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News

Next Conservative leader must stop internal sniping before it becomes a 'cancer' that will destroy the party, say political insiders

'Unity is the way to go' should be the marching orders from the new leadership to all Conservative Party members, says Keith Beardsley, former deputy chief to former prime minister Stephen Harper.



Former cabinet minister Peter MacKay, left, and Conservative MP and former cabinet minister Erin O'Toole are the front-runners in the Conservative Party leadership contest. But leadership candidates Toronto lawyer Leslyn Lewis and Conservative MP Derek Sloan are expected to play pivotal roles in the outcome of the race, say Conservative insiders. *The Hill Times file photographs*

BY ABBAS RANA

The next leader of the federal Conservatives will have to take immediate steps to stop sniping

between rival camps within the party, before it draws public attention away from the COVID-19 pandemic and becomes a "cancer" for the party, warn political insiders.

"Right now, it's inside baseball," said pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research, in an interview

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News

Stalled Liberal agenda awaits fall return of Parliament

BY PETER MAZEREUW

The Liberal government has plenty of work left to do as MPs begin their summer recess, with a stalled legislative agenda and high-profile promises awaiting Parliament's return this fall.

It's not yet clear what the return of Parliament will look like. The House of Commons has adjourned until Sept. 21. By default, that would mean regular sittings of all

338 MPs would begin on that day, forcing MPs to regularly criss-cross the country and sit in close proximity to one another. The number of COVID-19 cases in Canada has declined in recent weeks, but second waves of the virus have already begun to spring up in other countries around the world.

MPs have not yet reached a deal on how or whether to alter

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News

COVID-19 pushes Liberals into majority territory; Conservatives must ready an alternative vision, say pollsters

BY ABBAS RANA

Justin Trudeau's Liberals are in majority territory in public opinion polls chiefly because of their effective management of COVID-19, but opposition parties that have been relegated to the sidelines during the

pandemic should get ready to make themselves relevant in the coming months by offering a clear alternative vision for Canada's future and how to rebuild the economy, say political insiders and pollsters.

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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Palak Mangat

Philpott keeping busy these days, co-editing new book as dean appointment begins

Here comes Jane: Jane Philpott has helped edit *Vulnerable: The Law, Policy and Ethics of COVID-19*, published by the University of Ottawa Press. The 628-page book, to be released on July 14, features some 60 authors. She is one of five editors of the book. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Former health minister Jane Philpott tweeted a promotional video offering a sneak peek of her new book, which she co-edited, on June 29. It will go public July 14. Image courtesy of Jane Philpott's Twitter

Canada's former federal health minister **Jane Philpott** will soon have a new COVID-19 credential under her belt: a book detailing the impacts of the outbreak. Titled *Vulnerable: The Law, Policy and Ethics of COVID-19*, it's published by the University of Ottawa Press and set to be released on July 14. At a hefty 628 pages, the book is edited by Ms. Philpott, **Colleen M. Flood**, **Vanesa MacDonell**, **Sophie Thériault**, and **Sridhar Venkatapuram** and it

costs \$95.95 for cloth, \$49.95 for paperback, and \$29.99 in eBook. "Hopefully, COVID-19 will force us to deeply reflect on how we govern and our policy priorities; to focus preparedness, precaution, and recovery to include all, not just some," reads a description of the book, which Ms. Philpott co-edited and comes complete with 43 peer-reviewed chapters. She tweeted a one minute, 44-second video promoting the work, which features more than 60 au-

thors, on June 29. "This pandemic has been a massive wake-up call to expose the vulnerabilities that have existed for a very long time," says Ms. Philpott in the video. The book chronicles those who have been directly affected by the virus as well as those harmed by measures taken to slow its progress, including at the institutional, governance, and legal levels.

Ms. Philpott is quite busy nowadays: she marked her first day as dean of the faculty of health sciences and director of the school of medicine at Queen's University in Kingston on July 2. Her appointment came into effect July 1, Canada Day, when she tweeted a photo of her new office at Macklem House. She touched down in Kingston on June 30, when she shared a photo of her new home: "Met some friendly neighbours already and did a bit of exploring down by the lake," she tweeted. Earlier, she was one of the public figures on the front lines of the pandemic, when she returned to the Markham Stouffville Hospital in Markham in March, where she had worked for almost two decades as a family physician before joining politics. Ms. Philpott will serve at Queen's for a five-year term.

Governor General Julie Payette earned herself some musical chops last week. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



GG gets musical nod

The Queen's representative earned herself yet another accolade last week, after the Ottawa Bach Choir, which features Gov. Gen. **Julie Payette**, was named a Juno winner under the classical album of the year category. Since 2002, the group headed by York University associate professor and head of choral music **Lisette**

Canton has been picking up international and national recognition, all while featuring the former astronaut as one of the six sopranos. "Our album won ... we are so thrilled!" tweeted Ms. Payette on June 30. Astronaut, Governor General, award-winning singer ... what can't Ms. Payette do?



Fisheries Minister Bernadette Jordan, pictured at the November 2019 cabinet swearing-in, thanked some star power this week for donating to her alma mater. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Fisheries minister thanks star power

Fisheries Minister **Bernadette Jordan**, a proud West Dublin, N.S., resident who graduated from St. Francis Xavier University with a bachelor's degree in political science, gave a shout out to Vancouver-born Hollywood actor **Ryan Reynolds** and American actress **Blake Lively** last week. The Hollywood couple donated \$200,000 to the school to help launch the Coady Institute's program called Circle of Abundance-Amplifying

Indigenous Women's Leadership. "You are indeed both honorary Xaverians for life," tweeted Ms. Jordan, whose hometown sits just over three hours away from the school. The school's goal is to raise \$1-million in support of the programming, and the fund comes as the country wraps up its National Indigenous History Month for June. "I'm finally an X-Man. X-Person?" joked Mr. Reynolds on Twitter.

McKenna to talk recovery

In a July 14 Pearson Centre webinar, Infrastructure Minister **Catherine McKenna** will talk shop with **Brian Gallant**, the former Liberal premier of New Brunswick who was defeated by Conservative **Blaine Higgs** in 2018. The talk comes as governments across Canada begin reopening their economies, and Ms. McKenna will weigh in on how infrastructure can pave the path forward to a national recovery.

"Will Canada need a new Marshall Plan? And how can government[s] centre recovery objectives with issues such as environmental sustainability and gender equity?" reads a promotion of the webinar. The event runs 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.



Infrastructure Minister Catherine McKenna will chat with former Liberal New Brunswick premier Brian Gallant on July 14. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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Opinion

Radioactive waste: a big problem for New Brunswick's proposed new nuclear reactors

The nuclear waste problem is not going away.



Gordon Edwards & Susan O'Donnell

Opinion

On June 26, federal Climate Change and Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson ended the environmental assessment of a proposed radioactive waste storage facility beside Lake Huron, after the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) withdrew its proposal to build it. OPG decided to terminate the project after the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, on whose unceded territory the facility would be located, voted on Jan. 31 not to support the project, which had been under consideration for 15 years.

What to do with radioactive waste remains a significant challenge for all nuclear reactor operators, including the two proposed nuclear projects supported by the New Brunswick government and its public utility NB Power. Recently, more than 100 groups across Canada, including nine in New Brunswick, signed a letter to federal Minister of Natural Resources Seamus O'Regan asking to suspend decisions about radioactive waste disposal until Canada has a sufficient radioactive waste policy in place.

In November 2019, a special mission of experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recommended that Canada's radioactive waste policy needed to be enhanced and that a national strategy on dealing with radioactive waste needed to be formulated. Canada has agreed to act on the IAEA recommendation.

Nuclear energy produces dangerous irradiated nuclear fuel and a host of other radioactive waste materials requiring safe storage for hundreds of thousands of years. Globally, no facility for permanent safe storage of irradiated fuel has been licensed to operate, and several facilities for storing non-fuel radioactive wastes have experienced setbacks costing billions of dollars to rectify.

In Canada, only New Brunswick and Ontario have operational nuclear power reactors. Of the 10 proposed new reactor projects currently in pre-licensing review by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, two are in New Brunswick. Both, to be sited at NB Power's Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station, are so-called "small modular nuclear reactors" or SMNRs. Both will create irradiated fuel that is more intensely radioactive per kilogram than waste currently stored at the Lepreau CANDU reactor. In addition, the non-fuel radioactive wastes will remain the responsibility of the Government of New Brunswick, likely requiring the siting of a permanent radioactive waste repository somewhere in the province.

The two New Brunswick prototypes are both designed to re-use spent CANDU fuel bundles. At Point Lepreau, solid, highly radioactive used fuel bundles are stored in hundreds of silos on a site about a kilometre away from the CANDU reactor.

Interestingly, promoters of both new nuclear projects in New Brunswick—the ARC-100 reactor and the Moltex "Stable Salt Reactor"—claim their reactors will "burn up" these radioactive waste fuel bundles. They have even suggested that their prototype reactors offer a "solution" to the Lepreau reactor's existing nuclear fuel waste problem. The radioactive left-over used fuel from the new reactors will still require safe storage for hundreds of thousands of years.

The only way to re-use the existing used fuel at Lepreau is to access the unused "fissile material," mainly plutonium, contained in the irradiated fuel bundles.

The basic problem is that you cannot access the materials inside the spent fuel from Lepreau except by opening up the solid bundles and converting them into a molten or liquid form. The spent fuel contains hundreds of human-made radioactive poisons that were created inside the Lepreau nuclear reactor. Some of these poisons are gases or vapours, making it extremely difficult to keep all dangerous materials in check and accounted for. In prior operations of this kind, radioactive pollutants have invariably escaped into the environment.

Until now, every effort to recycle and "burn up" used reactor fuel—in France (La Hague), the U.K. (Sellafield), Russia (Mayak) and the U.S. (Hanford)—has resulted in countless incidents of radioactive contamination of the local environment. In addition, none of these projects eliminated the need for permanent storage of the left-over long-lived radioactive byproducts, many of which cannot be "burned up."

When recycled plutonium and enriched uranium are used as fuels in a Moltex SSR or ARC-100 reactor, an even greater concentration of intensely radioactive fission products will be produced—more so than already exists from the Lepreau reactor, which uses unenriched uranium as fuel. If the two new reactors are built, for the first 500 to 1,000 years after they go into operation, the used fuel from them will be much more radioactive per kilogram than the used fuel from Lepreau.

The nuclear waste problem is not going away. The recent letter from more than 100 groups across Canada, the cancellation last week of the proposed nuclear waste dump in Ontario, and the formation in May of a new coalition in New Brunswick to oppose the new nuclear projects demonstrate that significant opposition to new nuclear energy generation exists. Producing nuclear energy always means producing nuclear waste as well.

Dr. Gordon Edwards, a scientist and nuclear consultant, is the president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility and is based in Montreal. Dr. Susan O'Donnell, a former senior research officer at the National Research Council of Canada, is the lead researcher on the University of New Brunswick project Rural Action and Voices for the Environment (RAVEN) and is based in Fredericton.

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News

Stalled Liberal agenda awaits fall return of Parliament

The time is ripe for the Liberals to strike a deal on pharmacare, says former Liberal adviser John Delacourt.

Continued from page 1

the House's operations this fall to reduce the risk of MPs contracting and spreading the virus. Government House Leader Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Que.) has pressed for a move to a "hybrid" sittings, wherein some MPs are present in the Chamber and others participate and vote remotely using technology. Conservative House Leader Candice Bergen (Portage-Lisgar, Man.) has argued that there are plenty of ways to allow MPs to safely attend sittings in the Chamber in person, including by voting in shifts; reorganizing walking paths through the Chamber; pairing votes, or allowing MPs to volunteer to have their vote cast by their whip; spreading MPs and staff out into some of the empty spaces surrounding the Chamber; and other measures.

The Conservatives could have a new House leadership team in place when negotiations on how the House will resume heat up again in September. The Conservative leadership race is set to conclude on Aug. 21, and the winner may be expected to shuffle the party's leadership team. One of the front-runners, MP Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) already has a seat in the House, while the other, former cabinet minister Peter MacKay, does not.

The parties are closely watching the deliberations of the Procedure and House Affairs Committee (PROC), as its members hash out the details of a report that will recommend how MPs should continue to fulfill their parliamentary duties if Parliament is once again suspended because of the pandemic. The committee has asked for an extension to the timeline for its study, to July 21.

MPs are scheduled to meet in the House four times over the summer, on July 8, July 22, Aug. 12, and Aug. 26, and likely in limited numbers, to question government ministers and debate current issues. There won't be any opportunity to advance legislation during those meetings. Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) is also scheduled to deliver a fiscal "snapshot" of the Canadian economy on Wednesday, July 8, but has not announced a date yet for a fiscal update or a budget. The House is then scheduled to return in the fall on Monday, Sept. 21, for three straight weeks.

Pressure on Liberals to act on assisted dying, guns, pharmacare

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (Papineau, Que.) Liberals were slow to introduce new or substan-



Public Safety Minister Bill Blair, pictured May 6, 2020, in the House of Commons for a meeting of the Special Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic. Mr. Blair is responsible for delivering on some of the government's most high-profile promises, and ushering key pieces of legislation through a minority House of Commons. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

tial legislation at the beginning of the 43rd Parliament. Most of the new bills that they did eventually introduce were then sidelined by the COVID-19 pandemic—partly because of the public health risk of holding a regular House sitting, and partly by the government's decision to focus only on COVID-19-related measures through to the end of June.

So far, the government has passed 11 bills in this Parliament: five were supply bills to keep the government running, five were related to the pandemic, and another bill implemented the CUSMA trade deal, which had been agreed to during the last Parliament.

Seven government bills are still in the House of Commons, but have not been dealt with since mid-March when Parliament was suspended amid the pandemic. Those include **Bill C-3**, revived from the last Parliament to make good on a years-old

Liberal promise to establish independent oversight of the Canada Border Services Agency; **Bill C-6**, another revived bill that would change Canada's citizenship oath to include an affirmation of Indigenous treaty rights; **Bill C-7**, a court-ordered change to Canada's assisted dying law; **Bill C-8**, which would ban so-called "conversion therapy" for LGBTQ people; **Bill C-9**, which would make a technical change to the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act; and **Bill C-17**, the government's failed attempt to provide

financial help to disabled Canadians during the pandemic.

Those bills will be waiting when Parliament resumes this fall. The government is under a court order to pass Bill C-7 by Dec. 18. A committee review of the original assisted dying legislation is also now overdue.

The COVID-19 pandemic will add urgency to a Liberal promise to reform Canada's pharmacare system, said John Delacourt, a consultant lobbyist at Hill and Knowlton Strategies, and who previously served as a high-level staffer handling communications



Government House Leader Pablo Rodriguez has pressed opposition MPs to agree to hold electronic votes and partially virtual sittings of the House of Commons amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

and issues management for the Trudeau government.

Canada's federal and provincial first ministers and health ministers have been cooperating well throughout the pandemic, and Health Minister Patty Hajdu (Thunder Bay-Superior North, Ont.) should take advantage of that rapport and try to get a deal done with the provinces on pharmacare, he said.

The pandemic will also put a spotlight on the government's promise to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples, said Mr. Delacourt.

The Liberals ran on a promise to implement the terms of the declaration, known as UNDRIP, following the near-passage of the declaration in the last Parliament through a private member's bill introduced by former Quebec NDP MP Romeo Saganash.

The Trudeau government postponed its plan to introduce the implementing legislation as a government bill in February amid widespread protests and rail blockades by Indigenous rights activists. In the time since, Mr. Trudeau has promised swift action to counter anti-Indigenous racism, and Canada's Supreme Court has dismissed a challenge to the controversial TMX pipeline by three B.C. First Nations.

Passing UNDRIP will change the right and powers that First Nations in Canada have in a number of policy areas, including public health, said Mr. Delacourt.

Public Safety Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) has also promised to develop a legal framework for First Nations policing that would make it an essential service, and ensure that police forces on First Nations "reflect the communities they serve."

Mr. Blair is the lead minister responsible for promised gun control legislation that was among the government's top public priorities before the pandemic struck. The Liberals pledged to introduce legislation to give municipalities the power to ban

handguns; to tighten the rules for storing guns; to implement a buy-back program for newly-banned semi-automatic rifles; and to permanently re-classify those rifles as restricted weapons.

The government is also under pressure to strike a deal with the provinces to set new national standards for the long-term care sector. The COVID-19 pandemic has rampaged through many of Canada's long-term care homes, particularly in Ontario and Quebec, and those outbreaks have accounted for the majority of deaths caused by the virus. A report released in late May by Canadian military members working in COVID-stricken long-term care homes in Ontario documented abuse and neglect of residents, staff who were exhausted and fearful of using personal protective or sanitary equipment, and widespread contamination of the facilities.

The Liberals also have a long list of election promises from their last campaign to fulfill, many of which have been included in mandate letters to the government's ministers and will require legislation. Those include setting legally-binding targets for Canada to become a net-zero emitter of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050; banning single-use plastics; bringing in new taxes on luxury goods, multinational technology companies, and foreign speculation in Canada's housing market; establishing new penalties for elder abuse; bringing in legislation to support workers harmed by the government's GHG reduction efforts; making changes to the Official Languages, Environmental Protection, and Broadcasting and Telecommunications acts; creating a handful of new agencies, tribunals, and commissions that require a basis in legislation; and more.

The need for contact tracing to slow the spread of COVID-19 also highlights the need for the government to change federal privacy legislation, said Mr. Delacourt, who is registered to lobby for two clients with an interest in federal privacy laws.

Opposition critics in Parliament recently raised concerns with the contact tracing app being promoted by the federal government.

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The Hill Times

Status of government bills

House of Commons

Second reading:

- C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts
- C-6, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action number 94)
- C-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying)
- C-8, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)
- C-9, An Act to amend the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act
- C-17, An Act respecting additional COVID-19 measures

Committee:

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

Canada's misguided China policy needs an urgent review

It would, therefore, be prudent of Canada to seek to reinforce its diplomatic and economic ties with like-minded democracies such as the United States, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, and the United Kingdom to reduce its dependency on China before it's too late.

Strangely though, Canadian government leaders, including Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, have so far only countered China's bullying techniques with rather timid and carefully drafted PR statements to avoid upsetting the Communist Party of China (CPC). While a prisoner swap is out of the question, the lack of a more combative strategy or approach by Ottawa throughout the course of the Huawei issue has encouraged Beijing to walk all over it.

Prime Minister Trudeau must accept that the Chinese do not appreciate criticism, particularly on matters of national interest. They'd rather intimidate, bully and harass countries to avoid accountability and correction. For Beijing, it's always power over principle.

A recent national security review noted that Ottawa hasn't taken any stringent countermeasures despite the CPC's aggressive interference in Canada's political and economic systems. This should worry Canadians as China can "weaponize" key individuals, trade and investment if it has to extract political leeway, putting the country's national security and democratic institutions at risk.

The recent failure of Canada's high-profile bid for a seat in the UN Security Council is a wake-up call for the Trudeau government to overhaul its outdated and ineffective foreign policy, particularly when it comes to dealing with autocratic nations like Russia, China and Saudi Arabia. With such countries becoming increasingly powerful and displaying a blatant disregard for

a rules-based international system, Ottawa must adopt a proactive and evidence-based foreign policy that protects and extends the interests of Canada and its citizens.

It would, therefore, be prudent of Canada to seek to reinforce its diplomatic and economic ties with like-minded democracies such as the United States, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, and the United Kingdom to reduce its dependency on China before it's too late. Ottawa must consider imposing Magnitsky sanctions on CPC officials for human rights violations and also review Chinese state and state-linked investments in the country, to counter China's assumption that it can always get away with despotism and duplicity. Beijing's high-handed and reckless behaviour during the coronavirus pandemic has only fuelled an unfavourable opinion of it across the globe, with many speaking out. It is time for Canada to treat China like the bully it is.

Joe Adam George is a foreign affairs writer with the Washington-based policy think tank, Stimson Center, and a communications consultant. He is based in Toronto.

The Hill Times

ADVERTISEMENT

Putting a New Country on the World Map: Legacy of First President of Kazakhstan

July 6, 2020 marks the 80th birthday of First President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev. He had been leading the young nation, ninth largest in the world by territory and strategically located in the heart of Eurasian landmass, since the Soviet Union ceased to exist in 1991 up until March 2019. Last year, he stepped down as President to continue to serve as the chairman of Kazakhstan's Security Council and leader of Nur Otan Party.

As the newly elected President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said, Mr. Nazarbayev "laid the foundations of the new state during some of the most difficult geopolitical conditions imaginable". Transition from the decades-long existence within the Soviet Union into an independent state with a market economy was rough and turbulent. Many observers predicted that some countries in the region would not survive the shock.

However, having a long, successful career as an industry and party leader, Mr. Nazarbayev acted decisively and pragmatically, closely collaborating with his allies in the Parliament and across the country. Under his leadership, Kazakhstan moved quick to adopt a new constitution, to establish public service, armed forces, civil society institutions, and has undertaken large-scale socio-economic reforms.

Following these initial reforms and an intensive development of the oil and other industries, in the late 1990's Kazakhstan entered a period of dynamic growth recording double-digit growth of GDP for more than a decade. Mr. Nazarbayev was widely recognized as the Founding Father of modern Kazakhstan and a vast majority of population voted for him and his Nur Otan Party during the subsequent elections.

Kazakhstan has become a leading destination for foreign investment among the Central and Eastern European countries, having attracted over USD 300 billion in FDI over the past two decades. Mr. Nazarbayev has also focused on accumulating large financial resources in the National Fund, which made it possible to address socio-economic issues in global crises, like the 2008 financial crisis and global pandemic we are facing today. He managed to transform Kazakhstan into one of the 50 most competitive countries in the world with a young, skilled population and a growing middle class.

Often overlooked, but crucial accomplishment of that time was the delimitation of state borders. For the first time in centuries, Kazakhstan has successfully negotiated borders and signed legally-binding agreements with China, Russia, and its Central Asian neighbors. This process paved the way for not only building a friendly, mutually beneficial cooperation among these countries, but for a more stable, predictable strategic environment in a broader Eurasia.

Mr. Nazarbayev has also played a key role in shutting down one of the world's largest nuclear test site near Semipalatinsk and eventually establishing a nuclear-weapons-free zone in Central Asia. A major focus in his foreign policy was put on regional economic integration and multilateral cooperation within such forums as the United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Significant contribution to international peace and security led to Kazakhstan's election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2017-2018.

In her letter to Mr. Nazarbayev on the occasion of his anniversary, The Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, mentioned that Canada was among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan in 1992 and attached great value to our partnerships "through commercial, economic, governmental, multilateral and scientific ties". Indeed, these were among the topics Her Excellency discussed with Mr. Nazarbayev, Mr. Tokayev and other leaders during her visit to Kazakhstan in December 2018, when Canadian astronaut David Saint-Jacques was launched into the International Space Station from Kazakh soil.

While Her Excellency became the first ever Canadian Governor General to visit Kazakhstan, Mr. Nazarbayev was the first Kazakh President to visit Canada in 2003. Ever since, viewing Canada as a role model for Kazakhstan, he promoted bilateral ties between our countries with Prime Ministers Stephen Harper and Justin Trudeau. Earlier this year, President Tokayev and Prime Minister Trudeau met for the first time and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in the spheres of investment, energy, agriculture and governance, among others.

During a recent phone call between Foreign Affairs Ministers Mukhtar Tileuberdi and François-Philippe Champagne, both countries agreed to coordinate our response to the ongoing global pandemic and to work together to build a safer, more resilient world. We highly appreciate Canada's announced financial support for the Kazakh Red Crescent in its efforts to fight against COVID-19 in our country.

Thus, Mr. Nazarbayev's political leadership and diplomatic skills allowed for Kazakhstan's emergence on the international stage as an ambitious and prosperous modern state. Today, as the world faces unprecedented challenges, we strive to build upon his undisputable legacies and continue engaging with our partners, including Canada, to build a more secure, more stable, and better future.

*Akylbek Kamaldinov
Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Canada*



Joe Adam George

Opinion

TORONTO—Over the last four months, while much of the world's attention was trained on containing the spread of the deadly coronavirus, China was making the most of the distraction to relentlessly pursue its regional and global aspirations. From undertaking bellicose actions across Asia to inciting political scuffles—with a dash of propaganda and mask diplomacy—to annoy the West, it has been business as usual in Beijing.

The adoption of a new no-holds-barred tactic, dubbed "wolf-warrior diplomacy," is seemingly working for the Chinese, at least for now. China annexed a sizeable swath of territory from India along the contested border between the two nations, resulting in an ongoing tense diplomatic and military standoff and the death of 20 Indian soldiers. On June 30, Beijing passed a controversial national security plan to quash any form of civil or political unrest in Hong Kong.

With the United States busy battling two major crises on its home turf, namely, the coronavirus pandemic and the police killings of Black men and women, the Chinese have perhaps been emboldened to go after traditional American allies too, albeit in a less dramatic manner.

The French ministry of foreign affairs recently summoned Chinese ambassador, Lu Shaye, to express its deep displeasure over controversial claims made by Chinese diplomats that France had left its older citizens to die during the coronavirus pandemic. In retaliation to Australia's proposal to conduct an independent global investigation into the origin of the coronavirus outbreak, Beijing accused Canberra of being a "U.S. lackey," imposed an 80 per cent tariff on barley imports and suspended beef imports from Australia.

Soon after, it was Canada's turn. Following the B.C. Supreme Court's ruling that extradition proceedings against Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou could continue, Beijing further escalated its punitive campaign against Ottawa by indicting two Canadians—Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor—on unsubstantiated charges of espionage.



Nursultan Nazarbayev and Julie Payette (c) akorda.kz

http://www.akorda.kz/en/events/akorda_news/meetings_and_receptions/meeting-with-canadas-governor-general-julie-payette

Next Conservative leader must stop internal sniping before it becomes a 'cancer' that will destroy the party, say political insiders

'Unity is the way to go' should be the marching orders from the new leadership to all Conservative Party members, says Keith Beardsley, former deputy chief to former prime minister Stephen Harper.

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with *The Hill Times*. "But, it's a bit like a cancer, the Conservatives have to make sure [this] dirty-tricks cancer doesn't evolve into open warfare, because that'll be lethal for the Conservatives."

The leadership contest has featured a number of controversies that have caused divisions in the party since it began in January. Some members tried but failed to expel leadership candidate and MP Derek Sloan (Hastings-Lennox and Addington, Ont.) from the caucus after he publicly questioned whether Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam worked for the Chinese government. Two controversial candidates were disqualified from the contest, one of whom, Jim Karahalios, has launched a legal challenge against the party. Other candidates publicly voiced frustration with the oversight of the Leadership Election Organization Committee (LEOC). More recently, the RCMP agreed to examine a complaint from Erin O'Toole's (Durham, Ont.) leadership campaign team after a supporter of rival Peter MacKay's campaign collected confidential information from the O'Toole campaign.

Four leadership candidates are vying for the party's top job, including: Mr. MacKay, a former senior cabinet minister in the Stephen Harper government, and former leader of the now defunct Progressive Conservative Party; Mr. O'Toole, a Conservative MP and former cabinet minister; Mr. Sloan, a Conservative MP; and Toronto lawyer Leslyn Lewis. Mr. MacKay is perceived as a Red Tory candidate, while Mr. O'Toole is trying to portray himself as a Blue Tory, running on the slogan of "True Blue Leadership." Mr. Sloan and Ms. Lewis are representing the social conservative wing of the party, which is well organized and includes thousands of supporters.

According to political insiders, Mr. MacKay and Mr. O'Toole are the front-runners, running neck and neck in the contest, which is causing animosity between both camps. Neither Ms. Lewis or Mr. Sloan are likely to win the party's top job but their supporters will play a critical



Pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research says the new Conservative leader must ensure right after the leadership election that there's no infighting in the party, or it will become a cancer that will destroy the party. *The Hill Times file photograph*

role in the outcome of the leadership election, when their second and third choices on the ballot are counted.

Mr. MacKay is aiming to win the leadership election on the first ballot, as it appears unlikely that many social conservatives will place him high on their ballot because of his socially progressive views. Mr. O'Toole is actively courting the social conservatives to secure their support on the second or third spots on their ballots.

Whoever wins the Conservative leadership will lead the party in the next election and could potentially become the prime minister. Many Conservatives believed they could have unseated Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) in the last federal election, but failed to win because of a poorly-run campaign by outgoing leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.).



Former Conservative MP Brad Trost, who came in fourth place in the 2017 leadership contest, says the new Wexit Canada Party could be 'absolute zero, or it could be the next Reform Party.' *The Hill Times file photograph*

The election to choose a successor to Mr. Scheer is scheduled to wrap up shortly after Aug. 21, the deadline for mail-in ballots.

As in any leadership contest, many Conservative caucus members have publicly endorsed their preferred candidates. Caucus members often have a better chance of being given a key position in the party's shadow cabinet, and potentially a future

cabinet post, if the candidate they endorsed wins the contest. Caucus members often try to help their preferred candidate win votes in and outside of their ridings, by making calls and travelling to ridings where they think they can make a difference. That creates a competition among caucus members and sometimes becomes a source of tension amongst colleagues.

According to CBC, 43 Conservative MPs are supporting Mr. MacKay, 36 are supporting Mr. O'Toole, Ms. Lewis has the backing of six MPs, and Mr. Sloan does not have the support of any MPs.

Leadership elections are emotional and divisive, but after the contest the winning candidate's first job is to heal the wounds inflicted during the contest. If a new leader fails to bridge the divisions, it sows seeds of discord

Stephen Harper PMO, said that smart and successful winning candidates make healing internal wounds their first task after the race is decided.

Giving respect and prominent roles in the shadow cabinet to defeated rival candidates is one time-tested way to accomplish that, he said. The winning candidate should also make up the OLO with staff from other leadership campaigns as well as his or her own, he said, and deliver marching orders that "unity is the way to go."

"It shouldn't divide the party if the leader who wins is smart," said Mr. Beardsley, adding that both Mr. MacKay and Mr. O'Toole are smart political operatives and are capable of holding the party together.

"Both are aware of the game and how politics is played. A lot of this will not be so much the individual, but also people who surround them and, the messages they put out," said Mr. Beardsley.

Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie (Calgary-Midnapore, Alta.) told *The Hill Times* two weeks ago that if Mr. MacKay wins the leadership, it could cause disunity in the party. Social Conservatives and those in Western Canada don't want the party to be headed by a Red Tory, she said.

"If Peter is the victor, and he still could be, it is a threat to the unity of the party," said Ms. Kusie, who has endorsed Mr. O'Toole.

Former Saskatchewan Conservative MP Brad Trost who ran as a social Conservative in the last leadership election and came in fourth place, said he shares the concerns raised by Ms. Kusie. The challenge is surmountable for MacKay, said Mr. Trost, if he reaches out to social conservatives and includes MPs from rival camps in his shadow cabinet.

He said if Mr. MacKay wins the leadership he should pay close attention to the issues in Western Canada, or the separatist Wexit Party could become a serious headache for the Conservatives. He said it's hard to predict at this time if Wexit would make a serious dent in the dominance the Conservative Party enjoys in Western Canada.

"My caucus mate Lee Richardson [from Calgary] once said he won his seat in 1988 by 28,000 votes and lost it in 1993 to [a Reform Party candidate] by 22,000 votes," said Mr. Trost who is supporting Ms. Lewis and Mr. Sloan in this leadership election. "Wexit could be an absolute zero, or it could be another Reform Party. Western Canada, rural West, core West can be a lot like Quebec: when it moves, it can move all at once."

The Wexit Party is currently led by interim leader and former Conservative cabinet minister Jay Hill. Before he joined the Conservative Party, Mr. Hill was a mem-

ber of the Reform and Canadian Alliance parties. He was elected as a Reform MP in 1993; Reform later became the Canadian Alliance Party. Mr. Trost said if the Wexit Party is able to get a few more former MPs as candidates in the next election, it could cause political damage to the Conservative party. He said even if they don't win MPs of their own, Wexit candidates could divide the right-of-centre vote, which could let Liberals win a few seats in Western Canada. The Wexit Party has said it will run candidates in all 104 ridings in the four western provinces.

Of the 104 seats in the four Western provinces, the Liberals won only 15 seats in the last election—11 in B.C. and four in Manitoba. In comparison, the Conservatives won 71, the NDP 15, the Greens two, and one Independent MP was elected.



Former Conservative cabinet minister Jay Hill is the interim leader of the Wexit Party. *The Hill Times file photograph*

Veteran Conservative insider and former MP John Reynolds, who is supporting Mr. MacKay in the leadership campaign, told *The Hill Times* he's confident the party will not have a unity problem after the leadership contest is over. He said whoever wins the leadership will successfully bring the party together.

Mr. Reynolds said Mr. MacKay has a strong support in all regions of the country, and will not cause any disunity in the party. Mr. Reynolds said that it's not unusual for MPs and supporters of rival campaigns to take shots at each other, but once the campaign concludes, people come together.

"He is well liked in every region, we've got good support, we've got good membership base support in every province in Canada, including Alberta, including a great, great team in British Columbia," said Mr. Reynolds. "There'll be no disunity at all. There will always be some unhappy people. I think everybody will be fine."

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Effective handling of COVID-19 pushes Liberals into majority territory; Conservatives must ready an alternative vision, say pollsters and a veteran political player

Canadians currently are primarily paying attention to the federal and provincial governments, and not the opposition parties, because of the economic and health implications of the outbreak, says Frank Graves.

Continued from page 1

"They have to be patient," said Frank Graves, a veteran pollster and president of Ekos Research, in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "I think they [opposition] have to avoid being seen as not pulling together with the national team. It's a very tough time for opposition in general."

Since March governments around the world have focused on COVID-19, striving to look after their citizens while dealing with the deadly health and economic impacts of the pandemic. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, as of July 2, there were 104,772 confirmed cases of the virus in Canada, which has caused 8,642 deaths. Millions of Canadians and businesses have applied for assistance from the government to deal with the economic consequences of this outbreak. In the last few months, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (Papineau, Que.) government has made dozens of announcements worth billions of dollars to help Canadians of all walks of life affected by this pandemic. The funding announcements have significantly ballooned the size of the deficit, and the Parliamentary Budget Officer Yves Giroux said late last month that the deficit could hit \$256-billion this fiscal year. In May, he said, it's "realistic" to expect that the national debt could rise to \$1-trillion.

The Globe and Mail reported two weeks ago that Canada's credit rating has been downgraded by Fitch from triple A to double A-plus, because of the big size of federal deficit.

From a political perspective, the government's COVID measures have resonated with Canadians across the country and given a boost to the Liberals in the

national public opinion polls. In the October federal election, the Liberals were reduced from a majority to a minority government. In 2015, they came to power with a majority with 184 seats, but in their second mandate now have only 156 seats. To form a majority government, they needed 170 seats in the 338 member House. The Conservatives currently have 121 seats, the Bloc Québécois has 32 seats, the NDP 24, the Green Party three, and there are two Independent MPs.

A recent Léger poll that came out last week has suggested that 79 per cent of Canadians are satisfied with the Trudeau government's measures to fight COVID-19. In comparison, only 41 per

nearly tied, with 31 and 32 per cent support respectively. At the time, the NDP had the support of 19 per cent and the Green Party eight per cent of respondents to the poll.

A recent poll by EKOS Research also showed similar results. According to this poll, if an election were held now, the Liberals would get the support of 40.5 per cent of Canadians, the Conservatives 20.9 per cent, the NDP 12.7 per cent, and the Green Party 6.5 per cent. In Atlantic Canada, Ontario, and Manitoba, the poll suggested, the Liberals had a double-digit lead over the Conservatives, while in Quebec, the Liberals had a double-digit lead over the second place Bloc

election, and Parliament is not sitting, so the opposition parties are not getting the same media spotlight as the governing party. Mr. Graves said that the Conservative leadership race would normally get a lot more attention from Canadians, but COVID-19 has diverted their attention away from it. Once the crisis is over, he said, and the Conservatives have their new leader in place, things will change, giving the opposition an opportunity to present their vision of the future to Canadians.

"The opportunities for them, will open up as their leadership concludes," said Mr. Graves.

Pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research said that the Trudeau Liberals are enjoying their



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on June 11, 2020, visiting an Ottawa-based business to highlight how businesses are benefitting from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and other economic measures. An overwhelming majority of Canadians say they're satisfied with the government's efforts to fight COVID-19. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

cent of Americans are satisfied with their government's efforts to fight the pandemic.

The same poll suggested that if an election were to be held now, 40 per cent of the decided voters would vote for the Liberal Party, 28 per cent for the Conservatives, 17 per cent for the NDP, and six per cent for the Green Party. The Liberals have a comfortable lead in all regions of the country besides Alberta and Saskatchewan. According to this poll, the governing party was leading by double-digit margins amongst both male and female voters.

The web survey of 1,524 Canadians was conducted between June 26 and 28 and had a margin of error of 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

In contrast, prior to the pandemic started in Canada, according to a Jan. 22 Léger poll, the Liberals and Conservatives were

Québécois. In B.C., both the Liberals and Conservative were tied in a virtual dead heat, but in Alberta and Saskatchewan, the Conservatives were far ahead of the Grits.

This poll suggested that amongst men, both parties were tied, but the Liberals had a 20-point lead over the Conservatives amongst women.

The survey of 3,006 Canadians was conducted between June 11-16, and had a margin of error of 1.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Canadians currently are primarily paying attention to the federal and provincial governments, and not the opposition parties, because of the economic and health implications of the outbreak, said Mr. Graves. The Conservative Party, which is the official opposition, is also undergoing a divisive leadership

popularity in public opinion polls chiefly because of the Canadians' satisfaction with the way the government has managed the crisis.

"A lot of that has to do with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Mr. Nanos, founder and chief data scientist of Nanos Research. "What they've seen is there's a prime minister that is very, very proactive. A government that has pumped a stimulus into the economy, for both Canadian enterprises and also individuals."

He said that at a time of this once-in-a-century event, Canadians are selecting their preferred political party by measuring what politicians of different stripes have done to help them. Being in government, the Liberals have many more opportunities to help people in need.

Mr. Nanos said the reason why the Liberals are more popular with women is because of the

Liberal Party's exceptionally progressive policies, including a gender balanced cabinet, women holding powerful senior cabinet positions, and the prime minister's commitment to diversity and gender equality. He said there is an increasing number of women who find the government to be fundamentally aligned with their values.

"I always call it tone from the top that really counts for voters," said Mr. Nanos. "And I think that the tone at the top, right now at least, very well aligns with the views of many women voters."

Over the years, women have preferred the Liberals over the Conservatives but amongst men, the Conservatives have had an advantage over the Liberals. Mr. Nanos said if the Conservatives want to win a majority, they need to do very well amongst men and be very competitive with women. The same way, if the Liberals want to win a majority, they have to do very well amongst women and be competitive with male voters. Currently, he said, both men and women are satisfied with the government's handling of COVID-19, which has pushed the Liberals in the majority territory. In this day and age, people do not vote for the party they like the most but the one they dislike the least, Mr. Nanos said.

"They [male voters] don't like the Liberals," said Mr. Nanos. "It's just that they dislike them less."

He said if the Conservatives want to reconnect with Canadians, the new leader will have to put forward an agenda that resonates with Canadians and shows that the official opposition is a government in waiting. In order to get traction with women voters, he said, the Conservatives will have to come up with a socially progressive agenda that's different from the Liberals but has family-oriented elements.

"They have to hit the ground running hard coming out of this leadership convention, with an aspirational policy platform, a proactive view of the future," said Mr. Nanos. "They need to tell Canadians what they're going to do to help Canadians both economically and from a health perspective, and they have to look like government in waiting. That's a lot of work that the Conservatives have to do in order to challenge the Liberals."

Keith Beardsley, former deputy chief of staff to former prime minister Stephen Harper, said that he's not surprised about the lead the Liberals have in the national polls. In a time of crisis, he said, people want to hear the truth and want stability, and Mr. Trudeau is giving them both, he said.

As a Conservative, he said, he may be unhappy with the ballooning size of the national debt, but he gives credit to the government for handling the crisis well.

He also said the opposition haven't had an opportunity to hold the government to account, because the House is not holding its regular sittings, giving an advantage to the Liberals.

"They should be in the majority territory," said Mr. Beardsley with a chuckle. "You'd have to get a new leader if you couldn't be ahead of the Tories at this time."

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Editorial

Senate needs virtual sittings

Independent Senator Mobin Jaffer (British Columbia) told *The Hill Times* last week that she “felt silenced” when she wasn’t able to take part in the Senate’s emergency debate on racism on June 18 in the Senate Chamber. This is pretty strong stuff, considering she’s been an influential player who has made a life-long commitment to anti-racism work and has led discussions at the Senate Human Rights Committee on representation in the federal public service and pushed to create a Senate diversity committee. But she was stuck in British Columbia and still under travel restrictions, and only 33 Senators, excluding the Senate Speaker, are allowed in the Senate right now.

“I feel I’ve been involved in this for so long and then when the real debate happened, I wasn’t there,” she said. “I feel I was silenced. If we had virtual meetings then it would have been much better.”

The Senate has sat 11 days since the World Health Organization officially declared the COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, including one day in April, two in May, and seven days between June 16 and 26. It has only held in-person sittings. It has not opted for a hybrid model to allow for virtual participation, which means many Senators can’t get to Ottawa for important debates, including the one on racism. Less than one-third of the Senators have been able to come to Ottawa, either because of travel or health restrictions. But the Senators should be able to participate virtually over the next few months or even the next year, especially if the lockdown continues into the fall when the Senate returns and into next winter.

“During the initial crisis, there was a troubling but somewhat understandable agreement to limit debate to emergency

government legislation designed to help Canadians and to restrict the number of Senators allowed to participate to protect their health. But technology could change that and should have by now,” said Senator Pamela Wallin (Saskatchewan) on June 16 in the Upper Chamber. She’s right. The Senate should be able to meet virtually, especially to scrutinize the massive emergency government spending during the pandemic and everyone who wants to be heard should be heard. With a pandemic hitting some communities harder than others, the Chamber tasked to represent regional and minority voices should not be limited in that work.

Independent Senator Rosa Galvez (Quebec), who has frequently sat in on virtual meetings held by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the International Monetary Fund, and the ParLAmericas, says the technology and the security protections are sufficient to make a virtual sitting possible for those who are prevented from travelling or participating in person.

CSG Leader Scott Tannas (Alberta) says Canada will be “one of the last, if not the last,” Westminster-style institutions without a hybrid session that allows robust debate, voting, and procedures.

Parliaments around the world have been voting and debating virtually for months. Senators have been asked to either stay home or rotate their time in the Upper Chamber with other Senators, but the Senate should wire up the Upper Chamber to allow for in-person and virtual meetings and it should stop obstructing Senators’ rights to represent their regions and to participate in Senate proceedings. The Senators should get together on this.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

It’s time to fundamentally reassess Canadian foreign policy

With Canada suffering two consecutive defeats in its effort to gain a UN Security Council seat, the time has come to fundamentally reassess Canadian foreign policy.

Ten years ago, the Conservative government’s loss was largely explained as a rebuke of their support for Washington, mining and oil companies as well as anti-Palestinian policies. The Liberal government promised change, but the world is unconvinced.

Canada lost partly because of its support for controversial mining companies, indifference to International treaties, anti-Palestinian positions, climate policies and militarism. And in recent weeks, thousands of ordinary and prominent people were inspired to sign onto a grassroots effort that drew attention to the many flaws in Canada’s foreign policy record.

The world’s rejection of Canada’s bid for a seat on the Security Council is a unique opportunity for a review of Canadian foreign policy.

These 10 questions must be considered as part of a foreign policy reset:

Should we have a foreign policy driven by Washington or an independent foreign policy?

Should Canada continue to offer financial and diplomatic support to arms exporters or refocus on demilitarization?

Should Canadian foreign policy continue to be enmeshed with mining interests abroad?

Why has Canada isolated itself from world opinion on Palestinian rights rather

than standing for universal human rights?

How can we ensure Canada abides by all international treaties protecting Indigenous rights?

How can we ensure Canada radically reduces its greenhouse gas emissions?

Does Canada’s sanctions policy respect international law?

Why is Canada involved in efforts to oust Venezuela’s UN-recognized government, a clear violation of the principle of non-intervention in other country’s internal affairs?

Should Canada continue to be part of NATO or instead pursue non-military paths to peace in the world?

How can we ensure Canada’s foreign policy has a focus on peace, human rights and overcoming global inequities?

There has not been a formal review of Canadian foreign policy in 15 years. Let’s use this moment to usher in a new era in which our government’s policies abroad reflect the desire of Canadians to be a force for peace and human rights in the world.

David Suzuki,
 geneticist, broadcaster, and co-founder
 of the David Suzuki Foundation
Stephen Lewis,
 the Stephen Lewis Foundation
Naomi Klein,
 author, social activist, filmmaker
Green Party MP Paul Manly
 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith, B.C.)
Former Quebec NDP
MP Roméo Saganash

Canadian foreign policy is long overdue for a thorough public review

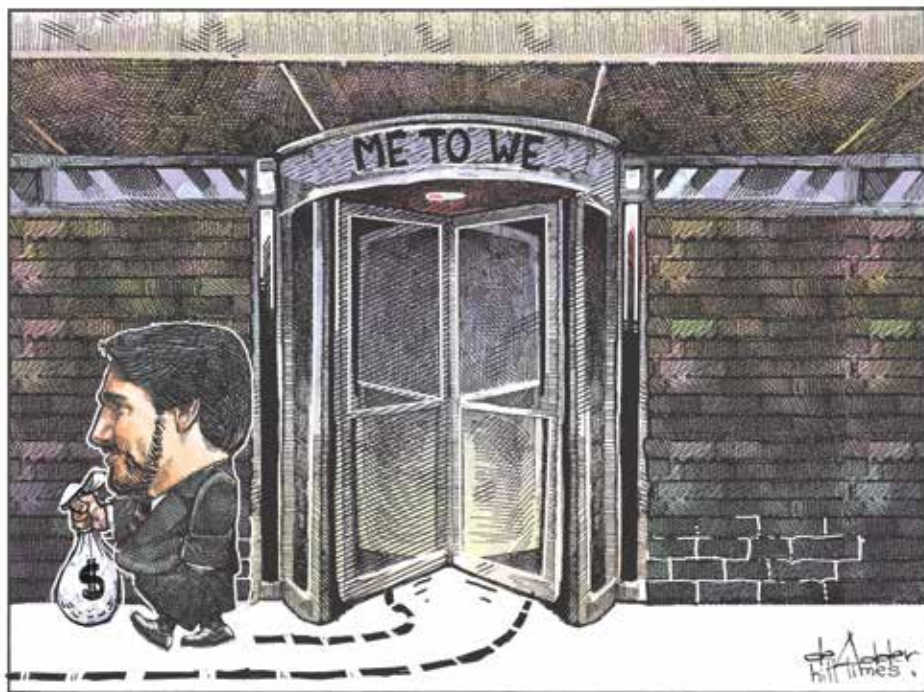
Re: “It isn’t fun losing UN Security Council seat, but there’s a lot to be learned from it,” (*The Hill Times*, June 22). Former ambassador Doug Roche says it was “very unfair” for thousands of ordinary Canadians (and a few prominent international people) to sign petitions and send letters opposing the Liberal government’s bid for a UN Security Council seat, because these messages ignore Canada’s previous half century of service at the UN. He does, however, agree with a some of the key #NoUNSC4Canada critiques, including: Trudeau’s arming of the Saudis, failures in arms control, excessive support of Israel at the expense of Palestinian rights and promotion of Canadian mining companies despite their economic and social ravaging of the Global South.

Nobody should expect to be elected to a UNSC seat based on nostalgia for long bygone diplomats, nor on the vague hope of a government performing “at a higher

standard” in the future. Governments earn UN votes based on their current and recent voting and action record. The Trudeau Liberals’ record was clearly found lacking by the world community, and hardly “by a whisker”—their vote count was lower than what the Harper Conservatives got in 2010.

Canada’s shamefully low ODA contributions and other issues raised by Mr. Roche all deserve scrutiny, including our government’s rather sporadic commitment to international law. A growing number of Canadians agree with Mr. Roche’s conclusion about the fundamental lesson that must be drawn from this UNSC defeat: Canadian foreign policy is long overdue for a thorough public review.

David Heap, PhD
 #NoUNSC4Canada volunteer
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COVID-19 political bump has bounced Liberals back into majority government territory

But the full return of Parliament will also focus more attention on Liberal mistakes, as the opposition parties will do their best to change the channel away from COVID solidarity.



Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—The COVID-19 political bump has bounced the Liberals back into majority government territory.

That is quite a comeback from a time when the party literally

limped into power following a gaffe-filled election campaign last fall.

The prime minister and all provincial premiers appear to be benefiting from a rise in public support attributed to their handling of the pandemic.

Daily communications have softened and strengthened images of each leader. That may seem like an anachronism, but most Canadians expect their leaders to be strong and approachable.

Leaders have also benefited from the absence of pandemic critics.

In a world outbreak, people expect political parties to work together, so it is very difficult to attack the life-saving measures being taken across the board.

Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, who was out early and often in heated attacks at the beginning of the lockdown, suffered criticism from within his own party for missing the mark.

The country expects leaders to work together in time of crisis, and they have been doing so.

For a brief period, even Alberta Premier Jason Kenney has set aside his Ottawa-bashing in an attempt to find common ground.

But the danger of this bump is that it is directly linked to a sense of danger.

If Canadians believe the third phase of COVID containment is going well, they will focus on issues other than the country's stand in the fight against the coronavirus.

News reports say there are several vaccines which will be undergoing massive human test trials starting at the end of this month.

If any are successful, the path to a vaccination may be marked by months, not years.

The Canadian government has already stockpiled enough syringes to vaccinate the whole population. That could mean an end to the social distancing and bubble-making that have become a way of life for all of us.

Canada Day in the nation's capital was a shadow of its usual self.

Virtual fireworks and concerts just don't cut it.

So, a vaccine would liberate us from the spell that the lockdown has cast over the whole country.

But that also brings its own political risks.

With no national danger in sight, political leaders in regions across the country will fall into their old habits of blaming other provinces or the federal government for their challenges.

Kenney dropped the corporate tax rate last week because he said he wanted to make Alberta stand out as a magnet for business.

The financial markets responded to the stimulus plan, which included \$10-billion in infrastructure spending this fiscal year, by cutting the province's credit rating.

American-based Fitch announced a downgrade from Double A to Double A minus, citing the province's heavy borrowing to fight the economic crisis.

Alberta is also facing the ongoing, worldwide crash in oil prices, which has been exacerbated by the COVID economic slowdown.

An international move away from fossil fuels is not likely to change anytime soon so Alberta will be facing continuing jobs pressure.

And with the safety of a vaccine, the spectre of COVID prompting interprovincial cooperation will dissipate quickly.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also faces the challenge of election timing.

The current numbers point to an early vote, but if the government moves too quickly, it will likely be accused of opportunism, sacrificing any residual goodwill from the crisis.

The full return of Parliament will also focus more attention on Liberal mistakes, as the opposition parties will do their best to change the channel away from COVID solidarity.

Racial and Indigenous inequities, post-COVID changes to the health-care system, and economic recovery will dominate the parliamentary agenda.

There will be criticism of government deficits, given the unprecedented payouts to millions of Canadians who were affected financially by the pandemic.

Canadians will also expect government action on migrant workers' abhorrent conditions, and the patchwork of regulations governing long-term care facilities across the country.

There is plenty of fodder for parliamentary debate that will quickly overshadow the question of pandemic management.

If the economy rebounds well, the government will be rewarded in the next election.

Canada has been relatively successful in navigating the crisis, largely because governments spoke with a single voice, and citizens were vigilant in following instruction on lockdowns, distancing, masking and bubbles.

Canadians have not been subject to the same mess of mixed messaging and anti-mask libertarianism that has afflicted the United States.

And our return to normalcy will be more secure because of our sacrifices.

Thankfully the worst Canada Day in history is behind us.

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

The Hill Times

Should the Conservatives 'stand athwart' history?

If the Canadian flag itself becomes an object of controversy, then the Conservatives have a clear opening to defend it.



Gerry Nicholls

Post-Partisan Pundit

OKAVILLE, ONT.—Napoleon once stated, "History is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon."

But the "Little Corporal" probably got that wrong.

As matter of fact, as daily news headlines attest to, our society is far from agreement about past events, mainly because we view history through ideological lenses.

Typically, those on the political right tend to view historical events not only as steps of civilizational progress, but as a foundation upon which to build national myths, while those on the political left tend to see history as an archive of oppression and thus as something to nurture contemporary grievances.

Hence the current debate raging over everything from statues to street names.

So, what are the political repercussions of this?

Well, it makes one wonder if whoever ends up leading the Conservative Party of Canada will choose to wade into this debate to defend our country's history and symbols.

Certainly, it would seem natural for the Conservatives to go this route.

After all, they're not called "conservatives" for nothing; they have a long record of wanting to "conserve" national traditions.

Indeed, for about the first hundred years after Confederation, one of the chief aims of Canadian conservatism was to preserve our country's historic ties to Britain.

Later on, under the leadership of prime minister Stephen Harper, the Conservatives also made great efforts to commemorate the War of 1812's 100th anniversary.

And more recently, many Conservatives opposed changing the lyrics to our national anthem to make them more "gender neutral."

Hence, it's easy to envision the Conservatives taking strong positions to oppose taking down statues or changing the names of schools or otherwise re-interpreting history.

Surely, such a stance would please the Conservative Party's base, but, at the same time, it would also entail a certain risk.

That's because any political party that stands up for history, can sometimes end up being on its wrong side.

The most obvious example of this is John Diefenbaker's bitter opposition in the early 1960s to the then Liberal government's plan to adopt a "distinctive" Canadian national flag.

Like many in his party, the tradition-minded Progressive Conservative Party leader had a sentimental attachment to the old "Red Ensign" which included the "Union Jack."

At any rate, after a long and acrimonious parliamentary fight, the Liberal government ended up adopting the Maple Leaf flag, which we all know and love today.

The point I'm making here is that Diefenbaker's opposition to the flag has haunted the Conservatives for decades.

In fact, in 2015, then opposition leader Justin Trudeau sharply criticized the Harper Conservative government for not doing enough to celebrate the Maple Leaf flag's 50th anniversary, implying the Conservatives might still be secretly opposed to the Liberal-created national banner.

What I'm saying is, when conservatives "stand athwart history yelling stop," as William F. Buckley once put it, they can end up getting trampled by modernity.

Yet, luckily for the Conservatives, there's a way they could conceivably stand up for the past, without hurting themselves in the future.

You see, I noted recently that the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* posted a "trigger warning" in its paper when it printed a cutout of the Canadian flag for Canada Day saying, "We understand the flag doesn't mean the same thing to everyone."

If that means the Canadian flag itself might become an object of controversy, then the Conservatives have a clear opening to defend it.

Not only would they come across as champions of a key civic symbol, but they could also make amends for their earlier opposition to the flag.

Napoleon might call that a "win, win."

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

The Hill Times

Opinion



It will take more than aspirations and boasts from the federal Liberals. It will take capacities for strategizing, implementation and transparency, all of which are all too rare in Ottawa. Yet there is too much at risk to fail, writes David Crane. *Image courtesy of Pixabay*

It's time for Liberals to get serious about climate change

The International Energy Agency, in a new report released on clean energy innovation—Energy Technology Perspectives 2020—warns that ‘without a major acceleration in clean energy innovation, net-zero emissions targets will not be achievable.’



David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—During last year’s federal election, the Trudeau government promised to join the growing list of nations committed to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. What we don’t know is what it will take to get there and how the Liberals would deliver on their goal.

It will be far from easy. The International Energy Agency, in a new report released on clean energy innovation—Energy Technology Perspectives 2020—warns that “without a major acceleration in clean energy innovation, net-zero emissions tar-

gets will not be achievable.” Yet achieving this target is seen as essential if the world is to hold the rise in the average global temperature to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, the level seen as necessary to avoid catastrophic climate change.

As the report notes, the world has seen a proliferation in the number of countries committing to the 2050 net-zero emissions target but “there is a stark disconnect between these high-profile pledges and the current state of clean energy technology.”

While innovations such as solar power and wind power and other technologies in use today are helping, “they are insufficient on their own to bring the world to net zero while ensuring energy systems remain secure,” the IEA says.

Much more innovation—and much more public and private investment in research, prototypes, demonstration projects and early adoption—is needed to create mature technologies that can be widely used at affordable cost. All of this also takes time. It has taken the past 30 years for solar panels to reach commercial viability, with government support and incentives playing critical roles.

Moreover, “there are no single or simple solutions to putting the world on a sustainable path to net-zero emission,” the IEA warns. We will need a broad range of technologies. Four technology approaches, for example, would achieve half the cumulative emissions reductions that the world needs to move onto what the IEA calls a “sustainable trajectory.”

These are: electrification of end-use sectors such as heating and transport (such as electric vehicles), supported by batteries; the application of carbon capture, utilization and storage; the use of low-carbon hydrogen and hydrogen-delivered fuels; and the use of bioenergy. However, each of these technologies faces challenges in achieving commercial viability. Much more work needs to be done, hence the need to

accelerate innovation and make progress on early-stage technologies.

In its report, the IEA puts forward a Faster Innovation Case to push early-stage technologies, warning that “failure to accelerate progress now risks pushing the transition to net-zero emissions further into the future. The pace of innovation in coming decades will depend on the policies governments put in place today.”

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens a major setback to the net-zero target if governments and companies cut back on initiatives to bring new technologies to market. On the other hand, the IEA says, governments could use the challenge created by the pandemic to accelerate clean energy innovation. “It can be a strategic opportunity for governments to ensure that their industries come out of the COVID-19 crisis stronger and ready to supply future domestic and international growth markets.” But this will require raising the level of ambition and support and much more focused strategies than we have seen out of Ottawa so far.

So what are the policies the Trudeau government plans to put in place today? The Liberal platform doesn’t take us very far. Net-zero emissions can be achieved by some combination of cutting actual emissions and by taking actions to offset emissions (planting more trees is a popular example).

At the heart of the Liberal plan is a pledge to set legally binding five-year milestones towards net-zero emissions “based on the advice of the experts and consultations with Canadians.” A group of scientists and economists and experts will be appointed to recommend the best policies to get the net-zero emissions. The appointment of the expert panel and design of the legally binding milestones have yet to be set. Nor have we been told how the government plans to exceed our 2030 emission reduction targets, as promised in the Liberal

platform, when we do not appear to be on track to meet our existing targets.

The platform promises new measures to further reduce emissions by major polluters such as the oil and gas industry, to invest corporate tax revenues resulting from the Trans Mountain Expansion Project (it suggests this could be \$500-million a year), along with proceeds from the sale of all or part of the projected in clean economy investments. It plans interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to homeowners and landlords for energy efficient homes and grants of up to \$5,000 to purchasers of new net-zero homes.

It plans to install “up to” 5,000 electric charging stations on major highways; require that all federally funded public transit projects be net-zero bus and rail systems starting in 2023; help fund 5,000 net-zero school and municipal transit buses over the next five years; pursue measures to help companies convert business fleets to net-zero vehicles; bring “clean and affordable power” with new clean electricity generation and transmission systems; establish a \$5-billion Clean Power Fund to help electrify industries heavily dependent on fossil fuels; “make Canada home to the cleanest mills, mines and factories in the world.” It also plans to cut corporate taxes in half for businesses that develop technologies or manufacture products for net-zero emissions—and plant two billion trees over the next decade.

All of this, the Liberals boast, will make Canada “the best place in the world to build a clean technology company.” How and when any of this will be implemented and how far it takes us towards net-zero emissions by 2050 is far from clear. It will take more than aspirations and boasts. It will take capacities for strategizing, implementation and transparency, all of which are all too rare in Ottawa. Yet there is too much at risk to fail.

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

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Selling armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia is not exactly justice for Jamal

When all the known facts of this atrocity come out, including the belief by Turkish authorities that Khashoggi's body was dissolved in acid, there won't be much appetite for kings and princes sitting in judgment of themselves.



Michael Harris

Harris

HALIFAX—I have spent a career in journalism believing that in the end, the truth wins out.

It sometimes takes time, even a heart-breaking amount of time. It was 11 years before the world knew that an innocent teenager and Mi'kmaq man, Donald Marshall, had been sent to prison for 11 years for a murder he did not commit.

All told, it took decades before the Boys of Mount Cashel Orphanage got justice for the terrible sexual and physical abuse they suffered as children at the hands of the Irish Christian Brothers. I was privileged enough to work on those cases. Luckily, both the books I wrote were made into movies so these stories were seen far and wide. It is so very important that the truth gets a wide audience.

It has only been a little over a-year-and-a-half since Jamal Khashoggi walked into the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul to get the documents he needed to marry his Turkish fiancé Hatise Cengiz. He did not know that a hit team of 15 individuals had flew in on a private jet and were laying in wait for him inside the consulate.

Khashoggi thought he was safe in a foreign country and a diplomatic setting. He was never seen again, though the Saudis later claim he walked away from the consulate a free man. After that fake claim was outed by video evidence showing someone wearing Khashoggi's clothes leaving the embassy, Riyadh changed its story again: now the whole thing was a "rogue" operation.

The official cause of Khashoggi's death was determined to be strangulation. But the reality of what happened that October afternoon back in 2018 inside the Saudi consulate is so much more unspeakable.

Against all the evidence that the Saudi government itself, in the person of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and his henchmen, were behind Khashoggi's death, the kingdom has indulged in gross lies and closed-door justice to brush off this brutal crime.

It is true that the Saudis held a trial in Riyadh where 11 accused were tried for Khashoggi's murder. Five were sentenced to death, including the doctor who sawed



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, pictured, and his henchmen, were behind Jamal Khashoggi's death, the kingdom has indulged in gross lies and closed-door justice to brush off this brutal crime, writes Michael Harris. Photograph courtesy of the Kremlin/Flickr

up his corpse. But there was zero cooperation with outside countries in either the Saudi "investigation" or the subsequent "trial."

The reaction to the verdict in Turkey was predictable.

"The prosecutors sentenced five hit men to death but did not touch those who were behind the five."

The ones sentenced "are people who cannot even use the bathroom without the permission of their superiors," Yasin Aktay, a member of Turkey's ruling party, said.

Agnes Callamard, the UN's special rapporteur on the Khashoggi case concluded that Khashoggi's gruesome death, which ended with dismemberment and disposal, was an "extra-judicial killing" ordered by the Saudi state.



Jamal Khashoggi thought he was safe in a foreign country and a diplomatic setting. He was never seen again, though the Saudis later claim he walked away from the consulate a free man. Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikipedia

U.S. intelligence agencies and the CIA concurred, laying the crime at the door of Prince bin Salman with "medium to high certainty."

How could they not, given that there was an audio recording of Khashoggi's grisly demise, including the ghastly hum of an autopsy saw after the victim was silenced by injection and smothered.

It is an audio tape that U.S. President Donald Trump refused to listen to. He also falsely denied that the CIA believed the prince was behind the murder, and refused a request from Congress to investigate the case and provide a written report.

While Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, was reportedly offering PR advice to Prince Salman on how to navigate the crisis, the UN's special rapporteur was making her report.

"Bottom line," Callamard wrote. "The hit men are quietly sentenced to death. The masterminds not only walk free. They have barely been touched by the investigation and the trial."

Until now. Turkey has just begun the trial in absentia of 20 Saudi nationals for the slaughter of Jamal Khashoggi. Two of the men held senior positions in the Kingdom. Saud al-Qahtani was an adviser to Prince Bin Salman, and Ahmed al-Assiri was the deputy head of Saudi Arabian General Intelligence. They are both charged by the Turks with "instigating premeditated torturous murder with monstrous intent."

The other 18 are charged with suffocating their victim, a former *Washington Post* columnist and Saudi elite. Turkey asked Saudi Arabia to extradite the alleged culprits to face trial but the kingdom refused. Justice, Saudi-style, had already been done.

Since Turkey had the Saudi Arabian consulate bugged, it has a complete audio record of what happened that day. This is in part what Dr. Salah al-Tubaigny, the man who dismembered Khashoggi's body, is heard to say: "It's the first time in my life I will have to cut up pieces on the ground. Even if you are a butcher you hang the animal up to do so....I often play music when

I'm cutting cadavers. And sometimes I have a coffee and a cigar at hand."

Turkey shared that audio tape, which is one of the reasons the CIA came to the conclusion that bin Salman had ordered Khashoggi's death to silence a critic of the his regime. The Turks also have wire taps showing that four days before Khashoggi was murdered, senior Saudi officials were discussing the mission.

Everyone in the world should watch this trial very closely, if only to see how ludicrous it was for the Saudi court to conclude that Khashoggi's murder was not premeditated.

When all the known facts of this atrocity come out, including the belief by Turkish authorities that Khashoggi's body was dissolved in acid, there won't be much appetite for kings and princes sitting in judgment of themselves.

Selling armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia is not exactly what I would call justice for Jamal.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

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Opinion



Canada is the only G7 country that does not have a national suicide prevention strategy. Tellingly, the word 'suicide' doesn't appear anywhere in the mandate letter for the federal Minister of Health Patty Hajdu, pictured May 26, 2020, writes Kathleen Finlay. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Canada's mental health system is broken

Changes, like a 988 national hotline for crisis intervention, could make all the difference.



Kathleen Finlay

Opinion

Calling 911 can save lives. But for some experiencing a mental health crisis, it can also be life-ending. That should never happen. It's another symptom of a broken mental health system that needs radical surgery. The evidence mounts each day, as does the need for a comprehensive federal response.

In April, D'Andre Campbell was shot and killed during an

altercation with police in Toronto after he called 911 looking for mental health support. In May, Regis Korchinski-Paquet fell to her death from her high-rise balcony during an attendance by Toronto police. Her mother had called 911 pleading to have Regis taken to a mental health facility for treatment. Chantel Moore was shot and killed by police in Edmundston, N.B., during a "wellness check" in early June. Days later, Rodney Levi, also of New Brunswick, was killed by RCMP. He had recently sought help for his mental health condition but was apparently denied the necessary assessment by a local hospital. And just two weeks ago, police shot and killed 62-year-old Ejaz Choudhry in his Toronto-area apartment during another wellness check. All these deaths occurred after police were called to deal with a mental health crisis. Other recent incidents have ended in physical and emotional trauma.

Canada urgently needs to re-imagine its approach to delivering mental health care from the ground up. An important part of the changed paradigm should be an alternative to the use of 911 for mental health emergencies. That

alternative is within reach, in the form of an easy to remember, quickly dialed, three-digit national hotline using the numbers 988. It's already being rolled out in the United States with the backing of the mental health community, leading advocates, and the U.S. government. I've been trying to get Ottawa to move quickly to adopt a similar system. But to say the federal government—and the Canadian mental health establishment, for that matter—are cool to the idea is an understatement.

Research tells us that being able to speak with a trained counsellor over the telephone can de-escalate mental health crises and produce better outcomes, including reductions in suicide. The 988 national hotline could be that connecting lifeline. It would give people struggling with emotional crisis or suicidal thoughts, and their families, a fast way of reaching mental health help, instead of calling 911 or scrambling to find some 10-digit number online or in the local phone book.

Of course, 988 alone won't fix our broken mental health system. For too long, Canada's spending on mental wellness and treatment has ranked near the bottom

among OECD countries. Canadians are paying an enormous price for that, and more investment by the federal government in mental health is clearly called for.

Ottawa needs to jump-start a massive marshalling of mental health resources to fill current gaps. Rapidly expanded tele-mental health services offer a promising path for getting needed care to more Canadians on a timely basis. The pool of available therapists could be significantly expanded if governments would fund the services of registered psychologists who are not currently available through the healthcare system because they are not typically covered by provincial health insurance programs.

It's also time Canada had a designated minister for mental health and suicide prevention. We need a stand-alone federal department that is capable of focusing full-time on building a true 21st century architecture for mental wellness and suicide prevention. Every year, 100,000 Canadians attempt to take their own lives. On top of this, experts are predicting a surge in what they are calling "deaths of

despair" linked to the coronavirus pandemic. Canada is ill-prepared to deal with such a crisis.

Canada is the only G7 country that does not have a national suicide prevention strategy. Tellingly, the word "suicide" doesn't appear anywhere in the mandate letter for the federal minister of health. And, in an omission that borders on mental health malpractice, the federal government refuses to include the current 10-digit national toll free suicide prevention number on its COVID-19 mental health portal, despite my urgings over the past several months.

One thing is beyond debate: we need to move boldly to rebuild our mental health system. And fast. Canadians dealing with mental health issues, like those facing serious medical conditions that affect their physical health, have more than enough challenges in their daily lives. Neither they nor their families should ever have to worry that a call for help will cause them harm—or cost their lives.

Kathleen Finlay is a mental health advocate and CEO of The Center for Patient Protection. Follow her on Twitter @ZeroHarmNow

The Hill Times

Netanyahu stalls

For Benjamin Netanyahu, a large-scale annexation of the occupied territory would eliminate the mythical ‘two-state’ threat that has been his greatest political asset—and deprive him of the ability to dangle the prospect of annexation before the settler block again in future elections. He prefers the status quo, and he is now stalling in the hope that he may be able to avoid keeping his promises.



Gwynne Dyer

Global Affairs

LONDON, U.K.—“We have been hearing about sovereignty for a year-and-a-half without things happening on the ground. Today turned out to be one big farce,” said prominent Israeli settler leader Yossi Dagan on July 1. For months, the first of July had been advertised as the date when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would announce the annexation of much of the occupied West Bank—but he said nothing. Why?

Because sometimes a corpse can be a useful thing, if you don’t actually bury it. Drag it out from time to time, apply a little lipstick and rouge, and you can persuade some people that it still poses a threat.

The ‘two-state solution,’ in which an independent Palestinian mini-state shares historic Pales-



For months, the first of July had been advertised as the date when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would announce the annexation of much of the occupied West Bank—but he said nothing. Why? *Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikipedia*

tine with the far larger and more powerful ‘Jewish national state’ of Israel, has in principle been the goal of Israeli-Arab peace talks for almost three decades now. Even though it is really long dead.

It was Benjamin Netanyahu who killed it, the first time he was prime minister back in 1996-99, but he was careful not to put a stake through its heart. The two-state solution was the ‘threat’ he used to mobilize the growing right-wing majority in Israel to vote for him, posing as ‘Mr Security’ who would never let it happen.

Eventually Netanyahu added another threat to his electoral rhetoric, in the form of an Iran allegedly always on the brink of getting nuclear weapons. He even seems to believe in that one. But the two-state ‘threat’ always remained an indispensable part of his sales pitch, so he must have watched the election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency in 2016 with mixed emotions.

He welcomed Trump’s obsession with Iran, but the new Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement the man was touting was a much more doubtful proposition. It was ridiculously slanted in

favour of Israel, but it didn’t do much for Netanyahu’s own long-term political prospects.

Trump, courting evangelical Christian voters in the United States, advocated a bigger Israel that incorporated much of the Israeli-occupied West Bank. This was territory destined to be the home of the future Palestinian state under the two-state solution, so it was the opportunity of a lifetime for Israeli expansionists. But Netanyahu, oddly, was dragging his feet.

The U.S. president threw bits of raw meat to his born-again supporters in America. He backed Israel’s formal annexation of the Golan Heights (land seized from Syria in 1967). He acknowledged Israel’s illegal annexation of the whole city of Jerusalem (including the Arab part) by moving the U.S. embassy up from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Last January, Trump even published his ‘peace plan,’ which gave Israel a green light to annex more territory in the West Bank, where 600,000 Jewish settlers already make their homes. But still Netanyahu sat tight—until three lost elections in one year forced his hand.

He began promising—not for the first time, but much more fervently—

that if his Likud Party won enough seats to form a coalition government, he really would annex a lot of the West Bank. It won him enough settler and ultra-religious votes to let him form a coalition third time round—but he was then stuck with his promise of annexation.

The problem with annexation is both national and personal. Since Israel already controls the entire West Bank militarily, and effectively treats the third of the territory that has been taken by Jewish settlers as part of Israel, there’s not much to be gained by annexation, and the costs are high.

First, annexation is illegal, and might trigger sanctions and boycotts against Israel in other countries. Secondly, it might lead to a new uprising by the several million Palestinians who live in the occupied areas, and a rupture in relations with Israel’s increasingly friendly Arab neighbours, like Jordan, Egypt, and even Saudi Arabia.

Perhaps more importantly for Netanyahu, a large-scale annexation of the occupied territory would eliminate the mythical ‘two-state’ threat that has been his greatest political asset—and deprive him of the ability to dangle

the prospect of annexation before the settler block again in future elections. He prefers the status quo, and he is now stalling in the hope that he may be able to avoid keeping his promises.

He has rattled on his commitments before, and it could happen again. However, the pro-annexationists in his coalition government and more broadly in the country are panicking as Donald Trump’s re-election prospects in November appear to dwindle. The window seems to be closing, and they want action now.

Netanyahu also desperately needs a success of some sort, as he is currently on trial for corruption. The upshot, therefore, may be a compromise that pleases nobody: a token annexation of a few Jewish settlements near the official Israeli border, and otherwise no change.

Possibly for the first time in history, Netanyahu’s personal and political interests, Israel’s real national interest, and the interest of world peace are all in alignment. Enjoy it while it lasts.

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

Comment

The closing-off of democracy?

There are lessons learned from the ‘virtual Parliament,’ that could lead to a reconfigured and renewed body, one that truly engages and encompasses diverse, inclusive, and accessible contributions.



Alexandra Dobrowolsky

Opinion

HALIFAX—As readers of *The Hill Times* will know, “Parliament” derives from the French, *parler*, to speak, and Canada’s Parliament and legislatures, rooted in the British Westminster parliamentary tradition, are places in which democratically elected representatives are meant to discuss, debate and deliberate. Yet, by mid March 2020, with the COVID-19 country-wide lockdown, Canada’s formal political institutions fell very quiet, and became quite empty. A range of interim measures gradually took shape to provide a modicum of democratic dialogue, accountability and transparency, but their shortfalls became increasingly apparent and concerning.

Parliament adjourned on March 13 with a return scheduled for April 20. In the interim, emergency meetings occurred twice. Approximately one-tenth of MPs (with party representation in proportion to party standings in the full, 338-seat, House of Commons) were on hand to pass a raft of emergency assistance policies—from supports to families, farmers and lobster fishers, to students, businesses and women’s shelters—which would amount to tens of billions of dollars in financial aid and stimulus packages.

Although Prime Minister Justin Trudeau initially received positive approval ratings for his empathetic, pandemic media briefings, red flags were raised when his government’s draft emergency spending bill (comprised of 44 pages and 19 parts) would not only implement mea-



MPs, pictured on May 13, 2020, in the House for a meeting of the Special Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic. Various democratic deficits point to dramatic and disturbing departures from even the most rudimentary of parliamentary requisites, coming at the worst of times, when democratic deliberations, oversight, and accountability are more crucial than ever, writes Alexandra Dobrowolsky. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

asures like the promised increases to the Canada Child Benefit and to GST credits, but would also give his minority government the power to spend, borrow or regulate taxes unilaterally, without parliamentary approval, for a period of 21 months. The opposition Conservatives accused the Liberals of taking advantage of a crisis for partisan gain, while media pundits chastised the government for its “overreach” and judged this “power grab” to be the Liberals’ first, big pandemic misstep. This prompted changes to the draft, but, nonetheless, shows how quickly the government was willing to slide down the slippery slope of diminished democratic accountability.

By late April, a government motion was passed by a vote of 22-15 calling for the House of Commons to meet: every Wednesday there would be, substantially reduced, in-person meetings, and every Tuesday and Thursday there would be virtual, “Zoom” meetings, despite security concerns around this particular platform. Canada’s first “virtual Parliament” came with technical glitches, as well as with some distinctive decorum issues and alleged breaches of the House code of conduct as when Commons Speaker, Anthony Rota, was accused of being dictatorial for threatening to

make use of the “mute” button to deal with MPs’ interruptions.

Granted, there were other parliamentary developments and activities, including the convening of a Special Committee of the House on the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Senate also established a special committee on lessons learned from COVID-19, and several of its committees planned to meet virtually, even though the Senate had been officially adjourned until June 2, 2020. Nonetheless, debate and the work of committees in both Houses of Parliament were circumscribed.

Provincial and territorial legislatures did not fare much better, although responses varied. In Ontario, by March 19, all legislative committee meetings were cancelled and would not be re-scheduled until May 19, which would also be the date for the first scheduled Question Period in two months. In Quebec, the province hit the hardest by COVID-19, legislative work was limited to video conferencing for committees between April 24 to May 13. Some provinces worked to coordinate operations across government departments, while others created mechanisms for cross-party collaboration. In British Columbia, a cross-ministry Pandemic Provincial Co-ordination Plan echoed what had occurred during previous SARS and H1N1

crises. An all-party committee was struck to deal with COVID-19 in Newfoundland and Labrador, but in this legislature, only a quorum of 10 was required to pass crucial COVID-19 legislation on March 26, and neither oral questions nor debate took place.

Initially, opposition parties tempered their critiques in the face of the crisis, but some soon came to question the legislative closures, and closed-off debates. Saskatchewan NDP Opposition leader, Ryan Meili, called for the legislature to resume so MLAs could do their jobs, while the Green Party in Prince Edward Island pressured the premier for weeks to open its legislature, closed since November 2019. Although Nova Scotia’s Premier Stephen McNeil, alongside the province’s chief medical officer, Dr. Robert Strang, met with the media for 30-minute, daily updates, political deliberations were limited to staff from the premier’s office briefing the unusually quiet opposition caucuses. Legislative committee meetings were cancelled, McNeil asserted that the legislature would not have to sit again until the fall, and Nova Scotians first learned of plans for loosening pandemic restrictions via media reports of Dr. Strang’s presentation to an exclusive, Halifax Chamber of Commerce and the Nova Scotia

Business and Labour Economic Coalition, audience.

At the best of times, Canada’s Parliament and legislatures experience various democratic deficits, and can certainly be critiqued for both the quantity and quality of their debates. Still, the foregoing points to dramatic and disturbing departures from even the most rudimentary of parliamentary requisites, coming at the worst of times, when democratic deliberations, oversight, and accountability are more crucial than ever. Yet the speed and ease with which democracy has been closed-off, also means that there are possibilities for opening up. This includes lessons learned from the “virtual Parliament,” that could lead to a reconfigured and renewed body, one that truly engages and encompasses diverse, inclusive, and accessible contributions.

Dr. Alexandra Dobrowolsky is a political science professor at Saint Mary’s University specializing in Canadian, comparative, and women, gender and politics. Prof. Dobrowolsky has published six books. Her most recent collection is entitled: Turbulent Times and Transformational Opportunities: Gender and Politics Today, and Tomorrow (co-edited with Fiona MacDonald) published by University of Toronto Press, 2020. The Hill Times

Our problem with China is much bigger than the fate of the two Michaels

There is no easy way to put this. China is not Canada's friend. It is a serial human rights abuser in Xinjiang against Uyghur Muslims. It is destroying culture in Tibet and Hong Kong is under pressure.



Phil Gurski

National Security

OTTAWA—Canadian governments are not the greatest in using the information intelligence agencies give them.

You have to feel for the families of the so-called “two Michaels”: Spavor and Kovrig. These two Canadians have been held by Chinese authorities for almost a year-and-a-half now and this is causing understandable strain on their families. This was clearly evidenced by the recent plea by Kovrig's wife, Vina Nadjibulla, to the Trudeau government to do more to gain his release. She was backed up by 19 former parliamentarians and diplomats, in addition to other prominent Canadians, such as former Supreme Court justice Louise Arbour, calling on the federal justice minister to free Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou.

On the other hand, there are those such as former Liberal attorney general and justice minister Anne McLellan, who said that while she has great respect for the letter's “heartfelt humanitarian” argument, she feels releasing Meng would set a dangerous precedent. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is, for the time being, opting not to release Meng, as are several seasoned op-ed writers in national newspapers such as *The Globe and Mail*, the *Ottawa Citizen* (one was penned by Margaret McCuaig-Johnston, with whom I sit on the board of the National Capital Branch of the Canadian International Council) and the *National Post*. Even my former director at CSIS, Richard Fadden, has weighed in on the ‘no’ side.

As a former CSIS strategic analyst, albeit a terrorism one, and not a China one, I am perhaps not surprisingly aligned with Fadden. The issue we have with China, however, goes well beyond the current crisis. That nation has been engaging in activities in our land for decades, activities that undermine our national security and democracy. And yet successive governments appear not to have noticed or have

chosen to ignore this interference as they were too bent on coddling China for economic profits.

CSIS has warned about China's activities for decades and those warnings have been shunted aside. A decade ago, we warned about politicians who seemed to be under PRC influence and yet some MPs called on Fadden to resign over his “allegations.” It is not just Fadden who thinks this is a problem:

a few days ago, the head of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, as well as a former Canadian ambassador to the PRC, agreed that China's moves in our country are not in our interest.

To my mind, this speaks to a much greater problem. Over my 30-plus years in security intelligence in Canada, I was amazed at how the information we provided got a lukewarm reception. It was not all bad: we had some great consumers who relied on our data. Overall, however, I cannot give decision-makers a high grade when it comes to the understanding and use of intelligence. In this, we are well behind our traditional U.S. and U.K. allies. It is almost as if they feel there is something “not quite right” about spying.

There is no easy way to put this. China is not Canada's friend. It is a serial human rights abuser in Xinjiang against Uyghur Muslims. It is destroying culture in Tibet, and Hong Kong is under pressure. And then there are the manoeuvres by the PRC navy in the South China Sea.

We have eagerly followed the money for decades and helped support a regime whose ethos is antithetical to our own. I am not advocating open conflict, but rather

an acknowledgement that Canada cannot and must not turn a blind eye to China's actions. It is neither in our interest nor reflective of who we are as a country.

We cannot give in to China's bullying with respect to Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig. There must be a better way that uses diplomatic pressure, including that of our allies, and still follows the tenets of international law. We all know what happens when you kowtow to the local hoodlum.

Our government must also pay more attention to what its intelligence agencies tell it. No, we do not have a crystal ball and, no, we are not perfect, but, yes, we do provide accurate, corroborated information that can, and must, help in policy development and decision making. Calling on the director of CSIS to resign because he lifts the lid on foreign interference is not the way to go. We have spies for a reason. Use what they gather and disseminate to advance Canada's interests.

Phil Gurski is the president of Borealis Threat and Risk Consulting and a 32-year intelligence analyst veteran at both CSE and CSIS.

The Hill Times



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Congratulations to Sanni Yaya, our first Vice-President, International and Francophonie

In this new position, Sanni Yaya will play a key role in achieving uOttawa's goals in the realm of internationalization and in furthering the University's historic mission, which is mandated by its founding legislation, of contributing to and fostering the expansion and success of the Franco-Ontarian community.

Sanni Yaya is a health economist and an expert in global health. He is a full professor at uOttawa's Faculty of Social Sciences who, from 2016 to 2019, held the position of associate dean and director of the School of International Development and Global

Studies. He is a prolific researcher with a humanistic vision who is passionately committed to combatting inequality in maternal and child health in Sub-Saharan Africa.

There is no doubt that his expertise in, and dedication to, internationalization and the Francophonie will serve him well in this important position.

HEARD ON THE HILL

Hill reporters to write white paper on journalistic standards

Continued from page 2

Three reporters on the Parliamentary Press Gallery's executive board will be working throughout the summer to create a white paper



The Globe and Mail's Bill Curry is one of three Hill reporters working on a white paper for the press gallery. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

of "shared journalistic principles" to help guide its decisions around memberships. Minutes from the gallery's May 28 executive meeting, which was held on teleconference, named Global News' **Amanda Connolly**, *The Globe and Mail's* **Bill Curry**, (who incidentally is a former *Hill Times* reporter), and La Presse Canadienne's **Catherine**

Lévesque as those who will share the guiding document with members on Sept. 1.

"The goal of this white paper is to provide some additional clarity on how the board interprets the definition of 'generally accepted journalistic standards and principles' when making membership decisions," read minutes from the meeting. It adds that the document could change as it is a "living document that can be updated and adjusted as needed." It will be open to suggestions from members once it is shared in the late-fall and winter, according to the minutes. There are about 300 members in the

Parliamentary Press Gallery, including reporters, editors, TV camera people, photographers, producers, and publishers.

Armed Canadian Forces reservist had 'several weapons' near prime minister's residence on July 2, say RCMP

RCMP said late last week that the Canadian Armed Forces member who made his way to the grounds of Rideau Hall on July 2 had "several weapons" and will face multiple charges. On July 3, the RCMP laid 22 charges against Corey Hurren, including one count of uttering threats. RCMP Deputy Commissioner Mike Duheme told reporters Friday that officers saw and spoke to the accused, who allegedly drove his truck through the pedestrian gate at 1 Sussex Dr. around 6:30 a.m. on Thursday, for about 90 minutes. He was taken into custody around 8:30 a.m. for questioning, and the force said he appeared to have been acting alone. RCMP said they know his motivation but did not elaborate, and said he was not previously known to police or on any watch lists. CBC News confirmed that the man in custody was Mr. Hurren, and *The Toronto Star* reported that he appeared to have posted a conspiracy theory about the COVID-19 virus shortly before the incident.

Blanchet's message on Canada Day



Bloc Québécois leader Yves-François Blanchet shared this image with his followers on July 1. Image courtesy Yves-François Blanchet's Twitter

In a hat tip to Quebec's traditional, but not enshrined-in-law day on July 1, Bloc Québécois Leader **Yves-François Blanchet** tweeted an image of a pizza box carrying the message of "Happy Moving Day 2020." Happening to coincide with Canada Day, the beginning of July marks the biggest moving day in the collective psyche of Quebecers.

While their Canadian colleagues elsewhere might be hitting the cottage, grilling up some burgers, and catching the nightly fireworks (mind you, with some major modifications this year because of the pandemic), Quebecers opt for U-Hauls and the inevitable chaos that awaits. Dating back to 1750, the tradition came about when French settler **François Bigot** declared May 1 to be Moving Day, which was later formalized in 1866 in the Civil Code of Lower Canada. It remained in place until 1974, when the province let tenants and landlords agree on any start and end date for their leases. The bill extended the end date for leases from April 30 to June 30, making July 1 the dreaded day, one all the more complicated by the pandemic this year. One housing advocacy group predicted on July 2 that more than 370 households had not yet secured a new lease, the highest number since 2003.

Biz council welcomes former Trudeau adviser

The Business Council of Canada is hiring two new people to its team this month. **Robert Asselin** and **Michael Gullo** are joining its policy team on July 20, as senior vice-president and vice-president, respectively. A release noted Mr. Asselin will be heading up the group's economic growth and recovery strategies, along with fiscal and tax policy, while Mr. Gullo will sink his teeth into regulatory and infrastructure issues around the council's growth strategies. Mr. Asselin joins the group from BlackBerry. He also has years of experience advising former prime minister **Paul Martin**, various Liberal ministers, and **Justin Trudeau** during his leadership campaign and the 2015 federal election.



Robert Asselin will take over as the Business Council of Canada's senior vice-president later this month. Image courtesy Business Council of Canada/Dave Chan

Mr. Gullo comes over from the Railway Association of Canada and brings his chops in natural resource sustainability, transportation, and supply chain policy. "It's a pleasure to welcome Robert and Michael to the Council's growing team of policy and communication leaders," said **Goldy Hyder**, president and CEO of the Business Council of Canada, in a release.

"Robert and Michael's strong and varied experience will add significant capacity to our strategic policy leadership at a critical time in our country's future." The group also bid adieu to **Brian Kingston**, who was named president and CEO of the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association on June 29. Mr. Kingston previously held the vice-president of international and fiscal policy role with the council.

The Hill Times



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The search committee will begin consideration of candidates immediately. Applications should include a letter of interest, curriculum vitae and the names of three references (who will not be contacted without the consent of the candidate) and be submitted electronically, in confidence, to:

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Employment Minister Carla Qualtrough, left, Social Development Minister Ahmed Hussen, Seniors Minister Deb Schulte, and Labour Filomena Tassi together head the Employment and Social Development Department, which has more than doubled its annual spending already this year as the government has tried to keep the economy afloat amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

Government spending tops \$392-billion, and counting, for 2020-21

Spending by Employment and Social Development Canada has risen by \$74-billion compared to last year.

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The federal government has topped \$392-billion in approved spending for the current fiscal year, with two appropriation periods still remaining that will raise that total higher.

Parliamentarians approved \$6-billion in new spending by the government for this year when they passed the appropriations Bill C-19 last month. The bill aligned with parts of the supplementary estimates (a) spending report from the government. It received royal assent on June 26.

The government also revealed another \$81-billion in new spending through the supplementary estimates (a) document, for a total of \$87-billion in spending beyond what was reported in the main estimates document published in February.

That \$81-billion was not classified as new spending in the supplementary estimates (a) document, because the government did not require approval from MPs to spend the money. That money was effectively pre-approved under terms in the government's pandemic emergency relief bills in March and April, which granted the government extraordinary powers

to spend money on any "public health event of national concern," and take measures to stabilize the economy without seeking permission from Parliament. The government's spending on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit program falls under those powers.

program within the Department of Indigenous Services.

Last year's supplementary estimates (a) included just shy of \$5-billion in new spending, bringing the total spent by the government up to that point in the year to roughly \$305-billion. The year before, 2018-19, the supplementary

ment has accounted for \$313-billion in spending in that year so far.

Of the \$390-billion of spending approved so far this year, \$131-billion has been passed by Parliament directly, and the remaining \$261-billion has been authorized under statutes already passed by Parliament.

The Liberal government has borrowed billions to provide financial relief to Canadians and keep the economy afloat amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced many businesses to close their doors to respect public health orders. Much of the country has now begun to loosen the most severe of those restrictions; however, many public health experts expect new outbreaks to occur in Canada until a vaccine has been developed and widely administered.

ing approvals so far this year, at \$101-billion, are up only modestly from previous years. The CRA's spending has increased from roughly \$4-billion and \$5-billion the previous two years to \$8-billion this year. National Defence, which typically boasts one of the government's largest budgets, has been approved to spend \$24-billion so far this year, third-most among departments.

The Employment and Social Development Department, which is split between four government ministers, has been responsible for administering the government's Canada Emergency Response Benefit program, which is sending cash to Canadian residents who have been put out of work during the pandemic. By June 21 that program had paid out \$52-billion worth of benefits. The CRA has shared some of the responsibility for the CERB program as well.

Finance Canada has been responsible for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program for businesses. The government initially projected that the CEWS would cost the government \$73-billion, but as of June 29 only \$17-billion worth of claims had been doled out. Business groups including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and Canadian Chamber of Commerce told the CBC last month that the government rolled out the CEWS program too late to help many businesses hit hard by the pandemic shutdowns.

MPs approved Bill C-19 after four hours of debate on June 17, under the terms of an agreement between the Liberals and NDP that limited the duration and frequency of House sittings. The Senate approved the bill on June 26.

The relief spending will likely swell the federal deficit above \$250-billion, according to Parliamentary Budget Officer Yves Giroux, who has also said the federal debt could hit \$1-trillion before the pandemic is over.

The federal government typically earns more than \$300-billion per year in revenue to offset its spending, primarily through collecting taxes. The government collected \$332-billion in 2018-19, when the Liberals ran a \$14-billion deficit. This year, the public shutdowns caused by the pandemic have driven the economy into a recession, which will reduce the government's tax revenue as well as raising expenses.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) is scheduled to provide the public with an update on the country's financial situation on July 8. Mr. Trudeau has said the update will only present a "snapshot" of the government's finances, not a full projection of its expected financial situation in the future, as has become customary in the government's annual fiscal updates.

The government did not present a fall fiscal update last year, and has not presented a budget or any other fiscal updates this year either. Mr. Trudeau has said the fast-changing nature of the pandemic and the government's response has made it too difficult to project the government's future financial situation accurately.

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The Hill Times

Canada Emergency Response Benefit statistics

Total CERB Benefits (delivered by Service Canada and Canada Revenue agency, combined) as of June 21st, 2020

Week of June 15 th to date applications	Total unique applicants	Total applications received
524.42 K	8.06M	18.31M
Total applications processed	Total dollar value of CERB benefits paid	
18.35M	\$52.14B	

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit program sends cash to people who have been put out of work by public shutdowns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is being run by Employment and Social Development Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency. *Screen-capture of the CERB website*

The \$6-billion portion that MPs did approve on June 26 included \$586-million in new money for the military's Joint Support Ship project, \$481-million for a government settlement with survivors of Federal Indian Day Schools, and \$468-million for the Child and Family Services

estimates (a) included \$8-billion in new spending, but government spending had only reached a total of \$284-billion at that point, including the new estimates.

The federal government spent a total of \$346-billion in 2018-19. Final figures for 2019-20 haven't been released yet, but the govern-

ment has increased the most during the pandemic, by far. The \$139-billion approved so far this year for that department is up from \$65-billion at the same point in time last year, and \$69-billion the year prior. The Finance Department's spend-

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Opinion

The Scheer truth does not exist



Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, pictured Feb. 20, 2020, on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The Conservatives under Andrew Scheer seem to have nothing good to say about anyone, or about any international or domestic body.



Mark Wegierski

Opinion

TORONTO—I wrote, a while back: “One wonders what scandal, what new fact about the dismal leadership of Scheer, will come out tomorrow.” Since then, there has been a continuing, almost weekly, gaffe, misstep, and—failure of leadership is not even an issue—a failure of even the modicum of stewardship, in the interim, of the CPC.

While Canadians have enjoyed a ‘spring of political unity’ in facing the horrible pandemic of COVID-19, as many commentators have noted, Andrew Scheer has managed to be the political leader to see his party dramatically lose public respect, a seemingly impossible achievement.

Contrast Scheer’s seeming inability to do anything right with Ontario Premier Doug Ford who, during the pandemic, has led well, articulately, decisively, and passionately.

Meanwhile, the Conservatives, under Scheer, seem to have nothing good to say about anyone, or any international or domestic body. The Conservatives seems to be locked in a perpetually losing approach to

politics. They will come out of the pandemic being remembered for: Parliament needs to sit like nothing is happening; people receiving Canadian Emergency Relief Benefits might not want to go back to work (i.e., recently unemployed people are lazy, of stop paying them not to work?); inaction on the part of Scheer regarding a leadership candidate’s widely perceived as racist and inflammatory remarks about Canada’s chief public health officer; and a seriously fractured CPC caucus.

It is fairly easy to predict (just choose the worst possible thing to say during popular anti-racism protests) that in the coming days a tone-deaf call for increased ‘law-and-order’ will come from Scheer.

It is not news that the consensus, of those with the slightest political sense, is that the CPC continues to have no hope of winning strategic urban ridings.

The CPC could not be worse off, if it went out of its way to try to be; leaderless would be better than what is passing for leadership these days.

Scheer has to be doing this damage completely on his own. (There can be no way that the 76 members of Scheer’s office, that *The Hill Times* profiled, could possibly all be okay with what the boss is doing.)

The only possible logical explanation is that staffers have no idea what Scheer will do, or fail to do, next. They say that political staffers spend a lot of time “putting out fires”—why, in the name of decency and respect for democracy, have the staffers in the Opposition Leader’s Office not called in the water-bombers?

The ability of the next leader of the party will be trapped by the legacy of Scheer. Day one, the new leader will be hit with questions about whether or not they stand by Scheer’s past decisions, or lack of them.

Unless the candidates for Scheer’s job come out now, and criticize Scheer openly, there will be no escaping the damage done. *Mark Wegierski is a Toronto-based writer and historical researcher, published in the Ottawa Citizen, Calgary Herald, and The Hill Times, among others. He is a long-time Conservative Party supporter.*

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Feds' policing reforms should respect self-governance of Indigenous people, say experts, Parliamentarians, in wake of deadly, violent run-ins with police

'I think the Indigenous community needs to be given absolute autonomy and authority to develop systems for themselves that sit completely outside of the system that we currently have,' says Notisha Massaquoi, a former executive director of community health centre, Women's Health in Women's Hands.

BY PALAK MANGAT

As the government works toward a new legislative framework aimed at improving the relationship between police and Indigenous people, some Parliamentarians and Indigenous experts say reforms should be rooted in self-determination, greater autonomy, and self-governance.

Such changes could better reflect Ottawa's commitment to reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, said Judith Sayers, president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council in Port Alberni, B.C.

"As communities, we definitely need to have our own form of Indigenous—I hate to use the word 'policing,' but for lack of better words—'Indigenous policing.' We know we can form our own trauma teams in our communities," said Ms. Sayers in a phone interview with *The Hill Times*.

Her comments come on the heels of a deadly string of interactions between police and Indigenous people across the country in the last few months, putting Ottawa and the RCMP under increased scrutiny for how Indigenous people are policed and over-represented in the correctional system.

"My point is making sure that there's enough funding to put in place the kind of policing that Indigenous people want to [have]. This is really in keeping with the universal declaration of Indigenous rights: self-determination, putting in our own social goals, and where we want to go with that," said Ms. Sayers.

Since April, eight Indigenous people have died in incidents that have involved police, with some being shot and killed: Rodney Levi, Chantel Moore, Eishia Hudson, Jason Collins, Stewart Kevin Andrews, Everett Patrick, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, and Abraham Natanine. (Ms. Korchinski-Paquet was an Indigenous-Black woman).

Ms. Moore was among those for whom police said they were responding to a wellness check on June 4. Police said they were met with a woman with a knife who was making threats, and she was subsequently shot and killed.

"Our relationship with police has been one of violence, from the colonial nature of everything that has happened in Canada," said Ms. Sayers, pointing to residential schools and the presence of RCMP officers in removing barriers and blockades during demonstrations by Wet'suwet'en land defenders earlier this year as examples.

"Can we actually calm someone down so that they're not required to be shot to be calmed down? I think that's one of the No. 1 things. We need to do some increased training and community orientation for officers. Often, we find, and this is not all officers, so I don't want to put a blanket on all officers, but often people don't value Indigenous people. They don't see us as people, so [we are] being dehumanized," said Ms. Sayers.

In the wake of those deadly interactions, Public Safety Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) committed to overhauling policing services and creating a new legislative framework for Indigenous policing. One program that will be re-examined is the First Nations Policing Program, which is 52 per cent funded by the federal government, with the remaining 48 per cent covered by the provinces and territories.

Progressive Senator Lillian Dyck (Saskatchewan) told *The Hill Times* that she is skeptical of the reach the new framework will have.

"Personally, I don't believe legislation—if it is as I suspect it's going to be—will have a very big impact. It will only have a limited effect on policing brutality and killings of Indigenous people because it will more than likely only be to grant police powers to First Nations on reserve," she said. "I think that's a good thing, but it leaves out off-reserve," which she predicted are the "urban and rural

areas of Canada" where some of the incidents took place.

As noted by a 2014 auditor general report, the First Nations Policing Program, introduced in 1991 and updated in 1996, aims "to contribute to the improvement of social order, public security, and personal safety in First Nations communities." It covers First Nations communities on reserve, some First Nations on Crown land, and Inuit communities, but excludes Métis, off-reserve, and urban communities. Today, the program serves about 60 per cent of First Nations and Inuit communities across the country.

Sen. Dyck said the deadly interactions off-reserve, paired with a January finding from the Correctional Investigator of Canada that Indigenous people make up more than 30 per cent of the total inmate population in federal prisons, "show the existence of systemic racism" in both systems. The investigator noted that in 2016, Indigenous people made up 25 per cent of the total inmate population, leading him to conclude that there is a "deepening 'Indigenization' of Canada's correctional system."

Asked about such stats, a spokesperson for Mr. Blair's office said in an emailed July 1 statement that the government needs "to acknowledge the lived experience of those who have known systemic racism."

"A criminal justice system that produces such inequitable outcomes for specific segments of our population cannot be considered truly just," Mr. Blair's statement said. "The overrepresentation of Indigenous people in correctional institutions is an unacceptable situation that we are working very hard to address."

Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller (Ville-Marie-Le Sud-Ouest-Île-des-Scœurs, Que.) has spoken out about police violence in recent weeks, saying he is "outraged" by the videos that have surfaced, and has called for a "full accounting of what has gone on." A spokesperson for Mr. Miller's office deferred inquiries to his previous public statements, and those around policing reform and incarceration to Public Safety.

Vicki Chartrand, who studies the links between colonialism and the justice system and Indigenous grassroots efforts to address violence against Indigenous women at Bishop's University in Quebec, said there are examples of where communities have taken it upon themselves to seek justice where they see authorities have not stepped in.

"What we've seen is that in communities themselves, despite the trauma and violence they experience, the poverty and lack of resources, is that they've come together in significant ways in order to address this lack of policing function that exists for their communities," Prof. Chartrand said. She pointed to the Bear Clan Patrol in Winnipeg, a group of 1,500 men and women who volunteer to patrol streets and draw "its direction solely from our traditional philosophies and practices."

Prof. Chartrand also took note of groups like Manitoba's Drag the Red, which started in 2014 to help solve cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women by searching rivers for remains and other evidence.

"These are the kinds of community measures that are going to keep people safe and connected. It's not going to be the negative interventions of police that aren't creating any kind of actual supports," she said.

"It becomes really clear that, there's a bunch of things at play there, but one of them is how Indigenous people are being policed, the lack of funding and resources, the kinds of colonial taxonomies that have been engrained in the functions of criminal justice."

RCMP eyes more diverse membership

Notisha Massaquoi, a former executive director of community health centre, Women's Health in Women's Hands, which works with racialized women in Toronto and surrounding areas, echoed Ms. Sayers' calls for First Nations to be granted greater self-determination through the reforms.

"I think the Indigenous community needs to be given absolute autonomy and authority to develop systems for themselves that sit completely outside of the system that we currently have," she said this week. "The one we have in place today is just an extension of the colonial practice that was designed to contain and exterminate Indigenous people, so it can't be the one that's going to resolve this problem."

Asked what she would like to see come out of the reforms, Ms. Sayers added that "what I think is the most important thing is having a trained, trauma-informed team of people that can go to these calls. Do we need police to go to these? Maybe, as a backup, if that's what is [needed]. But a lot of situations can be controlled by people who know what they're doing doing,

people who are familiar with who Indigenous people are."

RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki, who herself has faced scrutiny recently after initially denying the existence of systemic racism within her ranks before walking back her comments, appeared before the House Public Safety Committee on June 23 and cited mandatory "cultural awareness [online] training" for all RCMP workers as a step in this direction.

She added that the force needs to "double down on hiring a more diverse membership, as we want greater diversity to reflect the communities that we serve." As noted by *The Canadian Press* last month, an employment equity report on the force in 2018-19 found that the diversity of the overall workforce had "not changed by any significant measure" since the year before. The report found that as of April 2019, 21.8 per cent of the force's members were women, 11.5 per cent were visible minorities, 7.5 per cent were Indigenous people, and 1.6 per cent were people with disabilities. The representation figures are for RCMP members, not civilian employees.

"We continue to work with Indigenous peoples, partners, communities, and all racialized Canadians to ensure that our agencies serve without bias and with a commitment to justice for everyone," the statement from Mr. Blair's office said. "In order to achieve this, we need to acknowledge the lived experience of those who have known systemic racism."

Anna Banerji, a director of global and Indigenous health at the University of Toronto's faculty of medicine, noted there is generally a "lack of trust" from Indigenous communities when it comes to governments and state police.

"The government hasn't come through with what they should be doing, and Indigenous people are treated as second-class citizens," said Prof. Banerji, referencing boil-water advisories that are still in effect. The Liberal government said it plans to lift all long-term drinking water advisories on reserve by March 2021. Earlier this week, the town of Baker Lake in Nunavut was placed on an advisory as a "precautionary measure" because of cloudy water.

"If I can use the term 'apartheid,' we have an apartheid system in place, where what your access to rights, policy, and fundamental things like food, education, social services, etc., is based on, [is] your race. There's differential access."

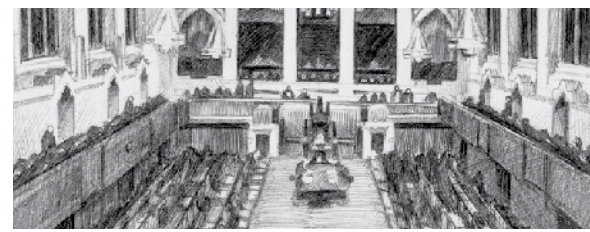
Other experts like Akwasi Owusu-Bempah, who studies race, crime, and criminal justice at the University of Toronto, agreed.

"This is cyclical. Part of the over-incarceration is due to deprivation in other areas of our society. [For Indigenous people], there's key areas of trauma that need to be addressed there," he said.

Independent Senator Kim Pate (Ontario), who has long advocated for the rights of prisoners, said that whichever reforms take place, the values of reconciliation should be respected. "I think self-governance and providing more ability for Indigenous communities and nations to be self governing is vitally important," she said.

pmangat@hilltimes.com
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Parliamentary Calendar



MONDAY, JULY 6

House Not Sitting—The House had its final meeting on June 18 of the Special COVID-19 Pandemic Committee, composed of all members of the House, but 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 House 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 Not Sitting—The Senate has adjourned 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.

Addressing Systemic Racism in Canada—Hosted by the Ottawa West-Nepean NDP riding association, NDP MPs Matthew Green and Mumilaaq Qaqqaq will take part in this live video town hall with Ottawa activist Richard Sharpe, Monday July 6, 7 p.m.-8 p.m. RSVP to events@ownndp.ca and the Zoom log-in information will be sent prior to the event.

TUESDAY, JULY 7

Government Relations: The New Reality—Global Public Affairs hosts a webinar on "Government Relations: The New Reality," exploring how the uncertainty of the pandemic will likely have major impacts on corporate strategy, especially when it comes to government relations and engagement. Tom Clark will moderate the discussion featuring Elan MacDonald, senior vice-president, national business development; and Yonathan Sumamo, senior consultant. Tuesday, July 7, from 10-11 a.m. (MDT). Please confirm your attendance by Monday, July 6 at 4 p.m.

Pearson Centre Webinar: The Canadian Economy, Now and Post-COVID—In conversation with Andrew Cardozo, president of the Pearson Centre, on Tuesday, July 7, 3-3:45 p.m. Jim Stanford, economist and director of the Centre for Future Work, and Andrew Cardozo will consider the prospects of debt repayment, labour, and the role of government in the post-COVID world. They will also discuss how sectors can and cannot change and the roles of precarious, frontline, and remote work in this pandemic will change their roles in our economic future. Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Finance Minister to Deliver Fiscal Update—Finance Minister Bill Morneau will deliver a fiscal "snapshot" of the Canadian economy on Wednesday, July 8, but has not announced a date yet for a fiscal update or a budget. The House is also scheduled to sit on July 8.

Auditor General Tables Spring Reports—The 2020 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada will be tabled in the House of Commons on Wednesday, July 8. The three reports will cover Immigration Removals, Student Financial Assistance, and Supplying the Canadian Armed Forces—National Defence, as well as special examinations of Crown corporations including the Canadian Commercial Corporation, Standards Council of Canada, and the National Gallery of Canada. The 2020 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada will be available on the Office of the Auditor General of Canada website

NDP MPs Green, Qaqqaq to talk about systemic racism in Canada on July 6 in video town hall



Talking system racism: NDP MPs Mumilaaq Qaqqaq and Matthew Green will take part in a live video town hall with Ottawa activist Richard Sharpe on Monday, July 6, from 7 p.m.-8 p.m. to talk about systemic racism in Canada. The event is hosted by the Ottawa-West Nepean NDP riding association. RSVP to events@ownndp.ca and the Zoom log-in information will be sent prior to the event. *Photographs courtesy of NDP*

(www.oag-bvg.gc.ca) immediately following tabling.

OECD Employment Outlook 2020: From Recover to Resilience After COVID-19—The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. In the first months of the crisis, the shock to the labour market has been severe: the OECD-wide unemployment rate rose from 5.3% to 8.4% as companies in non-essential sectors laid-off workers, froze hiring, and put most of their workforce on hold through subsidized job retention schemes. What are OECD countries doing to sustain individuals, households and companies, and what policies are working best? How is the crisis impacting low-income workers, minorities, youth, the self-employed, and women? How can labour market policies support a strong recovery and help minimize permanent scars? What can businesses do to help rebuild a dynamic labor market? How can skills be boosted, and how can vocational education and training facilitate school-to-work transitions? Join the OECD on July 8 for a presentation of its latest employment outlook and a discussion with senior economists from the OECD, AFL-CIO and further speakers to be announced.

Assessing Canada-China Relations—The University of Alberta's China Institute hosts a webinar on "Assessing Canada-China Relations," featuring former Canadian ambassador to China Robert Wright; Yves Tiberghien, Canada's representative on the International Steering Committee at the Pacific Trade and Development Conference; and former Canadian diplomat Philip Calvert, now senior fellow at U of A's China Institute. Wednesday, July 8, from 1 p.m.-2 p.m. Register online via Eventbrite to receive the Zoom link.

Canada's Foremost Fintech Conference FF-CON20—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, NCFCA; George Bordinu, co-founder and CEO, Balance; Julien Brazeau, partner, Deloitte; Alix Cormick, president, Venture Law Corporation; Nikola Danaylov, founder, keynote speaker, author futurist, Singularity Media; Pam Draper, president and CEO, Bitvo; Justin Hartzman, co-founder and CEO, CoinSmart; Peter-Paul Van Hoeken, founder & CEO, FrontFundr; Cynthia Huang, CEO and co-founder, Altcoin Fantasy; Austin Hubbel, CEO and co-founder, Consilium Crypto; Patrick Mandic, CEO, Mavenet; 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/>.

THURSDAY, JULY 9

Enhancing Canada-Pakistan Bilateral Trade—Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion, and International Trade Mary Ng will take part in a webinar on "Enhancing Canada-Pakistan Bilateral Trade," hosted by the Canada Pakistan Business Council. Ms. Ng will be joined by Liberal MP Salma Zahid, chair of the Canada Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group, and Rocco Rossi, president, Ontario Chamber of Commerce. Thursday, July 9, from 11 a.m. to

noon. Register via Eventbrite.

Making Space for Indigenous Governance—Ryerson University hosts a webinar on "Making Space for Indigenous Governance: Two Examples in Conversation," featuring Dr. Damien Lee, assistant professor in Ryerson University's Department of Sociology; and Marrison Mathews, a PhD candidate at McMaster University in Political Science. Thursday, July 9, from 1-2:30 p.m. Register for the Zoom event online.

FRIDAY, JULY 10

Quantum Supremacy and its Many States of National Insecurity—The Conference of Defence Associations Institute hosts a webinar on "Quantum Supremacy and its Many States of National Insecurity." Panelists include Lindsay Gorman, fellow of Emerging Technologies Alliance for Securing Democracy in Washington, D.C.; James Andrew Lewis, Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.; and Michele Mosca, director of Quantum-Safe Canada and co-founder of the Institute of Quantum Computing, Waterloo, Ont. Friday, July 10, at 10 a.m. Register through cdainstitute.ca.

TUESDAY, JULY 14

The Pearson Centre Webinar: Infrastructure and Economic Recovery Featuring Infrastructure Minister Catherine McKenna—Hosted by Pearson Centre president Andrew Cardozo, this event will happen on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, 2-3 p.m. EDT. Just as government investments have driven the economy through the COVID-19 pandemic, the scale, scope, and types of economic stimulus that will be included in Canada's economic recovery will have immense impacts on Canada's economic future. Canada's Minister of Infrastructure and Communities Catherine McKenna talks about how infrastructure can play a role in Canada's economic recovery. Will Canada need a new Marshall Plan? And how can

government centre recovery objectives with issues such as environmental sustainability and gender equity?

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

Cross Canada with Ambassador Cong Peiwu—The Canada China Business Council hosts a webinar on policies to encourage investment in China and liberalize trade. The webinar is geared to all five of its Canadian chapters simultaneously, followed by a roundtable discussion with Cong Peiwu, China's ambassador to Canada. Wednesday, July 15, from 11-11:45 a.m. Tickets are available for this Zoom webinar via Eventbrite.

FRIDAY, JULY 31—SATURDAY, AUG. 8

#CanadaPerforms at RBC Bluesfest Drive-In—The National Arts Centre and RBC Bluesfest are pleased to announce they are coming together to present #CanadaPerforms at RBC Bluesfest Drive-In, a summer weekend series of live concerts at the Place des Festivals Zibi site, by the Kitchissippi River (Ottawa River). Concert-goers, as small pods or families, will be encouraged to drive to the site and watch live concerts from their individual dedicated space. In order to safely welcome back audiences to watch live concerts, the Drive-In series will offer a physical distancing experience that respects reopening measures and protocols. Canadians will also be able to watch online the live-streamed concerts. Concerts will take place on Friday, July 31, Saturday, Aug. 1, Friday, Aug. 7, and Saturday, Aug. 8. Tickets on sale now. For the details, including additional dates and performers, go to: canadaperforms.ottawabluesfest.ca/

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 jgurfinke@cjf-fjc.ca or 416-955-0394.

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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