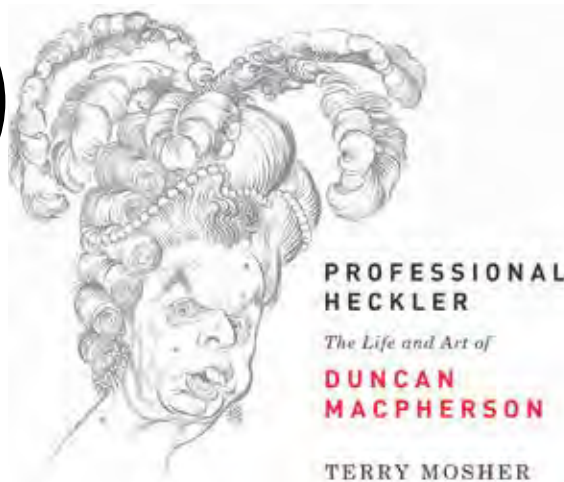


Workplace 3.0?

Bad + Bitchy
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Public service could shift to home office for the long haul p. 4



New book captures cartoonist's art of political critique

Andrew Caddell p. 9

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THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-FIRST YEAR, NO. 1727

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020 \$5.00

News Procurement

'Hard decisions are going to have to be made': can vital defence procurements survive in a post-pandemic world?

'When you are trying to fix a fiscal problem, inevitably national defence is part of the way governments have tended to try and fix that,' says defence procurement expert David Perry.



Lockheed Martin's F-35, pictured, is one of three potential options that could replace Canada's fleet of CF-18s with 88 new fighter jets. The procurement process for the new planes has already been delayed by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

BY NEIL MOSS

In the midst of critical procurements that will set the framework for the Canadian military for

years to come, questions remain on how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the oft-delayed projects. The pandemic has already impacted the two most high-profile

defence procurement projects with another delay in the replacement of Canada's fighter fleet as well as a reduced capability at the shipyard that will be building the

15 new warships that will serve as the backbone of the Canadian Navy for decades to come.

Continued on page 18

News Sponsored travel

MPs claimed \$230,000 in free travel from organizations, foreign governments in 2019

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

MPs accepted \$230,000 worth of travel sponsored by out-

side groups and foreign governments in 2019, halving the value of free trips MPs have accepted in recent years.

With a breakneck end to the session in June, MPs stopped taking sponsored travel and continued in that vein over the course of

the summer as they switched into campaign season. Thirty-seven MPs accepted a total of 43 trips in 2019, according to Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion's March 2020 report.

That's significantly fewer than the 95 trips in 2018 valued at \$520,700 for transportation,

Continued on page 17

News Conservatives & Quebec

Quebec CPC membership votes more important than low leadership donations, say politicians

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

All four Conservative leadership hopefuls have reported low fundraising numbers in Quebec to start the year, amounting to three per cent of all funds raised this race in a province that will be key to the next leaders' coronation. That doesn't mean they aren't active and recruiting support in Quebec, suggest some Conservative politicians, who say membership, not money, is most important, with donors distracted by COVID-19, fatigued by repeat

Continued on page 16

News Conservative leadership

Experienced team returns to back O'Toole in leadership bid

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Conservative MP Erin O'Toole is once again gunning for the party's helm and supporting him is a familiar team of experienced hands, including national campaign manager Fred DeLorey.

But this year's race is unlike any other, being waged amid the

Continued on page 14



HEARD ON THE HILL

by Neil Moss

Liberal MP Kamal Khera joins nursing ranks after COVID-19 recovery



Liberal MP Kamal Khera, second from right, is working alongside military nurses at a Brampton long-term care home on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19. Photograph courtesy of Twitter/Kamal Khera

The only MP to have publicly revealed to have tested positive for COVID-19 and subsequently recovered has joined the front lines pitching in at a long-term care home in Brampton, Ont.

Liberal MP **Kamal Khera**, who is a registered nurse, announced she was joining the front lines of the health crisis in March, but before she could don the scrubs she tested positive for COVID-19. After more than a month in self-isolation, she recovered from the virus in late April.

On May 11, she tweeted that since her recovery she has been pitching in at a long-term care home alongside military nurses deployed to the facility.

Canadian Forces nurses have been posted to five long-term care homes in Ontario at the request of the provincial government, including Holland Christian Homes Grace Manor in Brampton.

Ms. Khera, who is the parliamentary secretary to International Development Minister **Karina Gould**, has represented Brampton West, Ont., in the House of Commons since 2015.

She tweeted that she held a FaceTime call with Defence Minister **Harjit Sajjan** so he could thank the nurses for their work.

"I can't put into words what it meant for these brave women & men to hear directly from [Mr. Sajjan]," Ms. Khera wrote. "I also can't express what the support of the [Ca-

nadian Forces] has meant for this LTC and its nursing staff."

Senator Paula Simons launches five-part podcast on Albertan identity and culture

To explore what it is to be an Albertan, Independent Senator **Paula Simons** has launched a podcast to delve into Alberta's identity and mythology.

The five-part podcast features a conversation between the Albertan Senator and University of Alberta political science professor **Jared Wesley**, whose research on Albertans' self-identification was an inspiration for the podcast, Sen. Simons wrote on Twitter.

Alberta Unbound also features conversations with Conservative MP **Shannon Stubbs**, who represents Lakeland, Alta., in the House of Commons; as well as Yellowhead Tribal College president **Diana Steinhauer**, a Saddle Lake Cree Nation elder; journalist and author **Omar Mouallem**; and former Progressive Conservative cabinet minister **Doug Griffiths**.

"I don't just want to be a 'voice' for Alberta in Ottawa. I want to try to use my



Senator Paula Simons held conversations with five Albertans from differing backgrounds for *Alberta Unbound*. Photograph courtesy of Paula Simons

media background to help Canadians hear the voices of all kinds of Albertans—and not just the 'usual suspects' who tend to be featured on/in the news," Sen. Simons tweeted about the podcast on May 11.

Sen. Simons is a former *Edmonton Journal* columnist. She was appointed to the Senate in 2018.

Craig Dalton departs veterans ombudsman office

Canada's third veterans ombudsman has left the post after 18 months on the job, Veterans Affairs Minister **Lawrence MacAulay** announced earlier this week.



Veterans Affairs Minister Lawrence MacAulay announced Craig Dalton's departure in a May 11 press release. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Craig Dalton is a former colonel in the Canadian Armed Forces, where he spent 25 years as a member of the Army. During that time, Mr. Dalton was deployed to Afghanistan, where he served as Task Force Kandahar's chief of staff.

"As a veteran with more than 25 years of service in the Canadian Armed Forces, Mr. Dalton demonstrated exceptional leadership and showed care, compassion, and respect for our veterans and their families. He will continue to be a respected voice within the veteran community, and I am very grateful for his lifetime of service," Mr. MacAulay said in a press release.

He thanked Mr. Dalton, adding that he is beginning a "new chapter in his distinguished career."

Mr. Dalton raised concerns with the independence of the ombudsman office, and before the last election he had expressed hope the government would review its mandate. According to a CBC report, he wanted the government to assess whether the office should report to the veterans affairs minister or to Parliament.

The office was created in 2007 under the Conservative government of then-prime minister Stephen Harper. The last ombudsman, **Guy Parent**, served in the role from 2010 to 2018.

Former Press Gallery prez Gord McIntosh joins Toronto-based public affairs firm

Former veteran Hill reporter **Gord McIntosh** has joined Toronto's Brown & Co-



Gord McIntosh is pictured with *Hill Times* editor Kate Malloy in 2013. *The Hill Times* file photograph

hen, a communications and public affairs firm, as its senior Ottawa consultant.

Mr. McIntosh was the president of the Parliamentary Press Gallery from 1996 to 1998 and a member of the gallery as a Canadian Press reporter on the Hill from 1986 to 2001.

After leaving journalism, he became a lobbyist and was most recently a senior adviser for the Canadian Medical Association.

"Brown & Cohen lobbies at all levels of government which was a large factor in my wanting to join this team," Mr. McIntosh said in a statement. "I am excited to provide them with an expanded presence in Ottawa using both my media and government relations experience."

The former wire service reporter has appeared on *The Hill Times*' list of top federal lobbyists numerous times. His work has included ghost writing for parliamentarians and media training for politicians.

Mr. McIntosh also writes a monthly political column for *Investment Executive*.

Rubicon embarks into defence procurement

With the hiring of seasoned lobbyist **Louise Mercier**, Rubicon is entering the world of defence procurement.

Ms. Mercier previously was Hill+Knowlton Strategies' group lead on defence procurement in Ottawa.



Louise Mercier was one of the founding members of Women in Defence and Security in 2005. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

"Louise Mercier has successfully planned and executed multiple business development strategies for military industrial programs," Rubicon managing partner **Andrew Balfour** said in a press release.

"She is undoubtedly one of Canada's leading experts on defence procurement."

A veteran of the defence industry, having worked for Lockheed Martin and the ADGA Group, Ms. Mercier served as one of the founding members of Women in Defence and Security (WiDS) in 2005. She serves as a board member at the CDA Institute.

Rubicon founding partner **Kory Teneycke** noted in the release that Ms. Mercier brings a "new element" to the firm as an "expert in the practices and policies of the defence procurement process."

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Over the last two months, we've spoken to millions of Canadians and small business owners. Many are facing financial uncertainty, and there is anxiety about not knowing what might come next. We know it's been a challenging time, and we are working hard as your banks to bring you personalized and meaningful solutions to those who have been impacted.

Helping Canadians with immediate relief

With payment deferrals, we've freed up \$4.6 billion in mortgage payments, plus deferrals on over \$2.7 billion in credit cards and loans to date, to help millions of Canadians feel more secure and use their money where they need it most. We have also made \$48 billion in additional credit available to businesses to help them stay operational and keep people employed.

Personalized advice to ease uncertainty

If you are experiencing hardship, we're here with one-to-one guidance to help navigate your options and find the right solutions to get you back on your feet. We've also been assisting our clients with digital channels to bank from home, for more convenience and to keep them safer.

Working closely with government

To fulfill much needed federal support plans, we rapidly implemented direct deposit CERB payments to more than 2 million Canadians, and to date have facilitated more than 400,000 CEBA loans to help small businesses with \$16 billion in much needed credit.

Doing more for those who need it most

Working with partners in the public and private sectors, we identified communities most in need and followed up with significant donations to support healthcare and local-based community organizations across Canada. Additionally, we have implemented practices to protect our clients and our frontline employees delivering essential banking services.

We've been through challenging times before, and as this situation evolves, so will we. Canada's banking industry will continue to work to bring solutions to Canadians across the country. Together, we will get through this.

If you are in need of advice and support, please reach out to your advisor who is ready to help.

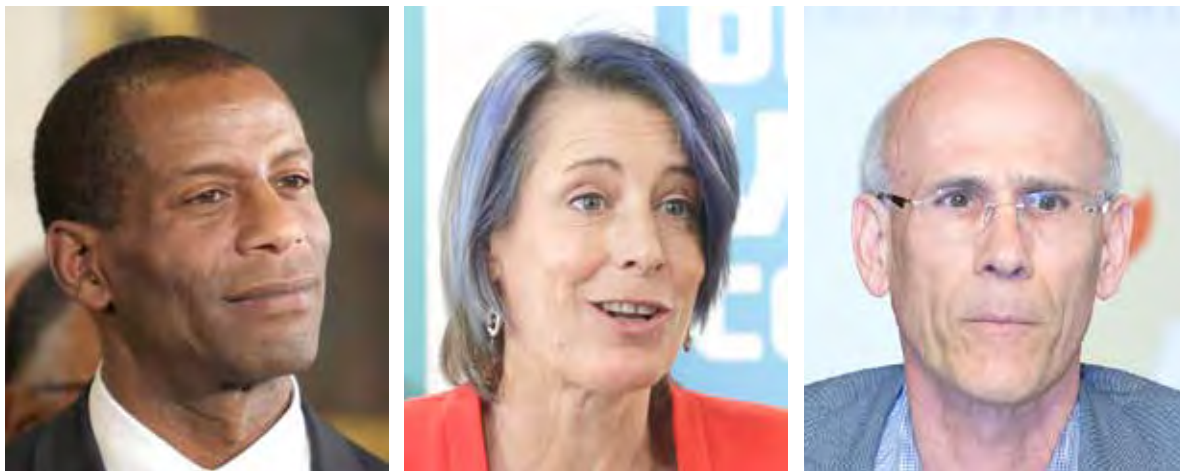
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Scotiabank



News Public service



Liberal MP Greg Fergus, left, PIPSC president Debi Daviau, centre, and former clerk of the Privy Council Michael Wernick, right. 'I'm incredibly amazed at the level of front line work that our members are engaged in as part of this pandemic, from developing CERB and other benefits, to making sure that public servants could work from home [which] was key to keeping operations going, to developing tests for COVID-19 to converting labs for disinfectant,' said Ms. Daviau. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade, Sam Garcia, and Jake Wright

'Quietly competent' public service during COVID-19 notable, says union president, as stakeholders take stock of bureaucracy's future role

'What's impressed me, is the dog that didn't bark,' says former clerk Wernick. 'We haven't had any major IT failures, bottlenecks or collapses—not everything has been perfect, but generally things have gone quite well.'

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

It's been an "important year for the public service" and "interesting to see" how Canadians have instinctively turned to the public sector for help, says former top federal bureaucrat Michael Wernick, with the president of Canada's second largest public sector union saying there are "silver linings" that can come out of how the federal bureaucracy has contended with the onslaught of COVID-19.

"I'm a proud mama as president of a union representing about 55,000 federal public servants," Debi Daviau, Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada president, said during a May 11 webinar hosted by the Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy. "I think what's really notable is that they've been quietly competent. Although people look

at the public service as largely an administrative body, I'm incredibly amazed at the level of front line work that our members are engaged in as part of this pandemic, from developing CERB and other benefits, to making sure that public servants could work from home [which] was key to keeping operations going, to developing tests for COVID-19 to converting labs for disinfectant."

The Monday afternoon event looked at how the public service has dealt with COVID-19, as well as lessons learned. The session included insights from former clerk of the Privy Council Michael Wernick, Liberal MP Greg Fergus (Hull-Aylmer, Que.), and past B.C. public service agency deputy minister Lynda Tarras.

The panellists addressed a wide swath of subjects, including public service outsourcing, working from home, IT issues—and what the public service will look like in the weeks, months, and years to come, based on the experience and insight gleaned from dealing with the worst health and economic catastrophe in memory.

'What's impressed me is the dog that didn't bark'

Mr. Wernick said that "in many ways, what's impressed me is the dog that didn't bark."

"We haven't had any major IT failures, bottlenecks or collapses—not everything has been perfect, but generally things have gone really quite well, certainly compared to some other public sectors you can think of around the world, so I think it's been gratifying," said Mr. Wernick. "It's also been interesting to see how

Canadians instinctively—and even more and more as the thing has progressed—have turned to the public sector for help for continuity, for persistence, and so on, and some of the people who were the loudest voices for tax cuts and privatization and deregulation are now running to the government for help."



Former deputy minister and head of the B.C. Public Service Agency Lynda Tarras says 'as public servants, we have to be really clear about why we are making the choice we're making in terms of whether it's public or private and what benefits are coming from that.'

Screenshot via YouTube

He added: "It's a little bit amusing and ironic, but I think it's really been, in some ways, in terrible circumstances, an important year for the public sector."

Mr. Fergus, who is also parliamentary secretary to Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos (Québec, Que.), said he thinks one of the reasons why the public service is enjoying overwhelming popularity right now is that it "stepped up to the bat and delivered."

That's the "fundamental barometer that I'm judged at whenever I go to the people at the polls," said Mr. Fergus. "If Canadians don't see the public service delivering on the goods, that's when other options will start looking a lot more attractive."

"As public servants, we have to be really clear about why we are making the choice we're making in terms of whether it's public or private and what benefits are coming from that," Ms. Tarras said, who noted there have been "some great examples" of public-private partnerships and outsourcing in B.C.

"Being clear about why you're doing it, being clear about what type of partner you are choosing, being clear that that partner shares the values that you have as an organization, and being clear that you're capitalizing in the skill set of the public service at the same time as you're capitalizing on whatever the private partner brings to that equation is an important thing."

When it comes to the future of the public service work environment, the current situation has demonstrated that working from home "is not only possible, but it's productive," said Ms. Daviau. "I don't think location makes one bit of difference—even if there is pressure to move jobs outside of Ottawa for example, what difference does it make? You don't have to move because you can connect to a job anywhere in the country, and this pandemic has really proven that that's the case."

It's one of the "silver linings" that have cropped up, she said. "There are opportunities that are arising out of this crisis—the ability to work remotely, the benefits to the environment, to health and wellness and even things like recruiting the next generation—[there's] a whole generation of people who feel quite natural about working that way and we

to move everything outside of Ottawa."

"To me, those ideological, a priori positioning, that's the thing that we didn't do in terms of responding so well as a public service to this crisis, and I would want us to hold on to that innovative approach that we have and say that good ideas come from different places and we can make that happen, without an ideological bent on it."

Mr. Wernick said it's "really important" to keep talking about the value that citizens and taxpayers are getting from the public sector.

"There are lots of people out there that want smaller government, lower taxes, are quick to find fault, they have an ideology that private is always better than public, and they are active, and I think the progressive side of the debate has been too passive and set back," he said.

'We may not go all the way back to normal at all,' says Senator Tony Dean

When asked about the "new normal" when the government returns to regular business, Independent Senator Tony Dean (Ontario) told *The Hill Times* it won't occur until we're in a "steady state where we've moved out of emergency mode."

"And that may mean that intermittently, there are still quarantines in particular parts of the country or in provinces, but generally speaking, [it will be when] we're not all 100 per cent in lockdown and on full alert," said Sen. Dean, a former top civil servant for the Ontario government.

"Things will wind down slowly, but you will need the capacity across the country for rapid response where there are occasional flare-ups of disease outbreak," said Sen. Dean. "So you will need a certain number of people to be in first-responder mode."

Eugene Lang, professor at the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University, told *The Hill Times* that "it's hard to know exactly what things are going to look like in a year or two."

"Right now, we're going through this unprecedented change in the role and size and scope and reach of government, generally. The federal government, I think specifically in Canada and other countries, national governments, we've never seen, at least not in peace time, expenditures of this scale, and, in particular, expenditures that are being ramped up from zero to 100 in a matter of days," said Prof. Lang. "We're almost having a federal budget every week."

Prof. Lang said the situation has "blown all the orthodoxies out the window."

"All the conventional thinking is gone about the role and scope of government, and for good reason, in my view," said Prof. Lang. "It has to be done, and everybody is learning by doing and fumbling in the dark to some degree, but when it's all over, whenever that is, I don't see it going back to status quo ante—I don't think that's going to happen, either from a policy standpoint or more from a management or administrative standpoint."

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The Hill Times

Comment

Digitalization is the way forward and out of COVID crisis

Fully integrated public services and full compliance with data privacy rules is the way to build a secure and broad-based digital society.



Toomas Lukk

Comment

OTTAWA—The coronavirus has accelerated the application of digital technologies. Big jumps in digital activity have been reported in countries that have imposed the strictest lockdowns. Remote working, online teaching, medical assistance, commerce, and teleconferencing have become a “new normal.” There are no proven guidelines as to how to act in these trying times. Digital infrastructure, however, allows us to observe the most important treatment available today—social distancing.

The Global Statshot Report of April 2020 suggests that the world’s digital behaviour has changed dramatically over the first three months of 2020. Billions of people have turned to online devices to help them cope with life and work under lockdowns. Today 4.57 billion people use the internet, which represents an increase of seven per cent over the same time last year. The number of social media users has grown even faster, reaching 3.81 billion. The number of mobile phone users has grown by 128 million over the past 12 months, and approximately two-thirds of the world’s total population now uses a mobile phone.

Estonia started building its information society in the 1990s, at a time when most people did not have access to the internet. Today, the spread of wireless technologies and the development of Estonia’s e-Governance ecosystems has ensured the continuity and sustainability of the public sector services for citizens and private enterprises and has had a tangible impact on quality of life.

There are many examples of services that could be adopted by Canada. A fully automated unemployment insurance registry allows citizens to apply for unemployment benefits or allowances, confirmed by a digital stamp, which is legally equal to that of a physical signature. An electronic fisheries management system provides data on fishing opportunities and licenses,

ensuring contact-free and sustainable fishing and simplified fishing surveillance. Many other smart applications are related to health, education, security, transport, and other sectors.

Digital solutions combined with good cyber security preparedness have proved their usefulness in minimizing the negative effects of hybrid threats, such as cyber-attacks and the spread of disinformation. They also enable us to address climate change issues and speed up the transition towards a green economy.

Estonian IT-cluster companies organized the “Hack the Crisis” hackathon, which rapidly grew into a worldwide movement. Over the Easter weekend, the Estonian-initiated global online hackathon provided solutions that were inspired by aspects of practical life and by the UN’s sustainable development goals. Similarly, the EU Commission hosted the pan-European “EU vs Virus” hackathon to develop innovative solutions aimed at fighting the pandemic.

Fully integrated public services and full compliance with data privacy rules is the way to build a secure and broad-based digital society.

Today, the world is concerned with an imminent and deep economic recession, and a disruption of existing global supply and value chains.

In the post-pandemic world, economic growth needs an accelerator. Digitalization of society, employment of new technologies, and business models using the potentials of information technology may become a key factor.

Last February, the European Commission unveiled its White Paper on Artificial Intelligence: a set of ideas for a digital transformation of Europe. Over the next five years, the Commission will focus on three key objectives; technology for people, a vibrant and sustainable economy, and sustainable democratic society. The digital future of Europe reflects and reinforces the concept of European integration and solidarity and the importance of shared freedoms and values.

The *New York Times* recently assessed that some countries might have a competitive edge on their way out of the COVID-19 crisis. Estonia is among them due to the digital nature of its society, the thriving startup ecosystem, and its agile business and government partnerships. Estonia’s experience in the digital state is unique to the world. Because of its digital society, Estonia has been able to keep most of its national systems and infrastructure running smoothly.

The coronavirus knows no borders and, therefore, international co-operation is our best weapon. The spread of the coronavirus has shown that there is a great need to support the development of countries in their digitization journey and to ensure access to secure digital services. Estonia is ready to share its experiences and help other countries to implement large-scale public sector digitization projects. Digital skills can



Estonia is ready to share its experiences and help other countries to implement large-scale public sector digitization projects, which can contribute to resolution of international crises, writes Estonian Ambassador to Canada Toomas Lukk. *Photograph courtesy of Pixabay*

contribute to the resolution of international crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the coronavirus constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, Estonia, a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, intends to pay special attention to these aspects during its UNSC presidency in May and beyond.

Employing digital methods and new innovative solutions to organize public life may face failures and risks along the way, but it is even more risky not to

embrace digital change at all. Estonia has the necessary experience and references to share the skills of building a secure digital society.

Digital solutions, if used smartly, make economies grow, governments more efficient and the world a better place. Digital society, if widely practiced, is not just a norm, but a lifestyle.

Toomas Lukk is the Estonian ambassador to Canada.

The Hill Times

100
25

COMMUNITY NOTICE Annual Vegetation Management Program

Every year, CN is required to clear its right-of-way from any vegetation that may pose a safety hazard. Vegetation on railway right-of-way, if left uncontrolled, can contribute to trackside fires and impair proper inspection of track infrastructure.

As such, for safe railway operations, the annual vegetation control program will be carried out on CN rail lines in the province of Ontario. A certified applicator will be applying herbicides on and around the railway tracks (primarily along the 16-foot gravelled area). All product requirements for setbacks in the vicinity of dwellings, aquatic environments and municipal water supplies will be fulfilled.

At this time, we expect that the program will take place from May to October 2020.

Visit cn.ca/vegetation to consult the list of cities as well as the updated schedule.

Safety is a core value at CN and in the actual context of the COVID-19 pandemic, our employees and contractors are taking all measures to stay healthy and to protect the communities in which we operate. For more information, please visit cn.ca/covid-19-update.

For more information, please contact the CN Public Inquiry Line at contact@cn.ca or 1-888-888-5909.

cn.ca



Comment

To err is human; to be relatable, politically wise

Who would have guessed that during the COVID-19 crisis we would have seen Trudeau and Ford sharing similar patterns of behaviour? I guess that is what you call the new normal.



Tim Powers

Plain Speak

OTTAWA—"To err is human; to forgive, divine," or so goes the well-known English proverb. Justin Trudeau and Doug Ford are living embodiments of that truth. Both are making a virtue of behaving like some of the rest of us have in this crisis, and demonstrating that highly valuable po-

litical tool of relatability.

Ontario Premier Ford is taking some heat for admitting that on Mother's Day he welcomed two of his four daughters, who were not already living in his home, into his residence on that day. He is being called out for breaking his own guidelines that he has publicly admonished people to follow for weeks. Stay in your home bubble. No more than five people in that bubble. Do not allow visitors. You know the rest, we have heard it so often.

This recent spate of criticism against the premier follows the blast he got last week for visiting his cottage to check on its well-being. Again, we are all familiar with the public scolding that has played out towards those nasty, nasty cottage owners to stay away from their own country dwellings.

Ford is being called a hypocrite and his effectiveness as a



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Ontario Premier Doug Ford, pictured addressing media on May 7 and Nov. 21, 2019, respectively. Both are making a virtue of behaving like some of the rest of us have in this crisis, and demonstrating that highly valuable political tool of relatability, writes Tim Powers. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

credible messenger of his own public health gospel questioned because he is not following his own rules. Sure, some of that is fair, but I suspect more of us are saying to ourselves: "We get it."

That is Ford's strength. He has a way of connecting with people at a personal level through his language and behaviour. I am sure he knew, in both the case of his daughters' visit and his trip to his cottage, he was going to get a public rap on his knuckles.

But he also knew to use his own defence of these actions, that is, that people govern themselves with "common sense," just like he



said he was practicing. Equally, it is hard to believe many of the media who cover him and those who call him out have been pure, absolute adherents to the guidelines.

Ford knew his choices were not going to lead to the crumbling of social order, nor mass rule-breaking.

Instead, he rightly calculated that a premier demonstrating a relatable flaw in behaviour would make him come across as more empathetic. It might have even played to an audience that is trying to find a way to respect public health approaches while searching for a bit of normal. It is called being human.

The prime minister also scored marks last week on the sounding like a normal human card. In one of his public appearances, Trudeau was asked about Quebec's reopening plans, including its plan to open some schools.

His answer did not sound like a corny talking point. He said on Radio-Canada's *Tout le monde en parle*, when asked if he would send his own kids back to school, though they are educated in Ontario: "I don't know."

"And it will be a decision that is extremely personal for many parents. I would make the decision probably at the last minute," he added.

All parents can relate to those comments. He did not offer the normal political speak, that he would respect the choices made by each province and note they were being made in the best interest of the people they serve. He sounded like he went off script and was partially in opposition to another first minister's position. That has not been the norm during this pandemic.

Error or not, it helped situate the prime minister's apparent own thoughts about his kids in the same plane as the rest of us. That type of connectivity is very valuable for any leader, especially in a time of crisis.

Who would have guessed that during the COVID-19 crisis we would have seen Trudeau and Ford sharing similar patterns of behaviour? I guess that is what you call the new normal.

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

Cinema Quarantena: what to watch (and not) in isolation

You'll have to watch *Tiger King* yourself.



Lisa Van Dusen

What Fresh Hell

After so many weeks of Isolation Nation quarantine that snow is now as discombobulated as the rest of us about which season it is, I'm down to streaming entertainment content that can best be described as "Whatever isn't *Tiger King*."

Having processed just enough information about *Tiger King* weeks ago to sort its fight-or-flight triggers, my amygdala identified it as the Netflix version of that sad jar of jumbo capers in the back of my fridge, i.e. the last isolation item I would ever consume before shuffling off this mortal coil.

So, in this latest instalment of my public service series of isolation tips, some viewing recommendations for whiling away those hours not spent either navel-gazing or looking up the thesaurus-junkie word for navel-gazing so you can actually use "omphaloskepsis" in a sentence.

Some people, and by some people I mean human beings of the type one once encountered in one's daily perambulations in the pre-pandemic utopian meat space of non-lethal droplets and unmasked bipeds, have been spending their isolation viewing hours—according to the unimpeachable anthropological authority of Twitter—watching pandemic movies, of which there is an entire genre.

The core canon includes *Contagion*, *Pandemic*, *Outbreak*, *28 Days Later*, *Virus*, and *How Hello Kitty Charmed the World*. There is a pandemic-adjacent sub-genre that includes *World War Z*, in which Brad Pitt plays a United Nations official single-handedly thwarting a zombie pandemic using his wits and the ineffable, balmy superpower of being Brad Pitt, which seems qualification enough for the real UN to conscript him as an asset in our current battle.

Since watching a pandemic movie during an actual pandemic strikes me as an act of karmic provocation comparable to licking every doorknob within 20-square blocks of this couch, even the Brad Pitt movie is out of the question. Instead, other than season 2 of Ricky Gervais' *After Life*, which is excellent, I've been watching anything that replicates the essential elements of the crisis—an enemy that doesn't respect borders, an uncertain future, a context of unfamiliar deprivation, democracies under siege—without the clinical similarities. In Second World War content, the addictive 2015-17 CBC series *X Company* has the best ass-saving line ever, yelled by a Resistance fighter caught in American crossfire while impersonating a Nazi: "Don't shoot—I'm Canadian!" which should be, if not our new national motto, at least a Barenaked Ladies song.

The most useful non-Nazi content I can recommend is *The Lives of Others*, the 2006 drama about the surveillance state run by the East German Stasi before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Since the COVID-19 pandemic is currently being used as a rationale for the expan-



There is an entire genre of pandemic movies and shows out there, but watching a pandemic movie during an actual pandemic strikes Lisa Van Dusen as an act of karmic provocation comparable to licking every doorknob within 20-square blocks of the couch. *Screenshot via Netflix*

sion of surveillance activity across an increasingly un-democratic globe, it's a bit of a primer for the surveillance-state renaissance.

Among the take-aways: unregulated, ubiquitous surveillance is never passive, it is a means of not just censorship but of maintaining fealty to a corrupt regime through coercion and intimidation; surveillance states inevitably abuse power on a massive scale to justify their continued existence; surveillance is a means of not just monitoring, but also colonizing the lives of others, deployed by people—because "the state" is made up of human beings after all—with agendas, grudges, obsessions, and vendettas.

A major difference since then: the Stasi surveillance empire was

built on hidden wires and camouflaged bugs. Surveillance stopped being about hardware and started being about software with the dawn of the fourth industrial revolution. These days, surveillance states respect no physical boundaries and leave no fingerprints.

Which means, as pandemics go, it may be more akin to zombies than microbes. And very tough to contain. The hopeful twist in *The Lives of Others* is that the watcher, a human being, rebels.

Lisa Van Dusen is associate editor of Policy Magazine and was a Washington and New York-based editor at UPI, AP, and ABC. She writes a weekly column for The Hill Times.

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Editorial

There isn't any time to waste in fixing the long-term care crisis

Arguably, the exposure of the long-term problems in this country's long-term care homes is as equally devastating an issue as the virus that is killing so many of those who reside in them.

For example, in just one home in Ottawa, Carlingview Manor, out of a potential 303 beds, there were 147 cases of COVID-19, CBC Ottawa reported on May 12. Forty-two residents of the home have died and 75 staff members have tested positive as well.

The premiers of Quebec and Ontario have requested military support to help out on the ground at these facilities, and on May 12, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that the federal government will help the provinces and territories find "lasting solutions" to the crisis.

Because of the way our country is set up, health care and these care homes fall under provincial and territorial responsibility, so, ostensibly there isn't much the federal government can do to make the necessary changes happen. That means it's going to take some serious co-ordination, co-operation, and lack of ego for things to get done the way they should.

We know it can happen, because we've been seeing it play out to various degrees throughout the coronavirus response—provinces, territories, and the federal government working hand-in-glove to address problems that each order would normally tackle on their own.

Health Minister Patty Hajdu was on that track this week, telling reporters on May 11 that sort of collaboration was on her mind. She said there's room for a conversation with provinces and territories to move from the existing system of

guidelines to having concrete national standards that all would have to follow.

As *The Toronto Star* reported, for-profit care homes have seen residents die of COVID-19 at twice the rate of those in non-profit homes, which has NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh calling for an end to for-profit facilities.

Speaking of the New Democrats, they and the Bloc Québécois have been ringing the bell for governmental support for seniors for weeks, and have consistently been met with the reassurance that something was on the way, that it was just around the corner.

That something was finally unveiled on May 12, when Seniors Minister Deb Schulte made a rare press conference appearance to announce new money for seniors through Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement one-time top ups.

When pressed about the situation in long-term care homes, Ms. Schulte reiterated the need to support provinces and territories, suggesting anything more will have to wait until the situation abates.

"The focus right now is on working as a Team Canada and to address these issues that are there right now," she said. "There will be time to look at the system and to work with the provinces and territories on addressing those issues that have become very apparent through this crisis."

But if things carry on as they are, without immediate intervention and movement, there may not be time for the promised review. People are sick, they are dying, and things need to change now, or the problem is only going to get worse.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

Now is when opportunity has a chance to meet preparedness



Finance Minister Bill Morneau gives an update about the government's COVID-19 response in the West Block on April 11. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

When considering financial support in a post-COVID world, we might want to use the lens of climate change and the future in which we want to live. The past, we will recall, has led us to where we are today. When opportunity meets preparedness, significant synergies can result and include a future by design.

Money will be spent in the post-COVID recovery. Do we want to use a rear-view mirror to re-claim the past, or design the future in which we want to live? There are opportunities to re-train workers and develop infrastructure to help transition toward that future. Are we prepared to take advantage of that opportunity?

**Ron Robinson
 Nelson, B.C.**

Base virus response on evidence, not fear, says reader

Are we too compassionate to notice at what point care changes into paranoia? In other words, can we attack a specific virus without incapacitating an entire economy? And how much of a cure is that if it causes widespread deaths by suicide? In effect, is life livable without a healthy economy?

Why can't everyone else follow the same practical precautions (masks/gloves/disinfectant) that grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, transit systems, and hospitals are applying? Either such measures are deemed safe for all working members of society, or they are safe for none. Of course, those who develop symptoms should avoid work—as we normally do. And do we need physical distancing if we're already wearing masks? Should it not be one or the other? At the same time, stricter pre-emptive tactics (isolation/quarantine) should be enforced only on those most vulnerable (the elderly and immune-deficient), along with focusing medical resources intensively on them—especially at every seniors' residence and sanatorium.

Are we basing our decisions regarding this epidemic on the threat of it being contagious or on the threat of it being deadly? The vast majority of the infected are recovering without suffering extreme conditions, so they'll require little in terms of prescribed care—or psychological coddling.

As time goes on, and hospitalization subsides and the contagion is no longer

consequential (along with a growth of antibodies in the population), none of us should tolerate the imposition of over-regulation. After all, did the authorities not react responsibly in regard to tuberculosis or the swine flu or SARS or other previously severe infections?

There's a difference between strategic containment and general paralysis. Those who object, insisting we're following the best possible advice, should therefore expect to meet the exact same tactics when hit with the next seasonal influenza, which can be, statistically, just as fatal. So is every flu now catastrophic? Of course not. The point is, statistics show the new virus is very contagious but, like the flu, not very deadly; so why is the economy being shut down as if we're facing the bubonic plague?

Is this not a disease we can manage to live through without putting our lives—and livelihoods—on pause in such drastic fashion? There's a difference between the temporarily sick and the truly endangered. When we know where the overwhelming percentage of casualties are happening, that's where most means of protection should be targeted. The current strategy being waged by our officials against the coronavirus shows an excess of benevolence and a failure of intelligence.

**L.S. Cattarini
 Montreal, Que.**



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As COVID-19 plays out, the world finds itself at a crossroads

Will the collective shock compel people to think seriously about a fundamental transformation of political motivation to prioritize social justice?



Les Whittington

Need to Know

OTTAWA—Like the Second World War, COVID-19 has the potential to be a dividing line that

will be felt around the globe for years to come.

Seventy-five years ago, it was the sheer horror of the 1939-45 war, in which 60 million were killed and countries were left in ruins, that prompted Western nations, led by the United States, to try to construct a global order founded on ideas such as national self-determination, rules-based trade among countries, and collective security.

The impact of the pandemic has not reached the proportions of that war, but the trauma and dislocation of normal life has been profound enough to prompt second thoughts about how we conduct ourselves. Early in the upheaval, people in many parts of the world set aside their distrust of politicians and looked to the authorities for guidance and help. There was also a recognition of how the glaring inequality built into our social-economic systems made those at the lower end of the income scale more vulnerable to COVID-19.

In Canada, for instance, many watching federal and provincial leaders extend emergency aid began to wonder if this was

a harbinger of change. If the collective shock might compel people to think seriously about a fundamental transformation of political motivation to prioritize social justice.

So it was in other Western countries. But now, with the first stage of the epidemic possibly receding, the jury is out. Will it mark a shift to a more humanistic, co-operative world based on shared hardship and the need for more generous policies, or will it be a source of increased isolation and discord among peoples and nations?

Increasingly, the signs are not propitious. With people eager as usual to blame someone for a catastrophe, there has been a troubling, widespread search for scapegoats. United Nations Secretary General António Guterres warned last week that the public health emergency is quickly becoming a human rights crisis. This is happening against a backdrop of rising ethno-nationalism, populism, authoritarianism, and push-back against human rights in some countries, the UN noted in a recent report.

“The instability and fear that the pandemic engenders is exacerbating existing human rights concerns, such as discrimination against certain groups, hate speech, xenophobia, attacks and forced returns of refugees and asylum-seekers, mistreatment of migrants, and sexual and gender-based violence, as well as limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights,” the UN report said.

It is well known that extremist, right-wing groups are trying to capitalize on COVID-born fear and frustration to drum up thousands of new recruits—pumping conspiracy theories and taking advantage of anti-shelter-in-place demonstrations.

Protests against COVID-related restrictions have happened in various countries but none has been as disturbing as the dozens of demonstrations by “Trump troops” in the U.S., particularly where extremists are harassing legislators while prominently displaying their assault rifles.

U.S. President Donald Trump has encouraged such protests, part of his daily efforts to turn the epidemic into a culture war to distract from his failure to address COVID-19 quickly or adequately. His beyond-chaotic performance has become historic as the U.S. has topped the lists of virus cases. Desperate to save his re-election prospects, Trump is betting everything on championing an economic recovery at all costs. The latest twist is his quiet embrace of herd immunity tactics, in effect encouraging Americans to see the coming upsurge in the epidemic as a result of a premature

reopening as the price of getting the economy going.

Internationally, Trump and his administration have opted to blame it all on China, going so far as to suggest without proof that it originated in a Chinese lab. While Beijing will rightly be the target of scrutiny post-epidemic, the alarming U.S. approach could unwind any progress the two countries have made in easing Trump’s trade war with China (a disturbing possibility when the world economy is struggling with the impact of COVID) and raises the prospect of an enduring great-power conflict. With Trump’s decision to defund the World Health Organization (another White House scapegoat) and refusal to co-operate in a global campaign to address the pandemic, the U.S. has completed its abandonment of the global leadership it assumed after the Second World War.

Other leaders are trying to fill the vacuum. For instance, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, speaking on May 8 about how the allied victory 75 years ago “liberated” his country from the catastrophic evil of fascism, said: “Today, (all peoples) must liberate ourselves. From the temptations of a new brand of nationalism. From a fascination with authoritarianism. From distrust, isolationism and hostility between nations. From hatred and hate speech, from xenophobia and contempt for democracy—for they are but the old evil in a new guise.”

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

The Star’s Macpherson defined moments in history in a single frame

It is the editorial cartoonist who has the capacity to survey the news, inject an opinion, find humour or pathos in current events, and define a moment in history in a single frame.



Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect

OTTAWA—As the pandemic grinds on, two noticeable phenomena have emerged: the

monopoly of COVID-19 on the news, and the melding of one day into another. Although the 75th anniversary of VE day on May 8 was marked with muted celebrations, other days have been lost in the fog of passing weeks.

One such overlooked date was World Press Freedom Day on May 3. The day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993 to “defend the media from attacks on their independence and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession.”

Among those journalists are cartoonists. It was only five years ago gunmen shot and killed 12 people at the French satirical weekly newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*. And given autocrats do not like being ridiculed, cartoonists are often targeted by repressive regimes. Fortunately, in our society, they are only the objects of rage by thin-skinned politicians.

For it is the editorial cartoonist who has the capacity to survey the news, find humour or pathos in current events, and define a moment in history in a single frame.

I was reminded of this role while reading an advance copy of Terry

Mosher’s brilliant biography of former *Toronto Star* cartoonist, Duncan Macpherson, *Professional Heckler*, to be launched later this year by McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Mosher, also known by his *nom de plume*, “Aislin,” is an award-winning cartoonist featured on the editorial pages of Montreal newspapers for five decades; Macpherson was a friend and a mentor. As a result, the Macpherson family gave Mosher access to his papers; he spent countless hours researching the late cartoonist and interviewing those who knew him.

While one might have expected a thick coffee table tome of cartoons, it goes far beyond, with a crisp, biographical narrative explaining Macpherson, warts and all, from his boyhood in rural Scotland and Toronto, to his death at 68 in 1993. One also appreciates Macpherson’s gift as an artist, combined with his skill in skewering the most powerful in Canada.

For those of a certain age, Macpherson defined how English Canadians felt about their political leaders. For example, his caricature of John Diefenbaker as Marie Antoinette stuck, to Dief’s dismay, while the depiction of an awkward

“Mike” Pearson wasn’t flattering, either. Pierre Trudeau was often portrayed as arrogant or alone, a characterization that outlived him. Macpherson often included a short, disheveled character in his cartoons, representing the Canadian “Everyman,” who was abused or ignored by the powerful.

The 1950s to 1980s were Macpherson’s heyday: newspapers were dominant, and *The Toronto Star* was the richest paper in the country. As the book attests, it had a stable of brilliant writers and was run by the hard-nosed Beland Honderich. Macpherson was considered the best editorial cartoonist in North America, so Honderich gave him free rein and the salary to go with it. In return, Macpherson won an unprecedented six National Newspaper Awards.

Macpherson is portrayed as a man who despised conflict after his experience in the Second World War, and lived as a “functioning alcoholic” for most of his life. While prone to rages when drunk, he held no malice for anyone in public life: “I don’t think I ever intended a cartoon to be vicious in the sense of (being vengeful) ... but if the

only way to make a point is a tough delivery, well the point’s going to be made.” Mosher characterizes him as an “equal opportunity lampoonist,” saying “any Canadian public figure was fair game.”

The greatest compliment any cartoonist can be paid is when “victims” request copies of their work. On the walls of countless politicians around the country, Macpherson’s work was displayed prominently, as it was considered an achievement to be caricatured by him. In the permanent exhibit on the life of “Mike” Pearson at the eponymous Global Affairs headquarters on Sussex Drive, several of Macpherson’s cartoons are featured, as they encapsulate history.

At a time when we look back to the days before COVID and beyond, and newspapers shrink or disappear, it is hard not to be nostalgic for the bygone era of literate criticism and satire. Macpherson’s work, sometimes dark, more often than not hilarious, reminds us of the service rendered by editorial cartoonists in standing up for the average person, and puncturing the egos of the powerful.

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

Comment

Push to reopen the economy fuelled by disinformation, political gaslighting

This pandemic is not just a mere inconvenience, it's literally life and death, yet we have politicians gaslighting us into believing otherwise.



Erica Ifill

Bad+Bitchy

OTTAWA—Donald Trump's gaslighting of America is rapidly turning into Canadian policy. This is being orchestrated through an aggressive disinformation campaign, controlled and co-ordinated by the White House.

On May 11, thousands of children in Quebec returned to school after an eight-week absence as a result of measures undertaken to stop the spread of COVID-19. Quebec was hit particularly hard by this virus, resulting in a high of 1,110 new cases on May 1, bringing its total to 38,469 cases as of May 11. In fact, coronavirus cases in Canada reached a milestone on that day with the death toll reaching 5,000, with most of these deaths in—you guessed it—Quebec.

Must be nice to be top shotta of the "reopen the economy" mafia, because that's what the band of provincial premiers who are moving ahead with such plans, who appear to be doing the most to ensure that people's lives are endangered for the good of the economy, are.

Speaking of organized crime, the recklessness with which many premiers



U.S. President Donald Trump, pictured in the Press Briefing Room on April 7. His gaslighting of America is rapidly turning into Canadian policy through an aggressive disinformation campaign controlled and co-ordinated by the White House, writes Erica Ifill. Photograph courtesy of the White House Flickr/Andrea Hanks

are opening the economy is not only the fault of their short-term, callous thinking, it originated as an orchestrated movement whose media manipulation tactics and disinformation techniques lie squarely at the heart of the White House.

The term "misinformation" is false information that is shared about a specific subject; disinformation is misinformation created to intentionally spread to confuse, deny, and lie to mislead the recipients of that information. In 1923, Russia established a special disinformation office, used by the then-precursor to the KGB as a tactical weapon for political warfare to influence the course of global events and tilt the analysis of those events in Russia's favour.

Today, the purpose remains the same, but is mostly done through social media, a fact uncovered by BuzzFeed News in their story on Russian disinformation campaigns after their invasion of Crimea: "The bizarre hive of social media activity appears to be part of a two-pronged Kremlin campaign to claim control over the internet, launching a million-dollar army of trolls to mold American public opinion as it cracks down on internet freedom at home." These troll farms were instrumental in the shaping of the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

The U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence tabled a report in April of this

year entitled, *Report of the Select Committee On Intelligence United States Senate On Russian Active Measures, Campaigns And Interference In The 2016 U.S. Election*, that laid out the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the Russian government's attempt "to access election infrastructure" with a campaign that "sought to polarize Americans on the basis of societal, ideological, and racial differences, provoked real world events, and was part of a foreign government's covert support of Russia's favored candidate in the U.S. presidential election." Hence the rancor of the public and politicians directed at the social media giants. Also, hence the Mueller Investigation.

Enter the Trump White House, which has never been ride or die for the truth, or facts, or information, for that matter—however, as the masters of media manipulation, that doesn't really matter.

Misinformation that turns into disinformation campaigns and the irreverent use of Twitter are what make U.S. President Donald Trump particularly effective at galvanizing his fan base to organize the spread of his "fake news." In this sense, the president of the United States runs his own informal troll farm, using Fox News as its public relations arm. It's quite brilliant if you look at this ecosystem of mendacity through a dispassionate lens. What he has learned is a tenet of today's digital media environment: a platform is power, and an engaged base provides inexpensive and inexhaustible ways to transmit your message, rapidly.

Enter mainstream media.

The problem with disinformation is that it is no longer confined to the anus of the internet or even social media; conspiracy theories that used to live there are now being platformed by media we rely on to tell us the truth and the politicians we rely on to make policy decisions. And let's be real, these are politicians whose oxygen supply is connected to the latest poll, so in that sense, media becomes instrumental in framing an issue and presenting it through a lens of critical analysis. (George Lakoff, a professor at UC Berkeley explained the

taxonomy of Trump's tweets as an effort to control the news cycle.)

What we have, instead, is a media that mainly transcribes Trump's messages, rather than challenging them for credibility or accuracy. In addition, just to make sure selected politicians stuck with the program, right-wing groups co-ordinate "protests" to pressure government officials to do their bidding. And that's exactly what happened with the "re-open the economy" debate: we got played.

Let's look at how this played out.

March 24: Trump states that he wants the economy open by Easter; this year, Easter Sunday was on April 12.

April 7: 42 states implemented lockdown or "shelter-in-place" restrictions.

April 12: Anti-lockdown protests in Canada began in Vancouver and Vernon on April 12, the same day as protests happened in Ohio and the same day as Trump's deadline to reopen the U.S. economy.

April 15: One of the first large-scale "anti-lockdown protests" was held in Michigan. It was organized by a Facebook group, "Operation Gridlock," created by the Michigan Freedom Fund, and they spread like wildfire. Protesters in multiple other states cited Michigan as an inspiration and used similar material on their own websites, Facebook groups, and Reddit pages to promote their protests. Interesting fact, the Michigan Freedom Fund was bankrolled by the DeVos family. You know, Betsey DeVos, the Secretary of Education.

April 17:

No one: ...

Donald Trump: LIBERATE VIRGINIA, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA!

In the next few weeks, the news cycle in Canadian media had turned this into a debate between reopening the economy or not, as though the choices had equitable outcomes. This is not a coincidence, it's co-ordinated; it is intended to fit into Trump's re-election strategy, predicated on a robust economy.

However, a pandemic can only be controlled so much and is often unpredictable, much like Trump himself. The U.S. is a ticking COVID-19 time-bomb with the latest death count as of filing deadline at 82,555 and 1,395,026 infected. That's bad news for Ontario, sandwiched between tweedle dee and tweedle don't, whose early COVID-19 infections came from across the 49th parallel.

It is unfortunate for us that the push to reopen the economy comes at a time when we are yet to have proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for health-care workers, long-term care facilities are exploding with the virus, Ontario's cases are beginning to increase again, we don't yet have a vaccine, and we are being consistently told by the Conservative Party how lazy we are because we are taking proper precautions for an unprecedented pandemic.

The fact that is most terrifying, though, is that those countries (South Korea, Germany, China) who seemed to have a handle on this virus, and who have reopened their economies, are now seeing new virus outbreaks, demonstrating that without these lockdown procedures, we could be right back in the same place we were in March.

This pandemic is not just a mere inconvenience, it's literally life and death, yet we have politicians gaslighting us into believing otherwise. What a dystopian nightmare of epic proportions.

Erica Ifill is a co-host of the Bad+Bitchy podcast.

The Hill Times

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Kids Can't Wait!

The federal government must act now to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on children.

Across the country, children are uniquely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and they and their families are in urgent need of support.

Children are affected by disruptions to their daily lives due to the closure of schools, recreational programs and other public places. Children's health has been directly impacted by the pivoting of healthcare systems to focusing on the needs of adults and seniors during the pandemic; meaning that many vital services for children have been cancelled or postponed. They are also impacted by the increasing economic pressures and stress that their parents and other caregivers are facing due to work closures and job losses. All children are impacted, and some are being particularly hard hit.

Kids growing up in poverty have limited access to nutritional programs that would otherwise be offered in schools and they no longer have access to recreational supports that would have been available through afterschool programs. Children who experience family violence no longer have a safe refuge at school, and more kids are at risk of abuse due to the increased economic pressures that their families are experiencing. First Nations, Métis and Inuit children living in remote and rural communities are particularly vulnerable due to overcrowded housing, lack of clean water, and limited access to hospitals.

Since the outset of the pandemic, Children First Canada and our Council of Champions have been working directly with the federal government, providing policy recommendations to senior decision-makers and to Ministers whose mandates include children to offer recommendations for action to mitigate the impact of the crisis on kids.

We have been encouraged by initial investments made in frontline organizations like Kids Help Phone, foodbanks and emergency shelters, and by the Prime Minister's efforts to directly engage children through his press conferences and by answering questions from kids in conjunction with Dr. Theresa Tam. We also acknowledge the tremendous supports from the private sector and communities in support of children and youth. These early efforts have brought much needed attention and resources to the plight of children and have been greatly appreciated, **but much more is needed** if we are to make significant impact.

With each day that passes, the toll of this crisis on children worsens. As leaders in our respective fields, we serve and support millions of children from coast to coast to coast. Collectively, we have identified three major priorities for immediate investment that are currently lacking support:

- **Protecting the physical and mental health of children:** including scaling up and ensuring long-term sustainable funding for virtual care for physical and mental health for

children. There is also a need for designated funding for child-focused research in order to ensure that children's health and well-being is not impacted in the long-term by the cancellation of virtually all non-COVID19 research across the country.

- **Protecting children from violence:** including scaling up programs to keep kids safe in their homes and online, such as: extending supports to children and youth in and out of care, supporting children and families at risk with emergency needs, providing home visits while maintaining physical distancing, and supporting children and families with virtual visits and programs. This must also include ensuring the continuity of care for children who had experienced abuse prior to the crisis and preparing for an anticipated spike in child abuse reports once the restrictions on schools and daycares are lifted.
- **Promoting the resilience of children:** including the provision of virtual and remote programming to ensure that children are supported with healthy active living through existing relationships with caring adults and peers. The delivery of such programs must include flexibility in how programs are delivered, not just a blanket outburst of 'virtualized' programs. Children need to see adults who care about them through small group interactions online, and this then reinforces the self-directed learning or exploration that they need now.

We call on the federal government to invest \$250 million to address these priorities, including the short, medium and long term impacts of the pandemic on the wellbeing of kids in Canada.

We also urge the federal government to work directly with Indigenous organizations to fund their needs to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and families. Furthermore, we urge the federal government to work with the Provinces and Territories in a coordinated response and ensure that no child is left behind.

Lastly, we call on the federal government to hear directly from children and youth as to how they are impacted and to involve them in the decisions being made to improve their lives. Children aren't simply people in need of help, they are citizens with rights.

There is nothing more important to Canadians than the survival of our children. Kids represent nearly a quarter of our population and one hundred percent of our future. Without immediate help, we risk jeopardizing their childhood and the future of all Canadians.

We urge the Government of Canada to **act without delay** and ensure that kids receive the care and support they need. Even prior to this crisis, Canada lagged behind our global peers when it comes to the health and wellbeing of our children, ranking in 25th place out of 41 OECD countries according to UNICEF. The COVID-19 pandemic is further threatening the physical and mental health of our children, and we must act now to ensure that the 8 million kids in Canada can survive and thrive.

Every single day matters in the life of a child, and they cannot afford to wait.

Children First Canada and the Council of Champions

Sara Austin, Founder and CEO, Children First Canada

Dr. Kevin Chan, Former Chair and Chief of Pediatrics, Children's Health Memorial

Owen Charters, CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs Canada

Mathew Chater, CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada

Dr. Ronald Cohn, CEO, Sick Kids Hospital

Irwin Elman, Former Ontario Child Advocate, Global Strategic Champion, Until the Last Child

Emily Gruenwold, CEO, Children's Healthcare Canada

Mary Jo Haddad, Chancellor of the Univ. of Windsor, Board Director of TD Bank Group & TELUS

Christine Hampson, President, The SandboxProject

Julia Hanigsberg, CEO, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab Hospital

Mark Hierlihy, President & CEO, Children's Hospital Foundations of Canada

Krista Jagaard, CEO, IWK Health Centre (Halifax)

Karyn Kennedy, CEO, Boost Child Advocacy Centre & Chair of the Canadian Network of Child Advocacy Centres

Alex Munter, CEO, CHEO Hospital

Bruce Squires, President of McMaster Children's Hospital

Dr. Holden Sheffield, Chief of Pediatrics, Qikiqtani General Hospital (Iqaluit)

Dr. Michael Shevell, Chair of Pediatrics, McGill University Health Centre, Pediatrician-in-Chief at The Montreal Children's Hospital

Kathleen Taylor, Chair of SickKids Foundation

Dr. Michael Ungar, Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience, Dalhousie University

Opinion

Mercenary mess should prompt Ottawa to drop picked Venezuelan president

Hopefully, Canada will cut its ties with Juan Guaidó now that his true colours have been revealed.



Scott Taylor

Inside Defence

OTTAWA—Last week, a bizarre drama unfolded on the shores of Venezuela. Security forces engaged several boatloads of armed gunmen, resulting in eight dead and a dozen prisoners. Two of those who surrendered to Venezuelan authorities were ex-U.S. Special Forces soldiers who had identity cards showing they worked for Silvercorp USA; a Florida-based private security company.

Just prior to the skirmishes, on Sunday, May 3, Silvercorp president Jordan Goudreau had proclaimed to the media that he was launching an invasion to liberate Venezuela and arrest President Nicolás Maduro.

The Canadian-born Goudreau served as a reservist with the Canadian Armed Forces before enlisting in the U.S. military, where he eventually was selected for the special forces.

Goudreau claimed that his actions were part of a contract he had signed with a chap named Juan Guaidó.

When the attempted Rambo-style invasion literally washed up on the Venezuelan shores, Guaidó was quick to denounce any knowledge of the armed invasion.

Unfortunately for Guaidó and other members of the Venezuelan opposition, there exists a signed contract between them and Silvercorp dated October 2019. The deliverable on that contract was the invasion of Venezuela and the overthrow of Maduro in exchange for US\$213-million.

For those who may have lost track of the Venezuelan political crisis in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it must be remembered that Guaidó was chosen as president of Venezuela in January 2019. This was not the choice of Venezuelan voters who had elected Maduro to a second term in 2018; rather, Guaidó was instead

selected by the Lima Group, which is led by Canada and includes 14 other Central and South American countries.

Since the Lima Group made its choice, Guaidó has been recognized as Venezuela's president by a total of 60 countries, the most notable being the U.S. This means that more than 120 countries do not recognize Guaidó's presidency, the most notable of them being Venezuela itself.

This past January, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland hosted Guaidó in Ottawa. Following that meeting, Freeland held a press conference wherein she told reporters that the Lima Group and Guaidó were all seeking the same goal of a "peaceful transition to democracy."

Meanwhile, completely unbeknownst to Freeland, Guaidó had already signed a contract with a mercenary to invade his own country.

That contract, which was published last week in the *Washington Post*, firmly tapes Guaidó's feet to the bicycle pedals in this botched coup. However, Goudreau has also made the claim that his invasion had the sanction of the Trump administration.

A photograph of Goudreau with U.S. President Donald Trump, purportedly taken on Oct. 18, 2018 in Charlotte, N.C., was posted on Goudreau's Instagram account.

Although the U.S. government has thus far denied having any involvement with the attempted coup d'état, Venezuelan participants in the botched raid stated they were seeking the bounty money offered by the Trump administration for the arrest of Maduro.



Venezuela politician and declared interim leader Juan Guaidó is pictured with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in Ottawa on Jan. 27. A Canadian-born mercenary allegedly ties Mr. Guaidó to a botched attempt to arrest Nicolás Maduro. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

According to Pompeo, these dastardly Venezuelans were using the cover and confusion of the COVID-19 pandemic to flood the U.S. with cheap illegal narcotics. He offered no proof, nor did he explain how such a scheme was to succeed. The Venezuelan Narco-Giveaway plot seems less feasible than Goudreau's 60-man invasion of Venezuela—and we saw how that unfolded.

Hopefully, Canada will cut its ties with Guaidó now that his true colours have been revealed. The Venezuelan people deserve better.

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

The Hill Times

An act of care: reframing global efforts to contain COVID-19

The narrative of war and rallying support for the battle of our lives and those of our fellow citizens excludes anyone who does not conform to a dominant masculine/feminine binary narrative.



Mayssam D. Zaaroura & Kirsten Van Houten

Opinion

We are waging a war, we are told. We are all in this war together. We have to fight this disease—look at how this country is winning this battle, this is how we flatten that curve, and here is how we will emerge victorious.

This militarized narrative is used to describe the COVID-19 pandemic: fighting on the frontlines. The militarization is not only evident in the language describing the crisis; it also shapes the response.

Many governments, including in Canada, are adopting increasingly militarized language and approaches to enforce physical distancing and restrict mobility of populations around the world. In some parts of Canada, police have set up checkpoints to reduce non-essential trips between and within provinces. In more extreme cases, such as the Philippines, governments have given their militaries the authorization to shoot and kill anyone violating lockdowns.

These militarized responses have led to an increase of human rights abuses around the world. In the Philippines, 21 residents of the urban, poor neighbourhood Sitio San Roque were arrested after protesting inadequate access to food after their livelihoods were restricted by the lockdown in Luzon. The pandemic response has also led to a resurgence of armed violence, as tensions rise in fragile and conflict-affected states, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mobility restrictions imposed in some countries also pose a risk to human rights defenders seeking protection from violence

perpetrated by state and non-state actors. In Colombia, the lockdown contributed to the assassination of a member of Organización Femenina Popular, one of several human rights defenders murdered within the broader context of state-sponsored and paramilitary violence.

This militarized response is driven by ongoing weapons manufacturing while other industries shut down. In Italy and other European countries, weapons manufacturing plants remain open as "essential services," and while such operations have not been deemed essential in the United States, they have not been closed. Despite endorsing the UN's call for a global ceasefire, such as in Yemen and Syria, the government of Canada recently announced its decision to resume approving weapon exports to Saudi Arabia, one of the world's most heinous human rights abusers.

The narrative of war and rallying support for the battle of our lives and those of our fellow citizens justifies this show of force. They are accompanied by violence and social norms that oppress all populations, but particularly racialized groups including Black and Indigenous communities; women and gender diverse people; and people with disabilities. This is the definition of militarized and toxic masculinity—whether adopted by men or women. It excludes anyone who does not conform to a dominant masculine/feminine binary narrative.

This narrative normalizes a military, police, or security presence that is proving to be far from benign.

For this moment of collective pain, force and muscle are out of place. Especially force and muscle that are using this pandemic to instill a tyranny of security that criminalizes those who are already most marginalized. In some spaces, it escalates the narrative of fear that leads to violence against those responding to the pandemic. Workers in too-often underfunded and underappreciated sectors of care. As Arundhati Roy asks: "if it were not masks and gloves that its frontline soldiers needed, but guns, smart bombs, bunker busters, submarines, fighter jets, and nuclear bombs, would there be a shortage?"

We need to reframe our narrative and response to the COVID-19 pandemic and, consequently, an alternative political and socioeconomic response that takes into account the needs of the most vulnerable populations.

This reframing must be feminist: rights-based, inclusive, non-violent, and undertaken in the spirit of gender equality and racial justice. Amnesty International has noted that measures undertaken by governments in the name of protecting people from this disease must be "proportionate, time-bound, and that they are implemented with transparency and adequate oversight."

Our response to COVID-19 must be presented as an act of care as opposed to an act of war. It must recognize that women are at the forefront of the response, and ensure they have seats at decision-making tables and where we maintain positions of leadership. A response that acknowledges women's continued work as human rights defenders throughout the pandemic and beyond, ranging from challenging militarism to providing humanitarian assistance.

Rather than staying home to fight the virus, we stay home to care for ourselves and each other. The frontline can be reframed as our communities. Let's use a narrative and response, steeped in care and compassion, in the hope that when the pandemic ends, this period might be remembered as the world's greatest collective effort towards positive peace and a more equitable world.

Mayssam D. Zaaroura is a women's rights knowledge specialist with Oxfam Canada, and Dr. Kirsten Van Houten is the global partnerships co-ordinator at Kairos Canada. This piece was written in collaboration with members of the Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada.

The Hill Times

More dollars through the door for CPC, but Liberals see more donors in 2020's first quarter



Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, and Green Party parliamentary leader Elizabeth May. The Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP all saw a dip in fundraising in the first quarter after a general election compared to early 2016, while the Bloc and Greens saw a boost. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

The Conservative Party once again led the pack in fundraising in the first quarter of 2020, but the Liberals saw 778 more individuals pitch in.

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Despite an ongoing leadership race seeing dollars being directed to the coffers of candidates' campaigns, the Conservative Party has reclaimed its lead and once again outpaced the other major parties in fundraising in the first quarter of 2020, bringing in almost \$4.4-million.

The Liberal Party's fundraising trailed the Conservatives' by almost \$1.2-million, with the governing party reporting a total of roughly \$3.2-million for the quarter. But, despite a lower total, the Grits saw 778 more donors over the quarter, with 27,224 contributors compared to the Tories' 26,446.

The New Democrats, Greens, and the Bloc Québécois all raised below the \$1-million mark between Jan. 1 and March 31, based on financial reports filed with Elections Canada.

Even without the \$535,129 in transfers from leadership contestants reported by the Conservatives over the quarter, the party still outpaced the Liberals in fundraising by \$626,422.

The Conservative Party set a \$200,000 entrance fee for candidates to run in this year's race, of which \$50,000 is non-refundable. The party also levies a 10 per cent administrative fee on donations directed to leadership candidates. The race to replace Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) officially kicked off on Jan. 13.

For its part, the Liberal Party's \$3.2-million for the quarter includes \$263,053 in transfers from riding associations and candidates.

The NDP reported a total of \$972,209 for the first quarter of 2020, including \$8,162 in transfers from riding associations and 2019 candidates, with 12,060 donors pitching in.

With donations from 8,215 individuals and \$4,800 in transfers from riding as-

sociations and candidates, the Green Party brought in a total of \$582,350 for the quarter. Meanwhile, the Bloc added \$203,548 to its central coffers over the first three months of the year, with \$19,352 in transfers from riding associations and candidates and donations from 1,519 individuals.

During the last quarter of 2019—covering Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, and in turn including the tail-end of last year's federal election, which saw the Liberals returned to government, albeit with a minority—the Liberals managed to surpass the Conservatives in fundraising and brought in \$656,967 more from 14,339 more individuals. The Liberals reported a total of roughly \$4.8-million that quarter, and 45,917 donors, while the Conservatives raised almost \$4.2-million from 31,578 individuals.

In all, between the last quarter of 2019 and the most recent one, the Liberal Party's fundraising dipped by 34 per cent, while the Conservatives' increased by roughly four per cent.

The NDP, Greens, and Bloc Québécois all saw their fundraising drop by roughly 65 per cent between the last quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of this year. In the last three months of 2019, the NDP raised almost \$2.8-million, while the Greens raised close to \$1.7-million, and the Bloc raised \$580,871.

But, compared to the first quarter of 2016 following the October 2015 federal election, the Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP all saw a dip in numbers this time around.

In the first three months of 2016, the Liberals—newly catapulted to government with a majority—reported \$4.1-million from 35,902 donors, while the Conservatives brought in \$5.5-million from 32,502 individuals, and the NDP raised \$1.4-million from 16,663.

On the other hand, the Bloc Québécois, which managed to increase its caucus from 10 to 34 last fall, and the Green Party, which went from two to three MPs (compared to just one after the 2015 vote), both had a much better post-election year first quarter compared to 2016. During the first quarter of 2016, the Bloc had raised just \$131,312 from 802 donors, and the Greens \$453,406 from 6,713 individuals.

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The Hill Times



Virtual Care is the Future of Health Care Delivery in Canada

By Michael Green, President and CEO, Canada Health Infoway

Many Canadians had likely never heard the term “virtual care” before the COVID-19 pandemic. Now it's part of our lexicon, right up there with terms like “physical distancing” and “flattening the curve.” But when the pandemic is over and we stop talking about physical distancing and flattening the curve, will virtual care be here to stay?

Virtual care – connecting with a health care provider by email, phone or video call – has become a necessity during the pandemic because in-person appointments at clinics and doctors' offices are not safe or feasible. Health care providers across the country have been offering virtual options for all but urgent or ongoing care, such as check-ups for expectant mothers.

Tracking by Canada Health Infoway (Infoway) shows that, by the end of April, the proportion of visits that happened virtually rather than in-person had increased to 60 per cent – a dramatic jump from less than 20 per cent prior to COVID-19. The most common way to connect with patients was by phone (40 per cent), followed by video visits (11 per cent) and email/online chats (5 per cent). For appointments specifically related to concerns about COVID-19, 23 per cent of Canadians contacted their family physician, 19 per cent accessed the system through 811 or a telehealth line, and 17 per cent reached out to a private sector virtual care provider.

Prior to the pandemic, even though many Canadians had likely never heard the term “virtual care,” their desire to connect with clinicians using modern digital technologies was already increasing. In a 2019 survey, 63 per cent said they would like to connect with their care providers by email, 58 per cent said they'd like to use SMS or an app, and 44 per cent said they'd like to use video calls.

Incidentally, in some clinical settings, patient satisfaction with virtual care is very high. Prior to the pandemic, for example, an e-visit pilot project delivered by the Ontario Telemedicine Network (now Ontario Health) found that 98 per cent of patients felt an e-visit was the same as or better than an in-person visit, 99 per cent said they'd use it again, and 92 per cent said it made accessing care more convenient. It's important to note that in primary care and specialist settings, virtual visits tend to work best when they support established doctor-patient relationships.

With high levels of patient interest in, and satisfaction with virtual care (in certain clinical settings), why were virtual visits relatively uncommon prior to COVID-19? There are a number of reasons for the low level of virtual consultations, including challenges with appropriate tools and training for clinicians. However, physician remuneration was a very significant issue – most provinces and territories did not support payment for routine clinician use of virtual visits. When the pandemic struck, this critical issue was urgently addressed, out of necessity. Today, all provinces and territories have billing codes in place for virtual care.

The recent announcement that the federal government is investing \$240.5 million to develop, expand and launch virtual care and mental health tools to support Canadians, is also a hopeful sign for the future of virtual care in Canada. We look forward to working with Health Canada and others to accelerate and support the roll-out of virtual care services across jurisdictions.

Why is it so critical to keep moving toward virtual health care delivery after the pandemic is over? In 2019, virtual care saved Canadians 11.5 million hours by not having to take time off work to attend in-person appointments. It also saved them more than \$595 million in avoided travel costs. And it resulted in a reduction of 120,000 metric tonnes of CO2 emissions – which is better for everyone's health. If we could sustain virtual visits at 50 per cent of primary care visits, we project annual savings of 103 million hours for Canadians, \$770 million in travel costs, and 325,000 metric tonnes of CO2 emissions.

Virtual care will never replace in-person appointments, and that is not the goal. Highly effective virtual care is intended to be complementary to traditional in-person care.

And the evidence in favour of virtual care is clear. It's a safe and effective means of care delivery. It can reduce pressures on our health system. Canadians want it and love it. It saves time and money and it's good for the environment. So when the pandemic is over and we stop talking about physical distancing and flattening the curve, we must ensure that virtual care becomes a permanent part of our lexicon and of health care delivery in Canada.



Canada Health **Infoway**

Experienced team returns to back O’Toole in leadership bid

‘No one has ever run a campaign during a pandemic, at least in my lifetime. There’s no path in the campaign manager manual on what to do,’ says Erin O’Toole’s campaign manager, Fred DeLorey.

Continued from page 1

COVID-19 pandemic and resulting physical distancing restrictions.

“No one has ever run a campaign during a pandemic, at least in my lifetime. There’s no path in the campaign manager manual on what to do,” Mr. DeLorey told *The Hill Times*.

“However, our team has been incredibly nimble and able to adjust on the fly in terms of our approach and how we’re communicating with members, and Erin is continuing to work night and day talking to Conservatives across Canada through video conferencing and telephones.”

The Conservative leadership race officially resumed on April 29, after suspending in late March due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Originally, the party planned to announce its new leader at a convention in Toronto on June 27. Now, a deadline of Aug. 21 has been set for mail-in ballots to be counted, and the party has said the “result will be announced as soon as those ballots can be properly processed and examined by scrutineers while respecting any health guidelines in place at that time.”

The race officially began on Jan. 13, a month after outgoing Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu’Appelle, Sask.) announced he would step down following 2019’s disappointing election result.

Mr. O’Toole, who’s been the MP for Durham, Ont., since 2012, officially announced he would make a second run for leadership on Jan. 27. A former officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force, he also briefly served as veterans affairs minister under Stephen Harper’s Conservative government in 2015.

Mr. O’Toole came third behind Mr. Scheer and then-Conservative MP Maxime Bernier in 2017 and is the only one of that



Conservative MP and leadership contender Erin O’Toole, pictured speaking with media outside the House of Commons Chamber on Dec. 10, 2019. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

year’s large, 14-candidate slate to have returned for a second attempt.

As with a majority of Canadians, the pandemic has pushed the work of campaigning almost entirely online.

For the O’Toole campaign team, it’s made little difference day to day, according to Mr. DeLorey. The campaign never had a physical headquarters office, he said—calling them a “thing of the past for leadership races”—and in turn, the team was already doing much of its work virtually.



Fred DeLorey is Mr. O’Toole’s national campaign manager. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Maxime Bernier, Erin O’Toole, and Andrew Scheer are pictured at the 2017 Conservative leadership convention in Toronto. Behind Mr. O’Toole, pictured right, is Mélanie Paradis, who is once again backing Mr. O’Toole, this time as one of three deputy campaign managers. *The Hill Times* file photograph



Jeff Ballingall is head of digital for Mr. O’Toole’s campaign. *Photograph courtesy of Jeff Ballingall*

tinuing to do that,” he said.

Mr. DeLorey, who was political operations director of the Conservative Party from 2013 to 2015, is running the campaign from Ottawa.

He ran the show for Mr. O’Toole back in 2017, and said he signed up to do the same—albeit, with hopes of a definitively different outcome—after connecting with Mr. O’Toole at a Christmas party shortly after Mr. Scheer announced his plans to step down in December 2019.

A Nova Scotia native, Mr. DeLorey has been managing partner with DesLaurier Public Affairs since 2015, and is also a former Atlantic regional affairs adviser to then-prime minister Stephen Harper and former director of communications for the federal party.

The campaign’s original “aggressive” cross-country tour plans have been scrapped as a result of COVID-19 and replaced with a virtual tour that has already seen Mr. O’Toole do “hundreds” of events, from videoconferencing to conference calls to live streams with question-and-answer sessions, said Mr. DeLorey.

While “nothing beats actually looking someone in the eye and having a conversation,” he said he’s seen benefits to campaigning virtually, and, with the ability to hit “a lot more ridings,” he predicted that “a lot of the stuff we’re seeing in this campaign” will “become the norm” for future leadership campaigns.

“Erin can have a meeting with members in the Yukon tonight and then he can

have one earlier in the day with people in Newfoundland, so you can get around and actually talk to more people,” said Mr. DeLorey. “Now that people are using video-conferencing more and more in their daily lives, it’s just become so much easier to set up these types of meetings.”

Pandemic aside, the use of digital advertising and outreach methods in general are becoming “more and more important” every election, said Mr. DeLorey, and “that’s something that we’ve put a lot of effort into, and it’s been paying off tremendously.”

In charge of the O’Toole campaign’s digital strategy this time around is Jeff Ballingall, founder of Ontario Proud, Canada Proud, and B.C. Proud, as well as the Mobilize Media Group and a co-owner of *The Post Millennial*, a right-wing news site.

Ontario Proud threw its weight behind Doug Ford’s Progressive Conservatives in the 2018 Ontario election, helping to run ads and mobilize voters for the party, which ultimately won a majority, reducing the provincial Liberals to just seven seats. Mr. Ballingall’s third-party network also backed the federal Conservatives in 2019.

After Mr. Scheer and party failed to defeat the Trudeau government, Mr. Ballingall was among those behind the Conservative Victory campaign formed last fall to push for a leadership race to be called. He’s also a former content producer with the since-defunct Sun News Network, a former special assistant for communications

to then-Western Economic Diversification minister of state Jim Prentice, and a former research and video specialist with the federal Conservative caucus’ research bureau, among other things.

Financial reports for the first quarter of 2020, up to March 31, show Mr. O’Toole’s campaign has raised a total of \$784,997 so far, from 4,686 individuals.

That tally puts Mr. O’Toole second in fundraising, behind Mr. MacKay, whose campaign reported nearly \$1.05-million raised. But Mr. O’Toole leads in donors, with the MacKay camp noting donations from 3,538 individuals—a difference of more than 1,000, or 24.5 per cent.

“We had an overwhelming number of more donors, which goes to show we have real grassroots support across the country,” said Mr. DeLorey.

The majority of donations made to Mr. O’Toole’s campaign in the first quarter came from Ontarians, with 2,066 contributing. Next was Alberta, with 1,177 donors, while 860 came from British Columbia, 162 from Saskatchewan, 155 from Manitoba, 92 from Quebec, 89 from Nova Scotia, 44 from New Brunswick, 19 from Newfoundland and Labrador, 13 from P.E.I., five from the Yukon, three from the Northwest Territories, and one from Nunavut.

“There’s a lot that goes into strategy, a lot of targeting that we do ... our biggest asset though, at the end of the day, is our candidate, Erin O’Toole,” said Mr. DeLorey, calling his candidate a “True Blue Conservative.”

“We have all these tools around him to help push the message, but it’s the message that’s so vital in this campaign and it’s what’s really set us apart, I’d say, from the MacKay campaign.”

Mr. DeLorey said a full campaign platform would be released “in due course.”



Dan Mader is leading policy development for Mr. O’Toole’s campaign. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

tant to then-Ontario PC minister Tim Hudak, Mr. Burnett was director of organization for Patrick Brown’s unsuccessful 2015 campaign for Ontario PC leadership and is now a partner with Pathway Group, a government relations and public affairs firm in Toronto.

Working closely with Mr. Burnett to recruit, train, and oversee volunteers and organizers across the country are Mr. O’Toole’s director of field operations, David Parker, and chair of field operations, Jim Ross.

Mr. Parker is a former assistant to Conservative MPs Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, Alta.) and Ed Fast (Abbotsford, B.C.) and was part of the

is a former Harper-era cabinet staff, including as chief of staff to then-associate defence minister Julian Fantino, and has spent the last two years as a partner with Loyalist Public Affairs.

Now on Team O’Toole, Mr. Burnett was Ontario campaign chair for Kevin O’Leary’s failed 2017 leadership bid. A former

ground team behind the 2017 campaign to unite Alberta’s Wildrose and Progressive Conservative parties. After the United Conservative Party was formed, he was regional organizer for central Alberta for now-Premier Jason Kenney’s successful leadership bid.

Mr. Ross has been a senior consultant with ElectRight since 2012, according to his LinkedIn profile, and previously worked on Mr. Brown’s 2015 Ontario PC leadership campaign and on Mr. Hudak’s 2009 leadership bid, among other campaigns. He’s a former assistant to then-Conservative MP Rick Dykstra and was an assistant in Mr. Kenney’s office as then-federal citizenship minister.

Tannis Drysdale is Team O’Toole’s Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) chair. She’s been running her own consulting firm for years, and has been involved in a long list of conservative campaigns over the years, including Kellie Leitch’s 2017 leadership campaign,

GOTV efforts broadly are much the same as they were last campaign, said Mr. DeLorey, noting that 2017’s race saw the vast majority of voting take place by mail-in ballot ahead of the convention, with only a limited number of polls set up for day-of voting.

Waliel Soliman, a partner with Norton Rose Fulbright LLP and its Canada chair since 2017, is Mr. O’Toole’s campaign chair, while Dan Robertson is chair of strategy. Mr. Robertson is a former associate director of communications to Mr. Harper as prime minister, a former spokesperson for then-Ontario premier Ernie Eves, and a former director of advertising for the federal party. Until January, he’d spent the last two years

as a partner with ONE Persuades, working alongside former Scheer campaign manager Hamish Marshall, among others.

Contact Gold’s Riyaz Lalani is also a senior adviser to the campaign, having been a co-chair of Mr. O’Toole’s 2017 bid.

Laura Kurkimaki, another former Harper-era cabinet staffer and former issues manager in the PMO, is



Mr. O’Toole’s campaign secretary, putting her in charge of ensuring the team stays on task and that communication flows between organizers spread out across the country. She previously worked alongside Mr. DeLorey at Conservative headquarters as a former national outreach co-ordinator and field operations manager for the party. Of late, she’s been busy as a senior public affairs adviser for Payments Canada.

Tausha Michaud is principal secretary to Mr. O’Toole. A former senior adviser and acting chief of staff to Mr. O’Toole as veterans affairs minister, she continued working for him as an MP for two years after the 2015 election. She’s currently a director with McMillan Vantage Policy Group in Toronto.

Jeffrey Kroecker, a partner with Civis Law LLP in Toronto and former adviser to Mr. Hudak and John Tory as then-Ontario PC leaders, is chief financial officer for the



Tausha Michaud is principal secretary to Mr. O’Toole on the campaign. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

While her work has moved to digital, Stephanie Dunlop is on board as tour director. An account director with Hill and Knowlton Strategies, she was the lead organizer in the GTA for Mr. O’Toole’s 2017 leadership bid and has since spent time as director of appointments and stakeholders to then-Ontario tourism minister Michael Tibollo.

Mike Wilson, a lawyer with Goodmans LLP and former chief of staff to Ontario Attorney General Doug Downey (and his predecessor, Caroline Mulroney), is the campaign’s legal counsel.

Team O’Toole also includes a roster of regional organizers. In Quebec, that’s led by Conservative MP Alupa Clarke (Beauport-Limoilou, Que.) as chair. Emmanuel Dion-Weiss, who’s been an assistant to Conservative MP Gerard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, Que.), and Andrew Swidzinski, a former president of the Lac Saint-Louis federal Conservative riding association, are running field operations in the province.

To date, Mr. O’Toole is second to Mr. MacKay in endorsements from current and former Parliamentarians and other notable politicians, with a tally of 36 such endorsements, including from 26 current MPs, two Conservative Senators, and Alberta Premier Jason Kenney, as of filing deadline. Mr. MacKay had 84 such endorsements as of May 11.

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Bastien & Prizant

OPTOMETRY

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Team O’Toole’s endorsements to date:*

1. Alberta MP Garnett Genuis
2. Alberta MP Dane Lloyd
3. Alberta MP Greg McLean
4. Ontario MP Alex Ruff
5. British Columbia MP Cathy McLeod
6. Ontario MP Bruce Stanton
7. British Columbia MP Kenny Chiu
8. Alberta MP Stephanie Kusie
9. Saskatchewan MP Gary Vidal
10. Manitoba MP Larry Maguire
11. Ontario MP Phillip Lawrence
12. Ontario MP Michael Barrett
13. Alberta MP Kerry Diotte
14. British Columbia MP Brad Vis
15. Saskatchewan MP Robert Kitchin
16. Manitoba MP Dan Mazier
17. Alberta MP Gerald Soroka
18. Ontario MP David Sweet
19. Alberta MP Martin Shields
20. Saskatchewan MP Warren Steinley
21. Saskatchewan MP Corey Tochor
22. Saskatchewan MP Brad Redekopp
23. Ontario MP Eric Melillo
24. Quebec MP Richard Martel
25. Alberta MP Blake Richards
26. Alberta MP Pat Kelly
27. Quebec Senator Leo Housakos
28. Quebec Senator Judith Seidman
29. Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta
30. David Piccini, Ontario MPP
31. Stacey Hassard, Yukon MLA and Yukon Party interim leader
32. Stan Cho, Ontario MPP
33. Michael Harris, former Ontario premier
34. Alupa Clarke, former Conservative MP
35. Chuck Strahl, former Conservative MP and cabinet minister
36. Christian Paradis, former Conservative MP and cabinet minister

* Note: this list is focused on current and former Parliamentarians, and notable provincial and municipal politicians.



Mélanie Paradis is one of three deputy campaign managers for Team O’Toole. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

is currently a vice-president of the Ontario PC Party and a director with McMillan Vantage Policy Group.

She’s no doubt in close contact with Mr. O’Toole’s campaign press secretary, Chelsea Tucker, and videographer Jeff Pierce, who’s been producing video content for the federal party in recent years.

Mr. Mader, who’s similarly returned for Round 2 after having helped with communications during Mr. O’Toole’s 2017 bid,

News Conservatives & Quebec

Quebec CPC membership votes more important than low leadership donations, say politicians

Quebec donations to CPC leadership candidates made up three per cent of the total they raised in the first quarter—down from seven per cent in the 2017 race—despite the province making up 23 per cent of the vote.

Continued from page 1

campaigns, and less inclined than provincial counterparts to give federally in the first place.

The four candidates collectively raised less than \$60,000 in Quebec, with frontrunners Peter MacKay (who raised a total \$1.04-million) and Erin O'Toole (who raised a total of \$785,000) neck-and-neck leading the small figures in the first three months of 2020, according to fundraising data released by Elections Canada. Meanwhile, all candidates combined raised \$1.49-million in Ontario, \$397,000 in Alberta, \$337,100 in B.C., \$183,500 in Nova Scotia, \$105,400 in Manitoba, and \$67,100 in Saskatchewan.

In Quebec, Mr. O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) came out slightly ahead with \$21,000, followed by the former justice minister's \$18,000. The other two candidates were further behind, with rookie Ontario MP Derek Sloan (Hastings-Lennox and Addington, Ont.) raising \$11,000 of his \$448,000 in Quebec, and for Ontario lawyer Leslyn Lewis, \$7,000 of her total \$410,000. None of the campaigns granted interviews or gave information about their work fundraising and recruiting members in Quebec.

With all 338 ridings worth equal weight electing the next leader, the relatively few party members in Quebec's 78 ridings make important marks for the leadership campaigns for their disproportionate influence on the outcome.

"I always say one Conservative vote in Quebec during a leadership campaign is almost equivalent to 100 votes in Alberta," said Conservative Senator Leo Housakos, where Quebec accounts for 23 per cent of the votes versus Alberta's 34 ridings at 10 per cent.

Sen. Housakos (Wellington, Que.) has endorsed Mr. O'Toole, and said the fundraising numbers don't suggest a lower interest in the race.

"I'm convinced a better snapshot of the leadership race from a fundraising perspective



Donations from Quebec residents to Conservative leadership candidates made up only three per cent of the totals, even though the province is an important pool for votes as 23 per cent of the final tally. From left, former cabinet minister Peter MacKay, Conservative MP Erin O'Toole, Conservative MP Derek Sloan, and Toronto lawyer Leslyn Lewis are running for the party's top job. Photographs courtesy of Twitter and The Hill Times file photographs

will probably come by the end of June now that Quebecers are slowly returning back to work and Montreal is being opened and we're coming out of our cocoons," said Sen. Housakos, who noted Quebec has been hit particularly hard with COVID-19. It's reported the most cases of the virus, and the most deaths. On March 26, the party announced it would suspend the leadership race, pushing back the April 17 deadline to bring on new members to May 15.

But Conservative strategist Tim Powers said the low fundraising totals could be instructive on a number of fronts, and may suggest there's a disconnect with the Conservative Party and its candidates with Quebec voters.

"Usually a leadership race creates some excitement and that may suggest there isn't the degree of excitement in Quebec that the party would like, and any leader would like. It might also suggest that the teams don't have strong fundraising organizations in Quebec," he said.

That's not necessarily a terrible thing if a campaign's focus is on securing the support of members in Quebec, several suggested, with the May 15 deadline looming. Especially, said Mr. Powers, given the "working theory" that much of this leadership race will be done off of active membership lists.

Still, the money raised in Quebec by the potential nine candidates that totaled the race amounted to only three per cent, or \$98,665, of the \$3.25-million they all brought in the first quarter—or an even worse two per cent among the four remaining candidates. That roughly matches the breakdown the Conservative Party fundraised in the same quarter, with Quebec accounting for only \$57,000 of the \$1.96-million in donations—of more than \$200 that can be tracked by location—to the brand rather than candidates. The Tories brought in nearly \$4.4-million overall for the first quarter of 2020.

It's worth taking into account how the party is doing in the province as a whole, said former Conservative cabinet chief of staff Garry Keller, noting Quebec is unique in its provincial fundraising, which has one of the highest per-vote subsidies paid to registered parties.

"Dollars may not necessarily translate to membership numbers," he said, and given that March was likely a "dead zone" for many of the candidates, it's hard to know who had momentum and whether it stalled.

the province's total donations. Meanwhile, the most raised in Quebec this race came from the former candidate Rudy Husny, who amassed \$27,300 and was the only Quebecer to enter the field.

MacKay leads in caucus endorsements

Mr. MacKay leads in caucus endorsements, including four of the 10 Quebec MPs, including Bernard Gagnéux (Montmagny-L'Islet-Kamouraska-Rivière du Loup, Que.), Jacques Gourde



Conservative Senator Leo Housakos has endorsed Ontario MP Erin O'Toole for Conservative leader. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

"I wouldn't read too much into it. If I'm a leadership candidate, Quebec is a great territory for leadership votes because of the number of ridings there."

While Quebec federal fundraising has historically been small for the size of the province, this race's candidates are still prompting, proportionally, fewer pockets to open in their favour compared to the 2017 race that saw Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) named leader.

Quebec donations accounted for seven per cent of all donations to the 2017 field of 14 candidates. They raised \$737,800 out of the \$10.3-million recorded by the end of the long campaign, with former Quebec MP Maxime Bernier bringing in more than half of

(Lévis-Lotbinière, Que.), Luc Berthold (Mégantic-L'Érable, Que.), and Pierre Paul-Hus. Mr. Paul-Hus' (Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles, Que.) office referred questions to the Conservative Party, while Mr. Berthold (Mégantic-L'Érable, Que.) declined to comment, as did the party's Quebec lieutenant Alain Rayes (Richmond-Arthabaska, Que.).

Mr. O'Toole has Quebec MP Richard Martel (Chicoutimi-Le Fjord, Que.) in his corner, alongside Sen. Housakos and Quebec Conservative Senator Judith Seidman. Former Conservative Quebec MP Alupa Clarke is also leading his campaign in Quebec, and Sen. Housakos said the team working the province is strong.

Conservative caucus endorsements don't mean much, agreed Mr. Powers and Mr. Keller, unless they come with the political organizing strength of the politician as well.

Both Mr. Martel, a former hockey coach who boasted connections in each riding, and Sen. Housakos said they've been on the phone and Zoom calls for days urging support for Mr. O'Toole. And, as *The Hill Times* reported this week, many of Mr. O'Toole's recent ads have run exclusively in French.

Mr. Martel (Chicoutimi-Le Fjord, Que.), speaking to *The Hill Times* through a translator, said the low numbers are in part due to the Quebec mentality on fundraising, especially federally. He said it's not reflective of the membership numbers and interest in the party or his chosen candidate, Mr. O'Toole, who he described as a straight-shooter with good judgement and a strong debater.

He also praised the Ontario MP's French and said the candidate can bring the party closer to Quebecers, acknowledging the election was a disaster for the party in his province. Sen. Housakos also pointed to language, saying that while all candidates are "challenged" with French, Mr. O'Toole has "improved drastically," and that was, in part, why he supported him.

With organizing all being done online and over the phone, former Conservative candidate David Tordjman said it's hard to get a read on where support is, but he'd put it at "an almost 50-50 split" for the two frontrunners.

He's supporting Mr. MacKay, who he said got a positive reception when visiting Mount Royal, Que., which Mr. Tordjman lost to incumbent Liberal MP Anthony Housefather.

Despite the hard time getting donors, he said he doesn't see people backing away from the Conservative Party. After the party posted disappointing results in Quebec and lost two seats in October, he said it was clear there were issues that needed to be addressed.

"Quebec is a key province to winning a federal election," he said, and he's been making calls to encourage involvement, regardless of who they support.

"My interest is making sure people sign up, whichever way they're going to vote," he said. "We need to make noise and people are not happy with the present government. We need to get ready for the next election."

Conservative Senator Larry Smith (Saurel, Que.), who has yet to endorse a candidate, said interest in the leadership campaign has been affected by COVID-19, and likely had an impact on the low numbers to end the quarter.

"Obviously there's work to do in Quebec," he said. "There's no secret the Conservatives have not had a strong position in Quebec, specifically in the Montreal area," he said, adding it will be "critical" for the next leader, especially as an anglophone, to better establish themselves among francophone voters. That means appealing directly to voters, he said.

"My philosophy is simple—get in front of as many as you can."

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MPs claimed \$230,000 in free travel from organizations, foreign governments in 2019

Taiwan was the most frequent—and expensive—destination, totalling \$90,000 and making up 40 per cent of all claimed travel.

Continued from page 1

accommodation, gifts, and fees described as “other” to these groups, or the 98 valued at \$616,300 in 2017.

Taiwan was the most frequent—and expensive—destination, totalling \$90,000 in sponsored travel from the island nation’s government and office in Canada. Attended by seven Conservative MPs and one Liberal, Taiwan accounted for 40 per cent of all claimed travel in 2019.

For at least the last five years, groups representing Taiwanese interests have topped the sponsorship list. For example, in 2018 these groups spent \$170,416 sponsoring 14 MPs and some of their partners on trips; in 2017, \$165,628 on 17 MPs; and in 2016, \$127,739 sponsoring 11 MPs.

Blocked at international tables by China, which claims it as a province, Taiwan has long lobbied countries to support its presence and independence. That effort has gained momentum amid the global fight against the novel coronavirus, with Taiwan arguing it deserves a seat at the World Health Organization.

Though Canada has a “One China” policy, where it doesn’t officially recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state, it has supported the small island nation having observer status at the WHO. Recently, Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint Maurice-Champlain, Que.) refused to name Taiwan when pressed by opposition to thank the government for its donation of 500,000 masks, though Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) later directly acknowledged the support.

Green MP Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.) said she worries about “inappropriate influence” when foreign governments are paying Canadian politicians to visit, especially when so much money is spent year after year.

“Taiwan should not keep needing to bring MPs to make sure we understand that international

question” and its tensions with China, she said. “It’s obviously for the purpose of securing more support for that government in terms of how Canada relates to that government.”

She said she shares the same concern with visits to Israel sponsored by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) in the past, noting both destinations are frequently atop of the annual sponsored travel list. Last year, CIJA didn’t sponsor any MPs, but in 2018, it sponsored 12 MPs and spent \$117,000, and in 2017 sponsored 13 MPs, valued at \$147,286.

Martin Sampson, spokesperson for CIJA, said by email it didn’t sponsor 2019 travel because it was an election year, and the organization shifts focus from parliamentary trips to other initiatives “because we know MPs are focused on the election and tend to spend more time in their ridings.”

There was only one sponsored trip reported between June and the Oct. 21, 2019 election, by Liberal MP Anita Vandenbeld in July to Malaysia, a \$3,200 trip granted by the National Endowment for Democracy. During the last Parliament, Ms. Vandenbeld (Ottawa West-Nepean, Ont.) chaired the newly created all-party democracy caucus. MPs were permitted to accept travel during those months and remained subject to the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons, and its reporting requirements, until the writ was issued in September last year. After the election, nine MPs reported trips to end the year.

Four MPs accepted two or more sponsored tours, and 15 involved someone accompanying the Parliamentarian, like a spouse. Conservatives were the most likely to accept the sponsorships, with 22 trips valued at \$128,200; followed by 14 for Liberal MPs, valued at \$63,800;

five for NDP MPs, at \$27,900; and two for Independents, valued at \$9,500.

The year before, Liberal trips edged out the opposition, with 44 Liberal visits valued at \$236,400, compared to 38 Conservative destinations valued at \$261,400, followed by 13 for NDP MPs at \$22,900.



Federal Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion released the latest MP sponsored travel report, showing MPs accepted \$229,600 worth of free travel in 2019. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Ethical ‘grey area’: May

Other than parliamentary committee travel, this is one of the few opportunities for opposition Members and government backbenchers to do international work—to see where Canadian development money is going, for example—whereas MPs who are parliamentary secretaries or ministers have that access, noted Conservative MP Mike Lake (Edmonton-Wetaskiwin, Alta.). His three trips last year were all in North America to speak at conferences.

But Ms. May said sponsored travel, especially from foreign governments, can be highly curated, with MPs lobbied on a certain perspective who “don’t get both sides of a story.”

“It’s certainly not black and white, but this creates a real ethical grey area that we need to examine because it’s so common. So much money is going into this and when I look at governments that do it most frequently, they have to feel it’s worth their while and an investment keeping Canada and getting Canadian MPs to take up their cause. And

that’s not our job,” said Ms. May, who said she doesn’t accept such travel, or pays her own way.

While she said she doesn’t want to criticize individual MPs—noting it’s such a common practice—she’d like it reviewed to see if the practice is transparent, complies with the lobbying act, and offers a clear picture about how foreign governments are lobbying MPs.

In a report last year, Lobbying Commissioner Nancy Bélanger warned of a transparency gap in reporting, where groups registered to lobby are concerned, noting reporting makes it unclear whether lobbying occurred.

Under the Conflict of Interest Code, MPs are restricted from accepting gifts “that might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence” them in their job, and must be disclosed if they are valued at \$200 or more, but travel is an exception—which Ms. May said amounts to “a loophole.”

New Democrat Charlie Angus (Timmins-James Bay, Ont.), Conservative Michael Barrett (Leeds-

Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Ont.), and Bloc Québécois MP Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides-Labell, Que.)—all ethics critics for their parties—didn’t respond to requests for comment.

In the past, Mr. Angus has echoed Ms. May’s concerns, calling sponsored travel “lobbying” and “very problematic,” with “serious gaps in the rules.”

“It’s about gaining influence and there’s no oversight over how the sponsored travel is allowed to happen,” said Mr. Angus in May last year.

Sponsored travel strikes ‘a good balance’: Lake

Though Mr. Lake didn’t accept travel overseas in 2019, he said it can be valuable for opposition Members to see the international development work Canada is taking part in. He’s travelled with World Vision in the past and said it gave him insight into what’s happening “on the ground.”

There’s no other mechanism for this type of travel, or for him to accept requests to speak on issues he’s passionate about. Mr. Lake, whose son has autism, said he sees it as a way to affect how people see employment and disability, and inclusion and contribution. He doesn’t accept speaking fees, and the current approach means neither he nor the taxpayer have to pay out of pocket.

“Rules around transparency are really important so people

can see the travel that we’re accepting and they can make their own assessment on whether we should accept the travel, and at the same time it reminds us, as Members of Parliament, that we are going to be accountable,” he said. “I think this strikes a good balance.”

He was among four MPs who accepted more than one trip in 2019. That also included Liberal MP Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Ont.) who wasn’t available for an interview and didn’t respond to questions by email.

She traveled to Tel Aviv, Israel, in February for a parliamentary meeting with “leading service providers of inclusion models” for people with disabilities in Israel, according to the report.

Her trip was sponsored by March of Dimes Canada, a national charity focused on rehabilitation services and resources for people with disabilities, which also paid for Conservative MP John Barlow (Foothills, Alta.) to attend.

She also travelled to Nairobi, Kenya, to attend the 25th anniversary of the Nairobi Summit’s International Conference on Population and Development. Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights sponsored the November visit. Both trips were valued at just less than \$4,000.

Both trips were in between her being named to parliamentary secretary posts—currently to Indigenous Services—as both cabinet ministers and parliamentary secretaries are forbidden from accepting sponsored travel.

Conservative MP Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, Alta.), who declined to comment, travelled to Uzbekistan in December, where the government sponsored the \$12,800 trip as a guest observer of its elections. He also went to learn about the “current political landscape and establish strong ties with Canada and Uzbekistan,” according to his report to the ethics commissioner.

Earlier in the year, World Vision sponsored his \$4,000 trip, alongside Liberal MP Rob Oliphant (Don Valley West, Ont.), to Bangladesh to “gain insight into Canadian-funded development and humanitarian programming.”

Conservative MP Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park-Fort Saskatchewan, Alta.) went on three trips, at a cost ranging from \$1,300 to \$3,000 to Colombia, sponsored by the Political Network for Values, to India sponsored by the Canada Tibet Committee, and to Switzerland, sponsored by the Office of Tibet in Geneva.

Most claims were for travel abroad, save for five in Canada. Independent MP Jody Wilson-Raybould (Vancouver Granville, B.C.) was top of that list, claiming \$7,174 for speaking at the November Ontario Realtor Party Conference. She claimed \$6,494 in transportation for the flights between Toronto and B.C. and cars to the venue and airport.

Her office said by email that the Ontario Real Estate Association booked and paid for the flight directly.

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‘Hard decisions are going to have to be made’: can vital defence procurements survive in a post-pandemic world?

‘When you are trying to fix a fiscal problem, inevitably national defence is part of the way governments have tended to try and fix that,’ says defence procurement expert David Perry.

Continued from page 1

“Companies and government are always generally working hard trying to meet [the] schedule, and make up time wherever they can afterwards, but there’s a limit what you can do to replace a few lost weeks of work,” said David Perry, a defence procurement expert and vice-president of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

“The impacts are going to be tangible,” Mr. Perry said, adding that the picture is still murky about the final impact on the current procurements as defence companies are still trying to get a handle on the pandemic.

The high-profile \$19-billion project to replace Canada’s fleet of CF-18 fighter jets was delayed a second time in 100 days last week, over a bidder’s concern over completing its bid on time, according to a Canadian Press report.

Irving Shipbuilding’s Halifax shipyard, which has been tasked to build two central pieces for the future of the Canadian Navy in six Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships and 15 Canadian Surface Combatants, is running at half capacity with around 650 people working at the shipyard and 300 remotely, according to a CTV report. The two projects are projected to cost upwards of \$4.3-billion and \$60-billion, respectively.

Mr. Perry also said the impact on the procurements will depend on what stage the project is in, with less effect for those still in design and requirement phases and more impact on projects in the midst of construction.

He added that the impact will also depend on where the facilities are located, as the Irving shipyard in Nova Scotia faced a three-week shutdown, opposed to the Seaspan shipyards in B.C., which has continued relatively normal operations.

A spokesperson for the Department of National Defence told *The Hill Times* that progress is still being made “where possible” on current and future equipment for the Canadian Forces.

“While our focus must be on responding to the COVID-19



pandemic, we remain committed to the National Shipbuilding Strategy and other defence projects under Strong, Secure, Engaged,” the spokesperson said in an email.

“We continue to meet regularly with PSPC [Public Services and Procurement Canada] to address the delivery of ongoing and future major procurement

projects, and to assess and address the impact of the pandemic on these projects. However, given that the extent of COVID-19, or how long this situation will last, cannot be assessed at this time, it is not yet possible to determine the impact this situation will have on our projects,” the statement read, adding that the focus remains on continuing essential services, which include “domestic operations and search and rescue.”

Former Air Force pilot Alan Stephenson said that there is “no doubt” that there will be “a huge impact” to defence procurement caused by the pandemic, pointing to the government’s ballooning spending.

Mr. Stephenson, a retired colonel who is now a senior associate at David Pratt and Associates, said the problem with the fighter jet procurement is being compounded by successive governments’ use of military spending to solve other problems.

“Now we find ourselves with ... fighters that will be over 50 years old,” he said. “And we’ll be flying

government will balance military requirements with economic needs.

Mr. Perry said historically when the government has needed to slash spending, it has looked at the military.

“When you are trying to fix a fiscal problem, inevitably national defence is part of the way governments have tended to try and fix

that,” he said, adding that given the size of the defence budget, it is “virtually impossible” to address an economic situation without making some fiscal changes at the Department of National Defence.

But he said that historical pattern may not continue as it’s a different kind of fiscal problem for the government.

“In a dynamic where you have real big impacts on consumer confidence and there’s also, I think, fairly serious concerns about the availability of financing and liquidity in the civilian economy, potentially there’s more of a room for DND and the Government of Canada writ large to be part of the economic solution

here and not just part of the fiscal problem,” Mr. Perry said.

Former naval officer Norman Jolin, who served in the Canadian Navy for 37 years and commanded the Halifax-class HMCS Montréal, said the last thing the government will want to do is cancel projects that it has already announced at the expense of Canadian workers.

“The last thing [the government] would want to do in a world where we’ve lost so many jobs is to cause more people not to have jobs by cutting things,” he said.

Mr. Jolin compared the National Shipbuilding Strategy to the construction of a trans-Canada railway in the 19th century.

“This is jobs across Canada,” he said, adding that it is not just jobs at shipyards but throughout the supply chain including manufacturing jobs in southern Ontario.

Mr. Jolin said with the procurements under the National Shipbuilding Strategy, the lengthy timeline will mitigate the pandemic’s impact.

For the Canadian Surface Combatant procurement, the first ship isn’t projected to be completed until the mid-2020s and the final delivery date for the entire fleet is in the late 2040s.

He said while there may be minor delays in the short term, it shouldn’t have much impact on when the ships are delivered in the end.

But he said there is still much unknown about how the pandemic has affected the procurement process.

Charles Davies, a retired colonel in the Armed Forces who spent time as the senior director responsible for procurement and equipment management policy at the Department of National Defence, also said the long timeline on projects should reduce the impact of any delay.

“In the inherently long gestation periods of the major programs, the net impact should be limited,” he said.

Mr. Davies, a CDA Institute fellow, said now can be a time for the government to look to make key investments in capabilities that will be needed in the future to defend its borders while at the same time keeping the economy afloat.

He said unlike in the mid-1990s during the budget cuts under then-prime minister Jean Chrétien, Canada is not in the geopolitical position to allow its defence budget to dissipate.

“We’re in a different world now,” he said, citing the “strategic environment” with more aggressive behaviour being seen from the Chinese and Russian governments.

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The Irving shipyard is operating with reduced capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is tasked with building six Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships and 15 Canadian Surface Combatants frigates. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

[the CF-18s] into the future.”

“COVID has changed the game,” Mr. Stephenson said, adding that the focus on the Liberals’ 2017 defence policy, Strong, Secure, Engaged, will still be present, but there will be fiscal questions of its feasibility.

“Hard decisions are going to have to be made,” he said, as the



HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

New communications director for Minister Rodriguez



Government House Leader and Quebec Lieutenant Pablo Rodriguez, pictured in the House of Commons during a meeting of the Special Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic on May 6. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Plus, Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller has hired a new director of parliamentary affairs and issues management.

Government House Leader and Quebec Lieutenant **Pablo Rodriguez** has a new director of communications, **Louis-François Brodeur**, supporting him in both of his cabinet posts.

Mr. Brodeur marked his first day tackling communications for Mr. Rodriguez on March 16.



Louis-François Brodeur is now communications director to Mr. Rodriguez. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Previously, former Parliamentary Press Gallery reporter **Mark Kennedy** wore the title of director of communications to Mr. Rodriguez as the government's House leader, a role he first took on in early 2017. Last November, after the 2019 election, Mr. Rodriguez was given the additional responsibility of Quebec lieutenant, and in

turn now has two teams supporting him, with some staff working as part of both, Mr. Brodeur included.

Mr. Kennedy continues to work for Mr. Rodriguez in his capacity as government House leader, now under the title of senior communications adviser.

Mr. Brodeur arrived straight from Quebec's national assembly, where he'd spent the last year and a half working for Quebec Justice Minister **Sonia LeBel** as a political adviser and director of communications.

Before then, he spent a little more than two years working as federal public servant for Employment and Social Development Canada in Gatineau, Que., ending as senior adviser for the innovation unit of the department's labour branch, as noted on his LinkedIn profile. He's also previously done public affairs work, including on a freelance basis for Octane Stratégies.

Emmanuelle Ducharme has also been hired on to Mr. Rodriguez's team and, like Mr. Brodeur, is supporting the minister in both of his roles. She started on the job as a communications adviser on Feb. 7.

Ms. Ducharme was previously working in the Prime Minister's Office as executive assistant to then-executive director of communications **Kate Purchase**. Ms. Purchase left the Hill to become a senior director with Microsoft in January, as previously reported.

Ms. Ducharme is also a former assistant to then-Quebec Liberal MP **Denis Paradis**.

Simon Ross remains press secretary to Mr. Rodriguez and similarly supports the minister as both House leader and Quebec lieutenant.

Speaking of Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**'s office, former PMO Quebec regional affairs adviser **Marie-Laurence Lapointe** has joined Mr. Rodriguez's Quebec lieutenant team as director of regional affairs for west Quebec.

Ms. Lapointe left the PMO after almost three years as the top office's Quebec desk in April 2019 to join Liberal Party head-



Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller, right, pictured speaking with Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos, left, and Public Safety Minister Bill Blair in the House of Commons on May 6. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

quarters as chief Quebec organizer ahead of last year's federal election, which saw the Liberals returned to government in a minority Parliament. She'd previously supported the party's campaign in Quebec in 2015.

She'll be working closely with **Paul-Christian Nolin**, director of regional affairs for east Quebec.

Geneviève Hinse is chief of staff to Mr. Rodriguez as Quebec lieutenant. That team also currently includes former Liberal MP **Ramez Ayoub** and **Éric Beaulieu** as senior advisers for regional affairs, and **Norair Serengulian** as director of community relations.

Rheal Lewis is chief of staff to Mr. Rodriguez as government House leader and currently oversees: **Hugo Dompierre**, director of parliamentary affairs; **Kornelia Mankowski**, director of Senate affairs; **Daniel Arsenault**, director of issues management; **John Matheson**, director of policy; **Rob Jamieson**, senior adviser; **Izabel Czuzoj-Shulman**, senior adviser for parliamentary affairs; **Trevor Harrison**, senior adviser for parliamentary affairs; **Jean-Luc Plourde**, senior special assistant for parliamentary affairs; **Jérôme Miousse**, policy adviser; **Samar Assoum**, parliamentary affairs adviser; and **Lynda Bouraoui**, executive assistant.

Indigenous Service Minister Miller names parliamentary affairs head

There's a new director of parliamentary affairs and issues management in place in the office of Indigenous Services Minister **Marc Miller**.

Sara Amash started in the job in early April. She's most recently been busy doing freelance public and government relations work, but previously spent a little more than three years working for then-Ontario Liberal citizenship and immigration minister **Laura Albanese** as director of communications and senior press secretary.



Sara Amash is now director of parliamentary affairs and issues management to Mr. Miller. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Ms. Amash first started working for the Ontario government as part of the public service in 2009, according to her LinkedIn profile, first doing issues management and policy work for the then-health promotion and sport ministry's programs and com-

munity development branch (that ministry has since been merged with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care). She's also done communications and engagement work for the Ministry of Transportation in the lead up to Toronto's 2015 Pan-Am and Parapan-Am Games, and issues management for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, amongst other past jobs.

Previously, **Jeff Valois** was Mr. Miller's head of parliamentary affairs, but he recently exited to join the Prime Minister's Office as an Ontario regional affairs adviser.

Jordano Nudo also joined Mr. Miller's team in early April, taking on the title of policy adviser.



Jordano Nudo has joined Mr. Miller's team straight from the public service. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Mr. Nudo has spent the last two and half years working on the departmental side of things as a junior policy analyst, having been hired on in January 2018 after interning in the then-named department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs for a little more than half a year.

He has a bachelor's degree in political science and government from McGill University and a master's degree in public policy and administration from Concordia University, during which time he worked as both a teaching assistant and research assistant.

Katherine Heus is director of policy to Mr. Miller.

Mike Burton is the minister's chief of staff. The team also currently includes: **Marie-Emmanuelle Cadieux**, director of communications; **Vanessa Adams**, senior communications adviser and press secretary; **Adrienne Vaupshas**, communications assistant; **Katherine Koostachin**, senior policy adviser; **Kathy Kettler**, senior adviser for Northern regional affairs; **Bismah Haq**, policy adviser; **Sherry Smith**, senior regional adviser for the Prairies; **Griffin Marsh**, operations assistant and regional adviser for B.C. and Ontario; **Deliah Bernard**, Atlantic regional affairs adviser; **Christi Basaraba**, issues adviser; **Hilary Lawson**, legislative assistant; **Bryan Rourke**, executive assistant to Mr. Miller; and **Alina Dewani**, executive assistant to Mr. Burton.

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Parties of the past

The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia

With COVID-19 putting a pause on diplomatic gatherings in Ottawa, *The Hill Times* is offering a look back with (some never-before-seen) images of celebrations and special events that have occurred at this time in years past.

Africa Day



The countries of the African Union with representation in Ottawa held an Africa Day party on May 25, 2007, with traditional performances.

Argentina national day



Then-Argentinian Ambassador Arturo Bothamley with then-Norwegian Ambassador Tor Berntin Naess at a reception for Argentina's national day on May 25, 2007.

Queen's Day



Then-Netherlands Ambassador Karel de Beer and then-French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau at party thrown by the Netherlands Embassy on April 30, 2007, to celebrate its Queen's Day.



Hasna Benamara, wife of the then-Algerian ambassador; then-Algerian Ambassador Smail Benamara; and then-Malian Ambassador Mamadou Bandiougou Diawara.



Then-Gabon Ambassador Joseph Obiang-Ndoutoume, then-South African High Commissioner Abraham Nkomo, and then-Angolan Ambassador Miguel Puna.



Mr. Bothamley and then-Brunei High Commissioner Magdalene Teo.



Mr. de Beer and then-Chinese Ambassador Lu Shumin.

Parliamentary Calendar

House recalled May 13, Senators to brainstorm about national autism strategy in May 15 web discussion

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

House Sitting—The House has been recalled to sit on Wednesday, May 13 to pass legislation relating to emergency COVID-19 relief. MPs will gather in the Chamber at the later of 2:30 p.m. and the conclusion of the proceedings of the in-person meeting of the Special Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic. Otherwise, the House is suspended until Monday, May 25, and the spring schedule is still not confirmed due to the global pandemic. However, during this adjournment time, a Special COVID-19 Pandemic Committee has been established, composed of all members of the House, to meet beginning on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. The Wednesday meeting will be in person, while the Tuesday and Thursday sessions will be held virtually. As per the original sitting calendar, if the House resumes on May 25, it will sit for four weeks, until its scheduled adjournment on June 23, but

none of this has been confirmed yet. The House was also scheduled to adjourn again for three months and to return in the fall on Monday, Sept. 21, for three straight weeks. It was scheduled to adjourn for one week and to sit again from Oct. 19 until Nov. 6. It was scheduled to break again for one week and to sit again from Nov. 16 to Dec. 11. And that would be it for 2020. We'll update you once the House calendar has been confirmed.

Senate Not Sitting—The Senate has extended its suspension due to the COVID-19 virus until June 2. The June possible sitting days were June 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, and 19. The Senate was scheduled to sit June 2-4; June 9-11; June 16-18; and June 22, 23, it was scheduled to break on June 24 for St. Jean Baptiste Day; and it was scheduled to sit June 25 and June 26. The Senate was scheduled to break 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. We'll also update you once the Senate calendar has been confirmed.

Calgary Chamber of Commerce Webinar—The Calgary Chamber of Commerce hosts a webinar, "Federal measures to support Canada's economic recovery and what Western Economic Diversification Canada is doing in Alberta." Justin Riemer, assistant deputy minister, Western Economic Diversification Canada, will provide an overview of federal economic measures in response to COVID-19 and the actions the department is undertaking to support firms and industry sectors in Alberta through economic recovery. Wednesday, May 13, from 11-11:30 a.m. MST. Register online via calgarychamber.com.

My Trade Team is Your Team—As part of its Trade Recovery Series, the Toronto Board of Trade hosts a webinar featuring Chief Trade Commissioner of Canada and assistant deputy minister, Global Affairs Canada, Ailish Campbell. Wednesday, May 13, at 2 p.m. Register online via the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

Partisan Politics During a Pandemic—McGill University hosts a webinar on "Partisan Politics During a Pandemic: From Consensus to Conflict" featuring media commentator and political analyst Tasha Kheiridin. Priority during the Q&A section of this webcast will be given to Max Bell School MPP students. Wednesday, May 13, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Register online.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13—MONDAY, MAY 18

Canadian Tulip Festival—The Canadian Tulip Festival, a not-for-profit charitable organization, is dedicating its programming this year to commemorating the role Canadians played in the Liberation of the Netherlands 75 years ago while celebrating the Gift of Tulips that led to the festival, from Friday, May 8, to Monday, May 18. While the tulips will still bloom in Commissioners Park, Tulip Festival programming will be presented on virtual platforms. The public is asked not to travel to the Tulip Gardens this year, but instead to allow the Canadian Tulip Festival to bring the tulips, and tulip-related activities and entertainment, into the comfort and safety of their homes. Festival-goers will be asked to visit www.tulipfestival.ca to take a virtual garden tour through the 300,000 tulip blooms in Ottawa's Commissioner's Park while also enjoying music, theatre, and memories on the Festival's TulipTV YouTube channel.

THURSDAY, MAY 14

The Shape of Canada's Infrastructure Stimulus—Re-New Canada and Global Public Affairs host a webinar on "The Shape of Canada's Infrastructure Stimulus," a discussion on how best to target infrastructure investments in 2020. Panellists include former federal Conservative cabinet minister John Baird, global strategic adviser at Hatch; former Nova Scotia premier Darrell Dexter, vice-chair, Global Public Affairs; and former premier of British Columbia Christy Clark, senior adviser, Bennett Jones. Thursday, May 14, from noon to 1 p.m. Register online via crowdfund.ca/e/fgydp9ax/

The State of the Canadian Oil and Gas Industry—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts a webinar on "The State of the Canadian Oil and Gas Industry" featuring Martha Hall Findlay, Suncor; Gord Lambert, former CEO, Alberta Energy Regulator; and Samantha Stuart, TC Energy. Thursday, May 14, from noon to 1 p.m. Register online via canadianclub.org.

FRIDAY, MAY 15

Senators at Home: Honing in on the National Autism Strategy—The Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance hosts a webinar, "Senators at Home: Honing in on the National Autism Strategy." Senators Jim Munson, Leo Housakos, Wanda Thomas Bernard, and Peter Boehm will discuss the what and why that should underlie the National Autism Strategy. Friday, May 15, from 3-4 p.m. Register via Eventbrite.

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; Alix 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/>.

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

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