

## **'Basic human rights' at stake in Nunavut housing crisis, says NDP MP Qaqqaq**

'I feel like I'm fighting all the time,' says Nunavut MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, who isn't sure whether she'll run for office again.

#### BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

NDP MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq spent her summer touring communities across Nunavut to highlight the dire housing conditions her constituents face, another chapter in what she describes as a seemingly endless fight to push the federal government to guarantee basic human rights for the people of Nunavut. Now, with Parliament soon to return for a new session, she's

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News



'We don't need more symbolism' After a summer spent touring substandard housing conditions in Nunavut, NDP MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq is taking her findings to the House of Commons to push for real action from the feds this fall. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade and courtesy of Twitter





Parties ramp up fundraising to cope after 'big hiccup' of pandemic, with a modified 'return to normal,' say experts

#### BY PALAK MANGAT

News

A s parties adjust to the new normal of operating amid COVID-19, the threat of a fall federal election is a "convenient" reason to resume ramping up digital fundraising efforts, prompting a modified "return to normal," say experts.

Speaking to *The Hill Times* last week, Dean Tester, president of Tester Digital, noted the pandemic "made things a little bit more difficult" as parties halted or postponed fundraising events in its the early months after CO-VID was declared a pandemic in March.

"But now, I think it's more or less back to normal,"Mr. Tester said last week. "Most of the money, I think, still comes from

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## 'Like a criminal': Canada-U.S. asylum agreement has a human cost, refugee says

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

 $\mathbf{F}^{ ext{ive years ago, a woman fled}}_{ ext{her home in central Africa,}}$ 

arrived in the United States, and days later headed for the Canadian border to seek asylum. A political activist who'd witnessed election fraud, she feared for her life after the militia killed her cousin and another activist. The 29-year-old thought that was the

worst she'd experience in her young life, but it was her treatment after Canadian officials turned her away to U.S. immi-



Back in U.S. custody, border officials handcuffed her, treating her "like a criminal or an animal," she

gration in 2015 that years later

brings her to tears.

recently told *The Hill Times*, her voice breaking as she described how dehumanized she felt.

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## **HEARD ON THE HILL**

by Palak Mangat

## Aline Chrétien, former PM's 'closest confidante,' remembered as 'class act' by politicos, Hillites



Aline Chrétien, partner to former Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien, is pictured in Ottawa on Oct. 25, 2018. She passed away last week at the age of 84, and is being remembered by political heavyweights and insiders as her partner's rock. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Hillites and Canadian politicos mourned the loss of Aline Chrétien last week. Partner to former prime minister Jean Chrétien, she passed away at the age of 84 on the morning of Sept. 12 at her residence

near Shawinigan, Que. The well-liked **Chrétien**, nicknamed the "rock of Gibraltar" by her husband, has been described as part of a duo that was "like two fingers on the same hand."

Tributes from the likes of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Quebec Premier François Legault, UN ambassador Bob Rae, and former Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper flowed in, along with sitting Conservative and Liberal MPs.

'I am very proud to have had the pleasure of knowing Aline Chrétien. I wish Jean and his family peace and comfort at this time,"tweeted Alberta Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie.

Natural Resources Minister Seamus O'Regan recited a passage from Mr. Chrétien's 2007 memoir, My Years as Prime Minister, on Twitter in tribute: "Aline was, is, and always shall be my Rock of Gibraltar. She is my closest confidante and my most trusted advisor, and, of all the people in the world, it is she who knows me best. Meeting her when I was eighteen...was the greatest, most important moment of my life.'

Longtime B.C.-based Liberal aide Bruce Young, who joined Earnscliffe Strategy Group in 2004, also expressed his condolences online."Aline Chrétien was a class act and always went out of her way to be kind. In '93 I recall how she insisted that I stop the car at a Kelowna Pizza Hut where she bought us dinner following a long day on the campaign trail. A lovely woman. Deepest sympathies to her family," he tweeted.

A cause of death has not been disclosed.

#### **Remote voting like Tinder, says** Tory whip

OK MPs, get those thumbs ready. Amid talk last week of the possible introduction of remote voting once the House returns on Sept. 23, newly minted Conservative Whip Blake Richards drew an intriguing parallel between the practice and swiping on a dating app.

"I do believe it's important that MPs are able to be seen and held accountable in the way they're voting," Mr. Richards told CBC's The House, which probed him, Liberal Whip Mark Holland, and NDP Whip Rachel Blaney on the plans around Parliament's return. Mr. Richards' party is not keen on electronic and remote voting, and had been pushing for Parliament to resume its full, regular operations long before it was prorogued last month.



Conservative Whip Blake Richards, pictured Sept. 9 on his way to new Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole's first caucus meeting. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

"I really don't believe voting can be reduced to having MPs sitting at home in their pyjamas and doing the voting almost like Tinder, where they swipe right or swipe left," he said. "We're talking about votes in some cases that are literally about life and death decisions, they shouldn't be reduced to swiping right or swiping left."

He agreed with Mr. Holland that it was "impossible" to have all 338 MPs in the same room without violating physical distancing guidelines. For his part, Mr. Holland tried to offer some certainty during these uncertain times.

"This is going to involve some MPs operating from home, we are in a global pandemic," he said, noting some MPs might have underlying health conditions and be subject to quarantine orders once they return to their home provinces.

As reported by The Hill Times this summer, House staff had been working on a remote voting application that it said could be ready for use this month. The House Procedure and Affairs Committee, which studied how Parliamentarians could continue to carry out their duties amid the pandemic, was told the move to create such a program came with "internal" and "sunk costs" that included salaries of staff who had their activities "prioritized" because of the pandemic.

#### O'Toole takes aim at Netflix film

Strategists have noted Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is appearing to strike a different tone from his predecessor, Andrew Scheer, as he looks to unite the party and pitch it as a more inclusive option for voters.

But last week, he seemed to channel is predecessor by weighing in on a different work of media. Retweeting Tory-linked media platform True North's clip of one of its hosts, Andrew Lawton, discussing the Netflix film, Cuties, Mr. O'Toole wrote that the portrayal is "exploitative."

"I'm a dad who is deeply disturbed by this Netflix show. Childhood is a time of innocence. We must do more to protect children. This show is exploitative and wrong,"wrote Mr. O'Toole, a father of two (including one daughter who recently started Grade 9).

True North is an organization that bills itself as "independent, non-governmental, [and] non-partisan." **Candice Malcolm**, a former press secretary to then-immigration minister Jason Kenney, is editor-in-chief of the True North Centre for Public Policy, and also heads up the Independent Press Gallery of Canada, which frames itself as "an alternative to the government-influenced Parliamentary Press Gallery."

The controversial film has received mixed reviews with many critical of its sexualized portrayal of children, and some even taking to Twitter amid calls to #CancelNetflix shortly after it was released on the platform.

Mr. O'Toole's remarks sparked a piece by The Globe and Mail's Toronto-based film and arts editor, Barry Hertz, who took aim at the leader in a column decrying his statements. Mr. Hertz wondered if Mr. O'Toole had even seen the film, as he mistakenly described it twice as a show rather than a movie."It was clear from the froth and spittle being spent on Cuties outrage that most of those who were calling for Netflix's head had not bothered to actually watch the film. If they did, and if they spent just one minute to think about [director Maïmouna] Doucouré's cinematic intent, they would have discovered that the movie excoriates the very thing they claim it propagates,"wrote Mr. Hertz.

While the film is "uncomfortable to watch at times," he added that "ultimately, it comes down to a guiding philosophy of art: depiction does not equate endorsement."

The film has raised eyebrows among s south of the bo Republican Senator Josh Hawley writing in an open letter to Netflix that the film "raises major questions of child safety and exploitation," and Republican Senator Ted Cruz saying it is "aggressively promoting ... sexualizing children."

Earlier this year, Mr. Scheer raised eyebrows when he critiqued a CBC article that he said suggested "capitalism is a bad thing."

"The CBC posted an article quoting a university professor who argued the children's TV show, Paw Patrol, encour-

Barry Hertz 📀 @HertzBarry

I am willing to bet that Erin O'Toole and others who are pushing an anti-Netflix crusade over CUTIES haven't bothered to actually watch the film. But why let facts and critical thinking stop a fiery faux-controversy? My column for @globeandmail



What Erin O'Toole gets wrong about the faux-controversy over ... One marketing mess does not mean Netflix is suddenly trafficking in child porn, which is what an increasingly vocal ... S theglobeandmail.com

1 3:14 PM - Sep 13, 2020

330 Q 783 people are Tweeting about this

ages children to embrace capitalism. Free market capitalism built our country. So lets [sic] celebrate it, not condemn it!" he said in a Feb. 23 tweet, which was accompanied by a two minute and 55-second video.

#### Trudeau comic now available

The story of Mr. Trudeau is now available in comic book format, thanks to TidalWave Comics, the company announced last week. In a Sept. 14 release, the U.S. firm, which develops graphic and literary fiction and non-fiction, along with audio and film, said Mr. Trudeau will be added to its "Political Power" series, to be released on Sept. 16.

"Non-fiction stories are sometimes more entertaining than stories involving capes and tights," said its publisher, Darren G. Davis, in the release. "In this case, the news far out passes traditional comic books."

Writer Michael Frizell added that the goal of the series is to allow a "non-partisan profile" of political figures who are popular around the world.



Minister Justin Trudeau has been given the comic book treatment. Photograph courtesy of TidalWave Comics

"But like any person, he's not without faults. As a writer, I need to find a way to balance the positives and negatives and distill a person's life and career into a little over 20 pages or about 100 pictures,"he said.

The 24-page book is drawn by artist e**rnat** and is available digitally print. Politicos can get their hands on a hard-cover copy of the book featuring a cover by Pablo Martinena, who has also drawn the likes of Nelson Mandela, David Beckham, the British royals, and Pope Francis.

It's not Mr. Trudeau's first time gracing the pages of a comic book, having previously been featured on a variant cover of issue No. 5 of Marvel's 2016 Civil War II: Choosing Sides.

pmangat@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

## Our Kids. Canada's Future.

It's time to put Canada's kids first. We call on the Government of Canada to urgently establish an independent Federal Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada.

Many Canadians believe our country is one of the best places in the world to raise a child. However, UNICEF Report Card 16 reports that the health and wellbeing of Canada's children ranks 30th of 38 wealthy countries. According to Children First Canada's latest Raising Canada report, fully one third of kids in Canada do not enjoy a safe and healthy childhood.

With strong economic, environmental, and social conditions for growing up, there are no excuses for the poor outcomes our children experience. The COVID-19 pandemic has widened existing inequalities and will affect the health and wellbeing of our children for a generation. **We must do better.** 

- **92%** of Canadians believe children should be a priority as governments develop plans and policies related to COVID-19 recovery, and beyond. *(Children's Healthcare Canada Abacus Polling, August 2020)*
- Canada spends **30% less** on policies focused on children and families than most rich countries. (UNICEF Report Card 16, 2020)
- The pandemic has heightened concerns about children's healthy development, with many of the top threats to childhood increasing, including mental illness, food insecurity, child abuse, physical inactivity and poverty. (Children First Canada, Raising Canada Report, Sept 2020)
- **70%** of Canadians expect the pandemic to have long-term effects on children. (*Children's Healthcare Canada Abacus Polling, August 2020*)
- **70%** of mental health disorders and addictions begin in childhood. *(CCSA, 2019)*
- 20% of children and youth suffer from mental health disorders. (UNICEF Report Card 16, 2020).
- Suicide is the **second leading cause** of death for youth aged 15 to 24 and has now become the leading cause of death among children 10 to 14. (*Children First Canada, Raising Canada Report, Sept 2020*)
- 1 in 5 Canadian children live in poverty. (UNICEF Report Card 16, 2020)
- 73% of Canadians support the creation of a Federal Commission for Children and Youth. (Children's Healthcare Canada Abacus Polling, 2020)

The statistics are in. The time for a Federal Commissioner for Children and Youth is now. Join us on social media to help build awareness & support for a Federal Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada!

#WeCANforKids | #RaisingCanada | #WorldsApart Visit bit.ly/canadasfuture for more information.







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#### News

# **'Basic human rights' at stake in Nunavut housing crisis, says NDP MP Qaqqaq**

'I feel like I'm fighting all the time,' says Nunavut MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, who isn't sure whether she'll run for office again.

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writing up a report on her findings to put to the government later this month.

Over 21 days in August, Ms. Qaqqaq visited eight communities and more than 100 homes in the Kitikmeot and Kivalliq regions and documented overcrowded and unsanitary homes that she described as "mould boxes."There are many challenges that afflict northern towns in the territory, but her office often hears about the dearth of housing and affordable, safe spaces, she told *The Hill Times*.

"The lack of infrastructure, the lack of housing ties into absolutely everything," she said in a phone interview on Sept. 11 from Ottawa, where she's working on a report about what she saw, including houses with mould and people stuck in homes where they don't feel safe.

In 2016, 52 per cent of the territory's population lived in social housing, of which 38 per cent lived in overcrowded conditions, rising to 72 per cent in some communities, according to the Nunavut Housing Corporation's presentation to a Senate committee that year. Construction costs are three times those in the south, and operation and maintenance costs are higher as well, at an estimated \$26,000 a year per public housing unit. Last year, Nunavut Premier Joe Savikataaq said federal funding means the territory can build about 83 houses a year, a far cry from reaching the estimated 3,100 units needed to help the 5,000 people-or 2,500 familiesin need of housing.

Ms. Qaqqaq started her tour in early August with that housing shortfall in mind as a basic foundational need, knowing she could "spend a lifetime" on the intense challenges the territory faces.

"I decided to go in with a focus around housing because, ultimately, how can we address things like having nine times the suicide rate [as the rest of Canada], having three times [the rate of] violence against women," and "rampant" child sexual abuse in the territory, she asked."Really, what it boils down to are things like, how can we help a child sexually abused if they're in an overcrowded home living with their abuser?" Or improve mental health, she asked, when counsellors don't have their own office place, with some reporting setting



up their own tents in the summer for space.

Substandard housing conditions have become far too normalized, and Ms. Qaqqaq said she's trying to stop that perspective in its tracks.

"The amount of trauma that Inuit encounter is completely unacceptable. And it's not normal. It's not normal for an entire group of people to be going through the situations that we see all the time, everywhere you go."

It's a tiring and often demoralizing job that has Ms. Qaqqaq on the fence about whether she'll run to represent the territory again, with talk of a possible snap election as early as this fall. She was elected for the first time last year at the age of 25.

"I know that I'm changing a lot of things, but realistically I feel like I'm fighting all the time. I'm constantly trying to justify to the federal government why Inuit lives matter; how draining to talk about

all the things I do when that's what I grew up around my entire life; how exhausting it is to live in a space that your people were forced into, that you continue to see your people struggling and you gotta stand in Parliament, in a place that was meant to kill you and your people, a place that did not want you to exist anymore."

### Qaqqaq preparing report for feds

Before she visited the homes, Ms. Qaqqaq explained that she asked to first meet with the respective mayor, MLA, and other community members or managers to be part of the discussion.

At each residence, she brought questions to help her collect data to bolster a report she plans to submit to the Liberal government later this month. Questions like: how many bedrooms are there? How many people live in the home? Has anyone in the home graduated? Has anyone had tuberculosis?

When she walked into some homes, Ms. Qaqqaq said she



All different (smaller aspects of) homes I went to in Gjoa Haven yesterday. Many homes had mould. All experienced water damage that resulted in needs of major repair. In Nunavut there is not only a housing crisis but the infrastructure is horrific and does not fit the needs



6:47 PM - Aug 11, 2020

started sneezing, smelling immediately that something was off.

"You could feel it right away," she said, saying the problems aren't just the smell or that they're "mould boxes,"but that the infrastructure itself is often damaged and rarely accessible for the elderly or those with mobility issues.

Armed with quantitative and qualitative details, she said she hopes to halt any federal reaction calling for more research or reports—something she said the Liberals are too fond of doing. Housing ties into a number of ministerial portfolios, including health, gender equality, NorthNDP MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq toured more than 100 homes in eight communities in August and documented the poor conditions many of her constituents live in as the territory grapples with a housing crisis. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

ern affairs, Indigenous services, Crown-Indigenous relations, so she said she hopes each cabinet member takes note of her report.

Asked if the government has any plans to address some of the issues she's been highlighting, beyond its promises last year, and a spokesperson for Employment and Social Development Minister Ahmed Hussen (York South— Weston, Ont.) said "since day one" the Liberal government has been committed to addressing the

housing crisis in Canada's north and arctic.

"The housing gap in the North has multiple social impacts and pres ents significant barriers to the creation of healthier, more sustainable communities. That's why we are making investments through our National Housing Strategy (NHS) to improve access to affordable housing," said Jessica Eritou.

"We acknowledge there is still more work to do, as our government continues to work with Indigenous and Northern communities to address a wide range of socio-economic determinants, in-

cluding: education, housing, and access to health services." In August 2019, Prime Minister

Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) travelled to Nunavut and announced \$290-million over eight years for social housing construction—but most of that was money already promised in 2016 and 2017.

Under the bilateral agreement, Ms. Eritou said the federal government will provide close to \$316-million in targeted funding over the next 10 years to protect and expand social community housing, and to repair and build affordable homes across the territory. She pointed to other housing initiatives that impact the territory, like the National Housing Co-Investment Fund that supports the Uquutaq Society (Iqaluit Men's Shelter). There's also the Reaching Home initiative, including \$638-million announced in 2019 to give Indigenous peoples living in urban, rural, and Northern communities better housing outcomes.

It's dehumanizing to keep the funding at the same levels, which Ms. Qaqqaq said amounts to keeping entire groups of people to live in a state they were forced into in the first place.

"We don't need symbolism," she said. "What grinds my gears the federal government is knowingly underfunding—severely and always has. But what they're not seeing is the direct outcomes of the lack of basic human rights that is resulting in death, in violence, in abuse and it's completely deteriorating relationships between families, between communities, between Inuit and non-Inuit."

#### Inequality present in Commons, too

The disparities that exist in Nunavut also play out in Ottawa, said Ms. Qaqqaq, though she doesn't like to talk about it much given her privileged position of power.

"Want to talk about racial profiling? Talk about how much happens in the House," she said, recounting how she's been "stalked by security all the time."

A Parliamentarian's budget looks very different when a Nunavut MP is trying to attract candidates to staff her Iqaluit office, given the high cost of living. She said she's asked whether she could divert some of her salary to her office budget, to no avail. Then there's the fact that MPs often pay expenses out of pocket and are later reimbursed. She questioned what implications that has for younger politicians, or people who don't have money to fall back on.

The system works well for the often older, rich white men who have overwhelmingly filled Parliament, she said.

"On all levels, the whole system was built for them... [and] the reality is, is that the system of how the actual House of Commons [functions] reflects on how it's not working for the rest of Canada."

She said her conflicted feelings about continuing on as an MP are not surprising, having entered the role firm in her desire to stay true to herself.

"I know it makes powerful impacts... but is it worth my sanity? I don't know," she said, with a laugh."But if I don't do it at this point in time, who else does? So I'm also very focused on doing the best job that I can."

swallen@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

## Parties ramp up fundraising to cope after 'big hiccup' of pandemic, with a modified 'return to normal,' say experts

Given 'all the different hints' of an early election call, Burlington Conservative riding association head Ross Noble says his team is looking to expand its fundraising efforts, with different formats and larger groups.

#### Continued from page 1 direct mail, phone calling, and digital fundraising, and all that stuff I think is full steam ahead for these guys now."

The Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP all were reported to have applied for, and received, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. The Conservatives, under new leader Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.), have since ended the subsidy and have indicated plans to repay it, while the Liberal Party indicated it would no longer be applying for it come the end of August.

The Trudeau government will soon face a confidence vote following its Sept. 23 speech from the throne. Most party leaders are now saying they don't want an election this fall, but will be ready in the event there is one, leading to a ramp up in fundraising efforts.

The Liberals brought in \$3.1-million in total contributions and transfers during the first quarter for the period ending on March (before the virus was declared a pandemic), a figure that dropped to \$2.6-million for the second quarter, which ended June. The Conservatives dipped from \$4.3-million to \$4-million between the first and second quarters of the year, while the NDP rose from \$972,208 to \$1.3-million, the Bloc Québécois dipped from \$203,547 to \$134,158, and the Greens rose from \$582,349 to \$721,345.

In all, so far this year the Liberals have brought in \$5.8-million, the Conservatives \$8.3-million, the NDP \$2.2-million, the Greens \$1.3-million, and the Bloc has raised a little more than \$337,000.

NDP national director Anne McGrath said her party cancelled all "in-person, event-type fundraising" activities when the pandemic hit in March, meaning its planned "big and ambitious series of meet and greet events" with NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) hit a snag.

She said between March and May, the party was planning to hold "about a dozen" events that it was



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took part in the Liberals' first-ever virtual grassroots fundraiser on Sept. 10, which was moderated by Liberal MP Rachel Bendayan, top right. The party's president, Suzanne Cowan, bottom left, and national director, Azam Ishmael, bottom right, also joined the 35-minute live event. *Photograph courtesy of Liberal Party screengrab* 

hoping would bring in about \$70,000 in all over a six-week timespan.

"That was immediately gone," she said, adding the party reduced the number of emails being sent out and "adjusted the messaging" for telephone and email appeals."We focused a lot more on conversations with people, rather than jumping directly to any kind of ask."

When NDP MP Niki Ashton (Churchill-Keewatinook Aski, Man.) marked her 38th birthday last week, she tweeted out a link asking supporters to sign up and name"one thing you would wish for to make Canada a more fair and just society." Longtime party aide Geoge Soule, who marked the end of his 30s last week, was more direct in his appeal, inviting Ottawa friends to join him for a beer at Brixton's."If you can't make it and wish you could buy [m]e a beer, [please] spend your \$5 here," he wrote, adding a link to donate to the party.

"In a minority Parliament, you have to be ready all the time, so part of what we're trying to do is make sure that we are debt free and ready for the next election,"said Ms. McGrath. The debt coming into the year was about \$7.7-million, which has since been cut down to"closer to \$1-million,"she said.

That, paired with a bump from the first to second quarter, leaves her "very confident that we will be in good shape" for whenever the next election comes.

"Obviously, it's a pretty big hiccup in what's happened with fundraising during the pandemic ... But we are finding ways to adapt and our fundraising is going quite well."

Braeden Caley, senior director of communications with the Liberal Party of Canada, said the party "put a complete pause" on email fundraising in March out of "respect" for people hit hard by the pandemic and instead focused those "channels" on pushing out information about the feds' relief measures. Around May, it held its first "virtual weekend of action" to allow volunteers to work the phones and "check in with their neighbours," events that have since grown to be more focused on asking for donations, something more "reminiscent" of what happens at the doorstep, he said. "There's the old saying that all

politics is local, and in 2020, all politics is digital. That's certainly been true of all of our grassroots fundraising across the country,"he said in a phone interview this week. "There are new realities that media shortly before it started. Moderated by Liberal MP Ra-

chel Bendayan (Outremont, Que.), who read out questions from donors, the event ran about 35 minutes, with almost 4,000 people tuning in. As described by The Canadian Press, Mr. Trudeau answered "softball" questions from supporters from areas including Pickering, Ont., Elora, Ont., and Buffalo Narrows, Sask. Azam Ishmael, the party's national director, and Suzanne Cowan, its president, also joined live.

The party is holding another fundraiser on Sept. 17 with Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino (Eglinton-Lawrence, Ont.), for which regular donors must pay \$195. Mr. Mendicino will perform a short piano recital during the "virtual reception."

"We've acknowledged in all of our communication about grassroots fundraising that not everyone is in a position to give at all this year, people have faced unprecedented challenges,"said Mr. Caley. The fundraiser with Mr. Mendicino "is about providing a safe and virtual opportunity" for donors who can afford to do so to chip in.

Ross Noble, president of the Burlington Conservative Association, told *The Hill Times* he is "very confident that with the current fundraising that is taking place and continuing to take place, we're going to be in a very good position" in the case of a fall election.

The riding of Burlington, Ont., swung red in 2015 and is currently held by International Development Minister Karina Gould (Burlington, Ont.), after being represented by former Conservative Mike Wallace for nearly a decade. Mr. Noble said his team held its



And a HUGE 'THANK YOU' goes to our star guest the Hon. Pierre Poilievre,
 our super moderator the Hon. Lisa Raitt, all our great event Contributors,
 & our #ZOOMAZING BCA Fundraising Team!

Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre took part in a Burlington Conservative Association Aug. 10 virtual fundraiser event, which was moderated by former Milton MP Lisa Raitt. *Photograph courtesy of the Burlington Conservative Association* 

all parties have had to adjust to, but having strong grassroots programs and strong digital programs is an important way that parties can adjust to these times."

Mr. Caley pointed to the Victory Fund, the party's monthly donation program that allows supporters to donate at least \$5 to a local campaign and \$5 to a national campaign, as an example that helps keep costs related to fundraising low.

The party held its first-ever virtual grassroots fundraiser last week, featuring Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), in which supporters were encouraged (but not required) to give \$25 to submit a question to ask the PM.

Mr. Caley declined to say how much the party raised from the event, only that early figures showed it "significantly exceeded our expectations." A link to view the live feed was circulated to interested first virtual fundraiser on Aug. 10 featuring former Milton, Ont., MP Lisa Raitt and six-term MP Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.). While the virtual event was a

first for his association, Mr. Noble said he saw benefits, noting it was much easier to schedule. "We hadn't run a virtual fundraiser before,"he said in a phone interview last week, of the event that saw 25 donors take

#### Total contributions and transfers, 2020

Party	Q1 total fundraised	Q2 total fundraised	Combined total so far
Liberals	\$3,198,387.84	\$2,648,481.88	\$5,846.869.72
Conservatives	\$4,359,938.90	\$4,021,680.55	\$8,381,619.45
NDP	\$972,208.75	\$1,302,042.40	\$2,274,251.15
Bloc	\$203,547.72	\$134,158.45	\$337,706.17
Greens	\$582,349.95	\$721,345.54	\$1,303,695.49

part."It did what it was supposed to do, and it helped us line up some of our efforts internally as to how to run those things and what works, what does not work."

News

Mr. Noble said the group was able to "hit the target it was looking for," as the event was advertised at \$150 per head. Given "all the different hints," he said the association is looking at holding other events under different formats and with larger groups.

He said his association "is in very good shape," as "more than two" people expressed interest in running for the party's nomination in the riding even before the results of the leadership race were announced, and membership has nearly doubled over the last year and a half.

Mr. Tester noted the threat of an election ups the ante for parties to fundraise, and though digital events are "forcing [them] to go where the people are,"he expects MPs soon may "get over their fear" of resuming traditional methods like door-knocking, or modify the practice to do it safely. "They're not going to leave any stone unturned."

Michael Edwards, a digital and creative director with Sussex Strategy Group who has worked in the past for the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, said effective fundraising is about striking the right message at the right time and place, "and digital provides a really wide range of opportunity for parties to do that."

"Unlike polling, where you're only looking for support but you don't have that follow-up connection with an individual regardless of how they respond to your question, with advertising and digital acquisition strategies, you can gauge someone's opinion and you can simultaneously ask them for money. That's a huge advantage that you don't get in other mediums,"he said.

Mr. Edwards added COVID offers an opportunity for parties to "democratize and make more accessible" more traditional fundraising events, which he expects parties to learn from and modify as they move forward.

"I think it's very similar to the experience that we've all had, having to transform the way we work and how we communicate. You think back to those early Zoom calls that you had with coworkers and your company, and where it is today—it's an evolutionary process, and figuring out and striking a balance that works best."

The Green Party said it is not "in a good position to comment" given it is still going through a leadership race, which will wrap up on Oct. 3. A Conservative Party spokesperson could not be reached in time for publication. pmangat@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

#### Opinion



New Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole, left, pictured on his way to his first caucus meeting as leader on Sept. 9 alongside his chief of staff. Tausha Michaud. and the party's new national campaign manager, Fred DeLorey. To date, O'Toole's main departures from the standard Conservative line have been shelving his party's defining fixation with the federal deficit and casting himself as a champion of workers, writes Les Whittington. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

## O'Toole's big blue tent looks more like the Ford/Trump sideshow

The Conservative standard bearer has continued his party's policy of demonizing Justin Trudeau, never missing a chance to depict the prime minister as a preening celebrity.



Les Whittington Need to Know

OTTAWA—One of the more interesting questions before Canadians this fall is what kind of a party leader they'll get in Erin O'Toole.

In the midst of COVID-19, people don't seem to be paying much attention to what the new Conservative head is actually saying. But what is clear so far is



that O'Toole is building a political persona drawing heavily from the tactics and style of Ontario Premier Doug Ford and U.S. President Donald Trump.

Adapting well to the role of down-to-earth, tough-talking leader out to save the little guy from the uncaring elitists in the faraway capital, O'Toole appears to have absorbed the 21<sup>st</sup> century's political lessons: (a) it's all about emotional messaging, including especially resentment and grievance, and (b) nobody really cares about veracity anymore.

The Conservative standard bearer has continued his party's policy of demonizing Justin Trudeau, never missing a chance to depict the prime minister as a preening celebrity. In an interview with Global News, O'Toole used the Trump tactic of issuing a scathing criticism of an opponent based on unverifiable information.

"There isn't a single world leader that views him [Trudeau] as serious,"the Conservative leader claimed.

Asked how he knows that, O'Toole said, without any details, that it's from his private talks with "diplomats." Based presumably on these secret talks, he suggested Trudeau has ruined "every relationship he's touched" on the world stage, citing Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and the United States. Regarding Trudeau's dealings with Trump, O'Toole delivered this meaningless insinuation: "Canada needs to have a real voice in the ear of the U.S. president, not someone on Twitter telling them what to do."

As for our national tensions, O'Toole blithely blames all of Alberta's troubles on Trudeau's "ideology," neglecting the historic collapse in crude oil prices and the Liberal government's \$12-billion bill to expand the Trans Mountain pipeline.

O'Toole is trying to dig his party out of its environmental

hole by reversing its rejection of Canada's Paris Agreement commitment on climate change. But he remains staunchly opposed to carbon taxes, claiming they don't work. In that, he is ignoring the successful use of a price on carbon to reduce fuel consumption in Canada's foremost, 12-year experiment in British Columbia. He also cites a study by the Parliamentary Budget Officer saying the current carbon tax would need to be tripled to change people's purchasing behaviour, ignoring the PBO'S caveat that its estimate was calculated on the (unlikely) assumption there would be no other supplementary GHG-reduction measures.

To date, O'Toole's main departures from the standard Conservative line have been shelving his party's defining fixation with the federal deficit and casting himself as a champion of workers as opposed to callous, greedy corporations. The overture to workers reflects the populist right's most bewildering accomplishment convincing people at the lower end of the new, post-industrial income scale that they should now look for support from the very people who spearheaded the systematic policy changes that created the growing income gap now menacing their livelihoods.

O'Toole is launching this pro-labour angle despite the fact that the Harper government, of which he was a part, tried to cripple labour unions, reduced Employment Insurance availability, and massively shifted the cost of supporting government and social programs onto the backs of individuals by cutting corporate income taxes. While O'Toole talks"Canada First," his party was instrumental in promoting expanded trade and investment relations with as many countries, including China, as possible. This was done for the good reason that a small, trade-dependent country like Canada lives or dies on its ability to access bigger economic markets.

And it's not at all obvious what a Conservative government would do for workers. In Ontario, where Ford ran in 2018 on a "For the People" slogan, the Ford government has put off a minimum wage increase, clamped down on public servants' benefits, and brought in health-care cost cuts that are damaging the system from the patients' point of view. In the U.S., despite all the

talk about supporting "forgotten" workers, Trump has pushed through tax cuts that are immensely more valuable to the wealthy, achieved little in the way of creating manufacturing jobs or higher wages with his protectionist measures, and is now trying to undermine what little the U.S. has in the way of public health care The cu administration has methodically tried to roll back workers' rights and, with the support of one of Trump's right-wing appointees, the U.S. Supreme Court recently handed organized labour a major blow by ruling against a key 40-year legal precedent on compulsory union dues. And Trump applauded.

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

## In any normal election campaign

The requirements of political success haven't changed so drastically that unelectability and disqualifying behaviour have been completely redefined. But these aren't normal times.



Lisa Van Dusen What Fresh Hell

T o lead with an exotic platitude in a time of perpetual hyperbole: election campaigns contain surprises.

Twelve years ago this week, on Sept. 15, 2008, Lehman Brothers filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, the first domino in a financial cataclysm that set the trajectory for the remaining six weeks of the presidential race between Barack Obama and John McCain.

As the 2020 U.S. presidential campaign enters its crucial final weeks, it's hard to imagine what could similarly upend this race, given the pre-existing horror show of an impeached, performative-lunatic incumbent campaigning on a record of mismanaging a deadly pandemic to genocidal proportions and generally acting as though the presidency of the United States is a proxy vendetta against America on behalf of an evil, Marvel Comics world domination plot ... who is still polling above 40 per cent.

Clearly, this is not a normal election and these are not normal times. The normalization of abnormality has become a huge political commodity because it recalibrates human expectations to accommodate any outcome. So, for the sake of argument, let's spend a few hundred words defying that destructive trend and treat this like a normal campaign.

On the (normally) core electability question, "Are you better off than you were four years ago?": At this writing, 194,107 Americans can't answer that question because they've died on Donald Trump's watch in the most extreme democracy-discrediting example in an Amazon rainforest-burning, Brexit-perpetrating, fear-andloathing amplifying series of new world order democracy-discrediting operations of the past five years.

On the (normally) core electability question of trust, Trump has lied more than 20,000 times (as of July... a count that apparently needs updating) since his inauguration, effectively forfeiting-by normal,









Former vice-president Joe Biden, pictured at a first ministers meeting in Canada on Dec. 8, 2016, is the Democratic Party's 2020 presidential candidate. The Hill Times file photograph

uncorrupted standards-the all-important trust issue to his opponent. In absolutely no uncorrupted political context would it make sense for such behaviour to not be disqualifying unless the rival candidate were also deeply untrustworthy, which Joe Biden is not.

On the (normally) core electability question of competence, Trump has mismanaged-wilfully, based on Bob Woodward's reporting-a deadly pandemic and compounded that mismanagement with frequent excursions into disinformation and contagion acceleration just in case anyone might mistake his incompetence for "heck of a job Brownie" haplessness rather than misanthropic, tactical cynicism.

On the more specific (normally) core electability question of economic competence, Trump has used his Twitter account to impact stock market outcomes and

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used coercive trade tactics ostensibly to benefit America that have redounded to the advantage of its competitors. He has, again, mismanaged a pandemic whose economic impact cannonballed U.S. second quarter GDP by an unprecedented 9.5 per cent and an equally unprecedented annualized 32.9 per cent. Recent job numbers have been relatively positive but at an apparent cost, especially in the absence of universal health care, of 1,000 lives lost to COVID-19 per day.

On the (normally) core electability question of character, see the previous 400 words. This election is not 2016. It's not the lesser-of-two-evils, no-goodoption choice the polls back then-when polls still seemed connected to realityrepeatedly registered as a voter-repelling dumpster fire. Americans have known Biden for decades, including for eight years as vice president in an administra-



California Senator Kamala Harris, pictured at the 2019 National Forum on Wages and Working People, is Mr. Biden's 2020 running mate. Photograph courtesy of Flickr/Gage Skidmore

tion untainted by scandal and undistracted by a single indictment. He and Kamala Harris present a rational, smart, competent, sane, principled alternative to a hellish status quo.

During the 2012 election campaign that produced a second majority for Biden and Obama, and the first back-to-back majorities since Dwight Eisenhower's re-election in 1956, one of Biden's stump speech applause lines was: "Osama bin Laden is dead and General Motors is alive" to sum up the administration's national security and economic competence. Tragically, the 2020 Trumpian version of that line is: "200,000 people are dead and chaos is thriving."

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

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## **HILL TIMES**

#### **Editorial**

EDITOR Kate Malloy

### Action plan on MMIWG calls for justice must be front and centre for feds this fall

 ${f R}$ oughly 15 months ago, at a ceremony to mark the official handover of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' final report, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau committed to "real, meaningful, Indigenous-led action" on the inquiry's 231 calls for justice.

"The work of the commissioners, the stories they have collected, and the calls for justice they have put forward will not be placed on a shelf to collect dust,"Mr. Trudeau told the hundreds of Indigenous leaders, families, and survivors gathered on June 3, 2019.

But in late May, Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett announced the government's much-awaited action plan to address the commission's calls-its "legal imperatives," as the commissioners described them-would be delayed.

The feds had been working, in co-ordination with the provinces, territories, Indigenous leaders, families, and women's groups, to release its action plan on the MMIWG final report's one-year anniversary.

Though she noted work continued via Zoom meetings and calls, Ms. Bennett said the COVID-19 pandemic had set back the government's timeline and that more time and consultation was needed to finalize its plan.

A few weeks later, on June 19, Ms. Bennett appeared before the House Indigenous Affairs Committee, where she was pressed by Conservative, NDP, and Bloc Québécois MPs to commit to a new, firm timeline for the action plan's release. The minister declined to give one, saying only that she hoped "to see it tabled as early as possible."

We will have an action plan when our partners believe it is appropriate to release with a consensus, and we are working with our partners to make that [happen] as soon as possible," she told the committee. This is not a federal report that I can write and just table."

During the meeting, Ms. Bennett chal-lenged criticisms of government "inaction," saying it got to work "immediately" after the report's release, and began getting needed funding to groups it's working with "right after" the 2019 election-a roughly five-week campaign during which much government work was put on auto-pilot.

Certainly, the work of collaborating across multiple jurisdictions, groups, and individuals-who all bring unique perspectives and priorities to the table-is an immense challenge, made more so by the unprecedented circumstances of our times.

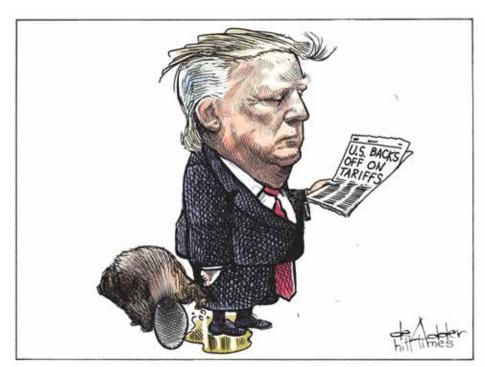
But Indigenous women, girls, genderdiverse people, and their families can't keep waiting.

COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic just under three months before the action's plans originally intended release. The government has now had an extra three months to finalize it.

Parliament will return to hear a new speech from the throne setting out the government's plans and priorities for the coming session on Sept. 23. No doubt, the speech, like those that have preceded it from Mr. Trudeau, will include mention of the government's oft-repeated commit-

ment to Indigenous reconciliation. But soon after, the government must ensure it moves beyond lip service; it must table its plan to act on the MMIWG's calls, and make the most of the coming parliamentary session to see it through.

The dust is already starting to gather. The Hill Times



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#### Letters to the Editor

### Removal of statues akin to medieval book burning, says reader

A statue of Sir John A. Macdonald is pictured

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Today's moral pur-ists attack early leaders, such as John A. Macdonald, Canada's founding prime minister, and Matthew Begbie, B.C.'s first chief justice.If we are going to remove statues of anyone in history who offends current sensibilities, to be consistent we in Montreal after being toppled by protestors must also remove all on Aug. 29. Screenshot courtesy of CBC News symbols recognizing all early political

leaders, all Second World War veterans, the Christian church, and probably everyone else

Virtually all founding leaders of Western democracies were white males. They restricted voting and property rights to white, male, property owners. "Clearly" they were racist, classist, and anti-woman. Expunge them all!

All Allied forces during the Second World War were allies of the Stalinist Russians. Stalin was a repressive and murderous leader. "Clearly," our troops, being allied with Stalin, were complicit in his atrocities. Expunge them all!

The Christian church has had a long history of repression. For centuries, parts, maybe most, of the church demeaned Jews: oversaw the breathtakingly vile inquisitions, torture, and public burning of "heretics" and witches; ran residential schools; worked against voting and equal rights for women, and more. Expunge them all!

This looks like the 21st century version of medieval book burnings.

For clarity, I am not proposing any of that. But that is where today's moral purists must inevitably lead us if there is any principle behind their demeaning of all early leaders.

Čertainly those early leaders were not perfect, but they were visionary and inspirational.

So let's discuss their flaws, but don't try and pretend that we don't owe a lot to their leadership. Ian MacLeod

Richmond, B.C.

## Correcting the record on military justice oversight

**R**e: "Parliament failing to oversee Canada's military," (*The Hill Times*, Aug. 31, p. 5). We have reviewed the article by Messrs. Michel Drapeau and Joshua Juneau and note the following key factual errors in its contents that require correction.

The article stated that none of the provisions of Bill C-77 have come into force. This is incorrect, as a number of provisions came into force upon Royal Assent, including those concerning sentencing principles related to gender identity and expression, Indigenous offenders considerations, and criminal records.

The article suggested that many important sections of the Strengthening Military Justice in the Defence of Canada Act, formerly Bill C-15, have not come into force. This is also incorrect, as the vast majority of the remaining provisions of the act-130 out of 134-have been in force since Sept 1, 2018.

The article states that an independent review of the National Defence Act must be conducted every five years. This is incorrect as subsection 273.601(2) of the NDA, which came into force on June

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1, 2014, stipulates that the independent review must be conducted, and the report tabled in Parliament, within seven years after the day on which this section comes into force. Accordingly, the required timeframe for having the report of the third independent review tabled in Parliament is June 2021

While I will not comment on the various opinions shared in this article with regard to the summary trial process and parliamentary oversight of the military justice system, I am bringing these errors to your attention so that the record may be corrected.

Additionally, and in the interest of providing your readership accurate information regarding the military justice system, I would point out that in its recent decision in the case of R. v. Stillman in 2019, the Supreme Court of Canada indicated that the military justice system is "a full partner in administering justice alongside the civilian justice system.'

Col. J.D. Wry Deputy Judge Advocate General-**Military Justice Department of National Defence** 

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## Liberals still struggling to outrun WE blame game

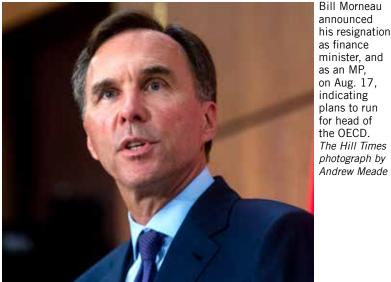
Since the Kielburgers announced their decision to shutter WE Charity's Canadian operations, a game of blame and brand protection has broken out.



**Tim Powers** Plain Speak

OTTAWA—It has been a week since the WE Charity announced it was going to close its Canadian operations and lay off more than 100 employees. Proclaiming that they were naive and misunderstood the vicious nature of Canadian politics, Mark and Craig Kielburger called time on WE.

that arrangement was scrapped when conflict of interest allegations were raised in relation to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and now-former finance minister Bill Morneau. Trudeau and Morneau are now subject to investigation by the federal ethics commissioner.



While I don't think there is any dispute that the WE Charity did over time do good work, and seeing people lose their jobs should bring no joy to anyone, it is hard to believe the organization collapsed solely on the force of its recent controversy.

Of course, the organization was reportedly in line to receive up to \$43.5-million to run the \$900-million national student volunteer program for the Canadian government. Eventually,

plans to run for head of the OECD The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade Since the Kielburgers an

nounced their decision last week, a game of blame and brand protection has broken out, with WE Charity presenting themselves as hapless victims and the federal government looking to disown itself from this entire mess. Each group wants to move quickly past sustaining long-term reputational damage that could harm their respective future prospects.

Early, when the news broke last week, some WE fans and Liberal supporters felt blame should be reserved for the opposition parties and media for pursuing the story of WE's would-be grant from the Trudeau government. This was instructive in getting to the heart of how this turned into such a big mess in the first place.

There were clearly groups, both in the WE organization and the government, who at some level believed the power of the WE brand was such that it existed on another plane beyond questioning or scrutiny; their meth-odology governed by a collective public sense that if you were working with WE, you could be doing nothing more virtuous. Apparently not.

The Kielburger brothers did an exclusive interview with CTV's Lisa LaFlamme on the day they broke the news of their demise.

The most unbelievable thing about that encounter was to hear the brothers describe themselves as naive when it came to politics. That was vomit inducing. No charity in the country, if not the world, was better at attracting major political figures and celebrities to its events. Casting themselves as effectively good-deed-doing victims just was not be lievable. But clearly, they wanted to move scrutiny away from them and the apparent long-standing governance challenges their organization had. Naivety as an excuse is also hard to stomach when they gave an exclusive interview to one of Canada's top news persons for her highly rated program. These poor rank amateurs. Break out the tissues.

As the Kielburgers were screaming"we were just victims,"the prime minister, when first asked about WE Charity's decision to shutter its Canadian operations, spoke for more than a minute in response without mentioning the group by name. He said, in what appeared to be an effort to point fingers, that he Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks to reporters in the West Block on Aug. 18. The prorogation of Parliament was an effort to bury the WE Charity story, but the Liberals still are having trouble out running the blame, writes Tim Powers. The Hill Times file photograph by Andrew Meade

now-it was them, not us, who got played.

The Kielburgers want to make sure Canada and the world knows them for all the good work they did. The Liberal government wants Canadians to move past this story without major brand



Mark and Craig Kielburger did an interview with CTV's Lisa LaFlamme the day they broke news WE Charity would be ending its Canadian operations. Screenshot courtesy of CTV News

thought the "partner" would be able to deliver the Canada Student Service Grant program.

Well, if he or any of officials had used that advanced search tool Google to start their due diligence, they might have discovered their "partner" had some challenges. Do not get bothered by such inconveniences, seems to be the government's approach burn to them. The prorogation of Parliament was an effort to bury the story, but the Liberals still are having trouble outrunning the blame.

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

Opinion

#### Comment

## Attacking prominent women does no one any good

The adverse attention on prominent women like Payette will do nothing to encourage future female leaders to venture into public life. If so, we will all be the poorer for it.



Andrew Caddell
With All Due Respect

KAMOURASKA, QUE.— Among the "bon mots" offered by Maryon Pearson, none stands out more than her comment, "Behind every successful man stands an astonished woman." Maryon Moody's brilliance attracted Professor "Mike" Pearson to her in his University of Toronto history class.

Her early married life was not easy, living in Ottawa while her diplomat husband spent months abroad. But she hated being the wife of a politician, which prevented her from a career of her own.

Maryon Pearson's story is not unusual: I am sure everyone knows of brilliant women in their family whose ambitions were blunted by sexism. But with time and the efforts of the feminist movement, barriers in Canada were broken and women rose to leadership in society. We now have a gender-balanced cabinet, many female CEOs, deputy ministers, and heads of agencies.

However, prominent women continue to be lightning rods for criticism, notably MP Jody Wilson-Raybould, RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki, and Governor General Julie Payette. While the former justice

minister won a moral victory in her election last year, her decisions during the SNC affair have admirers and critics in equal numbers. The same might be said about the RCMP commissioner: when asked about systemic racism in the RCMP, she compared it to a physical fitness test. It was a stumble, but her 32-year career as a Mountie should count for something.

Meanwhile, Payette is the latest in a list of governors general who have been criticized, all of whom were female: Jeanne Sauvé, Adrienne Clarkson, and Michaëlle Jean.

In 2016, my wife and I were dining with an accomplished friend and I suggested she should be governor general."Never—you can't express an opinion! You know who should do it? Julie Payette. She is bored and has nothing to do." It was not a ringing endorsement.

By all accounts, while his office was searching for an Indigenous person, the prime minister impetuously decided he wanted former astronaut Payette. If she was not the right person for the job, the PMO should have pushed back then.

It was not unlike the decision to appoint Jean, who was vaulted from being a mid-level host on Radio-Canada and the CBC to the vice-regal post. In time, she adapted to it, but she was a target, possibly because she was also a woman of colour.

Clarkson had all the bona fides: a brilliant communicator, with diplomatic experience in Paris as Ontario's agent-general. As a journalist she had a reputation of being aloof: not surprisingly, as GG she didn't suffer fools gladly.

Sauvé always had an air of superiority as a politician and as House Speaker, so it was no shock she carried that into Rideau Hall, briefly closing its grounds.

All three proved to be capable, if determined; had they been men, they might have been praised as "hard-nosed." It seems there is a double standard.

Let's compare them with former GGs David Johnston, Romeo LeBlanc, and Ray Hnatyshyn. Johnston was superb, but if there



Governor General Julie Payette, pictured at Rideau Hall on Feb. 1. Payette is the latest in a list of governors general who have been criticized, all of whom were female, writes Andrew Caddell. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia* 

was an apprenticeship for the job, he did it: president of two major universities and familiarity with government as chair of several task forces. LeBlanc and Hnatyshyn knew government and neither offended anyone, but are not memorable.

It was not that long ago the majority of premiers in this country were women. That's not the case anymore. Women, it seems, get one chance at the top in public life.

According to the *Peter Principle*, a best-selling management book of the 1960s, problems occur when one rises to the "level of their incompetence." In Payette's case, her personality, not her intelligence, have been her undoing. But would a man be judged on that basis?

Accomplished women are role models for their gender and deserve to rise to the top. But there are many capable women in this country. When one fails, it gives fuel to the misogynists and discourages women who aspire to leadership positions.

A generation or three ago, many of the "best and brightest" men chose business over public service, as the return was more lucrative and didn't put them in a fishbowl. Today, many accomplished women are making the same choice. The adverse attention on prominent women like Payette will do nothing to encourage future female leaders to venture into public life. If so, we will all be the poorer for it.

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

## CAF still has far to go to address racism in its ranks

Allowing Erik Myggland to continue serving, despite knowledge of his abhorrent beliefs, only illustrates how far the Canadian Armed Forces still have to go to address racism.



Scott Taylor Inside Defence

OTTAWA—On July 2, there was a bizarre incident at

Rideau Hall when an armed intruder drove a pickup truck onto the premises and subsequently stalked the grounds on foot. Police were able to defuse the situation peacefully. After this arrest, it was discovered that the alleged perpetrator—Corey Hurren, 46—was in fact a member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Hurren has since been charged with multiple crimes, not the least of which stems from him threatening the life of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Neither the Trudeau family nor Governor General Julie Payette were at Rideau Hall at the time of Hurren's intrusion. The disgruntled service member had detailed his intentions to his Ranger detachment commander prior to driving to Ottawa from his home in Bowsman, Man.

While this incident is now awaiting trial, it did serve to launch a CBC investigation into Hurren's military unit, the 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Group. It did not take reporter Murray Brewster long to discover a rather disturbing story involving another member of this same Ranger group.

It turns out that Erik Myggland—a serving member of the reserves—had openly supported two far-right groups on social media, and had called Trudeau a "treasonous bastard" on his Facebook account.

What was most disturbing about Brewster's findings was that the military counter-intelligence unit had already flagged the fact that Myggland promoted the far right Three-Percenter ideology and was a member of the notorious Sons of Odin. Three-Percenters promote themselves as embodying the values of the supposed three per cent of colonists who took up arms against Britain during the American Revolution, while Son's of Odin began in Finland as an anti-immigrant movement.

However, after interviewing Myggland, the counter-intelligence gumshoes (a.k.a. detectives) allowed him to continue serving in uniform.

Since this story broke, the Canadian Army has launched a summary investigation into why Myggland was not disciplined or discharged earlier.

Last week, Army Commander Lieutenant-General Wayne Eyre admitted to the CBC that Myggland could not be disciplined because his transgressions had taken place during his own time, not while he was on duty.

"A reservist is only subject to the code of service discipline while undertaking duty," explained Eyre, adding, "But to be very clear on this, we expect our individuals, whether they be full timers or part timers to embrace the values of our organization." Eyre also said he expects Myggland will be formally discharged from the ranks within a matter of weeks.

While that is a step in the right direction, one has to wonder whether any of this would have come to light had Hurren not driven his pickup truck through the gates of Rideau Hall and set the media investigation in motion.

I do not believe that the CAF is rife with white supremacists and far-right sympathizers, but as evidenced by the Myggland case, such individuals do wear the uniform. For counter-intelligence to spot such activity and allow the member to keep serving totally sends the wrong message.

As much as we Canadians may like to think that we are removed from the Black Lives Matter movement for social justice south of our border, the truth is that Canada—and in particular our Armed Forces—have a tarnished history of institutional racism.

During the First World War the enlistment of Black recruits was vehemently opposed by Canada's top soldier. In April 1916, at the height of the Great War recruiting crisis, General W.G. Gwatkin, then chief of the general staff, issued a memo which stated: "The civilized negro is vain and imitative; in Canada he is not impelled to enlist by a high sense of duty; in the trenches he is not likely to make a good fighter."

Just over a century later, such a racist statement by a senior general is unthinkable.

While this contrast in attitudes shows how far the CAF has come in terms of improving social justice, things like allowing Myggland to continue serving despite knowledge of his abhorrent beliefs, only illustrates how far we still have to go.

Scott Taylor is the editor and publisher of Esprit de Corps magazine. The Hill Times **Policy Briefing** 

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# UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES RESEARCH

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## Universities & Colleges Research Policy Briefing

**Black student** groups lead the charge as StatsCan data gives deep dive on racism in education

**Recent Statistics** Canada findings indicate socioeconomic factors alone can't account for the disparities in educational outcomes between Black Canadians and the rest of the population.

#### **BY AIDAN CHAMANDY**

As the international focus on systemic racism continues, disaggregated data from Statistics Canada gives a new glimpse into how anti-Black racism affects Black students in Canada, and the findings should compel universities and other major institutions to "look back to the basis of the structures we've operated in for years" to reform racist practices, says York University education professor Carl James.

Despite graduating from high school at a rate equivalent to children in the rest of the population, Black youth in Canada generally lag behind other students in terms of post-secondary success, according to a Statistics Canada survey released in February, titled"Education and labour market integration of Black youth in Canada."The survev, which compares data from the 2006 and 2016 censuses, presents etatictics immigration status, and more.

The gap between post-secondary graduation rates for Black youth and other youth remained after accounting for differences in socio-economic and family characteristics,"the study reads. "The persistent gaps between the Black population and the rest of the population suggest that other factors not measured by the data used, including discrimination, could have an effect."

For Prof. James, the data shows that universities need to reflect not only on how to make university more accessible for potential Black students, but also how to make it a better place once Black students are there.

"We're expecting to bring them

in to a system that was already

made, and was made not neces-

sarily to accommodate them and

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Around 90 per cent of Cana-

dian children graduate from high school. Girls do slightly better

than boys. There are "no signifi-

cant differences in high school

completion rates between Black

youth and the rest of the popula-

cess on par with the rest of the

population, Black children aged

13 to 17 in 2006"were less likely

than their counterparts in the rest

of the population to have a post-

secondary certificate, diploma or

degree" a decade later, the study

Despite secondary school suc-

for years," he said.

tion," the study reads.

their cultural differences. We have

shows. Statistics Canada defines a "certificate, diploma or degree" as "a registered apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma; a college, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma; or a university certificate, diploma or degree."

Young Black women were more likely than young Black men to have a post-secondary certificate of some kind. Young Black women, however, were still less likely than women in the remaining population to have a post-secondary certificate. Thirty-four per cent of Black girls aged 13 to 17 in 2006 had a university degree by 2016, compared to 41 per cent of girls in the remaining population of the same age during the same period—a seven percentage point gap.

When Statistics Canada adjusted the data to account for socio-economic differences, such as income and parental education levels, not much changed.

Fifty-one per cent of young Black males aged nine to 17 in 2006 had a post-secondary diploma or degree by 2016, compared to 62 per cent of males aged nine to 17 in the rest of the population.

'Isolating the effect of these factors resulted in an almost identical gap of 10 percentage points,' the study reads.

Young Black women also face the same problem, the data shows

ences account for lower graduation rates.

The StatsCan report notes that discrimination "could explain some of the results of the study." Black Canadians were far more likely than non-Black Canadians to report experiencing discrimination, 28 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively. Previous studies where researchers used fake resumes showed that "racialized candidates with equivalent qualifications and experience were much less likely to be called for

an interview," reads the report. Despite the statistics, another study from the agency published the same month suggests Black youth in Canada are more likely that non-Black Canadian youth to want a university education while also being more likely to say a degree is out of reach. Nearly 95 per cent of Black Canadian youth report wanting a university degree, compared to 82 per cent of youth in the rest of the population. However, just under 60 per cent of Black Canadian youth think they will get a degree, versus nearly 80 per cent of youth in the remaining population. Numerous studies conducted

in Toronto in the past two decades suggest this lack of optimism among Black Canadian youth is at least partially caused by "certain school professionals' and teachers' attitudes and behaviours toward them," reads the StatsCan report.

> The University of Toronto's Naylor Building, home to the school's department of medicine, is pictured in July 2018. The university's medical school is now one of three in Canada—out of 17 across the country-to have an admissions stream dedicated to Black students. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons/Ken Eckert

announced it would be ending streaming in high schools. "It is clear there is systemic

discrimination built within the education system, whether it be streaming of racialized students, suspensions overwhelmingly targeting Black and Indigenous kids, or the lack of merit-based diversity within our education workforce," Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce told CBC Toronto on July 6.

Now, some universities and student groups are working to get more Black youth into higher education and make the school experience more attuned to the lived experiences of Black Canadians

One is the new student group, the National Black Graduate Network, which launched on Sept. 4. Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, one of the founders of the organization, told University Affairs magazine the group is in part intended to remedy the feeling of being "isolated" that many Black students experience at higher education institutions. She also said she hopes it serves as a way to link Black student groups across the country and allow Black scholars to easily share their work. Representatives from the NBGN were not available to speak to The Hill Times for this piece.

Three of Canada's 17 medical schools now have admissions streams dedicated to Black students.

The University of Toronto was the first medical school to launch a Black Student Application Program in 2017, and is now joined by the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta. Edmonton, where the University of Alberta is located, and Calgary have the fourth- and fifth-largest Black populations in Canada, after Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa-Gatineau, according to Statistics Canada.

Academic admission criteria are the same as before, but Black students will now be able to submit a 250-word essay on why they chose to apply through the stream and have their entire admission package vetted by Black reviewers. The University of Toronto's webpage says "members of the Black community, as well as Black physicians, faculty members, and students will take part" in the admissions process. There is no quota for admissions, the page says.

In response to calls to action from the Black Law Students Association, the University of Calgary's law school joined its medical school in creating an admission stream dedicated to prospective Black students, with a process that is very similar to the one instituted at the University of Toronto's medical school.

he BLSA also working with the Calgary law community to institute a mentorship program, said Keshia Holloman-Dawson, president of the Calgary BLSA in a Sept. 4 interview with The Hill Times. She said the program will focus more on matching students with lawyers based on their identities, rather than a specific area of legal practice.

achamandv@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

"The adjusted probability of young Black women aged 13 to 17 in 2006 having a university degree was 0.33, compared with 0.41 for other young women," and the almost eight percentage point gap remained when the socioeconomic variables were isolated, the study found.

Taken together, "these results ggest that even if Black youth in this cohort had socio-economic and family characteristics similar to those of other youth, their post-secondary graduation rates would have been lower on average. This suggests that other factors are associated with the relatively less favourable outcomes of Black youth," the study reads, highlighting that these findings are inconsistent with past American studies that have suggested socio-economic differ-

For example, three studies conducted between 2013 and 2017 showed that "for a given group of students with similar academic abilities, the expectations of teachers are generally lower in the case of youth from ethnic minorities-especially Black students."

"As a result, Black youth may more likely to enro plied' or 'essentials' programs in high school, even if it does not suit the students' actual academic skills. This may limit access to university, may discourage Black youth who have the potential to pursue university studies from doing so, and may cause Black youth to lower their educational expectations," the study reads.

In early July, after years of pressure, the Ontario government



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## Policy Briefing Universities & Colleges Research

## Doubling down on research during the COVID-19 pandemic

**Research leads** to discoveries: discoveries lead to new products and services; and new products create jobs and protect the health of Canadians.



Liberal MP Will Amos Opinion

A s Canada grapples with the impacts of COVID-19, we have witnessed the essential role our research community plays in our society. Indeed, scientists are leading our country's efforts to address the pandemic. It is therefore critical that we sustain Canada's research excellence, talent, and knowledge so that our research community is in a strong position to support both our COVID-19 response and a strong economic recovery.

Our government fundamentally believes in the importance of science and evidence-based decision-making. In fact, we have a longstanding foundational role in supporting and sustaining research at universities and health research institutes across the country. These institutions drive many of the discoveries and innovations that are critically important to our health, well-being, and prosperity.

Universities and health research institutes are making a difference in their communities, and producing far-reaching results that benefit all Canadians. At the University of Prince Edward Island. Ali Ahmadi and his team are working to design and develop a manufacturing strategy for reusable personal protective equipment.

At Simon Fraser University, Kelley Lee and her research team are examining the social and economic impacts of crossborder COVID-19 countermeasures adopted around the world, such as travel restrictions and border closures. Using the data they are collecting, they aim to develop and pilot a platform to help policy-makers decide when to adopt or lift travel restrictions. The platform would also be an important tool for training and emergency planning.

When COVID-19 forced the suspension of much of the research community's work, our government stepped in with \$291.6-million in income supports for research trainees, students and postdoctoral fellows, and research staff at Canadian universities through federal awards and research grants. This funding provided a four-month extension for eligible federal graduate scholarship and postdoctoral fellowship awards, as well as additional funding to holders of federal research grants to cover the wage

costs of research trainees and staff paid out of these awards.

Additionally, in May, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the \$450-million Canada Research Continuity Emergency Fund, which is administered through the federal granting agencies. This program will help sustain Canada's academic research enterprise through the crisis caused by COVID-19. This is ensuring that highly qualified research personnel at universities and health research institutions are retained throughout this crisis. It is also ensuring that researchers can maintain essential research-related commitments during the pandemic and be in a position to safely ramp back up to full activity as public health measures are eased.

The three federal granting agencies-the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)have also introduced additional measures to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on researchers.

NSERC and the CIHR have extended some of their flag-

ship grants. All three agencies have extended grant application deadlines and financial report-ing deadlines, as well as covering unexpected costs that researchers are incurring due to travel cancellations and other exceptional expenses. Additionally, the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) is continuing to provide salary support for research personnel involved in the operation and maintenance of CFI-funded infrastructure, even while labs are shuttered due to COVID-19.

These measures will help sustain our academic research enterprise during this crisis, so that our world-leading universities and health research institutions are ready to contribute to Canada's post-COVID economic recovery. We are listening to the scientific community and making these significant investments because we know that great science is at the heart of sound decision-making and innovation. Research leads to discoveries; discoveries lead to new products and services; and new products create jobs and protect the health of Canadians.

As we start down the road of recovery and renewal, we remain committed to supporting science and academic research.

Liberal MP Will Amos represents Pontiac, Que., and is the parliamentary secretary to the minister of innovation, science, and industry. The Hill Times

better ways of educating students that allow us to more tightly weave together education and research.

Moving our teaching online has forced us to rethink what our students need to know and how to present this to them most effectively and efficiently.

Our instructors have accelerated the conversion of formal lectures to more engaging project-based and challenge-based learning, where students learn to solve problems in teams under careful expert guidance and mentoring. This is how engineering research is meant to be done.

Students are learning about subjects in virtual classrooms but also gaining valuable research skills. Assignments are being drawn from real-world examples that encourage them to inquire, research background material, and generate solutions.

Our future graduates are learning to be agile in the face of increasing complexity.

Across the country, and the world, institutions like ours are stepping up with a shared purpose. This concentrated effort will make e, playin role in overcoming the pandemic.

Necessity is indeed the parent of invention. While the pandemic entered uninvited, we accepted the challenge to up our game and do our part in bringing it to an end. Canada succeeds by support-

ing its universities. Ishwar K. Puri is the dean of engineering at McMaster Univer-

sity and a professor of mechanical engineering.

The Hill Times

## How the pandemic has driven us to up our game in research and teaching

Across the country, and the world, institutions are stepping up with a shared purpose. This concentrated effort will make a difference, playing a significant role in overcoming the pandemic.



Ishwar K. Puri **Opinion** 

Tragedy, suffering, and uncer-tainty have trailed in the wake of COVID-19, bringing social and economic turmoil, and hurting people everywhere.

The pandemic is a grand chal-

lenge that threatens our safety and our very existence.

This challenge is also a unique opportunity for universities to lead and innovate in ways that will benefit humankind well beyond the pandemic. Canada's universities have the talent and ideas to ensure that the disruption visited upon us will leave solutions that will benefit us long after the pandemic is overcome.

We need sustainable, ethical, and responsible solutions for prevention, treatment, and protection to deal with the virus itself. To overcome its far-reaching impacts, we must restructure the way that goods, services, and care are provided, at home and internationally.

Just as cholera gave rise to modern sanitation and the Spanish flu spawned public health, the Dattle to overcome COVII inevitably yield new and beneficial knowledge.

That is where we are focusing our resources on research and education alike.

In the faculty of engineering at McMaster University, where I serve as dean, we have moved quickly, seizing our share of responsibility to help resolve this crisis. Our researchers have risen to the expectation that we must provide solutions swiftly. They have taken

the enormous problems that CO-VID has created and broken them into manageable pieces.

Much of this work has been direct and immediately relevant, as it is for Ravi Selvganapathy, Canada Research Chair in Biomicrofluidics, who is leading our Centre of Excellence in Protective Equipment and Materials. Or Tohid Didar and Leyla Soleymani, entrepreneurial faculty members adapting the bacteria-repellent wrap they invented to stop the transfer of CO-VID-19 to commonly used surfaces.

Civil engineers Zoe Li and Wael El-Dakhakhni are developing a reliable model for municipal facility operations and re-opening decisions to be made in a smarter, faster, and more strategic manner. Carlos Filipe, a leading chemical engineer. is embedded in a team working with vaccine manufacturers to store and transport vaccines saler without refrigeration. My research group has developed a home testing kit to rapidly detect SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in human blood.

All these names, including mine, are of immigrants.

Canada succeeds when its universities celebrate talent, no matter where it originates.

Across our university, Mc-Master's leading researchers are working with one another and collaborating with national and

global partners across time zones through the Global Nexus for Pandemics and Biological Threats.

These are but a few examples. In my three-decade career in academia, I have never seen university researchers pivot as rapidly to solve a grand challenge problem. That we were prepared to step up so quickly points to the significance of continuing investment in research.

Canada succeeds when it strengthens its research granting councils.

Tackling COVID-19 head on has given our researchers and students hope and made us realize that we have the agency and the expertise to make a difference.

In my faculty, deploying our researchers as effectively as possible has also hastened the ongoing process of making engineering education more practical and relevant. Our engineering researchers find answers, not by working on their own, but in partnership with medical and scientific researchers, communicators, policymakers, government agencies, and industry.

This is a good example for our students to follow.

The threat of infection has forced us to set aside our traditional methods of teaching and identify opportunities to create newer and



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## Les universités canadiennes sont des innovatrices des accélératrices des partenaires

dans la reprise du Canada à la suite de la pandémie de COVID-19.

Les universités accélèrent la reprise économique et sociale du Canada en offrant une éducation de grande qualité aux étudiants et de la formation aux travailleurs qui ont été écartés du marché du travail en raison de la pandémie. Elles stimulent en outre la recherche et l'innovation pour l'avenir du Canada. **Renseignements : univcan.ca/reprise** 

## Canada's universities are innovators accelerators partners

in Canada's COVID-19 recovery.

Universities are accelerating Canada's social and economic recovery by ensuring high-quality education for students, providing skills training for workers displaced by the pandemic, and driving research and innovation for Canada's future. Learn more at univcan.ca/recovery

## Universities & Colleges Research Policy Briefing

## University education and Black youth



Numerous studies have shown that during high school. Black students are discouraged by teachers and guidance counsellors from enrolling in academic programs that would prepare them for university, writes York University's Carl James. Photograph courtesy of Unsplash

Despite the growing racial diversity of today's student population and universities' claims of being inclusive, the whiteness and the colonial structure of the system remains.



Carl E. James

In Statistics Canada's recent report, Changes in the socioeconomic situation of Canada's Black population, 2001 to 2016, René Houle writes that "one of the main challenges" faced by members of Canadian Black communities is that Black youth—especially young men—"are less likely to have attended a higher educational institution and to have earned a post-secondary diploma." This finding is quite telling

since in an earlier release, Canada's Black population: Education labour and resilience, it was found that in 2016, 94 per cent of Black youth, compared to 82 per cent of the rest of the population, all aged 15 to 25 years, indicated they "would like to obtain a university degree." And while 78 per cent of all these young people thought "they will obtain a university degree," only 61 per cent of Black youth thought they would. The difference in these percentages should be concerning.

Hence, we might ask: is it that Black youth overestimated their academic abilities and over time have come to realize that the ways in which they applied themselves to their schooling and education was not enough for them to obtain a university degree? Is it that they id not have suppo from parents, peers, and community members that caused them to give up on pursuing a university education? Is it that the education system failed to be responsive to the schooling and educational needs, interests, expectations, and aspirations of Black students, thereby contributing to their failure to meet the academic

requirements for university? In responding to these questions, we must take into account the fact that compared to their counterparts, more Black youth expressed an interest in obtaining a university education. This is consistent with the many studies that show Black youth and their parents strongly believe in education, and more so, post-secondary education, as the means by which they will be able to gain the opportunities needed to become socially and economically successful in the society.

Furthermore, in the same Statistics Canada study, it was noted that while "44 per cent of Black individuals said they were 'always' able to bounce back quickly after hard times," only 33 per cent of their peers in the rest of the population felt the same. This was considered to be evidence that the Black population has "strong levels of resilience." How, then, might we explain that, despite their "university degree" aspirations and their "resilience," Black youth continue to be least likely to obtain university degrees?

Numerous studies have shown that during high school, Black students are discouraged by teachers and guidance counsellors from enrolling in academic programs that would prepare them for university.

Consider the experience of Hyacinth Gaynair, who wrote in *The Huffington Post* in 2017 that after being "an exceptional student" in elementary school and earning "an 85 per cent average after three difficult years" in high school, the guidance counsellor directed her into "trade school" since that "would be suitable for [her] perceived skills." Having rejected this suggestion, at the time of her writing she was a doctoral candidate at an American university. And in a study a colleague and I recently completed, we found that Black students in Toronto were the racial group least likely to attend university, and of those who attended, only about 50 per cent of them graduated.

Hence, despite the growing racial diversity of today's student population and universities' claims of being inclusive, the whiteness and the colonial structure of the system remains. As such, systemic racism, and anti-Black racism in particular, are likely to continue to affect Black students' pursuit of a university education.

This situation has far reaching implications for the Black population insofar as in the coming years 70 per cent of jobs are going to require individuals to have post-secondary education. Without university education, there will be widening disparities in the employment and earnings of Black people, which in turn will have further impact on the level of educational attainment of their children.

Evidence points to the fact that it is not simply lack of individual motivation and efforts that account for Black youth not attaining a post-secondary education. Rather, a system of inequity evident in teachers' low expectations, institutional streaming practices, and societal, social, and economic conditions account for their level of educational attainment. This is sustained by systemic racism, and anti-Black racism in particular, which the protests over the past three months—including the recent two-day Scholar Strike by academics—are demanding be addressed.

So, if indeed, the situation of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized people is to be addressed, then governments and political, business, civil, and educational leaders must do more than voice agreement that systemic racism, anti-Black racism, and anti-Indigenous racism exist in the society. This acknowledgement must be accompanied by actions designed to remove the institutional, societal and systemic conditions, and related legislations, oolicies, programs, and practice that operate as impediments to the post-secondary educational success of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized students.

Carl E. James holds the Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community and Diaspora in the faculty of education at York University and holds cross-appointments in the graduate programs in sociology, social and political thought, and social work. The Hill Times

## Policy Briefing Universities & Colleges Research



Elders and youth watch the commissioners of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls during its closing ceremonies and report handover on June 3, 2019. All change-makers must continue to ask hard questions of ourselves, and others, about what ethically and respectfully must be done to create a new dynamic that combines the strengths of Indigenous and Western educational systems, writes Shelly Johnson. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

## Indigenous visions for Canadian postsecondary institutions: past, present, and future

The relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadian post-secondary institutions remains wary, despite Canada's apologies and financial settlements for its Indian Residential School or Sixties Scoop projects.



Shelly JohnsonOpinion

For thousands of years, sovereign and thriving Indigenous nations sustained Indigenous education, health, and governance systems. The settler colonial Canadian government, along with Christian churches, forcibly replaced Indigenous education systems with its Indian Residential School project. Widespread substandard instruction, violence, forced starvation, nutritional experimentation, ethnic cleansing, trauma, and fear followed.

These perverted Canadian education systems laid the foundation for many Indigenous people's historical experiences with Western education; the genocidal repercussions from which we are healing today.

Informed by this brutal history, Indigenous people employed by Canadian post-secondary institutions make decisions about how much of ourselves to bring to the academy, and how much to leave at its institutional gates. We enter Canada's post-secondary educational spaces in tiny groups or singularly, with the knowledge that Canada used education as a weapon against generations of our families through its Indian Act and 120-year old Indian Residential School project.

The contemporary relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadian postsecondary institutions remains wary, despite Canada's apologies and financial settlements for its Indian Residential School or Sixties Scoop projects in 2008 and 2019, respectively. Quite rightly, there is much more to heal in our relationship due to ongoing land theft, selective implementation of treaties, and instances where post-secondary institutions are built on unceded territories.

The land inequities mean that benefits accrue to the institutions, rather than the rights-based or traditional Indigenous nations upon whose lands the institutions are built. For example, the majority of British Columbia's postsecondary institutions are located on unceded territories. Yet, very few post-secondary institutions have developed or implemented an Indigenous Employment Strategy, Indigenous student tuition waiver or bursary, made spaces for Indigenous Elders as adjunct professors, Indigenous-specific recruitment or exit interview processes. All of these initiatives would support Indigenous poverty-reduction, student success, and Indigenous faculty and staff retention issues.

#### Present

Indigenous peoples navigate and negotiate a complex range of contemporary and historical physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual issues in ways that our non-Indigenous colleagues do not. Indigenous peoples are regularly reminded that our right to practice our spiritual ceremonies on campus is subject to policy approval by foreign educational institutions.

Indigenous faculty are disproportionately expected to participate in university service work in ways not expected of non-Indigenous faculty, and it takes time away from research initiatives. The Indigenous-led First Nations University of Canada must operate without its own Senate, rather it must adhere to the rules of University of Regina Senate. There is much work to do, and there are too few Indigenous academics to do it. Future work must also be actively supported by all non-Indigenous academics, and administrators across the country.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers' recent report, The Slow March Toward Equity, examines evidence from the 2016 long-form Canadian census and the University and College Academic Staff System. According to these reports, Indigenous academics account for only 1.4 per cent of all university professors, compared to one per cent in 2006. In colleges, the rate of Indigenous academics is just three per cent. This is much lower than the 3.8 per cent Indigenous representation in the Canadian labour force. In addition, the data shows that Indigenous faculty are paid less than their non-Indigenous colleagues, and are more often precariously employed, particularly if they are women. This must change and the growth must be sustained in new ways.

Efforts to address inequities in research funding held by Indigenous faculty members include equity targets established in 2006 by the Canada Research Chairs program. Some progress is evident among the 76 Canadian post-secondary institutions that support 1,614 research chairs. However most have failed to reach the established target of one per cent for Indigenous scholars, currently allocated at only 0.59 per cent. Indigenous-led research projects may be the stated goal, yet the reality is much different.

All research professors who work in these spaces have a debt to Indigenous values of responsibility, reciprocity, and respect to make their work relevant to Indigenous communities and peoples, and to be led by Indigenous peoples.

#### Future

In the 2018 article, *Indigenization as inclusion, reconciliation, and decolonization: navigating*  the different visions for indigenizing the Canadian Academy by Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz, the authors pose that indigenization exists on a three-part spectrum. Based on responses to an anonymous, online survey of 25 Indigenous faculty and allies, the authors identify that "on one end is Indigenous inclusion, in the middle reconciliation indigenization, and on the other end decolonial indigenization."

The concept of Indigenous inclusion is perhaps the most common policy espoused by Canadian institutions. It simply aims to increase the number of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff in the Canadian academy, and expects Indigenous peoples to adapt to the existing Western academic culture. The type of change envisioned by many Indigenous academics is not possible on this part of the spectrum, and simply maintains the status quo.

Reconciliation indigenization locates indigenization on common ground between Indigenous and Canadian ideals. Finally, decolonial indigenization envisions the "wholesale overhaul of the academy to fundamentally reorient knowledge production based on balancing power relations between Indigenous peoples and Canadians," and the creation of a new and dynamic institution, the authors write.

All change-makers must continue to ask hard questions of ourselves, and others, about what ethically and respectfully must be done to create a new dynamic that combines the strengths of Indigenous and Western educational systems.

Together we must create plans with achievable and aspirational outcomes and completion dates. We must hold each other accountable to remain uncomfortable with disruptive and existing inequities. Our collective visionary work today is desperately needed to create a balanced educational future for those yet to come.

Shelly Johnson is an associate professor at Thompson Rivers University and the Canada Research Chair in Indigenizing Higher Education. The Hill Times

## Universities & Colleges Research Policy Briefing



Students are pictured on campus at the University of Guelph. The next few weeks are likely to be critical to the future of Canada's globally competitive university sector, writes MLI's Ken Coates. Photograph courtesv of Wikimedia Commons/ Oacstudent

## **COVID-19 and the future of Canadian universities**

The path forward for Canada's universities is troubling, complex, and uncertain.



Ken Coates

COVID-19 sparked a global crisis in post-secondary education that has remained seriously under-appreciated.

In the United States, tuitiondependent private colleges are in dire financial straits; several recently closed permanently, and more mergers and bankruptcies seem sure to follow. The decline in international enrolments has caused enormous financial damage in Australia, with widespread layoffs and serious budget crises.

With the wholesale shift to online learning for the fall—and likely for the whole 2020-21 academic year—institutions are left guessing about the number of students who will show up and survive in online learning environments. At the same time, the sharp downturn in the global economy has harmed employment prospects for graduates, calling into question the utility of the years of study and the expenditure of thousands of dollars on

diture of thousands of dollars on what was supposed to be a careerlaunching exercise. Canadian universities have struggled quietly with the transi-

struggled quietly with the transitions and challenges. The University of Alberta,

The University of Alberta, already facing major cutbacks in provincial support, has been the most public in that regard. Most universities are working calmly through endless online meetings while guessing about the likely financial and educational fallout. Incoming students must weigh their options: a difficult transition to an online first-year experience, joining the uncertainties of a damaged workforce, or taking a gap year at a time when travel and casual employment are extremely difficult.

Some Canadian institutions, most notably polytechnics and colleges, have been upfront about their financial challenges. Mohawk College, for one, has been explicit in describing the major changes it must make. Universities prefer, it seems, the drip-drip method of dispensing bad news: episodic staff layoffs, cutbacks in sessional contract teaching, and bits of information about enrollment and declining international student registrations.

The provincial governments are at least standing beside the institutions. Student pushback has, so far, been minimal, restricted largely to frustration with paying full tuition fees for only a limited post-secondary experience, although this will likely escalate when online classes begin and bills come due.

Overseas, the stakes are much higher. In Australia, the government has capitalized on the turmoil to propose sweeping changes in enrolment, with sky-rocketing tuition fees for low-employment fields like humanities, and reduced rates for high-demand areas, including engineering. The U.K. has for discouraged discussion of the possible closure of some institutions. U.S. President Donald Trump is trying to force universities to operate in person. portending a high-risk fall semester that could spark a surge in infections, although most campuses are backtracking from announced re-openings.

Canadians would do well to pay close attention to the challenges facing the universities. The system faces unprecedented threats; the lack of focused discussion masks the severity of the crisis. Thousands of students will likely choose not to attend university this year. Colleges and polytechnics will likely face less disruption, due to their emphasis on practicality and career preparation.

Perhaps more worrisome is how these challenges will emphasize the shortcomings of the existing university system. The emphasis of some faculty on identity politics and nonprofessional programs seem out of step with post-COVID reali-ties. Pragmatism will become an even higher priority for young people and their parents. Students academically on the cusp will likely be most affected. Declines in enrolment will result in major financial challenges for most institutions. And the drop in international student enrolments could well be permanent undermining a vital part of institutional business plans.

Spare some thought, too, for the towns and businesses that depend on universities. Smaller centres will be severely affected. Restaurants, pubs, hotels, and other services face potential closure, and the waves of dislocation will only spread.

Universities are core parts of our society and economy. Even with their shortcomings, they are vital to a country's economic and social development. Canadian universities have relatively small endowments and few resources other than governments—to rely on in times of crisis. Institutional closures and mergers could, by this time next year, be on the table. Alternative pathways into the workforce will become more attractive.

The path forward for Canada's universities is troubling, complex, and uncertain. But in a world where hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost, entire sectors like tourism thrown into disarray, and with a quarter or more of all small businesses at risk of closure, universities cannot expect to come through the pandemic unscathed.

To date, most of the changes have been comparatively minor. The next few weeks, however, are likely to be critical to the future of Canada's globally competitive university sector. If the students show up in large numbers and if they adapt well to the online environment, the damage might be minimal. If, however, enrolment plunges and if student turn away from online learning, this could be a long and cold winter.

Ken Coates is a Munk Senior Fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute.

## 'Like a criminal': Canada–U.S. asylum agreement has a human cost, refugee says

The U.S. 'is not a safe country for refugees,' says a woman who Canada turned away because she entered the U.S. first. Her case helped convince a Federal Court judge the SCTA should end, a ruling the feds are appealing.

Continued from page 1

"I had no rights," said the woman who would later share her "traumatic experience" in an affidavit before the Federal Court as part of the mountain of evidence that led Justice Ann Marie Mc-Donald to strike down the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) in a landmark July 22 ruling.

The Hill Times agreed not to identify the woman, who the courts also granted protection as an anonymous affiant, because she fears for her safety. She gave herself the pseudonym Mariama Bah. Speaking by phone on Sept. 11, she was accompanied by Kate Webster, a member of the counsel team involved in the STCA litigation with the Canadian Council for Refugees, Amnesty International, and the Canadian Council of Churches.

When Ms. Bah crossed the Canadian border, she'd never heard of the agreement, a 16-yearold pact that requires refugees to seek asylum in whichever of the two countries they arrive in first. Now she knows it's what led to her detention, which included 10 days in solitary confinement and 51 days locked in what she considered jail, in what she described as freezing conditions, with no privacy when she used the toilet.

"I couldn't really differentiate between day and night," or understand the guards who didn't speak French, said Ms. Bah. "Every night I was sleeping thinking, "This is a dream. That can't be.' Not only I fled my country, but in this country, which I think and hope they respect human rights, but they are treating me like a criminal. I'm far from my country, can't speak language, don't even give me a translator." She said she felt "validated" by

She said she felt "validated" by Justice McDonald's July decision, and just as quickly, disappointed, when a month later the Liberal government appealed the ruling, a move she hopes politicians will reconsider.

"The U.S.A. is not a safe country for refugees ... I really want people to be aware that human rights are not being respected," she told *The Hill Times*. "I don't want anyone to go through what I went through. It's already been five years. It still feels like it's yesterday."



Public Safety Minister Bill Blair, pictured outside a Liberal cabinet meeting in January, says the recent ruling striking down the Safe Third Country Agreement is being challenged by the feds to make clear the legal framework governing asylum law. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Her story is one of many, said Janet Dench, executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees, recalling how powerful evidence like this was when read into the record last November.

"The atmosphere in the court was extremely tense, it was very compelling evidence and I don't think anybody could be unmoved and certainly the atmosphere you could cut with a knife, it was so tense," said Ms. Dench, adding she wasn't surprised that the judge made her "very clear" ruling.

### Feds argue errors in judge's 'key findings'

A spokesperson for Border Security Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) reiterated statements his office has made since the government appealed the July 22 ruling, saying it did so because there are "errors" in some of the key findings of fact and law.

"The decision suggests all asylum claimants who are ineligible under the STCA and turned back to the U.S. are automatically detained as a penalty. This is not the case. The U.S. remains a party to the UN Refugee Convention," said press secretary Mary-Liz Power.

Still, Ms. Dench said "a very high proportion of them find themselves in detention in these unspeakable conditions," and questioned how the government could make that argument when it is not objecting to the evidence, including the experience of the woman *The Hill Times* spoke with, among many others outlined in affidavits.

"It's not just extreme cases, but a generalized experience of being held in isolation, being subject to extreme colds, to experiences of racism, to not having sufficient food, to experiences of extreme alienation, the separation of families,"said Ms. Dench. Even so, Justice McDonald said in her ruling that the impact on a "single person" is enough to establish "gross disproportionality"—that the risks of detention outweigh the administrative benefit of the agreement, in reference to Nedira Jemal Mustefa, one of the named applicants in the case.

"In my view, Ms. Mustefa's evidence alone meets this test and is sufficient to "shock the conscience," wrote Justice McDonald, who suspended the judgement for six months to give the government time to respond. The government has asked for a stay, which Ms. Dench said she hopes the court won't grant. year, she crossed at an unofficial border near Montreal, spending some days sleeping on the floor at the Olympic Stadium in Montreal, before she was released to stay with a friend.

Because she made her way across the Quebec border at an unofficial crossing—such crossings aren't covered under the agreement—Ms. Bah wasn't again immediately removed, though the STCA stamp remains on her file, and a person previously deemed ineligible is barred from making a refugee claim. She's among the reported 58,255 people who have made irregular crossings from the



RCMP officers are pictured at an unofficial border crossing between Quebec and the U.S. *Screenshot courtesy of CBC News* 

There are a many parallels between the experience of Ms. Mustefa and Ms. Bah, whose family in 2015 scrounged US\$10,000 to get her out of detention, Ms. Dench said.

For two and a half years, Ms. Bah lived in New York City, moving from couch to couch, waiting for her hearings. In 2017, she learned it would be another two years before she'd get a hearing, and by then U.S. President Donald Trump was in power and she felt deportation would be certain. And so, in August of that U.S. since the beginning of 2017. Her status has remained in that limbo and won't be affected by any future court decision on the agreement—a case many believe will end up at the Supreme Court. Certainly, if the Federal Court of Appeal overturns the decision, Ms. Dench said the organizations will appeal.

#### Welcome to Canada?

In a statement, Ms. Power said Canada is "welcoming" to

those fleeing war and persecution, calling the agreement "an important tool" for both countries to have an "orderly processing of asylum claims along the shared border.

"The Safe Third Country Agreement has served Canada well for 16 years. We are in continuous discussions with the U.S. Government on issues related to our shared border. We believe that the STCA remains a comprehensive vehicle for the fair, compassionate and orderly handling of asylum claims in our two countries."

Referencing Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (Papineau, Que.) now famous tweet from January 2017—which read: "To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada"—Ms. Dench called the current policy and appeal a "rather striking contradiction."

"A government that prides itself on respecting the charter and defending human rights and protecting refugees, it's hard to understand how they could consider it in line with their values [to appeal]... knowing this is what's going to happen to them in most cases," said Ms. Dench, who

Both Ms. Dench and Ms. Bah av politics are at play.

"It's almost like they don't care about the humans being impacted by [the STCA], it's more about the politics behind, which is so sad because this is people being traumatized and being impacted. It's almost like they forgot about the human beings," Ms. Bah said. "You feel rejected twice, in your country, but also in this country."

swallen@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

News

### Opinion

## On Iran sanctions, Canada needs to step up against Trump's unilateralism



U.S. President Donald Trump. pictured at Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility in Washington on July 10. Failing to challenge Trump's unilateralism on Iran will guarantee the intensification of violence and destabilization in the Middle East, and serve as yet another example of the international community's lack of structural capacity to maintain the rules-based international system in the face of U.S. aggression, writes Helyah Doutaghi. Photograph courtesy of the White House Flickr/Tia Dufour

It is crucial for the Trudeau government to join UNSC members and its European allies in refusing to adopt any measures under the United Nations Act that would enact UN sanctions on Iran under U.S. terms.



Helyeh Doutaghi Opinion

The United States is set to restore virtually all United Nations Security Council sanctions on Iran on the eve of Sept. 20. This decision was made following the Trump administra-

tion's recent failure to garner

support for the adoption of a draft resolution to the UNSC that sought to extend an arms embargo against Iran. This was promptly followed by a second defeat, in which an overwhelming majority of UNSC members rejected the legal foundation and validity of the U.S. attempt to trigger the re-imposition of UN sanctions on Iran, known as the "snapback" provision, that were lifted pursuant to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). This provision was designed as a mechanism for any of the JCPOA's "participating states" to "notify" the UNSC if they believe another participating nation is in a state of "significant non-performance" as per its commitment under the deal.

With the U.S.'s official withdrawal from JCPOA on May 2018, followed by immediate enforcement of the "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran, in violation of its obligations under the deal, the dominant legal narrative attests to the extra-legal foundation and formulation of Washington's attempt to use JCPOA's provision as a "participating state."

In spite of this, the U.S. insists on its right to trigger the JCPOA mechanism, arguing it still qualifies as a "participating state" to the UNSC resolution 2231 (as defined under Article 10 of the same resolution), regardless of its wellpublicized official withdrawal. The Trump administration is once again framing its unilateral actions against multilateralism in juridical terms. The U.S. has a long history of policing the international community's compliance with its sanction regimes through the enforcement of "secondary sanctions"—punishing those states, individuals, entities, and other legal persons that violate the prohibitions contained under its unilateral sanction regimes.

By threatening to use its double veto, the U.S. is attempting to (ab)use its power and position as a permanent member of the UNSC to employ the council as an extended arm for advancing its failed foreign policy agenda on Iran. The legally binding nature of the UNSC sanction regime gives the U.S. further legal leverage to police the few who dare refuse to abide by past unilateral sanctions. Should this materialize, it will have profound consequences and cause rable damage to the remaining legitimacy and reputation of the council as the main UN organ responsible for international peace and security.

The critical window of opportunity for preserving the already hobbled Nuclear Deal as one of the most significant non-proliferation international agreements is closing fast.

On Sept. 1, the JCPOA Joint Commission—responsible for overseeing the implementation of the agreement—held a meeting in which representatives from China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Iran reaffirmed that the U.S. "unilaterally announced its cessation of participation in the JCPOA on 8 May 2018 and therefore [it] cannot initiate the process of reinstating UN sanctions under UNSC resolution 2231."

Eight other non-permanent member states of the UNSC have already written to the UNSC president expressing their opposition to the U.S.'s move. The UNSC's president, Indonesia, has therefore concluded it is "not in a position to take further action" on Washington's request, as there is no consensus in the 15-member body.

Even John Bolton, Mr. Trump's former national security adviser, has argued the U.S. has no grounds for triggering the snapback and is "endangering" its position in the UNSC by doing so.

Soon after the U.S. defeat at the UNSC, Iran agreed to allow international monitors to inspect two of its previously blocked nuclear sites. Recognizing its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as vital for any international attempt to maintain security in the region, Tehran has previously threatened to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons if other parties to the JCPOA fail to hold up their end of the bargain.

Canada is one of the lead contributors to IAEA's robust monitoring and verification of Iran's commitments under the JCPOA. Thus, it is crucial for the Trudeau government to join UNSC members and its European allies in refusing to adopt any measures under the "United Nations Act" that would enact UN sanctions on Iran under U.S. terms. Dismissing the U.S. snapback as a "non-event" is also in line with Canada's official position in supporting diplomatic efforts for the implementation of the JCPOA. Indeed, it is in Canada's national interest to uphold the rule of law, by respecting the legal interpretation of the Security Council by the Security Council.

Canada—along with the entire international community has a responsibility to take effective and concrete actions against Trump's unilateralism. Failing to do so will guarantee the intensification of violence and destabilization in the Middle East, and serve as yet another example of the international community's lack of structural capacity to maintain the rules-based international system in the face of U.S. aggression.

Helyeh Doutaghi is a doctoral candidate in law and legal studies at Carleton University. The Hill Times

## should be a priority for the government



Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc are pictured during a press conference on Aug. 18. The Canadian Paediatric Society is calling on the federal government to ensure it includes an explicit commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of children and youth. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Time and again, the rights of children and vouth are ignored and their interests are not reflected in government policy and practice.



Opinion

Sept. 23 will be an important day for Canada's children and youth. The Governor General will deliver a new speech from the throne and the government's priorities for this new session will be made clear.

If we truly hope to "move forward to-gether," as was the promise of 2019, a firm commitment to improving the well-being of Canada's children and youth needs to be made a clear priority in this guiding speech.

The events of 2020 have shown us just how vulnerable the rights of our children and youth can be. Paediatricians across the country are seeing a significant impact on the physical and mental health of children and youth, as a direct result of living through the largest public health crisis in

We are seeing the ripple effects of increased economic, food, and housing insecurity; decreased access to physical and mental health services and supports that were already inadequate and overwhelmed; a significant rise in mental health challenges including depression, stress, anxiety, and eating disorders; and an amplification of social inequities. We need federal leadership now to reverse these trends and shrink the gaps that are widening along the all-too-familiar fault lines of race, class, and sex.

For years, children and youth have received at best a passing mention in throne speeches. They are often a talking point, but seldom a priority. Consequently, the quality of life for children and youth in Canada is slipping. In fact, in this year's UNICEF Report Card, Canada now ranks 30<sup>th</sup> among 38 rich countries in the wellbeing of children and youth, 31st on mental health and happiness, 35th on teen suicide rates, and 26<sup>th</sup> on child poverty.

Our young people deserve better. That is why the Canadian Paediatric Society is calling on the federal government to ensure that this year's speech from the throne includes an explicit commitment to improve the health and well-being of our children and youth.

Action on this issue can take many forms. We need targeted resources to help children and youth get the mental health support they need right now and into the future; as we all grapple with the long-term impacts of this pandemic and the associated stress, anxiety, and isolation, the mental health of our children and youth cannot be forgotten.

We need adequate and sustained funding for a return to school for all children regardless of their postal code or socioeconomic background. We need policy and leadership to ensure that the number of children living in poverty in this country does not rise as a result of the economic insecurity created by this pandemic. We also need a commitment to finally establish a federal Commissioner for Children and Youth.

As noted in Bill S-217, children and youth in Canada currently have no independent voice to represent their rights and interests in Parliament, limited opportunity to participate in political processes, and no effective recourse when their rights are violated. Consequently, time and again, the rights of children and youth are ignored and their interests are not reflected in government policy and practice.

As the upcoming throne speech seeks to guide us though the next phase of COVID-19 management and recovery, the rights and well-being of the next generation should be made a priority. We can and must do better.

Dr. Sam Wong is president of the Canadian Paediatric Society and practices general paediatrics part-time in Yellowknife, N.W.T., and Edmonton, Alta.

The Hill Times

## Children's well-being Why is the NDP failing to push the Liberals for climate action?

Now is the perfect time for the party to be vocal on the need for climate action and push for its climate vision.



Kenneth C. Johnson Opinion

Recently, I joined other concerned citizens in sending a letter to NDP MPs expressing shock and disappointment at the New Democratic Party's understating, and sometimes ignoring, of the climate crisis-even when given a chance to address a national radio audience.

This was made clear on CBC Radio's The House on both Aug. 22 and Sept. 5. In the first case, NDP Leader Jagmeet

Singh did not speak up about the need for climate action, nor did he demand a strong green recovery program in the upcoming throne speech.

Two weeks later, NDP national director Anne Mc-Grath didn't mention green policies in her list of NDP demands for the throne speech.

The federal government declared there to be a national climate emergency a year agonow they need to act on it. The Sept. 23 speech from the throne will be critical to this process. Be-

cause it holds on climate with this minority government, writes Below2C's Ken the balance Johnson. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade of power, the NDP can and should have a positive influ-

ence on its contents. It makes no sense for the NDP to leave the climate crisis out of the mix for several

reasons Scientists have made it clear that this is the decade when serious decarbonization

must be achieved. During the 2019 election campaign, the

NDP talked a good game: "The time for delay and denial is over-it's time to act," read its platform. The party said its plan would create 300,000 good paying jobs. The Liberals have been ineffective on climate action for five years. Surely, a strong, green stand by the NDP would differentiate the party.

The federal NDP has been at its strongest and made its most important contributions historically when it held the balance of power with a Liberal minority government. This is the perfect window for the party to be vocal on the need for climate action and push for its climate vision. Showing leadership on this critical file, and pushing the Liberals on climate action can only be seen as an NDP win.

On the flip side, remaining silent or weak on the climate crisis will be seen as a political loss for the NDP if the Liberals don't deliver a strong green throne speech. The party might even look worse if the Liberals do.

Here are key promises we would like to see the NDP push for in the speech from the throne on Sept. 23:

1. A Climate Accountability Act. This should include: legislated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets with yearly impact goals; a legislated planning and reporting system; and an arm's-length, expert advisory committee that regularly guides and reports on the whole system.

2. Stronger GHG emissions targets. The science demands that Canada cut its emissions 60 per cent by 2030. That means starting this year to cut emissions at a minimum of 7.6 per cent annually

3. A national green homes/buildings retrofit strategy. This could create hundreds of thousands of skilled, local jobs while

substantially cutting carbon emissions from buildings across Canada. A national program is needed to coordinate efforts, inspire and rally citizens, and cut costs. This needs to be on the scale of \$20-billion for housing and \$6-billion for commercial buildings. 4. A na-

tional green jobs training program. Canadians. especially those working in the oil and gas sector, along with those who

have lost work during the pandemic and se in precarious jobs, need to for a greener, cleaner economy.

There are just a few days left to push the Liberals to support and facilitate a green and just recovery in the throne speech. The NDP has a rare opportunity to make a positive difference on climate with this minority government.

If not now, when?

Kenneth C. Johnson, PhD, is an environmental scientist focused on action on the climate crisis and co-editor of Below2C. org.

The Hill Times



NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, pictured in the West Block on April

29. The NDP has a rare opportunity to make a positive difference

Opinion

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## **Parties of the past**

The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia

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

### **Cameron visits Canada**





### Mexico's national day fiesta





### Chile celebrates in style





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## Parliamentary Calendar

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 16

**Donner Prize Presentation**—The winner of the 2019/2020 Donner Prize for Public Policy will be revealed during an online program at 11 a.m. (EDT) on the Donner Prize YouTube channel and Facebook page. The prize was created to honour the best public policy thinking, writing, and research by a Canadian. The 2019/2020 shortlist titles were chosen from a field of 74 submissions. The winner receives \$50,000, while each other nominated title receives \$7,500.

Cybersecurity for the Remote Workplace: Security in the Time of COVID-19 and Beyond—In our increasingly digital world, cybersecurity challenges for workplaces and private citizens have grown in recent decades, as bad actors continue to grow in numbers and sophistication. With rapid digital advancements due to COVID-19, this challenge has grown at an expo-nential rate. As the cyber workplace has intertwined the personal and professional lives of many, cybersecurity concerns on these fronts have been combined as well. Join us as we discuss the challenges we face and the possible solutions needed today and tomorrow. Hosted by the Pearson Centre, it will also discuss how cybersecurity concerns impact Canada internationally and how this may impact security in new areas in the years to come. Join John Menezes, president and CEO of Stratejm Inc. and Liberal MP John McKay in conversation with former New Brunswick premier Brian Gallant, who's on the Pearson Centre's advisory board. Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2 p.m.-3 p.m. Register online.

#### THURSDAY, SEPT. 17

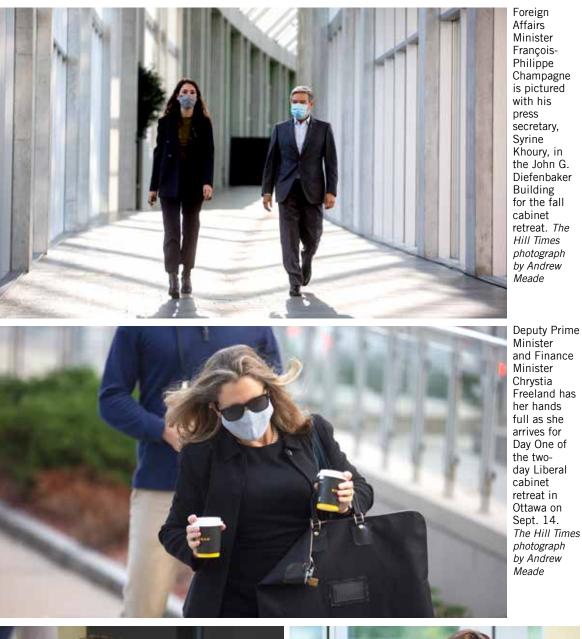
Racism, Anti-oppression, and International Affairs—The Balsillie School of International Affairs hosts a webinar on "Racism, Anti-oppression, and International Affairs," part of its Global Insights series. A yet-tobe-announced panel of experts will discuss how the study of politics and international affairs have come under scrutiny for their racialized assumptions and biases, and the new opportunities arising for self-examination, structural reform, reconciliation, alliance, and justice. Thursday, Sept. 17, from 11 a.m. to noon. Register at balsillieschool.ca.

For a Healthy Canada: Benefits of a Clean and Sustainable Recovery For Canadians' Health-The second webinar of the "Path towards relaunching the economy and protecting the health of Canadians" series will feature Dr. Kristie Ebi, Dr. Trevor Hancock, and Dr. Elaine McDonald. It will focus on the links between environmental protection and human health and include a Q&A session. It is a one-time only event that will not be recorded and for which spaces are limited. For parliamentary offices and key government officials only. Organized and moderated by Senator Rosa Galvez. Thursday, Sept. 17, 1-2:45 p.m. ET. Register here to reserve your place. For any questions reach out to stephane. laviolette@sen.parl.gc.ca.

Anti-Black Racism in Canadian Government and Politics—The University of Ottawa hosts a webinar on "Anti-Black Racism in Canadian Government and Politics." Speakers include Mary Anne Chambers, former Ontario Liberal cabinet minister; Richard Sharpe, Federal Black Employee Caucus; Debra Thompson, professor of political science at McGill University; and Karine Coen-Sanchez, PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Ottawa. Thursday, Sept. 17, from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Register for the free webinar via Eventbrite.

A National Project: Syrian Refugee Resettlement in Canada—The Balsillie School of International Affairs hosts the launch of a new book, A National Project: Syrian Refugee Resettlement in Canada. The book's editors and immigration experts will discuss the experiences of refugees and receiving communities during Canada's Operation Syrian Refugee from 2015-

## Donner Prize winner to be announced, as Parliament readies for return

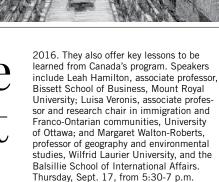




Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks with reporters on the morning of Sept. 14 ahead of two days of cabinet meetings. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade* 



Coffee in hand, PMO chief of staff Katie Telford arrives at 111 Sussex Dr. for two days of cabinet meetings ahead of the new parliamentary session. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade* 



Register via Eventbrite. The Future Of Canada-U.S. Trade-The Canadian International Council's Edmonton chapter hosts a webinar on "The Future Of Canada-U.S. Trade,' featuring Dr. Greg Anderson, professor in political science at the University of Alberta: Carlo Dade, director of the Trade and Investment Centre at the Canada Champagne West Foundation; and Dr. Meredith Lilly, associate professor at Carleton University. Thursday, Sept. 17, from 6-7 p.m. MDT. Members can register for the free event online at https://thecic.org/event/ cic-edmonton-the-future-of-canada-u-strade/. FRIDAY, SEPT. 18

National Forum on Canada-China Economic Policy—The University of Alberta's China Institute hosts its 10<sup>th</sup> National Forum on Canada-China Economic Policy on the theme "50 Years of Evolving Economic Relations." Speakers include (among others) Peiwu Cong, China's Ambassador to Canada; Dominic Barton, Canada's Ambassador to China; Lloyd Axworthy, former Canadian foreign affairs minister and current chair of CUSO International; and Guy Saint-Jacques, former Canadian ambassador to China. Friday, Sept. 18, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. EDT. Register via Eventbrite.

#### SUNDAY, SEPT. 20

**Noopiming: The Cure for White Ladies** with Leanne Betasamosake Simpson—Acclaimed Algonquin Anishinaabe novelist Karen McBride talks with Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, the award-winning Nishnaabeg storyteller and writer. Her latest book, *Noopiming: The Cure for White Ladies*, is a bold reimagination of the novel, one that combines narrative and poetic fragments through a careful and fierce reclamation of Anishinaabe aesthetics. The free, pre-recorded event is Sunday, Sept. 20, at 2 p.m. RSVP at writersfestival.org.

#### TUESDAY, SEPT. 22

Hong Kong—A Way Forward: How the Free World Will Respond to Beijing's Crackdown—China's 'National Security Law' imposed over Hong Kong eliminated the territory's freedoms. The question is how will Western nations work together to respond? Whether through legislation, sanctions, or diplomacy, policy-makers must coordinate their efforts in order to pressure Beijing to reverse course. MLI is hosting a webinar to bring together some of the world's leading voices to provide insights on the situation facing Hong Kong and what the democratic nations of the world should do to push back. Tuesday, Sept. 22, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Register online for the event.

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 23

Return of Parliament and Speech from the Throne—The House of Commons will return from the first mid-mandate prorogation called by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Aug. 18. The government will lay out its priorities in a throne speech.

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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