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THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-FIRST YEAR, NO. 1737

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

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News

‘Politics as usual’: CERB bill failure suggests shifting tactics, say critics, though Canadians want co-operation amid crisis

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

Parliament's first piece of stalled COVID-19-related legislation is part of the “natural evolution”

in Parliament's response to the pandemic, says a Conservative MP, while pollsters and pundits say opposition parties have to be careful in their approach, with

Canadians preferring co-operation in response to the crisis.

Since the pandemic shut down Parliament in mid-March, opposition parties have been overall

supportive of the relief measures brought forward, at least in the passing of legislation. But last

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News

Black Conservatives urge more engagement, action from CPC and beyond after endorsement flop

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Leadership races are natural moments for self-reflection, and Black Conservative Party supporters say they hope the current race, and ongoing anti-Black racism protests, prompt a conversation about what

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News

The ‘afterlife of slavery’: defund, reform Canada’s prisons, advocates call, after watchdog says ‘very little’ has improved for Black inmates

‘It’s a racist system. We live it,’ says one Black prisoner of Canada’s correctional system. ‘We’re seen as rigid, defiant, very combative, non-compliant. These are the labels we get.’

Public Safety Minister Bill Blair oversees the Correctional Service of Canada, which advocates say needs to address systemic racism, given the outcomes of its Black inmates. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

Seven years after Canada’s prison watchdog report detailed the systemic discrimination

Black men and women experience inside the country’s prisons, the office says “very little” has changed as advocates call for “aggressive” reform.

Black Canadians continue to be overrepresented in federal prisons, in segregation, and in use-of-force incidents, said Correctional Investigator of Canada

Ivan Zinger in an email response to *The Hill Times*. Despite a case study published in early 2014 by

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News

NDP, Green MPs raise concern over Canada’s trust in OAS election monitoring in Bolivia

BY NEIL MOSS

As doubt grows over the monitoring of the last Bolivian election, NDP and Green Party MPs have raised concerns over the ability for the Organization of American States to be trusted to oversee a pivotal election in September.

Recent studies have suggested that the decision of the Organization of American States (OAS) Electoral Observation Mission in

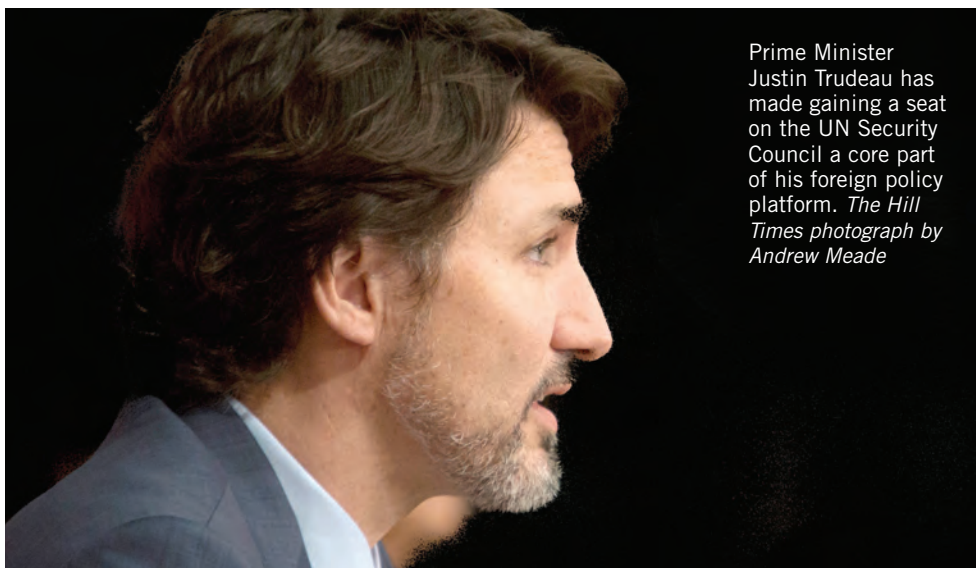
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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Neil Moss

Time for Champagne?: Canada awaits UN Security Council vote in New York City



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has made gaining a seat on the UN Security Council a core part of his foreign policy platform. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In what could be one of the most important days for the legacy of Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau's** foreign policy, Canada will find out if it will have a spot on the UN Security Council for the first time in 20 years after the UN General Assembly votes on who will win on June 17.

Canada is facing tough competition for two open seats in the Western Europe and Others bloc for the 2021 and 2022 term from Norway and Ireland. It is expected that Norway will win a seat, leaving Canada and Ireland to compete for the second.

Canada joined the campaign late, announcing its bid in 2016. Ireland and Norway started their campaigns in 2005 and 2007, respectively.

The bid is part of Mr. Trudeau's pledge to re-engage with the UN. The campaign for the Security Council seat was one of the few foreign policy objectives listed in last year's throne speech.

Former diplomat **Colin Robertson**, vice-president of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, told *The Hill Times* that the campaign was a personal mission for Mr. Trudeau.

"It's the one foreign policy venture that is truly his," Mr. Robertson said.

In the past few weeks, Mr. Trudeau has been making a series of calls to world leaders, some of which have involved Canada's UN Security Council campaign.

Foreign Affairs Minister **François-Philippe Champagne** has joined Canada's UN ambassador, **Marc-André Blanchard**, in New York City for the final stretch of the campaign.

The Canadian delegation at the United Nations has been tight-lipped on whether they feel they have the necessary votes to win a spot on the Security Council. The last time Canada tried to win a spot on the body in 2010, the Harper government felt it had the votes to win, but in the end the bid fell short. A country needs at least 129 votes to win a spot on the council.

Canada has had a spot on the Security Council in every decade since the UN was formed in the 1940s until its 2010 defeat.

Senator Lillian Dyck calls for RCMP commissioner's resignation

Following RCMP Commissioner **Brenda Lucki's** public comments last week waffling in response to questions about systematic racism in the national police force, Progressive Senator **Lillian Dyck** is calling for the commissioner to step down.



Progressive Senator Lillian Dyck says the 'about-face' of RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki is 'paradoxical and unacceptable as a leader.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

"Commissioner Brenda Lucki's statements in the last few days reveal that she does not possess the necessary knowledge or skills to remain as the RCMP commissioner. She should step down or be removed immediately. This will benefit all Canadians, including the



The Canada Day festivities in 2019 included more than 55,000 people on Parliament Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Canadians to celebrate Canada Day virtually with Alanis Morissette, Sarah McLachlan, and others

Unlike past Canada Day celebrations there won't be any fanfare on Parliament Hill this year, but Canadians can tune in online to catch some of the bigger names in Canadian music of yesteryear.

The artists will include **Alanis Morissette**, **Sarah McLachlan**, and **Avril Lavigne**, as well as **The Sheepdogs** and **Alan Doyle** of **Great Big Sea**.

The festivities will start with an afternoon show from 1 to 2 p.m., which will feature artists from all around Canada, including Moncton, N.B., Quebec City, Que., Sudbury, Ont., Calgary, Alta., and Yellowknife, N.W.T., among others.

The evening show will start at 8 p.m., with the bigger names performing. It will finish at 10 p.m. with a montage of past firework shows. There will also be a virtual firework show available through an app.

It will be a change of pace for the Hill compared to last year when more than 55,000 people attended Canada Day celebrations on Parliament Hill, which included a 15-minute firework show.

members of the RCMP," Sen. Dyck said in a statement.

Ms. Lucki initially said in a CBC interview that she has heard "about 15 or 20 definitions of systemic racism," and added that "if it refers to an unconscious bias that exists and we definitely have that in the RCMP and we are not immune to it at all." She later released a statement clarifying her remarks, saying that she should have made clear that systematic racism exists within the RCMP.

"I do know that systemic racism is part of every institution, the RCMP included. Throughout our history and today, we have not always treated racialized and Indigenous people fairly," she said in the statement.

Sen. Dyck, a member of the Gordon First Nation, said Ms. Lucki's "about-face" is "paradoxical and unacceptable as a leader."

The Saskatchewan Senator added that Ms. Lucki doesn't "possess the knowledge or leadership skills" to keep a promise she made at a hearing of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and 2SLGBT that the RCMP would "do better."

Sen. Dyck has been a member of the Red Chamber since 2005 following her nomination by then-prime minister **Paul Martin**.

Jailed blogger at centre of Canada's spat with Saudi Arabia marks eight years in prison

In 2018, then-foreign affairs minister **Chrystia Freeland** called for the release of Saudi dissident **Raif Badawi** and his sister, **Samar Badawi**, in a tweet which sparked a spat between the two countries. Mr. Badawi will mark his eighth year behind bars on July 17.

Mr. Badawi was arrested in 2012 for the charge of insulting Islam on his blog. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes. He was also fined.

A Twitter account dedicated to Mr. Badawi that is managed by his wife, **Ensaf Haidar**, is encouraging others to show support for the imprisoned blogger and call for his release. Ms. Haidar and her children have been granted asylum in Canada.



Raif Badawi, pictured in 2012, was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes in the same year. *Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

After Ms. Freeland called for Mr. Badawi's release, Saudi Arabia retaliated by expelling Canada's ambassador in Riyadh and recalled its ambassador from Ottawa. It also suspended any new trade and investment in Canada.

Bloc Québécois MP **Stéphane Bergeron** raised Mr. Badawi's case earlier this year in the House of Commons. Liberal MP **Robert Oliphant**, parliamentary secretary to Mr. Champagne, said in January that Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** has raised the case of Mr. Badawi "directly" to King **Salman** and Crown Prince **Mohammed bin Salman**.

A motion was passed in the House of Commons by unanimous consent in March for the Canadian government to offer consular service to Mr. Badawi.

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The Hill Times

Canada's untapped cleantech opportunities can transform and help rebuild the economy

Re-shaping of country's workforce key to cleantech sector's future.



Kevin Nilsen

President & CEO, ECO Canada

ECO Canada has been working with government and industry to grow and support the environmental workforce in Canada for almost 30 years. As a national organization, we provide support across the country to Canadians interested in developing careers in environment-related fields and to the employers looking to fill such roles to grow their business in a sustainable way.

As the steward for the environmental workforce, we are currently sharing our views on how enabling more people to work in the growing cleantech sector can enhance the country's economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no question Canada's employment landscape has been shaken, and while some areas are facing significant downturns others such as the cleantech sector are expected to be engines for growth.

Research points to economic recovery opportunity

ECO Canada does a significant amount of research to determine what sectors of the economy will be growing, what skillsets are required, and how the environmental workforce can be developed to meet such demands.

A study we completed in early 2020 just prior to the pandemic outbreak pointed to major opportunities for Canadian workers to enter a growing cleantech sector at a time when jobs were being minimized in other areas of the economy.

We feel just as strongly today that these jobs can be drivers for an economic recovery that benefits the country as well as helps to improve the environment.

According to the report "Cleantech Defined: A Scoping Study of the Sector and its Workforce," cleantech was a \$1.2 trillion industry in 2015 and had been projected to reach \$2.5 trillion by 2022. While the pandemic will certainly impact that growth trajectory, we still believe investment and interest from both the public and private sectors in cleantech in Canada will grow.

Our research findings highlight Canada as a top country in the world from a research and innovation perspective. And although this is worth celebrating, it is worrisome that we only rank number 16 in terms of global market share in cleantech.

We must ensure future funding is not only limited to "new" and "innovative," but also encompasses commercialization and the building of a deep workforce. Doing so will help Canada gain a greater slice of that global revenue pie. Canada has a long history of breeding great innovators so with the relaunch of the economy following COVID-19 we also need to ensure we take the steps to commercialize and capitalize on our innovations.

Pandemic leading people to seek new employment options

The COVID-19 pandemic along with recent developments in Canada's economy, such as stalled energy projects, are prompting workers to consider new industrial sectors for employment. This may be an effective way to build a talent pipeline to the cleantech sector. We know a number of industries are already expanding their demand for cleantech expertise in the near term. Energy, mining, manufacturing, forestry and hydro all present massive cleantech opportunities. Agriculture and construction are both making progress in reducing costs while promoting environmental sustainability. Trucking and transportation firms are also committed to looking at ways to reduce their footprints and decrease costs through route optimization and other innovations.

These are sectors of the economy which we want to get re-started and operating efficiently and effectively as they all provide major employment opportunities for Canadians. Jobs in cleantech are broad and range from engineers, geologists, and project managers to tradespeople and machine operators. Employers we work with are seeing the marketplace moving away from some of the typical jobs in traditional industries to more opportunities in the cleantech space. These companies see the need for skilled and talented people who find ways to deliver value by developing new technologies, testing new services and producing higher efficiency products.

We know these workers' expertise and abilities are vital

to us to recover our economy and take a leadership role globally in cleantech.

Expanding skillsets will be required to develop capabilities

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Our goal is a healthy economic recovery for Canada

A successful cleantech strategy will lead to healthier bottom lines for companies by reducing costs, improving performance, reducing environmental impact and ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources. That's something all Canadians, as well as our governments, want.

I'm excited by the opportunity new investment in the environmental workforce can bring to Canada's economic recovery. We need government and industry working together to recover the economy and to put us on a strong footing globally. We are championing these efforts now.

ECO Canada is perfectly suited to bridge the gap between the people and the evolving skillsets required to support industry as employers generate new ways of doing business and find new markets globally. Our economic recovery depends on us developing such solutions and putting people and their talents to work in environment-related fields. We've been doing this successfully for some 30 years.

To review ECO Canada's Cleantech Report or access other workforce reports, contact us at research@eco.ca.



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remarkable
change
ahead



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News

Unions, Treasury Board in talks for public service's return to workplace after three-month shutdown



PIPSC president Debi Daviau, left, and PSAC national president Chris Aylward, right. Mr. Aylward says one major issue around workers returning to the workplace is how to ensure 'physical distancing can be respected.' *The Hill Times* photographs by Sam Garcia, Andrew Meade

PIPSC president Debi Daviau says there's 'no rush' to get employees back to work and that public servants should be able to work from home 'for the foreseeable future' if they can.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Three months into the COVID-19 shutdown that's seen government offices closed to all but critical workers and thousands of public servants working from home, union leaders say while there's "no rush" to return to offices—arguing recent weeks have proven telework arrangements don't hinder performance—they've been working closely with the Treasury Board to plan the re-opening of physical workspaces.

Debi Daviau, president of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC), told *The Hill Times* that her union has been in discussions with the government for weeks on return-to-work guidelines, and that the deputy head of each department or agency will be responsible for their respective return-to-workplace plans.

"For us, obviously, the safety of our members is the top priority, so we've been working hard all along to make sure that there was personal protective equipment for people that had to go to work, and introducing new technology and procedures to send as many people as possible home," said Ms. Daviau. "Now, as we look at returning to work, we're not just looking at government offices, we're looking at labs, field work, community [issues], performing audits, and the safety of our members and their families while that happens."

Ms. Daviau said people should be able to continue to work from home for the foreseeable future if they can, and that continued efforts would need to be made to accommodate and ensure that employees can work effectively from home.

"There's still some missing pieces," said Ms. Daviau. "Things like equipment and procedures that need to reflect this new way of work."

"We think that we need to have genuine engagement and transparency with the employer when we're creating these back-to-work documents," said Ms. Daviau, adding there's no rush to get employees back to work.

A recent study by the Angus Reid Institute, released on June 11, found that among those working from home—just under one third of Canada's adult population—only 36 per cent say they will likely go back to their place of work when COVID-19 concerns subside, with 20 per cent saying they were likely to continue working from home, and 44 per cent anticipating splitting time between their workplace and home.

"The vast majority of public servants are working away, effectively from home, and we don't see the reason to throw caution to the wind when they've been productive working from home," said Ms. Daviau.

"It's a virtual world, and public servants have proven that they're able to work remotely, and we don't feel confident that adequate health and safety measures have been put in place, such as social distancing requirements, sanitation of common spaces like bathrooms and kitchens."

Treasury Board has been 'consultative, co-operative' says PSAC national president

In an interview with *The Hill Times* last week, Chris Aylward, national president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), said his union entered into discussions with the Treasury Board a few weeks ago around plans for members to return to the physical workplaces.

"Treasury Board released a 77-page document which we responded to with a 20-page response," said Mr. Aylward. "What we found mostly was that [we] had a lot of health and safety issues of course."

Mr. Aylward said one major issue is around how to ensure that appropriate physical distancing within office spaces can be respected, noting that PSAC has a lot of members who work in Service Canada centres.

"What safeguards are going to be put in place to protect our members and to protect the clients as well in those offices?" posed Mr. Aylward. "Those are things we're currently working through with Treasury Board."

Continued on page 18

Inclusive and resilient global agriculture systems can address climate crisis and COVID recovery



Support for agriculture in developing countries can reduce hunger, empower women, and build climate resilience. Inclusive and resilient agriculture systems will help the world to build back better from the COVID pandemic, write Virginie Levasseur and Paul Hagerman. Photograph courtesy of Pixabay

Canada has taken bold actions on the global stage, with a feminist foreign policy and strong support for climate resilience. The next step is to scale up support for agricultural development.



Paul Hagerman & Virginie Levasseur

Opinion

Global hunger has been rising since 2015, and food producers are hardest hit. Erratic weather is making it harder to produce food. Gender inequality holds back women, who make up a large percentage of farmers in developing countries. And now COVID-19 is impacting producers and consumers alike.

Canada has taken bold actions on the global stage, with a feminist foreign policy and strong support for climate resilience. The next step is to scale up support for agricultural development. A new report from a Canadian coalition of NGOs demonstrates that support for agriculture in developing countries can reduce hunger, empower women, and build climate resilience. Inclusive and resilient agriculture systems will help the world to build back better from the COVID pandemic.

The report, from the Food Security Policy Group (FSPG), documents a sharp decline in Canada's support for agricultural development in the past four years, even

as global hunger was on the rise. Through analysis of six projects in West Africa, implemented by Canadian NGOs and funded by Global Affairs Canada, the report shows that appropriate investments in agriculture can achieve many of the goals that Canada has already prioritized in the Feminist International Assistance Policy.

Agriculture and development objectives

In developing countries, most rural people earn their livelihoods in agriculture and food systems. They work at every point along the value chain: caring for crops and livestock, working as labourers, processing and transporting food, and selling food in the marketplace. While food systems play a key role in the livelihoods of many of the most vulnerable communities, these same communities are among the most food insecure.

Aid to agriculture is falling

Despite agriculture's potential, Canada's performance in providing aid to the sector is dropping, as the FSPG study reports. While Canada has committed to agriculture and food security in the past, notably during the global food price crisis of 2008, its commitment has steadily dropped since. In the most recent four-year period, aid to agriculture fell by 24 per cent.

Canadian aid to agriculture improves equality, resilience, and nutrition

The six projects featured in the study show that when women gain access to resources—good land, finances, livestock, inputs, equipment, innovations, information, markets, training—they flourish. Gender transformation comes about through good project design; the engagement of men and boys, alongside women and girls, in transforming social norms; and the inclusion of broad partnerships between government, extension services, local NGOs, research, and the private sector.

The projects also documented improvements in family income, as families earned

more diverse production from their own farms, contributed to improved family nutrition.

Participants in the projects not only improved their understanding of climate risks, they also adopted new practices to boost their resilience in the face of these risks.

Beyond a crisis

In April, the World Food Programme warned that COVID-19 could double the number of people at risk of starvation in 2020. As emergency and longer-term food and agriculture initiatives are rolled out, it is important that Canada finds ways to build back better systems in developing countries—ones that address climate change, gender equality, and food needs of the most vulnerable people on earth.

As we prepare for an uncertain future, agriculture will continue to play a key role in ensuring healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities, particularly as climate change continues to exacerbate the food insecurity faced by rural communities.

Aid for agriculture

The need for strong, inclusive, and resilient agriculture systems is pressing. Canada has a chance to prove itself a leader with a strong focus on agriculture within the Feminist International Assistance Policy. As the world recovers from COVID-19, Canada should increase its aid budget, with a focus on inclusive and resilient agriculture systems.

Virginie Levasseur is Africa program director at SOCODEVI. Paul Hagerman is director of public policy at Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Together they co-chair the Food Security Policy Group.

The Hill Times

APPOINTMENT NOTICE

Canada's Building Trades Unions (CBTU) Welcomes Sean Strickland as new Canadian Director

Canada's Building Trades Unions are pleased to announce that Sean Strickland has joined CBTU as the new Executive Director.



Sean Strickland
Executive Director

Sean is a well respected, senior construction executive with over 20 years working in the construction sector, with proven results for success. His deep knowledge of the industry combined with a strong government relations background will serve CBTU well to grow the workforce of tomorrow. Sean holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Waterloo, and is a graduate of the Executive Management Program at Wilfrid Laurier University as well as Leadership Development from Harvard University.



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The ‘afterlife of slavery’: defund, reform Canada’s prisons, advocates call, after watchdog says ‘very little’ has improved for Black inmates

‘It’s a racist system. We live it,’ says one Black prisoner of Canada’s correctional system. ‘We’re seen as rigid, defiant, very combative, non-compliant. These are the labels we get.’

Continued from page 1

his predecessor that outlined such treatment by the Correctional Service of Canada, he said “very little has changed materially or substantively” for Black prisoners under the CSC’s control.

Though Black Canadians make up only 3.5 per cent of people in Canada, they account for 9.6 per cent of the prison population as of 2019-20. That proportion is up again after being on the decline for four years, he noted, and while the overall prison population decreased by about three per cent between March 2011 and March 2020, the Black population increased by 4.5 per cent.

Black prisoners are also more likely to be within prison walls than on parole, with the supervised population increasing by 53 per cent since 2010 compared to an overall 20 per cent jump for the total population. That’s despite the 2014 report finding that Black prisoners have better release outcomes, a “counter-intuitive” finding that was considered beyond the scope of the analysis at the time. Asked how it has responded to the 2014 findings, the CSC did not respond by deadline.

Representation is only part of the picture and it isn’t the goal, noted El Jones, an activist and educator who has been working with prisoners for years.

“The point is, prisons are fundamentally unjust,” said Ms. Jones, who is wary of calls for prison reform, noting even if there were fewer behind bars, “Black people would still be living in unjust conditions.”

For weeks, Black Lives Matter protesters in the United States, Canada, and other countries have demanded governments address the violence Black citizens face at the hands of police, with many pushing to defund them. Advocates like Ms. Jones say the call shouldn’t stop there, and that the prisons where Black men and women are kept should be defunded too.

“As long as Black bodies are seen as a fundamental threat to the public, a threat that needs to be controlled, that’s why prisons and policing will always disproportionately target us,” said Ms. Jones.

Prison is an “expression of the afterlife of slavery,” said human rights lawyer Anthony Morgan, and part of an “alarming” level of monitoring, control, containment, and mistreatment of Black people where the institution reflects historic racial dynamics, including the “overwhelmingly white” guards overseeing the population.

The CSC is operating in the “grip” of anti-Black stereotypes, and the misperception that Black people are inherently more dangerous, more violent, and more gang-involved, “even when evidence shows them having better outcomes,” he said.

“There’s no active training, development, or commitment to checking internal biases, prejudice in those areas of the system to make sure those stereotypes are not playing



Thousands gather on the Parliament Hill for a rally to call attention to anti-Black racism and police violence against Black people across Canada and the United States on June 5. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

out in carceral decision making,” said Mr. Morgan, who’s heard silence from the CSC on the question of its Black population. In both of the CSC’s latest departmental plans, and its results reports for the year before, it doesn’t make mention of Black inmates.

The country needs an African-Canadian justice strategy, said Mr. Morgan, and to apply that lens to every part of the justice system that sees Black people overrepresented and surveilled at every stage.

‘It’s a racist system’

The system is racist and the guards don’t follow their own rules, said Renford Farrier, a 50-year-old who is entering his third decade behind bars for murdering a man.

“It’s a racist system. We live it, we see it. The treatment is different, the way they speak to us is different,” said Mr. Farrier, speaking by phone with *The Hill Times* from the maximum security Donnacona Institution in Quebec. “We’re seen as rigid, defiant, very combative, non-compliant. These are the labels we get... Then, in turn, if you show love for yourself, we’re narcissistic.”

The 2014 watchdog report found Black inmates were more likely to be disciplined when the rules were subjective, but were consistently under-represented when the rules were less

discretionary. These misconduct charges have “serious consequences,” the report noted, and may lead to additional time added to a sentence and denial of parole. Black inmates also continue to disproportionately face use of force from guards, involved 13 per cent of the time in 2019-20.

Being Black in prison is “a whole other animal,” Mr. Farrier said, and an environment where there’s fewer opportunities and a feeling that you’ll do more time.

“I see white counterparts getting released, whereas I don’t see the Black people leaving, most stay most of their sentence,” said Mr. Farrier.

Another inmate echoed Mr. Farrier’s assessment that his skin played a part in which prisons he stayed in or was sent to. The 2014 report found that though Black inmates were collectively rated as a lower risk to reoffend, they were more likely to wind up in maximum security.

The 41-year-old man, who didn’t want his name published for fear of retribution, recalled being described by his parole officer as intimidating, calling the interaction “disheartening” and “demoralizing” coming from the person who’s supposed to help get him back in society.

The same parole officer also gave him a verbal warning for making a gang ges-

ture in a photo taken during Black History Month—except he said it was the Holy Trinity sign commonly used by Rastafarians. Many guards are ignorant of the faith, a point both Mr. Morgan and Ms. Jones stressed, too, and in this case the man said it was used in part to deny his transfer to a lower-security prison.

Another way racism “raises up its head,” the man said, is how Black men are blocked from certain jobs. Prison unemployment was higher for Black inmates, at seven per cent, compared to 1.5 per cent for the population in 2012-13, and Black inmates were also considerably less likely to get the in-demand CORCAN jobs, which offer vocational skills and experience in a particular trade.

“I think it’s because of the systematic racism... they don’t feel like they can trust Black people,” he said. “They always have their eyes on you.”

But the gang affiliation label “is the one issue that seems to both distinguish and define the Black inmate experience,” said the 2014 case study, noting that while Black inmates are twice as likely to have a gang affiliation, the vast majority—70 per cent—were not gang members.

Racial profiling on the inside

When Independent Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard (East Preston, N.S.) toured prisons during the Senate Human Rights Committee’s study of them during the last Parliament, she made a point of wearing a durag, which is common among inmates but gets them labelled as gang affiliated.

It was a show of solidarity and a sign of justice, said Sen. Bernard, to emphasize that it’s a culturally specific head wrap worn for a particular purpose.

“I wore it and no one questioned me at all... I felt it was really important to make a statement about the use of the durag,” she said, because it’s symbolic for the lack of culturally specific programming in the prisons.

During the Senate study, Sen. Bernard said they heard repeated stories about Black people being labelled as gang members.

“That’s a form of racial profiling,” she said, with some labelled as such simply because of the neighbourhoods they live in, and it’s almost impossible to have that classification removed. The classification extends to family members, noted Ms. Jones, describing instances where visitors were

blocked from entering or faced additional screening.

In the committee’s interim report, released in February 2019, Senators reported hearing personal stories of racism and discrimination from almost every Black person they met, both prisoners and guards. And despite accounting for a small portion of the prison population, Mr. Zinger said Black people accounted for 37 per cent of all discrimination complaints to his office between 2008 and 2018.

Longtime prison advocate and Independent Senator Kim Pate (Ontario), who sat on the committee with Sen. Bernard, noted their interim report documented the ongoing systemic discrimination on the basis of race for Indigenous and Black prisoners, and it’s clear it persists.

“CSC has a role and could participate in addressing the systemic discrimination that entrenches and reinforces the overrepresentation,” said Sen. Pate by email, like addressing its classification tools that both the courts and the Canadian Human Rights Commission have criticized as discriminatory on the basis of sex, race, and disability. “Tools designed by and for white, middle-class men disproportionately result in over classification of women and those who are racialized. The result is that Black and Indigenous prisoners are too often classified and held in higher security prisons, which in turn makes it more difficult to work toward release.”

Canada has mechanisms in the current legislation to release women, racialized prisoners, and those with disabling mental health issues, she said, and since they exist, “rather than merely discussing reviewing programs and services for relevance to a diverse population, the obvious question is why corrections does not use them to try to redress the discriminatory overrepresentation?”

Results are ‘mixed’ for Black inmates, says Zinger

When looking at institutional and community outcomes, Mr. Zinger said “the results are mixed.”

The latest numbers, for 2019-20, show Black prisoners were more likely than the rest of the inmate population to be classified as maximum security (18.7 per cent versus 13 per cent), were disproportionately involved in incidents of use of force (13 per cent), and had lower rates of revocation compared to the national rate (21.9 per cent versus 32.9 per cent).

Since his office’s 2014 report, parole outcomes have shifted dramatically for Black inmates. Between 2007 and 2012, the average grant rates for day parole sat at 58 per cent compared to 68 per cent for the total population—between 2015 and 2019 that climbed to 75 per cent, versus 78 per cent for the total population. Meanwhile, the full parole approvals went from 16 per cent for Black inmates, and 20 per cent of the total population, to 38 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively.

Iulia Pescarus Popa, a spokesperson for the Parole Board of Canada, said it’s not possible to identify whether the watchdog report had an impact or what changed within the parole board to account for the double-digit shifts.

“These numbers reflect an overall increase in parole grant rates for federal offenders. There are a number of factors that may have contributed to this trend, including legislative changes such as the abolition of accelerated parole review for first-time



Independent Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard pictured during a prison visit last Parliament wearing a durag. *Photograph courtesy of the Senate of Canada*

federal non-violent offenders, resulting in the review of these cases through regular parole,” she said by email, and that board members conduct a thorough risk assessment while also weighing the “unique systemic and background factors that have played a part” in the person’s experience, including systemic discrimination, racism, family or community breakdown, unemployment, poverty, and lack of education and employment opportunities.

But, Mr. Zinger also noted that over the last two fiscal years the proportion of inmates being released at statutory release has decreased from 62.7 per cent in 2017-18 to 57.2 per cent in 2019-20.

Mr. Zinger said his office continues to call for full-time ethnicity liaison officers dedicated to supporting ethnocultural inmates, as well as programs and interventions tailored to the needs and experiences of this population. Following the 2014 report, he said the CSC agreed to enhance training but the current “ethnocultural site co-ordinator” appears to be a staffer doing it as an added responsibility, rather than it being their primary job. His office also recommended the CSC complete a review of its staff, including discrimination complaints, and develop an action plan.

The CSC said by email it’s studying the in-custody experience of “ethnocultural offenders,” including Black prisoners, during a \$20,000 multi-year project that is expected to produce a full research report this fall.

The report will cover in-custody experience, including participation in correctional programs, education, employment, and how

the populations reintegrate in the community through programs, employment, and successful completion of sentence, said Esther Mailhot, a spokesperson for the CSC.

The project uses a combination of CSC resources—equivalent to one and a half employees from its research branch—and is in collaboration with Nipissing University. She added that CSC “maintains positive collaborations” with several Canadian universities to “maintain the highest standards of research.”

That’s not been Ms. Jones’ experience. She said the CSC blocks independent research into its institutions and only supports studies that comply with its own mandate. Sen. Bernard, meanwhile, questioned why the CSC is doing further study when the problem is already well documented.

“We need a really aggressive approach to address the problems,” said Sen. Bernard, a longtime social worker and human rights activist who said she doesn’t see movement from the CSC. While more

needs to be done “downstream” to emphasize prevention and address the “school-to-prison pipeline,” in the meantime the CSC needs to address the reality and racism many inmates face and offer public reports about progress.

“What are you doing with this population? How’s it being addressed? How are you connecting to those communities? How are they being supported?”

CSC needs to ‘take action,’ MPs say

NDP MP Jack Harris (St. John’s East, N.L.) said the poorer outcomes Black and

Indigenous inmates face is a function of the systemic discrimination of society.

“That tells you there’s some bias in where they get put,” he said, and core programs aren’t culturally sensitive.

He said the House Public Safety Committee needs to reconvene and Public Safety Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.), responsible for both the RCMP and the CSC, should answer questions about systemic racism in both institutions.

“We need to know that they’re, A, not in denial about it and, B, that they are committed to finding solutions and improving the situation and how they plan to do it,” he said, and in the wake of George Floyd’s death and the ensuing outcry, “we have to use the momentum that’s been created by the public response and political response.”

Bloc Québécois MP Kristina Michaud (Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia, Que.) said it doesn’t seem to be a priority for the CSC and she hopes it adopts programs and works to “change the mindset.”

“We see that the discrimination continues behind the bars,” she said. “Reports are a good thing, but after that we need to take action and what is going on in the prison system is a little bit of a reflection of what’s going on in society.”

Conservative MP Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Matapé, Que.) wasn’t available for an interview and didn’t offer comment on prisons, except to say that systemic racism is a problem in Canada that must be addressed, with government at all levels doing a better job.

“Trudeau and the NDP have shut down Parliament until at least the fall. This is unfortunate as Parliamentarians could study this issue and ensure that Canada’s correctional system is fairer for all Canadians,” said Mr. Paul-Hus, his party’s public safety critic, in an emailed statement.

CSC working ‘as meant to operate’: advocate

Many saw hope in the election of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) for prison reform, said Ms. Jones. They saw a “different kind of day” coming compared to the Conservative approach that brought in sentencing mandatory minimums.

Those have yet to be repealed and “we haven’t seen Trudeau reverse anything, and nobody’s really confronted him about it because people don’t care about prisoners,” she said. “It’s one of the great failures of [Mr. Trudeau’s] election promises versus the reality of what his government did.”

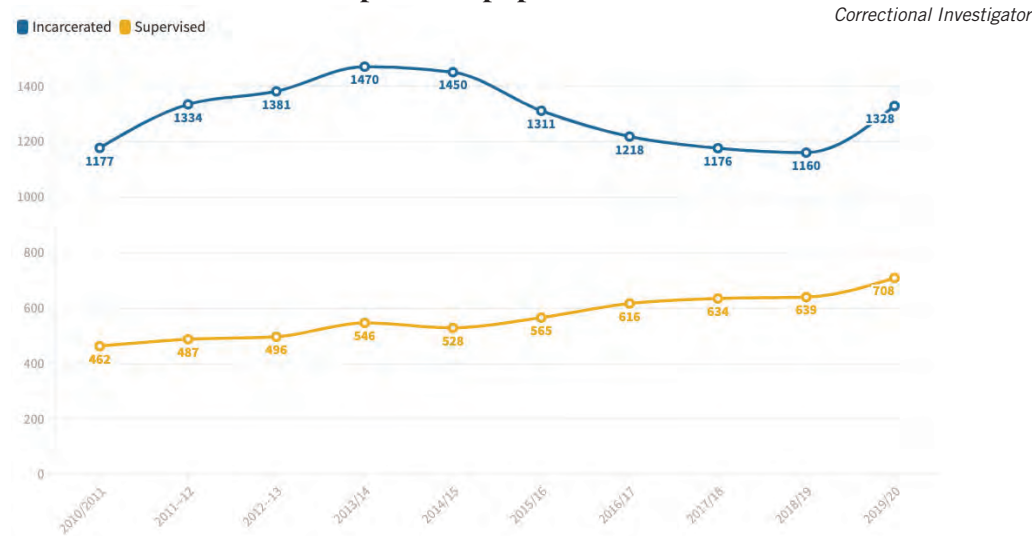
The CSC as an institution isn’t broken, and is instead functioning exactly as it is “meant to operate,” said Rajean Hoilett, a member of the Toronto Prisoners Justice Project, who’s heard repeated stories of “immense racism” within the institution.

“We are seeing calls in the community to defund and abolish prisons and police because we know their key purpose in our communities are to police and surveil and imprison and oppress Black and Indigenous communities across the country, that has been the key mandate of these institutions since their inception,” he said, and instead, funding should be put towards public housing, food programs, and addressing poverty.

“I don’t think we can continue to sit with the status quo.”

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Black incarcerated and supervised population



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Editorial

The Black caucus has laid out yet another road map and it’s time for the feds to drive

On June 16, the Parliamentary Black Caucus released a statement in response to the worldwide movement against anti-Black racism and police brutality that’s taken over the streets since the May 25 killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minn.

“Several brutal acts of racism, caught on video, came to light in the past few weeks for everyone to witness. They represent only a very thin slice of the racism that Black Canadians experience in their daily lives,” the group, which is led by Liberal MP Greg Fergus, said in the statement. “From daily micro-aggressions to the rarer, but tragically fatal, hate-filled acts, as seen in those videos, many non-Black Canadians are becoming conscious of the systemic and insidious nature of racism in our country.”

The group of eight MPs and Senators in the caucus were backed by more than 130 other MPs and Senators from the Liberal, NDP, Green, Progressive, and Independent benches who signed on to both the statement and the accompanying list of 44 recommendations for all levels of government to act on to “minimize the consequences of systemic racism” in Canada.

“We urge all governments to act immediately. This is not a time for further discussion—the Afro-Canadian community has spoken for many years and is no longer interested in continued consultation or study.”

The group was formed in 2015, amid the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent, which began on Jan. 1, 2015 and runs until Dec. 31, 2024. Canada and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau officially recognized the decade in January 2018.

The recommendations run the gamut, from the oft-repeated call for collecting race-based disaggregated data to measure the Black experience in Canada, to increasing the number of federal contracts for Black-owned and -operated businesses, to making sure that Black youth are being recruited into the public service.

Nearly half of the recommendations centre on justice and public safety reforms, including banning carding, re-evaluating police presence in schools, reforming policing with a view towards de-escalation techniques, and scrapping mandatory minimum sentencing measures.

Of note, Justice Minister David Lametti is one of the signatories to this statement, but Public Safety Minister Bill Blair is not. Whether it didn’t cross Mr. Blair’s desk in time, or he doesn’t support the call, has yet to be determined, but all told, 21 cabinet ministers added their names.

With that much front-bench support, it behooves the government to act. As the statement said: “Extensive reports and serious proposals already exist. What is needed is the implementation of these proposals and the dedication of adequate financial resources to do so effectively.”

The work has been done. The data and research are there. All that’s missing is the will. There are no more excuses not to move forward on some of these things, which the caucus notes isn’t even all the work that needs to be done.

A continued lack of action will send the message that Black lives only matter when it’s time for votes or photo ops.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

Protecting the environment is all important to secure our future

The alarms are red in 2020: Australian bushfires, Taal Volcano in the Philippines, Storm Gloria in the Mediterranean, tornadoes in the U.S. state of Tennessee, heavy rains in Rwanda and Brazil, and COVID-19 in the world. Natural disasters threaten humans more and more.

In the face of disaster, pain is equal. No one can boast about temporary security. The only clear fact is that the Earth is our common home, and protecting the environment is the only way to sustain human development safely and healthily.

I believe that Canadians care about protecting our environment. Still, vulnerable communities are under additional stress because of COVID-19, and I am convinced that more needs to be done and can be done. Canada can support poorer countries’ ability to deal with the combined effects of social distancing, COVID-19 infections, and climate change, which lead, among other things, to significant levels of food insecurity and malnutrition. Canada can and must play a bigger role in changing the world for the better.

Li Li
Ottawa, Ont.

Trudeau’s silence was showing leadership, says Toronto reader

Re: “Nagging questions are again bubbling around Trudeau’s leadership,” (*The Hill Times*, June 8, p. 11). Donald Trump is a liar, a thief, and a thug. And the American electoral system has given him virtually absolute power. I am sure that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau would have dealt directly with the “21-second question” in just that way if the well-being of 37 million Canadians did not depend on his answer.

As a small fish, I can write what I like—and I have done so (and I stay out of the U.S.)—but I am too small a fish to fry. This is not the case for our prime minister. If we were to translate Mr. Trump’s attitude to the protesters and the response of police in the U.S. into international terms, the rational, co-operative countries of the world would have sent in the UN peacekeeping force to beat the hell out of Mr. Trump in the mistaken belief that insane people are violent offenders.

Mike Harris has no idea the responsibilities that lie on the shoulders of a Canadian prime minister. We are fortunate to have a leader who didn’t want the job and is trying to do the best he can with it with the able assistance of an excellent team and the advice of experts. Mr. Trump is the proverbial bull in the china shop and has been getting away with bizarre behaviour because people are hoping it will end and the relatively measured, moral, and professional leadership of the U.S. will return. The world cannot be healthy unless most countries are healthy.

Tom McElroy
Toronto, Ont.

We need a sustainable recovery effort, says letter writer

They already had suppressed protests and hired guards that waltzed around with assault weapons to intimidate protesters, and now this?

There needs to be serious concern towards the way Indigenous people are treated today when it comes to their right to govern their land, basic human rights, and the fact that Indigenous women and children get abducted without nearly enough investigation from the police force to get justice.

Let’s not forget to mention the deforestation, harm to waterways, and ecosystem disturbance that arise from building a pipeline.

There are so many promising alternatives coming up and being developed that could be invested in by these companies or even the government, we just have to come together and propose them until they give in.

Employees of the oil industry that lost their job or quit can always reinvest their energy and time into building affordable housing and providing access to clean water and electricity for our vulnerable communities.

The government already sunk a bunch of money into oil and bailing out the industry every year—and even more now because of what’s going on—it’s not the time for taxpayer money to go to them if we are serious as a country to meet our climate targets.

In conclusion, Indigenous people deserve to be respected, supported, and understood and taxpayer money shouldn’t be invested in Big Oil when it’s a billion-dollar industry that has no respect.

Sector workers don’t have a choice but to work for a living, so if we had a way to retrain them in building affordable housing or green energy it could be a good way to make the switch.

Sustainability is team effort and I’m sure we can find a way if we speak out.

Chloé Sabourin
Gatineau, Que.



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The best way to plug military leaks is with air-tight information

When a leak occurs, it is not about embarrassing the institution, it is about setting the record straight. If DND wants to prevent leaks, they need to tell the truth in a timely manner.



Scott Taylor

Inside Defence

OTTAWA—Top officials at the Department of National Defence recently formulated a plan on how to crack down on those within their ranks who leak unclassified, albeit embarrassing, information to the news media. It didn't take long, however, for details about the plan to be leaked to *Ottawa Citizen* reporter David Pugliese.

While this incident was clearly illustrative of how little control the DND has over the flow of internal unclassified information, it also reveals the proprietary mindset of our military leadership in that they somehow "own" the truth.

What is disturbing about this revelation is the nature of the two most recent "leaks," which were the genesis for this latest planned crack down.

One was regarding the recent crash of a Cyclone helicopter and the other was the allegations of abuse and neglect witnessed by troops serving in long-term care facilities in Ontario and Quebec during the pandemic.



Early statements about the Cyclone crash from Chief of Defence Staff General Jonathan Vance and Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan gave much different information than was later revealed to be the case about the circumstances of the helicopter crash. Instead of hunting down the leakers of truth, DND should be investigating who thought it would be a good idea to insert the false element of mystery to the Cyclone tragedy, and why, writes Scott Taylor. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade



It was on Wednesday, April 29 that the Cyclone helicopter from HMCS Fredericton crashed into the Mediterranean Sea. Although news of the crash was circulating on Greek media sites almost immediately, it took DND more than 24 hours to issue a formal statement.

That statement advised Canadians that "One member of the Canadian Armed Forces was killed ... and five others remain missing following an accident involving a Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CH-148 Cyclone helicopter."

No details as to the possible cause of the crash were provided, but we were told that the crew of Fredericton "had lost contact with the helicopter" prior to the crash.

Statements made at the time by Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan and Chief of Defence Staff General Jonathan Vance implied that the Cyclone had crashed some distance from the warship.

All the initial Canadian media reports portrayed this as an exten-

sive and ongoing search and rescue effort to save the five CAF members who were "confirmed missing."

On the afternoon of Friday, May 1, more than 48 hours after the crash, DND issued an updated statement advising the public the five missing souls were "presumed dead" and the nature of the effort was now that of search and recovery.

It was around this timeframe that one of those nefarious "leakers" contacted the CBC with some contradictory information. It turned out that the Cyclone crashed in the immediate vicinity of Fredericton while doing a flypast for a photo op.

The ship did not "lose contact" with the Cyclone, as had been suggested, since some of the crew witnessed the crash in real time. Once pressed, DND confirmed that there were indeed witnesses and that their testimony would be included in the investigation into the crash.

One can only imagine the frustration, which led to the leaker or leakers contacting the CBC with

this vital piece of information. For more than two days, journalists—myself included—had been sharing the DND-provided false narrative, and someone felt the truth about the fate of their comrades needed to be told.

Instead of hunting down the leakers of truth, DND should be investigating who thought it would be a good idea to insert the false element of mystery to this tragedy, and why?

There would be no rhyme or reason for the Fredericton to have misrepresented the true nature of this incident to DND HQ. So it seems likely the idea to provide misleading information to the news media originated within National Defence headquarters in Ottawa.

As for the leak of the report detailing allegations of abuse and neglect in the long-term care facilities, one has to believe the motivation was to prompt some immediate reforms. As we have seen, the outrage generated by the details of that report have already set in motion a flurry of policy reviews in both Ontario and Quebec.

By their nature, service members are not natural "leakers," and under normal circumstances, they are very comfortable reporting things through their chain of command.

When a leak occurs, it is not about embarrassing the institution, it is about setting the record straight. If DND wants to prevent leaks, they need to tell the truth in a timely manner rather than trying to control and manipulate the message.

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

The Hill Times

Bully versus pulpit

It may say as much about Donald Trump as it does about God that some of his fiercest critics these days are leaders of faith.



Lisa Van Dusen

What Fresh Hell

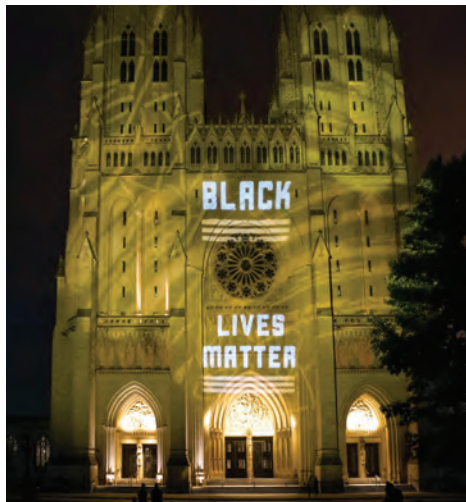
If Donald Trump were not worried about the supernatural status of some of his most potent opposition these days, surely he wouldn't have stood in front of St. John's Church on Lafayette Square on June 1 wagging a bible

like some kind of medicine show huckster.

You don't have to believe in a higher power to sense that what has been defining our daily experience lately—from the rampant political corruption disenfranchising citizens to the industrialized rubbish protecting that corruption to the devaluation of life on display in the pandemic mismanagement by Trump and his authoritarian cohorts to the commodification of lives and lying that defines Big Tech business models to the smug entitlement on the face of a white police officer as he extinguishes the life of a Black father and brother—is sufficiently akin to evil that I'm running out of less loaded, equally accurate ways of labeling it.

The last time America experienced such a vortex of political, social, and moral upheaval was during the 1960s, when the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War were punctuated by grotesque assassinations that turned the decade into a procession of veiled widows. Then as now, a mistrust of government had set in whose justification would not be clear until democracy had exposed it. Then as now, the churn

of a racial reckoning demanded that power—individual, institutional, and political—take sides and inspired a joining of forces against the newly relevant fact that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.



At Washington National Cathedral, which overlooks the city as America's unofficial church, 'Black Lives Matter' nightly illuminates the neo-Gothic façade of the landmark, in stark contrast to a president who goes around wagging a bible like some kind of medicine show huckster, writes Lisa Van Dusen. *Flickr photograph by Victoria Pickering*

The voice who delivered that truth belonged to someone whose faith in something bigger than his own brand provided the perspective to counter white hatred from Bull Connor's German shepherds to Edgar J. Hoover's hounding surveillance. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s social justice activism wasn't placid, amenable, or deferential. Neither was the language he used to diagnose racism as not only a disease and a broken promise on the security of justice, but a leading indicator of deeper dysfunction.

Now, at Washington National Cathedral, overlooking the city as America's unofficial church, "Black Lives Matter" nightly illuminates the neo-Gothic façade of the landmark where King delivered his last Sunday sermon, and where presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush were eulogized by a Canadian, Brian Mulroney.

On Sunday, June 14, Rev. William Barber ended a stentorian guest sermon at the cathedral with, "America, why don't you try mercy in your public policy? Why don't you try love? Why don't you try redemption? Why don't you try grace? Why don't you try truth? Why

don't you try that rather than trying revenge?" On June 2, Presiding Episcopal Bishop Michael Curry (you may remember him from Meghan and Harry's wedding) said of Trump's crowd-clearing bible photo-op, "You don't read 'blessed are the peacemakers' then have tear gas fired on peaceful protesters." The previous Sunday, Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde delivered an eloquent description of this as a "*kairos* moment" (Greek, meaning a propitious turning point): a chance to "help bring some good out of the nightmare we've been in, to wrench grace from unspeakable tragedy." On the front line of grieving for George Floyd, the preacher who has shepherded far too many Black families through public mourning, Rev. Al Sharpton, channeled an indignant humanity, turning "Get your knee off our necks" into a chorus for justice. At the Vatican, Pope Francis called out both racism and hypocrisy, saying, "We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life."

Also recently, from a secular oracle of Omaha whose teachings may be more familiar to Mr. Trump: "Never, ever bet against America."

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*.

The Hill Times

Comment

The never-ending outrage: Canadians need to finally come to terms with police brutality and racial injustice

Rooting out deeply ingrained prejudice toward Indigenous people and racialized Canadians will require long-term, radical solutions that will challenge the public's attitude no less than that of police officers.



Les Whittington

Need to Know

OTTAWA—The video of RCMP officers attacking and punching Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation Chief Allan Adam is disturbing enough. But the truly shocking part of this episode was the conclusion by RCMP supervisors reviewing the incident that it was an appropriate use of force.

Wood Buffalo RCMP said “it was determined (by supervisors) that the members’ actions were reasonable

and did not meet the threshold for an external investigation.” Words fail to describe the total lack of judgment and accountability conveyed in that assessment.

As soon as Canadians started paying attention to this sort of thing as the outrage over the killing of George Floyd in the U.S. raised concerns of racist police violence to a new level, it seemed these incidents are happening all the time. On June 4, Chantel Moore, a 26-year-old mother originally from the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation in B.C., died after being shot five times by a police officer during a “wellness check” in Edmundston, N.B. Late last week, Rodney Levi, a 48-year-old Indigenous father of three, was tasered and shot by RCMP during a mental-health episode in New Brunswick. In the last three months, six Indigenous people have been killed by police

in shootings in Winnipeg, Man., Nunavut, and New Brunswick.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged June 15 the government has stacks of reports on how to address this problem. Some steps have been taken, he said, without specifying what. But he tried to demonstrate he gets it, that the government “absolutely” needs to focus on rapid “concrete measures” to address systematic racism.

That this reckoning is so long overdue and only arrived because of the graphic, horrific killing of a Black man in the U.S. is an indictment of Canada’s democracy and its peoples’ sense of decency and justice. Systematic racism within Canada’s police forces is undeniable and has been as far back as one wants to look. And, as in the U.S., the police are in many ways beyond effective civilian control.

Changing this situation will take a great deal more than platitudes and a few proposals for better police training or body cameras. It is abundantly clear, for instance, that RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki and Alberta RCMP Deputy Commissioner Curtis Zablocki don’t have a clue what the problem is. Both publicly disputed the idea that there is systematic racism within the RCMP until told how myopic that was.

Rooting out deeply ingrained prejudice toward Indigenous people and racialized Canadians will require long-term, radical solutions that will challenge the public’s attitude no less than that of police officers. Given the protections for police built into the current system as a result of their contracts and legal precedents and the government inertia surrounding this problem, it’s clear the only way to make progress will be through a drastic overhaul of the current policing model.

With Americans’ extraordinary acknowledgement of the ongoing low-level war being conducted against Black people in the U.S., police chiefs there are being fired, officers are facing criminal charges, legislators are readying to try to bring the police under better control, and some local authorities are moving to reduce or eliminate police budgets. The resulting notion of “defunding” is an unfortunate bit of short-hand, but the idea, based on changing the roles of police and the funding allocations for some of society’s many public security-related functions, is sensible.

Part of the problem—both here and to larger degree in the U.S.—is that conservative-led efforts to un-

dercut government and trim funding for programs related to jobs, housing, community services, and mental health have left patrol officers confronting all kinds of situations they are not qualified to deal with, and where their fallback on force should be the last, not the first, resort.

But even at this moment, which many see as a turning point in the struggle for racial equality and freedom from police brutality, it remains to be seen to what extent people will endorse actions to alter the police role in the face of claims by police and some politicians that doing so will invite surging crime rates.

Trudeau and other Canadian leaders need to wrench themselves away from the usual plodding, incremental pace of change and recognize that adding a new round of circumscribed, bureaucratically weighted measures based on police conducting their own oversight will accomplish nothing. This has been tried repeatedly and has failed. The time has come for Canadians to recognize the racism built into society and finally really do something meaningful to fix it.

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

No pride in police history of neglect and violence against queer communities

The history of police violence against queer communities in Canada has been well documented, although their experiences continue to be erased from the mainstream narrative.



Arezoo Najibzadeh & Erica Ifill

Bad+Bitchy

OTTAWA—Some of you are new to caring about the humanity of Black lives. And it shows.

In 2016, when Black Lives Matter defiantly stopped Toronto’s Pride Parade for 30 minutes to demand an end to uniformed and armed police presence—a parade that prominently featured the prime minis-

ter—they were met with outrage from the queer community. This, despite what is known as Toronto’s official first-ever Pride parade was a demonstration against police discrimination and prejudice.

The reality is that Pride has always been a protest against police violence, not just in the U.S. where it was built on the legacy of the Stonewall riots, but also here in Canada. With the cancellation of Pride activities in light of COVID-19 social distancing rules, and the previously ignored calls for defunding the police, queer Canadians must take some time to reflect on their life choices if they’re truly serious about challenging anti-Blackness, racism, and police brutality.

Black Lives Matter in queer communities, too.

The history of police violence against queer communities in Canada has been well documented, although the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and racialized queer, trans, and two-spirit people continue to be erased from the mainstream narrative. What began with the forceful erasure of Indigenous identities, specifically two-spirit identities, to reflect European constructs of gender and sexuality, continues to contribute to high suicide rates, violence, and everyday discrimination against two-spirit people across the country.

But even in the context of modern policing, there is a long

history of over-policing and under-protecting queer communities, going to back as early as the 1970s, when the police refused to protect drag performers and queer people from homophobic mobs and violent harassment at the annual Halloween drag parade at Toronto’s Club Manatee.

Between the 1970s and 2000s, police in Toronto, Edmonton, and Montreal routinely raided queer bars and bathhouses and criminalized queer people under the “bawdy house laws.” Rooted in sex-work legislation, “bawdy house” laws were introduced to regulate sex work and other “acts of indecency”—a vague term that allowed the law to be applied to other forms of non-heteronormative sexual behaviour.

A homophobic state police force isn’t a bug, it’s a feature.

As recently as 2000, a group of male Toronto police officers raided “Pussy Palace,” an all-female nude bathhouse event, charging the organizers with liquor law violations. Two years later, an Ontario Court judge dismissed the charges and ruled that the raid violated the Charter rights of the 350 women who were in attendance. This judgement led to a class-action lawsuit and Ontario Human Rights Commission complaint that was eventually settled. In 2016, the complainants received and rejected an apology by Toronto police, citing its seemingly performative nature. As discussed in a CBC article, “It

doesn’t reflect a change in the actual practices of the police. I think it is tokenism.”

Most recently, Toronto police failed to adequately investigate and arrest serial killer Bruce McArthur until 2017, they connected to the disappearance of at least three racialized men from Toronto’s Gay Village from as early as 2013. This was especially triggering for the mental health of many in the community, as it reminded them of the 1970s Gay Village cold cases, seven of which remain unsolved.

And we’re mainly talking about white people—imagine what happens when you put skin colour into the mix?

Black and racialized trans women, who often face various forms of marginalization such as homelessness and poverty, are de-prioritized when it comes to police protection, partially due to Canada’s prohibitive sex-work laws that force sex-workers into dangerous situations. This contributes to a common experience of police harassment faced especially by transgender women, “walking while trans.” It refers to how often police stop, search, and arrest transgender people because officers suspect they’re sex workers. The police also partake in misgendering and negligence when it comes to responding to crimes against trans women. Add anti-Blackness to the mix, and well, you know what happens—injustice and possibly death.

Such was the case for Sumaya Dalmar, a Somali Muslim trans woman whose suspicious death in a Toronto home remains a mystery. Furthermore, in 2017, Toronto Police took four months to identify Alloura Wells, a biracial trans woman who participated in survival sex work and had disappeared from Toronto’s Gay Village.

There is no doubt that the intersections of race, sexual orientation, and gender identity continue to affect police response to violence in queer communities. Black Torontonians make up 37 per cent of victims of police violence in that city, and Indigenous people account for more than 60 per cent of people who die while in the custody of Winnipeg Police. Combine that with the homophobic and transphobic history of policing in Canada and you’ll understand why Black, Indigenous, and racialized queer people call for defunding the police.

Whether through Black Lives Matter protests or MMIWG Calls for Justice, Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities have been calling for police accountability and investments in community-driven and harm-reduction mechanisms for years. And considering the police’s history of neglect and violence against queer communities, it only makes sense that we consolidate our efforts and demand that our leaders explore community safety mechanisms that work for us, not against us.

Defund the police, invest in communities, and then, celebrate Pride.

Arezoo Najibzadeh and Erica Ifill are co-hosts of the Bad+Bitchy podcast.
The Hill Times

Defund the police? More like re-think how we fund them

If recent events prove anything, it is the need to reverse the escalating use of force as well as the militarization of the police in the suppression of dissent.



Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect

KAMOURASKA, QUE.—A little less than two hours' drive from here lies the city of Edmundston, N.B. With only 16,500 inhabitants, it is notable for straddling the borders of two provinces and two countries. But not much else.

However, on June 4, Edmundston became the focal point of national media as an Indigenous woman, Chantel Moore, was killed by police. A friend called city police to express concern about Moore's mental health, and they went to check. When they arrived at her apartment, she allegedly emerged from her apartment with a knife and was shot dead. Then last Friday, an Indigenous man—who police say was carrying knives—was shot dead by RCMP elsewhere in New Brunswick.

These are only two of a series of deadly confrontations between Indigenous or Black citizens and police in Canada over the years. It has brought the issue of systemic racism into focus, with calls to defund the police in the wake of George Floyd's death.

This is not an easy subject for anyone, much less a white man with the privileges I have enjoyed. It is especially hard, when I have worked with many great police officers, with then-named Solicitor General Canada (now Public Safety), as a reporter in several Canadian cities, and as a town councillor responsible for police liaison in Montreal.

At the same time, there is no doubt, police have a culture unique to themselves. At a Canada Day celebration in our town in the 1990s, police were asked to help to clear the field after the event. I expected them to walk with us; instead, they slowly drove into the crowd. I stopped them by standing in front of their vehicle. Another time, as a journalist I was thrown against a wall and held with a baton at my throat for not producing identification quickly enough.

But could we do without the police? In October of 1969, the Montreal police went on strike: the result was chaos. Dozens of banks were robbed, many stores were looted, the militant Montreal taxi union rioted at a local bus monopoly's garage, a Quebec police officer was shot dead, and

there were millions of dollars in damages.

That is why I don't believe "defund the police" means to eliminate them, but rather to re-assess what they do.

First, some history: when Robert Peel created the famed London "Bobbies" in 1829, they did not carry guns, their duties focused on crime prevention, and they had to "win the respect and cooperation of the public," not intimidate them.

In Canada, while their subsequent history with Indigenous peoples is troublesome, the RCMP's creation in the 1870s as the North West Mounted Police was to

establish order and drive out whisky traders who were killing Indigenous people in what is now Alberta and Saskatchewan. In the Klondike gold rush, it was the "Mounties" who kept the Yukon crime-free.

It was not that long ago the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary did not carry guns. When I lived in St. John's in the 1980s, it was a reflection of the society that police were not armed.

All that has changed, police argue, as Canadian society has become more violent, issues more complex, and weapons more powerful. The killings of three Moncton RCMP officers in 2014 were attributed to a lack of firepower to respond to the shooter.

But the current trend to "militarize" the police is a far cry from its original purpose. And statistics show the vast majority of police work is not violent. So, elected officials everywhere have to ask why they are paying for body armour, armoured personnel carriers, and the increased use of tactical squads.

While domestic disputes and mental health issues are dangerous issues, the presence of force often escalates a situation. Police could be employing counsel-

lors to defuse tension, not increase it. And far too often in Canada, police are arresting, assaulting, or killing Black or Indigenous people simply because they look different.

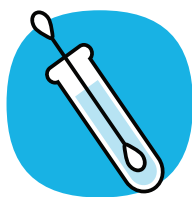
It is time for a parliamentary inquiry into police training and methods across Canada. It could examine the escalating use of force with minority communities and in the suppression of dissent. It could recommend better application of intelligence, expert engagement, civilian oversight, and community policing, and money cut from militarization could be shifted into community building, adult literacy, and alternative sentencing. In short, such an inquiry could change Canadian police culture and discourage them from emulating the worst habits of their counterparts to the south.

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

You're making a difference to keep people safe from COVID-19

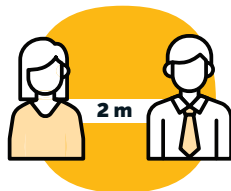
We all need to continue our efforts to protect each other.



Get tested if you are worried you may have COVID-19, or have been exposed to the virus.



Wear a face covering when physical distancing is a challenge.



Practice physical distancing, stay two metres apart.



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Inside or out, stay safe. Save lives.

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Comment



Policing cultures and structures should be assessed, but that also requires wisdom, not just acting as a response to the immediate challenges of the day, writes Tim Powers. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Avoid painting all police officers with the same brush in push for reform

We have to guard against punishing all police for the actions of the criminal element among some of them.



Tim Powers

Plain Speak

OTTAWA—Racism is pervasive in Canada. It is found almost everywhere. We can all do better to stamp it out and make

meaningful personal, as well as societal, changes. I have made stupid comments, cracked jokes, and given others what I thought were playful nicknames that in hindsight were not appropriate and offensive. That was wrong and no doubt hurtful. For those behaviours I am sorry, and I will work to be better. But today is not about my apologies—they are better done in person with sincerity and legitimacy.

For years, I worked with the Mounted Police Members Legal Fund. The “Legal Fund” was effectively a mass body of thousands of RCMP members from across the country who represented their members’ interests before the members of the force became unionized. My colleagues and I had the great honour of working with committed police officers from all across the country, whose driving ambition was to represent the RCMP proudly and positively while at the same time protecting the well-being of the people they served.

Separate from members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, I have friends and leaders in the Ontario Provincial Police, the Ottawa Police Service, the Royal New-

foundland Constabulary, and the Metro Toronto Police service. Like me, none of these people are perfect humans. Unlike me, they bravely perform important public policing work with integrity and commitment.

Yes, there are members of police forces who are racists, bullies, and thugs. But policing organizations are not the exclusive preserve of these people. They can be found everywhere. Though it is more worrisome when you see people like that carrying guns and violently assaulting citizens—often non-white citizens—on video. The danger, though, when we see images of such heinous behaviour on our screens, is mass stereotyping can happen.

I have been struck by the frustration and anger many law-abiding police officers have felt watching fellow officers commit crimes. Like the rest of us, they hate what they are seeing. It goes against their core values and beliefs. They know it is wrong, too.

Unlike us though, they go to work with a uniform. Now, for many of them, donning their equipment becomes an invitation for public disdain and vanished respect. The criminal actions of some in their com-

munity are painting them all as menacing villains. They need to live with this, and so do their families. None of that can be easy. This is all part of this uncomfortable, but necessary, conversation we seem to be having about who we are as a people.

We do, however, have to guard against punishing all police for the actions of the criminal element among some of them. That does not mean policing cultures and structures should not be assessed—they should be—but that also requires wisdom, not just acting as a response to the immediate challenges of the day. Public mood can instigate reform, but is it the right sort of meaningful reform that will make real change? For example, is spending money on more body cameras suddenly going to eradicate police brutality? Crazy thought, but probably not.

Just about every police officer I have had the pleasure of dealing with cares about their community, and wants, like we do, to create a safe and healthy place for their own families to live in. Many of them take leadership roles in the cities and towns they serve. They coach teams, volunteer their time when off duty to help in causes they believe in, and do not view themselves as above the rest of us because they have a badge and gun.

I feel for these officers now. They still must go to work and do their duty at a time when their profession has been shaken to its core. I wonder how it will influence how they police us now. Never has it been so difficult to serve in law enforcement. The police can get better but so can we in being broader minded as the debate about policing the police evolves.

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

Canada's voting record on Israel at the UN should be commended, not condemned

Instead of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with bigots and anti-Semites against the world's only Jewish state, Canada advocates for freedom, and equality with its UN votes, the majority of the time.



Jakob Glogauer

Opinion

Canada's UN voting record regarding Israel has been based on its democratic freedoms, its efforts to uphold the rule of law, and for its outstanding record of human rights. In no way should Canada not be elected to the UN Security Council (UNSC) simply because of an alleged "anti-Palestinian" voting record, because that's simply not true.

From prime minister to prime minister, Canada has not recognized any so-called "State of Palestine" as part of its foreign policy.

The generally pro-Israel voting record has nothing to do with race, religion, or creed; rather, it has all to do with similar values and traditions that are common between the two nations.

Time and time again, Canada has ensured the human rights and dignity of the Palestinian people, regardless of its vote at the UN, not because of anti-Israel bias, rather because it is the right thing to do. By staying true to principled values, Canada should be viewed in a positive light for its support of peaceful and democratic causes.

Instead of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with bigots and anti-Semites against the world's only Jewish state, Canada advocates for freedom, and equality with its UN votes, the majority of the time.

According to the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism—which Canada adopted last year—denying the right to Jewish self-determination in their ancestral lands (a key concept of Zionist ideology), as well as calling Israel a racist state, is considered anti-Semitic. By voting in support of Israel, Canada actually stands in solidarity with other members of the international community against anti-Semitism, the world's oldest form of hatred.

For 14 years, from the last days of Jean Chrétien and the early days of Stephen Harper, Canada always voted "no" on major votes regarding Israel's mere existence. While this record changed in November of last year, voting in favour of an anti-Israel resolution, the overall record of Canada supporting Israel is principled and, besides this outlier vote that first appeared last year, the majority of Canada's Israel-related votes at the UN are supportive of Israel and the values it represents.

Canada's potential seat on the UNSC would bring a diversity of thought and opinion regarding how to treat Middle East policies and allow for meaningful discourse on these topics at such a prominent international body. By sitting on the council, Canada should use the opportunity given to further advance pro-Israeli causes, such as recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moving the embassy to the eternal capital of the Jewish people, which the United States and Guatemala have already done.

In 1979, then-prime ministerial candidate Joe Clark even promised to move the Canadian embassy to Jerusalem as a sign of Canada's steadfast support for Israel, though unfortunately, this initiative did not come to fruition.

By acting as an ally of Israel as well as voting in favour of resolutions that recognize Israel's sovereign rights to Judea and Samaria (West Bank), Canada acknowledges that the Jewish people are in fact indigenous to the land. Canada's support for the Jewish people's indigeneity conveys the more-than-3000-year truth that there has been an established Jewish presence in Israel throughout world history.

The simple fact is: Jews are indigenous to Judea.

In supporting Israel's right to exist from its inception, Canada demonstrates that it's standing on the right side of democracy and human rights, but also of history. Indeed, Lester B. Pearson supported the Jewish people's claim to the land, as he was able to comprehend the fact that Zionism is not only an ideology, but rather an element of Judaism that the majority of the faith subscribes to.

During the early stages of Israel's independence, the highest levels of Canadian leadership clearly saw that standing with Israel, meant standing with the Jewish people, at home and abroad. In the present, whether it be at the UN or at any other international institution, Canada remains a strong friend, ally, and partner of Israel's, in support of its existence as both a democratic and a Jewish state.

When the UN Partition Plan was introduced and proposed, the land was not given simply to the Zionist movement, it was given to the Jewish people. The new Israeli government then ensured it was truly the Jewish homeland by enacting laws to allow for the right of return for any Jewish person in the diaspora.

Time after time, the Palestinians refuse a state of their own, even with generous concessions from Israel. After 72 years, it is obvious that the international community has lost its patience in Palestinian leadership to negotiate any sort of final agreement. This was evident at the announcement of the Trump peace plan earlier this year, where representatives from Bahrain, Oman, and the UAE attended, signifying that there is in fact support from Israel's Arab neighbours for everlasting peace.

Canada should use the UNSC candidacy as a venture to spread light on their positive support for Israel, and worldwide Jewry at large. Instead of the U.S. being the only ally of Israel at the table, Canada can join the U.S. in being a second and a much-needed ally of Israel's.

Ultimately, Canada's record of defending Israel and the Jewish people from discrimination should be given the utmost respect and dignity, rather than an unnecessary barrage of condemnations, when considering their opportunity to sit on the UN Security Council.

Jakob Glogauer is a research analyst at *HonestReporting Canada*.

Black Conservatives urge more engagement, action from CPC and beyond after endorsement flop



Conservative Party members pictured at the party's last policy convention in Halifax in August 2018. *The Hill Times* photograph by Samantha Wright Allen

'Any leader of the Conservative Party needs to think a lot more, a lot better about how to broaden the base,' and address issues of diversity, racism, and inclusion in its own ranks and beyond, says Angela Wright.

Continued from page 1

more the party can do to address systemic racism and bring more Black Canadians into its fold—a conversation they say hasn't happened yet in the race.

"The nation is really focused on this issue and people seem to be fairly receptive to different ideas around these—diversity, inclusion, racism—these sort of things, so I think it's a perfect opportunity to at least kind of set where exactly they [Conservative leadership candidates] think they can make some sort of change," said Angela Wright, a Conservative Party member and political analyst, referring to widespread anti-Black racism and police brutality protests across Canada and the U.S.

When it comes to diversity, racism, and inclusion, Ms. Wright said "all political parties definitely have issues, [and] Conservatives are no exception to that," but unlike its electoral competitors, she thinks the CPC hasn't articulated a plan on how to

address those issues, within its own ranks or beyond.

Internally, Ms. Wright said the party needs to "be more intentional about trying to find a greater diversity of people" to become staffers, candidates, and members of riding association boards. Externally, it needs to come up with a plan to address systemic racism, something she said can be done while incorporating conservative values, like equality of opportunity and the rule of law. (For example: "How can we ensure that public institutions, which includes police services, are not abusing their power?")

Ms. Wright said previous multicultural outreach efforts spearheaded by then-Conservative minister Jason Kenney were successful in diversifying the party's tent—noting he made a point of hiring people from those communities to do outreach—and helped elevate it to majority government in 2011. But she thinks that progress has since been eroded, due to policies

"that appeared to be very racist, especially towards Muslims and South Asians," like the 2015 Anti-terrorism Act, changes to the Citizenship Act, or the niqab debate, and the divisive leadership campaigns of Maxime Bernier and Kellie Leitch in 2017.

"There's kind of this need, I think, for the party to get away from that," she said.

"Conservatives tend to shy away from things like quotas, and they have these [ideas] around the meritocracy and all these things,

but I mean, at the end of the day, there is no real equality of opportunity, especially when it comes to working in politics," said Ms. Wright, highlighting the "fairly insular" nature of political parties.

Continued on page 14



Angela Wright says the Conservative Party has the 'perfect opportunity' to articulate its plan to address systemic racism in Canada and its lack of diversity internally. *Photograph courtesy of Twitter*

News

Black Conservatives urge more engagement, action from CPC and beyond after endorsement flop

Continued from page 13

While she said she doesn't think Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) is good at "making any sort of real gestures," she said he is "very good at making a lot of symbolic gestures," and while that alone isn't good enough, it's "still more than nothing."

"There are a lot of Black people who already vote Conservative or who are willing to vote Conservative, but then if you have other parties coming up with plans [to address racism and their lack of diversity], whether or not you think it's a good plan ... that makes the Conservative Party look a bit out of touch," said Ms. Wright.

"Any leader of the Conservative Party needs to think a lot more, a lot better about how to broaden the base."

To Ms. Wright, an episode in May—in which the national council of the Association of Black Conservatives (ABC) endorsed Conservative MP Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) for leadership, which he at first accepted and

it sparked "has caused disunity both within our Party and within the greater Black community," and in turn he could not accept it and instead encouraged the group to work with "all verified candidates."

The ABC's endorsement of Mr. O'Toole indeed caused division, with critics citing the candidacy of Ms. Lewis—a Black woman, new Canadian, and lawyer from Toronto—and a lack of consultation by the national council.

Mr. O'Toole's decision to accept and then decline it also raised the eyebrows of some outside observers online.

"It's odd to accept an endorsement and then reject [it]. That just kinds of lends the question: are you really in touch with these people?" said Ms. Wright, who is not a member of the ABC.

In response to an interview request from *The Hill Times*, Mr. O'Toole's campaign pointed to his May 21 thread, and in a follow-up email, Mr. O'Toole said that making the Conservative Party "a place where all Canadians can see themselves and feel they



Conservative MP and leadership candidate Erin O'Toole, pictured in the West Block on Dec. 10, 2019. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Tories need to take advantage of 'historic moment in time'

Lilly Obina, a Conservative Party member, said she'd been a member of the ABC but left the group in May after it endorsed Mr. O'Toole without sharing its reasoning with members or putting it to a vote.

"They just decided on their own that they're going to support Erin, they didn't tell us why they're supporting him," she told *The Hill Times*. "That is why the members became very upset."

Ms. Obina—who said she's personally split between supporting the candidacy of Ms. Lewis, lauding her intelligence, "freshness," and courage in running, and Peter MacKay, whose progressive conservative leanings she shares—said Mr. O'Toole made the "right call" in not accepting the endorsement.

The ABC is a relatively new organization, launched with a view to promoting and representing Black Canadians within the Conservative Party, and vice versa.

"As Black Conservatives, we said, 'OK, we need to have a cohesive voice so that we can articulate those things since we are inside the party, and the party is willing to accept everybody,'" said Ms. Obina.

"Conservatives have not done a great job of reaching out to them [Black communities in Canada], of explaining where they are, because most of the time people always have this belief, 'oh, they are racist, oh they have racist policies,' and yet they have very good policies for people and they're willing to listen and they're willing actually to do things for the Black folks," said Ms. Obina, who sought the party's nomination in Nepean, Ont., in 2015, a nomination she said she lost not because the party didn't want her, but because she hadn't, at that point, been a member for long enough to qualify. "That was why the group was formed and was starting that process of

trying to have those communications" before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Ms. Obina said so far in the leadership race, she hasn't heard that conversation happen.

"They're not talking about that, they're not even talking about the current situation with George Floyd," she said. "I want them to reach out, I want them to be able to engage all Canadians."

Ms. Obina said all politicians need to work to create better mentorship opportunities for Black youth, address discriminatory immigration policies, and do more to reduce the barriers to entry for Black people trying to participate in the political process.

Impact Public Affairs' Oumar Dicko, a former federal Conservative staffer, said now is a "historic moment in time" for everyone, political parties included, "to think and take a deep look at the issues of racism and diversity, even within their ranks."

He pointed to a recent CBC story highlighting that the Liberal government only has four chiefs of staff who are not white out of 37. Only one of those four is Black, Marjorie Michel, chief of staff to the Treasury Board president, who took on the role last year.

That lack of diversity is also "true" for the Conservatives, "and the NDP as well," he said, adding he hopes the government and leaders of all political parties "listen and take this opportunity, because this is an extraordinary time to make these changes."

Mr. Dicko said he hopes to see "systemic racism in Canada and

political parties" discussed in the upcoming Conservative leadership debates—set for June 17 and 18.

"They need to take a deeper look at their staffers, within the leadership, to ensure that it is representative of the diversity of caucus and also the diversity of Canadians, and that is super important during elections and during time in government, so that when it's time to make decisions and to take decisions regarding policy, they get the perspectives brought from racialized Canadians and within their ranks as well," said Mr. Dicko.

All political parties should undertake internal audits to assess who's at their table, who's being hired and recruited (and who's doing that recruiting), and whose voices are being heard (and whose aren't), said Velma Morgan, chair of Operation Black Vote Canada.

"If all the voices sound the same, then perhaps you need to bring other people in. We all know that studies show that the more diverse voices and the more diverse experiences at any decision-making tables makes for better decisions for everybody," she said, adding it's not just about attracting Black staffers and candidates, it's also about parties creating environments "where they can retain us and promote us."

Ms. Morgan said she hopes the fact that a Black woman is running for CPC leadership for the first time helps prompt that internal reflection for the party, which she said, at least "on the surface," has a "longer way to go," pointing to the fact it only had two Black candidates out of 338 in the last election.

Tim Powers, vice-chairman at Summa Strategies, said "like every political party," the CPC "needs to do a better job at connecting with a variety of different racialized communities in Canada" and needs to listen to diverse voices—not just "white, pale-faced middle aged men"—to figure out how to do so.

He said he thinks it would be a "disservice" if the issue of anti-Black racism and diversity within the party isn't raised during the ongoing leadership race "given the challenges with racism are very much front and centre in our Canadian public dialogue right now."

lryckewaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Toronto lawyer Leslyn Lewis is the first Black woman approved to run in a federal Conservative leadership race. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

later declined—highlighted a need to better understand the party's Black membership.

In a May 15 press release announcing its endorsement, the ABC said, among other things, that it believes "engagement with ethnic communities is important to the [O'Toole] campaign and will continue under Erin's leadership," pointing to his commitment—since made public in his platform—to designate a caucus member to lead a "cross-culture engagement strategy with a diverse team on the ground in the most diverse parts of Canada," like the GTA.

Later that day, Mr. O'Toole tweeted that he was "honoured to have this support."

But on May 21, in a tweet thread noting Leslyn Lewis' "historic" candidacy, Mr. O'Toole said that while he was "honoured and humbled" to have received the endorsement, he realized that the "back and forth"

belong" would be an "important focus" for him as leader and would "be a key part of our electoral victory."

The Hill Times reached out to the ABC, its Ontario and Alberta chapters, as well as its national chair, Ako Ufodike, to discuss the endorsement, but did not receive a response by deadline. In a statement posted to its Facebook page on May 20, the ABC defended its decision to endorse Mr. O'Toole, saying it circulated a questionnaire, reviewed platforms, and sought meetings with all of the leadership candidates in making its decision, and that Ms. Lewis "did not respond" to the questionnaire and didn't offer "to provide any input."

Ms. Lewis' was not made available for an interview, but in an email to supporters accused the group of being Liberal-lite. Ms. Lewis also tweeted on May 15 that ABC has "worked to discredit [her] from its inception."

‘Politics as usual’: CERB bill failure suggests shifting tactics, say critics, though Canadians want co-operation amid crisis

The COVID-19 crisis is not an environment that favours opposition parties, which need to be wary of public perceptions given Canadians’ support for cross-partisan co-operation, says pollster Frank Graves.

Continued from page 1

week the Liberals failed to get another party on board and rejected a Conservative motion to return to regular sittings in order to debate Bill C-17. The bill would bring in fines and jail time for Canadians who made fraudulent Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) claims—a detail the NDP demanded be removed as a condition of its caucus’ support. The Bloc Québécois, meanwhile, has been calling for a fiscal update. Bill C-17 also included changes to the federal wage subsidy and would bring in a \$600 payment to help Canadians with disabilities.

Conservative MP Dan Albas (Central Okanagan-Similkameen-Nicola, B.C.) said what transpired during the few-minutes-long sitting on June 10 was “just the natural evolution” of Parliament’s response, as provinces start opening up and loosening restrictions.

“It seems to me as Parliament’s response to the COVID pandemic changes, and we have more perspective, so are its actors questioning whether or not these single legislation-in-a-day sittings are as effective as what we’re accustomed to,” said Mr. Albas, his party’s critic for employment, workforce development, and disability inclusion.

Last week, parties were pointing fingers about the impasse, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) blaming the Conservatives during what Mr. Albas described as a “campaign-style” press conference.

When the government shared the draft legislation, the opposition parties were very clear on what they wanted, he said, and it’s the government’s job to craft legislation that can secure support.

“The Liberals seem to have either misread the room and had not adequate negotiations to be able to move forward, or they are laying the narrative where Parliament is not working,” he said. “That’s not true. Parliament is working. It’s the government that’s failing to secure the partner.”

“At the end of the day, democracy is the art of getting people to say ‘yes,’ and perhaps the government needs to go back to some of those basic principles.”

Grit ‘overreach’ a lesson in minority Parliaments: Keller

NDP MP Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood-Transcona, Man.), his party’s critic on the employment file, said the main shift he’s seen has been in the government’s approach to CERB, from touting it as a program meant to support Canadians in need,

to a “fear campaign” and “an attitude that is about criminalizing people who made mistakes” on their forms.

“I don’t think anyone should be surprised that when the approach changed, the level of support changed as well. I don’t think you can separate the politics of this from the substance of the issue and that’s why we saw things break down last Wednesday [June 10],” said Mr. Blaikie, adding he doesn’t think the bill is beyond repair and the NDP remains willing to discuss the right approach to CERB.

The government brought the legislation forward with a “false sense of urgency” to deal with controversial measures and he said shoehorning support for Canadians with disabilities into last week’s Bill C-17 was “a poor decision.”

“From the outside, it looks a lot like an attempt to get some really controversial changes to CERB passed on the backs of people with disabilities,” he said, adding the government knew splitting it would require an unlikely agreement to give unanimous consent—which the NDP would support—when the government could have presented it as two bills to begin with.

It follows a trend of the Liberal government relying on omnibus legislation, said Karl Bélanger, an NDP strategist, pointing to an early “overreach” from the Liberals as the pandemic started when Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) sought unlimited spending powers into 2021.

That tactic failed again last week, he said, in part because the slowing of the virus’ spread and COVID-19 deaths mean the sense of urgency is also fading.

“That’s true for all political players who know that life needs to continue and you cannot just keep giving the government a blank cheque, and the government knows the window of opportunity to get things done will come to pass too,” he said.

The question is “has the government learned its lesson?” said Garry Keller, vice-president at StrategyCorp, calling the government’s decision to move ahead with Bill C-17 without the support of one opposition party locked in a risky move, but not a surprising one.

“The government is always willing to test the House, and the House was clearly not having it,” said Mr. Keller, who served as chief of staff to a Conservative government House leader and whip. “This is life in a minority Parliament. There’s give and take” and perhaps Mr. Trudeau is learning it requires putting “water in your wine.”

But that was last week, and this week the Liberals may again have a dance partner in the NDP with a confidence bill dealing with \$87-billion in mostly COVID-related measures up for a vote June 17, added Mr. Keller.

“Parliament moves very fast and it seems like there’s a route open to the government, if they take it,” said Mr. Keller, who added it was notable that NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) was first out of the gate this week on the spending bill, saying the NDP wouldn’t support it without an extension of CERB. On June 16, Mr. Trudeau announced the benefit would be expanded for a maximum of 24 weeks, up eight weeks from the previous amount.



In what’s been described as a campaign-style presser, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau spoke on June 11, pictured, to highlight how businesses are benefiting from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, while also attacking the Conservatives and blaming the opposition for playing ‘political games’ with a bill that failed to pass the day before. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Still, it hasn’t been easy over the last few months, with what former Liberal Party adviser Shaemus Murphy described as a lot of brinkmanship in getting emergency measures passed, but opposition also was working within “a fear of being perceived as being uncooperative.”

Canadians expected parties to work together to act given the gravity of the pandemic, he said, but now “parties are less willing to give the government free rein,” though he said it’s unreasonable to expect major concessions on every piece of legislation.

Bill C-17 deals with tweaks to the CERB program, and not the approval of billions in immediate and necessary spending, so it isn’t surprising to see opposition parties more willing to push back, he said.

Still, it’s the opposition that needs to be wary, with governments across Canada seeing widespread popular support for their efforts to address the pandemic and Canadians paying far more attention about what’s going on in Ottawa, said EKOS Research president Frank Graves.

“It’s not an environment that really favours opposition and the usual emphasis on oversight and accountability. That will probably come back into focus depending on what happens to the economy,” he said as the public feels enormous levels of uncertainty right now.

Polls suggest Canadians want co-operation

Public opinion polls suggest that co-operation leads to better public support for parties willing to work together, said Elliott Hughes, a senior advisor with Ottawa-based Summa Strategies, who previously worked in the Liberal finance and defence ministers’ offices.

“It seems the only person who hasn’t been very co-operative and whose poll numbers have gone down is [Conservative Leader] Andrew Scheer’s. I think the proof is in the pudding.”

A recent Abacus survey found 17 per cent of respondents had a positive opinion of the outgoing Conservative leader, down from 30 per cent in mid-April, and negative impressions were at 47 per cent, up from 25 per cent. The online survey had 1,800 respondents randomly sampled between May 14 and 17.

The Conservative Party, meanwhile, had a projected 31 per cent support if an election were called, according to the survey, trailing the Liberals’ 39 per cent. The NDP were at 16 per cent, the Bloc at seven per cent, and the Greens at six per cent.

“To me, that’s a signal [that how the CPC] approached their job as an opposition party hasn’t been as well received as maybe the New Democrats, who haven’t been chummy chummy all the time with the Liberals but have offered suggestions about how to improve legislation,” said David Coletto, CEO of Abacus Data.

The crisis has brought an unprecedented level of approval for governments at all levels, he said, which can be seen as a signal that support isn’t partisan in nature, with a desire for political leaders to work together.

“One of the things that we’ve seen is that despite a deep recession, despite some difficult choices the federal government has made, the Conservative Party hasn’t made any gains or any progress in appealing to more Canadians,” with Mr. Scheer’s (Regina-Qu’Appelle, Sask.) personal numbers getting worse and the party not doing better, despite a leadership race.

As long as the government continues to demonstrate to people that it’s acting for the right reasons, Mr. Coletto said Canadians will likely give it the benefit of the doubt.

Polls by Léger, Abacus Data, and the Angus Reid Institute in April put the Liberals at an average lead of nine percentage points over the Conservatives among decided voters, according to a CBC analysis. A May 2020 survey by Nanos found that feelings of satisfaction towards the federal government remain high.

Mr. Trudeau’s approval ratings remain steady, but among the parties there are “some fault lines re-emerging that had previously dissipated” amid the pandemic, like partisanship and regional fractures, Mr. Graves noted.

As for the parties’ failed efforts last week, neither pollster thought it would register with Canadians, who Mr. Graves said are feeling enormous levels of uncertainty and anxiety.

‘Back to normal’

Last week’s dynamics may also have to do with the time of year, pointed out Mr. Hughes, with this tenor typical as Parliament winds down for the summer break.

“This is unfortunately back to a little bit of what we’re used to this time of year,” with the usual “final push by politicians to make their mark before summer,” he said. “It’s unfortunate it had to play out over something like disability payments.”

June typically becomes more “rancorous” as the House prepares to rise, agreed Mr. Murphy.

“It always becomes more challenging,” he said. “Eventually we were going to get back to politics as usual.”

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Former Bolivian president Evo Morales, pictured in November 2019, resigned and went into exile in Mexico after losing the support of his country's security forces following an October 2019 election controversially flagged by Organization of American States observers. A Global Affairs spokesperson says that Canada 'welcomes public scrutiny of democratic processes, including electoral observation missions.' Flickr photograph by Prachatai

NDP, Green MPs raise concern over Canada's trust in OAS election monitoring in Bolivia

'[Canada] should be going out of its way to ensure that what happened in Bolivia in the fall is something that the Bolivian people actually want,' says NDP MP Jack Harris.

Continued from page 1

Bolivia to flag the suspension of the release of the vote count as a sign of electoral fraud was flawed.

During the night of the Oct. 20, 2019, election, Bolivia's election authority stopped publicly releasing preliminary results after it had more than 80 per cent of the vote tallied. The OAS released a statement the next day alleging that when more results came, they had "an inexplicable change in trend that drastically modifies the fate of the election and generates a loss of confidence in the electoral process."

A study by U.S. academics found that assertion to be flawed, as *The New York Times* reported earlier this month. That study follows an analysis by two Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers that found that the trend shouldn't be linked to fraud, as "there does not seem to be a statistically significant difference in the margin before and after the halt of the

preliminary vote," they wrote in *The Washington Post*.

NDP MP Jack Harris (St. John's East, N.L.) told *The Hill Times* that the Canadian government was too quick to accept accusations of voter fraud.

"It seems that the Government of Canada very quickly recognized the changeover [after the incumbent president's resignation] and appeared to be supporting the change," he said. "I don't think we should be doing that."

"[Canada] should be going out of its way to ensure that what happened in Bolivia in the fall is something that the Bolivian people actually want."

Mr. Harris, the NDP's foreign affairs critic, also said it was "very unfortunate" that Canada played a large role in a process that led to a change in government.

On Oct. 29, Global Affairs released a statement proclaiming that it was "deeply concerned by additional reports of serious election irregularities," and cited the delay in disseminating election results.

"These issues cast serious doubt over the legitimacy of the results and it is not possible to accept the outcome under these circumstances," the statement read.

Canada trailed both the U.S. and the European Union in its condemnation of the Bolivian election.

Following the OAS public comments on the suspension of releasing voting results, anti-government protests heightened with then-president Evo Morales losing the support of Bolivian security forces. Soon after, Mr. Morales went into exile in Mexico.

Then-Foreign Affairs minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) released a statement on Nov. 10 noting the resignation of Mr. Morales and welcomed the OAS call for new elections. Ms. Freeland also called for those elections to be monitored by the OAS.

Former Canadian diplomat Patricia Fortier, who served as ambassador to Bolivia and Peru from 2011 to 2015, said the government's approach to the Bolivian election was "very measured," as it waited for the OAS to release its preliminary conclusions before alleging electoral fraud had taken place.

"The OAS has kind of tainted itself by acting so hastily delegitimizing the election with a questionable approach," Mr. Harris said.

Mr. Harris said the focus now has to be for Bolivia to have free and fair elections.

"I think there ought to be a larger body of international observers, not just the OAS," he said, suggesting one group that should pitch in would be Ottawa-based democracy promotion group Canadem.

Elections were supposed to be held again in Bolivia in May, but were pushed back to Sept. 6 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Global Affairs spokesperson said that Canada supports free and fair elections in Bolivia.

"Free, open, and informed debate is essential to the functioning of democracies,

and Canada welcomes public scrutiny of democratic processes, including electoral observation missions," John Babcock said.

Ms. Fortier, who was a senior adviser to the OAS Electoral Observation Mission to Peru in 2006, said the more electoral observation organizations that are present the better.

"That means there are lots of eyes and ears and they all will have a slightly different point of view," she said.

The benefit with the OAS monitoring, Ms. Fortier said, is they have a lot of experience with difficult elections.

"Everybody is using them as a punching bag and they carry on," she said. "They do it really well. They are professional."

"Because they are made up of all the countries of the hemisphere, there's always good representation on the observation missions. You don't get one point of view."

Ms. Fortier added that unlike non-governmental groups, the OAS will stay for the long term, which can become necessary after a polarized election.

"The OAS is important because it is a multilateral institution ... and has the capacity to deploy beforehand, stay throughout and continue afterwards if necessary," she said, citing the case of the 1994 Dominican Republic elections. When other democracy promotion groups left, the OAS stayed behind to foster negotiations and meditation in the months that followed.

Two subsequent reports released by the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Bolivia found other evidence of fraud, including the diverting of ballot data away from the servers of the Bolivian electoral authority to two private servers.

The OAS alleged that more than 38,000 votes were tempered with, which is more than the number of votes that Mr. Morales used to claim victory over his opponents.

Green Party MP Paul Manly (Nanaimo-Ladysmith, B.C.) told *The Hill Times* that the Canadian government was too quick to accept the elevation of the government of Bolivian interim President Jeanine Añez.

He added that he is concerned over the role the OAS may play in the next election in September. The OAS is "not a credible, impartial player when it comes to leftist governments in South America," Mr. Manly said.

"It was established to advance U.S. interests," he said. "It has undue influence on other members."

Mr. Harris said the OAS has not historically been seen as a supporter of democracy in the

Americas, but rather a "tool of the United States."

"I do know that the United States is very interested in seeing Morales replaced, so I wouldn't want us to be caught up in someone else's machinations," he said.

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NDP MP Jack Harris says there should be a large body of observers overseeing the next Bolivian election and not just the OAS. *The Hill Times* file photograph

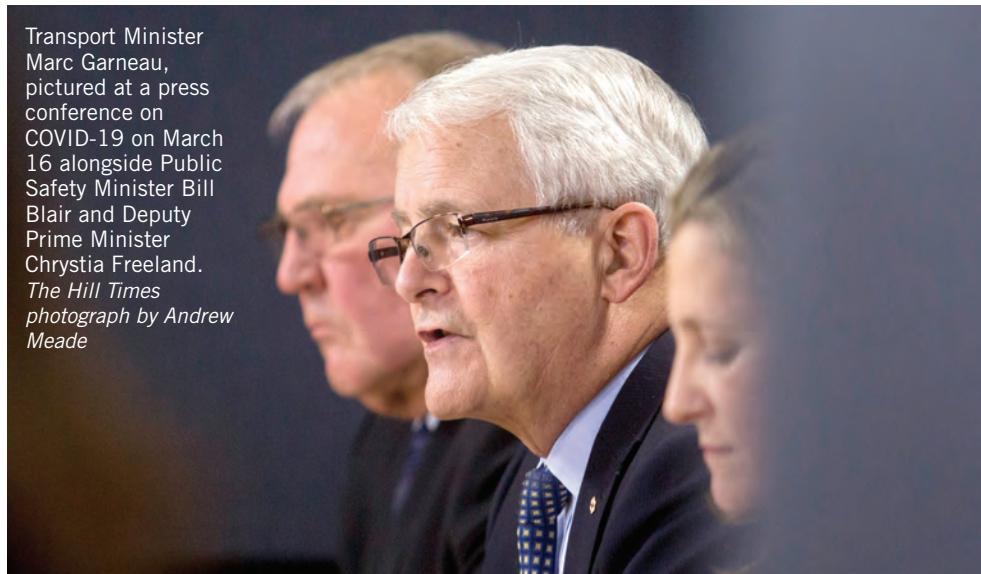


HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

Harvey-Blouin now covering Quebec desk for Transport Minister Garneau

Transport Minister Marc Garneau, pictured at a press conference on COVID-19 on March 16 alongside Public Safety Minister Bill Blair and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Plus, Helena Kojo is now executive assistant in the transport minister's office, replacing Benoit Michon who left in March after landing a job in the Prime Minister's Office.

Transport Minister **Marc Garneau** has made a number of changes to his political staff team since *Hill Climbers* last checked in back in late February, including **William Harvey-Blouin** being promoted to policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser to the minister.

Mr. Harvey-Blouin was previously working as a special assistant tackling issues management in the office, and was bumped up to his new role on April 10.



William Harvey-Blouin is now an issues management, policy, and Quebec regional affairs adviser to Mr. Garneau. *Photograph courtesy of the transport minister's office*

He's now no doubt being kept busy wearing three hats in the minister's office: along with providing Quebec regional advice to Mr. Garneau, Mr. Harvey-Blouin is now tackling the rail policy file and also continues to do issues management work.

Mr. Harvey-Blouin worked in Mr. Garneau's office as transport minister through much of the last Parliament, starting as a 2016 summer intern, after which he was hired on as a special assistant. He remained in place up until late April 2019, when he left to join Liberal Party headquarters to work as a mobilization and candidate support strategist ahead of the election last fall.

He's also previously been active in the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount Liberal riding association—the Quebec riding represented by Mr. Garneau—including as male youth vice-president during Mr. Garneau's 2015 election campaign.

Also new to Mr. Garneau's policy team is adviser **Blake Oliver**, who officially started on the job in the minister's office back on March 16.

On top of tackling the surface transportation policy file in the office, Ms. Oliver is also serving as Ontario regional affairs adviser.

Before joining Mr. Garneau's office, she had spent the last almost two years working for Crestview Strategy, starting as a public affairs intern in May 2018. She was hired on as an analyst with the firm that fall, and in April 2019 became a consultant, as noted on her LinkedIn profile.

Ms. Oliver spent the 2019 election as campaign manager to then-Liberal candidate **Josh Bennett**, who sought a seat in Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Ont. Ultimately, that seat stayed blue, with incumbent Conservative MP **Michael Barrett** having been re-elected with almost 49 per cent of the vote; Mr. Bennett came second with roughly 26.5 per



Blake Oliver is a policy adviser to the transport minister. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

cent support. In 2018, she ran her father, **Mark Oliver's**, mayoral campaign in Brockville, Ont. In the end, now-mayor **Jason Baker** won that race.

Ms. Oliver has a bachelor's degree in health sciences from McMaster University—serving a term as vice-president for education for the McMaster Students Union while there, among other things—and has a master's degree in political management from Carleton University.

Around the same time, **Miled Hill** was promoted from policy adviser to senior policy adviser.



Miled Hill is now a senior policy adviser to Mr. Garneau. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Mr. Hill started out as a practicum student in the transport minister's office over the summer of 2018—as part of his master's degree in political management from Carleton University—after which he was hired on full time. He's also a former assistant to Quebec Liberal MP **Peter Schiefke** and was a regional field organizer for the Liberals during the 2019 federal election.

As previously reported by *Hill Climbers*, senior policy adviser **Anson Duran** exited Mr. Garneau's office to cover Quebec regional affairs for the Prime Minister's Office.

Left tackling policy for the transport minister, aside from those already mentioned, is director of policy **Shane McClo-**

skey and policy adviser **Philip Kuligowski Chan**.

Also as yet unmentioned in Mr. Garneau's office is executive assistant **Helena Kojo**, who was brought on board as of March 4 to replace **Benoit Michon**, who exited for a job in the Prime Minister's Office.

Mr. Michon is now a special assistant for appointments in the top office. He'd only been working for Mr. Garneau for a few months, starting in December 2019, before which he'd been working as a riding readiness co-ordinator for the federal Liberal Party in the lead up to the last election.

During the actual 2019 campaign, he was executive assistant to the Liberals' Quebec campaign director, **Marie-Laurence Lapointe**, who previously worked as the PMO's Quebec regional affairs adviser. Mr. Michon is also a former assistant to Toronto Liberal MP **Arif Virani**.

For her part, Ms. Kojo previously served as executive assistant to then-employment minister **Patty Hajdu** and her chief of staff, **Sabina Saini**, during the last Parliament, starting in early 2019. She's also a former intern, through the Liberal Party's 2018 summer internship program, in Liberal MP **Julie Dabrusin's** office.

As with Mr. Michon, Ms. Kojo is executive assistant to both Mr. Garneau and his chief of staff, **Marc Roy**.

Mr. Garneau's ministerial office also currently includes: **Amy Butcher**, director of communications; **Livia Belcea**, press secretary; **Elisabeth d'Amours**, special assistant for communications and operations; **Jean Proulx**, senior special assistant; **Malcolm McEachern**, special assistant; and **Steve Desjardins**, driver.

In other staffing news, Heritage Minister **Steven Guilbeault** recently bade farewell to a member of his team, with social media adviser **Philippe Desforges** having exited in early May.

Mr. Desforges, who'd worked on Mr. Guilbeault's successful 2019 election campaign, spent three months in the office in all and is now working off the Hill as a media strategist with House of Socials, a digital marketing firm.

Justine Lesage remains director of communications and issues management to Mr. Guilbeault, with **Camille Gagné-Raynauld** as press secretary, **Lynda Haddoud** as a communications and issues management adviser, and **Sarah Leclair** as communications adviser and assistant to the parliamentary secretary for sport, Liberal MP **Adam van Koevorden**.

Mathieu Bouchard is Mr. Guilbeault's chief of staff.

Over in Finance Minister **Bill Morneau's** office, special assistant for parliamentary affairs **Francesco Biondi-Morra** exited the minister's team in March.

A former assistant to then-Liberal MP **Jean-Claude Poissant**, he had been working for Mr. Morneau since September 2018.

Marion Pilon-Cousineau remains Mr. Morneau's director of parliamentary affairs, while **Elder Marques** is chief of staff. *lryckewaert@hilltimes.com*
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Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault pictured arriving at the West Block on June 2. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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Unions, Treasury Board in talks for public service's return to workplace after three-month shutdown

Continued from page 4

Mr. Aylward said Treasury Board is not pushing for everyone to get back to work by the end of the month, and that the department has been very consultative, co-operative, and open to suggestions and concerns.

"If it continues that way, it should be OK," said Mr. Aylward.

Thousands of PSAC members worked to process more than 3.8 million applications for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) in the first five days following the program's launch on April 6, according to the Union of Taxation Employees' website. Cumulatively, more than 5.6 million claims for financial support were received and processed between March 15 and April 10.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) announced the government would be extending the CERB by eight weeks on June 16.

Telework, flexible work arrangements feasible, says CAPE president Greg Phillips

Greg Phillips, president of the Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE), said his union recently conducted a survey to touch base with its membership and find out their thoughts and feelings about returning to physical workplaces.

"We're in the midst of analyzing those results now, but it's clear it covers the whole spectrum of stress and worries from some people who aren't worried at all, to those who are very, very worried," Mr. Phillips told *The Hill Times* in an interview last week.

Telework and flexible work arrangements can work when you have an employer that's willing to accept and embrace it, and work with employees to let them telework, according to Mr. Phillips.

"It can be very useful and shouldn't be something that employers fear engaging in, because we see that a lot of our members put in full-time hours," said Mr. Phillips, who noted that one in six of his union's members are going into work every day and are considered essential.

Four out of five members who answered the survey have worked full time during the entire period of the pandemic-related shutdown, which began for the public service in mid-March.

"And that's despite one in four saying they have COVID-19 family-related responsibility issues that hindered their ability to work, so 25 per cent were saying that COVID-19 had an impact of their family responsibilities, but still four out of five worked a full day," said Mr. Phillips.

But Mr. Phillips noted work-from-home arrangements come with some concerns of their own.

"Especially now with COVID, with people working at home, even long-term, having a workstation at home, to be able to get that separation [between] work life and home life, you'll get a situation where employees might, on the weekend, just take it upon themselves to work for a couple of hours because their office is there," said Mr. Phillips. "Because of their dedication to their projects, they might reach a point where there's burnout and stress because

they're not giving themselves that break that they need."

"With increased teleworking and with everybody doing it, that's what I'm worried about," said Mr. Phillips. "We already perform a lot of unpaid overtime, but this will exasperate the situation, and I worry about the mental health of my membership."

Dany Richard, president of the Association of Canadian Financial Officers (ACFO-ACAF), told *The Hill Times* last week that "we've shown that we can deliver the same output if we have the right tools and connections to the network, so for us, there's no really no rush to physically return to the office space."

"The good news is, for the most part, because we work in finance, we can perform the duties via telework, said Mr. Richard. "COVID-19 is a very unfortunate situation, but one of the silver linings will be that it will be much easier for our members to telework because it's been proven now that it works," said Mr. Richard. "Don't get me wrong, the government was allowing telework before, but not to this extent."

Mr. Richard also said some of his union's members are keen to return to the workplace, citing difficulty in separating personal lives from professional lives when everything is in one household.

"Some of our members, and this is something we're working with the employer on, whenever we do have to return to work, we'd like them to ask for volunteers first," said Mr. Richard. "Some people say, 'as soon as I can get back to work, get me in there,' and that's the approach that you want," said Mr. Richard.

According to Treasury Board Secretariat spokesperson Bianca Healy, "the government will move cautiously as we consider increasing access to federal worksites," and that "the health and safety of employees is paramount."

"We will be guided by the decisions of public health authorities, including Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, and the direction of provinces and territories," wrote Ms. Healy in an emailed statement to *The Hill Times*, which she noted are reopening their economies and gradually easing restrictions at varying paces.

"This is a very positive sign and the government has been working behind the scenes for many weeks to prepare guidance for deputy ministers in anticipation of this phase," wrote Ms. Healy. "This guidance has benefited from input from a cross-section of deputy colleagues as well as bargaining agents."

Employees of every organization will be given reasonable notice and assurances about safety measures that will apply before being asked to return to a worksite, and organizations will be considering a range of scenarios that includes the possibility of a second wave, according to Ms. Healy.

"It will be a gradual process and organizations, engaging employees and their bargaining agents, will shape their specific plans based on these considerations," wrote Ms. Healy. "In the meantime, public servants will continue to benefit from the enhanced and expanded network infrastructure, security, teleconferencing, and collaboration tools established during the response phase of the pandemic."

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Parliamentary Calendar



MPs gather in House of Commons for confidence vote on June 17

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

House Sitting—The House is sitting Wednesday, June 17 to discuss supplementary spending estimates. The Special COVID-19 Pandemic Committee, composed of all members of the House, and will also meet Wednesday, and have its final meeting on June 18. As per a government motion tabled May 25, the House will sit on July 8, July 22, Aug. 12, Aug. 26. The House is then scheduled to return in the fall on Monday, Sept. 21, for three straight weeks, as per the original sitting calendar. 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 Sitting—The Senate resumed sitting on June 16. 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.

Norwegian Business in Canada in a COVID-19 Perspective—The Embassy of Norway in Canada hosts a webinar on "Norwegian Business in Canada in a COVID-19 Perspective," examining key effects of the pandemic and how governments and business support each other. Speakers include Anne Kari Hansen Ovind, Norway's ambassador to Canada; Mark Schaan, associate assistant deputy minister at Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada; Jon Ingar Kjenes, CEO Motitech AS; and Øyvind E. Haga, director, Innovation Norway Toronto. The online events run from 9:30-10:15 a.m. ET on Wednesday, Jun 17. Register via Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 & THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Conservative Party Leadership Debates—The Conservative Party will host leadership debates on June 17 (French) and June 18 (English) in Toronto. Both debates will be live-streamed at conservative.ca starting at 7 p.m., and Canadians will have the opportunity to submit questions for the candidates in advance. The debates will be moderated by the Leadership Election Organizing Committee co-chairs Dan Nowlan and Lisa Raitt. The debates will exclusively feature questions from the public, and Canadians are asked to submit their video recorded questions to our Conservative Leadership website www.cpc-leadership2020.ca by June 10.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Canada's International Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts a webinar on "Canada's International Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic" featuring Marta Morgan, deputy minister of Global Affairs Canada. The deputy minister will present on navigating disrupted global supply chains and international efforts to address the ongoing pandemic by providing support to those who are most vulnerable. Thursday, June 18, from 12:30-1:30 p.m. C.D. Howe Institute members and their guests can register online.

Building National Networks to Solve Wicked Problems—The Canadian Science Policy Centre hosts its virtual CanCOVID panel who will discuss "Building National Networks to Solve Wicked Problems" featuring Dr. Karen Dodds, research scientist consultant to the vice-president, Infectious Diseases Prevention and



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who visited Régimbal Awards and Promotions on June 11, will face a test from the minority Parliament on June 17 with a confidence vote on supplementary spending estimates scheduled in the House of Commons.
The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade



Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Theresa Tam, pictured June 15, arrives for a media availability in West Block to update Canadians on the response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade



Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland arrives for a media availability in West Block to update Canadians on the response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on June 10.
The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Control Branch, Public Health Agency of Canada; Ramy R. Saleh, McGill University Health Center; and Marcel Behr, McGill University. Thursday, June 18, at 12:30 p.m. Register online.

International Development Assistance In a COVID-19 World—The Canadian International Council hosts a webinar on "International Development Assistance In a COVID-19 World." How can political leaders better convince the Canadian public of the synergies between our values and interests in the context of an invisible global virus? How might COVID-19 lead to radical changes in the quantity, quality and administration of Canadian development assistance? Panellists include Nilima Gulrajani, senior research fellow at the Overseas Development Institute in London; Anna Vogt, director of the Mennonite Central Committee Canada Ottawa Office; Stephen Brown, professor at the University of Ottawa's School of Political Studies; and Nicolas Moyer, president and CEO of the Canadian School of International Co-operation. Thursday, June 18, from 7-8:30 p.m. CDT. CIC members can register online.

TUESDAY, JUNE 23

Getting to Net Zero—Independent Senator Mary Coyle will speak about "Getting to Net Zero," discussing her recently launched Senate Inquiry into finding the right pathways and actions for Canada and Canadians to meet our net-zero carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions targets, hosted by the Group of 78. This virtual discussion happens Tuesday, June 23, from 1-2 p.m. Register via Eventbrite.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

Canada Summit for National Progress 2020—The Canada Summit for National Progress is a ground-

breaking gathering of established leaders, emerging leaders, dreamers and doers who are committed to building a strong Canada for future generations. If you are a business person, non-profit organization leader, elected official, community leader, community volunteer, student, senior or anyone with a heart for Canada and a desire to work for tangible change, then this event is for you. Presenters include Stockwell Day, former opposition leader; Niels Veldhuis, Fraser Institute president; Tony Clement, former federal health minister; and Joy Smith, former Conservative MP. Event participants will hear from prominent national voices on key issues and have the option of participating in think tank sessions. The summit is a free, two-day event, taking place on Saturday, June 13 and Saturday, June 27. Register at canadasummit.ca.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Canada's Foremost Fintech Conference FFCON20—Featuring high-growth start-ups and leading industry experts across fintech sectors including digital banking, P2P finance, AI, capital markets, Wealthtech, payments, crypto, and blockchain. July 8-9. Speakers include: Robert Asselin, senior director public policy, BlackBerry; Paul Schulte, founder and editor, Schulte Research; Craig Asano, founder and CEO, NCFA; George Bordianu, co-founder and CEO, Balance; Julien Brazeau, partner, Deloitte; Alixe Cormick, president, Venture Law Corporation; Nikola Danaylov, founder, keynote speaker, author futurist, Singularity Media; Pam Draper, president and CEO, Bitvo; Justin Hartzman, co-founder and CEO, CoinSmart; Peter-Paul Van Hoeken, founder & CEO, FrontFundr; Cynthia Huang, CEO and co-founder, Altcoin Fantasy; Austin Hubbel, CEO and co-founder, Consilium Crypto; Patrick Mandic,

CEO, Mavennet; Mark Morissette, co-founder & CEO, Foxquilt; Cato Pastoll, co-founder & CEO, Lending Loop; Bernd Petak, investment partner, Northmark Ventures; Ali Pourdad, Pourdad Capital Partners, Family Office; Richard Prior, global head of policy and research, FDATA; Richard Remillard, president, Remillard Consulting Group; Jennifer Reynolds, president & CEO, Toronto Finance International; Jason Saltzman, partner, Gowling WLG Canada; James Wallace, co-chair and co-CEO, Exponential; Alan Wunsche, CEO & chief token officer, Tokenfunder; and Danish Yusuf, founder and CEO, Zensurance. For more information, please visit: <https://fintechandfunding.com/>.

FRIDAY, AUG. 21

Conservative Party Leadership—The federal Conservative Party's Leadership Election Organizing Committee, also known as LEOC, announced on April 29 that Aug. 21 is the deadline for mail-in ballots, after the leadership was suspended on March 26 due to the global pandemic. The party says the winner will be announced once the ballots can be safely counted.

THURSDAY, OCT. 15

PPF Testimonial Dinner and Awards—Join us at the 33rd annual event to network and celebrate as the Public Policy Forum honours Canadians who have made their mark on policy and leadership. Anne McLellan and Senator Peter Harder will take their place among a cohort of other stellar Canadians who we've honoured over the last 33 years, people who have dedicated themselves to making Canada a better place through policy leadership and public service. The gala event will be held on Thursday, Oct. 15, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St. W., Toronto.

SATURDAY, OCT. 24

Parliamentary Press Gallery Dinner—The Parliamentary Press Gallery Dinner happens on Saturday, Oct. 24, in the Sir John A. Macdonald Building on Wellington Street in Ottawa.

FRIDAY, OCT. 30

CJF Awards Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence in Journalism—The Canadian Journalism Foundation Awards will be held on Oct. 30, 2020, at the Ritz-Carlton, Toronto, hosted by Rick Mercer, former host of *The Rick Mercer Report*. The CBC's Anna Maria Tremonti will be honoured. Tables are \$7,500 and tickets are \$750. For more information on tables and sponsorship opportunities, contact Josh Gurfinkel at jgurfinkel@cjf-fjc.ca or 416-955-0394.

TUESDAY, NOV. 3

U.S. Presidential Election—The U.S. presidential election is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020. U.S. President Donald Trump is the Republican candidate and former vice-president Joe Biden is the presumptive Democratic candidate. The winner is scheduled to be inaugurated on Jan. 20, 2021.

THURSDAY, NOV. 12

Liberal Party National Convention—The Liberal Party of Canada announced the 2020 Liberal National Convention will be hosted in Ottawa, from Nov. 12-15. For more information, please contact: media@liberal.ca, 613-627-2384.

FRIDAY, NOV. 13

Bridging Divides in Wake of a Global Pandemic—The University of Victoria (UVic) and the Senate of Canada are bringing together change-makers at the Victoria Forum to help generate solutions to some of the world's most divisive problems. The two-day virtual forum will be held Nov. 13-14 to examine issues that fall under the theme of "Bridging divides in the wake of a global pandemic." The forum will draw on emerging trends and lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic through biweekly webinars. For more information or to register, visit www.victoriaforum.ca.

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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