running against time, not everyone can lead. It's time Prime Minister Justin Trudeau rise like a phoenix from the ashes of his minority government. I would like to take you back to early 1930s, Canada was hit by Great Depression. Then-prime minister R.B. Bennett personally answered hundreds of letters from desperate Canadians requesting his help. We are in digital age, we don't want that. We are pretty okay, even if the prime minister arrives late by 40 minutes for updates on COVID-19 for the press briefing. We don't question the prime minister's love for Canada and Canadians. All we want is for the prime minister to act fast, before it's late.

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte is now the most failed man on the planet. His wails and cries for help are alarming. People elect governments so that they can prepare us for the future.

Had the Italian prime minister taken draconian initiatives, he would have gone as a saviour of Italians. Look at where Italy is as of today, 5,500 deaths in this modern age.

I truly appreciate the prime minister's efforts to introduce a \$102-billion emergen-

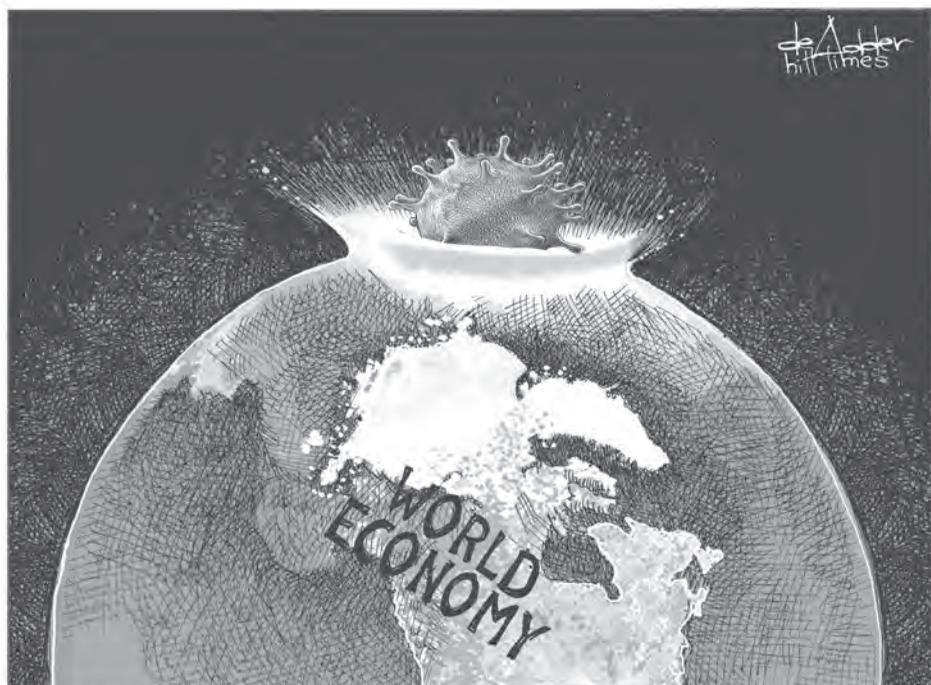
cy aid package to help Canadians impacted by COVID-19. This legislation will increase federal powers and will provide financial relief to businesses and workers. My only concern is the current situation means no government would be able to do much more right now. That's why a quick solution is needed. Our next big challenge is to fight the economic doom after the coronavirus is gone.

Enforce lock-downs and tell people that their groceries or other essential items will be delivered. Believe me thousands of people are still ready to volunteer. If we pay them at this moment they would emboldened to serve and work more. Nearly one million Canadians applied for EI last week.

Take some cues from China on some of the draconian steps it took to flatten the curve.

I don't mind you bringing in draconian measures but save Canada from becoming another Italy. We have full faith in your leadership. Don't advise, make it mandatory and do it, before it's too late.

Viney Sharma,
 Vancouver, B.C.



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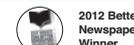
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Trump seems to think prayer rather than personal protective equipment is the answer to COVID-19

It would be hard to come up with a more surreal or feckless strategy against COVID-19, unless you left everything up to the Christian Right in America.



Michael Harris

Harris

HALIFAX—U.S. soldiers stationed on our southern border with America in the name of fighting the coronavirus?

Salvador Dali must be providing inspiration to U.S. President Donald Trump these days.

It would be hard to come up with a more surreal or feckless strategy against COVID-19, unless you left everything up to the Christian Right in America.

There is nothing that group would like more than packed congregations at Easter—the “beautiful” prospect the President himself is musing over.

With Israel tightening its lockdown during the pandemic, Pastor Rick Wiles said the spread of the virus in synagogues was “punishment.” For what? “You’re under judgment, because you oppose his son, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Trump seems to basically agree that prayer rather than personal protective equipment is the answer to COVID-19: “No matter where you may be, I encourage you to turn towards prayer in an act of faith. Together we will easily PREVAIL.”

There is nothing easy about the situation facing the planet.

That’s why the border stuff is simply wacko. As everyone knows, there are 13 U.S. states that touch Canada’s southern border. Those states have 40,000 cases of the virus. The entire U.S. has 85,000. Canada has 4,000, as of Friday, March 27.

Is Trump really saying that his soldiers will stop waves of Canadians trying to get into the States? What would their purpose be—to get in on that country’s spiking COVID-19 problem?

The U.S. now has the most infections in the world in this pandemic. If those soldiers caught anybody, it would more likely be confused Americans trying to get into a country with a rational plan. Trumpland is descending into chaos.

The first nurse in beleaguered New York City has died treating COVID-19. Doctors are being told to take their flimsy masks home, put them in zip-log bags, and use them for as long as a week.



U.S. President Donald Trump, pictured on Jan. 29, 2020, at the signing ceremony for the USMCA. Photograph courtesy of White House Flickr

Trump won’t use his emergency powers to compel U.S. industry to make the needed ventilators, masks, gowns, and swabs. Instead, he raves about how exciting it would be to get Americans back to work by April 12. That is a Make America Sicker deadline.

Prematurely lifting the lockdown, and the practice of social distancing, would almost certainly guarantee that the U.S. would quickly go the way of Italy. So far, 6,200 health-care workers have been infected in that country—over eight per cent of the total number of infections. Included in the tragic number of more than 8,200 deaths are at least 37 doctors staffing the front lines in overwhelmed facilities.

It is well past time to stop showing deference to Donald Trump because of the office he holds. Three cheers for Chrystia Freeland for telling Trump to pack sand—in more diplomatic, but nevertheless stern, language.

Donald Trump deserves shunning, not praise. He is a petulant leader who keeps throwing his toys out the pram when he doesn’t get his way. In the time of COVID-19, it is essential that the international community pull on the same oars—both in stopping the disease, and protecting the interconnected world economy as much as that is possible.

Trump’s contribution to this united approach was to force fellow G7 ministers to spike a joint statement on COVID-19 by insisting that it be called the “Wuhan virus.” As usual, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was the bobble-head who delivered the news. The other leaders wouldn’t agree, possibly because the World Health Organization advises that viruses should not be named after cities or countries. The name assigned to a virus should not be a badge of shame or a punishment.

Not so long ago, critics were considering Article 25 as a way of dealing with this dunce of a president with the cash-register heart. Sec. 4, Article 25 of the U.S. Constitution allows for the removal of a president, if it is deemed he is unable to carry out his duties.

All it takes is for the vice president and eight of Trump’s cabinet secretaries to write an opinion that he is unable to carry out his duties. That letter would then be sent to the Speaker of the House and the president of the Senate pro tempore. That done, Trump would be out, though he could appeal his ouster. In that case, his fate would be decided by a vote in the House and the Senate.

Sec. 25 was actively talked about during the investigation of

Trump during the Russia inquiry. The two officials were Andrew McCabe, then acting-director of the FBI, and Rod Rosenstein, then deputy attorney-general.

Trump had done two things that caught their eye—firing FBI Director James Comey, and sharing classified information with foreign countries. The plan quickly fizzled, most likely because the coterie of sycophants around the president owe their sleazy official lives to the king’s continuing reign of error.

It has been noted by a lot of commentators that when Trump gets in trouble, he tries to change the media channel with a tweet or controversial act. Since he is now backing away from putting troops on the border, that was probably why he made the announcement in the first place.

It made him look like he was doing something other than twiddling his thumbs while governors and mayors continue to beg Washington for the tools to fight COVID-19. As one doctor in California put it, “I am fighting a war with no ammunition.”

Trump’s other distraction from his failure to face the reality of COVID-19 was his announcement this week about Venezuela and long-time enemy President Nicolas Maduro.

Maduro and 12 other members of his government were charged with being “narco-terrorists.” Trump’s State Department had already offered a \$15-million reward for information leading to Maduro’s capture. Now they have unsealed the indictments against Maduro and the others.

Making another Manuel Noriega out of Maduro may turn some cranks in Trump’s inner circle. But as the body-count rises in places like New York, Washington State, Louisiana, Florida and California, not many Americans will be distracted.

Not when they’ve already seen Spain warehousing its dead in ice rinks.

Trump has lied on an epic scale, been impeached, locked kids in cages, demolished institutions designed to protect America from pandemics, threatened “fire and fury” against multiple countries, and given huge swaths of American treasure to those who were already embarrassed by their riches. Now he is risking the lives of literally millions of people in the United States.

If this guy isn’t a Sec. 25, I guess we’ll just have to wait for a Dr. Strangelove who also happens to be president.

Michael Harris is an award-winning journalist and author. *The Hill Times*

Global



So it's an ill wind that blows no good, a saying that was already old when John Heywood first catalogued it in 1546. Some of the anticipated changes are definitely good, but we are going to pay an enormous price in lives and in loss for these benefits. It could have been dealt with a lot better, writes Gwynne Dyer. Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia

Nine things that have changed because of the plague

Or at least they should. COVID-19 is certainly not going to change the world forever, but it is going to change quite a few things, in some cases for a long time.



Gwynne Dyer
Global Affairs

LONDON, U.K.—They teach you in journalism school never to use the phrase “...X has changed the world forever.” Or at least they should. COVID-19 is certainly not going to change

the world forever, but it is going to change quite a few things, in some cases for a long time. Here's nine of them, in no particular order.

1. The clean air over China's cities in the past month, thanks to an almost total shutdown of the big sources of pollution, has saved 20 times as many Chinese lives as COVID-19 has taken. (Air pollution kills about 1.1 million people in China every year.) People will remember this when the filthy air comes back, and want something done about it. India too.

2. Online shopping was already slowly killing the retail shops. The lock-down will force tens of millions who rarely or never shop online to do it all the time. (Yes, all the websites are crashed or booked until mid-April now, but there will be lots of time to scale them up to meet the demand.) Once customers get used to shopping online, most of them won't go back, so retail jobs will be disappearing twice as fast.

3. Not so radical a change with restaurants, but basically the same story: more take-aways and home deliveries, fewer bums on seats. Habits will change, and a lot of people won't come back

afterwards. Food sold out the door generates much less cash flow than food served at the table, and half of the waiters' jobs are gone. There will be a severe cull of restaurants.

4. Once it becomes clear that 'remote working' actually works for most jobs, it will start to seem normal for people not to go in to work most days. So a steep drop in commuting, lower greenhouse-gas emissions, and eventually a lot of empty office space in city centres.

5. There will be a recession, of course, but it probably won't be as bad or as long as the one after the financial crash of 2008. It isn't a collapse of 'the market' that has cost people their jobs this time. It was a virus that made them stop working, and governments are doing far more than ever before to sustain working people through what will probably be a long siege. When the virus is tamed and they can go back to work, the work (in most cases) will still be there. Although there will also be a few trillion dollars of extra debt.

6. Don't worry about the debt. Banks have always created as much money as the government requires. Put too much money into the economy and you'll

cause inflation, which is bad, but just replacing what people would ordinarily be earning so that the economy doesn't seize up is good. So French President Emmanuel Macron can tell the French that no business, however small, will be allowed to go bankrupt. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson can tell the British that the government will pay them 80 per cent of their normal income, up to a limit of £2,500 (\$3,000) a month, if their work has vanished. And U.S. President Trump can talk about sprinkling 'helicopter money' on the grateful masses.

6. What is being revealed here is a deeper truth. 'Austerity'—cutting back on the welfare state to 'balance the budget'—is a political and ideological choice, not an economic necessity. What governments are moving into, willy-nilly, is a basic income guaranteed by the state. Just for the duration of the crisis, they say, and it's not quite a universal basic income, but that idea is now firmly on the table.

7. Collective action and government protection for the old and the poor will no longer be viewed as dangerous radicalism, even in the United States. Welfare states were built all over the developed world after the Second

World War. They will be expanded after the plague ends. Indeed, if Joe Biden were to drop out of the presidential race tomorrow for health reasons, Bernie Sanders would stand a fair chance of beating Trump in November.

8. Decisive action on the climate crisis will become possible (although not guaranteed), because we will have learned that 'business as usual' is not sacred. If we have to change the way we do business, we can.

So it's an ill wind that blows no good (a saying that was already old when John Heywood first catalogued it in 1546). Some of the anticipated changes are definitely good, but we are going to pay an enormous price in lives and in loss for these benefits. It could have been dealt with a lot better.

9. And the West should learn a little humility. Taiwan, South Korea, and China (after the early fumble) have handled this crisis far better than Europe and North America. There are already more dead in Italy than in China, and America, Britain, France, and Germany will certainly follow suit.

Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy (and Work)'.
The Hill Times



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on March 23, 2020, at Rideau Cottage in Ottawa delivering one of his daily news briefings. Getting money into the hands of those who have none, or too little to cover even basic necessities, is the most immediate challenge, especially to support unemployed Canadians with little or no savings to fall back on, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

Unprecedented times require unprecedented responses

That was the lesson of the 1930s Great Depression. If we are to avoid a similar calamity as the 1930s we need to be innovative in our responses today—and to be fast in getting things done. We are only partway there.



David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—Getting money into the hands of those who have none, or too little to cover even basic necessities, is the most immediate challenge, especially to support unemployed Canadians with little or no savings to fall back on.

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit announced by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will provide Canadians—those who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19 or have to stop working to care for children—with up to \$2,000 a month for up to 16 weeks. That's a good start. The problem is getting the money to those who need it fast. Trudeau hopes that the federal government will be ready to receive applications by April 6 and that first payments can start flowing 10 days later.

But there's another issue. Many of the most vulnerable may lack the paperwork and internet capacity to successfully apply while the alternative, an automated telephone application process, may turn out to be too complicated for applicants.

Other promised help—a one-time boost in the Canada Child Benefit and a one-time boost in the GST/HST tax credit for low-income families—will not be paid out until May. Why not sooner?

What do people do in the meantime? A poll taken by the Angus Reid Institute between March 20 and 23 and released last week, found that 44 per cent of Canadians indicated that either they or someone in their household had lost working time (jobs altogether or reduced hours) and of this 44 per cent, employers in about two-thirds of cases were not covering any of their lost wages. Another 37 per cent

expected to lose their jobs. About half of those who had applied for employment insurance described the process as “difficult” and said that they had yet to receive any money.

These numbers could easily have worsened since the survey was taken. With nearly one million EI claimants just over a week ago, the challenge is daunting.

The challenge isn't lack of federal money. “When we look at the potential fiscal capacity for the federal government we find there is plenty of room for more aggressive action,” RBC Economics reported recently. “Economic theory provides little in terms of how much debt is too much but there is plenty of room for the federal government to run higher deficits and debt.”

In fact, even with a projected federal deficit of close to \$110-billion, the ratio of government debt to GDP is manageable and “the ratio remains well below the average debt burden across the industrial world.”

That is critical because more will be needed. So far, federal efforts have, quite rightly, focused on help for individuals.

But businesses, particularly small and midsize businesses (as well as some large ones), are in urgent need of help. A key reason to sustain businesses through the crisis is that we will need them to help restart the economy when the crisis passes. But today businesses need cash flow to pay their

employees, suppliers, utilities and, often, landlords. When sales dry up, so does cash flow.

Moreover, by keeping businesses alive at a time of serious business downturn means that many of them should be able to maintain needed jobs. For tech start-ups the case is also compelling.

As TD Economics argues, “the Canadian economy is in the midst of a shock with no modern precedent.” The impact has generated “an economic hit that no business could have planned for, and so requires an economic response,” the report said, expressing hope that help would be forthcoming.

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, its small business confidence index—Business Barometer—is at its lowest level in its 32-year history. Only 20 per cent of small business owners say their business is in good shape, compared to 38 per cent who say their business is doing poorly. Some 50 per cent of small business owners said they were planning layoffs and only five per cent were planning for new hires. Moreover, the survey was taken before mandatory lockdowns in many parts of Canada which means the survey could be even lower if taken today.

The index fell to 38 in March, compared to 60.5 in February, the CFIB said adding that an index level nearer to 65 indicates the economy is growing at its

potential. Clearly the drop in confidence has been both sudden and deep. As the CFIB put it, “March 2020 has turned out to be a month unlike any other in Canada's economic history—and the downward path of small business confidence puts it clearly in perspective.” Restoring confidence is the critical need.

Business aid, aside from deferral of tax payments, has consisted primarily of easier access to credit through Business Development Bank and the Export Development Corporation. But making it easier for businesses to take on more debt is of limited value since the debt will have to be repaid and many businesses may not have confidence that in their ability to repay. The federal government may have to be more innovative, perhaps providing direct grants or taking equity positions.

At the same time, the federal government could do more to encourage smaller companies, including tech start-ups, to retain employees by subsidizing wages.

The Trudeau government's late move to raise its planned 10 per cent wage subsidy for those continuing to go to work in small businesses to 75 per cent was necessary. Other countries had gone much further—Britain was already covering up to 80 per cent of the wages in small businesses. Clearly, it is more important to keep people working than paying them to stay at home.

Unprecedented times require unprecedented responses. That was the lesson of the 1930s Great Depression. If we are to avoid a similar calamity as the 1930s we need to be innovative in our responses today—and to be fast in getting things done. We are only partway there.

David Crane can be reached at crane@interlog.com.

The Hill Times

Opinion



CSIS director David Vigneault, pictured at the House Public Safety and National Security Committee on May 13, 2019. CSIS is mandated to advise the government on the following threats, as outlined in the CSIS Act: espionage or sabotage; foreign-influenced activities that are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person; acts of serious violence against persons or property for the purpose of achieving a political, religious, or ideological objective; and acts that could lead to the destruction or overthrow by violence of, the constitutionally established system of Government in Canada. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Who is turning leading academic research into new companies to help Canada become a world leader in life sciences?



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What role for Canadian intelligence during the COVID-19 crisis?

Yes, there is a role for our spies in these times. COVID-19 is not the only threat we are faced with. Let's hope they can continue to do their work and keep us safe.



Phil Gurski

National Security

OTTAWA—We see our intelligence sector as there to protect us from threats like terrorism and foreign espionage—what about pandemics?

I don't know where most Canadians get their impressions on intelligence from but I can guess. Bond, James Bond. Jason Bourne. *Homeland*. All fictional sources.

The underlying problem is that those who work in intelligence are the worst at letting us know what they do and how they do it. We all understand why, I'd like to think, we do not get a lot from those on the inside. Those who deal with sensitive information derived from sensitive (or secret) sources simply cannot be as open as Canadians would like them to be. There is nothing more sacrosanct—and critical to success—than sources and methods and spies guard those to the utmost degree.

What we do know about what these agencies do can be derived from legislation, the ways in which a democracy establishes what is legitimate, what is required, and what are the limits on powers. For instance, CSIS is mandated to advise the government on the following threats, as outlined in the CSIS Act: espionage or sabotage; foreign-influenced activities that are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person; acts of serious violence against persons or property for the purpose of achieving a political, religious, or ideological objective; and acts that could lead to the destruction or overthrow by violence of, the constitutionally established system of Government in Canada.

That is a wide-ranging mandate that seems to cover what we would probably think spies should do: stop terrorism, foreign espionage, and foreign interference. And, based on my three decades at CSIS and CSE, I think they do a good job of that (yes, I am biased, but I also have an insider perspective on this).

So what happens in the current COVID-19 crisis?

It does not seem, at least on the surface, that threats of this kind fall under any of the above-noted categories. And yet there

is no question that the virus pandemic does constitute a national security threat, perhaps one we have never seen in this country in a long, long, time. What, then, if anything should our security intelligence organizations do to help ensure that the government, and, by extension, Canadians, have the best information/intelligence possible in order to make the best decisions possible?

I can see several areas where there is indeed a role for CSE and CSIS. The former has already warned Canadians, especially those working on responses to COVID-19, to lock down their data because sophisticated hackers are out to “steal ongoing key research toward a vaccine.” The Canada Centre for Cyber Security, housed within CSE, has also warned that hackers, spammers, and fraudsters are counting on concerns about the pandemic to induce people to click on unsolicited emails containing computer viruses (these are particularly potent these days, because social-distancing measures mean more people are working from their homes, where their data can be less protected compared to their offices).

CSE also has a foreign intelligence (FI) mandate and that can be used to collect data on what is happening outside of Canada as it relates to COVID-19 (full disclosure: I worked in foreign intelligence at CSE from 1983 to 2001). The government could learn from what other countries are doing or not doing. In a perfect world all nations would share their data: alas the world is not perfect and that is why we need spies to gather information for us.

As for CSIS, the terrorism and foreign espionage/interference threats are still with us. Terrorists could take advantage of what they may perceive as our redirected attention to plan attacks: foreign states have already been detected spreading disinformation. CSIS can find out what these actors are doing and advise appropriately.

The challenge is that, much like the rest of the country, CSE and CSIS employees are encouraged to self-isolate to lower the incidence of the spread of COVID-19 (I have spoken to friends with both agencies who have confirmed that many are being asked to stay home). Clearly, spies cannot “work from home” given the nature of their jobs and the classification of the data they collect. I suppose they will do the best they can, under the circumstances.

For their part, U.S. intelligence agencies were issuing ominous, classified warnings in January and February about the global danger posed by the coronavirus while U.S. President Donald Trump and lawmakers played down the threat. This is, unfortunately, not a surprise for an administration which has regularly undermined the messaging from the men and women who work in American national security.

So, yes, there is a role for our spies in these times. COVID-19 is not the only threat we are faced with. Let's hope they can continue to do their work and keep us safe.

Phil Gurski is a retired strategic analyst at CSIS. He posts material regularly on his website www.borealistthreatandrisk.com
The Hill Times



Finance Minister Bill Morneau, pictured on March 18, 2020 addressing reporters on COVID-19, sponsored the bill that allows the government to issue special warrants. His office says the auditor general's office has seen a 16 per cent boost to its funding since 2016. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Auditor general says 'too early' to tell if request for audit on COVID-19 special warrants demands funding boost

'Given the scope and scale of this crisis, it's incumbent on the government to provide them with supplementary budgeting to adequately provide the support they're looking for,' says NDP MP Matthew Green.

BY BEATRICE PAEZ

With Parliament suspended until at least mid-April, oversight on one of the government's new spending powers granted during the COVID-19 pandemic will fall squarely on the auditor general, whose office is facing resource constraints, to assess the feds' use of its temporary authority.

On March 13, the House unanimously agreed to suspend Parliament, passing a motion that would allow it to adjourn until at least April 20, which included a provision called for by the op-

position to mandate the auditor general's office to conduct an audit into special warrants issued while Parliament is not sitting.

In "very special" circumstances, special warrants allow the government to get the appropriations, or funding, needed to maintain its operations, programs, and other services when the "expenditure is urgently required for the public good." It's separate from Bill C-13, the \$107-billion emergency relief legislation, which Parliament passed on March 25 after a marathon negotiation session into the wee hours and gives the government broad spending powers to roll out new measures until Sept. 30 to respond to the crisis without parliamentary oversight.

However, the House did agree that while it stands adjourned, the Health and Finance Committees would hold weekly electronic meetings to review the government's COVID-19 response, and that Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) would provide the Finance Committee with biweekly updates on the spending authority afforded to him under C-13.

Paul Thomas, senior research associate at Samara Centre for Democracy, said opposition parties' consent to give the government the power to issue special warrants, provided there is oversight from the auditor general, is

akin to giving it a "blank cheque," while "still trying to acknowledge the democratic process."

"[The opposition's] hoping they use that authority well, and, to a substantial degree, it reflects on our leaders across parties being willing to accept that action must happen quickly and decisively," he said.

Any appropriations to fund government operations made during this period have to be published in the Canada Gazette within 30 days after it is issued. The power also expires June 24, and the auditor general's office is required to report on its assessment by June 2021.

"One of the foundational things [of our parliamentary system] is the Crown is not supposed to spend money or raise money unless approved by Parliament," Mr. Thomas said.

Philippe Lagasse, associate professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa, said that the Westminster parliamentary system can allow for the speedy passage of extraordinary measures. "The circumstances are unusual, but the ability of Parliament to act with speed is fairly well established," he said. "They do control their own procedures, and are able to get things done quite quickly."

Unlike the U.S., where congressional oversight warrants immediate accountability, Canada's parliamentary system allows for it to happen retrospectively, Prof. Lagasse said. "It's not unusual that Parliament will look back after the fact, and similarly, there's a fine balance that has to be struck between enabling quick action," he said.

Balancing the need for oversight with speed was the main point of contention for opposition parties over the Liberals' push to extend its spending authority to the rollout of new measures in Bill C-13 intended to respond to COVID-19. After several hours of debate, the government agreed to limit its ability to spend unfettered to Sept. 30, backing down from the proposed end date of December 2021.

The motion to suspend Parliament also saw the Senate, which was in the midst of a pre-study of the new NAFTA, pass the renegotiated trilateral pact before it could go through the legislative

that while the AG's office is the appropriate body to oversee the government's spending, it needs adequate funding to ensure it is able to carry out its work.

"Given the scope and scale of this crisis, it's incumbent on the government to provide them with supplementary budgeting to adequately provide the support they're looking for," Mr. Green said, referring to interim auditor general Sylvain Ricard's recent petition before the committee for a funding boost.

A request for comment from Conservative MP Dean Allison (Niagara West, Ont.), chair of the committee, was not returned by deadline.

Mr. Ricard testified on Feb. 27 that his office has been constrained in its efforts to properly staff and upgrade its outdated software. The lack of adequate funding is hobbling its ability to conduct audits, he said, estimating that it needs an additional \$10.8-million on top of its current \$88-million budget.

Reached for comment about its capacity to carry out an audit on the special warrants, in addition to its routine work, a spokesperson for the auditor general's office said last week it is still "analyzing this audit request," and it's "too early to know what additional pressure this request could have on the OAG's funding and operations."

Finance Canada, for its part, said the government has increased the AG's budget since 2016, noting that, in 2018, it pledged to spend an additional \$41-million on the office's operations. According to spokesperson Marie-France Faucher, that commitment marked a 16 per cent increase to its operating budget.

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Government House Leaver Pablo Rodriguez, Transport Minister Marc Garneau, Public Safety Minister Bill Blair, Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos, and Health Minister Patty Hajdu, pictured on the Hill on March 25, 2020. Mr. Rodriguez tweeted this photograph at 5:54 a.m. 'It's done. The House has adopted the emergency support announced to face #COVID19. It's now up to the Senate. We will work day and night so that Canadians receive as quickly as possible the help they critically need. We will be there for you.' Photograph courtesy of Pablo Rodriguez

procedure in its usual form.

Mr. Thomas noted that, based on Samara's study of the length of time bills receive scrutiny, the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA, passed with similar speed and was of comparable length to the new NAFTA. (The new NAFTA implementation legislation is a 104-page bill, while CETA is 140 pages.) He added that CETA was studied for a total of 26 days, while the new NAFTA had 21 days, including three pre-committee study meetings in the Senate.

NDP MP Matthew Green (Hamilton-Centre, Ont.), a member of the House Public Accounts Committee, said in a phone interview with *The Hill Times*

Opinion

Academic research underpins sound policy

The thoughtful progress of Canadian society depends upon our ability to provide scientific, evidence-informed support for our policy development.



Alejandro Adem

Opinion

Whether it be snow, hockey, maple syrup, or health care, Canadians pride ourselves on our unique attributes. Among some of our greatest national strengths are our policies—the laws and regulatory guidelines that govern Canadians.

As the president of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, NSERC, I am concerned with the growing trend for questionable online sources to inform public opinion which in turn, may affect important policy decisions. For example, the recent resurgence of measles—a disease declared eliminated in the Americas in



Canada's Chief Science Adviser Mona Nemer's mandate is to provide advice on issues related to science and government policies, including advising on ways to ensure that scientific evidence supports policy decisions. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

2002—demonstrates how online sources inform the public conversation around the necessity of vaccinations, which in turn, affects the need to revise policy.

I strive to ensure that we leverage our scientific knowledge and evidence-based research to inform our policy development. Canada invests substantially in world-class research and produces experts in all scientific fields. A unique Canadian asset, we need to deploy our research expertise to inform solid public policy.

With this in mind, I am pleased to share that I recently met with a very special group of researchers—the current cohort of the Mitacs Canadian Science Policy Fellowship program.

While I was CEO at Mitacs, we developed the fellowship program along with the University of Ottawa's Institute for Science, Society and Policy to address an existing gap between policy makers and academic researchers. This unique program creates bridges between academia and government departments and develops a connective network.

Now that I am leading a government agency—NSERC—I am experiencing the other side of the equation. Namely, I see firsthand how these fellows work within government departments to understand their needs and challenges. Government hosts benefit from a fellow skilled in translating scientific knowledge for policy-making. They also gain access to leading-edge research applicable to their department's goals. And they acquire access to a network of academics—an interconnected web of subject matter experts at the fellow's host universities as well as those across the world.

Although a relatively new program, its fellows are making an impact. One of the first fellows, Dr. Masha Cemna, an expert in the human immune response, now works for Dr. Mona Nemer, chief science adviser to Canada's prime minister, minister of innovation, science and industry, and cabinet. With the chief science adviser's mandate to provide advice on issues related to science and government policies including advising on ways to ensure that scientific evidence supports policy decisions, Masha has ample good work to do.

At NSERC we have also found tremendous value in the program. Last year, NSERC hosted Dr. Shawn McGuirk, whose PhD research centered on the role of cellu-

lar metabolism in cancer progression. His work and connections were proven so valuable to NSERC, that we simply couldn't afford to lose his expertise and the conduit that he provided to current academic research; we hired him in an ongoing role as a senior policy adviser.

After a careful selection process, an elite cohort of fellows receive advanced training on a variety of topics including the policy-making process, communicating science to a non-scientific audience, delivering effective presentations, and other topics that equip very smart researchers with applicable skills. The fellows advance together as a class, so they are efficiently trained together, and develop a "Class of..." alumni network among themselves. They access many unique opportunities including the Canadian Science Policy Conference where they connect with policy-makers and scientists dedicated to advancing science for policy.

The fellowship program is available to researchers in and across all disciplines including the social sciences and humanities as well as STEM. They work on policies related to artificial intelligence, digital systems, clean technology, mental health, and environmental issues to name a few. Their work is delivered in results-oriented data-based evidence that their government hosts can readily consume, and in turn, share with their public stakeholders.

As the deadline for the Canadian Science Policy Fellowship call for hosts approaches in early March, I strongly encourage all government departments and agencies to consider hosting a fellow. The thoughtful progress of Canadian society depends upon our ability to provide scientific, evidence-informed support for our policy development.

Alejandro Adem is the president of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council. He is the former CEO and scientific director at Mitacs, a not-for-profit organization that fosters growth and innovation in Canada. He is also a professor of mathematics at the University of British Columbia.

The Hill Times

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

What you need to know to help you and your family stay healthy.

- Only visit an assessment centre if you have been referred by a health care professional.
- Avoid non-essential travel.
- Monitor for symptoms after travel.
- Avoid large gatherings.
- Be prepared, but avoid panic stocking.
- Caring for those who are ill? Take precautions.
- Clean high-touch surfaces regularly.
- Order your prescription medication.
- Practice cough and sneeze etiquette in transit.

If you have symptoms, take the self-assessment at ontario.ca/coronavirus. Or call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007) or your public health unit.

The president of the United States is no friend of ours

As long as Donald Trump is in office, he will continue to promote despots and dictators over democrats. He would rather befriend Russian president Vladimir Putin and North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un.



Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—Donald Trump's border threat confirms what we already know.

The president of the United States is no friend of ours.

Of course, our prime minister cannot say that publicly. Deputy prime minister Chrystia Freeland tied herself into a pretzel to avoid commenting on internal

American border patrol decisions.

She wants to ensure that we have a working relationship with friends in the administration who believe in the friendship between the two countries.

But Trump obviously does not. There is a significant amount of irony in the president's threat to send the army to protect his northern borders.

The protection on the northern border is really needed on the Canadian side, because the confused, chaotic COVID-19 response in the United States has the potential to infect Canada.

Frankly the fewer American travellers crossing over into our country, the better.

Canada has done a decent job of trying to flatten the curve, and the federal/provincial cooperation on our side of the border is visible.

Daily press conferences from the federal government and various provincial leaders have been harmonized, both in messaging and delivery.

Compare that to the American tragicomedy unfolding between the president and the country's top specialist in infectious diseases.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, had provided advice to six successive presidents, and was called upon to join the president's task force on the coronavirus.

The collaboration was fine until Trump decided that he would ignore the science and encourage



Donald Trump's border threat confirms what we already know, writes Sheila Copps. *Illustration courtesy of Needpix.com*

people to stop self-isolating and socialize more.

To Fauci's credit, he publicly contradicted the president, succinctly stating the government doesn't decide the timeframe, the virus does.

But as soon as Fauci crossed the president, he suddenly disappeared from any joint announcements on the White House coronavirus strategy.

Fauci will obviously not support the president's attempts to minimize the benefits of self-isolation. The notion that Americans should flock to public gatherings at Easter is akin to signing a death warrant for thousands of people who are vulnerable to the virus.

But the president's crazy claims have lots of support. Just last week, the lieutenant-governor of Texas backed the president's call to shorten the social distancing timeframe, even though he acknowledged that it could cost lives. Dan Patrick stepped in to back Trump's call to end the social isolation in favour of the economy, stating that grandparents would be willing to sacrifice their lives for the economy.

Patrick claimed the United States would be finished if the coronavirus keeps people in their

homes for another three months.

But the scientists tell us that if we refuse to keep our distance from others, the virus will simply rebound and gather more strength.

The last few weeks have provided a pretty good snapshot of the benefits of universal health care versus the American health hodgepodge.

In our country, federal and provincial health ministers are working together to provide the support for frontline workers fighting the spread of this disease.

The prime minister and premiers are collaborating to ensure the economic damage to workers and companies is backstopped with government support.

One only needs to switch between Canadian and American television networks to witness the difference in our approaches to COVID-19-virus fighting.

And if you don't believe the anecdotal evidence, just review the numbers. The United States has now become the epicentre of the virus. As of last Thursday, more than 1,000 Americans had died from the virus, compared to 35 Canadians. One-third of the American deaths occurred in New York, which borders our country.

So, the one thing that soldiers

at the border could accomplish is keeping Americans on their side of the fence.

It is a sad day when the world's longest undefended border reverts to army protection. And it also is a testament to the fragility of our bilateral relationship.

But at the end of the day, anything that discourages traffic between Canada and the United States can only benefit us.

As long as Donald Trump is in office, he will continue to promote despots and dictators over democrats. He would rather befriend Russian president Vladimir Putin and North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un.

The North Korean despot was reported on social media to have executed the first corona virus sufferer in his country, although that posting has not been confirmed.

If Trump proceeds with his plan to arm his northern border, we can return the favour by limiting American traffic.

Trump's plan may actually help keep COVID-19 out of Canada.

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

News COVID-19



Finance Minister Bill Morneau's 2020 budget has been postponed—it's unclear for how long—and his mandate to change Canada's tax laws have, like the rest of the Liberal agenda, been sidelined by the need to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Budget 2020, election promises in question amid COVID-19 global pandemic crisis, say McKay, Delacourt

'It is going to blow a hole in the government's legislative agenda,' says Liberal MP John McKay.

Continued from page 1

After narrowly winning a second mandate last fall, the Liberal government's medium- and long-term plans for the 43rd Parliament have been put in jeopardy by a health and economic crisis that could carry on for months or even years to come.

The Liberals got off to a relatively slow start in the House of Commons, introducing just a few truly original pieces of legislation before the spreading virus forced the closure of Parliament on March 13. Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) promised a federal budget on March 30, then quickly postponed it when Parliament adjourned until at least late April.

Liberal election promises to do more to fight climate change, advance Indigenous rights, tighten gun control, and revise the Criminal Code, among others, will have to wait, said Mr. McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.), who has won eight straight elections in his Greater Toronto Area riding.

"It is going to blow a hole in the government's legislative agenda, that for the foreseeable future the health crisis will take over any agenda the government may have had, and then thereafter the economic crisis, which will extend the health crisis, will take over whatever remaining agenda the government might have wished to have had."

"At this stage, the overwhelming consensus is that the government needs to do what the government needs to do in order to be able to safeguard people's health and to mitigate the egregious effects on the economy," said Mr. McKay, who has served as a parliamentary secretary for defence and finance during his career.

The 43rd Parliament began on Dec. 5, though the House has

sat for just a little more than six weeks since then. The Liberals have passed six bills in that time; however, three were appropriation bills to keep the government operating, two were emergency responses to the COVID-19 crisis, and the other was the NAFTA implementation bill.

The government introduced six other bills that are still in the House of Commons. Three were essentially copies of bills from the previous Parliament—on oversight of the Canada Border Services Agency, a change to the citizenship oath, and former Conservative MP Rona Ambrose's private member's bill to have judges trained in sexual harassment law. Another, on medical assistance in dying, was tabled in response to a court order. Two were original pieces of legislation: a bill to ban so-called "conversion therapy" for gay people through the Criminal Code, and another to expand the list of banned chemical weapons in Canada.

The Liberals campaigned on a broad range of promises that would require legislation to implement, including the

creation of a number of new bodies, officers, and agencies. Other promised changes include new taxes on luxury goods, technology companies, and housing market speculation; changes to laws related to gun storage, elder abuse, health, copyright, and heritage, to name a few; and to bring in legislation to advance Indigenous rights.

After abandoning pledges to balance the federal budget during the last Parliament, the Liberals ran a campaign last year promising to keep Canada's debt-to-GDP ratio—essentially a measure of the government's ability to comfortably service its debt—on a decline. With tens of billions in new spending now planned to battle the virus, and an economy (and GDP) expected to contract in the months ahead, sticking to that plan will be almost impossible.

The Finance Department had previously estimated that the government would run a \$28-billion deficit in the coming fiscal year. That was well before the government passed a \$107-billion financial aid package to prop up the stalling economy.

The huge expected deficit will have knock-on effects on Canada's monetary and fiscal policy in the future, said Mr. McKay.

Status of government bills

House of Commons

Second reading:

- C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts
- C-6, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action number 94)
- C-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying)
- C-8, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)
- C-9, An Act to amend the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act

Committee:

- C-5, An Act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code

"You don't recover from that, you just don't."

Still, Mr. McKay said his constituents were more concerned with the government's response to the crisis.

"If I said 'debt-to-gdp ratio' to most of my constituents, they would look at me with blank stares. If I said to them, 'Well, we won't be able to help you with next month's rent cheque,' that will focus their mind quite dramatically."

"Stabilize the economy: that is job number one, and everything else will fall by the wayside," he said.

'Too early to say' if or when budget coming

Mr. Delacourt, who worked as the communications director for the Liberal Research Bureau before joining the ranks of political consultants in 2017, said there is no guarantee the Liberal government even releases a budget for the upcoming year.

"I think it is too early to say, at this point," he said.

The government is focused on dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, he said. The fast-spreading disease has shuttered business and forced Canadian residents to stay isolated from one another for the foreseeable future.

"It has been literally weeks since I have heard the word 'budget' pass anyone's lips," said Mr. Delacourt of his talks with government insiders.

"Where everyone is focused now is, what is happening in the immediate future?"

The government's annual budget is primarily a political document, outlining its planned spending priorities for the year ahead. Government spending is and must be reported to Parliament in more detail through the estimates process.

"The government does not have to table a budget every year. It's a parliamentary convention, and that's all," said Mr. Delacourt, who works at Hill and Knowlton Strategies.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau's (Toronto Centre, Ont.) office did not respond March 26 when asked whether the government still intended to release a budget this year.

The House of Commons is scheduled to return on April 20. Government House Leader Pablo Rodriguez's (Honoré-Mercier, Que.) office would not say on March 23 whether the government still expected the House to return on that date. Press secretary Simon Ross noted that the motion to adjourn the House on March 13 required that all four recognized parties must agree for the adjournment to be extended.

Mr. Morneau said in January that the environment would be the central focus of the government's first budget in the 43rd Parliament. The CBC reported March 6 that the federal budget would include measures to address the COVID-19 crisis, but would still include a major focus on "clean growth"—shorthand for an economy that produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions—quoting an unnamed official from Mr. Morneau's office.

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The Hill Times

Government should be careful in using cellphone data to track COVID-19, advocates say

Continued from page 5

was in each of those locations," Ms. West explained.

"But to actually trace down to like, where did this person go minute by minute? You're not going to get that."

Bell spokesman Marc Choma said Bell does not track or store the more precise mobile device GPS location data, with the exception of real-time 911 calls.

"Those kinds of measures require lawful authority or a court order and are not something that we have offered to governments as part of their COVID-19 response plans," he said in an email. Mr. Choma clarified that Bell does "have access to previous cell tower location data. At an individual level, this information would only be provided with the consent of the customer or through lawful access."

The federal government isn't the only one who could compel use of such data; that option would be open to provinces as well. Ontario Premier Doug Ford indicated early on in the COVID-19 crisis that it's an option he would consider, while *The Logic* reported that Toronto Mayor John Tory had said the city was gathering cellphone data to map out where people were gathering; city staff later contradicted that in a statement.

A spokesperson for Mr. Ford did not reply to questions about whether Ontario is in the process of going ahead with such a plan. Neither did seven other provinces

or territories; representatives for Nunavut, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Quebec all said they aren't working on gathering cellphone location data at the moment.

But Marie-Claude Lacasse, spokesperson for the Quebec health ministry, said in an email she couldn't specify "if this is something we would ever consider in the future."

Canada's chief public health officer, Theresa Tam, was also asked at a March 24 press conference about whether cellphone data was a viable way to slow the spread of the virus. "I think there's lots of innovative approaches and they should all be examined obviously with due respect to privacy, ethics and all of those considerations," Dr. Tam responded.

But Dr. Tam said that the government's "primary strategy is to ensure people are self-isolating when they should be and also that everyone is respecting social distancing."

As Mr. Trudeau made the statement that the government would keep the option of using cellphone data on the table, both University of Ottawa law professor Michael Geist and Teresa Scassa, Canada research chair in information law and policy at the University of Ottawa, called in separate blog posts for the authorities to be careful in doing so.

"In normal times, most Canadians would respond to the collection and use of sensitive health and location information

with a hard 'no.' But these are not normal times. The trade-offs between public health and privacy, not to mention the massive impact being felt by millions as the economy grinds to a halt, means that all measures can and should be considered in response to the global pandemic," Prof. Geist wrote.

Privacy and civil liberties shouldn't be "casual victims of pandemic panic," Prof. Scassa wrote.

Both said any such collection should be subject to time limits and limits on how the data is used, as well as oversight, accountability, and transparency.

Work with opposition to make sure safeguards in place, says Tory critic

Conservative MP Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, Alta.), her party's industry critic, echoed those comments, issuing a press release calling for the government to work with the opposition to put in place safeguards.

She said the government should tell the public under what circumstances it would consider using location data, and work "with opposition parties to ensure strict safeguards and parliamentary oversight measures are in place prior to deploying any such strategy."

It should also ensure collection is temporary, with clear end dates, and narrowly

"define the scope for the collection of the data." Ms. Rempel Garner also said the government should reassure Canadians "that this would be done only with express consent and strict limits as to who sees the data, what it can be used for, how it will be securely stored, and for how long it will be stored for."

In a scenario where the authorities went through the courts to obtain a warrant or production order, such requests wouldn't be visible unless the government or companies involved chose to publicize them.

Former Ontario privacy commissioner Ann Cavoukian said in a phone interview that if authorities do end up using de-identified data, they should endeavour to be as open as possible.

"Be transparent. Say, 'look, we're trying to really nail down these sources of the COVID-19, and what parts of town they're [in], or whatever, and that's why we went to the court and we got a warrant to gain access to this information. We're only going to use it for this purpose intended," she said.

"You can go a long way by speaking to the public that way, as opposed to not disclosing it and then somebody finds out about it and then the government looks terrible, like they're hiding something."

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COVID-19 can't end parliamentary scrutiny, say experts

'There is no incompatibility between an effective and efficient government and legislative scrutiny,' says Carleton University professor Philippe Lagassé.

Continued from page 1

Carleton University professor Philippe Lagassé, an expert on decision-making in the Westminster parliamentary system, said the role of Parliament is laid out in the Emergencies Act. The act still lays out responsibilities for parliamentary oversight of the government even when the act is being used, he said.

"That tells us that there is an expectation that Parliament should be continuing to scrutinize government, even during crises," Prof. Lagassé told *The Hill Times*.

Parliamentarians returned to Ottawa in limited numbers last week, they did so to be mindful of public health warnings against large gatherings.

What was intended to be a quick sitting on March 24 extended into the night and early morning as negotiations took place outside the Chamber to find a solution to make way for the passage of Bill C-13, which gives the federal government increased spending powers and implemented its financial assistance package.

The sitting ended with the MPs passing a \$107-billion package of emergency aid in less than 24 hours.

The Parliamentarians who made up the skeleton sitting were invited by their respective House leaders offices, Conservative MPs Scott Reid (Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, Ont.) being an exception, who objected to a leaked version of the original bill that gave the government broad powers until the end of 2021.

In an essay posted to his website, Mr. Reid objected to the House adopting a bill that had not been seen.

Samara researcher Paul E.J. Thomas said it was "a little disconcerting" to see the extent of which Bill C-13 was "hammered out behind close doors," in comparison to the legislative process for emergency measures in the United Kingdom and Australia.

"There could hopefully be a slightly better balance between expediency and ... respect for transparency and basic parliamentary provisions, like having members know what they are agreeing to," said Mr. Thomas, senior research associate at the Samara Centre for Democracy. Last week, Economic Devel-

and flexibility as they can. That's why it's important to maintain these longstanding constitutional functions, because the second- and third-order effects of that are unknown at this time," he added.

"It just reminds us that that's what Parliament is for, that's what the courts are for, to make sure that when, under pressure, the

ability, but those forums and the statements made will become the main tool," Mr. Thomas said, adding that recalling Parliament would likely only be used as a last resort.

He said the committees will need to find a way to gather input from MPs across the country, and not just the smaller group who might be leading the conversation.

Mr. Thomas said the big question is if House leaders offices will substitute members on the two committees—a practice that was seen on the House Justice and Ethics committees during the last Parliament at the height of the SNC-Lavalin affair.

"I would sincerely hope that that the parties would recognize the need for expertise rather than seniority in these contexts, so people that may have a long history on serving on the Finance Committee or the Health Committee would be best placed to take

So far, Mr. Thomas, there has been two instances both when the House was adjourned on March 13 and when Bill C-13 was passed last week by unanimous consent when the negotiations were done and details were ironed out away from the Chamber.

"The time to start is now to figure out how we can have a broader range of parliamentarians taking part," he said.

In the unique sitting last week, there was a far greater representation among members of the executive, with more than a third of all MPs present being cabinet ministers compared to 11 per cent in a regular sitting. Among the 14 Liberal MPs present, there were 11 cabinet ministers, two parliamentary secretaries, and only one backbench MP.

When will Parliament sit next?

The looming question as the COVID-19 crisis plays out is how long can the House of Commons go without having another sitting.

The House is currently adjourned until April 20, but Bill C-13 gives Mr. Morneau spending powers until the end of September.

If the government decides to trigger the Emergencies Act, Parliament would have to reconvene.

The act allows any 10 Senators or 20 MPs to force a vote in their respective Houses on revoking the government's use of the act. It also creates a parliamentary review committee that must report to Parliament on the government's actions every 60 days.

Mr. Davies said Parliament should be exploring the option to have virtual sittings.

"I think the technology exists," he said. "I think the only things stopping that is probably the political will to do so."

"As it becomes clearer ... that we may be looking at perhaps an extended period of time [for the] suspension of Parliament, I think it's only a matter of time before we start turning our minds to figure out how we can meet virtually," Mr. Davies said.

In a March 19 post on his website, Mr. Reid suggested that there is a need for a special committee to oversee the government's response to the coronavirus crisis, in the vein of the Special House Committee on Canada-China Relations.

In a series of tweets following the passage of Bill C-13, Mr. Reid said the changes made to the bill included the adoption of "important oversight measures," such as the ongoing meetings of the Finance and Health Committees. He added the changes to the bill persevered Parliamentary sovereignty.

Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.) said the idea of committee makes sense as all committee work could be done virtually.

"I take the view that Parliament is supreme on all matters and over all institutions," including the government and judiciary, Mr. McKay said. "Because Parliament is supreme, there does need to be an agreed upon way in which we move forward, whether or not we are formally meeting in the House of Commons."

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Government House Leader Pablo Rodriguez, pictured on March 24, 2020, in the House. Photograph courtesy screen capture of CPAC

opment and Official Languages Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.) told Global News that the emergency powers that the government proposed—giving Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) spending powers until the end of 2021—were needed because of the slow pace of the Parliament.

With the pressure that the government is under, Prof. Lagassé said they are making decisions very quickly and as effectively as possible, and not necessarily thinking about the best way to approach a problem.

"It's always good to have a second set of eyes, and our system provides that through parliamentary scrutiny," he said. "There is no incompatibility between an effective and efficient government and legislative scrutiny."

"It's understandable that in that situation they want to give themselves as much authority

executive attempts to go further than it should, that it gets reined in, if ever so slightly."

As part of the motion that received unanimous consent to adopt Bill C-13, it also included provisions for the House Health and Finance committees to meet virtually.

NDP MP Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, B.C.), his party's representative on the Health Committee, said the committees have become "critical" with the typical role of parliamentarians "severely truncated at this point."

"I think these two committees take on an incredibly added importance at this point in time, in the absence of having regular parliamentary sittings."

Mr. Thomas said currently there is little oversight possible beyond the virtual meetings of the Health and Finance committees.

"You may not have a formal mechanism for exerting account-

part in those debates," he said. "Given recent events, I am worried that may not be the case."

Mr. Davies said he is hoping that will be a resistance to politicize committees, but added their were early signs that there might be a temptation to do so.

"I think Canadians expect us and want us, to the extent we can, work across party lines in as a non-partisan way as possible and focus on the task at hand, which is, I think, ferreting out the most comprehensive information we can, holding the government to account, and making sure that we come up with the best possible proposal we can," Mr. Davies said.

"It is really important," Mr. Thomas said to create mechanisms so that MPs—and their constituents—who weren't in the Chamber last week, still have a voice.

"The signs so far are not great in that regard," he added.



Former cabinet minister Peter MacKay, along with Conservative MPs Erin O'Toole and Marilyn Gladu, are all vying to replace outgoing leader Andrew Scheer. The Conservative leadership race began in January of this year, giving potential candidates just 10 weeks to meet the eligibility criteria. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Political parties should rethink process for winnowing candidate pool

Fundraising prowess, which typically requires networks of wealthy contacts or ties to powerful interest groups, is a poor basis for assessing leadership candidates' viability or commitment, writes Samara's Paul Thomas.



Paul EJ Thomas

Opinion

Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic burst into Canadians' lives, the Conservative Party of Canada has faced questions about whether it will delay its current leadership contest.

While the vote itself is not until June, these questions are already urgent; potential candidates only have until March 25 to pay the \$200,000 registration fee and \$100,000 "compliance deposit" to be on the ballot. They must also submit the signatures of at least 3,000 party members, drawn from at least 30 constituencies in seven provinces.

Given the impact of COVID-19 on Canadians' finances, and the difficulties that social distancing poses for campaigning, several candidates have called for the deadlines to be extended—a request the CPC's Leadership Election Organizing Committee has, so far, declined.

However, while the coronavirus outbreak has created significant new challenges for potential candidates, it has also underlined just how onerous the party's entry requirements were in the first place. Indeed, such high thresholds risk limiting leadership races to those who are well-funded and well connected.

The Conservative leadership race began in January of this year, giving potential candidates just 10 weeks to meet the eligibility criteria. By contrast, the 13 candidates in the party's last leadership race had nearly a year to secure just 300 signatures, while the entry fee and deposit were only \$50,000 each.

The sharp increases in the entry requirements this time around were presumably designed to discourage fringe candidates, and other parties are moving in the same direction. The \$30,000 entrance fee for the NDP's last leadership race—while still comparatively low—was double that from the previous contest in 2012. Contestants vying for the Green Party leadership face a \$50,000 buy-in, up from just \$2,000 in 2006.

It is understandable for political parties to be concerned that some candidates may use leadership races to gain publicity and distract from serious policy discussions. Leadership races certainly do not have to be free-for-alls. It's reasonable for parties to seek candidates with long-term party engagement. Parties also have a right to maintain some cohesiveness, and to continue to advance enduring ideas about government and society. The Trump experience

reflects an undesirable alternative, where wide-open leadership selection allowed a radical oligarch with no real Republican Party history to seize control and direct it in self-serving ways.

But parties are using the wrong filters for determining the candidate pool. Fundraising prowess, which typically requires networks of wealthy contacts or ties to powerful interest groups, is a poor basis for assessing leadership candidates' viability or commitment. These rules make the race inaccessible to all but a narrow segment of the Canadian population while still failing to prevent vanity campaigns from those with few party ties, or those who hold more extreme views compared to the broader party membership.

One doesn't need to look far for a more effective mechanism for selecting candidates. Until the early 20th century, the party caucuses chose the leader. Over the past century, parties steadily moved away from that model in favour of having party members elect the leader. While this approach means broader participation, it ironically also comes at a tremendous democratic cost—party leaders now receive their mandates from party members who have no way to hold them accountable on an ongoing basis. At the same time, caucuses have less leverage over leaders, and can easily become marginalized. Together, these developments facilitate the growing centralization of power in the hands of party leaders.

Caucuses could again play a greater role in leadership selection. A simple way to accomplish this would be to require candidates to achieve a certain threshold of support from existing MPs and past election candidates to qualify for the ballot. Chosen by local party members, these individuals would reflect the diversity of views in each party, would have demonstrated a commitment to its values, and would be positioned to hold the leader accountable for their performance going forward.

Both during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond, the current approach to leadership selection among Canadian parties requires some rethinking. It is currently both too open and too closed off; requiring high fees limits the portion of Canadians who can realistically dream of serving in Canada's highest office, but it also creates no guarantees that leadership candidates will be serious, credible, or invested in the party. Requiring a level of support from caucus and former election candidates is a more effective way to eliminate marginal or extreme leadership contenders. Leaders would also become more accountable to their caucus, altering the power balance within the party for the better.

Paul EJ Thomas is a senior research associate at the Samara Centre for Democracy. *The Hill Times*

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COVID-19

Bailout for the oil and gas sector? Time for Alberta to pivot to the future



The oilsands in Fort McMurray, Alta. The Government of Canada is in the midst of preparing a multi-billion-dollar bailout of the oil and gas industry. Herein lies a historic opportunity for Canada's oil and gas sector to craft a new future that aligns with Canada's aspiration to lower greenhouse gas emissions and yet ensure transformation of the sector that is orderly, supportive of workers and the social needs of communities dependent on the sector, writes Jatin Nathwani. *The Hill Times* photograph by Jake Wright

The trajectory and scale of what this human tragedy will deliver is unknown. What is known is the response of governments in Canada: a commitment to leave no stone unturned to support all efforts to stem the tide of the pandemic, minimize fatalities and help us get back on our feet economically.



Jatin Nathwani

Opinion

This is a historic opportunity for the oil and gas sector to transition to a low carbon energy economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has arrived in our midst, with a force, fury and features as ugly as Banquo's ghost at Macbeth's feast, enough to rattle individual sensibilities but also our collective sense of safety, well-being and security. The trajectory and scale of what this human tragedy will deliver is unknown. What is known is the response of governments in Canada: a commitment to leave no stone unturned to support all efforts to stem the tide of the pandemic, minimize fatalities and help us get back on our feet economically. The federal government's willingness to intervene in the economy through a powerful fiscal stimulus, in the order of \$107-billion, for income support to individuals and businesses is tangible evidence of a serious response.

The Government of Canada is in the midst of preparing a multi-billion-dollar bailout of the oil and gas industry. Herein lies a historic opportunity for Canada's oil and gas sector to craft a new future that aligns with Canada's aspiration to lower greenhouse gas emissions and yet ensure transformation of the sector that is orderly, supportive of workers and the social needs of communities dependent on the sector. The drop in demand for oil globally, that began as an international price war, and now coupled to a pandemic-driven global recession,

is a double whammy that has hit Albertan's particularly hard with similar impacts on Saskatchewan and Newfoundland.

Time has come for the oil and gas sector to turn its gaze to extracting heat rather than carbon as it begins to make a painful adjustment to the combined threats of the pandemic and a world that may no longer require as much as much oil and gas in the future.

The immediate responses to the management of the crisis in the short term should not blind us to the possibilities of an energy future that is economically promising, environmentally sustainable and well clear of a pathway that reinforces continued dependence on fossil fuels extraction. Providing much needed financial support to employees and business is clearly the right thing to do, and Alberta's needs are more acute given the dominance of the oil and gas sector in its economy. But an outright bailout supporting the industry status quo would be a huge mistake because it creates a "historical lock-in" to a high-carbon future. The tragedy would be to pass on to future generations not only the debt obligations that accrue to the investment patterns fossil fuels extraction but also create a path dependency that makes it inflexible for the national energy system to evolve towards a cleaner system.

There are several options available to the federal government and the oil and gas sector. If the bailout envisaged is in the multiple of billions of dollars, a small proportion could be structured as loan guarantees to businesses in the sector to assist with the immediate challenge of maintaining cash flows, viability of the business and support to workers. From an investment perspective, the historic opportunity is to re-shape the patterns of capital expenditures in the oil and sector towards non-carbon sources of energy. This

will require funds for deployment of new solutions in tandem with innovation on a massive scale to diversify the supply resources.

Canada and Alberta has the technological and scientific capacity to go from transportation of fossil fuels by pipelines to movement of electrons by wires utilizing diverse sources of energy such as hydro, geothermal energy, large-scale wind and solar with storage, nuclear including small modular reactors and bioenergy resources.

Geothermal energy, in particular, is a highly relevant option, perhaps the easiest choice for Alberta's current challenges. Its development can be led by the oil and gas sector with each dollar of investment by the sector matched by the federal government dollar or any similar formula. Over the past century, the oil-and-gas sector has acquired an unparalleled technological capacity to drill, explore, extract and bring carbon energy to markets. Now the goal should be to re-purpose this extensive knowledge of geology and geotechnical engineering expertise to extraction of heat energy for homes, industry and the power sector on a large-scale.

Geothermal energy resources, among other non-carbon energy resources, provide a perfect substitute for fossil fuels, a bonanza in waiting without any drastic changes to the existing financial incentives, depreciation allowances and tax credits available to the sector for drilling activities. Combining the strength of Alberta based companies developing geothermal energy resources with parallel activities include a wide variety of options: advancing the development and rapid deployment of small modular reactors for high temperature process heat application in existing facilities, clean up inactive and orphan wells to provide employment and business stability and a massive boost to innovation in the building and automotive sectors for e-mobility and data driven smart technologies for efficient utilization of existing assets.

Time has come for the oil and gas sector to turn its gaze to extracting heat rather than carbon as it begins to make a painful adjustment to the combined threats of the pandemic and a world that may no longer require as much as much oil and gas in the future.

Supporting Albertans and other workers across Canada is essential now; subsidizing the status quo and locking in new investment capital into existing carbon extraction enterprise is not. By focusing our support on workers and the environment, one positive legacy of the current pandemic crisis would be a more resilient energy sector for Alberta and Canada.

Professor Jatin Nathwani is the Ontario Research Chair in Public Policy for Sustainable Energy and executive director of the Waterloo Institute for Sustainable Energy at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ont.

The Hill Times

Ottawa should trigger Emergencies Act amid COVID-19 crisis, says retired general and former Liberal Andrew Leslie

The Emergencies Act was carefully crafted and revised in the 1980s so that governments wouldn't have to 'reinvent the wheel' when crisis struck, said the former Liberal whip and army commander.

BY PETER MAZERREUW

The federal government should use the Emergencies Act to start coordinating a cross-country response to the COVID-19 crisis, says Andrew Leslie, the former commander of Canada's Army and MP who served as the Liberal government's chief whip for part of the last Parliament.

The Emergencies Act, last revised in 1988, gives the federal government broad powers to control the movement of people and goods, take control of property, make emergency payments, and direct the activities of industry in times of crisis.

The act allows the government to take on special powers in cases of emergency, including those caused by disease. Canada and most of the rest of the world is currently in the grips of a global pandemic caused by a new type

of coronavirus that has spread rapidly around the world. As of March 26, the virus had killed more than 21,000 people around the world and 36 people in Canada, and those figures were growing rapidly each day.

Invoking the act would allow the government to ensure that provincial efforts to respond to the COVID-19 crisis are beneficial to the country as a whole, said Mr. Leslie, who is working as a consultant for Ottawa lobby firm Bluesky Strategy Group.

Mr. Leslie retired from the military after holding the rank of commander of the Canadian Army, and ran successfully for the Liberal Party in 2015, winning a seat in Orléans, Ont. He served as the government's chief whip for more than a year in the last Parliament, and later as a parliamentary secretary to the minister of foreign affairs.

"Right now there's a lack of coordination, and there's gaps," he said of the response so far by provincial governments. "They're responding to local conditions and their circumstances, and they're not necessarily thinking of their neighbour."

For example, provinces that shut their borders to travellers from elsewhere in Canada could unwittingly prevent essential workers who live on one side of a border from working on the other, he said.

New Brunswick's government set up border checkpoints on March 25 to stop travellers from entering the province, though those restrictions were aimed at people crossing the border for

reasons like socializing or shopping, said Premier Blaine Higgs.

"The junction points between the authorities that the various provinces have instituted are drifting apart," said Mr. Leslie. "What Quebec has imposed is not the same in the broadest sense as what Ontario's doing. Which is not what Saskatchewan is doing. And eventually those holes will become so big that they're going to have to actually implement legislation to coordinate them."

The Emergencies Act would allow the federal government to take actions such as ordering the conversion of empty privately owned buildings into hospitals, or manufacturers to change their production lines to start making essential healthcare equipment. It would allow the government to make payments without parliamentary approval—a power the government just secured until the end of September through Bill C-13. If the military is ever required to help evacuate people across the country, it would allow the Canadian Forces to negotiate those movements with the federal government alone, instead of holding simultaneous talks with each affected province, said Mr. Leslie.

He pointed to Ontario Premier Doug Ford's call for factories in the province to start producing medical equipment like masks.

"Let's assume that Ontario has more production capability for masks than the rest of Canada combined. Who decides where those masks go? Right now it's Mr. Ford," said Mr. Leslie.

"Is that truly in the national interest? What happens if Northwest Territories has none? What happens if Alberta is desperately short? Who adjudicates? Who referees? These could be life-and-death issues, especially when it comes time for ventilator discussions."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) told reporters on March 24 that provincial premiers had told him they were willing to share medical equipment and coordinate their responses as necessary, but did not yet support the federal government triggering the Emergencies Act to take a greater role in managing the cross-country response to the crisis.

Mr. Trudeau has not ruled out using the Emergencies Act as he deals with the crisis, telling reporters that "we haven't taken anything off the table."

'This is the whole reason you have plans'

Concern from some corners that imposing the Emergencies Act would take away Canadians' civil rights is "nonsense," said Mr. Leslie.

"You cannot break the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, nor can



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, should use the Emergencies Act to better coordinate Canada's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, says former army general and Liberal MP Andrew Leslie. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade



you break the Canadian Bill of Rights," he said, pointing to language in the preamble to the act that makes that clear.

Mr. Leslie criticized the Liberal government for trying to give itself broad powers over spending, taxation, and legal changes without parliamentary approval until the end of 2021. The government initially proposed including those powers in its bailout bill for the crisis, C-13, then scaled them back under pressure from the opposition. The government now has powers to spend money on anything related to the crisis

Government powers under the Emergencies Act

*Subject to numerous conditions and restrictions

Source: Department of Justice Canada

While a declaration of a public welfare emergency is in effect, the Governor in Council may make such orders or regulations with respect to the following matters as the Governor in Council believes, on reasonable grounds, are necessary for dealing with the emergency:

- (a) the regulation or prohibition of travel to, from or within any specified area, where necessary for the protection of the health or safety of individuals;
- (b) the evacuation of persons and the removal of personal property from any specified area and the making of arrangements for the adequate care and protection of the persons and property;
- (c) the requisition, use or disposition of property;
- (d) the authorization of or direction to any person, or any person of a class of persons, to render essential services of a type that that person, or a person of that class, is competent to provide and the provision of reasonable compensation in respect of services so rendered;
- (e) the regulation of the distribution and availability of essential goods, services and resources;
- (f) the authorization and making of emergency payments;
- (g) the establishment of emergency shelters and hospitals;
- (h) the assessment of damage to any works or undertakings and the repair, replacement or restoration thereof;
- (i) the assessment of damage to the environment and the elimination or alleviation of the damage; and
- (j) the imposition
 - (i) on summary conviction, of a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or imprisonment not exceeding six months or both that fine and imprisonment, or
 - (ii) on indictment, of a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars or imprisonment not exceeding five years or both that fine and imprisonment,
- for contravention of any order or regulation made under this section.

until the end of September of this year.

The Emergencies Act includes detailed parameters for parliamentary supervision of the government's actions while the act is being used. It allows any 10 Senators or 20 MPs to force a vote in their respective Houses on revoking the government's use of the act. It also creates a parliamen-

tary review committee that must report to Parliament on the government's actions every 60 days.

The act also requires the government to take an extension to its use of the act, if needed, every 90 days.

"Our forefathers and foremothers have not too long ago thought this issue through, and they wanted a readily accessible, easy-to-understand, but broad-based-enough act that, in an emergency, governments didn't have to reinvent the wheel, and go chasing rabbits down dark holes. And they could just turn to this established legislation, and go, 'Right, in an emergency, this is what you do,'" he said.

"This is the whole reason you have plans."

The Emergencies Act would give the government the power to coordinate what many provinces are already doing, said Philippe Lagasse, a professor at Carleton University who studies decision-making in the Westminster parliamentary system.

"The time to invoke it will likely be when it's necessary to coordinate and to have an effective distribution of resources across the country, if it gets quite dire," he said.

For example, the government would be justified in invoking the act if there is a need to move workers from one province to another to better provide essential services, or ensure that some provinces don't monopolize the supply of essential goods, he said.

Kevin Smith, the president of the organization that oversees several large Toronto hospitals, told *The Toronto Star* that he wanted the federal government to invoke the Emergencies Act now.

"Based on what we saw on the weekend, people are still not taking seriously the need for physical distancing," Mr. Smith, the president of the University Health Network, told *The Star*.

The Emergencies Act allows the government to restrict people from travelling "to, from, or within" any specified area, and to evacuate people from an area.

Under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canadians have a right to come and go from Canada, and to move to, reside in, and pursue a livelihood in any province, but do not have other mobility rights enshrined in the Charter.

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Trudeau should pay 80 per cent Canadians' salaries to protect them from the 'psychological trauma' of COVID-19, says Liberal strategist Herle

Canadians are going to judge Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handling of the COVID-19 crisis by how fast his government could deliver the financial assistance to the ones in need, says Nanos Research founder and chief data scientist Nik Nanos.

Continued from page 1

demic, to protect Canadians from the psychological trauma of the health scare and the threat of losing their jobs, and keep the economy from slipping into a recession, says a senior Liberal strategist.

"They are doing the things one would want them to be doing in terms of combating the health crisis," said David Herle, who in the past served as a top strategist to former prime minister Paul Martin, and former Ontario premier Kathleen Wynne.

"On the economic front, things are getting away on them. And it's because they've been more timid in dealing with economic aspects of this than they have been dealing with the health aspects of it."

Mr. Herle, who is the owner of the Gandalf Group and hosts a popular political podcast called *The Herle Burly*, said that Mr. Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) and his team of top officials have done a good job of tackling the health crisis, and providing daily briefings that he described as "thorough, honest, transparent, and reassuring." But, on the economic side, he said, the federal government is not providing the same leadership and is not taking measures like some Scandinavian or European countries to support the economy and to provide support to employers so they won't lay off their employees.

He said the Trudeau government could use the same model that the U.K. is using, and pay 80 per cent of wages of all employees up to a certain maximum for the indefinite future, on the condition that employers don't lay off their staff. He said, in his view, the best way to handle the economic aspect of the crisis is to let employees stay in their jobs, ensure continuity and helping to keep the economy afloat.

He said the government has pledged to pay EI for Canadians who lost their jobs because of COVID-19, but that measure is

"woefully inadequate" and will barely cover the rents for Canadians living in major urban centres. Mr. Herle said the government should not be worried about how much its bailout measures cost, as right now the important thing is to protect the economy from slipping into a recession or depression, and save Canadians from the psychological trauma of losing their jobs in the middle of this health scare.

"Governments around the world are imaginatively finding ways to pump money into their economies to keep some sense of normalcy going on, for what is hoped to be a relatively brief period of time, before commerce can return more to normal...the benefits of that are to the workers—more cash and more stability in their lives, less uncertainty in their lives—and to business," said Mr. Herle. "It's the continuity and the ability to pick up where they left off."

On Friday, Prime Minister Trudeau announced a sweeping package for qualifying small businesses that will cover up to 75 per cent of employee salaries. He did not provide specifics of the package, saying the details were still being worked out. Based on the announcement, it appeared a significant chunk of the government support would be in the form of interest free loans from banks backed by guarantees from the government.

Mr. Herle said that the COVID-19 crisis is the "defining moment of Mr. Trudeau's prime ministership" as this is the "biggest" event of our history, and this is a crisis where the government has a central role to play in its management. He said this crisis will be critical for Mr. Trudeau's legacy, as analysts will spend most of their time analyzing the prime minister's leadership during this crisis.

Parliament adjourned on March 13 until at least April 20 as part of a nationwide effort to suppress the spread of the coronavirus. It was recalled back on Tuesday, March 24 to approve the aid package which was tabled in the House in the form of a legislation. In the initial draft version of the legislation, the government demanded powers to spend money, change tax levels, transfer money to corporations, and more without parliamentary approval

until the end of 2021, which the Conservatives refused to agree to. The government needed unanimous consent in the House to fast-track its bailout bill through the legislative process. Finally, the legislation was passed after a day and night of tense back and forth between the government and the opposition parties that ended up with some restrictions on the the government's authorities during the crisis, and with a Sept. 30 expiration date for its special powers.

On Wednesday, March 25, Parliament passed a \$107-billion package—\$52-billion in direct support and \$55-billion in tax deferrals—to provide support to Canadians and businesses who need help during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the package, Canadians who lost their jobs will receive \$2,000 per month

vice of professionals in his government, and no one expected that the situation would change so dramatically within a span of a days.

"I think that they've been, as they like to say, evidence-based on this," said Mr. Herle. "And always, I think the prime minister's got a personal instinct to err on the side of protecting civil liberties as much as possible. And within that context, I think they've been impeccable on that. There's no issue like the border that I would second guess them on. I simply don't."

Prof. Stephen Azzi, program director and associate professor in Carleton University's Department of Political Management, whose research specialties include prime ministerial leadership in Canada, agreed with Mr. Herle. He added that considering Canada's diverse

population and traditional openness to all international communities, it was not an easy decision to take.

Canada is a country "that's traditionally been open to the world where there's a large Chinese diaspora population," said Prof. Azzi, a former Liberal ministerial staffer to then-national defence minister John McCallum in the

Jean Chrétien cabinet. "So it's not an easy decision to make to close the border."

Meanwhile, Nik Nanos, president of Nanos Research said that Canadians are going to judge Mr. Trudeau's performance based on how soon they receive financial help from the federal government. They will also compare the prime minister's handling of the situation with the performance of U.S. President Donald Trump and other western leaders.

"There will be a high level of impatience with how fast they [government support initiatives] can be implemented," said Mr. Nanos. "So this is a bit of a political slow burn, that the longer that it takes for Canadians to receive the support that they're expecting from the federal government, the greater the political risks for Justin Trudeau. If people start not being able to pay their rent, people don't have any income to pay their bills, there's a pretty hard wall that some Canadians will slam into financially because of the current economic situation."

According to a poll by Nanos Research, Canadians nationally

and regionally appear to be split as to whether Mr. Trudeau has the qualities of a good leader. Mr. Nanos said his question to Canadians on whether prime minister has the qualities of a good leader is a good gauge of how they think about Mr. Trudeau, as this is not a partisan question where they are asked if they would vote for the Liberal Party or some other federal party.

According to the poll, 44 per cent of Canadians thought that Mr. Trudeau had the qualities of a good leader, 42.8 per cent thought he did not, and 13.2 per cent were undecided. In Atlantic Canada, 45.3 per cent of Atlantic Canadians thought he had the qualities of a good leader while 40 per cent thought he did not. The same poll suggested that 51.2 per cent of Quebecers, 50.4 per cent of Ontarians, 27.4 per cent of Canadians living in Prairies, and 40.7 per cent British Columbians looked at Mr. Trudeau favourably in terms of having qualities of a good leader. At the same time, 39.2 per cent Quebecer, 33.3 per cent of Ontarians, 60.3 per cent of respondents living in Prairies and 46.2 per cent of British Columbians had an unfavourable opinion about Mr. Trudeau.

Amongst males, 42.6 per cent Canadians thought he had the qualities of a good leader and 46.9 per cent thought he did not. Amongst women, 45.3 per cent agreed Mr. Trudeau is a good leader and 38.9 per cent did not.

The poll of 1,000 Canadians was conducted in the week ending on March 20 and had a margin of error of 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

"The weekly tracking research suggests that Canadians remain quite regionally polarized when it comes to Justin Trudeau and that his response to the current health crisis has not driven positive impressions of him in terms of having the qualities of a good political leader," said Mr. Nanos.

Mr. Nanos said the Liberals have done well to win the support of provincial premiers in handing this crisis, and also to reassure Canadians that the government is there to support them. But, Mr. Trudeau could have done a better job of maintaining a better working relationship with federal opposition parties. He referred to last Tuesday's tense negotiations between the government and the opposition, adding that the aid package should have been passed in the House without any hurdles.

According to a poll by Angus Reid Institute released on March 26, 64 per cent of Canadians approved the way Mr. Trudeau is handling the COVID-19 crisis. But, some provincial premiers are receiving even higher approval ratings. For example, 93 per cent of Quebecers, 78 per cent each of Atlantic, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba residents, 76 per cent of Albertans, 74 per cent of Ontarians, and 73 per cent of British Columbians approve of the way their respective provincial governments are dealing with the crisis.

The online poll of 1,664 Canadians was conducted between March 20-23.

Emergency cabinet meeting held in Ottawa where ministers said new measures were coming, but rebuffed reporters' questions about why the government was waiting, and why there was insufficient

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According to last week's Angus Reid Institute poll, 64 per cent of Canadians approve of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handling of the COVID-19 crisis. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Transport Minister Marc Garneau, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, Health Minister Patty Hajdu, and Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos convene for a presser on March 16. Cabinet ministers have been convening near-daily briefings with journalists on their response to the pandemic. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Federal lobbyists' registry sees crop of new COVID-19 filings, as groups grapple with pandemic

At least 35 organizations are either lobbying federal officials about their needs or looking to assist the government in its response to the escalating coronavirus crisis.

Continued from page 1

the government's evolving coronavirus response, with some offering help and others urging action as the crisis threatens to devastate companies and industries.

There have been 57 new or updated filings added to the federal registry that explicitly mention COVID-19 as of March 27, created by more than 35 separate organizations, with some registering two or more consultants intending to reach out to officials. The number of organizations looking to connect directly with officials has risen rapidly over the last few days, up from just 35 coronavirus-related filings on March 25.

The companies, associations, and industry groups span all sectors, including health, airlines, dairy farming, and festivals that warn their employees and members are hurting and need answers over and above the federal government's near-daily promises to relieve the financial stress felt by Canadians as COVID-19 progresses. In Canada, at least 39 are dead and there are 4,043 cases and more than 165,000 people tested, according to a March 27 update

from the federal deputy chief public health officer, Howard Njoo.

Their filings show worry for impoverished families made more vulnerable by income loss and reduced social support, essential services and workers under pressure, the impact of travel advisories and closed borders, as well as a litany of requests for financial aid.

Lt.-Col. John Murray, who leads the Salvation Army Canada's communications, said the charity updated its disclosure filing to reflect its concerns about food security, noting that some 400 vulnerable communities across the country rely on its services, including food banks, hospices, shelters, and long-term care facilities.

Amid concerns about a drop in donations, Lt.-Col. Murray said they sent a letter to the prime minister, "reminding" the government that "we deal with the disadvantaged, marginalized—those on the cusp of poverty, who may now find themselves living in poverty."

He said while the charity has taken precautionary measures in response to COVID-19 that have led to adjustments in its delivery of services—such as limiting facilities to clients and staff—its social services remain open.

Other charities have also started to feel the pinch. Though the Muslim community has also adjusted its services, from suspending Friday prayers to closing mosques, and shifting to online gatherings and teachings, Sharaf Sharafeldin, executive director of the Muslim Association of Canada, said donations are typically collected in person.

"We are not able to fundraise in the absence of being able to host physical fundraisers," he said.

While the association hasn't made direct appeals to the government, it is working closely with Imagine Canada, which represents a host of charitable organizations, to petition the government for relief for the sector in the form of credit lines.

A number of groups in the health sector have registered, including Best Medicines Coalition worried about the "potential exacerbation of drug shortages," Kohl and Frisch as a national distributor of pharmaceuticals wanting its work considered "essential," and AbCellera Biologics Inc. for "research and development."

The Canadian Dental Association said it understands the government is "chasing this as much as any of us are," and it's trying to catch up with what the constant announcements mean and how they'll help their members.

"A short-term shutdown is one thing, but a longer-term shutdown is another, and so we're still on a daily and hourly basis trying to evaluate what all this means," said Kevin Desjardins, the association's director of public affairs in a phone interview March 26, a couple of weeks after it added a consultant on the crisis file.

Others say they're also providing essential services that need government attention.

The B.C. Maritime Employers Association, in a filing created March 5, said it's focused on the health and safety of waterfront workers, and will update officials as it ensures the "continuity of critical waterfront operations to support Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic."

That meant taking "immediate actions" to bring in "enhanced safety and communications protocols to mitigate the transmission of illness within the workforce and ensure that operations continue at all B.C. ports," explained Mike Leonard, the association's CEO, in a March 26 emailed statement.

The ports are receiving and moving "critical goods that are essential to Canadians and the country's fight against COVID-19," he said, but workforce safety remains the "top priority."

Kraft Heinz Canada filed a new consultant registration March 19 to disclose its outreach to the government, according to Stephen Knight, senior manager of corporate affairs and communications.

In a phone interview, Mr. Knight said Kraft experienced an "unprecedented demand" for some of its popular products such as Kraft Dinner and peanut butter during the scramble to stockpile—and, in some cases, hoard—staple goods. He estimated that demand for those items surged by 35 to 40 per cent.

"Our message, and part of the reason we re-registered, is to support the government in their message, help them to [assure Canadians] there's no need to panic buy, to stockpile our items," he said. "Our massive plant in Montreal is working around the clock to get these items out."

Ninety per cent of its output in the country is concentrated in its Montreal plant, he said, and there have been no disruptions to its supply chain since Canada and the U.S. decided to close the border to non-essential traffic on March 20.

These organizations won't have to log their ongoing communications until the mid-April reporting deadline, so it's not yet clear how successful their efforts will be to connect with officials amid a crisis. In February, lobbyists filed 3,427 communications with officials, up significantly from the 2,707 logged the same month the year before. In March 2019, that number dipped further to 1,462 communications.

In other filings, an organization representing more than 700 annual events across Canada, many in small rural communities, is worried the economic measures to help businesses won't protect their members whose survival is tied to whether the events go forward.

Hundreds of events have already been cancelled, said Christina Franc, executive director of Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions, with events typically running from May to October.

"I understand we're a niche market, and we don't contribute billions to the economy, but we contribute to the vibrancy of rural communities and that counts for something," said Ms. Franc in a March 25 phone interview, the same day her organization signed up a consultant to lobby officials for financial aid.

It's not the only event-focused group experiencing anxiety. Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group registered its president, Daniel Lamarre, and two board members as lobbyists between March 22 and 25, all with the goal of pushing for financial support given its events have been cancelled worldwide. They note the value is still unknown, and put the Prime Minister's Office as the sole government body they want to speak with. The company declined to comment.

The crisis especially puts time-sensitive businesses in a tough spot, because once festival season is over, they have to wait a year to get their footing.

"We're in a bit of a bad place," said Ms. Franc. "A lot of businesses will start to rebuild whenever [the outbreak ends], but everything for us is delayed."

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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Neil Moss

Catherine McKenna offers virtual civics lesson for furloughed students



Infrastructure Minister Catherine McKenna went online to share what it's like to be an MP and a cabinet minister with kids who were home from school. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

With Ontario's children stuck at home following the provincial government's school closures to curb the spread of the coronavirus, Infrastructure Minister **Catherine McKenna** decided to sub in.

Ms. McKenna hosted a 45-minute civics lesson on Facebook live last week.

"I thought I would try do something different, which is, talk about being a Member of Parliament, and being a minister, and answer questions," she said.



Catherine McKenna is pictured giving a pop-up civics lesson on Facebook last week. *Screen capture courtesy of Facebook/Catherine McKenna*

The day before, she asked her Facebook followers to ask any civics homework questions they have.

Ontario is the only province to have a mandatory civics class in its high school curriculum, though it has faced pressure at times to scrap the half-semester Grade 10 class.

Ms. McKenna talked about some basics of Canadian democracy, from the nomination procedure for MPs to the legislative process. She also answered questions about what it's like working from home, learning French, and what job she wanted to do when she was younger.

Kirsten Hillman appointed Canada's next ambassador in D.C., becomes first woman to hold post



Chrystia Freeland, right, is pictured with Kirsten Hillman on Feb. 18, 2020, at a meeting of the House Committee on International Trade. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Career diplomat **Kirsten Hillman** was named Canada's next permanent ambassador to the U.S. on March 26, seven months after her predecessor **David MacNaughton** left the role.

Since September, Ms. Hillman has been working as acting ambassador. Prior to Mr. MacNaughton leaving the post, she was the deputy ambassador—a role she started in 2017.

In a statement, the first woman to be picked for the position said she was "deeply" honoured to be selected, adding that her immediate priority is working with the U.S. to confront the COVID-19 crisis.

Ms. Hillman was part of the Canadian team, along with now-Deputy Prime Minister **Chrystia Freeland**, Mr. MacNaughton, and chief negotiator **Steve Verheul**, that negotiated the new NAFTA.

"When we worked together to negotiate the new NAFTA, I saw Ms. Hillman's ability to stand up for Canadians and fight for their interests. She combines exceptional knowledge and skills, and is a gifted diplomat. Ms. Hillman will remain a trusted advisor, friend, and counsellor in Washington and is our point person with Congress and the U.S. administration," Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** said in a statement.

Ms. Freeland also added her praises: "Ms. Hillman is exactly the person Canada needs as point person in Washington right now. Her work on trade, on the new NAFTA, as acting Ambassador, and most recently on our cross-border response to COVID-19, makes her the obvious, outstanding candidate for this role."

Other rumoured candidates for the post included former Conservative interim leader **Rona Ambrose**.

Before working in the Pennsylvania Avenue embassy—sitting steps away from Capitol Hill on the National Mall—Ms. Hillman was the assistant deputy minister of trade policy and negotiations at Global Affairs and served as the chief trade negotiator for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)—later becoming the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

A wide-range of politicians congratulated Ms. Hillman on her appointment, including former prime minister **Stephen Harper**, Alberta Premier **Jason Kenney**, and Canada's chief of the defence staff **Jonathan Vance**.

Ms. Hillman will be a rare diplomat to hold the post, as previous envoys have come from the political class. It hasn't been since **Michael Kegin**, who held the post from 2000 to 2005, that a career diplomat served in the role.

Global News' Beatrice Britneff to rejoin Parliamentary Press Gallery

After two years covering local Ottawa news for Global News, **Beatrice Britneff** is joining the broadcaster's parliamentary bureau.

"I'm excited to share that starting April 6, I'll be joining Global's parliamentary bureau as an on-line political reporter," Ms. Britneff tweeted on March 24. "I do feel sad to leave my hardworking local colleagues across Ontario but appreciate the chance to work with Global's national reporters and [Global News online managing editor James Armstrong]."

She previously worked on the Hill for *iPolitics* from 2016 to 2018, where she covered justice, lobbying, Canadian heritage, and the media, according to her LinkedIn account.

Global News' 17-member Elgin Street newsroom is led by bureau chief and *West Block* host **Mercedes Stephenson**.



Beatrice Britneff, right, is pictured with Global News' colleague Amanda Connolly. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

One of the last remaining cats from the former Parliament Hill feline sanctuary dies



Spot is pictured with fellow former Parliament Hill sanctuary cat and his adoptive feline brother Coal. *Photograph courtesy of Danny Taurozzi*

One of the former residents of Parliament Hill's old cat sanctuary has died.

Spot died earlier this month after a battle with congestive heart failure, a statement on the cat's Facebook page announced.

"Spot was offered his favourite food and was able to eat a little in the examination room," the statement read, adding that Spot was "humanely euthanized."

Parliament Hill's cat sanctuary was closed in 2013 to make room for construction. While it was

operating, local cats could spend all waking and sleeping hours on the Hill—maybe along with some MPs who were voting throughout the evening and early morning. They lived in shelters that were insulated with straw to keep the cats warm in the winter months.

Spot is survived by his caretaker, **Danny Taurozzi**, who used to be a volunteer at the sanctuary, as well as his younger, adopted feline brother **Coal**—who was also a Parliament Hill cat—and his adoptive feline sister **Valérie**.

Grit MP Kamal Khera tests positive for COVID-19, had just re-registered as a nurse to help fight virus



Liberal MP **Kamal Khera** announced last week that she had tested positive for COVID-19, becoming the first Member of Parliament to contact the virus. Ms. Khera, who is a former registered nurse, announced in a March 25 statement that she had tested positive for the coronavirus.

She said she started to develop flu-like symptoms on March 21 and started to self-isolate thereafter. She was subsequently tested for COVID-19 on March 23 and two days later the results came back positive.

"While I am experiencing symptoms, I am in good spirits. I know that many Canadians are in much worse circumstances," she said in the statement.

Ms. Khera is a second term MP who represents Brampton West, Ont. She currently serves as the parliamentary secretary to International Development Minister **Karina Gould**. She

also served as parliamentary secretary to the ministers of National Revenue and Health in the last Parliament.

In response to a Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario call, Ms. Khera tweeted on March 17 that she had re-registered as a nurse to help curb the shortage. But she told the CBC that she tested positive for COVID-19 before she could provide any nursing assistance.

A number of MPs have tested negative for the virus, including Conservative MP **Randy Hoback**, who went into self-isolation after meeting with Executive Director of the World Food Programme **David Beasley**, who tested positive for COVID-19 after his trip to Canada. Ms. Khera also met with Mr. Beasley while he was in Ottawa.

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'Bold decisions' are needed if the CBC is to survive

David Taras and Christopher Waddell recently authored *The End of the CBC?*, published by the University of Toronto Press. They have exceptional credentials to examine the English arm of the public broadcaster.

BY ALEX MARLAND

ST. JOHN'S, N.L.—For those who can, reading a book is a good way to pass the time during the coronavirus pandemic. It's excellent escapism from the anxieties of life as we know it fall apart.

David Taras and Christopher Waddell recently authored *The End of the CBC?*, published by the University of Toronto Press. They have exceptional credentials to examine the English arm of the public broadcaster.

I've read some of Taras's books about communications in Canada. I was introduced to *The Newsmakers* in the early 1990s as a political science student at Carleton University. A few years ago, I read *Digital Mosaic*. The first helped me understand news media biases; the other impressed how media must adapt to the digital revolution or die. I expect similar themes in *The End of the CBC*.

Waddell has extensive experience in the Canadian news industry. He worked for CBC-TV news for a decade where he was a senior producer for The National and parliamentary bureau chief in Ottawa. He was also a reporter, Ottawa bureau chief, associate editor and national editor for The Globe and Mail. I've often used a book he co-edited with Taras called *How Canadians Communicate: Media and Politics*. Occasionally, I come across his work as a reporter in the 1980s when I am combing through *Globe and Mail* archives.

So, what then do these two distinguished professors have to say about the past, present, and future of the CBC? Page 8 lays out their intentions: "Our main argument in this book is that the CBC has come to the end of its rope in terms of carrying out the tasks of a public broadcaster." The CBC, they say, is now "in a kind of limbo" (page 9) and "is unlikely to survive for much longer" (page 23). The CBC has a broad reach and yet, with the exception of successes such as *The Fifth Estate*, they suggest that the CBC fails to stand out in a hyper-competitive media environment.

The book is organized into eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides baseline information about the social objectives of a public broadcaster, which in Canada includes pushing back against American cultural influence.

The authors explain something called "the attention economy" which refers to the economic competition for consumer interest in a busy media landscape. They document how CBC ratings and viewing time have eroded over the years. The CBC product has declined across an astounding array of areas—national news, local news, drama, comedy, sports—and it is unable to compete in emerging areas, such as reality TV. The most significant warning sign is demographics: millennials are uninterested in the CBC (page 17). It is a senior citizen's network with a shrinking base of loyal followers.

me, this well-written chapter was a compressed update of *Digital Mosaic* that would have benefited from more emphasis on the CBC. Conversely, chapter 5's study of the withering of CBC sports and CBC news is on the mark, providing an excellent summary of recent circumstances.

The discussion in chapter 6 about the CBC in an online world is fascinating. Aside from summarizing what it has done right and where it has gone wrong, the authors raise some interesting questions. Has the CBC plunged into digital too quickly? How do you tally view counts when content is repurposed across digital platforms? Do the data represent captivated audiences, fleeting viewers or bots? Ultimately, the authors believe that YouTube and podcasting are good venues for the CBC (page 133). But even this raises a dilemma given that YouTube is owned by Alphabet, Google's parent company, one of the main organizations grabbing advertising dollars. Facebook is the other.

I was particularly interested in how CBC uses Chartbeat (pages 129-130). Journalists have told me that newsrooms feature large screens with graphics showing digital audience

focused on delivering a narrower range of services" (page 158). To them, this means prioritizing high quality news and current affairs operations.

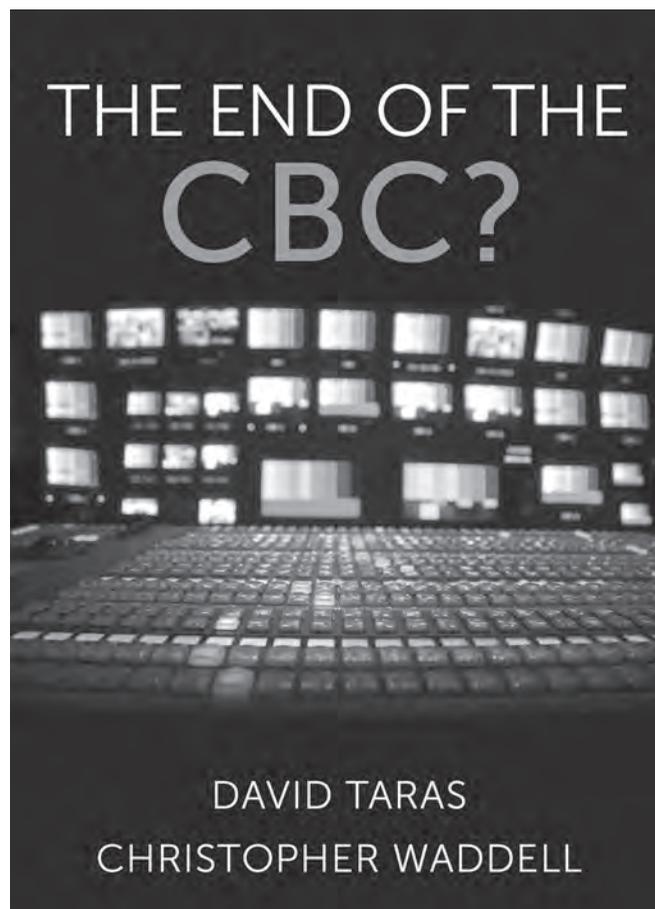
My amateur impressions about what the CBC ought to consider can be juxtaposed against what these deep thinkers recommend. Before reading *The End of the CBC?*, I came up with some things the CBC could do. It could raise awareness of the CBC's code of Journalistic Standards and Practices. I think that English CBC-TV could run a slice of Radio-Canada programming, such as *Tout le monde en parle* with closed captions. It could profile Canadian sports that lack a national audience, such as lacrosse. It could allow local CBC radio stations to sell advertising. Finally, the CBC ought to deliver some content explicitly designed to appeal to conservatives and libertarians.

In arriving at these impressions, I made the erroneous assumption that the CBC must continue to occupy the quantity of space that it does. I overlooked that the CBC has greatly expanded its reach. Taras and Waddell are correct to suggest surgical extraction from certain areas. It is much better for the CBC to do some things well than to stretch resources so thin that it is difficult, if not impossible, to be exceptionally good. The authors tackle the issues of sports and advertising with expertise that shames my quick impressions. Yet on many fronts they fail to convince me, which speaks to the immense dilemmas facing CBC executives.

In chapter 8, the professors breezily suggest that the CBC "give up" sports and music. In my opinion, these areas should be more strategically selective, but given the public broadcaster's role, they must not be abandoned. Reporting on sports has an ability to bring communities together. It cultivates a sense of identity and pride. Likewise, music connects Canadians. The CBC has a pivotal role in the Canadian cultural mosaic. Perhaps instead of abandonment the CBC should have a clearer purpose in its selection of sports and music. On page 167, the authors mention soccer, track and field, and volleyball as candidates for elimination. They are probably right because none of these get to Canadiana. But hockey does; so does lacrosse, Canada's national sport for which interest could be cultivated. And, given the CBC's mandate, I fail to understand why a variety of CBC Music specials deserve the chopping block.

I do think there is merit in their suggestion that the CBC get out of the entertainment business, with one exception. In my view, Taras and Waddell lack appreciation for the regional mandate of the CBC. Regional programming on a national platform is essential. If entertainment shows are going to be jettisoned, let them be the ones that fail to highlight the unique character of Canada's geographic diversity.

Where I vehemently disagree with these esteemed scholars is the suggestion that CBC-TV "end all advertising" (page 170). They are correct that it is a declining source of revenue. They overstate that this would free CBC executives of being concerned about chasing audience metrics. Is being unconcerned with audience interest necessarily better? How can we justify more money for the CBC when there are so many other priorities in society? Would a smaller CBC warrant more public funding or would retrenchment be required to offset lost revenues? A fundamental tenet of public policy is that resources are limited. The CBC needs to do better with what it has before it can make a credible case for more.



David Taras and Chris Waddell say the CBC 'must become smaller and more focused on delivering a narrower range of services.' To them, this means prioritizing high quality news and current affairs operations. *The End of the CBC?*, by David Taras and Christopher Waddell, University of Toronto Press, 2020, \$34.95.

Chapter 2 is about the history of the CBC. The broadcaster's origins, funding models, content choices and relationship with prime ministers are outlined. Taras and Waddell identify three turning points: (1) blending local news into regional news operations, (2) the CRTC excluding the CBC from the specialty channel universe and (3) the abscondment of *Hockey Night in Canada* to Rogers.

Subsequent chapters examine specific aspects of the CBC's decline. Chapter 3 remarks on budget cuts because of reduced government funding, a smaller number of employees, and media relations battles with the PMO. Little has come of reviews and reports about what to do with the CBC. Chapter 4 is a sobering synthesis of the CBC's immense challenges in a digital world characterized by the attention economy, social media platforms and other internet behemoths such as Google and Netflix. To

metrics, but I was unfamiliar with the name of the software until reading *The End of the CBC*. The authors' comment that some CBC personnel are addicted to monitoring Chartbeat user statistics. In some newsrooms, decisions about what stories to pursue are influenced by how well a story is likely to resonate online. If true, it is little wonder that journalism everywhere is in a free-fall and is under threat. Taras and Waddell recommend that the CBC consider the implications of Chartbeat on its news operations (page 168).

The chapter 7 summary of recent CBC self-analyses and Netflix's Canadian policies is a tad tedious, despite the authors' efforts. But readers are rewarded with a strong conclusion. Provocatively titled, "Reinvent the CBC or Allow it to Die," chapter 8 delivers a series of knockout punches about what the CBC needs to do to survive.

Taras and Waddell believe that the CBC "must become smaller and more

Continued on page 27

CBC is a critically important Canadian institution, it should step up its game

Canada unequivocally needs a media outlet dedicated to celebrating Canadian cultures in the face of Americanization, globalization, and now digitalization. The CBC's crucial role in the fabric of Canadian society is why so many people get upset about a brand that many believe has lost its way.



Alex Marland

Books & Big Ideas

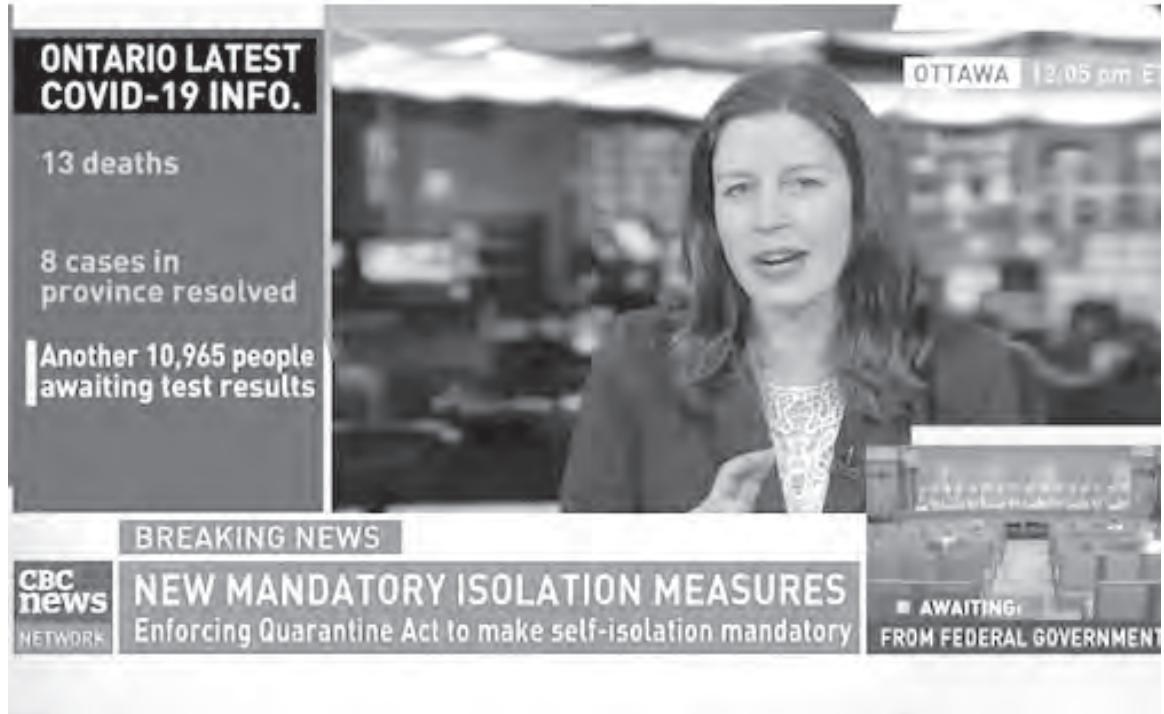
ST. JOHN'S, N.L.—During the COVID-19 pandemic the CBC recently shut down local 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. TV newscasts. CBC News executives have their reasons for the decision, just as private broadcasters have reasons for continuing with local TV news. The title of a new book by two veteran professors has particular currency in this extraordinary context.

In *The End of the CBC?*, David Taras and Christopher Waddell promise to tackle the CBC's role in a digital environment. So I am weighing in with my thoughts about the state of Canada's venerable broadcaster. Laying out some armchair opinions should enable a more robust and fair-minded assessment of the professors' analysis.

Many things come to mind when I think about the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Its history. An iconic logo. Programs that carve a place in Canadian culture and identity. Standard-setting news coverage. *Hockey Night in Canada*. CBC personalities. Radio-Canada. And, inevitably, concern about the transformation that the CBC is undergoing as the media landscape shifts around it.

The CBC is a critically important Canadian institution. Canada unequivocally needs a media outlet dedicated to celebrating Canadian cultures in the face of Americanization, globalization, and now digitalization. The CBC's crucial role in the fabric of Canadian society is why so many people get upset about a brand that many believe has lost its way.

To be successful, a brand needs to connect emotionally with its audiences so that they prefer it over the alternatives, even when the alternatives otherwise better suit their needs. The CBC is uniquely positioned in a crowded media marketplace. It has



CBC Parliament Hill reporter Catherine Cullen, pictured on March 26, 2020. To be successful, a brand needs to connect emotionally with its audiences so that they prefer it over the alternatives, even when the alternatives otherwise better suit their needs, writes Alex Marland. Screen capture image courtesy of CBC News

strong, if vulnerable, brand equity. It benefits from hundreds of millions of dollars in government funding. It has leveraged that financial might to muscle into the digital space, despite having a broadcasting mandate. However, unlike its competitors, the CBC has an added responsibility to create Canadian content that competes with international goodies like *The Voice* or *Ellen's Game of Games*.

For decades, the bread and butter of the CBC has historically done well: high standards of integrity journalism, quality coverage of Canadian events, and homegrown programming anchored in regional storytelling. But things are different in a multi-channel universe where increasing numbers of people are abandoning cable cords. As well, its content is heavily influenced by a Toronto-centric outlook that sometimes overwhelms the CBC's regional requirements and which leaves the public broadcaster vulnerable to left-wing bias.

High journalistic standards

On balance, CBC journalism is impressive. Any report filed by Julie Van Dusen has bite. Hosting by Ian Hanomansing is superb. Vassy Kapelos and Jeannie Lee are among many who deliver facts in a no-nonsense style. Images of Briar Stewart reporting from Fort McMurray highways while wildfires raged behind her in 2016 is seared into many Canadians' minds.

What do these and select other CBC-TV journalists have in common? Professionalism. That fine quality of demanding high standards and ideological balance as Knowlton Nash, Barbara Frum, and others would demand. They avoid betraying a political preference. They have a keen sense of checking favouritism at the door. They are not overtly caught up in the CBC star system.

News professionalism is an area that the CBC News should be a brand leader. Unfortunately, efforts to entertain and engage audiences on social media has got some journalists confused about their role. Some appear transfixed by their own celebrity

status. I have often sighed as national and local TV news hosts editorialize and joke around on air in an inappropriate fashion. Done well, and a dose of humour offers a lighthearted moment. Done poorly, and a side remark smacks of elitism, hubris, self-importance. It does a disservice to the network's journalistic integrity and impartiality.

From what I have experienced in St. John's, local CBC radio has fallen on hard times. Sure, the national programs continue, with edgy fare like *As It Happens* being a hallmark of exceptional infotainment. But local CBC radio—on this side of the country, at least—has suffered greatly from digital. The morning radio programming slot (5:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.) routinely chases what is on social media. Audio from TV reports is played verbatim, cannibalizing the supertime news. Musical interludes fill gaps that used to be news, interviews, or panel discussions about local developments. The tunes are so varied that they surely provoke people to turn down the volume or switch stations. I distinctly recall saying to an assistant deputy minister in 2004 that local CBC radio morning was must-listen news in Newfoundland. It is hard to imagine that anyone would say that now. The digital first mentality has hollowed out the CBC's capacity to conduct local journalism.

The evolution of CBC News is much more than the recent debacle of four people hosting *The National* and the appropriate decision to scale back. Putting CBC local TV news on hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic reflects the Toronto-based nature of Canadian news production today. Local technicians have been phased out because TV cameras in regional centres can be operated remotely from Toronto. That Canadians across the country, except in the North, are now going to turn to CTV, Global and other private networks for local news during a massive health crisis embodies the centralized nature of CBC decision-making. Here in Newfoundland, in addition to the COVID-19 sit-

uation, the provincial Liberal Party is preparing to replace the premier with someone who does not have a seat in the House of Assembly. Plunging oil prices have massive implications for already dire economic circumstances. Instead of local ramifications, we are going to hear about how Canadian cities—not rural or remote areas, mind you—are practicing social distancing. Memo to CBC honchos: the hinterland needs resources dedicated to more local news coverage, not less.

Quality coverage of Canadian events

As the COVID-19 news decision suggests, the CBC strives to unite (English) Canadians during national events. Canada Day and Remembrance Day specials are top-notch. The CBC covers the arts community in a way that the private sector would not. The Olympic Games are rare moments that bring Canadians together—and often CBC Sports has been there to tell Canadian athletes' stories. From an audience perspective, the one material benefit of the decision to nationalize TV news during the COVID-19 crisis is to possibly generate national attention about local situations.

An ongoing dilemma for the CBC is what to do about sports, in particular NHL hockey. Advertisers place a premium on live must-see events. The growth of sports channels TSN and Sportsnet combined with digital platforms creates serious competition that drives up the price of sports licensing. When Rogers paid \$5.2-billion for 12 years of NHL broadcasting rights until 2026 it meant CBC would lose a financial windfall and have a massive programming hole. The sub-licensing agreement with Rogers to run *Hockey Night in Canada* without generating advertising revenue is an unusual programming solution. The money needs to be found elsewhere, such as by advertising revenues on *Family Feud Canada* or *Coronation Street*.

Continued on page 27



Another cost-efficient option to explore is for CBC-TV to run a slice of Radio-Canada programming. *Tout le monde en parle* plays a major role in Quebec public life. Yet most anglophones across Canada have likely never heard of it. Would it be so bad for English CBC to air episodes with closed captioning? Are there other cost-effective opportunities to bridge language, political and cultural divides, asks Alex Marland. *Screenshot courtesy of RDI*

Continued from page 26

Regional programming vs Toronto biases

Item #1 in the Broadcasting Act's list of responsibilities for the CBC is to emphasize Canadian regions. Specifically, the Act says that CBC programming should "be predominantly and distinctively Canadian, reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions."

Some CBC shows resonate nationally because they transcend a sense of place. *The Nature of Things* and *Dragon's Den* are examples. Others embrace their location, such as *Schitt's Creek* or *Kim's Convenience*. Entertainment programming works best when it doesn't preach political or social values, which some Toronto-based CBC TV writers are keen to do. Good television is escapism. Or, according to the *Broadcasting Act*, it involves "a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains."

Telling regional stories is where CBC ought to shine. Exposing Canadians to their fellow citizens is just as important as those Canadians seeing themselves. Legacy programs such as *On the Road Again* gave way to the *Rick Mercer Report* and the marvellous *Still Standing*. The ability of *Land and Sea* to shine a spotlight on Atlantic life is impressive. *Heartland* brings a Prairies touch to the network. *Arctic Air* was a great way for Canadians to learn about Yellowknife and the North. Sadly, English Canada largely misses out on francophone and Quebec stories that are created in French for Radio-Canada. CBC should be commended for more programming with a greater diversity of gender, race, Indigeneity, and sexual orientation. This needs to be weighed against the perception of many Canadians that the CBC prioritizes urban, progressive, political values.

A serious impediment that CBC personnel might be oblivious to is the extent to which Toronto-centric biases colour the English CBC. This is especially true with some of its comedy. With each passing year, I would cringe as *Royal Canadian Air Farce* humour became Toronto-centric. Sadly, the same fate has befallen *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, which has gone from edgy Canadian regional comedy with sardonic wit to mocking the U.S. Republican president's looks and mannerisms.

Five suggestions for CBC

CBC radio and TV should consider replacing some of their self-promos with spots that raise awareness of the CBC's code of Journalistic Standards and Practices (JSP). The code says, "CBC journalists do not express their own personal opinion because it affects the perception of impartiality and could affect an open and honest exploration of an issue." This would be a cost-neutral way to raise awareness of a competitive advantage. There should be greater awareness among CBC on-air personalities and viewing audiences that news impartiality is paramount. When audiences detect otherwise, it should be top of mind to contact the CBC ombudsman. This accountability function would constitute a brand promise to Canadians.

Another cost-efficient option to explore is for CBC-TV to run a slice of Radio-Canada programming. *Tout le monde en parle*

fortunately this year's July event seems to be in doubt—and so are the Arctic Winter Games. How many Canadians know about the Royal St. John's Regatta whose boat races date back to 1816? Or the harness racing of the Gold Cup Parade in Charlottetown? For that matter, Winterlude in Ottawa or Quebec's Winter Carnival?

Building on this, Canadians can learn more about regions with national coverage of local days of recognition—Louis Riel Day in Manitoba, Islander Day in Prince Edward Island, Saint-Jean-Baptiste in Quebec, National Aboriginal Day in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

A more controversial suggestion is to give local CBC radio stations the option to sell advertising in place of musical interruptions. This is delicate because Facebook and Google are gobbling advertising dollars. Private sector radio stations do not need more competition. But it is in the public interest for a public broadcaster to be somewhat self-sustaining.

Finally, the network ought to consider the political ramifications of Don Cherry's firing in the broader context of Kevin O'Leary exiting *Dragon's Den*. Say what you want about these oversized personalities and their right-wing politics, but the reality is they brought a dose of ideological impunity to the CBC which is otherwise labelled as left-leaning. I think it is incumbent on the CBC to give a platform to small-c conservatives and libertarians, all the better someone who is not the stereotype of a wealthy, older white man. There needs to be content that counters negativity from opinion leaders who decry the CBC's left wing slants.

Now, let's see how these impressions square with *The End of the CBC?* The book's back cover promises an examination of "how the CBC lost its place in sports, drama and entertainment" and recommendations to

focus "resources on news and current affairs." Whatever David Taras and Christopher Waddell suggest, let's hope they have a solution to help the CBC flourish so that there is no need to deliberate its end—notwithstanding that local supertime TV news is on hiatus during the global pandemic.

Alex Marland is a professor of political science at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He was the lead editor of the new book *Inside the Campaign: Managing Elections in Canada* (UBC Press, 2020).

The Hill Times

'Bold decisions' are needed if the CBC is to survive

Continued from page 25

Incidentally, a remark on the first page of the book is disturbingly relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic. When praising CBC-TV for being freely available, the authors say "many, if not most, Canadians [are] just one or two paycheques away from falling off a financial cliff." The future of the CBC is a low priority when people are concerned about their lives. When the health crisis eases, it is more likely that politicians will come looking for money from the CBC than giving it more.

The authors observe that CBC-TV without advertising could become like CBC radio. But getting rid of commercials that would increase the number of content hours to fill while reducing revenues. Even if Parliament were to magically offset the forgone funds, CBC-TV would have the same budget with which to generate even more content. And is CBC radio really doing so well? As resources have been siphoned to support digital-first, the St. John's Morning Show has been replacing local storytelling and news slots with irritating music.

I also completely disagree with the authors' belief that one of five areas that the CBC should emphasize is "urban life" (page 175). This betrays our locations: Taras and Waddell work in Calgary and Ottawa, respectively, whereas I work in rural Newfoundland. From where I sit, a massive problem with the CBC is that it is so Toronto-centric. City issues are often indistinguishable from each other. They are often told from a Toronto point of view. The urbanization of media is already happening as community newspapers die. Digging into the nooks and crannies of Canada's regional, rural and remote communities is exactly why we need a public broadcaster.

Where we agree is that CBC journalists should not "spend their days sitting at desks like bureaucrats, reading and regurgitating social media content in pursuit of clicks" (page 171). It is unrealistic to think this culture will change, even with a massive infusion of cash. To me, greater emphasis on the journalistic code is warranted.

I really like the authors' idea that digital content could be shared with other online content providers (page 172). Instead of competing with them this would help prop up Canadian media outlets. I also agree that CBC platforms could help promote news literacy (page 172).

Finally, the authors conclude that "bold decisions" (page 177) are needed if the CBC is to survive. What decisions will those be? While the best course of action is unclear, one thing is certain: people who read *The End of the CBC* will come away better informed about the serious challenges facing Canada's public broadcaster. The future of the CBC is something to worry about that can distract from the much bigger worries confronting everyone right now.

Alex Marland is a professor of political science at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He was the lead editor of the new book *Inside the Campaign: Managing Elections in Canada* (UBC Press, 2020).

The End of the CBC?, by David Taras and Christopher Waddell, University of Toronto Press, 2020, \$34.95.

The Hill Times



A serious impediment that CBC personnel might be oblivious to is the extent to which Toronto-centric biases colour the English CBC. This is especially true with some of its comedy. With each passing year, I would cringe as *Royal Canadian Air Farce* humour became Toronto-centric. Sadly, the same fate has befallen *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, which has gone from edgy Canadian regional comedy with sardonic wit to mocking the U.S. Republican president's looks and mannerisms. *Image courtesy of CBC*

plays a major role in Quebec public life. Yet most anglophones across Canada have likely never heard of it. Would it be so bad for English CBC to air episodes with closed captioning? Are there other cost-effective opportunities to bridge language, political and cultural divides?

Perhaps the CBC could profile Canadian sports that lack a national audience. Lacrosse is Canada's national sport—but when is it ever on television? More could be done to cover regional sporting events. Yes, the Calgary Stampede is covered—un-

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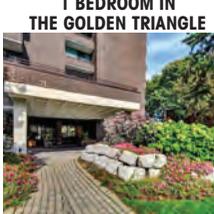
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Canada's chief public health officers take centre stage amid COVID-19 crisis

Federal officers such as Dr. Theresa Tam and Dr. Howard Njoo, and provincial chief doctors, are involved in daily live press conferences during which they speak directly to Canadians, informing them on the country's caseload, emphasizing the need for social distancing, and, at times, offering non-medical guidance amid extraordinary circumstances.

BY TESSIE SANCI

Chief public health officers across the country now have a public profile never before seen in this country, thanks to their position as the scientific and medical voices of reason during the COVID-19 crisis.

Federal officers such as Dr. Theresa Tam and Dr. Howard Njoo, and provincial chief doctors, including British Columbia's Dr. Bonnie Henry and Ontario's Dr. David Williams, are involved in daily live press conferences during which they speak directly to Canadians, informing them on the country's caseload, emphasizing the need for social distancing, and, at times, offering non-medical guidance amid extraordinary circumstances.

In addition to helping lead the government's public messaging, the doctors are members of a special advisory committee that convenes daily to swap updates.

These are the individuals who are guiding elected officials on where Canada goes next in its efforts to "plank the curve" and control the transmission of COVID-19:

Canada

Dr. Theresa Tam was named chief public health officer for the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) in June 2017. As an employee of the Government of Canada, she previously served as the deputy officer and assistant deputy minister for infectious disease prevention and control. Her official government biography describes her as having "expertise in immunization, infectious disease, emergency preparedness and global health security."

Dr. Tam previously served on emergency committees for the World Health Organization related to Ebola, the Middle East respiratory syndrome, and poliovirus. In



Canada's Chief Public Health Officer

Theresa Tam, pictured on March 24, 2020, arriving at the West Block on Parliament Hill for her daily press briefing on the COVID-19 world pandemic crisis. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

February 2017, she told the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* in February 2017 that her background in field epidemiology, travel health, emergency medicine, and pandemic preparedness led to her join those committees.

During the SARS outbreak in 2003, Dr. Tam was on the front lines helping patients out of Ottawa's emergency operations centre.

In August 2019, she told *Chatelaine* magazine that her "job is to prepare for the unknown." On pandemics, Tam said, every pandemic, no matter how many one has lived through, is "always new."

Dr. Howard Njoo, deputy chief public health officer, delivers the agency's French-language briefing to reporters alongside Dr. Tam, and steps in for her during pressers when she is unavailable.

Dr. Njoo has held his current role since April 2016, and has been employed with the agency since January 2005. In that time, some of his titles have included interim chief science officer and director general for the Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control, according to his LinkedIn profile. Before the establishment of the agency in 2004, Njoo held multiple positions within Health Canada in the areas of infectious and chronic diseases, emergency preparedness and response. He also spent close to five years as an associate medical officer of health for the City of Toronto.

British Columbia

Dr. Bonnie Henry's title is "provincial health officer," a role she has held since February 2018.



Dr. Bonnie Henry. Photograph courtesy of UBC

While employed by the BC Centre for Disease Control between 2005 and 2014,

she was executive medical director, medical director for communicable disease prevention and control, and medical director for public health emergency management, according to her LinkedIn profile.

Her biography on the Government of British Columbia's website states she is a "specialist in public health and preventive medicine."

Between September 2001 and January 2005, she was an associate medical officer of health for the City of Toronto, which involved her acting as the operational lead during the SARS outbreak in 2003. She was also a member of the Canadian pandemic co-ordinating committee, which responded to the H1N1 influenza in 2009. That year, Dr. Henry also penned a book, *Soap and Water and Common Sense*, which explores how basic hygiene can prevent illness.

Former British Columbia health minister Terry Lake had glowing words for Dr. Henry, describing her as a "the voice of reason and calm," according to Global News. "She is capable of handling great amounts of pressure, but in a way that gives you confidence she is in control."

Alberta



Dr. Deena Hinshaw. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

as a medical health officer for Alberta Health Services.

Dr. Hinshaw had a brief COVID-19 scare in mid-March when she was tested for the virus after experiencing mild cold symptoms. She went into self-isolation and held at least one press briefing from her

home. As reported by the *Edmonton Journal*, Dr. Hinshaw said during that press conference that she was fortunate to have a spare bedroom, where she could self-isolate. During that period, she also refrained from eating meals with her family and always stuck to staying two metres away from those in her household.

Dr. Hinshaw's composure during these press conferences has led to a fan following, with some Albertan designers producing T-shirts, including one that reads, "What would Dr. Hinshaw do?", with her likeness. That aforementioned T-shirt has raised more than \$20,000 for the province's food banks, according to CTV news.

Saskatchewan



Dr. Saqib Shahab. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

and preventive medicine from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and a past president of the Saskatchewan Public Health Association.

Manitoba



Dr. Brent Roussin. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

and Inuit Health branch, which delivers health services to First

Nations and Inuit communities. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Ontario



Dr. David Williams. Photograph courtesy of the Government of Ontario

Dr. David Williams has been in his post as chief medical health officer since 2016. In a public health career of more than 25 years, he has jumped back and forth between serving the Province of Ontario

and the City of Thunder Bay, Ont. Between 2011 and 2015, and 1991 to 2005, he was the medical officer of health for Thunder Bay's district board of health. The years 2005 to 2011 saw him working at the province's health ministry and long-term care, in the areas of infectious disease and environmental health.

Quebec



Dr. Horacio Arruda. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Dr. Horacio Arruda took on the role of national public health director in 2012. He has worked for Quebec's Ministry of Health and Social Services for about 20 years.

Dr. Arruda has endeared himself to the Quebec public with his suggestions on how residents can pass the time as they stick close to home.

"Do a little FaceTime danse en ligne [line dancing.] Why not? You put music, you both have the music, and you dance in front of the music, and you repeat," he said, according to the *Montreal Gazette*.

Like Alberta's top doctor, Dr. Arruda fans can also order T-shirts with his likeness. A spokesperson for the retail provider Mercerie Roger told HillTimes Research that, like the store's other graphic tees, the shirt featuring Dr. Arruda is being sold for profit, but that his store's wares are based on eco-friendly and ethical production practices.

Newfoundland and Labrador



Dr. Janice Fitzgerald. Photograph courtesy of YouTube

Dr. Janice Fitzgerald became the province's chief public health officer in 2019, after two years as a regional medical officer of health, according to a statement from a provincial spokesperson.

Like many other public health officers during this time, Dr. Fitzgerald's words of wisdom have waded outside the medical realm. At her daily briefing on March 19, she spoke about the virus' social effects on children as schools remain closed and children are unable to visit friends.



HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

Who's who in Economic Development Minister Joly's 20-member office

New additions to the minister's team include senior policy advisers Kelsey MacDonald and Richard Léger.

AN APARTMENT NEAR PARLIAMENT HILL—Now Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, **Mélanie Joly** has assembled a 20-member staff team to support her, led by chief of staff **Daniel Lauzon**.

Caroline Séguin continues as director of policy to Ms. Joly. She's been running the minister's policy shop through her time in multiple cabinet portfolios, from heritage to tourism, official languages, and La Francophonie, since January 2016. Ms. Séguin briefly stepped in as acting chief of staff to the minister last summer, after Mr. Lauzon left to do communications and policy work for the 2019 national Liberal campaign.

Before she began working for Ms. Joly, Ms. Séguin was working in the office of then-Ontario premier **Kathleen Wynne**, last as executive director for intergovernmental affairs.

Ms. Séguin is also former director of policy to Ottawa Mayor **Jim Watson**, and a former special assistant for political operations to then-federal Liberal leader **Michael Ignatieff**.

Michel Breau is the minister's senior policy adviser focused on covering the various federal regional development agencies—Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, the Atlantic Canada

Opportunities Agency, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, the Canada Economic Development Agency for Quebec Regions, and the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario.

Mr. Breau comes from the heritage minister's office, having started there under Ms. Joly in March 2016 as a policy and Western regional affairs adviser and later being bumped up to director of operations. He stayed on in the office after now-Government House Leader **Pablo Rodriguez** took over in July 2018, becoming director of operations and outreach. Mr. Breau is also a former director of political operations and outreach for Alberta for the federal Liberal Party.

Kelsey MacDonald is a senior policy adviser for economic development and tourism. Ms. MacDonald spent 2019 as director

of parliamentary affairs to then-rural economic development minister **Bernadette Jordan** and before then was working in the democratic institutions minister's office, starting in the fall of 2016 as an executive and communications assistant to then-minister **Maryam Monsef** and ending as a senior special assistant for parliamentary affairs to then-minister **Karina Gould**.

A former staffer at the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia provincial legislatures—including as executive assistant to the New Brunswick assembly's Speaker—Ms. MacDonald actually ran as a federal Liberal candidate in Tobique-Mactaquac, N.B., last fall. The riding, previously represented by Liberal MP **T.J. Harvey**, ultimately went blue, with Conservative MP **Richard Bragdon** elected with roughly 50.3 per cent of the vote.

Richard Léger is senior policy adviser for official languages. A former policy adviser to then-public services minister **Carla Qualtrough**, Mr. Léger has a background in law and previously worked as a lawyer with Vincent Dagenais Gibson LLP and Caza Saikaley LLP, both in Ottawa.

After roughly two years running Ms. Joly's constituency office as the Liberal MP for Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que., **Philippe Lafrance** has joined her new ministerial office as a senior adviser.

Sandra Aubé, who was previously director of communications to Ms. Joly as tourism minister, is now director of parliamentary affairs and issues management to the minister.

Ms. Aubé is also a former communications director to then-small business and tourism minister **Bardish Chagger**, a former issues adviser in the Prime Minister's Office, a former issues manager for strategic communications to Ms. Joly during her time as heritage minister, and is a former Radio-Canada journalist, among other things.

Working under Ms. Aubé as parliamentary affairs advisers are **Kariné Aprahamian** and **Jessica LaForge**.

After interning in Ms. Joly's old office as tourism minister over the summer of 2019, Ms. Aprahamian worked on the ultimately successful re-election campaigns of Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** as the Liberal MP for Papineau, Que., and Liberal MP **Soraya Martínez Ferrada** in Hochelaga, Que.

Ms. LaForge has been working for Ms. Joly since March 2019, starting as a scheduling assistant during the minister's time.



Economic Development and Official Languages Minister **Mélanie Joly**, pictured in the West Block on Feb. 27, 2020. *The Hill Times* photograph by **Andrew Meade**

Catherine Mounier-Desrochers is a legislative assistant in the office. She spent the 2019 election monitoring media for the national Liberal campaign, and previously interned in Ms. Joly's office as heritage minister over the summer of 2017, and in the PMO over the summer of 2018.



Emma Kristensen is manager of operations in Ms. Joly's office. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Emma Kristensen is Ms. Joly's operations manager. Ms. Kristensen spent most of 2019 as a communications manager in the Liberal research bureau on the Hill and before then was a special assistant for operations and policy to then-infrastructure minister **Amarjeet Sohi**. She's also a former PMO staffer, having been hired on after interning there over the summer of 2017, first as executive assistant to then-operations director **John Zerucelli** and later to then-PMO deputy director of outreach **Andrée-Lyne Hallé** and then-deputy director of tour **Susan Menchini**.

Pavan Sapra is in place as the Atlantic regional affairs adviser. He's a former assistant to Mr. Trudeau in his capacity as a Liberal MP and most recently was working for then-Liberal MP **Alaina Lockhart**, who represented Fundy Royal, N.B., and also served as parliamentary secretary to Ms. Joly as tourism minister.



Pavan Sapra is covering the Atlantic affairs desk. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Gabriel Cyr is the office's regional adviser for Quebec. A former assistant to then-Quebec Liberal MP **Richard Hébert**, Mr. Cyr joined Ms. Joly's old tourism office as an assistant for policy and operations in October 2018. He spent the 2019 election running Liberal candidate **Chantal Pilon**'s ultimately unsuccessful campaign in Rimouski-Neigette-Témiscouata-Les Basques, Que., having served as president of that federal riding association for the last four years. In the end, now-Bloc Québécois MP

Maxime Blanchet-Joncas defeated incumbent NDP MP **Guy Caron** to win the riding with roughly 37.8 per cent of the vote.

James Leask is covering the Ontario regional desk for Ms. Joly, and **Galen Richardson** is the regional adviser for the West and North.

A former associate with McKercher LLP, Mr. Richardson spent 2019 tackling Western and Northern regional affairs to then-infrastructure minister **François-Philippe Champagne**.

Jérémy Ghio, who was previously press secretary to Ms. Joly as tourism minister, has been promoted to director of communications in her office. Mr. Ghio is also a former press secretary to National Revenue Minister **Diane Lebouthillier** and a former assistant to then-Liberal MP **Jean-Claude Poissant** in his capacity as parliamentary secretary to the minister of agriculture.

Now working under him as Ms. Joly's new press secretary is **Alexander Cohen**, who was previously busy working for then-health minister **Ginette Petitpas Taylor**, last as acting press secretary.

Mr. Cohen started out as a special assistant for communications to Ms. Petitpas Taylor in March 2018 and was later bumped up to issues management and communications adviser. He's also a former vice president of communications for the Young Liberals of Canada. 9



Alexander Cohen is Ms. Joly's new press secretary. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Joshua Arless is helping keep the metaphorical trains moving as manager of executive operations to Ms. Joly. He's spent roughly the last two and a half years working in the foreign affairs minister's office, starting as assistant to the chief of staff to then-minister **Chrystia Freeland** in the fall of 2017 and later tackling Quebec and Atlantic regional affairs. Mr. Arless is also a former assistant to Quebec Liberal MP **Sherry Romanado** and has been an elected commissioner with the Lester B. Pearson School Board in Quebec since 2014.

Finally, **Gabrielle Labadie-Johnson** has been hired on as Ms. Joly's new executive assistant. Until recently, she'd been a scheduling and administrative assistant to Ms. Lebouthillier since September 2016.

As already reported by **Hill Climbers**, Mr. Lauzon previously ran Ms. Joly's office as heritage minister during the last Parliament. lryckewaert@hilltimes.com

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Canada's chief public health officers take centre stage amid COVID-19 crisis

Continued from page 29

"Many children may be feeling anxious or worried. We need to support them, help them adjust to their new routines and help them cope," she said.

New Brunswick



Dr. Jennifer Russell.
Photograph courtesy of YouTube

Dr. Jennifer Russell has been New Brunswick's permanent chief medical officer of health since March 2018, but her experience extends further, after spending 15 months between the period of September 2014 and March 2018 in the role on an interim basis.

Before working in public health in New Brunswick, she was a base surgeon for the Canadian Armed Forces for five years, and was employed in a medical capacity by the military between 1997 and 2007. She was also a medical officer for Veterans Affairs Canada between 2007 and 2009. Dr. Russell specialized in mental health and addictions while working for the Horizon Health Network, which operates 12 hospitals in New Brunswick.

Her message to residents has been to maintain the recommended two metres of distance between themselves and others without shuttering themselves inside.

"Several things are closed, but the outdoors is not one of them!" Dr. Russell said in a press release. "There are many activities

that you and your family can do outside that still respect social-distancing practices. Go for a walk or hike, do yoga in the backyard or look for signs of spring."

Prince Edward Island



Dr. Heather Morrison.
Photograph courtesy of Government of Prince Edward Island

Dr. Heather Morrison became chief health officer in July 2007. In her public health career, she has served as Prince Edward Island's representative on both the national special advisory committees for H1N1 and epidemic of opioid overdoses; she co-chaired the island's response to the Ebola outbreak, as

P.E.I. prepared for the possibility that an infected person could travel to the province; and she chaired the provincial infection and prevention control committee. She also continues to practice emergency medicine.

Nova Scotia

Dr. Robert Strang received the title of "chief medical officer of health" in 2016, but actually became the province's first chief public health officer in 2007. Before moving to Halifax in 1999 to take on the role of medical officer of health for a Nova Scotian regional health authority, he was an associ-



Dr. Robert Strang.
Photograph courtesy of Government of Nova Scotia

ate medical health office for British Columbia from 1997 to 1999.

Prior to becoming a daily fixture on Canadian television screens, he was a familiar face to House Health Committee members during the previous parliamentary session. In 2018, he spoke to members on at least two occasions as a representative of all provincial and territorial public health officers, voicing their support for Bill S-5, which set up a legislative framework for vaping products and received royal assent in May 2018, and Bill S-228, which would have restricted the promotion of some foods and beverages to children (this bill died on the Order Paper when the House rose last June).



Dr. Brendan Hanley.
Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Yukon

Dr. Brendan Hanley was named chief medical officer of health in February 2008. His other professional experiences include a role as chief of emergency at Whitehorse General Hospital and multiple positions within Doc-

tors Without Borders, where he was involved in emergency missions.

Northwest Territories



Dr. Kami Kandola.
Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Dr. Kami Kandola has been Northwest Territories' chief public health officer since October 2018, and was previously the region's deputy chief public health officer since 2011. Her CV also includes time spent as the president of Canadian

Society for Circumpolar Health (2012-2015) and the Northwest Territories Medical Association (2005-2007). She was a health specialist for the Canadian International Development Agency between 1998 and 2003.

On March 15, she appealed to territorial residents to stop spreading rumours about possible cases and said that too many public health resources were being spent investigating those cases, as reported by local news radio station Cabin Radio. She also told residents, "If we are going to beat this, we must be kind to each other."

Nunavut

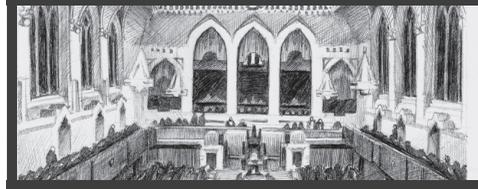
Dr. Michael Patterson became the territory's chief medical officer of health in December 2018, after about a year and a half as deputy chief medical officer of health. He completed his family practice residency in 2001 and began providing medical services in Northern Manitoba and the Kivalliq region of Nunavut. He moved to Nova Scotia to start a private practice in 2005 and returned to Nunavut in 2012.

Tessie Sancis is editor of Hill Times Research, owned by Hill Times Publishing. The Hill Times

Events Feature

House suspended until Monday, April 20, for now

Parliamentary Calendar



MONDAY, MARCH 30

House Not Sitting—The House has been suspended until Monday, April 20, due to the COVID-19 virus, but it's expected to return this week for a short time to pass emergency measures in financial aid for Canadians and businesses to get through the COVID-19 crisis. As of April 20, it is then scheduled to sit for four straight weeks until May 15. It will take a one-week break and will resume sitting again on May 25 and will sit straight through for the next four consecutive weeks, until it's scheduled to adjourn on June 23. The House adjourns again for three months and will return in the fall on Monday, Sept. 21, for three straight weeks. It will adjourn for one week and will sit again from Oct. 19 until Nov. 6. It will break again for one week and will sit again from Nov. 16 to Dec. 11. And that will be it for 2020.

Senate Sitting—The Senate has also been suspended due to the COVID-19 virus, but will sit on Wednesday, March 25 to approve emergency legislation sent from the House of Commons. When it's scheduled to return, the possible sitting days are April 20, 24, 27, and May 1. The Senate is scheduled to sit April 21-23 and April 28-30. The possible Senate sittings are May 4, 8, 11, 15, 25, and 29. The Senate is scheduled to

sit May 5-7 and May 12-May 14. The Senate will break May 18-22. It is scheduled to sit May 26-28. The June possible sitting days are June 1, 5, 8, 12, 15 and 19. The Senate is scheduled to sit June 2-4; June 9-11; June 16-18; and June 22, 23, it breaks June 24 for St. Jean Baptiste Day; and it's scheduled to sit June 25 and June 26. The Senate breaks from June 29 until Sept. 22. The Senate's possible September sitting days are Sept. 21, 25, 28. It's scheduled to sit Sept. 22-24 and Sept. 29-Oct. 1, with a possible sitting day on Friday, Oct. 2. The possible Senate sitting days are Oct. 5, 9, 19, 23, 26, and 30. It's scheduled to sit Oct. 6-8; it takes a break from Oct. 12-16; it will sit Oct. 20-22; and Oct. 27-29. The November possible Senate days are: Nov. 2, 6, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30. It's scheduled to sit Nov. 3-5; it will take a break from Nov. 9-13; it will sit Nov. 17-19; and Nov. 24-26. The possible December Senate sitting days are: Dec. 4, 7, and 11. The Senate is scheduled to sit Dec. 1-3; Dec. 8-10 and it will sit Dec. 14-18.

MONDAY, MAY 4

International Day of Pink—In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots/Pride; and the 30th anniversary of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, we are proud to invite you to Stonewall 50 across Canada, in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, and Cape Breton, from May 4-21, featuring Stonewall riot activist Martin Boyce. Stonewall 50 across Canada is a free speakers' series in cities across the country featuring Stonewall Riot activist Martin Boyce. Boyce is among a handful of surviving Stonewall activists whose contributions have had a significant impact on our communities. Join us as he shares his stories of uprising and rebellion, what motivated him that night.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

CJF Awards Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence in Journalism—The Canadian Journalism Foundation Awards will be held on June 10, 2020, at the Ritz-

Carlton, Toronto, Ont., hosted by Rick Mercer, former host of *The Rick Mercer Report*. The CBC's Anna Maria Tremonti will be honoured. Tables are \$7,500 and tickets are \$750. For more information on tables and sponsorship opportunities, contact Josh Gurfinkel at jgurfinkel@cjf-fjc.ca or 416-955-0394.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Canada's Foremost Fintech Conference FFCON20—Featuring high-growth start-ups and leading industry experts across fintech sectors including digital banking, P2P finance, AI, capital markets, Wealthtech, payments, crypto, and blockchain. July 8-9. Speakers include: Robert Asselin, senior director public policy, BlackBerry; Paul Schulte, founder and editor, Schulte Research; Craig Asano, founder and CEO, NCFA; George Bordinu, co-founder and CEO, Balance; Julien Brazeau, partner, Deloitte; Alixe Cormick, president, Venture Law Corporation; Nikola Danaylov, founder, keynote speaker, author futurist, Singularity Media; Pam Draper, president and CEO, Bitvo; Justin Hartzman, co-founder and CEO, CoinSmart; Peter-Paul Van Hoeken, founder & CEO, FrontFundr; Cynthia Huang, CEO and co-founder, Altcoin Fantasy; Austin Hubbel, CEO and co-founder, Consilium Crypto; Patrick Mandic, CEO, Mavennet; Mark Morissette, co-founder & CEO, Foxquilt; Cato Pastoll, co-founder & CEO, Lending Loop; Bernd Petak, investment partner, Northmark Ventures; Ali Pourdad, Pourdad Capital Partners, Family Office; Richard Prior, global head of policy and research, FDATA; Richard Remillard, president, Remillard Consulting Group; Jennifer Reynolds, president & CEO, Toronto Finance International; Jason Saltzman, partner, Gowling WLG Canada; James Wallace, co-chair and co-CEO, Exponential; Alan Wunsche, CEO & chief token officer, Tokenfunder; and Danish Yusuf, founder and CEO, Zensurance. For more information, please visit: <https://fintechandfunding.com/>.

SATURDAY, OCT. 3

Green Party Convention—The Green Party will hold its convention and elect a new party leader Oct. 3-4, at the Delta Hotels Prince Edward in Charlottetown, P.E.I. For more information, contact 613-562-4916.

THURSDAY, OCT. 15

Former Liberal deputy prime minister Anne McLellan, along with Senator Peter Harder, will be honoured at this year's Public Policy Forum Testimonial Dinner and Awards on Oct. 15. *The Hill Times* file photograph

PPF Testimonial Dinner and Awards—Join us at the 33rd annual event to network and celebrate as the Public Policy Forum honours Canadians who have made their mark on policy and leadership. Anne McLellan and Senator Peter Harder will take their place among a cohort of other stellar Canadians who we've honoured over the last 33 years, people who have dedicated themselves to making Canada a better place through policy leadership and public service. The gala event will be held on Thursday, Oct. 15, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St. W., Toronto.

SATURDAY, OCT. 24

Parliamentary Press Gallery Dinner—The Parliamentary Press Gallery Dinner happens on Saturday, Oct. 24, in the Sir John A. Macdonald Building on Wellington Street.

THURSDAY, NOV. 12

Liberal Party National Convention—The Liberal Party of Canada announced the 2020 Liberal National Convention will be hosted in Ottawa, from Nov. 12-15. For more information, please contact: media@liberal.ca, 613-627-2384.

Conservative Party National Convention—The Conservatives will hold a convention in Quebec City from Nov. 12-14. For more information, please contact 1-866-808-8407.

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental event in a paragraph with all the relevant details under the subject line 'Parliamentary Calendar' to news@hilltimes.com by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper. We can't guarantee inclusion of every event, but we will definitely do our best. Events can be updated daily online, too.
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The Hill Times is offering free access to all our coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

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