Coming out on the other side of COVID-19

Lobbyists, non-profits clamour to be heard p. 6

Wage subsidies critical for postcoronavirus survival, say businesses p. 3

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CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

News Health care

Mental health a 'missing piece' in feds' COVID-19 response, say critics, advocates

NDP MP Don Davies says the situation calls for an 'extraordinary response' and supports for mental health, which one advocate says should come 'imminently.'

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

As the government rapidly responds to the immediate health and economic needs of Canadians affected by CO-VID-19, more than two weeks after the country adopted strict isolation measures, advocates say now is the time to address the mental health toll more are likely to face. At least one organization said they expect an announcement "imminently," though neither Health Canada nor Health Minister Patty Hajdu (Thunder Bay-Superior North, Ont.) responded to requests to confirm the details. On March 25, Ms. Hajdu said the government would launch a free virtual mental health tool in

Continued on page 16

 Health Minister Patry on March 25 that the fedral government was, working on a virtual mental health tood as part of Canada's COVID-19 response, which one group says should be announced part of Canada's COVID-19 response, which one group says

News Trade

Mail

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Food supply, emergency vehicle repair: keeping Canada–U.S. trade open key to fight against COVID–19, say stakeholders

BY NEIL MOSS & MIKE LAPOINTE

With the epicentre of the coronavirus pandemic having shifted to the United States, industry stakeholders say Canada-U.S. trade is too vital for crossborder commerce to be halted. While non-essential travel between Canada and the United States has been barred since March 17, with commerce being exempted, U.S. President Donald Trump publicly floated ending physical distancing instructions before announc-

News COVID-19

Introduction of electronic, remote voting not called for yet, but should be re-examined by House committee, say some MPs

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Physical-distancing measures aimed at dampening COVID-19's spread are keeping Members of Parliament away from the House of Commons, and while MPs who spoke with *The Hill Times* say they're fine with arrangements so far, some think the House should reconsider whether to introduce remote and electronic voting down the road.

"I would like to see a renewed commitment of looking at how it is that we can modernize the rules of the House, that [how MPs vote] being one aspect of



HEARD ON THE HILL

by Neil Moss

Ralph Goodale tapped as special adviser on Flight 752 downing



Ralph Goodale, who served as public safety minister from 2015 to 2019, was in the Liberal caucus from 1974 to 1979 and again from 1993 until he was defeated in last October's election. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Former Liberal cabinet minister Ralph Goodale is being brought back into the fold as the new special adviser for the federal government's response to the downing of Flight 752.

The Ukrainian commercial airline flight was shot down by Iranian authorities on Jan. 8 shortly after its takeoff from Tehran, killing all 176 on board, including 55 Canadians and 30 permanent residents.

The Canadian government has been urging the Iranian government to transfer the flight's black box to another country, as Iran lacks the expertise to download the data. Tehran agreed to hand over the black box, but according to a CBC report that process was delayed due to COVID-19.

In his new post, Mr. Goodale is being tasked with assessing the lessons that have been learned from the downing of Flight 752 and other air disasters—including the crash of Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 in 2009 and the bombing of Air India Flight 182 in 1985—to serve as a framework to



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how the Canadian government will respond to international air tragedies in the future, according to a March 31 press release.

"The Ukraine International Airlines tragedy should never have occurred, and the families and loved ones of the victims deserve to know how and why it happened. While we work to get them the accountability, justice, and closure they deserve, we also need to develop a strategy on how to best respond to international air disasters," Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** said in a statement.

"I am confident that Ralph Goodale has the experience to help us identify best practices, and support efforts to ensure that families are properly compensated,"he added.

Mr. Goodale was the public safety minister from 2015 until losing his seat in the 2019 election. The longtime Liberal MP has previously served in cabinet in a wide variety of roles, including as minister of public works and government serves and as finance minister.

In his new advisory role, Mr. Goodale will work with Foreign Affairs Minister **François-Philippe Champagne** and Transport Minister **Marc Garneau**.

Jaimie Anderson Parliamentary Internship Program placed on pause due to COVID-19



Bruce Anderson is pictured with Peter Mansbridge at a fundraising bash at Blacksheep Inn in Wakefield, Que., which in the past raised money for the Jaimie Anderson Parliamentary Internship Program before the internship became self-sustaining. *The Hill Times file photograph*

An annual program that places three paid interns in Hill offices has been scrapped for this year in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak in Canada.

"It is with deep regret that we must suspend the @jaimiesinterns program for this summer, to avoid any potential risk to health,"tweeted Jaimie Anderson Parliamentary Internship Fund co-chair **Bruce Anderson** on March 29. "Be assured that the internship will be back up and running for the summer of 2021."

The program was set up in honour of **Jaimie Anderson**—the niece of Mr. Anderson and daughter of former Reform Party national campaign manager **Rick Anderson**—who died from cancer at the age of 23. Ms. Anderson was a former staffer to then-natural resources minister **Gary Lunn** and former Conservative MP **Diane Ablonczy**.

Serving with Bruce Anderson as cochair for the program's fund is former *The National* anchor **Peter Mansbridge**. Recently departed PMO communications czar **Kate Purchase**, who was Jaimie Anderson's cousin, serves on the program's board along with Rick Anderson and other family members.

"Very disappointing to share this news," Ms. Purchase tweeted of the program's hiatus, "but it does give me an extra year to make epic lists of things to do with our 2021 interns!"

The three interns are placed in MP offices across party lines. In 2018, for example, interns were hosted in the offices of now-Small Business, Export Promotion, and International Trade Minister **Mary Ng**, Conservative MP **Michael Chong**, and past NDP MP **Murray Rankin**. The program was initially funded through an annual bash hosted at the Blacksheep Inn in Wakefield, Que., but since the internship has become selfsufficient, the fundraiser now goes towards financing a political journalism internship.

Some Conservative MPs eschew pay raise, vow to donate hike



Conservative MP John Brassard, pictured with then-governor general David Johnston in 2017, has vowed to donate his salary increase to charity. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia*

As Canadians struggle with the new economic reality brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, some Conservative MPs are pledging to donate a scheduled salary raise to charity.

The pledge was kicked off by Conservative MPs **John Brassard** and **Doug Shipley**, who represent ridings in Barrie, Ont.

In a March 27 statement, Mr. Brassard said that little could be done to stop the pay raise, which stems from a **Paul Martin**-era act giving MPs a raise every year on April 1.

Conservative Party Leader Andrew Scheer also plans to give his pay increase to charity, according to a *HuffPost Canada* report, as do Conservative MPs Blaine Calkins, Earl Dreeshen, Philip Lawrence, and Scott Reid.

"Individual MPs cannot refuse it," Mr. Reid tweeted. "But we get paid more than enough. I'll be following the example of [Mr. Scheer]: donating mine to a COVIDrelated charity in the riding."

Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** was asked about the raises during his daily press conference at Rideau Cottage on March 30. He responded that he hadn't heard that Parliament was having discussions about foregoing the raise, but added "I'm sure they will reflect on it now" that the question has been asked.

Relief fund to give Canadian writers grants of \$1,500

As the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic affect all facets of Canada's economy, a fund has been announced to provide economic relief for writers who have been hurt by the downturn.

The Writers'Trust of Canada and The Writers' Union of Canada have partnered to launch the relief fund, announced on March 30, which will give struggling writers grants in amounts of \$1,500. The fund has an initial pool of \$150,000.

"Writers, whether veterans or novices, cobble together income from a variety of sources,"Writers'Trust's executive director **Charlie Foran** said in a statement."This leaves them especially vulnerable during a public health crisis the magnitude of CO-VID-19. We are grateful to have partners so committed to supporting our authors."

Applications for the fund are currently open to working writers who can detail a total loss that is greater than the grant amount and meet the minimum publishing barrier of one book or three works in "fee-paying magazines or anthologies" over the last five years.

Members of the The Writers' Union of Canada who were surveyed are projecting a loss of \$1.86-million or \$3,267 per individual, on average, according to a press release. nmoss@hilltimes.com

The Hill Times

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Wage subsidies 'critical,' a 'lifeline' for businesses to survive pandemic, says Chamber of Commerce president

'This subsidy will make a real difference in your lives and help everyone affected bridge to better times,' said Prime **Minister Justin** Trudeau on Friday, March 27.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

The federal government -increased wage subsidy announcement was "critical" if smalland medium-sized businesses are going to come out alive on the other side of the coronavirus pandemic, say business leaders.

"It's a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of small- and mediumsized businesses that employ millions of Canadians," said Perrin Beatty, president and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "Without it, our main streets would have remained dark, long after the pandemic was over."

As the federal government continues to roll out unprecedented financial measures to help families and businesses contend with the financial fallout from COVID-19, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) announced on March 27 that his government would boost a previously announced business-assistance program so that it covered up to 75 per cent of employees'

wages, up from the initial 10 per cent described on March 18, for up to three months.

"If your business' revenues have decreased by at least 30 per cent because of COVID-19, you will be eligible for this subsidy,' Mr. Trudeau said on March 27, adding that eligibility is not determined by the number of employees a business has, and that it would apply to non-profit organizations and

charities. This subsidy will make a real difference in your lives and help everyone affected bridge to better times," said Mr. Trudeau.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) and Small **Business Min**ister Mary Ng (Markham-Thornhill, Ont.) were scheduled to make

an announcement outlining the fine print of the program on April 1. Small businesses across the

world have borne a heavy weight from the fallout of COVID-19, said Mr. Beatty.

"The experience in China, Italy, South Korea has been that small businesses have been the ones that are the most hard hit throughout the pandemic," said Mr. Beatty. "For a number of reasons-the first is that larger organizations have done business continuity plans in advance and are better prepared when

disasters, whether they're climate disasters or cyberterrorism or pandemics, strike."

Many small businesses don't have the cash to let them survive very long with their doors closed, he said."The majority of them have a very hard time lasting more than about three weeks. And many of them, much less time than that.'



Corinne Pohlmann, senior vice-president of national affairs at the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, said her organization has done some surveying on this issue already, and has found that about one-quarter of business owners said they will not be able to make it a month without going under.

'So 25 per cent cannot survive less than a month under the current condition, because their business will just not work anymore. And then if you go further, it's actually closer to 60 per cent that

of COVID-19, you will be eligible for this subsidy,' that will see up to 75 per cent of some salaries covered by the government. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

be able to afford to do that-and keep those people off the [employment insurance] roll," said Ms. Pohlmann."But ultimately, for us, at the end of the day, it's about that keeping that connection, because once you lay them off, you don't know if you're going to get them back.'

According to Ryan Nearing, press secretary for Ms. Ng, if an employee works for a company that has been impacted by COV-ID-19, the government will cover up to 75 per cent of their salary for the first \$58,700 they earn.

That means up to \$847 a week. And this will be backdated to March 15," said Mr. Nearing.

The government is also counting on businesses that can afford to pay their employees to continue to do so, trusting them to do the right thing.

"If you have the means to pay the remaining 25 per cent that's not covered by the subsidy, please do so," said the prime minister. "And if you think this is a system you can take advantage of or game, don't. There will be serious consequences for those who do."

'We've got to restore normalcy,' says chamber head

"Sooner or later, the pandemic will end, and we've got to restore normalcy-or at least some semblance of it," said Mr. Beatty. "If we have hundreds of thousands of small businesses going into bankruptcy, there wouldn't be jobs for people to go to after the pandemic was under control and the impact on our economy-because about 90 something per cent of our businesses in Canada are SMEs-the impact on the economy would have been enormous. And it would have left us with massive structural unemployment."

Pedro Antunes, who is the chief economist at the Conference Board of Canada, said he thinks the government is trying to lighten the burden of administering programs, "because there's only so much you can manage."

"And they want to do that by limiting the number of people being laid off, and hopefully what they can do with this is a more generous program, in terms of wage subsidies," said Mr. Antunes. "Hold back the number of potential layoffs that would happen and have subsidies going to fewer enterprises that could then manage their employees and their staff.

"The idea here is you want to make sure that the public has confidence that we can administer these programs effectively and in a timely way to make sure that the income is there for households," said Mr. Antunes." What we're trying to do with all of this is shut down the economy for a couple of months, because of these social distancing measures, flatten the curve or kill the progress of this epidemic, and make sure we that don't see a lot of bankruptcies for households and for businesses," said Mr. Antunes.

"What we want to avoid are these problems having some contagion effect into the financial markets."

mlapointe@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, says small businesses in other countries have been the hardest hit by COVID-19. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Perrin Beatty,

quickly, it's going to be the big difference. We also have rent payments coming up now, and that's the other issue.' Ms. Pohlmann said the government's recent

can't go more than two months,"

Those timelines are for busi-

nesses with already "very thin profit margins," often in the heav-

ily affected sectors like hospital-

ity or personal services, such as

massage therapists and hairdress-

"The money is needed now.

The cash flow is needed now. And

so if those wage

subsidies and other

measures can flow

said Ms. Pohlmann.

ers, she said.

announcements are important to let small employers hold on to as many people as they can. "Putting people

on the unemployment line isn't necessarily a solution. If we could find a way to help them keep those people so that when things turn around, they have those people that are ready to hit the ground running and get the busi-

ness back up and running more quickly," she said in an interview with The Hill Times. The initial reaction to the

Liberals' wage-subsidy announcement was positive, she said. Business owners are already

saving they're going to rehire back people they'd already laid off, because this allows them to

Bill C-13: COVID-19 Emergency Response Act



Canada Emergency Response Benefit

Created to replace the Emergency Care Benefit and Emergency Support Benefit previously announced on March 18, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit was created with the passage of Bill C-13 on March 25.

It provides a taxable benefit of \$2,000 per month for up to four months to:

- Workers who made at least \$5,000 the year prior and must stop working due to COVID-19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support. • Workers who are sick, guarantined, or
- taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19. Working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are
- sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures. Workers who still have their employment
- but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work

• Wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

Other business support measures

 Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy: provides up to 75 per cent of salaries for qualifying businesses on the first \$58,700, or up to \$874 per week, for three months, retroactive to March 15, Available to businesses, non-profits, charities whose revenues have decreased by at least 30 per cent, irrespective of the number of employees

 Canada Emergency Business Account: provides small business and not-for-profits with interest-free loans of up to \$40,000. Up to \$10,000 of the loan is forgivable for anyone who repays it by Dec. 31, 2022. • Export Development Canada loans: the agency will work with financial institutions to issue new operating and credit and cash flow term loans of up to \$6.25-million to small and medium-sized businesses. Business Development Bank of Canada loans: a co-lending program for small- and medium-sized enterprises, teaming up with financial institutions to offer loans of up to \$6.25-million. — Source: Finance Canada

What's in the bill?

- Introduces a one-time additional payment under the GST/HST tax credit
- Provides temporary additional amounts under the Canada Child Benefit.
- Reduces required minimal withdrawals from registered retirement income funds by 25 per cent for 2020.
- Provides eligible small employers a temporary wage subsidy for a period of three months.
- Enacts the Canada Emergency Response Benefit Act to authorize the making of income support payments to workers who suffer a loss of income for reasons related to COVID-19.
- Enacts the Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act, which authorizes payments to be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund in relation to public health events of national concern. It also provides for the repeal of the Act on Sept. 30, 2020.
- Amends the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation Act to allow the finance minister to increase the deposit insurance coverage limit until Sept. 30, 2020
- Amends the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act to authorize the finance minister, with the approval of the governor-in-council, to make payments to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purpose of increasing the Corporation's capital.
- Amends the Export Development Act to broaden the purposes for which Export Development Canada is established and to permit the finance minister, until Sept. 30, 2020, to determine the amount of Export Development Canada's authorized capital as well as the amount of certain limits applicable to Export Development Canada. It broadens the transactions for which the international trade minister, with the concurrence of the finance minister, may grant an authorization. It also provides for the suspension of certain provisions of the Export Development Canada Exercise of Certain Powers Regulations.
- Amends the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act to authorize additional payments to the provinces and territories for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 2019.
- Amends Part IV of the Financial Administration Act to authorize the finance minister, until Sept. 30, 2020, to borrow money under that Act for certain payments without the authorization of the governor-incouncil, and it also amends that Part to extend the time for the tabling of the report on that minister's plans in relation to the management of the public debt. It also amends that Act to authorize that minister to make payments to an entity and to procure the incorporation of a corporation or establish an entity, other than a corporation, for the purposes of promoting the stability or maintaining the efficiency of the



International Trade Minister Mary Ng has a broader range of Export Development Canada transactions she can authorize under Bill C-13. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

financial system in Canada. Finally, it makes related amendments to the Borrowing Authority Act and a consequential amendment to the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation Act.

- Amends the Food and Drugs Act to, among other things, authorize the governor-incouncil to make regulations requiring persons to provide information to the health minister and preventing shortages of therapeutic products in Canada or alleviating those shortages or their effects, in order to protect human health.
- Amends the Canada Labour Code to, among other things, create a regime which provides for a leave related to COVID-19 of up to 16 weeks. It also amends that Act to provide for the repeal of that regime and to provide for a quarantine leave under the medical leave regime.
- Amends the National Housing Act to increase, for a period of five years, the maximum total for the outstanding insured amounts of all insured loans
- Amends the Patent Act to, among other things, provide that the Commissioner must, on the application of the health minister, authorize the Government of Canada and any person specified in the application to make, construct, use and sell a patented invention to the extent necessary to respond to a public health emergency that is a matter of national concern.



- Amends the Canada Student Loans Act to provide that, during the period that begins on March 30, 2020 and ends on Sept. 30, 2020, no interest is payable by a borrower on a guaranteed student loan and no amount on account of principal or interest is required to be paid by the borrowe
- Amends the Farm Credit Canada Act to authorize the finance minister to determine the limit on the amounts that the he may pay to Farm Credit Canada out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund
- during the period that begins on March 30, 2020 and ends on Sept. 30, 2020, no interest is payable by a borrower on a student loan and no amount on account of principal or interest is required to be paid by the borrower.
- Amends the Business Development Bank of Canada Act to authorize the finance minister to determine the limit on the aggregate of the paid-in capital—and any related contributed surplus—of the Business Development Bank and any proceeds prescribed as equity.

A timeline of Canadian COVID-19 developments

JAN. 25, 2020

 Canada records first "presumptive positive" case in Ontario, a man in his 50s who fell ill after returning from the Chinese city of Wuhan, where the outbreak started.

JAN. 28, 2020 . B.C. records its first case of the virus, and within a week, several more are confirmed

but all who had been connected to people who had travelled to or visited from the affected region in China.

FEB. 6, 2020

 Ottawa begins repatriating what will eventually be hundreds of residents, chartering two planes to China and airlifting others from Japan on board the Diamond Princess ruise ship. The Diamond Princess had been quarantined off the coast of Japan since Feb. 3 with about 3,700 passengers on board. It wasn't until early March when Canada's public health officer started warning Canadians to "think twice" about cruise travel

FEB. 26, 2020

 Deputy chief public health officer Dr. Howard Njoo tells the House Health Committe that the government is looking at the possibility of calling for social-distancing measures, which would involve the cancellation of mass public gatherings. Such measures are outlined in the government's pandemic influenza plan.

MARCH 4, 2020

- Bank of Canada cuts interest rates by 50 basis points to 1.25 per cent amid coronavirus concerns, following in the U.S. Federal Reserve's footsteps, in an effort to soften the economic impact.
- Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland is named chair of a new cabinet committee tasked with managing the federal response to the outbreak, convened to "complement" the work of the Incident Response Group that typically meets during
- a crisis.

MARCH 8, 2020

• First COVID-19 death recorded when a B.C. resident in a nursing home died. Officials said the man was in his 80s and had other underlying health issues

MARCH 11, 2020 • World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a pandemic.

• The federal government announced a \$1-billion fund aimed at mitigating the spread of the coronavirus, including \$500-million in support to provinces and territories, and additional \$275-million in funding for research, and waiving one-week waiting period

for employees who need to claim Employment Insurance sickness benefits on account of being quarantined or having to self-isolate. MARCH 13, 2020

Parliament agrees to suspend for five weeks until at least April 20 after unanimous

- agreement among all parties. Senate is recalled to sit on Friday (after it adjourned the day before) to finish business.
- most notably to pass the new NAFTA. • Canada upgrades advice that international travellers should self-quarantine, but

over the weekend, some passengers coming from abroad said they weren't properly screened, prompting some provinces—like Quebec, Alberta, and Nova Scotia—and Montreal city officials to send their own personnel to make sure the federal job was being done

• Treasury Board Secretariat issues directive to federal public servants permitting the to work from home during the coronavirus pandemic, per their managers' discretion. • The prime minister's wife, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, who returned from a trip to the United Kingdom, was tested after having flu-like symptoms, and by evening, the PMO

reported she had tested positive. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau starts 14-day self-isolation, but with no symptoms, officials said meant he would not be tested. The in-person First Ministers' Meeting.

planned for the same day, was cancelled, with Mr. Trudeau instead speaking with premiers over the phone. • The impact of the outbreak, combined with diving oil prices, helped push the

Canadian stock market to its worst one-day plunge in eight decades.

· 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 screening at several airports. • Canada's public health officer Dr. Theresa Tam warns the window to flatten the curve is closing.

MARCH 16, 2020

 Mr. Trudeau announces major new measures, including banning entry to most for nationals, except for U.S. citizens. Anyone with symptoms, regardless of citizenship, will also be denied boarding of flights to Canada.

• Canadian death toll rises to four, and all are connected to the B.C. nursing home where the first Canadian victim died.

• Conservative Party says leadership race and rules will go forward, but it would give leadership candidates online tools to support efforts to canvas members from a safe social distance, including making easier to gather online signatures, but declined calls

from some to push off the March 25 deadline.

MARCH 17. 2020

- Mr. Trudeau announced Parliament will be recalled for an emergency session to pass legislation and that the government would announce a major economic aid package
- on March 18 to help workers. • A fifth Canadian person, a 77-year-old man, dies with COVID-19 detected postmortem, the first in Ontario

MARCH 18, 2020

- The new border measures come into effect, with only four airports in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Calgary accepting international flights
- Canada and the U.S. announce that non-essential travel between the two countries will be barred, not including trade and commerce
- Mr. Trudeau announces \$82-billion support package, which includes two packages nearly totalling \$15-billion of employment insurance support for Canadians facing unemployment who are not eligible for EI, as well as \$300-million to address "immediate needs" in Indigenous unities, and a six-month moratorium on student loans, among other measures
- Deadline for Canadians to file taxes is extended from April 30 to June 1. COVID-19 deaths in Canada increase to nine with seven dead in British Columbia.

one in Ontario, and one in Quebec-the province's first MARCH 19, 2020

- Mr Trudeau appounces that closure of the Canada-U.S. border to discretionary travel will likely take effect on Friday night, March 20.
- . He says the U.S. and Canada have also struck a deal to temporarily extend the Safe Third Country Agreement to unofficial ports of entry. That means refugee cla will not be allowed to cross the border and remain in Canada while their claim is
- heard, a reversal from the government's position. MARCH 21, 2020

• Canada-U.S. border closes to non-essential travel for a period of 30 days, with the possibility of an extension.

MARCH 22, 2020

 Health Minister Patty Haidu warns that the feds could impose criminal penalties if travellers continue to defy advice to self-isolate after returning home from abroad. • The government announces it is launching an ad campaign, which will begin airing on

March 23, to appeal to Canadians to practice social distancing and good hygiene. MARCH 23, 2020

to be dispensed through Farm Credit Canada. That includes a six-month deferral for the repayment of existing loans, amounting to \$173-million. He also pledges another \$192-million to fund efforts to fast track the development of a potential vaccine. The feds' COVID-19 ad campaign starts airing.

- The prime minister schedules a call with premiers to discuss the possibility of
- enforcing the Emergencies Act, which would temporarily grant the federal governme the authority to, if necessary, curtail movement within the country to curb the spread of COVID-19. He says no province has "formally" asked it to invoke the act.

MARCH 24, 2020

- The House emergency sitting to consider the COVID-19 bailout bill stalls as opposition parties balk at conditions that gave the Liberal cabinet unfettered spending powers.
- Mr. Trudeau says provinces have "largely" decided that it's unnecessary at this stage to invoke the federal Emergencies Act.

MARCH 25, 2020

• The House stalemate ends in the early-morning hours and the Senate later sits, and without amendments passes Bill C-13, passes the \$107-billion aid package. • Mr. Trudeau announces a \$2,000-a-month benefit for workers who don't have a paycheque, promising the money will come within 10 days and would be ongoing

over four months • Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault says support for media will come in the form

of a \$30-million ad buy to raise awareness on efforts to fight the pandemic. Th nment also says it is working to rollout the previously announced tax credits for He also pledges \$9-million for United Way Canada's senior-focused efforts, and fving media outlet Foreign Affairs Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne participates in a conference call MARCH 30, 2020

- with his G7 counterparts. The group fails to issue a joint communiqué over the Trump administration's insistence on referring to the pandemic as the "Wuhan virus," despite the WHO's guidelines discouraging nations from linking it to a place or animal.
- Ms. Hajdu announces all returning travellers—except essential workers—will be under mandatory 14-day guarantine. Ontario MP Kamal Khera, who re-registered as a nurse, tests positive for COVID-19.

Rideau Cottage after his 14 days in self-isolation.

MARCH 26, 2020

- Amends the Canada Student Financial Assistance Act to provide that.

• Mr. Trudeau announces a \$5-billion credit package for the farming industry, with loans

•Mr. Trudeau participates in a call with G20 leaders, and is officially clear to leave

•Ms. Freeland says the government has pushed back against the Trump administration suggestion to deploy troops to the border, as the number of cases in the U.S. climbs to more than 75,000: "What we have said is, 'We really do not believe at all that

- Amends the Apprentice Loans Act to provide that, during the period that begins on March 30, 2020 and ends on Sept. 30, 2020, no interest is payable by a borrower on an apprentice loan and no amount on account of principal or interest is required to be paid by a borrowe
- social development minister the power to make interim orders for the purpose of mitigating the economic effects of COVID-19.
- Provides that every reference in any provision of the Employment Insur ance Act and of regulations made under it to a certificate issued by a medical doctor or other medical professional or medical practitioner or by a nurse practitioner is deemed to be of no effect and that any benefit that would have been payable to a claimant had such a certificate been issued is payable to the claimant if the Canada Employment Insurance Commission is satisfied that the claimant is entitled to the
- Source: Library of Parliament

response, appears to back off.

MARCH 27, 2020

Emergency Response Benefit.

communities and those in poverty

Amends the Employment Insurance Act to give the employment and

The Food

Act was

who has

to provide

to Health

Minister

information

Patty Hajdu.

photograph

bv Andrew

Meade

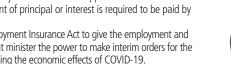
The Hill Times

and Drugs

changed so

that cabine

can regulate



benefit.

there would be a public health justification for you to take this action.' " The U.S., in

· Following the PM's videoconference with G20 counterparts, the multilateral group

announces \$5-trillion in global stimulus to help other countries battling COVID-19.

• Citing the pandemic, the Conservative Party's Leadership Organizing Election Committee

• After mixed messaging, the government walks back its initial plan to tax the Canada

• Mr. Trudeau ups the federal wage subsidy from 10 per cent to 75 per cent for small-

and medium-sized businesses. It will be backdated to March 15. GST and HST tax

• The government introduces the Canada Emergency Business Account, through which

banks will offer up to \$40,000 in interest-free loans for the first year, \$10,000 of

• Mr. Trudeau also signals that a package is in the works for youth, marginalized

Bank of Canada cuts key rate to 0.25 per cent, marking its third cut this month.

• Mr. Trudeau gives 48 hours' notice that the government now expects airline, train

operators to screen would-be passengers travelling domestically for COVID-19

• Mr. Trudeau says that employers, regardless of the size of their business or

venue (or operating costs, for non-profits).

to be deployed, should the need arise.

The House is tentatively scheduled to return

APRIL 20, 2020

SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

this day

organization, can recoup up to 75 per cent of their employees' salaries on the first

• Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan says that 24,000 reserve and regular troops are ready

• The government's power to spend unlimited, without parliamentary oversight, expires

\$58,700 earned, if they can demonstrate they have lost at least 30 per cent of their

payments on imports will also be deferred until June.

which will be forgivable, depending on the business' eligibility.

decides to suspend the leadership race indefinitely after resisting numerous calls to do so.

Other legislation affected by C-13

- Income Tax Act
- Canada Emergency Response Benefit Act (new)
- Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act

Oversight Committees

- Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation Act
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act
- Export Development Act
- Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act
- Financial Administration Act Borrowing Authority Act
- Food and Drugs Act

- Canada Labour Code
- Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No. 2
- National Housing Act Patent Act
- Canada Student Loans Act
- Farm Credit Canada Act
- Canada Student Financial Assistance Act
- Business Development Bank of Canada Act
- Apprentice Loans Act
- Employment Insurance Act — Source: Library of Parliament

On March 25, the House of Commons agreed that while the Chamber is suspended, its standing Health and Finance committees would meet at least once per week "for the sole purpose of receiving evidence concerning matters related to the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

House Finance Committee



Malpeque, P.E.I. Liberal



James Cumming Edmonton Centre, Alta. Conservative



Peter Julian New Westminster Burnaby, B.C.

Annie Koutrakis

Pierre Poilievre (vice-chair)

Carleton, Ont

Conservative

Gabriel Ste-Marie (vice-chair) Joliette, Que

Bloc Québécois

Peter Fragiskatos



Michael Cooper St. Albert–Edmonton, Alta Conservative



Central Nova, N.S. Liberal

Marty Morantz Charleswood–St. James–As siniboia-Headingley, Man Conservative

House Health Committee



Ron McKinnon (chair) Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam, B.C. Liberal



Dartmouth–Cole Harbour, N.S. Cloverdale–Langley City, B.C. Liberal





Marcus Powlowsk Thunder Bay–Rainy River, Ont. Liberal

Matt Jeneroux (vice-chair)

Edmonton Riverbend, Alta

Conservative

Conservative



Sonia Sidhu

Brampton South, Ont. Liberal



Luc Thériault (vice-chair) Montcalm, Oue Bloc Ouébécois



Cape Breton–Canso, N.S. Liberal



Tony Van Byne Newmarket–Aurora, Ont. Liberal



Vancouver Kingsway, B.C. NDF



Souris-Moose Mountain, Sask. Conservative



I en Webb Calgary Confederation, Alta. Conservative

Michael McLeod Northwest Territories Vimy, Oue. Liberal Liberal

Julie Dzerowicz Davenport, Ont. Liberal





Lobbyists clamour to get voices heard on COVID-19

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN & BEATRICE PAEZ

L obbying groups lining up to influence federal decisions on Canada's CO-VID-19 response are vying to ensure that their sector's concerns are reflected, with some warning that they may fall through the cracks even as they say Ottawa has made time for consultations.

Beyond particularly hard-hit industries such as the airline and tourism sectors, there are organizations such as Languages Canada, an association that represents language schools that rely on a steady stream of foreign students, which are concerned about their survival amid the pandemic, which has battered their bottomline.

Gonzalo Peralta, the association's executive director, said since COVID-19 took hold in China, which represents the third-largest source country after Japan and Brazil for these schools, the group has noticed a precipitous drop in enrolments that has now extended to other countries.

Given the border closures across different parts of the world, including in Canada, he said in-person recruitment has been paused indefinitely.

"On the very optimistic end, we're looking at a 50 per cent loss for this year, but we estimate it will actually be closer to 75 per cent, because we don't depend only

Organizations registered to lobby on COVID-19

Organization	Last updated	Number of filings on COVID-19
3M Canada Company	3/25/2020	1
AbCellera Biologics Inc.	3/26/2020	1
Agropur Dairy Cooperative	3/20/2020	2
Air Canada Pilots Association	3/27/2020	3
Airbnb Canada Inc.	3/18/2020	2
Association québécoise des pharmaciens propriétaires (AQPP)	3/23/2020	1
Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation	3/27/2020	2
Baxter Corporation	3/19/2020	1
Bayer Inc.	3/27/2020	1
Bell Textron Canada Limited	3/30/2020	2
Best Medicines Coalition	3/23/2020	4
Boat Rocker Media	3/20/2020	2
British Columbia Maritime Employers Association	3/5/2020	1
Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL–CIO, Canadian office	3/24/2020	1
Canadian Association of Broadcastersn	3/23/2020	1
Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions	3/25/2020	2
Canadian Chamber of Commerce	3/16/2020	1
Canadian Dental Association	3/9/2020	1
Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association	3/12/2020	1
Canadian Pharmacists' Association	3/23/2020	1
Chartwell Retirement Residences	3/23/2020	4
Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group	3/25/2020	3
Conseil des professionnels en services financiers	3/27/2020	1
Flair Airlines Ltd.	3/27/2020	6
GlaxoSmithKline Inc.	3/27/2020	3
Health Charities Coalition of Canada	3/23/2020	1
Husky Oil Operations Limited	3/27/2020	3
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers First District	3/1/2020	1
International Union of Operating Engineers	3/23/2020	1
Keurig Canada	3/18/2020	1
Kohl & Frisch	3/19/2020	1
Kraft Heinz Canada ULC	3/19/2020	2
Labatt Breweries of Canada	3/19/2020	1
Languages Canada	3/19/2020	1
Mastronardi Produce Limited	3/17/2020	3
Mastronardi Produce Limited	3/21/2020	5
Muslim Association of Canada	3/24/2020	5
Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association	3/20/2020	1
5	3/25/2020	1
Optel Group		1
Organigram Inc. Pearson Education Inc.	3/23/2020	3
	3/27/2020	1
Precision Biomonitoring Inc.	3/22/2020	
Protect-YU Inc.	3/23/2020	1
Registration Sysco Canada Inc.	3/16/2020	1
Restaurant Brands International Inc.	3/13/2020	1
Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory	3/24/2020	1
Sandoz Canada Inc.	3/25/2020	1
Sunwing Travel Group Inc.	3/16/2020	2
Swissport Canada Inc	3/23/2020	1
Sysco Canada Inc.	3/17/2020	3
Teva Canada Ltd.	3/27/2020	1
Toyota Canada Inc. (through Casacom)	3/27/2020	3
Ultra Electronics TCS	3/24/2020	1
Viral Me	3/30/2020	1
Whirlpool Canada LP	3/18/2020	1

on our situation, but the situation of other countries from where students come from," he said. "What is very clear to us is that without some type of intervention, it will take many years for us to recover."

Mr. Peralta said he has been in touch with Global Affairs and the office of Small Business and International Trade Minister Mary Ng (Markham-Thornhill, Ont.) for financial relief, noting that efforts to free up credit for businesses are helpful, but won't be sufficient to stave off the threat of closures.

Some groups,

including the charitable sector, are eyeing the feds' 75 per cent wage subsidy optimistically, but are awaiting further clarity on its implementation.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) on March 30 outlined the eligibility requirements for the wage subsidy program, saying that employers who can demonstrate they have lost at least 30 per cent of their revenue can recoup up to 75 per cent of their employees' salaries on the first \$58,700 earned. The program, which was boosted from its initial 10 per cent last week amid criticism that it would not be enough to prevent massive layoffs, is open to non-profits, charities, and other businesses, regardless of their size.

Health Minister Patty Hajdu, pictured in a Feb. 6 press briefing, oversees files that are among those lobbyists most often plan to target on COVID-19. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

needs to be worked out in terms of how the non-profit sector can track and prove that its revenue has declined by 30 per cent, and to ensure that it isn't "unintentionally" left out. "Our revenue cycles are different id "In the one of the

Bruce MacDonald,

president and CEO of

Imagine Canada, said

while it's "welcome

news," much still

[than sales],"he said. "In the case of the charitable sector, with many being reliant on event fundraising, we may be expecting, anticipating a revenue stream that won't actually occur for a little while. The question is how do we estimate revenue declines in anticipated revenues."

At the same time, he said, the government's effort to include charities and non-profits in its relief response reflects a recognition that the sector is not only a purveyor of services, but also one that employs some 2.4 million Canadians. The group is still crunching the numbers on how much the pledged support will help.

Mr. MacDonald said the pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of the sector, which, for the most part, lacks financial reserves to stay afloat amid a downturn."In fact, for years, some funders have penalized those [organizations] building reserves."

In a letter to the government, Imagine Canada estimated that registered charities will likely lose between \$9.5-billion and \$15.7-billion, resulting in layoffs between 118,000 and 194,000. To head off those scenarios, Mr. MacDonald said the sector is asking in part for an \$8-billion stabilization fund, which would include grants worth at least 90 per cent of that amount to cover community programs and purchase personal protective equipment for frontline workers, among other needs.

Disclosure filings on COVID-19 explode

Within the last week, the number of disclosure filings on the federal lobbyists' registry showed a significant uptick in registrations connected to the coronavirus. There have been 90 registrations for 55 organizations, as of March 31, indicating their interest in connecting with federal officials on issues ranging from policy to funding.

Such federal lobbying filings have jumped compared to the 57 entries just a few days before from those who disclosed their desire to speak with officials. The target of their attention starts at the top, with 81 of the 90 listing the Prime Minister's Office, followed by 63 for the House of Commons, which captures MPs and their staff. Some of the registrations, updated or created in the last week in the federal lobbyist registry touch on policy outside of the tutions they reach out to and on what subjects. The other departments that are top of mind include Finance Canada (mentioned in 61 registrations), Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada (57), the Senate (46), Health Canada (43), Global Affairs Canada (37), and Employment and Social Development Canada (34).

The companies, associations, and industry groups come from a number of sectors facing increased economic pressure, including airlines and travel (Flair Airlines Ltd., Sunwing Travel Group Inc., and Air Canada Pilots Association each have several files, for example), entertainment (Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group, which has laid off almost all of its staff), food and beverages (Kraft Heinz Canada, Labatt Breweries of Canada), and a broad swath from the health sector.

As for subjects they want to discuss, health is mentioned in 61 of the filings, followed by employment and training (37), economic development (37), industry (35), international trade (32), and taxation and finance (26).

Canada's fairs and exhibitions are also among those sounding the alarm, warning that they are at risk of closing "forever" due to the pandemic, even as they, along with Health Charities, praised the government for expanding the wage subsidy.

Christina Franc, executive director of Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions, said the organization is trying "to get ahead" of the impact to make sure some of the 700 members don't become "one of the unintended consequences" of the outbreak—in their case, the survival beyond the year.

"We want to make sure our voice is heard now so that we can make sure our members can access the services they need in order to continue to be viable," she said, adding it's been difficult to get a response from a number of departments that touch their sector, though she had a meeting with Rural Economic Development Minister Maryam Monsef's (Peterborough–Kawartha, Ont.) office on March 31.

Ms. Franc noted that with most festivals and fairs planned from May to October, it may be difficult to demonstrate a drop in 30 per cent of revenue to apply. Many of the events are based in rural communities and with organizations that are "older than Canada itself" and an "integral part" of their culture, added Ms. Franc.

Feds 'quite responsive,' lobbvists say

Connie Côté, CEO of the Health Charities Coalition of Canada, said the coalition has been "pleased" with interactions from MPs and officials, who have been responding "quite appropriately." Government relations has become "a little more challenging," she said. With the loss of face-toface meetings, it's more difficult to have patients tell their stories, for example.

Chartwell Retirement Residences registered four consultant lobbyists on March 23 to speak with officials about getting healthsector specific changes to Employment Insurance for staff at some of its 200-plus seniors homes in four provinces, which range from assisted living to long-term care.

"The government has been quite responsive and we are engaging to see how we can best work together to ensure we all get through this safely," said Sharon Ranalli, vice-president of marketing, over email.

Despite the workload, Kevin Desjardins, the Canadian Dental Association's director of public affairs, said it's his sense that officials are responding by phone and email more quickly than in the past.

"I think everyone is trying to do the best that we can given the circumstances," said Mr. Desjardins, and while government relations work is certainly different—not a six-month consultation, as in some cases most see that the government has to work quickly and then make the necessary adjustments. For example, the government first came out with two employee emergency benefit programs and then changed it into the single benefit.

"It shows that there's a willingness to take action but course-correct ... if it doesn't feel as though it's the right approach."

swallen@hilltimes.com bpaez@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Comment

Safety nets were chopped and now we're screwed trying to respond to the 'equal opportunity virus'



The employment insurance program can barely function when we need it most because politicians stole from workers to make their books look balanced. Indeed, as is the custom of the first of April, we were fooled.



Erica Ifill Bad+Bitchv

TTAWA—The entire Western was feelin' it the novel coronavirus hit. Now, we've been humbled like Justin Trudeau on his blackface apology tour.

Every time I type the name of this pandemic, all I can hear is Cardi B's coronavirus rant on Instagram that has been chopped and screwed into a remix that's blazing up the charts. (The internet remains undefeated.)

It's no surprise that a former dancer, turned reality show star

and Instagram influencer, turned hit femcee, turned political and social commenter, is one of those few intersectional voices leading the communication of the consequences of this virus to those who mainstream media news broadcasts cannot reach. After all, COVID-19 should be known as the "equal opportunity virus," one that doesn't care about your age, your education, your postal code, or your status. In fact, it's remarkable how many privileged, monied, and powerful people have contracted this virus: Tom Hanks, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, Idris Elba, Prince Albert of Monaco, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, and Prince Charles, to name a few. The irony of millionaires and billionaires being more susceptible to this virus than previous outbreaks is, frankly, unprecedented. This may be due to the concentration of wealth and privilege-the one per cent, if

you will-that has grown over the past 40 years. It is in this timeframe that we have coincidentally ravaged the welfare state to the point where it is just a shell of itself;

it's reminiscent of a Jenga tower that wobbles more destructively with each block removed from its structure. The eventuality is already pre-ordained. The Canadian social safety net, or the welfare state, we have now is no match for the damage the coronavirus will inflict on all of us. And we did it to ourselves by worshipping at the altar of the neoliberal ideology.

Neoliberalism is generally associated with policies of economic liberalization including: privatization, deregulation, globalization, free trade, austerity, and reductions in government spending to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society. Originally buoyed by the political fallout of two oil crises in the 1970s and the political economy of Thatcherism and Reaganomics, trickle-down economics-neoliberalism's first wave-remains the biggest economic lie ever told. Even the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stated the ineffectiveness of this piece of economic dogma in its 2015 report on global income inequality,

'Specifically, if the income share of the top 20 per cent (the rich) increases, then GDP growth actually declines over the medium term, suggesting that the benefits do not trickle down. In contrast, an increase in the income share of the bottom 20 per cent (the poor) is associated with higher GDP growth. The poor and the middle class matter the most for growth via a number of interrelated economic, social, and political channels,"the report said.

Word.

But we don't make policy for the poor, or the middle class (whoever they are), or the marginalized, we make policy to make sure that corporations and oligarchs are in the prime position of financial health. so that their profits and the benefits that result can trickle down to society as a whole. This is done mainly through tax policy, namely, cutting taxes for the wealthiest and the corporations, who will then invest in labour and capital with the extra money, and whose increased production and resource allocation resulting from this investment benefits society

as a whole. Only, it doesn't work out this way. These supply-side economic strategies don't amount to anything more than large holes in government budgets (see: the Kansas City experiment). Also note that tax cuts amount to government spending, much like direct spending on social programs (it's the opportunity cost of it all).

In the tenor of supply-side economics/neoliberalism, the first instinct of the federal government during the coronavirus crisis was to lower interest rates, in an already low-interest rate environment. Sure. I guess. But did anyone at the Bank of Canada look at the fact that lowering interest rates may exacerbate an affordable housing epidemic where homelessness and home insecurity are rising? What happens to those people, who are more likely to be precariously unemployed, who may also be increasingly susceptible to the coronavirus if they are also deemed essential workers? Nobody thought about this? Oh.

Property owners over the populace.

Conversely, labour will always suffer the fate of being an afterthought—if at all—in government policy. The 1971 Unemployment Insurance Act greatly expanded unemployment insurance (UI) almost to the point of universality (it covered 96 per cent of the labour force) with: a 75 per cent wage replacement rate, coverage until 70 years of age, and a maximum duration of benefits at 51 weeks. Since the mid-1970s (coinciding with the period of the oil shocks), successive Conservative and Liberal governments have shanked this program to the point

where it's just a carcass among

the debris of political and economic mendacity. All this done in the name of "tax cuts" or "efficiencies" or "small government"-or my personal favourite, "balanced budgets"—at a time when massive legislative changes must be made for the rebranded employment insurance (EI) to cover the majority of the labour force.

UI used to be a shared cost amongst the federal government, employers, and employees. However, in 1990, the federal government removed its financial responsibility, making the rebranded EI a self-financing program whose financial liabilities were to be borne solely by employers and employees. The only reason there are EI surpluses is because the federal government just passed the puck to the rest of us. What is most egregious, however, is that starving EI wasn't enough-Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin stole money from the EI surplus (what else do you call taking something that's not yours without permission?) to fund social programs and it is under this ruse that Martin earned his reputation as a deficit slaver. That the \$54-billion was never recovered, even with the election of Stephen Harper, is grotesque. So here we are with a program that can barely function when we need it most because politicians stole from workers to make their books look balanced. Indeed, as is the custom of the first of April, we were fooled.

And these are your political heroes? I'd rather listen to Cardi B. Erica Ifill is a co-host of the Bad+Bitchy podcast. The Hill Times

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HILLTIMES

Editorial

Turning away asylum seekers is turning back on most vulnerable in global time of need

Nearly two weeks ago, on March 20, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a major departure from his government's stance on people who cross the Canada-U.S. border irregularly—they're no longer welcome, in the age of the novel coronavirus.

The issue of asylum seekers who made their way into Canada on foot outside of the regular border crossings has been a longstanding political hot potato.

The Safe Third Country Agreement is a pact struck in 2002 between Canada and the United States, that came into force in 2004 and compels refugee claimants to make their claim in the first country along the 49th parallel that they arrive in. The agreement has pushed refugee claimants to cross the Canada-U.S. border irregularly as the pact is in place at recognized land crossings, at train stations, and at airports.

Up until mid-March, Public Safety Minister Bill Blair was saying that those crossing the border irregularly would still be allowed in the country, but would be taken into custody, screened, and quarantined if necessary.

But a few days later, Mr. Trudeau changed tack, after hashing out details with his American counterpart about the overall closure of the Canada-U.S. border to all except essential travellers. The announcement itself, tacked onto the end of an update about repatriation and the U.S. border generally, almost seemed like an afterthought.

"Further, today, Canada and the United States are announcing a reciprocal arrangement where we will now be returning irregular migrants who attempt to cross anywhere at the Canada-U.S. border,"Mr. Trudeau said briefly on March 20, before moving on to other topics. Asked about the reports that the U.S. would be deporting the people who had been turned away at the Canadian border, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said on March 27 it was something the government was "discussing urgently with [its] American partners." She said it's important for Canada to abide by international commitments, and that it was aware of problems, but it "continues to be important for Canada to have assurances that that would not happen to people returned to the United States."

She also added that the government was "clearly alive to those concerns at the time that these agreements were announced."

Despite continued questions at subsequent press conferences, Ms. Freeland wasn't able to provide any updates to those urgent discussions, but said again on March 31 that "Canada will never do anything to go against" those international obligations.

While the move is being touted as temporary, in the name of protecting Canadians and public health, it's hard to square the circle when politicians say that the move is aligned with their long-touted values, as the prime minister said.

Advocates are sounding the alarm over this move by the government. In a March 21 press release, Amnesty International Canada called it a "a shameful breach of international law that risks further endangering lives during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Yes, these are strange and unprecedented times, but when the time comes to analyze Canada's response, it will be difficult to justify why the government stood idly by and essentially turned a blind eye to some of the most vulnerable. PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY BY HILL TIMES PUBLISHING INC. 246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4 PUBLISHERS Anne Marie Creskey, Jim Creskey, Ross Dickson GENERAL MANAGER, CFO Andrew Morrow

Letters to the Editor

Trusting in science the only way to go

Re: "Help Canada's workers now—but don't lock us into a high-carbon future," (*The Hill Times*, March 25, p. 9). Recently, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau praised the youth of Canada for all they are doing to help their parents during this pandemic and for "trusting in science."We must show our youth by example that we trust in science, too.

I agree with Richard Florizone that supporting people during the COVID-19 pandemic "does not mean cutting carbon taxes, as some have suggested." Since September 2010, I have been highly involved with the Citizens' Climate Lobby. Our focus has been Carbon Fee and Dividend: an incrementally rising price on carbon pollution where 100 per cent of the fees collected are returned to citizens. Canada's national backstop carbon-pricing policy is a form of Carbon Fee and Dividend. Tellingly, 27 Nobel Prize-winning economists and thousands of economists worldwide support Carbon Fee and Dividend as well. Citizens' Climate Lobby is a network

Citizens' Climate Lobby is a network of climate leaders in 57 countries around the world. Our international colleagues tell us all the time that Canada is a world leader in carbon pricing. The fact is, the countries with the best climate policies that include carbon pricing will be better poised to capture part of the \$26-trillion in opportunities in climate-smart growth by 2030.

Now is not the time to cut the carbon tax. Gas prices are currently at record lows. The 6.7 cents per litre of gas at \$30 per tonne carbon price in 2020 will not be a burden. On the contrary: Canada's carbon-pricing policy puts money in people's pockets. The fact is, 80 per cent of households come out ahead, a finding confirmed by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and others.

We are most likely heading into a recession, if not a depression. When he regained power in 1935 during the Great Depression, then-prime minister William Lyon Mackenzie King implemented relief programs such as the National Housing Act and National Employment Commission, similar to or even modelled after the New Deal of then-U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The objective was to put money in the pockets of the common people, and it worked. We need to do the same again today.

If governments expect Canadians to self-isolate for extended periods of time, then those Canadians must be provided with money adequate to cover their needs. The fossil fee dividend or carbon tax rebate in the federal backstop policy is a step in that direction and must be preserved, if not expanded.

Also, Canada's carbon-pricing policy could be an important stepping stone towards universal basic income. Evidence is mounting that universal basic income will become necessary to help people cope with the transition to an economy dominated by automation and artificial intelligence. Perhaps now is the time to begin that transition.

When we come out of the COVID-19 crisis, the world is going to be a dramatically changed place. This is a time where Canada can shine and show the world the way forward.

Cathy Orlando Citizens' Climate Lobby international outreach manager and Canadian director

Don't waste the opportunity to transition to a cleaner future, says reader

Re: "Help Canada's workers now—but don't lock us into a high-carbon future," (*The Hill Times*, March 25, p. 9). The COVID-19 crisis has delivered one more severe body blow to Canada's oil industry. It is a stark reminder of the precarious nature of this sector and the urgent need to diversify our economy.

Government dollars directed at the sector must first and foremost support the workers as they transition to new lines of work, and not be used to prop up dying and carbon-intense products. Any subsidies to companies must come with a strict caveat: invest in clean tech alternatives such as solar, wind, and the like. With gas prices at record lows, now is not the time to scale back on the federal government's carbon-pricing backstop, which delivers money to Canadians living in provinces with no legislated carbon pricing.

I urge the government to extend the rising fee to 2030, which will send a price signal for businesses and households to continue to produce and invest in carbonfree products and services.

The COVID-19 crisis presents us with an opportunity to transition our economy to one that is resilient, equitable, and sustainable. Let's not waste it.

Cheryl McNamara Toronto, Ont.

EDITORIAL

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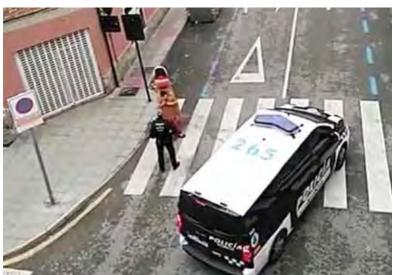
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8



We're all survivalists now: Coronapocalypse Adaptation



We're living in a context in which you can be arrested for loitering in a Halloween costume, as one Spaniard, pictured, learned. So if you must go out, leave your phone at home and disguise yourself as a shrub indigenous to your local biome, writes Lisa Van Dusen. *Screenshot courtesy of Twitter/MurciaPolicia*

Hunkering down amid a global pandemic whose containability depends on your latitude, longitude, and head of government requires mad adaptation skills.



What Fresh Hell

Unless you have a history of hoarding canned goods, burying 200-gallon steel drums full of water in your backyard, or securing the perimeter of your bungalow with concertina wire and fougasses, managing the more existential aspects of our current pandemic may not be second nature to you. Hereby, a helpful primer on how to mobilize your inner prepper for the non-medical exigencies of our current siege:

1. DON'T GO OUT THERE! Per the arcane and arbitrary rules for social isolating as prescribed by the International Society for COVID-19 Orwellian Buggery, based on a formula involving variably weighted inputs adjusted for national, regional, and local jurisdictions, you can now get arrested just for walking down the street. In Spain, the cops busted an orgy last Friday night and more than 1,000 people have been arrested for violating national lockdown rules in a crackdown of such granular, surveillance-assisted fervency that if it weren't, ironically, for the pandemic and the lockdown restrictions, people would be filling the streets in righteous indignation. Whatever you do, do not engage in orgies of more than one person and, if you must go out, leave your phone at home

and disguise yourself as a shrub indigenous to your local biome. Wearing a dinosaur costume, as one thwarted Spaniard learned, will do you no good, as police are just as quick to arrest eejits as joggers and septuagenarian Pokémon Go addicts.

2. Since we're not allowed, in Canada, to orbit each other at any distance closer than the length of a hockey stick, zip on your shrub suit and go buy a hockey stick to brandish at daredevil pedestrians and frozen-food-section heretics. Per rule 10.1 of the NHL Rulebook, it must be regulation length, not exceeding 63 inches. I have no idea why there's no minimum length requirement or why hockey sticks are measured in inches and not centimetres. Unlike mastering teleportation, learning new things about hockey isn't one of my self-isolation projects.

3. Since maintaining a positive attitude is a key predictor of surviving any cataclysm, even one whose potentially dystopian economic, political, and social consequences depend on the whims of both a googolplex of pleomorphic spherical particles with bulbous surface projections and one lunatic game show host, try to keep your spirits up. First and foremost, avoid any exposure—even fleeting—to the last-responder stylings of a certain president whose apparent mission in the content sphere is to misrepresent every threat, backtrack on every edict, compound every crisis, and double down perpetually on chaos. Instead, watch the speeches of his predecessor, especially the crisis management ones, to remind yourself that America had a sane commander-in-chief before the pre-pandemic pandemic of bullsh*t got so miasmic.

4. There's no "I" in social order. In a context in which you can be arrested for loitering in a Halloween costume and opportunistic larceny includes everything from failing to self-isolate to hijacking loo roll shipments, be your own Stasi. Memorize Emily Post's Etiquette: Manners for a New World or, better yet, Czeslaw Milosz's The Captive Mind. Be polite at all times, do not publicly (the definition of "public" could evolve rapidly .. Google regularly for updates) question authority, and have a plan for when the performative anarchy kicks in. A little common courtesy goes a long way in an apocalyptic hellscape.

5. Stockpile essential items. I am watching the survivalist classic *Move Over Darling* while writing this, and Doris Day somehow managed to MacGyver false eyelashes on a desert island. Let that be your standard and don't be caught with the wrong shade of lip gloss when SHTF just because your alpha strategy was full of holes.

6. Chin up and stay well. Lisa Van Dusen is associate editor of Policy Magazine and was a Washington and New Yorkbased editor at UPI, AP, and ABC. She writes a weekly column for The Hill Times. The Hill Times

This pandemic must be understood, not feared, and that's why good data is crucial

Marie Curie once said, 'Nothing in life is to be feared: it is only to be understood.' In order to protect the most vulnerable, the public needs to know who will get sick.



Andrew Caddell
With All Due Respect

OTTAWA—It's all about the numbers. In the past few weeks, we have been inundated by data associated with CO-VID-19. Some make sense, some don't some i irrelevant or foko

don't, some is irrelevant or fake. When I worked for the World Health Organization as an information officer in the late 1990s, my teachers were the best doctors in the world. There was a rigorous discipline to be respected, and the data we used had to be precise. Because both the public and professionals around the world depended on it.

I dealt with Ebola, tuberculosis, heart disease, and HIV/ AIDS, which all involved death. My colleagues' research sought to determine how people died and why, in order to ensure more did not. It was fascinating.

I have been following the story of COVID-19 since December. And throughout, the challenge has been reliable information. When the outbreak hit in Wuhan, China, preliminary data indicated children were not affected and the elderly were dying. At the same time, the majority were surviving: this was not Ebola, with a 60 per cent mortality rate.

Then it hit Italy, and the elderly population in the north began to die in huge numbers. Research revealed a significant number of the dead had prior health conditions. The numbers and the symptoms were relatively consistent with China.

When COVID-19 arrived here, most of the information was flawed. In Taiwan, South Korea, and Germany, everyone was being tested. In Canada, few were being tested and we had a backlog. Potential morbidity was "guesstimated" at 30 to 70 per cent of the population. When data was finally provided on March 29, we discovered of 200,000 people tested, more than three per cent were positive, around 90 per cent negative, three per cent were critical, and one per cent fatal.

And yet, with 70 known cases in Ottawa, the medical officer

of health speculated there could be 4,000. One of those unknown cases, a friend of mine in his 40s, was never tested; he is now fine. He had a dry cough and fever that turned into a severe pneumonia. It had to be COVID.

While Canada lacks data, our neighbour to the south is in the dark. Without proper testing or quarantines, American numbers are doubling every three days: by the end of April, there could be 32 million. If the U.S. experiences the lowest projections (30 per cent morbidity and one per cent mortality, or 0.3 per cent of the population) 750,000 Americans will die. In Canada, that's 77,000 dead.

My boomer generation, and those a decade or two older, will be hit hard. We have to be hopeful, resilient, and smart, but choices will be made if the worst comes: many may have to sign "Do not resuscitate" orders if their prognosis isn't good and ICUs are flooded.

The young may survive the virus, but they can be carriers and are not invulnerable: smokers, vapers, or those with asthma are potential victims. Numbers from the Public Health Agency bear that out: only 12 per cent of those who have died are under 40. But the numbers between 20 and 40 are not available. As if to emphasize that point, two deaths were announced in Ottawa this week, but for privacy reasons, their ages were not divulged. That is unacceptable. Marie Curie once said, "Nothing in life is to be feared: it is only to be understood." In order to protect the most vulnerable, the public needs to know who will get sick. I am concerned people are being panicked into a less-nuanced understanding of this virus because government thinks it's the only way to get them to act responsibly. In time, that strategy will fail: people will tire of being harangued, and will disobey.

While our current quarantines appear to be working, the longterm consequences of a continued lockdown will be enormous job losses, extreme mental health problems, and deaths by suicide. Not to mention a crippling deficit.

If people are tested efficiently in drive-through facilities, arenas, anywhere—we can identify who is ill, who is vulnerable, and ensure the public is safe. That is how it is being done elsewhere, with real results. While Canada is making some progress in "flattening the curve," officials have to be creative if they want to get the country back on track as soon as possible.

back on track as soon as possible. Andrew Caddell is retired from Global Affairs Canada, where he was a senior policy adviser. He previously worked as an adviser to Liberal governments. He is a fellow with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute and a principal of QIT Canada. He can be reached at pipson52@hotmail.com. The Hill Times

COVID-19

All the king's horses and all the king's men and women shouldn't be putting the coronavirus egg back together again

A premature, public relations optics-only deployment of the CAF is not going to help fix this broken egg called COVID-19.



Scott Taylor Inside Defence OUS. President Donald Trump caused a diplomatic flap when he proposed sending American troops to the Canadian border. Trump was, of course, simply pandering to his voter base by acting as some great protector, deploying combat soldiers to keep COVID-19-infected Canadians from sneaking across the mutual boundary.

As soldiers with weapons cannot stop a virus that has already taken hold in the U.S., this deployment of Trump's martial might would have been for purely diversionary optics.

This can be described as the "Humpty Dumpty" syndrome, wherein when a giant egg breaks, the king marches around with all his men and horses. No one ever asked how in the hell all these horses and men would put Humpty Dumpty back together again, but it did give the impression that at least the king was attempting to do something about the broken-egg crisis.

But Trump's presumption that stricken Canadians would attempt to illegally cross the border to enter the already overloaded U.S. health-care system simply makes no sense.

However, on the subject of Humpty Dumpty syndrome, it turns out that Canadians are no more immune to it than our southern neighbours.

A recent poll conducted by the Conference of Defence Associations Institute and IPSOS, determined that nine out of every 10 Canadians believe that the Canadian Armed Forces should be deployed to play a role in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic.

While it is admittedly a refreshing vote of confidence in the professionalism of the CAF, this poll result also illustrates just how out of touch the public is with regards to the role, responsibility, structure, and equipment of our military.

It is true that Chief of Defence Staff General Jonathan Vance has put 24,000 troops on standby to mobilize, and to date, some military personnel and facilities were employed in repatriating Canadians from foreign countries. However, the limited scale of

However, the limited scale of the CAF means that it does not have much of a surplus of medical resources beyond what is necessary to protect and treat its own serving personnel.

Unlike the Chinese and U.S. militaries that contributed 4,000 military medical staff and 2,000 ventilators, respectively, to the



Gen. Jonathan Vance, chief of the defence staff, says the Canadian Armed Forces has plans in place and troops sequestered in anticipation of being called upon to assist with the COVID-19 response. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

COVID-19 battle, such resources simply do not exist in Canada.

To date there has been no indication of civil disobedience or violent chaos in the streets. By and large, a petrified Canadian population has unquestioningly abided by the strict rules of selfisolation and quarantine. Any minor transgressions have been easily quelled by local police forces or in many instances unarmed security guards such as those who are now employed by liquor stores in Ontario to ensure physi-

cal distancing between clients. So if the CAF is not deployed to administer health care or to augment law enforcement, then the question begs just what role would people like to see them perform?

At present, and for the foreseeable future, the global supply chain remains functioning with no predicted critical shortages of essential goods. There is also no shortage of transportation and delivery means available. While it might be visually reassuring to see army trucks and uniformed soldiers delivering supplies to COVID-19 test centres, this would be a completely unnecessary misuse of our military resources.

use of our military resources. The civilian delivery system is more than capable, and replacing them with soldiers would only be another kick to one of the few sectors of our economy that is still functioning.

This applies also to the suggestion of using transport aircraft from the RCAF to repatriate stranded Canadians who remain trapped in locked down foreign countries.

As long as civilian charter flights can be arranged, it means our battered airline industry still gets the cash flow, albeit a nonsustaining minuscule drip feed.

That said, I count myself among the one in 10 Canadians that does *not* want to see our military employed to battle CO-VID-19.

If it does come down to Canada employing our resource of last resort—the CAF—then we will need those personnel to remain healthy. A premature, public relations optics-only deployment of the CAF is not going to help fix this broken egg called COVID-19.

Scott Taylor is the editor and publisher of Esprit de Corps magazine.

The Hill Times

The U.S. heads into the abyss

There's speculation over how the U.S. election will be handled in the age of the pandemic. The prevailing view is that the president would not be able legally to postpone the vote, although, with Trump, who knows?



Les Whittington Need to Know

Ortrawa—As the COVID-19 crisis has gained momentum, Donald Trump has reduced the office of the U.S. president to a kind of endless, theatre-of-the-absurd talk show routine. His lies, bewildering nonsense, rancour, lack of awareness of what is going on, and inappropriateness defy description. That he has rendered useless any concepts of leadership, public deportment, accountability, and reasonable political discourse is driven home almost hourly.

The misinformation and twisting of the facts come so fast and furious that the fact-checkers are left in the dust. With thousands of lives at stake, Trump has picked public fights with governors because, as he acknowledged, they didn't "appreciate" him enough. He argued that New York, at the centre of the crisis, was exaggerating the need for ventilators, later accusing NewYork health-care workers of stealing face masks. At a moment when drastic action was needed by the federal rnment Trump explained he had lapsed into his beloved dealmaking mode and put off an agreement with private companies to produce 80,000 ventilators.

He has refused to accept responsibility for his disastrous response to COVID-19, trying, despite being in office for threeplus years, to blame it on previous administrations ("We took over an empty shelve") or journalists trying to hurt his election chances. He has stoked hope for non-



U.S. President Donald Trump delivers remarks at the White House Coronavirus Task Force update briefing on March 29. The fact that half of Americans can find something to approve in his performance shows how much he has converted his leadership into a cult, write Les Whittington. *White House photograph courtesy of Andrea Hanks*

existent cures. And, playing to his foreigner-hating base, he couldn't pass up the chance to muse about putting troops on the Canadian border, suggesting Canada shouldn't be treated differently than Mexico and accusing Canada of allowing goods dumped by China into the U.S. Muddying the waters as usual, he said "we had some troops up in Canada." As the U.S. virus toll climbed

toward the worst on the globe, the

president emoted for a while about quickly ending the current restrictions hurting the economy and seeing everyone back in church together for a glorious April 12 Easter celebration. And in the midst of the catastrophe, Trump has been crowing that his daily bragging sessions have earned the same cable TV ratings as the season finale of *The Bachelor*. On March 29, he crossed into new territory, saying if the death toll in the U.S. stays at or below 100,000, "we all together (will) have done a very good job."

have done a very good job." Even given the usual rally-'round-the-flag support afforded a leader in this kind of situation, it is bizarre in the extreme that Trump's approval ratings in late March were actually rising on the basis of his unhinged performance. The fact that half of Americans can find something to approve in his performance shows how much he has converted his leadership into a cult. Previously, his behaviour on almost any single day in the past month vould have been enough to have Americans up in arms demanding the president's ouster.

Of course, Trump has reshuffled the entire U.S. political deck. But, even if he has now set things up to lay some of the blame for a worst-case COVID-19 scenario on state governors, the president has taken an enormous risk in personalizing and owning the administration's halting, politically calculated, and ineffective anti-virus campaign.

Much presumably will depend on how bad the sickness, death, and economic destruction in the U.S. become, and whether voters will remember that Trump's mishandling of the crisis in January and February made it a lot worse than it might otherwise have been. As the virus spreads into Trump country, it may dampen his supporters' blind loyalty. The implications going forward will also hinge on the ability of the Democratic presidential candidate to tie Trump to the crisis. Joe Biden, the party's presumptive candidate, has been somewhat lacklustre in that regard so far.

But the election is still seven months away, and it's unclear how long the pandemic will last, how vast will be the damage, and how long it will take the economy and the stock market—once the main elements of Trump's re-election message—to show signs of recovery. How the president will fare is anyone's guess, as the situation in the U.S. will be anything out pointics as normal. For now there is even a lot of speculation about how the election will be conducted, mail-in ballots being one option. The stage is arranged for a chaotic process of historic proportions. In that context, the prevailing view is that the president would not be able legally to postpone the vote, although, with Trump, who knows?

Les Whittington is a regular columnist for The Hill Times. The Hill Times

Pausing CPC race was the right move, and campaigns should seize the chance to retool

Hopefully, the pause in the campaign will allow the candidates to come back with a focused pitch, not to just to Conservatives, but to Canadians in the tough new world we find ourselves in.



Tim Powers
Plain Speak

Organization Committee (LEOC) of the Conservative Party eventually made the right decision last week in deciding to postpone the leadership vote originally scheduled for June 27.

The official reasoning the party provided was that staff resources and logistical challenges made it impossible to continue. It is right the party is making the health and well-being of its team a priority, along with that of electors. However, it would not have hurt them to be a bit more emphatic, to state more forcefully, that now is not the time for politics as usual.

It is easy to be an armchair quarterback and question the LEOC's decision. Having previously been a member of the LEOC during the 2004 leadership race, I know it happened frequently to me, as well as my fellow committee members at the time. There are good and capable people on this LEOC, Lisa Raitt and Dan Nowlan among them. They are people of integrity, who I believe do always try to act not just in the best interests of Conservatives, but also the country as a whole. They got to the right place in coming to a decision about postponement, and much of this will be irrelevant when the race starts again.

Readers of this column will know Peter MacKay is a friend, and I believe he is an extremely capable person who has the skills necessary to be a strong leader. But it is clear that MacKay and his team need to take the time during this pause to reflect on some of their strategic approaches if they want to be successful when the race resumes.

Though I imagine it was a pressure tactic to influence the LEOC's thinking on whether or not to postpone the June leadership vote, the MacKay team's plea to view electing the leader of the opposition as an essential service and to press forward in this unprecedented crisis was a risky pitch that produced no reward.

In the end, MacKay and his team took some deserved criticism for taking that avenue, and rightly so. When the race recommences, this will likely be a distant memory, but it does speak to some patterns of behaviour in the campaign Team MacKay will want to get under control. There were some poorly timed tweets launched by the MacKay campaign during the rail blockades earlier in the year, and

other tweets that were more partisan, more biting, than I know MacKay to be. Also, the shut down of the interview with a CTV reporter and other little missteps that, again, go against the grain of who people know MacKay to be.

All political campaigns have missteps and leaders make mistakes. Stephen Harper made plenty of them before he became prime minister in 2006. Harper was unafraid to be brutally reflective in determining what he had to improve. MacKay has to do the same.

Credit to Erin O'Toole for having the sense to call for a delay. His campaign has generally been well run. I am sure, as in the case of the other two remaining candidates, Leslyn Lewis and Derek Sloan, that it wasn't entirely altruism driving their motivations for a delay as there has been a lot of chatter to suggest that, given what the country has been going through, it has been tough to sign up members. A postponement of the contest allows time to retool on that front and beg the party to have a longer window to get people to become party members. The previous, now invalid, cut-off date for membership sign-ups had been April 17.

Finally, hopefully, the pause in the campaign will allow the candidates to come back with a focused pitch, not to just to Conservatives, but to Canadians in the tough new world we find ourselves in. What worked prior to the pandemic in terms of tone and temperament may be much less appealing when it's done. They should all park the notion floated

They should all park the notion floated prior to the pandemic that in the fall the first order of business will be a confidence vote. What Canada needs from the Conservatives in the next six to 12 months is a political party that is offering a strong critique of government, one that is looking for legitimate ways to co-operate, and one that can put its own ambitions on hold until 2021.

Tim Powers is vice-chairman of Summa Strategies and managing director of Abacus Data. He is a former adviser to Conservative political leaders. The Hill Times

INFRASTRUCTURE Publication date: April 22, 2020 Advertising deadline: April 17, 2020

As of December 2019, the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) had nine projects across Canada. The CIB focuses on four main sectors: public transit, trade and transportation, green infrastructure, and broadband infrastructure. Is Canada getting good value? Are the projects in the public interest?

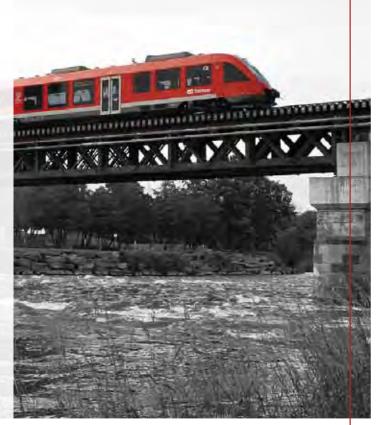
One key to how the federal government's infrastructure policy is shaped is the need to navigate the chasm between how much money needs to be spent and what funding is actually making it out the door. What is Canada's infrastructure gap and is it any closer to being closed?

This briefing will also take a look at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' fall report that said Canada's public infrastructure is "at risk" unless some key investments are made.

It will also explore the federal Gas Tax Fund, and whether it lives up to its promise of providing predictable, longterm funding for local governments (a \$2.2-billion onetime transfer was allocated in Budget 2019).

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Does the coronavirus contain a silver lining?

If this crisis is to produce a positive turning point and not an apocalypse, governments must quickly reverse course.

Joseph Ingram

Opinion

n a 2012 Huffington Post column ("What 2012 can learn from 2011")—thought by many at the time to be the year of the apocalypse—I observed that it might instead prove to be the year of a global awakening. A positive turning point in history when a critical mass of citizens, confronted by global challenges and connected by social media, would demand that their governments do more to meet their needs and concerns. I suggested that humanity would be confronted by crises that affect all of us-from climate change to widening income equality and migration, doubts about dominant economic and political models, and yes, global health threats.

The common reaction to such threats would be a growing uncertainty and fear of unintended consequences. Some would favour dealing with them through exclusively home-grown and nationally targeted policies—strong controls on immigration and higher levels of trade protection—leaving the private sector to generate creative work and economic growth, rather than a more robust and proactive public sector. This way, corporate taxes could be contained, or even reduced, and regulations, many of which were adopted following the 2008 financial crash, could be eliminated, thereby unleashing the fabled dynamism and market efficiencies of privately led economic growth. At least that is what conservatives, Rupert Murdoch's Fox News and his U.K.-based publications, as well as the leaders of the financial, industrial, and pharmaceutical sectors, contended. Indeed, this storyline has been the bedrock of the Donald Trump administration policies in the U.S., and of Boris Johnson's government in the U.K.

In contrast, others viewed the threats more as dangers to the global commons, requiring a multinational or global response. Global warming, migration, financial flows, and pandemics are ultimately not confined to single nations and their borders, or stopped by physical walls. Instead, this group advocated strengthening key public institutions, more strategically targeted regulations on the financial sector, more progressive tax codes, and curtailment of corporate welfare so as to finance the strengthened public services needed to effectively address such threats. Many also urged increased support for specialized international institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and its 2005 International Health Regulations, which, amongst others, were then seen as ill-equipped to deal with these new-order risks

What we now have, in the U.S., the U.K., and in a number of other major economies, is the election of nativist governments with policy fixes that have favoured years

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.

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The U.S. President Donald Trump and U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson governments' failures to recognize the need for widespread co-operation will only exacerbate the impact this pandemic will have on both the health and the economies of their citizens, writes Joseph Ingram. *White House photograph by Joyce N. Boghosian and Flickr photograph by Arno Mikkor*

of austerity and Brexit in the U.K., and a retreat into unilateralism and zero-sum nationalism in the U.S. Forward-looking governments, with visions of global development based on an empirical understanding of the past and a comprehension of the inexorable trends we face as a planet, are gone. Now, we have governments in both countries that seek to recreate a mythical past, with corporate elites effectively formulating our laws (and providing the majority of our senior government officials) to favour their companies and shareholders. The prevailing ideology asserts that such an approach is best at creating equality of opportunity and national welfare.

But what has that approach looked like in reality and what has it actually produced? Since taking office in 2017, consistent with long-standing Republican ideology, the Trump administration has sought to reduce the delivery of public goods by government and replace it as much as possible by private sector provision—in education, in transport, public utilities, and in health care by seeking to replace Obamacare. This, while simultaneously eliminating regulations that were adopted to protect the general public from the predatory, profit-maximizing practices of the banking sector that led to the 2008 financial collapse. In addition, reflecting Trump's unilateralism, the administration has proposed substantial cuts to interna-tional organizations and to U.S. foreign aid. These included an almost 60 per cent reduction in funding to the WHO for 2021, while also eliminating in 2018 the pandemic unit in the White House that the Barack Obama administration created following the SARS and Ebola pandemics. For the latest budget, Trump had also proposed 30-40 per cent cuts to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)-a step too far even for his congressional Republican allies. Most recently, the administration has refused to accept protective gear offered by the WHO for frontline medical staff to offset current U.S. shortages. Presumably, the reasoning is that a ramped-up U.S. private sector can do this more efficiently than having to rely on the charity of a multinational organization.

Across the pond in the U.K., the tradition of conservative myopia seems just as entrenched, with the crisis revealing how poorly resourced the National Health Service (NHS) has become following years of Conservative austerity. God forbid the Boris Johnson government have to deal with the threat by following EU guidelines, especially with Britain having just regained from Europe its "sovereignty." Better the urgings of nationalists like Dominic Cummings and Fox News' Steve Hilton (a former advisor to David Cameron) to pursue a "nudging strategy" (eschewing any shutdowns and relying solely on washing hands and social distancing) than to follow WHO or EU guidelines. That hasn't worked out well, however, for either the prime minister or his health minister, both of whom have since tested positive for the coronavirus.

We will see what the results of these unilateral policies will be in both the U.K. and the U.S., countries in which income inequality has widened to obscene proportions with almost 45 per cent of families in both countries with incomes under the equivalent of \$35,000 per year. We will see how far that takes those afflicted with the virus and without health insurance or access to adequate testing and treatment from under-resourced public health institutions, or indeed how many of them will even have jobs in what are proving to be deeply distressed economies. We will see if the early assurances and wilful inconsistencies from both Trump and Johnson as to the ephemeral nature of the virus bear out. Current trends in the U.S. suggest otherwise. My guess is that both their political ideologies and the vapid comprehension of the need for greater multinational co-operation will fail them, and many of their citizens will continue to die needlessly as a result.

If this crisis is to produce a positive turning point and not an apocalypse, governments must quickly reverse course. They have to recognize that public policy must be based on solid research and empirical evidence that demonstrate which measures actually work in an increasingly complex and globalized environment. They need to recognize that their playing fields are less and less national and that, on an interlinked planet, desired outcomes must include multinational approaches that respond to the needs of multiple actors.

This should be done through close co-operation amongst governments and multilateral organizations, allowing the work of the planet's best minds and shared experiences, regardless of nationality, to determine best practices. The Trump and Johnson governments' failures to recognize these realities will only exacerbate the impact this pandemic will have on both the health and the economies of their citizens.

We can no longer afford leaders who are incapable of understanding global trends and the bigger picture. What we desperately need are politicians who recognize that in today's globalized world, other than in sports, success can rarely be defined in zero-sum terms.

Joseph Ingram is the chairman of Capitalis Partners, a former president of the North South Institute, and a former World Bank special representative to the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. He is an expert adviser to the Global Growth Dialogue and a fellow of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. The Hill Times

How to save the Canadian media industry from mass extinction



Daniel Bernhard

TORONTO—If current trends continue, Canada's news media will not survive the COVID-19 recession. Even during the boom years of 2009-2019, nearly 300 Canadian outlets shut down and 16,000 journalists were laid off.

But the good times, if you can call them that, are over.

In the last two weeks, nearly 500 more journalists have been axed, mostly in Quebec and the Maritimes. Advertising revenues are reportedly down 60 per cent. Many papers in small- and medium-sized centres may simply stop publishing next week. Larger outlets are not far behind. Make no mistake, failing a sizeable and swift intervention, Canadian media face mass extinction. And if that happens, the consequences for Canadian democracy, now, and after the recession, would be devastating and permanent.

The federal wage subsidy will buy some publishers some time, but support for a mere 14 weeks just isn't enough. Even if it provides a bridge, the scale of the muchdelayed media bailout announced in November 2018 is just too small. Much more needs to be done—fast. Industry sources estimate that we have between six and eight weeks to stave off the worst.

Our challenge is clear: find a way to pump a lot of money likely about \$1-billion—into the Canadian media sector, in three to four weeks, while avoiding the ethical problems inherent to government picking and choosing which media outlets get saved and which are left to die.

The situation is not unprecedented. After the 2008 financial crash,



the U.S. government faced a similar problem. Major financial institutions required major cash infusionsquickly. The government's initial offering, the Troubled Asset Relief Plan (TARP), bought some time, but it was not enough. The banks needed further support to stave off mass bankruptcies, but Americans were understandably reluctant to give the billionaire bankers who caused the mess even more public money. Even worse, the banks didn't know which assets were dragging them down, and there was simply no way to identify them fast enough to prevent collapse.

The solution was to run a second bailout through AIG, the oncemighty insurance company that had taken bets with the big banks, lost most of them, but found itself too broke to pay its debts. AIG had already received TARP money, but the second bailout wasn't meant for them. Its purpose was to give AIG the ability to repay its debts, thereby channeling more government money to the banks to whom Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault, pictured Feb. . 3 in the West Block, announced measures meant to support Canadian media during the COVID-19 pandemic. That and the government's wage subsidy program won't be enough, writes Daniel Bernhard. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

the debts were owed.

The plan had serious moral limitations. But it worked. It was a focused intervention that used one company with existing government funding as a conduit to bail out hundreds of other companies using existing networks and infrastructure. It was the only way to get enough money into the system, quickly, while avoiding the difficult ethical challenge of giving the likes of JP Morgan yet another taxpayer rescue package.

The CBC could and should play the role of AIG in a bailout of the media sector.

We need to pump about \$1-billion to hundreds of Canadian media outlets, within weeks, before they die. The AIG case suggests we can pull this off by finding a single beneficiary with existing government funding that is capable of getting the money into the system fast, using existing networks and relationships, in a way that shelters government from directly deciding the final placement of funds. Its many faults notwithstanding, the CBC seems like the only viable candidate for the job. The package could look something like this. Ottawa provides the CBC with an extra \$1-billion. The CBC would use the money to hire ailing newspapers and broadcasters as contract content providers—basically wholesale freelancers. These "freelancers" would use their current staff to deliver the goods, thereby keeping journalists employed, and more importantly, reporting.

Here's the key: the funding must come with the condition that all content be made freely available for any news organization to use. This would allow the publishers and broadcasters to keep publishing and keep selling ads. If they can retain talent and keep publishing while still earning some revenue, they might just live to fight another day. Are there problems with this plan? Of course. But this is a matter of life and death and we don't have time to bicker. Perfection cannot be the enemy of survival.

Government is notoriously slow to set up new programs in normal times. There's no way they'll be able to cook up something brand new during this crisis. That's why this plan is worth considering. No matter its shortcomings, the CBC already works with hundreds of freelance contractors. They have the contracts and payment infrastructure in place.

It's time to give this plan serious consideration. Because without it, mass failure faces Canada's media. Daniel Bernhard is the ex-

ecutive director of FRIENDS of Canadian Broadcasting. Follow Daniel @sendinthewolf. The Hill Times

COVID-19 illuminating challenges of democratic governance



Pascal Desbiens

Is COVID-19 a blessing in disguise? Patients infected or dying from COVID-19 are the least likely to think so. This virus has shaken a number of concepts that many citizens of democratic societies take for granted.

Reviews of how this crisis has been handled by governments, and global efforts at bracing for its impacts, will likely continue to fuel controversy.

However, the management of the COVID-19 pandemic also serves as a timely reminder that global emergencies are triggered by a specific original shock, which quickly spreads in society.

For a virus, it is viral contagion. For governance, these are economic, social, legal, information, and technological contagions. These wide-ranging implications illustrate the need for appropriate and well-managed firewalls and bridges.

The potential victims of crises, beyond those affected by the original shock, are undoubtedly the losses of collateral damage, that is, the law and other vulnerable people.

In armed conflicts, collateral damage affects civilians not participating in hostilities in need of physical protection and humanitarian law. In natural disasters, civilians need protection from those taking advantage of their privileged positions to exploit economic and social opportunities. In a pandemic, it depends how the crisis is managed.

Several bodies, including the United Nations, have published first-rate studies on the economics of war, which, arguably, apply to other calamities. Crises create governance distortions that affect the allocation of resources, the setting of priorities, and the interpretation of laws that restrict or guide the behaviour of citizens.

Public decisions in emergencies are sometimes made quickly, generally affect a wide range of society, and are not always based on sound analysis or tested in public administrations. In the name of urgency, political and legal arbitrations may be weakened or sacrificed during a crisis.

Three areas of crisis management, among others, deserve particular attention with regard to the protection offered by law: respect for human rights; economic governance, including the distribution of support to affected parties; and technological matters.

On the issue of human rights, COVID-19 has triggered serious restrictions, in terms of confinement, displacement, and, in some cases, methods of enforcement and sanctions. These are lawful, as public authorities are vested with the power to take suitable and prompt legal measures to protect the common interest.

Restrictive measures are not problematic when it comes to broad principles affecting collective behaviour, as promoted by legitimate public institutions.

However, challenges emerge arguably from their methods of implementation and the treatment of so-called offenders. The latter sometimes have no immediate recourse for ill-conceived methods of implementing otherwise legitimate restrictive actions. Confinement, curfews, or limits on gatherings, or the distance allowed, and the reasons for daily travel are often sources of potential tension between the parties who manage and those who suffer from a crisis.

Law-enforcement control protocols, in dealing with special or exceptional situations, to name a few, only add to the challenges. The separation between public and private spaces, and the rules that apply to each, are other sources of misunderstandings.

These measures become less effective in a context of democratic governance motivated by consent, and contribute to authoritarianism moreover compensating for laxity in normal times.

In the absence of arbitration channels, crises can feed the best and the worst of citizens who take sides, and interpret laws and rules according to their own understanding of instructions and their limits.

On the economic front, measures such as the European Union's suspension of the Stability and Growth Pact, a set of fiscal rules governing spending, in Europe, or Canada's economic response plan for Canadians and businesses, are vital responses, but have enormous potential to worsen economic inequality and injustice, despite the best intentions to the contrary.

Fiscal flexibility, income support, mortgage management, and business assistance to keep workers, for instance, have considerable distributive implications. Leaving no one behind, and not counting anybody twice, is paramount.

COVID-19 has also raised awareness among cybersecurity experts that the internet, local networks, communication platforms, applications and devices are not quite ready for a global digital society.

Such vulnerabilities were known long before COVID-19, but the latter undoubtedly reinforced this observation. There is nothing better than a concrete case to focus the attention of policy-makers and to help them consider carefully their response affecting society more broadly.

Arguably, COVID-19 is a blessing in disguise for shedding more light on the challenges of democratic governance, and on other economic and public communication issues. Despite adversity, it can also have a positive side, if it helps to better prepare in case something worse happens.

Pascal Desbiens is a former counsellor at the permanent mission of Canada to the UN, foreign and defence policy adviser in the Privy Council Office, and policy and program planner and manager at the former Canadian International Development Agency.

The Hill Times

COVID-19

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Introduction of electronic, remote voting not called for yet, but should be re-examined by House committee, say some MPs

Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie says she doesn't think such a reconsideration is warranted yet, but could be if COVID-19 keeps Parliament away into the fall.

Continued from page 1 it," said Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Man.), who also serves as parliamentary secretary to the government House leader and has previously spoken about ideas to reform and modernize how the House of Commons operates.

The current circumstances that Parliament, and all of Canada, finds itself in are "really unfortunate" and not something anyone "would have predicted," said Mr. Lamoureux, but for him, do"highlight the need for modernization.

"What we're witnessing today is so unique, you have to go back to the time of war when the House of Commons was put in such a position," he said."I don't want to try to exploit this current situation, [but] suffice it to say that, yeah, I think that if we had modernized our rules or Standing Orders, I don't believe we would have had a situation like what we have today in terms of MPs not being able to be engaged."

That said, Mr. Lamoureux said he felt "very comfortable" that he was kept up to eed with decisions made in the and the Finance Committee—will The House Affairs Commit- of a global pandemic prompting House last week, noting MPs are in "constant contact" with their caucuses.

Mr. Lamoureux has pitched a number of ideas for reforming the House in recent years, including reforms to voting in the context of freeing up more time for MPs to do other work, namely meeting with constituents, rather than having time eaten up by the process of ringing bells for votes and then having all MPs wait in the

Chamber as each caucus stands to be tallied.

Last week, 32 MPs out of 338 were chosen by their respective leadership teams to return to Parliament Hill on March 24 to vote on Bill C-13, legislation-since passed—to enact government measures aimed at addressing the COVID-19 emergency. The House had adjourned on March 13 until April 20, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the end, 33 MPs voted: 14 Liberals, 12 Conservatives (though only 11 had been planned, one MP, Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, Ont.'s Scott Reid, independently opted to attend), three Bloc Québécois, three New Democrats, and one Green MP.

the meeting to happen within five days of receipt.

Changes to the House of Commons' rules would be required to introduce electronic or remote voting. While remote voting necessarily refers to a Member of Parliament voting from outside of the Parliamentary Precinct, electronic voting could be done either remotely, or within the Chamber itself.

Liberal MP Larry Bagnell (Yukon) said aside from saving time in normal circumstances, electronic voting within the House could help in a situation like now, by making the process faster and potentially eliminating the need for all MPs to be in the Chamber to stand for votes all at once.

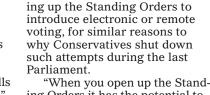
Mr. Bagnell said he hopes the Procedure and House Affairs Committee (PROC) discusses both ideas once it resumes normal operations.

It did so a year later, after the Liberal House leader put out discussion paper in March 2017 outlining a number of ideas to reform the Standing Orders, including introducing electronic voting, calling the "ringing of bells and taking of recorded divisions" a "time-consuming exercise" and suggesting that electronic voting would allow MPs to "record their vote and then resume other political and constituency work.' At the same time this paper was released, a Liberal MP tabled a motion at PROC with suggestions along similar lines.

Those proposals were met with extreme opposition, in particular from Conservatives, who accused the government of attempting to unilaterally change the rules of the House and in turn launched a committee filibuster that ultimately lasted more than 80 hours. In the end, a slimmeddown version of changes were adopted by the House-including giving the Speaker the power to break-up omnibus bills for the purpose of voting-with electronic voting left off the list.

But during the debate that resulted, MPs across party lines were divided on the idea of introducing electronic, or remote, voting. Many who were against it spoke of the significance of physically standing in the House Chamber and being seen casting their vote, while others flagged concern over the potential for votes to be cast under duress if

MPs are enabled to vote remotely. The idea of needing electronic voting in, for example, the event



ing Orders it has the potential to open up just a myriad of options, and we believe that it is a slippery slope, as to proxy for votes, as well as what can be considered on the record in the House," said Ms. Kusie

The House will have only lost two planned sitting weeks (last week and the current one) if it returns as currently planned on April 20.

"Once we have a better time frame as to that [how long the isolation period will be], we can reconsider the necessity of opening up the Standing Orders, but I don't believe we're there yet," she said.

"If we get through this sum-mer, when Parliament generally recesses, and we get into the fall and we are still in this isolation period, I think that's when we have to consider looking at the Standing Orders again, but just given the time frame now, I don't think it's a necessity."

Ms. Kusie, who was not in Ottawa last week, said she felt she was "briefed significantly" by her caucus ahead of the March 25 vote, in particular regarding aspects relevant to her post as caucus critic for families, children, and social development, and praised Conservative Whip Mark Strahl (Chilliwack-Hope, B.C.) in particular for his outreach to caucus

"But, as I said, this is an evolving situation and just as the crisis evolves, our legislative capacity will have to constantly be evaluated and evolve as well," she said.

Either way, Ms. Kusie said when Parliament returns-whenever that is—she's confident lots of time will be spent evaluating the government's response and "planning for future possible scenarios.

"I wouldn't be surprised to see electronic voting come up again at that time," she said.

While Mr. Bagnell said he'd like to see PROC once again study the idea of introducing electronic or remote voting options, he said he doesn't think remote voting should ever become "routine," and instead should only be considered for "emergency purposes." Mr. Bagnell said

he had no concerns with the a rangements thus far to get needed legislation passed-namely, having a limited number of MPs, proportional to party standing in the House, from as close to Ottawa as possible convene.

"I'm very agreeable with the House being flexible, as it was this time, to do whatever it has to do to carry on, but to carry on safely," he said.

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Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux, left, Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie, centre, and Liberal MP Larry Bagnell, right. Mr. Lamoureux and Mr. Bagnell both say they'd like to see the House Affairs Committee once again discuss the idea of changing how the House votes when Parliament returns to normal-a discussion Ms. Kusie says she expects will happen as part of a larger post-pandemic reevaluation. The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade and courtesy of LinkedIn

hold virtual meetings, by videoconferencing or teleconferencing, to scrutinize government measures, and by default, gives them permission to do so. In turn, no changes to the Standing Orders were required, though one rule has been modified to allow four MPs on a committee to request a meeting within 48 hours of the clerk receiving the request by email. Normally, such a request would be made in writing, with

tee has looked into the idea of reforming how the House votes on multiple occasions, including twice during the last Parliament, first in 2016 as part of its study aimed at making the House more family friendly. That study considered the idea of introducing absentee voting—looking at both proxy voting and electronic voting-but ultimately didn't recommend any changes, saying instead that it might "revisit this topic in further study.

the need for wide-spread physical distancing and isolation was not considered in either instance.

"It's probably something someone should have been brought up, but I don't think it came up" in either study last Parliament, said Mr. Bagnell, who was committee chair at the time.

Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, Alta.) said, as things stand now, her caucus isn't interested in open-





A motion adopted on March 25 also sets out terms by which two House of Commons committees-the Health Committee

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Food supply, emergency vehicle repair: keeping Canada-U.S. trade open key to fight against COVID-19, say stakeholders

The 'biggest point of concern right now' is 'making sure that we keep those shipments of fresh vegetables and other commodities rolling in by truck across the border, truck or train,' says John Manley.

Continued from page 1

ing on March 29 that those guidelines would be extended until the end of April, including travel to Canada.

Canadian Canola Growers Association president Rick White said the government has committed to do everything it can to keep the border open.

"They're well aware of the problems that would be created if it does close,"Mr. White said."That's about the only assurance that we have-that they recognize the

importance of it and said they're committed to keeping it fluid." While numerous industry

groups say the Canadian government understands how important it is for trade to continue across the border, no promises have been provided.

Industry associations have been taking part in nearly daily briefing calls with relevant government departments, some of which include the presence of a cabinet minister.

Mary Robinson, president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, said she hasn't heard "any indication" that the federal government is reconsidering its decision to keep cross-border commerce unabated.

"I think that it's fair to say that our government understands the importance of the integrated North American agri-food market that is the reality of today," she said.

At times, the fast-moving nature of the coronavirus pandemic has resulted in government changing course, such as on its decision to bar non-essential travellers from entering Canada.

Former foreign affairs minister and deputy prime minister John Manley told The Hill Times that most of Canada's food comes from the United States, so the "biggest

point of concern right now," is "making sure that we keep those ship ments of fresh vegetables and other commodities rolling in by truck across the border, truck or train.'

'The normal industrial exchange, the just-in-time inventory, I'd be surprised if much of that is even functioning now, just because the industrial facilities are non-essential services and are mostly shut down in both countries," said Mr. Manley.

"It's the hierarchy of needs, we have to have food. We grow some ourselves in greenhouses in winter, but much of our food supply now is imported," he said.

On March 21, Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau (Compton-Stanstead, Que.) sought to "reassure farmers and good businesses that foreign workers will be allowed to enter Canada provided they observe a 14-day period of supervised isolation.

Regarding border policies generally, a spokesperson for the office of Public Safety Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) said that the government is "constantly evaluating the situation and considering next steps.'

'Over the past few weeks, in collaboration with our international partners, our government has introduced progressively more restrictive measures at our borders. These decisions have not been made lightly, but we know that they are necessary to keep Canadians safe."

"Canada and the United States recognize the need to maintain supply chains between our two countries. These supply chains ensure that food, fuel, and lifesaving medicines reach people on both sides of the border. Supply chains, including trucking, will not be affected by these restrictions. Essential travel will continue un-

impeded," the spokesperson said. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) told reporters last week that the government "constantly" reviews additional measures on an hourly basis, including those measure pertaining to the Canada-U.S. border.

Ability to keep emergency vehicles on the road will be threatened with border closure

Minister Justin Trudeau is pictured with U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence, who now heads the White House Coronavirus Task Force, on May 30, 2019. The Hill Times photograph

Automotive Industries As-

Jean-François Champagne said

emergency vehicles can't be re-

to limit the use of public transit,

delivery vehicles, truck delivery,

ers are all maintained by our

used by first responders and

industry," he said.

pagne said.

reliance on personal automobiles,

and the very fleet of first respond-

"Our capacity to maintain the

fleet of vehicles, specifically those

essential services, would not be

possible if the border was closed

He added that Ms. Freeland— who chairs the cabinet com-

mittee tasked with tackling the

of the integrated nature" of the

North American market given

renegotiation of NAFTA.

virus-has a "great understanding

her responsibility overseeing the

"I think she is very much

familiar with the importance of

maintaining commerce with the

But he said the future of the

Potential cases of truck drivers

Canada-U.S. commerce relation-

returning from the United States

after contracting COVID-19 could

lead to public pressure to close

crossing, a possibility Mr. Cham-

Others said they didn't see a

reach a point where they wouldn't

pagne said is "a great concern."

case where Canada would ever

allow trucks and trains to travel

Brian Kingston, vice-presi-

policy at the Business Council of

dent of international and fiscal

Canada, said there is an under-

standing of how integrated the

Canadian economy is with the

additional damage done to the

economy through border thick-

Mr. Kingston said, adding that

reach between 15 and 20 per cent,

"The key point will be ... for

government to ensure that, as this

continue to grow-and it appears

evolves in the U.S., and if cases

with unemployment "potentially"

Canada's GDP decline could

reaching 15 per cent.

ening and other measures."

"The last thing we need is

across the border.

United States.

the border to essential border

U.S.," Mr. Champagne said.

ship still remains an issue.

for any length of time,"Mr. Cham-

so we have now even a greater

paired without cross-border trade.

We are now telling Canadians

sociation of Canada president

to be on that pathway—we have to make sure that there are means to ensure adequate testing is done and that people that are coming in and out are being screened properly,"he said. So far, Mr. Kingston said, the

government has done a great job balancing the need to curb the spread of COVID-19 while protecting commercial links.

"We are a trading nation and have to continue to be able to move goods and services across borders because without that the economic situation, which is already very dire, will only get worse,"he said. While nothing can be pre-

dicted about the trajectory of COVID-19, Canadian Steel Producers Association president Catherine Cobden said that governments at all levels will do everything they can to keep the trade routes open.

"We have to continue to supply key infrastructure and critical ... essential things that need to keep moving in a virus," Ms. Cobden said."Our need for energy, electricity, transportation, defence, etc., doesn't go away, in fact it might be intensified in a time of a virus.'

Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance executive director Claire Citeau said, as circumstances permit, it will be important to establish a pathway back to the normalization of border operations.

Ms. Citeau said it's a positive sign that both the Canadian and the U.S. governments have been working together to ensure that the border remains open for agriculture and food trade.

Pedro Antunes, chief economist at the Conference Board of Canada, said physical distancing measures need to be successful both in Canada and the U.S. for Canada to be able to move on and see some light at the end of the tunnel, "in the sense that we have a bit of a rebound in the third quarter and hopefully in the fourth quarter this year." "We need the U.S. economy

to be doing well for us to be able to continue to see our exports flow into that market," said Mr. Antunes in an interview with The Hill Times, citing the close connection of Canada's auto manufacturing industry with the U.S.

"What we're seeing right now and in almost all parts of the world is really a self-imposed demand shock. We are not traveling or not shopping, we are not getting out of the house, and we're not generating product for a lot of things because the work environment is not essential, or the certain products are not essential."

"So, in that respect, I haven't seen it as much as a supply shock," said Mr. Antunes, ' we do get to a situation where of course we start to see issues with borders closing or with the inability of us to get product across the borders, I do think that would be something to add on top of the long list of concerns that we already have."

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Mental health a 'missing piece' in feds' COVID-19 response, say critics, advocates

NDP MP Don Davies says the situation calls for an 'extraordinary response' and supports for mental health, which one advocate says should come 'imminently.'

Continued from page 1

"the days to come," in response to concerns raised by Independent Senator Chantal Petitclerc.

We need to make sure the services are available," explained Sen. Petitclerc (Grandville, Que.) in a phone interview March 31, to those whose mental health might worsen in these new conditions, like isolation and the inability to access services they might be used to. "That's going to take funding, but that's also going to take making sure that we see it coming... Not everybody is equipped the same to face such a challenge. It would be a tragedy that already vulnerable Canadians don't have what they need to make sure that they can go through as best as possible.

Ms. Hajdu told Senators, recalled to the Upper Chamber on March 25 to vote on the government's \$107-billion COVID-19 emergency response bill, that the tool would help Canadians "at least be able to learn some skills that could help reduce their anxiety and their fear."

Such a tool will be very helpful with Canadians flooding the phone lines of the Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) 75 branches, said its CEO Margaret Eaton, noting there has been a roughly 50 per cent increase in calls for support.

"We're seeing where the gaps are," she said, with staff managing calls from people struggling with mental illness and those in the general public who are wondering how to manage. Some people are calling every day, with many vulnerable people, like seniors, living alone and without interaction. "The pandemic is really shining a light that we need mental health services."

The government put out a call for proposals to invest substantially in online resources and crisis services, said Ms. Eaton. CMHA has participated in the proposal writing process and has been consulted on the tool Ms. Hajdu hinted at during her Senate appearance, and Ms. Eaton said she's "encouraged" the response is likely to include a psychosocial piece.

"[Health Canada] estimates that 11 million Canadians will access online services, but about two million Canadians are going to need one-on-one support, so short-term therapy, two to four



sessions just to get over the crisis. So we're very happy to see that support. I think that is fantastic," said Ms. Eaton of the expected announcement to be made "imminently," declining to say more.

Neither Health Canada nor Ms. Hajdu's office responded to a request for comment on the federal government's mental health response, or to confirm those estimations. A Health Canada spokesperson instead instructed *The Hill Times* to reach out to each jurisdiction's College of Physicians, saying the "actual provision of mental health services falls under the practice of medicine."

Mental health response a 'missing piece'

The talk of that online tool and a potential hotline, while good, is not enough of a response for NDP MP Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, B.C.), who said his takeaway remains that there's no promise of new funding.

He's not alone—with the government rolling out billions in aid, advocates said mental health should be in that mix. While none were critical of the government's timing, saying it makes sense ministers addressed essential critical health and economic infrastructure first, they said mental health must also be among the suite of responses.

While health care is at a provincial and territorial level of responsibility, Mr. Davies said it's no question that the feds have a leadership and co-ordinating role with mental health.

"When you have a pandemic and a national crisis that will

exacerbate the mental health needs of Canadians, we obviously need an extraordinary response and I don't see that extraordinary response announced by the federal government yet,"said Mr. Davies, adding he planned to raise the issue at the March 31 House Health Committee, its first of weekly briefings with government officials.

Outside of the pressures COVID-19 brings—job losses, income insecurity, isolation, health worries, to name a few—Canada's mental health system is already overburdened and chronically underfunded, advocates say, especially in the area of mental health.

Many have long called for that portion of health-care funding to increase, from about seven per cent to a minimum of nine per cent by 2022, as recommended by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, with Mr. Davies saying Canada is not on track to meet that and "it's particularly important that we focus on that now."

That's after a 2017 investment announced in the Liberal budget that year for \$5-billion specifically for mental health and addiction initiatives, handed to the provinces and territories over 10 years beginning with \$100-million in 2017-18.

He and his Conservative health critic counterpart, Matt Jeneroux, both praised that investment but said more likely needs to be done.

Mental health should be one of the "key factors" the government should be focusing on now, said Mr. Jeneroux (Edmonton-Riverbend, Alta.), who said the critic role has been "all-consuming" since he took it on earlier this year. "There's a missing piece to [the COVID-19 response] and that is mental health,"he said.

As part of its response, the federal government can also direct Canadians to existing resources, said Sheryl Boswell, executive director of Youth Mental Health Canada, pointing to its mental wellness workbook as one place for people and parents struggling with where to turn for support. Many mental health organizations have created resources specific to the pandemic. The CMHA, for example, answers key ques tions around areas that might cause anxiety to Canadians, including where to get reliable information, how to speak with children about COVID-19, how to support upset loved ones and endless discussions on worst-case scenarios, loneliness, managing anxiety while awaiting a test, and what do when tested positive.

'If there's not the action, it's just lip service'

It's "crucial and critical and essential" for mental health to be integrated with support and action around physical health, added Ms. Boswell, but she said that's long been a gap in the approach.

"We've normalized the talk about mental health and wellness and we're talking about it now during this global pandemic but if there's not the action then it's just lip service,"she said.

On March 29, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) announced \$7.5-million to Kids Help Phone, which has seen an uptick in demand for counselling services, and some advocates say they expect more announcements will come.

Even in the best of times, Canadians do not have enough funded access to properly care for mental illness, most commonly through assessment diagnosis, medication, and psychotherapy, said Karen Cohen, a member of the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health. She's long advocated for insurers to increase coverage so that people get the evidence-based care they need, and while it's hard to quantify the impact of COVID-19, she said she expects the crisis will put more pressure on an alreadyunderfunded system.

"Stressors build on other stressors, so if [someone is] already dealing with mental health challenges, that could put you at greater risk for more. Physical distancing is tough for people, and if you have challenges that you're living with and the ways you normally cope are overturned or upended or changed in some way, you have to come up with other coping mechanisms," said Dr. Cohen, who is also CEO of the Canadian Psychological Association.

Still, she noted worry is a natural response to an event of this scale and said people are resilient—a word renowned psychiatrist and Independent Senator Stan Kutcher refers to frequently when explaining the mind's responses to these unusual and stressful circumstances.

It's also important to make the distinction between the "very normal" responses tied to fear of a very real threat, and those who have mental illness, said Sen. Kutcher (Nova Scotia). The former should not be directed to an already overburdened healthcare system when information and community support might be more suitable to address a natural emotional state, and with the latter, it shouldn't be assumed those with mental health challenges can't also be resilient.

"Just because you have a mental illness doesn't mean you can't emotionally respond to a threat effectively. ... That being said, it is more difficult and people may need support," he said, and the health-care system has long had a "capacity problem" for rapid access to the best available, evidence-based treatment.

Outreach and enhancing the resources in our society, especially for those most vulnerable, is the top priority, he said.

If those who are feeling upset, worried, fearful, or overcome "start to turn to mental healthcare services for those normal existential concerns, the services are going to be swamped," said Sen. Kutcher, who added the context of COVID-19 "throws a harsh light on the reality" of what is needed and missing already to care for people with a mental illness.

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Diving into the 76-member **Conservative OLO** team: Part One

Hill Climbers has tallied a total of 19 staff departures from Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer's team since the 2019 election, and 14 recent hires.

N APARTMENT NEAR PARLIAMENT AHILL—Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer will be at his party's helm a little while longer after its recent decision to suspend the ongoing leadership race due to COVID-19, and supporting him is a 76-member team led by acting chief of staff Martin Bélanger.

Originally scheduled to conclude June 27, a new date for the race has yet to be set, with the party waiting to see where things stand come May 1.

At present count, 14 new hires have joined the OLO since the 2019 election. That list includes the already reported addition of former Conservative Party executive director Ian Brodie, who's also a former chief of staff to then-prime minister Stephen Harper, as an adviser to Mr. Scheer. At 76 staff, the team is roughly the same size as it was during the last Parliament.

Given the size of the opposition leader's office (OLO)-referring here to both the specific leader's office and the corresponding research bureau, which work in close conjunction-Hill Climbers is breaking up its coverage, with this column focused on departures, executive staff (those directly supporting Mr. Scheer and with general office oversight), and administrative staff.

For detail-oriented readers: the Conservative caucus has a new name for its research office as of this year. Previously called the Conservative Resource Group (CRG), it's now Conservative Caucus Services (CCS).

With longtime caucus services head Mr. Bélanger now acting chief of staff to the leader, Hannah Anderson has been made executive director of the CCS. A former assistant to British Columbia Conserva-

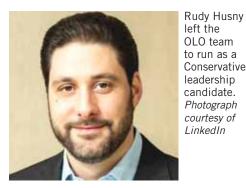


Hannah Anderson is now in charge of Conservative Caucus Services. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

tive MP Alice Wong, Ms. Anderson became a caucus liaison and regional adviser for B.C. and the Territories in the fall of 2017 and about a year later was promoted to manager of caucus tour.

Supporting her is Brad Davey as associate director of caucus services. He's been in the office since 2008, according to his LinkedIn profile, starting as a caucus liaison and regional adviser for Ontario, and last as manager of caucus services.

Overall, the OLO has seen 19 staff depart since the end of the last Parliament including the already reported exits of former chief of staff Marc-André Leclerc and former communications director Brock Harrison.



Among the list of departures is former OLO director of issues management, research, and stakeholder relations Rodolphe"Rudy"Husny. Mr. Husny left to run in the ongoing Conservative leadership race. Ultimately, he was one of two candidates who failed to meet the required thresholds to become an official, verified candidate by March 25. He'd been among those calling for the race to be suspended.

Simon Jefferies, who'd stepped in as acting director of communications after Mr. Harrison's departure, has since left the Hill. A former director of media relations to Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Mr. Jefferies had rejoined Mr. Scheer's team as associate director of media relations in June 2019-having worked in the OLO before his time at Queen's Park. Mr. Jefferies is now a senior vice-president with Jenni Byrne & Associates.

Veronica Green is no longer associate director of strategic communications. Like Mr. Jefferies, she joined Mr. Scheer's team in June 2019 straight from Mr. Ford's office, where she'd spent almost a year as deputy director of communications. Ms. Green is now a development co-ordinator with Slate Asset Management in Toronto.

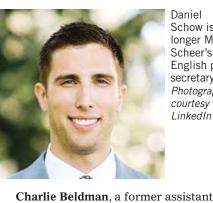
Paul Terrien, a former speechwriter to Mr. Harper who joined Mr. Scheer's team in early 2019 as a special adviser, has left.

Policy adviser Mark Johnson, a former Harper-era cabinet staffer, left the Hill in March and is now director of strategic planning to Ontario Finance Minister Rod Phillips. He'd been working in Mr. Scheer's OLO since April 2018.

Harrison Ruess, a former producer with Sun Media who briefly served as a digital content manager in Mr. Harper's PMO, has exited his post as associate director of digital media to Mr. Scheer.

Leslie Kellestine, who'd been in the OLO since the fall of 2017, last as assistant manager of digital media, has also left.

Daniel Schow is no longer Mr. Scheer's English press secretary. A former assistant to Conservative MP Garnett Genuis, he'd started out as both press secretary and executive assistant to the leader in August 2017.



to Mr. Scheer as the Conservative MP for

Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask., who joined his

OLO in the summer of 2018 and was last

executive assistant to the leader, has left

the Hill. He's now busy as a junior assis-

Veteran Hill staffer Elecia Elliott, who

tant to Alberta Premier Jason Kenney.

previously spent years as an executive

assistant to then-Conservative minister

Julian Fantino through multiple portfo-

lios, is no longer in the OLO, where she'd

been scheduler to the leader and special

Potter.

assistant to his principal secretary, Kenzie

Ms. Potter, it's worth noting here, re-

mains in place. She's been working for Mr.

Scheer since 2011, when she took over as

chief of staff in his office as House Speak-

House leader and chief government Whip.

Karly Wittet, who'd been busy as a

press secretary for the Conservative shad-

ow cabinet, has left. A former assistant to

Conservative MP Diane Finley, she'd been

hired on to the OLO as a communications

Michael Eugenio has left his post as tour

Ashley Cain

Photograph

courtesy of

LinkedIn

has left

the Hill.

and event planner in the OLO to become an

assistant to Conservative MP Kerry-Lynne

since August 2017, starting as a caucus liai-

Administrative assistant Angela Meier

has left the OLO, as has Ashley Cain, a for-

mer correspondence writer in Mr. Harper's

PMO and a writer and executive assistant

to Mr. Bélanger since the beginning of

2016. Ms. Cain is now a communications

French writer Frédéric Lamontagne has

adviser with the Correctional Service of

left the OLO to become a French editor

holder relations adviser to Mr. Scheer

with the office of the federal privacy com-

after the 2019 election and briefly worked

Seeback before leaving the Hill altogether

as an assistant to Conservative MP Kyle

last month to became a policy and public

affairs officer with the Canadian Urban

Elvanee Veeramalay exited as a stake-

Canada.

missioner.

Transit Association.

Findlay. He'd been working in the OLO

son and Quebec regional adviser.

assistant at the start of 2018

of the then-Conservative government

er. Ms. Potter has also worked in the offices

Schow is no longer Mr. Scheer's English press secretary. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Daniel



Christopher Henein is Mr. Scheer's new executive assistant. Photograph courtesv of LinkedIn

Rounding out the list of OLO departures is media monitor Nathaniel Dueck, who's now doing research and development for The News Forum in St. Catharines, Ont.

Now, on to the current team: Christopher Henein, a recent graduate of Tyndale University, a Christian university in Toronto, is Mr. Scheer's new executive assistant.



Denise Siele is Mr. Scheer's new English press secretary. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Denise Siele has been hired on as English press secretary to the leader, while Josée Morissette is Mr. Scheer's new French press secretary.

A former director of stakeholder and community relations for Equal Voice, Ms. Siele unsuccessfully sought the Conservative Party's nomination in Nepean, Ont., ahead of the 2019 election, and went on to become a principal with Tactix. Ms. Morissette was a press aide for Quebec for the Conservative Party during the 2019 election

Mr. Scheer's former French press secretary, Virginie Bonneau, who was also associate director of communications, has since switched roles and is now associate director of parliamentary affairs in the OLO-but more on that team later.

Christine Wylupski, who was previously manager of finance, human resources, events, and Mr. Scheer's official residence as opposition leader, now has a more senior title: director of finance and administration. She was previously an executive assistant to Mr. Scheer during his time as Speaker, and an executive assistant to then-trade minister Ed Fast before that.

Nancy Bishay, who had been director of strategic planning in the OLO since August 2017, now holds the title of director of special projects. She's a former Harper-era staffer, having been communications director to then-fisheries minister Gail Shea.

Lynn Kreviazuk continues as executive assistant to Mr. Scheer's chief of staffnow Mr. Bélanger-and has also taken on the role of scheduler to the leader.

Jordyn Ham and Deanna Pieterman are both new to the OLO as administrative assistants. Ms. Ham is currently a student at Carleton University and lent a hand to the Conservative Party's 2019 national campaign, according to her LinkedIn profile. Ms. Pieterman interned in the office last summer and has previously volunteered in Conservative MP Blaine Calkin's office.

ean Calder continues as t workgroup administrator, and Amy Docksteader remains resource co-ordinator for the caucus services team. Heather Egan, who had been an administrative assistant. is now office manager.

Finally-for this column at least-François Goulet continues as Mr. Scheer's official driver, having previously done the same for Rona Ambrose during her time as interim leader and as health minister before that.

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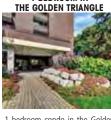
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Events Feature

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 Bordianu, 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

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.

The Hill Times



PM, ministers continue daily briefings

Deputy chief public health officer Howard Njoo, left, Deputy Prime Minister Chryspeak at an Ottawa press conference about the government's response to COVID-Freeland, and Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos on March 27. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Parliamentary Calendar

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

House Not Sitting—The House has been suspended until Monday, April 20. It is then scheduled to sit for four straight weeks until May 15. It will take a oneweek 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 Not Sitting—The Senate has also been suspended due to the COVID-19 virus. 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.

Estonia celebrates national day in pre-social distancing days

The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia













Ms. Lukk and Kathleen Billen,

wife of the Belgian ambassado

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All readers of *The Hill Times*, including cabinet ministers, MPs, Senators, political staff, senior bureaucrats, and officials in the PMO and PCO will continue to receive their *Hill Times*' digital edition (PDF) twice a week, along with our daily coverage on HillTimes.com, along with our seven-days-a-week special email briefings. Print subscriptions will continue to be delivered twice a week.

We offer trustworthy political and policy coverage. We're keeping on top of key policy developments in order to help keep our readers well-informed and we'll keep shining a light on Canada's federal government and Parliament during this critical time.

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