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News

'These jobs are not coming back': economists pour cold water on O'Toole's Canada First policy

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole's promised "Canada-first" economic strategy could make most Canadians worse off than they are now, say some economists, and wouldn't likely bring back manufacturing jobs unless it includes heavy subsidies for industry.

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News

Liberal tilt to the left could have electoral consequences for NDP, say pollsters

The federal Liberals should be careful about the 'recoil effect' as some of their supporters could back away if they vacate the political centre.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Sept. 16, 2020, and his Liberals will be taking a chance if they tip further to the political left in the remainder of their mandate, say seasoned political insiders. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

BY ABBAS RANA

The Liberals may use the upcoming Throne Speech to signal a tilt to the political left and try to consolidate support among progressive voters, but while political insiders say that could cause big problems for the NDP, a veteran New Democrat MP says his party is not worried.

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research said the Liberal

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News

PM should create permanent emergency preparedness cabinet committee, say experts, political players

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

A former national security adviser to the prime minister says Canada "doesn't worry about emergency preparedness as much

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News

Old and new priorities compete for space in Liberals' fall agenda

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The governing Liberals will have plenty on their plate when business gets underway in the House of Commons following the Sept. 23 Throne Speech.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) called a mid-term

Continued on page 4

News

'Ping-pong' gun politics continue to divide voters, as O'Toole courts GTA seats

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

Even during the worst health and economic crises in recent memory, gun politics are inescapable in Canada.

A petition to Parliament calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) to reverse his May 1 decision to ban a list of guns that he described as "military-grade assault weapons" has garnered more than 230,000 signatures from across the country since it was introduced shortly

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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Palak Mangat

Former federal NDP MPs Rankin, Cullen eye return to politics, seek to run for B.C. party

Fall election speculation appears to be a favourite Canadian pastime even in the most unprecedented of times, and British Columbia politicos got in on the fun last week, prompting two former federal political players to announce intentions to run in the province's next vote.

Longtime NDP MP **Murray Rankin**, who captured the Victoria, B.C., federal riding in a 2012 byelection and held it up until last year, will be seeking the party's nomination in the provincial riding of Oak Bay-Gordon Head, currently held by Green-turned-Independent MLA **Andrew Weaver**.

"I will be honest: this was not an easy decision. But after listening to the views of many people in our community, I concluded that the stakes were too high to sit on the sidelines," Mr. Rankin wrote in a note posted to his webpage. "This is my home. I raised my family here. I love it here. And when I served as your MP, the biggest rewards came from helping make life better for this community and all who call it home. With your support, I hope I can continue doing that work."

Former NDP MPs Murray Rankin and Nathan Cullen both opted not to run in last fall's federal election, but want to run provincially in British Columbia. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade*

Mr. Rankin was among at least a dozen NDP MPs last year who decided not to run again in the 2019 federal election, opting to make way for a party "renewal" and "fresh look." (The federal party has since welcomed eight rookie MPs onto the Hill, some of whom are on the fence about running again.)

"Soooo excited to see my friend and outstanding all around good guy @MurrayRankinNDP throw his hat in the race for the #BCNDP in Oak Bay-Gordon Head. An accomplished lawyer, champion for the planet & defender of our coast. Go Murray!" tweeted former NDP MP **Nathan Cullen**, who also opted to not run in last fall's election. Late last week. Mr. Cullen, who held the Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C. riding from 2004 to 2019, shared some of his own news: he will be making a bid to become the party's candidate for the provincial riding of Stikine. It is currently held by the NDP's **Doug Donaldson**, who will not be seeking re-election.

Mr. Rankin, 70, will compete with former Oak Bay city councillor **Michelle Kirby** to be named the party's candidate, after just under a year of returning to practise law.

B.C. NDP Premier **John Horgan** said last week that his party has been "preparing for the eventuality of an election since day one," but did not answer for certain if he would call to dissolve the legislature. Mr. Rankin's announcement came just days after New Brunswick voters opted to give Premier **Blaine Higgs**' Progressive Conservatives another mandate, this time a majority, after the province's 2018 vote. B.C.'s next scheduled election would take place in 2021 if one is not called earlier.

McConaghy wins this year's $50,000 Donner Prize

Dennis McConaghy won this year's prestigious $50,000 Donner Prize for his book *Breakdown: The Pipeline Debate and the Threat to Canada's Future*, published by Dundurn Press.

Mr. McConaghy's book was awarded the best public policy book of the year, because "it addresses arguably one of the most contentious and consequential sets of policy issues facing Canada today—the nexus of resource development, climate change, Indigenous rights and Alberta alienation. It presents the history of four pipeline projects and overlays the political decisions that have resulted in many projects not being supported or being delayed significantly. McConaghy outlines several pragmatic strategies that can be used to reduce or remove the bottleneck to move large infrastructure projects forward (or create earlier certainty that they should not) so that investment (domestic and foreign) will be attracted to Canada," said the Donner Prize jury members **David A. Dodge**, (Jury Chair), **Elizabeth Cannon**, **Jean-Marie Dufour**, **Brenda Eaton**, and **Peter Nicholson**, in a press release on Sept. 16. There were 74 submissions.

Mr. McConaghy's book won over the other finalists, which included: *Empty Planet: The Shock of Global Population Decline*, by **Darrell Bricker** and **John Ibbitson** (Signal/McClelland & Stewart); *Living With China: A Middle Power Finds Its Way*, by **Wendy Dobson** (Rotman-UTP Publishing/University of Toronto Press); *The Wealth of First Nations*, by **Tom Flanagan** (Fraser Institute); and *The Tangled Garden: A Canadian Cultural Manifesto for the Digital Age*, by **Richard Stursberg** with **Stephen Armstrong** (James Lorimer & Co.). Each of the other nominated authors received $7,500.

Ex-staffer starts a new line of seltzers

The Dominion City Brewing Company, which includes a former Conservative Hill staffer who co-founded the group in 2014, launched a new line of non-alcoholic sparking water last week called City Seltzer. **Josh McJannett** worked in former Conservative MP **Jay Hill**'s office during his tenure at chief government whip, and was also a consultant at Summa Strategies.

Did someone say beer? Former Conservative Hill staffer Josh McJannett, pictured left, with Alex Monk, and Andrew Kent, helped launch a new line of sparkling water last week. *The Hill Times file photograph*

"Fantastic how this can be done in these times," wrote Summa vice-chair **Tim Powers** in a note to *The Hill Times* on Sept. 14.

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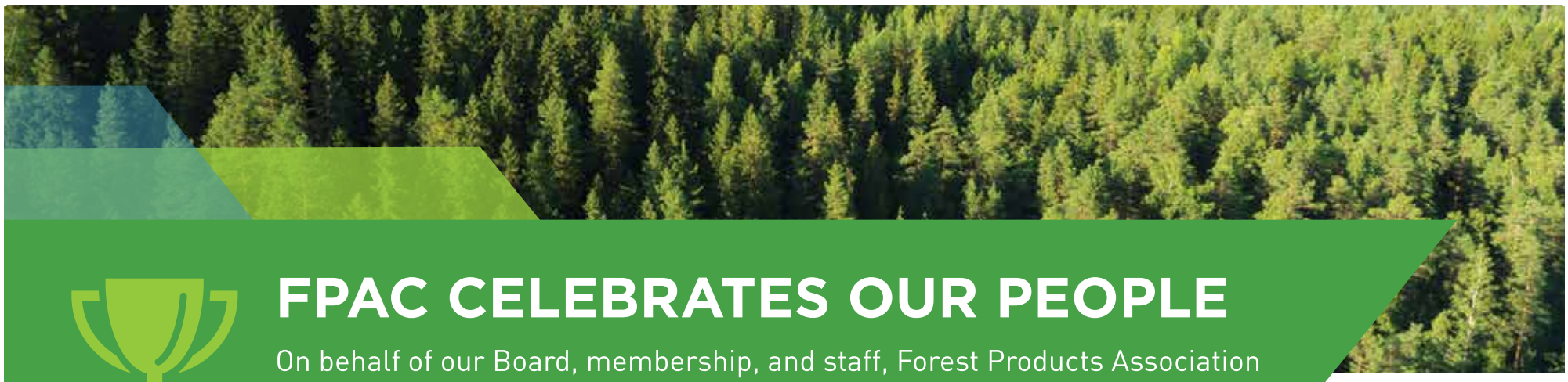

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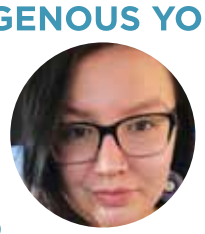

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News

Old and new priorities compete for space in Liberals' fall agenda

Talk of pharmacare, childcare and clean energy is nothing new, but a re-surging pandemic could sideline everything else.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau arrives for the fall Liberal cabinet retreat in Ottawa before Parliament resumes on Sept. 14. Mr. Trudeau's cabinet will have to juggle the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority opposition in Parliament, and their own unfulfilled promises as they shape the government's fall agenda. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Continued from page 1

prorogation of Parliament in August, the first time since he had done so since he took office. The prorogation wiped away committee studies of the WE Charity scandal, but will also give Mr. Trudeau a chance to reframe his government's agenda as it tries to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and jumpstart the Canadian economy.

COVID-19 cases have begun to rise in recent weeks, prompting a warning from Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Theresa Tam that Canadians should "act now" to curtail indoor gatherings. The growing threat of another wave of the virus has tempered the language used by top Liberals to describe the upcoming Throne Speech and fall session. Mr. Trudeau told reporters last week that, "We need to get through this in order to be able to talk about next steps."

Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) hammered on that point again during a Sept. 15 press conference, calling **the pandemic** her government's "100 per cent priority."

"The single most important economic policy of our government and the best thing we can do for our economy is to keep coronavirus under control," she said.

Ms. Freeland said "**growth and jobs**" were priority number two.

Before COVID-19 cases began to rise again, government and Liberal insiders were busy signalling other new priorities that could be highlighted in the Throne Speech. **Pharmacare**, **housing**, **childcare**, **clean energy** and the **environment**, and **long-term care** have all been floated by insiders as possible highlights of the Throne Speech, according to reports from the CBC, *The Toronto Star*, Global News, and *The Hill Times*. Implementing a **guaranteed basic income** was flagged as a top policy priority by members of the Liberal caucus as they looked ahead to the party's November convention, the CBC reported Sept. 12.

When pressed by *Globe and Mail* reporter Bill Curry last week about the earlier talk of a green-focused Throne Speech, Ms. Freeland said that the focus on health and COVID-19 "in no way negates any other emphases or priorities."

"**Green jobs** are absolutely going to be part of our recovery," she said.

If the pandemic is again brought under control, the government agenda could still be constrained by a ballooning deficit, and the Liberals' many unfulfilled promises from this summer, the last election campaign, and earlier.

If Mr. Trudeau wants to avoid an election, as he has said on numerous occasions, the speech will need to reflect some of the priorities of at least one other party in the House. Pharmacare and housing would align with major NDP priorities.

Swollen deficit

Thanks largely to its costly response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government is expected to run a deficit of roughly $343-billion this fiscal year—and that's before any new initiatives announced in the Throne Speech.

One of the largest drivers of that cost overrun, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, will be eliminated on Sept. 27 and replaced with more limited programs.

Canada's economy has recovered well from the pandemic so far, having recouped two-thirds of the jobs lost amid widespread public shutdowns this spring. The economy still has to climb out of a "deep hole," and that will take time, Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem said in public remarks made Sept. 10.

That recovery could be complicated if COVID-19 cases spike again, forcing more businesses to close.

When asked about the sustainability of the government's debt and deficit on Sept. 15, Ms. Freeland told reporters that Canada was in a strong fiscal position at the beginning of the pandemic.

"We understand the value of wise and prudent fiscal management. That is the policy our government will continue," she said.

New promises, meet old promises

The government has yet to act on most of its promises from the last election campaign, and some from before. Those include a pledge to set legally-binding **emissions targets** that would set Canada on the path to a net-zero economy by 2050; to bring in legislation to fund **support for workers** harmed by the transition to a lower-emissions economy; to implement the **UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**; and to bring in new **gun control** legislation, and enact a buyback program for recently-banned semi-automatic rifles, among many others.

Liberal MPs joined a chorus of voices this summer calling for major reforms to the long-term care sector. Many of the country's long-term care homes experienced outbreaks of COVID-19 in the first months of the pandemic, and long-term care residents made up roughly 80 per cent of the Canadians killed by COVID-19 as of June. A military report made public in May revealed homes where squalid conditions, abuse of residents, and staff who were scared to use sanitary or protective equipment were common.

Long-term care homes fall under provincial jurisdiction, but Mr. Trudeau promised in June to take action to help the provinces bring the homes up to par. That has yet to happen.

Mr. Trudeau also called for fast **reforms to policing** in Canada in June, following the violent arrest of Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation Chief Allan Adam by RCMP officers, and the killing of George Floyd, a black man, by police officers in Minnesota. The RCMP falls under the oversight of Public Safety Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.). Apart from a pledge to purchase and use body cameras more often, no major changes to the governance or procedure of the RCMP have been announced.

Seven government bills also died on the Order Paper when Parliament was prorogued. Six of them are prime candidates to be reintroduced this fall.

Bill C-3 would have renamed the RCMP Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, and made it responsible for overseeing the work of the Canada Border Services Agency, a years-old Liberal promise. **Bill C-5** would have required all judges to undergo training on sexual assault law and "social context." The Liberals committed to that change during the election campaign.

Embattled Governor General Julie Payette, who has been accused of harassing and bullying her staff, is expected to read the latest government Throne Speech into the record in the Senate on Sept. 23. *The Hill Times file photograph*

Bill C-6 would have changed the citizenship oath for new Canadians to include an acknowledgement of the treaty rights of Canada's First Peoples. The Liberals have already reintroduced that bill once, after it died when the last election was called.

Bill C-7 would have fulfilled a court order to amend the government's assisted dying law, in order to allow an assisted death for people for whom death is not reasonably foreseeable. **Bill C-8** would have banned so-called "conversion therapy"—attempts to force LQBTQ people to become straight—another Liberal election promise. **Bill C-9**, would have made technical amendments to the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act.

Bill C-17, however, may not be revived. That omnibus bill would have made changes to the Emergency Wage Subsidy program, allowed the government to send cash to people living with a disability to help them survive the pandemic, and suspended or extended certain time limits for judicial proceedings.

The government found another way to send cash to disabled Canadians, promising $600 per person in August. The portion of the bill that would change the time limits for judicial proceedings, meanwhile, was challenged by the Federal Court of Appeals in a ruling earlier this month, which said that Attorney General David Lametti's (LaSalle-Émard-Verdun, Que.) "position concerning the interpretation and effect of" part of the law was "incorrect" and "should not be followed."

Pharmacare, childcare promised before last election

The Liberals have made promises around childcare, pharmacare, and housing before. They promised during the last election campaign to create 250,000 new childcare spaces across the country and cut the fees for those spaces, betting heavily that the provinces would cooperate with them. The government never tabled a budget for this year, and it's not clear if it has moved to make good on that promise.

Last year, an advisory council struck by the government called for the creation of a single-payer pharmacare system for the country. The Liberals promised to implement a "national universal pharmacare" system during the last election campaign, but have yet to do so. In September, Mr. Trudeau pledged $6-billion towards national pharmacare, but said that the rest would depend on negotiations with the provinces.

The Liberals promised back in 2017 to spend tens of billions on programs related to housing over 10 years. Most of that money is budgeted to be spent in the coming years.

The Liberals also promised during the last election campaign to prioritize spending on affordable housing, and increase the GST rebate on investments in rental housing to 100 per cent.

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News

Liberal tilt to the left could have electoral consequences for NDP, say pollsters

The Liberals should be careful about the 'recoil effect' as some of their supporters could back away if they vacate the political centre, says pollster Nik Nanos.

Governor General Julie Payette will deliver the Throne Speech this week. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

NDP MP Charlie Angus says he's not worried about Liberals tilting to the left. He said Liberals always campaign from the left and govern from the centre and Canadian know that. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, pictured Jan. 22, 2020, on the Hill. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Continued from page 1

government's tilt to the left is bad news for the NDP, making it electorally "vulnerable" in the next election. He also said progressive voters will have questions about the NDP's "relevance" going forward, with some instead choosing the Liberals, who are already in power and making their agenda even more progressive. Mr. Nanos said it could mean the NDP losing seats to the Liberals and to the Bloc Québécois in the next election.

"With the Liberals moving further to the left, the relevance of the NDP is up in the air," said Mr. Nanos, chief data scientist and founder of Nanos Research. "For a lot of New Democratic voters, they could vote with their heart by supporting the New Democrats. But if they vote with their head, they probably [will] be supporting the Liberals because the Liberals are in power. And they have an exceptionally progressive agenda that is very similar to the agenda of the New Democrats. So, realistically, the New Democratic lunch is being eaten by the Liberals."

In recent media interviews, unnamed Liberal MPs and other senior Liberals have said that they expect some ambitious big-ticket items, attractive to progressive voters, such as guaranteed basic income, infrastructure, pharmacare, child care, seniors care, and green economy measures to be included in the Throne Speech, which will further balloon the size of the already-high deficit.

The deficit at the end of last year was around $28-billion, but with the unprecedented government spending this year to help Canadians deal with the economic and health effects of COVID-19, the deficit is expected to hit $400-billion. The federal debt will soon exceed $1-trillion.

Usually, the federal budget is tabled in February or March but this year no budget has yet been released. As of press time last week, it was not known how much new measures included in the Throne Speech will add to the deficit.

Uncomfortable with the mounting debt, some Liberal MPs told *The Hill Times* two weeks ago that if the government did tilt further to the left, that would leave the political centre, home to the majority of moderate voters, open for the taking by the Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) Conservatives.

Pollster Darrell Bricker of Ipsos Public Affairs said that if the information about the Throne Speech that has trickled out in recent weeks turned out to be accurate it would create a tough electoral situation for the NDP. If it happens, the only hope the NDP will have is that the Liberals run into controversies and people become disenchanted with them and consider throwing them out of power.

"It's a very, very difficult situation [for the NDP]," said Mr. Bricker, president of Ipsos Public Affairs. "The only thing that they [the NDP] can hope for is that during the course of the campaign that progressive voters are disappointed enough with what the Liberal Party has done during the last five years, or what they promised as part of their election platform or how they behaved on the campaign trail, that they want to consider another option. And they're not going to vote conservative."

But veteran NDP MP Charlie Angus (Timmins-James Bay, Ont.) said he's not worried about news stories suggesting Liberals are moving further to the left into the ideological NDP territory. He said that the Liberals have talked about pursuing a progressive agenda for as long as he can remember, but when it comes time for action, they move to the centre. Mr. Angus said he would believe in the initiatives the Liberals are talking about once they have been delivered. He said that his party has dealt with this strategy before and is not worried going forward.

"They spent all summer raising huge trial balloons about how progressive…they are, and now they're walking all those promises back," said Mr. Angus. "You've seen this story with the Liberals a thousand times. So what is their Green strategy? What is their strategy to deal with income security? We want to know what they're putting on the table and we will be holding them to account."

Mr. Nanos warned the Liberals to be careful about the "recoil effect," where Canadians who have been voting for the Liberals could withdraw their support if they felt the Liberals were moving too far to the left.

"Most of Canadian voters are moderate, they're in the middle of the ideological spectrum," said Mr. Nanos. "The Liberals have to watch out for a potential recoil effect, where they just go a little too far."

Mr. Bricker said that putting together a winning coalition for the next election would not be easy for any federal party. He explained that if the Liberals move to the left, giving an opening to the Conservatives, it won't necessarily be easy for Mr. O'Toole to move to the centre because of the pressure from Wexit, the Peoples' Party of Canada, the Conservative caucus, party donors and the grassroots members of the party.

"It's not clear sailing for the Conservatives by any stretch, Erin O'Toole is skating on fairly thin ice, too," said Mr. Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs.

"There's potential that he could be dealing with Western separatists in his party. The People's Party, Maxime Bernier hasn't disappeared. So it's a delicate balancing act there for the Conservatives."

Mr. Bricker said the progressive coalition usually sits at around 60 per cent of voters, while the Conservative coalition is about 40 per cent.

Governor General Julie Payette will read out the Trudeau government's Throne Speech on Sept. 23. After this, all the parties will vote on a reply to the Throne Speech. If a majority reject it, an election will be triggered.

In the 338-member House, the Liberals would need the support of 170 MPs to win the vote of confidence. The Trudeau Liberals currently have 154 seats in the House, the Conservatives 121, the Bloc Québécois 32, NDP 24, the Green Party three, and there are two Independent MPs. On top of 154 votes, the Grits need 16 more votes from another party to win the confidence vote, so they will need to secure the support of at least one other party in the House to survive.

As of last week, chances of a federal election being triggered on the Throne Speech appeared to be slim for several reasons, including the rising number of COVID-19 cases across the country, a strong possibility of a provincial election being called in B.C. this week, and the opposition parties' unwillingness to go to the polls because it's more likely to benefit the Liberals at this time.

By Sept. 16, there were about 140,000 total cases of COVID-19 across the country, according to Public Health Agency of Canada. The Coronavirus has caused 9,193 deaths in Canada.

Former Ontario Liberal MP Joe Jordan told *The Hill Times* last week that he does not think there will be a fall election, although it appears the Liberals want one but don't want to be seen as the party causing it. Mr. Jordan explained that the Liberals want an election to capitalize on the goodwill they've received for their handling of COVID-19. Considering the state of economy, it might become an uphill battle for the Liberals in the coming months to win a majority government. On the opposition side, he said, Mr. O'Toole just won the leadership and needs more time to get his party ready for an election, and the NDP does not have adequate amount of money to run a competitive campaign with the Liberals and the Conservatives.

"I think that the electoral prospects right now, from what I can see, are good [for the Liberals] but if Canadians thought that they deliberately came up with a Throne Speech that nobody could support [and it appeared that] they they're trying to take advantage, it could backfire," said Mr. Jordan, senior associate with Bluesky Strategy Group. "If they have a Throne Speech that Canadians support and they're brought down by the opposition, that's the narrative they can go to the people with."

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Editorial

Parties must find consensus on COVID-19 sittings

Since the House of Commons suspended sitting as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, the governing Liberals have been at odds with the Conservative official opposition, in particular, about how to proceed with parliamentary business.

The Procedure and House Affairs Committee (PROC) was assigned last spring to explore how the House could adapt to its operations amid the pandemic, and to allow for hybrid House proceedings and virtual committee meetings. But the big question—the question of how the House will return to its full schedule of regular parliamentary business amid the pandemic—remains unresolved.

It was unresolved in June when PROC tabled its report recommending remote voting be introduced—from which Conservatives dissented—and it was unresolved in August when *The Hill Times* did the rounds to see if the House leaders had yet come to an agreement.

Voting is a major sticking point in the discussion. The Liberals—with the signalled support of the Bloc Québécois, NDP, and Greens—want to introduce remote electronic voting to the House. Since all 338 MPs cannot fit into the House Chamber while maintaining the recommended physical distancing practices, the government wants to allow MPs to instead lock in their votes by app, with Zoom being a proposed alternative.

The Conservatives have been staunchly opposed to this suggestion, which would require amendments to the Standing Orders.

The idea of amending the rules that govern the House proved a thorny issue for the two parties during the last Parliament, with Conservatives shooting down a Liberal attempt to explore possible changes to the Standing Orders; proposals that included introducing remote voting.

Along with these lingering tensions, the official opposition has argued the push is an attempt by the government to dodge parliamentary accountability and be less transparent.

Conservatives have suggested a major sticking point for the caucus in dissenting from PROC's recommendations last session was the lack of a sunset clause, which would make the proposed changes to the Standing Orders temporary.

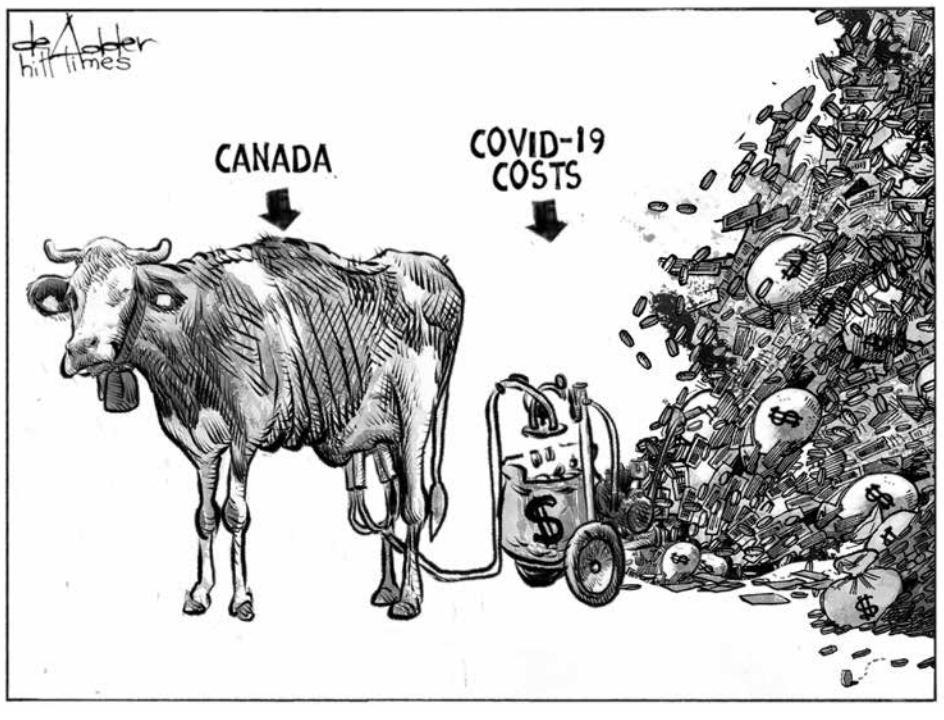
Asked in late July whether the government would consider adding a sunset clause to get Conservatives onside, a spokesperson for Government House Leader Pablo Rodriguez said House leaders would be discussing the matter in the "coming weeks."

Those weeks have passed, and on the eve of Parliament's return—by all public indications—the question of how the House will resume regular business remains essentially unresolved.

Bloc Québécois MPs are currently in isolation after their caucus was exposed to a staffer who tested positive for COVID-19, and Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is also in isolation after an exposure. A parliamentary security guard also tested positive for the virus.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said he'll move ahead with plans for a hybrid sitting model, one that includes remote voting. That can happen without unanimous consent, but before it comes to that, House leaders need to put aside their partisan predilections and try to come to an agreement that works for everyone and also for the sake of the country and democracy. We're in the midst of a global pandemic and the political parties need to come together and lead.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor

Setting the record straight on military justice oversight

Re: "Correcting the record on military justice oversight," (*The Hill Times*, Sept. 16, letter to the editor). Colonel Jill Wry, from the Office of the Judge Advocate General letter in *The Hill Times* attempted to "correct the record" concerning an article that we had published 16 days earlier. Unfortunately, Col. Wry has mischaracterized our article.

Concerning Bill C-15: our original article states that many important provisions have not yet come into force, and this is absolutely true. We even provide an example of reform to the military grievance process. Col. Wry counters by stating that a "vast majority" of the act has been put into force, and this is unacceptable. It is not within the purview of any department to decide which parts of legislation should be put into force, and which should not. Once the will of Parliament is crystalized through royal assent, all sections should be put into force, without exception. Failure to do so is actively undermining the will of Parliament, and this is not in keeping with the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy. We thank Col. Wry for confirming our suspicions, that there is, even more so, a strong need for parliamentary oversight of the national defence file.

Concerning Bill C-77: Col. Wry is correct when she writes that some of Bill C-77 was put into force on royal assent, however, our original article does not argue this. Our original article clearly states that the specific provisions abolishing the unfair military summary trial process and giving rights to victims of crime have not been put into force—and they have not. The exaggerated passage of time in having the will of Parliament acted upon swiftly in these two critical areas is causing prejudice to members of the Canadian Armed Forces, who are still being subjected to the unconstitutional summary trial process.

Finally, June 2021 will mark nearly 10 years since the last independent review of the National Defence Act was completed. This is double the five-year timeframe originally envisioned for such reviews.

Michel Drapeau and **Joshua Juneau**
Ottawa, Ont.

(The letter-writers are administrative lawyers based in Ottawa, Ont., whose practice focuses on military and veterans issues.)

Canada needs a public Disease Early Warning system, says reader

Canada needs a new DEW line—a Disease Early Warning system. The Hill Times reporter Mike Lapointe's Sept. 7 article, "Combatting a pandemic requires mobilizing intelligence," primarily addresses Canada's response to a public health crisis. While response policies and procedures are essential, we need a public health early warning system to improve response efficiency and effectiveness.

A Lancet article in July 2020 noted that low- to middle-income countries had a better response and COVID-19 outcomes compared to most European countries that "attempted a more nuanced, slowly evolving approach by gradually responding with control measures as infection rates rise." On Sept. 8, Global News reported that the Minister of Health, Patty Hajdu, ordered a review following reports that the national pandemic early warning system was shut down last year.

The Public Health Agency of Canada, CSIS, and the Department of National Defence must develop made-in-Canada early warning and pandemic response monitoring and methods to protect Canadians.

Pandemics are public health issues, as well as a national security issue. On Jan. 20, a few weeks before we all learned about COVID-19, the World Health Organization published its top 13 challenges for the next decade. No. 6 was pandemics: "When it comes to disease outbreaks or epidemics, it is important to stay ahead of the curve, especially when millions of lives are potentially at risk … countries need to focus on preparedness and preventative measures."

Our new DEW line needs to be a highly secure but open system. Open to capture data from any public or private health-care information source, any location, and any technology. The data must also be available to any analysis tool to ensure that researchers can use any analytics method, especially evolving machine learning tools. Finally, and ideally, because of mobile technology and the advent of edge computing, there is a massive opportunity for researchers, health-care professionals, policymakers, and even the public to create, research, and access public health data with their mobile devices. Canada has the technology and the innovation ability to keep its citizens safe. We can act now on lessons learned to ensure that we receive early warnings of the next public health challenge that could hit.

Michael Gaffney
CEO and Chairman of Leonovus Inc.
Ottawa, Ont.

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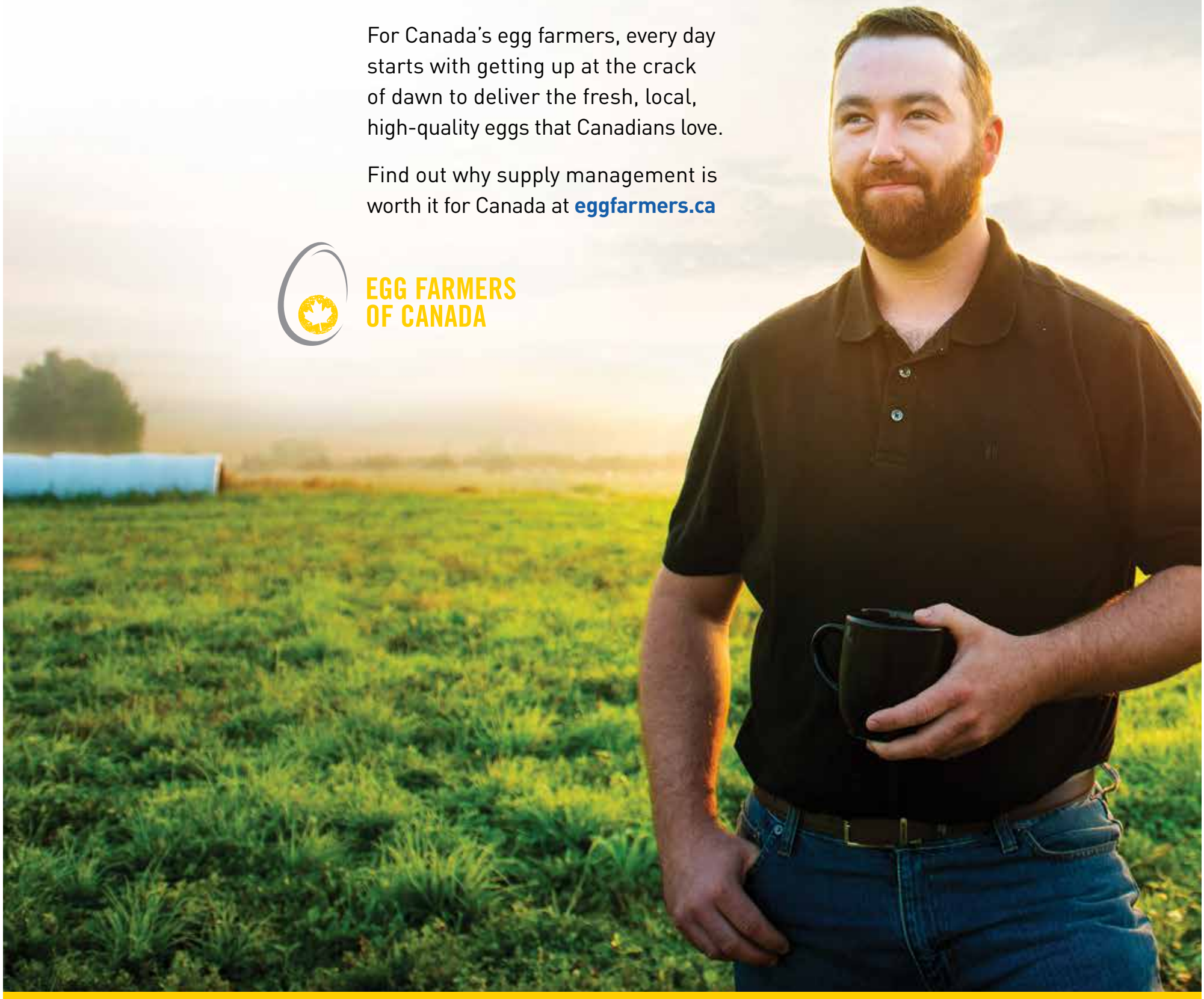


Opinion

Aline Chrétien's life was more than just a political story

She was the half that made Jean Chrétien whole.

Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—The passing of Aline Chrétien is more than just a political story. It is a love story of epic proportions.

Madame, as everyone affectionately called her, was more than a wise counsel for her husband.

She was the half that made him whole.

It goes without saying that Jean Chrétien would likely never have become prime minister without the advice, support and love of his lifelong partner.

Her passing was only two days after their 63rd wedding anniversary and they had been together for 68 years.

Madame was the partner who shaped a rebellious young man into a future Member of Parliament and prime minister.

While everyone thought of Chrétien as the "Little guy from Shawinigan" it was Aline who put the polish on the pair.

I was lucky enough to attend her funeral in Shawinigan and it was an incredible reflection of her life's passions.

The service was held in a unique Québécois church that carries a national historic site designation because of the artist who painted incredible murals on the walls. The famed muralist Ozias Leduc was part of a Quebec religious painting mural movement and he spent the last 13 years of his life painting the walls in Notre-Dame-de-la-Presentation church. It was his chef d'oeuvre and a great illustration of the Symbolist movement.

The walls were literally a story of the community, including paintings of Indigenous persons, coureurs de bois, and the choppers of wood, and hewers of water who built Shawinigan.

Aline Chrétien's private funeral was a blend of hometown roots with the classic touch that so epitomized her.

Even the music was reminiscent of her life as a small-town girl who rose to the highest heights of the land.

Gregory Charles, a famous Quebec musician, played and sang at the ceremony and his mix was truly unique.

The choices ranged from Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah* to *Panis Angelicus*, a funeral hymn associated with most Catholic funerals.

The final tribute was from Felix Leclerc, his famous folksong, *Moi, mes souliers*, which could have been written for Aline Chrétien. The opening, "Me, my shoes have travelled far" was an allegory for her life.

Aline Chrétien, pictured with former House law clerk Joe Maingot on Oct. 25, 2018, at former PM Jean Chrétien's book launch for, My Stories, My Times, at the Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Her daughter, France, delivered an allocution that was a perfect tribute to her mother's private and public accomplishments.

Her love of music and language was present throughout. France said that when her father asked her mother about the value of establishing a Millennium Scholarship Fund, she thought it was a wonderful idea. She told her husband that if such financial help had been available when she was young, she might have gone to university.

Instead, she followed the path of many young women into secretarial school. But one of her proudest accomplishments was the recognition she received with multiple honorary degrees, and her ultimate appointment as chancellor of Laurentian university, one of Canada's few bilingual universities.

France also referenced her mother's love of family and her fair-minded approach to life. On her deathbed, Aline Chrétien was visiting with grandchildren, and said to each, in French "Oh, how handsome you are." One of the mischievous ones asked her directly, grandma, tell the truth, who is the most handsome.

She laughed and weakly retorted, oh you are bad. But she would not pick one over the others.

Madame was also a very religious person and the archbishop gave a wonderful homily in recognition of her values. She was a Chretien and a strong Christian.

Attendance at the funeral was limited by COVID distancing rules. Pews were roped off and attendees were also separated by the two-metre distance.

The attendance included close family, childhood friends and political allies through the years. One leadership organizer came all the way from Vancouver. Two current ministers were in attendance, Minister of Veterans Affairs and longtime friend Lawrence MacAulay and Foreign Affairs Minister and local Liberal Member of Parliament François-Philippe Champagne.

The former mayor of Shawinigan was there to pay her respects along with several Liberal political organizers who began and ended their lives in politics at the Chrétien's side.

Aline Chrétien's siblings were there as well as the family's extensive clan on Chrétien's side.

Jean Chrétien's nephew participated in readings on the altar.

Because of COVID-19, there was no reception after the mass, but friends gathered on the front steps of the church to pay their respects to the family.

The family is planning a celebration of Aline Chrétien's life in Ottawa once pandemic restrictions are lifted.

Jean Chrétien plans to take time with family and then get right back to work.

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

The Hill Times

Politics, polls, and persuasion

With a federal election possibly in the offing, I guarantee you the Liberals, Conservatives, and New Democrats are all polling the electorate like crazy right now.

Gerry Nicholls

Post-Partisan Pundit

OAKVILLE, ONT.—This might surprise you, but when the next federal election rolls around, I doubt our political parties will be airing many media ads designed to persuade voters to change their minds.

They rarely do.

Okay, I know that sounds strange, since, after all, persuading people is supposedly what politics is all about, so let me quickly clarify by saying, my point is political parties don't concoct electoral communication strategies for the purpose of convincing people to shift their partisan allegiances or to accept new ideas.

In other words, the Conservatives won't try to persuade dyed-in-the-wool Liberals to vote Conservative nor will Liberals try to persuade dyed-in-the-wool Conservatives to vote Liberal.

Nor will either party try to get people to change their minds on issues like the carbon tax or COVID.

That's just now how political persuasion works.

For one thing, no matter how brilliant an advertising campaign might be, it's nearly impossible to get people to alter their views on issues once they've already made up their minds.

And remember too, most political TV advertisements are only 30 seconds long.

So, given these limitations, no political party will ever be in a position during an election to overwhelm people with facts or with cogent, compelling arguments.

Famed American philosopher Eric Hoffer understood this reality when he wrote, "The truth seems to be that propaganda on its own cannot force its way into unwilling minds; neither can it inculcate something wholly new."

So, what can propaganda—or to use a more euphemistic term, "political persuasion"—actually do?

Well, typically the point of political persuasion is to get people to more firmly believe what they already believe.

Or to put that another way, political advertising simply reinforces preconceptions.

The persuasion goal of the Conservative Party's media advertising in the next election, for instance, will be to get people who already don't like the Liberals or their policies to like them even less and to get people who already like the Conservatives or their policies to like them even more.

This is why polling is such an important part of any political advertising strategy.

Simply put, before you come up with a political messaging plan for an election campaign, you need to know what voters (especially undecided voters) already like or don't like when it comes to the various party leaders and their platforms.

Armed with this information, political parties can then craft their election messages to take advantage of voter biases.

Accordingly, with a federal election possibly in the offing, I guarantee you the Liberals, Conservatives, and New Democrats are all polling the electorate like crazy right now, each of them asking questions along the lines of: "What do you think are Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (or Erin O'Toole's or Jagmeet Singh's) biggest strengths; what are his biggest weakness? Which of his policies do you absolutely love; which do you totally hate?"

To see how this might work in practice, let's say, to use a completely hypothetical example, polls indicate undecided Canadian voters don't like Trudeau's trade policy with China, but they're okay with his massive deficits.

Knowing this, the Conservative Party would likely not spend their precious resources trying to convince undecided voters as to why Trudeau's deficits are bad for the economy, even if that message should be a key part of their ideological pitch.

If they did, nobody would listen.

Rather they'd be much more likely to run a series of ads inflaming existing animosity against Trudeau's China trade policy, since it's easier to go with the flow.

To quote Hoffer again, propaganda "penetrates only into minds already open."

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

The Hill Times

Politics

Will there ever be a right time for concerted action on climate?

The climate crisis is accelerating with every passing season. If not now, when? If not us, who?

Susan Riley

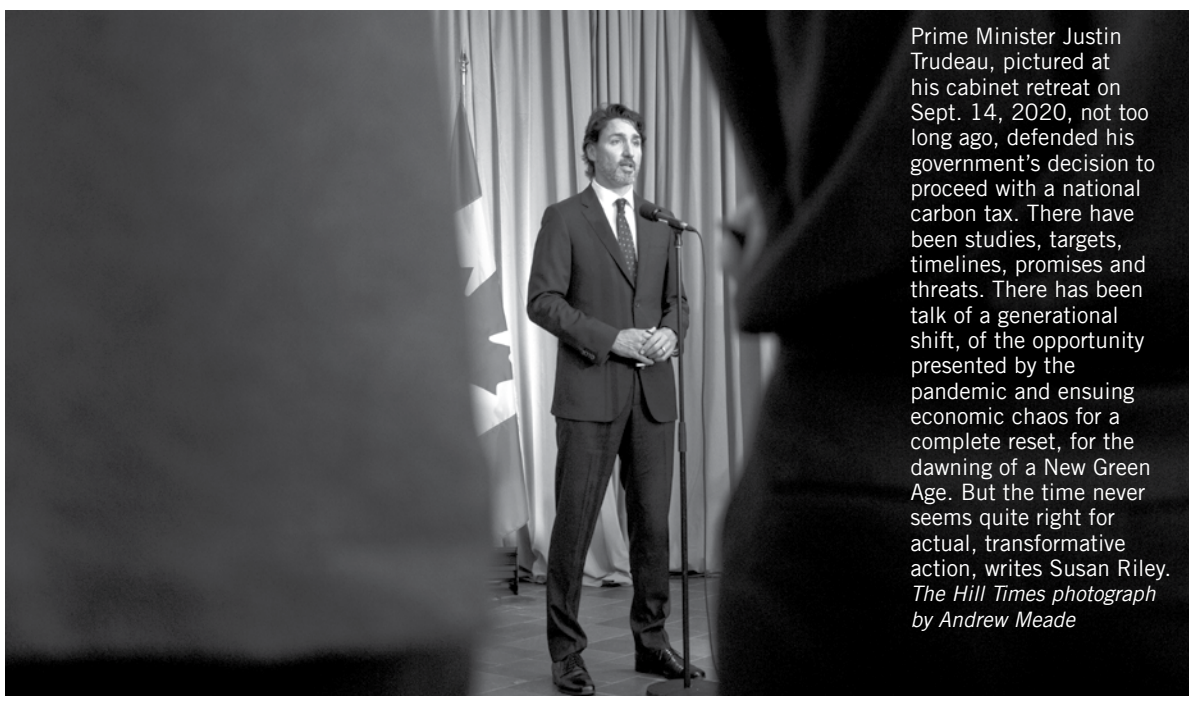
Impolitic

CHELSEA, QUE.—"If not now, when? If not us, who?"That was Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, not too long ago, defending his government's decision to proceed with a national carbon tax. The urgency of the climate crisis, the requirement for strong regulation, promises of targeted federal support for green technologies—not to mention the jobs and prosperity that will follow transition to a green economy—they have been the subject of a million Liberal speeches. Predating Trudeau, even.

There have been studies, targets, timelines, promises and threats. There has been talk of a generational shift, of the opportunity presented by the pandemic and ensuing economic chaos for a complete reset, for the dawning of a New Green Age. But the time never seems quite right for actual, transformative action. And, if rumbles around Ottawa are to be believed, the upcoming Throne Speech could be another missed opportunity.

The consensus—among central Canadian pundits and pols, at least—is that a perky chat about the pandemic's upside, or a forced march towards a greener future, will not play well with voters infuriated by five-hour waits for a COVID test, worried sick about their children's return to school, or depressed at the onset of rising case numbers and colder weather. British Columbians might beg to differ; they might consider measures to contain climate change critically important, as they emerge, coughing and hacking, from smoke from the U.S. wildfires. But that isn't what central Canada usually means when it talks about "western alienation."

There is always an excuse—even for the most idealistic government—not to act. The oil sector is booming and any additional regulatory burden could kill the goose that is laying the golden egg. The oil sector is struggling and any additional regulatory burden could weaken it fatally. And then there is "Alberta," with its chronically irritated premiers, dark threats about leaving Confederation, and fruitless attempts at appeasement by federal leaders of all stripes. Far from being exploited by uncaring eastern rulers, "Alberta"—the province's political and business elite, that is—looks more often like the tail that wags the dog.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured at his cabinet retreat on Sept. 14, 2020, not too long ago, defended his government's decision to proceed with a national carbon tax. There have been studies, targets, timelines, promises and threats. There has been talk of a generational shift, of the opportunity presented by the pandemic and ensuing economic chaos for a complete reset, for the dawning of a New Green Age. But the time never seems quite right for actual, transformative action, writes Susan Riley. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

There are invariably international obstacles, too. Donald Trump is elected and he weakens Obama-era methane regulations and Canada has no choice but to delay implementation of our own world-leading regime for fear of rendering our fossil fuel industry uncompetitive. Or so goes the familiar argument. "We have to listen to industry," was the way former environment minister Catherine McKenna put it at the time.

Even the overdue federal-provincial attempt to phase out coal has run into a wall. Alberta Premier Jason Kenney's government is now opening certain previously protected regions in the Rocky Mountain foothills to new coal mines.

This is how, incrementally, progress is stalled and emissions continue to rise. Like the Harper government before them, the Liberals promised to phase out subsidies to oil and gas, but, what with the pipeline squeeze, the boom in Texas shale, the anti-competitive antics of Russia and OPEC, the pandemic—well, isn't it far easier to simply increase subsidies, which is what the Trudeau government has recently done? (For all the thanks they get from their many western-Canadian fans on Twitter.)

That said, the latest round of payouts to the oil sector were artfully engineered and could point to a new path forward—an answer to both the jobs dilemma and rising emissions. In April, Trudeau announced a $1.7-billion aid package for the energy sector intended to clean up nearly 100,000 orphaned and inactive oil and gas wells that dot rural Alberta, and, to a lesser degree, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. There was another $750-million in "recoverable contributions" to oil and gas companies to help eliminate methane emissions.

These are costs industry should have borne when it was making truckloads of money, but now companies with orphan wells are either pleading poverty or they've already skipped town. To keep oil service companies, and some laid-off oil workers employed, the federal and Alberta governments devised the clean-up operations, intended to create up to 10,000 jobs and help the environment. So much for the revered "polluter pay principle," but at least this subsidy isn't dumping money into development of new oilsands plays.

As to methane emissions, if companies take full advantage of the federal cash, that could have an oversized positive impact on reducing emissions. Methane, much of which originates from oil and gas operations, accounts for one-quarter of global warming and the technology to capture the powerful greenhouse gas is both affordable and accessible.

So these recent, low-key federal initiatives have the potential, at least, to reduce our carbon footprint and get us closer to our climate goals—provided they are monitored and the improvements measured.

But they won't engage the public as readily as other hardly novel, but still useful, ideas: notably, a national building retrofit program and more support for the purchase and manufacturing of electric vehicles. Both were recommendations from the recent multi-partisan Task Force for a Resilient Recovery, which included former Trudeau senior aide and long-time environmentalist, Gerry Butts.

The question now is how prominently such potentially popular ideas will feature in this week's speech from the Throne and how robustly they will be financed in the anticipated spring budget. In the early days of the pandemic, when various cabinet ministers were heralding a revolutionary embrace of green everything, there was talk of $40,000 interest-free loans for individuals and businesses to conduct energy retrofits.

In theory, this would create more work for already-busy renovators and builders and capture emissions from leaky old buildings. In reality, applicants would have to come up with cash for the work, up front, at only a slight tax saving. Not top-of-mind for pandemic-shaken families, many of whom are more concerned about making next month's mortgage. But that doesn't mean it shouldn't happen. After the pandemic passes, the climate crisis remains.

Expanded subsidies for electric vehicles, residential and commercial, and for charging stations, also hold great potential for lowering emissions, given that transportation is responsible for 25 per cent of greenhouse gases. And incentives clearly work, as they have in Norway, where near half the population drives EVs. It is no co-incidence that EV ownership in Canada—although still less than five per cent of the mix—is highest in B.C. and Quebec, where provincial incentives, coupled with a $5,000 federal grant for new vehicles, makes zero-emissions vehicles almost as affordable as regular cars.

The problem is they are still scarce. Demand far outstrips supply in Quebec, for instance, which raises a genuinely revolutionary idea: why doesn't Canada manufacture electric vehicles here, for sale domestically and elsewhere? Is that not creating well-paid jobs of the future? When the General Motors plant in Oshawa was shuttered a few years ago because the company said it wanted to focus on building electric in the U.S., Canadian governments missed one opportunity to keep the plant, and the product, here.

There is already an incubating electric vehicle industry in Quebec. A company in Saint-Jérôme, for instance, just sold 50 electric trucks to CN to transport goods between rail stops. It also produces electric school buses and minibuses. If Canada can manufacture light-armoured vehicles for sale to Saudi Arabia in London, Ont., why not electric passenger cars in southern Ontario, with its experienced, well-trained workforce?

Unfortunately, the Liberals are not being pushed on these questions by any of the opposition parties. The Conservatives are even more risk-averse and pro-fossil fuel than the Liberals. New Democrats, especially led by Jagmeet Singh, have shown scant interest in environmental action, beyond the usual platitudes. That leaves the temporarily leaderless Green Party (leaderless until next month, at least), who, without Elizabeth May's formidable voice, have all but disappeared. And, while stronger social supports are a top priority right now, the climate crisis is accelerating with every passing season.

If not now, when? If not us, who? Asking for a friend.

Susan Riley is a veteran political columnist who writes regularly for The Hill Times.

The Hill Times

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NFA | CANADA'S NATIONAL FIREARMS ASSOCIATION

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on Sept. 15, 2020, and his cabinet continue to make errors, but Canadians will forgive them as long as the pandemic remains at the top of their minds, writes Michael Harris. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Trudeau's future is tied to the pandemic

It won't be long before opposition parties are going to realize that COVID-19 is Justin Trudeau's best punch. They will soon stop walking into it.

Michael Harris

Harris

HALIFAX—Orcas, they say, are attacking boats in the waters off Spain and Portugal.

Justin Trudeau will soon know exactly how those mariners feel. As Canada's decaffeinated democracy slouches back into action, the prime minister himself will be personally rammed from all sides.

Freshly-minted Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole has already blundered into the COVID-19 saga, slamming the government for not having rapid tests for the killer-virus. It is a dog that won't hunt.

O'Toole based his comments on his personal experience. It ought to be a reminder that there is only so much you can do with anecdotal evidence.

O'Toole and his family had to wait for hours for COVID-19 testing, and then didn't get it. Apparently, O'Toole did not notice those long line-ups until he was in one of them. They have been around for months, and it's been crickets from him until now.

O'Toole wants the federal government to speed up the testing program, the way that Donald Trump is frog-jumping American scientists toward an instant vaccine—preferably before November 3rd. Some one should tell him that testing is a provincial responsibility.

The Conservative leader forgets something fundamental here. Canadians don't want voodoo science producing quick-hit tests that come up with false positive results, as has happened in the U.S.. The only thing worse than no test is a bad test. Nor are Canadians clamouring for instant vaccines that create more problems than they solve.

President Gerald Ford discovered the problem with speed-science when he tried to rush out a vaccine for a deadly strain of swine flew back in 1976. He got his wish by bullying the Centre for Disease Control, just as Trump is doing today.

The rest was a shipwreck. The flu never got out of Fort Dix, but 30 people who took the rushed vaccine against it died. Canadians want science that doesn't quack. Giddy-up is for horses, not immunologists.

So try as they might, the opposition won't have much luck taking the government to task over its handling of COVID-19. That's why the imminent Throne Speech will continue to focus on the pandemic. It is the secret sauce of its continuing public support.

Trudeau has had the country's collective back during the pandemic, while south of the border, Trump has stabbed his citizenry in the front. Polls verify that Canadians appreciate the difference. They will remember how the PM got the big shapes right. In the crunch, he and his government were there. It won't be long before opposition parties are going to realize that COVID-19 is Justin Trudeau's best punch. They will soon stop walking into it.

But that doesn't mean they can't pile up points against his government with political jabs on a host of lesser issues. In a show of either incompetence or arrogance, the PM has dropped his guard, and given his critics some damaging openings.

In the absence of an election, parliamentary committees will resume their work, and more damaging information could come out about the WE Charity fiasco. The ex-finance minister and the founders of WE might not be the only casualties before the dust finally clears.

Out there on the horizon, this darkening thundercloud: Mario Dion will inform the country whether the PM himself broke the conflict of interest laws yet again by failing to recuse himself from the cabinet vote that handed administrative control of a now cancelled $900-million government program to WE. The NDP is already blaming Trudeau personally for the demise of the WE Charity in Canada. Expect all opposition parties to pile on.

Fuelling their enthusiasm is further proof from the ethics commissioner that the Liberal Old Boys Club is very much alive and well. Mario Dion has ordered nine senior government officials to stop all official dealings with former U.S. ambassador David McNaughton for one year.

Dion found that McNaughton, now an executive with Palantir Technologies Canada, violated Section 33 of the Conflict of Interest Act. That section forbids former public office holders from acting in such a manner as to take improper advantage of his or her previous public office. McNaughton, a former lobbyist, was one of Trudeau's first diplomatic appointments.

Included in the list of senior government officials who must cease dealing with McNaughton for the next twelve months are: Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland; Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains; Chief of the Defence Staff Jonathan Vance; and Trudeau's director of policy and cabinet affairs in the PMO, Rick Theis. Try calling any one of these people, if you think they pick up their phones for just anybody.

The opposition will want to know exactly what McNaughton and all those officials talked about. Was it all an exercise in pro bono assistance during the pandemic, as the former ambassador says, or something a little more nuanced? The opposition will also be taking Trudeau to task over his fatal attraction to interfering in judicial or quasi-judicial matters.

The PM face-planted on the SNC-Lavalin Affair, improperly interfering in a criminal case. So it was a little surprising that he said that Julie Payette was a "great" Governor Governor, who was doing an "excellent job."

How so? To endorse Payette while an ostensibly "independent" investigation into the GG's alleged abuse of staff is ongoing is putting the cart before the mule-train. Once again, the finger-print on the scales of justice belongs to Justin Trudeau. His political rivals will undoubtedly capitalize on the political forensics. How can he endorse Payette, without knowing if she actually created a toxic working environment at Rideau Hall?

It is impossible to imagine that the Green Party will neglect to call the PM out over what his environment and climate change minister recently told the CBC. Jonathan Wilkinson said oil and gas will be around for several decades to come. It would be "silly," the minister said, not to extract these natural resources for energy purposes.

Does the PM believe that? He seemed to in 2017 when he told an audience in Houston Texas that no country would find 173 billion barrels of oil in the ground and leave them there. He seemed to again in 2018 when his government bought a leaky old pipeline in the midst of a climate emergency triggered by carbon emissions.

But since his hyperbole in Houston and that ringing endorsement of the tar sands, Trudeau's rhetoric has shifted greenward. Don't be surprised if Elizabeth May asks the PM if he believes the science, which says the planet has just one decade to get it right on global warming. Or does he agree with Jonathan Wilkinson, who sees an oily future stretching out to the crack of doom?

The view from 30,000 feet comes down to this: if the dreaded second phase of COVID-19 strikes this autumn and winter, and the Liberals continue to provide cover for Canadians, they are probably politically bullet-proof.

But should the pandemic surprise the experts, should it recede instead of explode, matters of character and judgement could come back and haunt this government. The future of everyone, including the Liberals, depends upon the virus.

Michael Harris is an award-winning journalist and author.

The Hill Times

TRANSITIONING VETERANS ARE LOOKING TO US FOR CAREER HELP DURING POST-COVID RECOVERY

ABOUT US

Founded in 2012, Helmets to Hardhats is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to assisting veterans who are transitioning from military service into well paid, highly-skilled second careers in the construction industry.

In partnership with construction trade unions, governments and industry, H2H streamlines the pathways to apprenticeship, advanced training and career placement opportunities in the construction industry with registered employers who support the men and women who serve our country — veterans, active reservists, and senior cadets.

OUR VISION FOR POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

The construction industry, like so many others, has been ravaged by COVID-19, and veterans who have wanted to kickstart their second careers in the industry have had to wait out the health crisis. As we move into economic recovery, there will be more eager career-seekers than H2H can handle.

On any given day, about 300 transitioning veterans are registered with H2H who are available and seeking a second career in construction and related industries.

To date, we have successfully placed over 1000 veterans into highly skilled apprenticeship programs and direct hires with unionized employers across Canada.

Faced with a skills shortage in the construction industry, we want to do more — and we can. We want to double our placement capacity, and broaden our focus to include more direct employer opportunities and to assist more homeless veterans.

WE'RE ASKING FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

To achieve our goal, we could use some help. We're asking for assistance from the federal government in our efforts to get more transitioning veterans started in their second careers, to offer reservists and senior cadets the chance to begin quality apprenticeship programs, and to continue to seek out homeless veterans.

Helmets to Hardhats wants to ensure that the men and women who have given so much for their country get their fair share of employment opportunities during Canada's economic recovery, and are not left behind.

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Global

So the question in the United Kingdom today is this: if Prime Minister Boris Johnson is Blackadder, who is his Baldrick? Who actually put Johnson up to passing a new law that says Britain can unilaterally change the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement he signed with the European Union less than eight months ago, asks Gwynne Dyer. Image courtesy of Pixabay

Boris Johnson's cunning plan

We are asked to believe that Boris Johnson—BORIS JOHNSON—has belatedly realized there will be a crisis in the Irish Sea next January, and decided to push through a highly controversial law right now to give himself cover for an illegal act next year. It's so out of character that it begs the question: who put him up to it?

Gwynne Dyer

Global Affairs

LONDON, U.K.—"I've got a plan so cunning you could put a tail on it and call it a weasel," said Blackadder's sidekick Baldrick in the BBC's brilliant historical comedy series *Blackadder*. In fact, he said "I have a cunning plan" in almost every episode, but the plans hardly ever worked, and it became a popular catch-phrase.

So the question in the United Kingdom today is this: if Prime Minister Boris Johnson is Blackadder, who is his Baldrick? Who actually put Johnson up to passing a new law that says Britain can unilaterally change the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement he signed with the European Union less than eight months ago?

Did he not understand what the treaty said? Unlikely. He negotiated it with the EU himself.

Does he realize that a treaty is a legally enforceable international agreement? Presumably, because even his own cabinet minister for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis, admits that plan "does break international law in a specific and limited way."

Did he plan from the start to break the treaty? Probably not. This is Boris Johnson— well, Al Johnson, really; 'Boris' is just his stage name—and he regards worrying about next week as long-term planning.

Johnson was well aware that the problem that brought down Theresa May's government last year and made him prime minister was the Irish border. Peace in Northern Ireland depends on there being an open border with the Irish Republic. EU trade with the United Kingdom, post-Brexit, depends on controlling that border so that there is not a massive smuggling problem. Square that circle, if you can.

May tried to square it by agreeing that the customs border would effectively run down the middle of the Irish Sea, between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. That way, no customs controls would be needed on the border between the two parts of Ireland.

She never got that through parliament, because so many MPs from her own Conservative Party saw it as an unacceptable breach of British sovereignty. Eventually her government fell, and Johnson won the Conservative leadership and a large majority in an election last December by promising to fix that problem and 'get Brexit done'.

But he couldn't fix it, of course. Instead, he just accepted the same withdrawal terms as May had when the negotiating time ran out, with a few extra concessions to the EU and the border still firmly in the middle of the Irish Sea. But he went around telling everyone in the UK who hadn't read the text that it wasn't true.

On the strength of that 'victory' he won a big majority in last December's election. How could he imagine that this would not come back to bite him?

By following standard Boris operating procedure: bluster and lie to win time, and hope something magical turns up in the end to save the day. If that doesn't happen, then stage a disguised last-minute surrender, because without a trade deal with the EU, its biggest trading partner, the UK is heading for a massive economic crash.

Johnson has been on course for that surrender for some time now, but a new trade deal doesn't cancel the existing Withdrawal Agreement, so the border controls will still appear in the Irish Sea next January. His instinct would be to blame it all on Johnny Foreigner and his tricky ways, and maybe he could ride out the storm.

Instead, he has announced that he is going to tear up an international treaty with the EU. This is most un-Boris-like behaviour.

We are asked to believe that Boris Johnson—BORIS JOHNSON—has belatedly realized there will be a crisis in the Irish Sea next January, and decided to push through a highly controversial law right now to give himself cover for an illegal act next year. It's so out of character that it begs the question: who put him up to it?

Not exactly Baldrick, but Johnson's senior political adviser is Dominic Cummings, whose passionate and scarcely concealed desire is to crash the United Kingdom out of the European Union with no deal at all.

The other man who truly wants that outcome is Michael Gove, the most powerful person in Johnson's cabinet, who used to be Cummings's main patron in government. Together, they have somehow talked Johnson into doing something so stupid that it may make a trade deal impossible and end his prime ministership.

They probably just told him that such a grave threat would bring the spineless foreigners to heel. The EU would let Johnson have his way, forget about putting an Irish-U.K. border anywhere (even though the Irish Republic is an EU member), and all would be well.

And the poor mug believed them.

Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy (and Work)'.

The Hill Times

Opinion

Throne Speech writers must reflect Indigenous views

Indigenous rage will not fade away. With more allies than ever before, politicians can't assume it won't make the evening news anymore.

Rose LeMay

Stories, Myths, and Truths

OTTAWA—The OPP is arresting journalists, and Throne-Speech writers need to understand why.

Journalists in Canada sometimes get flamed on social media, perhaps receive some anger in their pursuit of truth, but there is a tacit understanding that it's part of the job.

In India, Hungary, and Russia, journalists have been arrested for their work. It's happening in the United States too; according to the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker, more than 100 journalists have been arrested in the U.S. while covering Black Lives Matter.

And it is happening here, in your backyard, at 1492 Land Back Lane in southern Ontario.

Treaty promises from 1784 to protect that specific piece of land for Six Nations remain unfulfilled and in dispute. Haldimand County supported development on the land in 2003, and signed an agreement with the Six Nations elected chief and council in May 2019. As part of that agreement, the elected chief and council would publicly support the development, receive funding for a new school, receive an equal amount of land elsewhere, and dissuade any protests.

Six Nations also has a traditional form of government, and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs did not sign on. During the summer people built a blockade to stop the development, and things started getting dangerous. Tires were burned, police brought out the rubber bullets or beanbag ammo. Superior Court Justice R. John Harper supported injunctions against the blockade in late August, without regard for historical treaties.

Why is there so much rage against development of this 107-acre piece of land?

A very similar story played out in 1990 at Oka, a key point in Canadian history. Then-prime minister Brian Mulroney gave the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples the task to "redress literally centuries of injustice."The commission called for large-scale change in colonial policy and law—and then nothing changed. How do we know?

Clayoquot, 1993; Ipperwash, 1995; Gustafsen Lake, 1995; Listuguj, 1998; Caledonia, 2006; Val D'or, 2007; Bouleau Lake, 2010; Idle No More, 2013; Rexton, 2013; Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015; Muskrat Falls, 2016; Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report, 2019; Wet'suwet'en, 2020.

The 1492 blockade is complicated by the two governments of Six Nations. It's complicated because any Indigenous assembly, blockade or round dance in the street is held on the centuries of unfilled promises and empty words of Canada. It's complicated because Indigenous rights to assembly are not protected in this country.

Justin Trudeau and Doug Ford said nice words about the 1492 crisis back in late August. Since then, the Ontario Provincial Police has arrested people at the blockade for mischief, and allegedly followed some home. Indigenous journalist Karl Dockstader, recipient of the 2020 Canadian Journalism Federation-CBC Indigenous Journalism fellowship, was arrested.

We are on a slippery slope that other countries have followed, this trend of arresting journalists. The trend always ends badly for democracy. The OPP is not the arm of democracy to fix the 1492 crisis, nor was any police force the answer to any demand of an assembly of citizens. There is legitimate fear that reconciliation is truly dead, and Indigenous journalists and Indigenous peoples will always face risk at the hands of police, or becoming missing or murdered, or simply passed over by a country hell-bent on protecting the policy machine which consistently omits Indigenous peoples.

Demonstrators march through downtown Ottawa on Feb. 24, 2020, to support the Wet'suwet'en nation's protest of the building of the Coastal GasLink pipeline through its traditional territory. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Throne-Speech writers and party insiders, listen up. The crisis of Indigenous rage at the machine you work in will not fade away. More Canadians support the positions of Indigenous neighbours than ever, so the rationale that perhaps it won't make the evening news is weak or worse. It is your responsibility to reflect Indigenous Canadians' views and perspectives.

Rose LeMay is Tlingit from the West Coast and the CEO of the Indigenous Reconciliation Group. She writes twice a month about Indigenous inclusion and reconciliation. In Tlingit worldview, the stories are the knowledge system, sometimes told through myth and sometimes contradicting the myths told by others. But always with at least some truth.

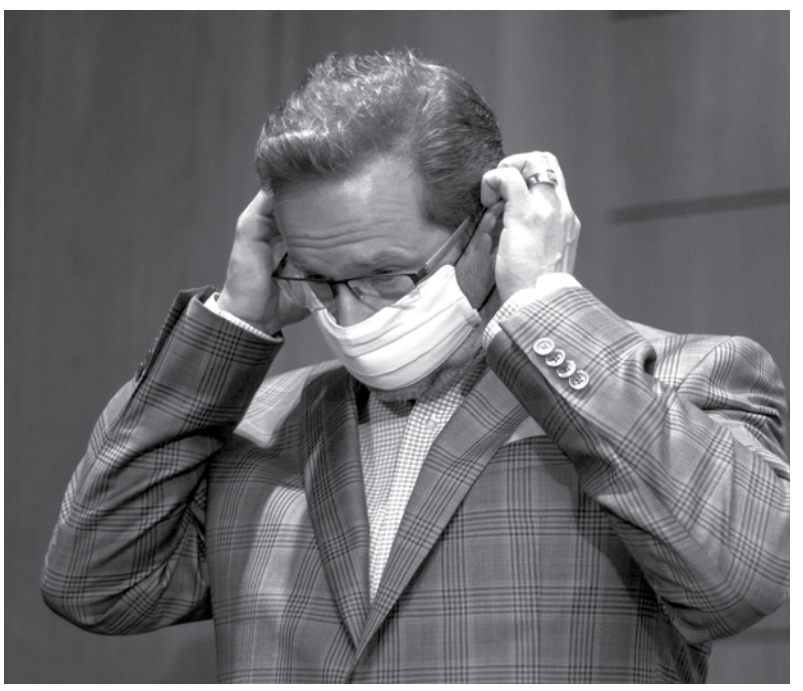
The Hill Times

Parliament: the reckoning episode

At the risk of ruining my already blemished record, I really don't think we are headed for an election this fall. There does not seem to be a critical mass of support, and it is highly unlikely that a party will be drawn into one against their will.

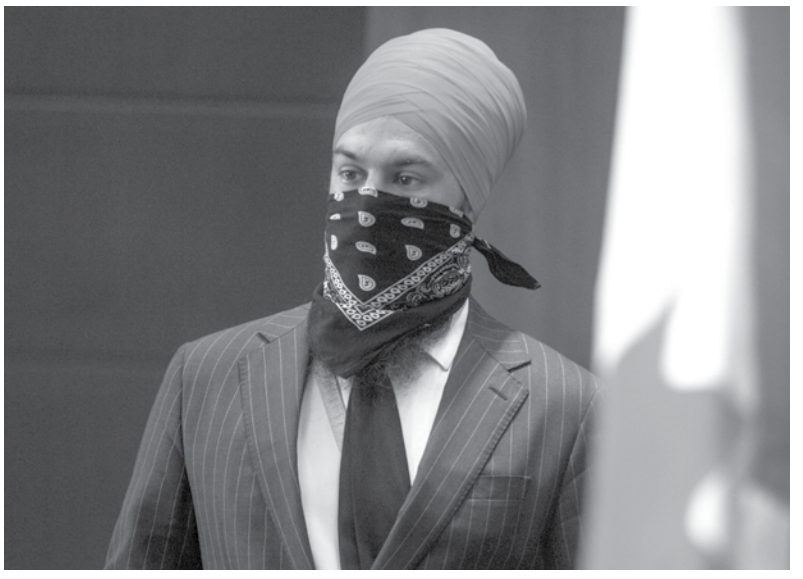
Joe Jordan
Opinion

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Sept. 15, 2020, arriving for last week's two-day cabinet retreat in Ottawa before Parliament resumes this week. The Liberals hold the most cards and I put them in the 'want-a-fall-election-but-don't-want-to-be-seen-as-wanting-one,' writes Joe Jordan. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, July 21, 2020, in the West Block on the Hill. The Bloc MPs are already on the record demanding the resignation of the prime minister, so I will take them at their word and put them in the 'want-an-election-this-fall' category. I am not entirely sure how they would make out, but the ability to be confidently wrong is not an uncommon political characteristic. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Newly elected Conservative Party Leader Erin O'Toole, pictured on Sept. 9, 2020, arriving his Conservative caucus meeting. I would put the Conservatives in the 'don't-want-an-election-this-fall-but-would-gladly-fight-one' category as Mr. O'Toole seems to have a grasp of what the Conservatives need to change to raise their compete level, and that's going to take time that a fall election would not provide them. *The Hill Times photograph Andrew Meade*



New Democratic Party Leader Jagmeet Singh, pictured on July 8, 2020, on the Hill. The aggressive actions on display through the recent WE Charity issue would suggest that they may not be content to simply play a supporting role and want the whole enchilada. The problem is that the 'whole enchilada' requires a policy suite and bank account they may not currently possess. I put them in the 'what-is-an-election?' category. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

OTTAWA—To paraphrase Tennyson, in the immediate aftermath of a minority government Throne Speech, an old political hack's fancy heavily turns to thoughts of elections.

So, amid the chaos, confusion, and uncertainty that the COVID-19 pandemic has sown, the second session of the 43rd Parliament of Canada will commence with a Speech from the Throne on Sept. 23. While we may not know exactly what the new processes and protocols surrounding it will be, we do know that a Throne Speech is a confidence matter and that it will put pressure on the government, as well as each of the opposition parties.

The traditional election equation starts with the base assumption that Canadians never want one, so you need to ensure that out of the gate your rhetoric roughly aligns with that sentiment. You then divide this original position by the actions you undertake to either cause or prevent an election, knowing full well that you only control, or influence, a portion of the elements at play. Multiply all this by the square root of these things never work out as planned and here we are!

At the risk of ruining my already blemished record, I really don't think we are headed for an election this fall. There does not seem to be a critical mass of support, and it is highly unlikely that a party will be drawn into one against their will.

The Bloc Québécois MPs are already on the record demanding the resignation of the prime minister, so I will take them at their word and put them in the "want-an-election-this-fall" category. I am not entirely sure how they would make out, but the ability to be confidently wrong is not an uncommon political characteristic.

The current NDP MPs are a bit of an enigma. Historically, they have skillfully leveraged minority governments to advance significant social policy, but that doesn't feel like what is happening here. The aggressive actions on display through the recent WE Charity issue would suggest that they may not be content to simply play a supporting role and want the whole enchilada. The problem is that the "whole enchilada" requires a policy suite and bank account they may not currently possess. I put them in the "what-is-an-election?" category.

The Conservatives are coming off some reasonable success in holding the government to account and also have a new leader. I would put them in the "don't-want-an-election-this-fall-but-would-gladly-fight-one" category as Conservative Party Erin O'Toole seems to have a grasp of what they need to change to raise their compete level, and that is going to take time that a fall election would not provide them. He has wisely turned down the temperature on the issue and provided himself an off ramp.

The Liberals hold the most cards and I put them in the "want-a-fall-election-but-don't-want-to-be-seen-as-wanting-one." While they have demonstrated the capacity to reach out to the opposition parties to get unanimous consent on several COVID-19 resolutions, this goodwill seems to be lacking heading into the Throne Speech, which I believe as I write this, has got to be pretty much in the can. They could easily slip party-specific poison pills into the document and orchestrate their own demise. This election scenario could work out for the Liberals, but a second wave of COVID-19 infections during the writ could also compromise logistics and call into question the rationale behind the decision. I suspect the major players are currently extracting the applicable lessons from the recent New Brunswick experience.

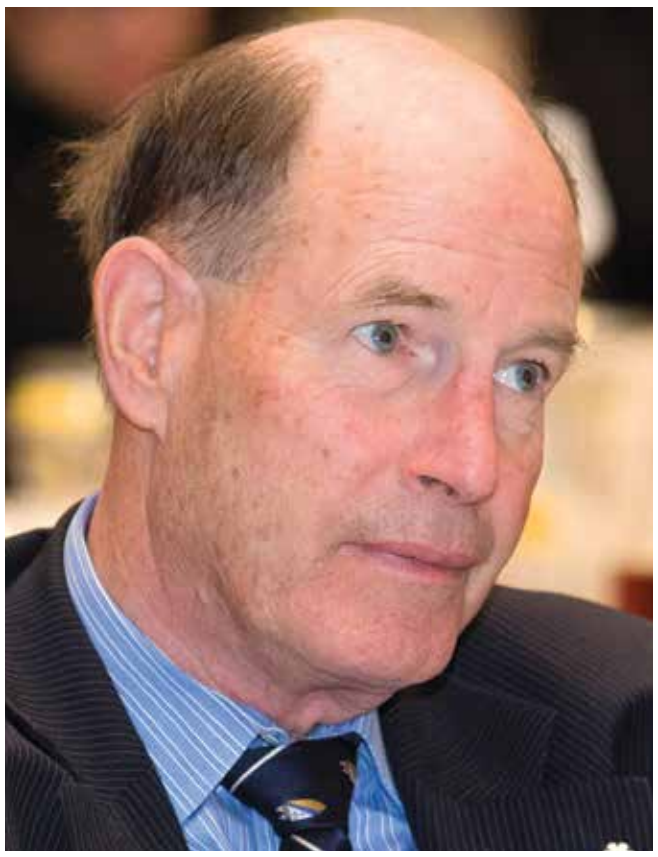
At the end of the sitting day, the fundamental challenge for the government is to capture the imagination of Canadians in the Throne Speech, to essentially take the Throne Speech where no Throne Speech has gone before, and they have to do this in a way that will not attract the support of the NDP. In my opinion, that specific political dichotomy is what will keep Parliamentarians in their seats until the spring, or at least until a November budget has us repeat the confidence dance.

Political parties should also be careful to not underestimate how the local and prolonged impacts of the pandemic may have permanently altered the view that average Canadians have, in terms of the fundamental role of government in a modern society. That is ballot box stuff, and I think the next election will be determined based on which party is best at reading the room.

Finally, the road to an election is never linear and endless analysis may be interesting, but keep in mind that it is usually testosterone, and not policy, that pushes the machine over the edge.

Joe Jordan was a second-generation Liberal Member of Parliament and is currently a senior consultant at BlueSky Strategies Group in Ottawa.

The Hill Times



Former Bank of Canada governor David Dodge released a paper in September recommending a plan to get Canada's stagnant economy on track. Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland is in charge of crafting the government's plan, which will be unveiled in the upcoming Throne Speech and the next budget. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade, file photograph*

Liberals should heed David Dodge's plan to fix the economy

It's time we came to grips with the reality that Canada does not have an economy today that can deliver good jobs and the wealth we need to sustain and expand the public goods we value.

David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—David Dodge has done Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland a huge favour.

The former deputy minister of finance and governor of the Bank of Canada has told them what they should do if they really want to build back better. In a policy paper that correctly defines many of the critical economic challenges Canada faces, Dodge sets out some policy priorities that should be uppermost in the forthcoming Speech from the Throne and a budget that should quickly follow.

As a country we have been too complacent for too long. We never really recovered from the 2008 financial crisis, despite the Harper government's belief that Canada was by then becoming a rich energy superpower or the Trudeau government's subsequent boasting that we were on track to become a global innovation superstar. Neither was true. Instead, we have been living off past investments and increasing our level of foreign debt to sustain our way of life when we should have been doing much more to build up the productive side of the economy

Now, the clock is running down. It's time we came to grips with the reality that Canada does not have an economy today that can deliver good jobs and the wealth we need to sustain and expand the public goods we value. Dodge's paper—*Two Mountains to Climb: Canada's Twin Deficits and How to Scale Them*—sets out to deal with that. It is published by the Public Policy Forum and can be found on its website.

The paper focuses on two big challenges. One is our chronic current account deficit, now in its 12th consecutive year, which as Dodge says, is "a broad measure of our trading and investment relationship with the rest of the world" and which reflects our poor economic competitiveness. Last year we ran a current account deficit of $47-billion and in 2018 of $55.5-billion. Most recently, Statistics Canada reports, we have been relying heavily on foreign creditors, with record foreign investment in Canadian debt securities, amounting to about $120-billion in the first half of this year. At the same time, foreign investors have been dumping shares in Canadian companies.

The second big challenges is our growing public debt, much of it taken on to support consumption rather than productive investment. Future deficits, Dodge argues, must prioritize productive investments to raise the growth potential of the economy needed to generate the jobs and wealth for future well-being and ensure our capacity to service our debt, thus avoiding a future fiscal or foreign exchange crisis. While it's not necessary to balance the budget soon, foreign investors will want to see that we have a longer-term plan to do so, with a credible fiscal anchor to benchmark progress.

Unless we address the current account deficit we will become a poorer nation with a declining standard of living. It is why investment and encouragement of innovation is so important. If we can improve our productivity performance, we can raise the potential growth rate of the economy and raise our ability to pay our way in the world while at the same time addressing the challenges of an aging society and increasing opportunity for the young.

"What is clear," Dodge writes, is that "we cannot continue to borrow from foreigners in order to maintain our standard of living. It was questionable before COVID-19 and is untenable now. A permanently rising current account deficit is not sustainable." In the long-run, he stresses, "the real income of Canadians and the public programmes they cherish depend on the value of the goods and services (GDP) Canadian workers and businesses produce."

Canada ran solid merchandise trade surpluses from 1997 to 2008 because we had things the rest of the world wanted to buy. This offset our deficits in services and investment and imports of consumer goods. We are not in that position today. Starting in 2009, we have had a merchandise trade deficit every year (aside from 2011 and 2014), with oil the only significant growth export, as our other major export sector—autos and auto parts—has been in decline for more than a decade.

Oil could be next. The "global demand for oil is on a long-term downwards trajectory and the price of crude is likely to remain well below 2010-2015 levels," Dodge warns. We will need to find new exports to pay our way in the world.

So what is to be done? Dodge sets out his priorities: help transition industry to advanced technologies and innovation in goods and services; help shift the resource sector into both cleaner production and higher-value activities; through training and other approaches, increase the participation and skills of Canadians in the workforce; improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public services, for example through digitization of delivery; and restore confidence in fiscal stability, including a long-term plan and a benchmark for fiscal balance.

This is not just a challenge for government. Business in Canada has neglected its long-term competitiveness. For example, Canadian businesses have lagged their U.S. counterparts in registering patents and generating revenue from IP. "By failing to invest in commanding their own IP (often for products and processes they have worked hard to develop) Canadian businesses have effectively been willing to forego significant streams of potential income from a new intangibles economy in which intellectual assets are surpassing physical ones as generators of wealth," Dodge argues. "Just as Canada has lagged behind other countries in commercializing our research efforts, now we have fallen behind in generating IP rents from our R&D expenditures."

Dodge's paper could not have been more timely. In blunt but realistic words Dodge has outlined what we have to do next. The Throne speech should tell us whether the government is getting serious on the economy or is simply drafting an opportunistic document focused on an election that could come sometime next year. What Dodge is telling Canadians is that we have to get serious.

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

The Hill Times

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On May 23rd, 1955, Canada's House of Commons held a final debate on the *Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries.* After several interventions, including a statement of support from then Fisheries Minister James Sinclair (Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's maternal grandfather), Lambton West Conservative MP Joseph Murphy rose to endorse the treaty with the United States. Murphy spoke about the economic value of the Great Lakes, and then concluded with what was perhaps the highest praise a budget-hawk could give the proposal: "*I never make it a practice, and I do not intend ever to make it a practice, to ask for moneys unless I think they can be wisely spent. I do not know of an instance where this government could spend money more wisely…*" Put another way, the fiscal conservative underscored that investment in the Great Lakes pays dividends well beyond the face value of any expenditure. Moments later, the House approved the Convention, and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) was born.

Sixty-five-years later, due to that legislative foresight, fish stocks have rebounded, sea lamprey populations have declined, and the Great Lakes provide 238,000 jobs, $45 billion in direct economic activity, $13 billion in recreation/ resource interests, and facilitate the movement of $20 billion worth of goods annually. Canada now contributes just $9.54 million each year to the GLFC's sea lamprey control mandate, to science on which to base fisheries management decisions, and to maintain the crucial cross-border relationships needed for the success of the Great Lakes fisheries as a shared resource. Despite all of this, Canada's current contribution is half what it should be.

South of the border, as our neighbours plan their post-COVID-19 economic recovery strategy, the Great Lakes are a central pillar. The US House of Representatives approved millions of dollars in new resources for initiatives such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative because US lawmakers understand that public investment in the Great Lakes causes an economic multiplier effect, sparks the creation of jobs, and leads to broad economic growth throughout the region.

In Canada, as part of the pre-budget consultation, the House Finance Committee received a GLFC request for Canada to contribute its full $19.44 million share to the effort. Not only would this enhanced investment fulfil Canada's international commitment, but it also would bolster the Great Lakes as a pan-Canadian economic and job-creation engine. To demonstrate the important and universal appeal of this call, the GLFC asked legislators for their views on the merit of this request. Their unedited replies are attached.

The Great Lakes are a National Treasure and Must be Viewed by Government as Such

Gordon Lightfoot's "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" tells of the tragic shipwreck of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald, a freighter carrying iron ore that was wrecked in a storm in 1975. When I first heard the song, I was struck by the human tragedy and by Lightfoot's great skill as a songwriter; upon later listens, I was reminded of the importance of the Great Lakes whereupon the tragedy took place. The Great Lakes are at once an economic powerhouse, an ecological treasure, and a bi-national responsibility.

In Queen of the Lakes, historian Mark L. Thompson explains: "The freshwater of the Great Lakes drains into the saltwater of the Atlantic Ocean by way of the St. Lawrence River. The lakes lie at an elevation more than six hundred feet above that of the Atlantic, and as the lakewater flows unceasingly downhill to the sea it drops over the towering falls on the Niagara River and swirls through a series of turbulent rapids on the lower St. Lawrence." The Great Lakes are a truly pan-Canadian asset, and whatever comes down the river – good or bad – has an impact on us in PEI, which stands at Canada's eastern doorway. We are all connected.

In the 1950s, the Great Lakes arrived at a crisis point. Poor environmental protections, cross-border bickering, and arrival of the invasive species sea lamprey created a perfect storm that threatened the existence of Canada's inland fishery. Such a loss would have cost the people of Canada countless billions of dollars and irreparably harmed our natural environment. Canadians won the day because governments started working in genuine collaboration with stakeholders, communities, states, and provinces. Today, sixty-five years later, we seem to have forgotten past lessons and strayed from true partnership on the Great Lakes. Successive governments have failed to appropriately fund important work related to the Great Lakes.

As Parliament returns, it is my hope that the government will ensure that the Great Lakes remain an economic and ecological boon to Canada. Surely, we do not have to wait until a crisis strikes to maintain a resource as essential as the Great Lakes. I urge the Government of Canada to again view the health and sustainability of the Great Lakes as matters of great national importance.

Sincerely,

Senator Diane Griffin (PEI)
Co-Chair, Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Taskforce

The Great Lakes are Just Too Great to Ignore

For decades we have witnessed the changing tides of the Great Lakes. From rising water levels, to toxic algae and increasing invasive species, these lakes have recently seen a surge in positive attention by business, industry, not-for-profits and governments. Yet, there is so much to do in order to keep these lakes healthy for the long-term starting with federal funding in the upcoming Budget for the lakes.

We know that science is crucial to the improved health of the Great Lakes. My own work on banning microplastics was based on the very science that proved these miniscule plastics were toxic and contributing to the overall destruction of many Great Lakes ecosystems. As the Great Lakes Fishery Commission has identified and requested, their own work funded by both the Canadian and American governments has yielded significant improvements to the Great Lakes – based on science and benefitting the overall economies.

Likewise, the importance of these lakes to both the overall economies of the United States and Canada cannot be understated – the Great Lakes region supplies 30 percent of the combined workforce of our two economies or 51-million jobs. From fishing to shipping, and tourism to recreation, these lakes are vital to our environment, our health, and to our shared and independent Canadian and American economies. Coming back from the collapsing economy of Covid-19, the United States just infused millions of dollars in funding resources to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to help create jobs, help industries relying on the lakes, and to bring back tourism and recreation to suffering economies along the lakes.

Our own Members of Parliament and Senators from all political parties recently agreed that the Great Lakes were important enough that we have established a new working group as part of the larger Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group. As a member of this group, we will work together to highlight the significance of the lakes including all of the issues and opportunities they bring to all Canadians. Our intention is to ensure that the long-term health and vitality is recognized and that we are working alongside our American counterparts to proudly do our share of protecting such a valuable resource. Most importantly, the Canadian federal government should be funding Great Lakes budgetary requests to help spur economic growth, create jobs and protect the overall ecosystem. These lakes are just too great to be ignored.

Brian Masse, MP
Windsor West (Ontario)
Vice-Chair, Canada-US Inter-Parliamentary Group

Great Lakes Funding Would Support Canada's Triple Bottom Line (Economic, Social and Environmental) in a Post-COVID-19 World

More than 20% of the world's surface fresh water is in the Great Lakes, which means the system is invaluable as the source of drinking water for more than 51 million people in the United States and Canada. Economically, the Great Lakes generate 1.5 million jobs and $60 billion in wages annually. The Great Lakes provide the backbone for a multi-trillion-dollar regional economy that would be one of the largest in the world if it stood as its own country. Recreation on and around the system – including world-renowned boating, hunting, and fishing opportunities – generate more than $52 billion dollars annually for the region. And environmentally speaking, the area is also home to some 3,500 unique plant and animal species, many of which are found nowhere else on Earth.

In this context, the Great Lakes are a binational treasure, an economic driver, a job creation engine, and a gateway to US and other global markets. I submit that they are also key to any post COVID-19 economic recovery in Ontario and throughout Canada. Clearly the Great Lakes are a resource we need to support both in terms of resources and attention.

In the mid-1950s, Canada and the US adopted a treaty that created the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, a bilateral institution designed to ensure cross-border cooperation and maximize the benefits the fishery had to offer. At the time, the lakes were in crisis and the two nations faced the very real potential for the complete failure of their commercial and recreational fisheries in the Great Lakes. The Commission was formed to do what Canadian and US agencies were not able to do unilaterally, despite two decades of efforts to address the issues that led to the crisis. Specifically, the Commission was instructed to:

- Harmonize the cross-border management of the fisheries;
- Control the invasive and destructive sea lamprey; and
- Coordinate research in support of Great Lakes fishery management.

Solving these issues became the primary Commission mandate; a mandate that is as relevant today as it was in 1955.

Unfortunately, since the 1980s, Canada has fallen behind on its financial commitments to this essential work; a reality that threatens past success and imperils the future Canada/US relationship on the Great Lakes. In response, the US has temporarily increased funding - beyond its treaty commitment - to help compensate for Canada's shortfall. This has allowed the Commission to continue with its work, but this is not a permanent solution.

In February 2020, the Commission appeared before the all-party House Finance Committee to make the case for Canada to meet its international commitments on the Great Lakes. I was pleased to see the Finance Committee offer a recommendation (#78) to government in support of this proposal and, as a Great Lakes MP, I offer my full support for the Committee's recommendation. Canadians know that the Great Lakes are a national and binational treasure that warrant Canada's attention and support. I am happy to add my name to that chorus of support and look forward to being part of the government that finally rights this long-standing wrong.

Vance Badawey, MP
Niagara Centre (Ontario)
Co-Chair, Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Taskforce

The Great Lakes Need Canada to Fulfill its Commitments for Strong Bi-Lateral Stewardship

Among the many shared treasures between Canada and the United States is the massive series of freshwater lakes in the central south and north of the countries respectively, The Great Lakes of North America. As the largest collection of freshwater lakes on the planet, they are a vitally important resource as they serve both countries in various capacities. The fisheries of the Great Lakes are, without a doubt, one aspect that makes these bodies of water an invaluable resource; one that requires extensive cooperation and science-led management between bi-lateral partners whose shared success is dependent upon the health of the ecosystems there. Based on the size and scope of operations to monitor and manage these bodies, adequate funding is essential.

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission was established as Canada's body to protect the ecosystem of the Great Lakes which, in turn, support those who rely on the area for work. Since its conception, the objective was for each country to fund their share toward the control of invasive species and general bilateral management of the system. It is essential that both countries do so and Canada needs to increase funding to meet these commitments. Beyond that, there are obvious economic reasons that alone predicate this necessity.

The Great Lakes commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries are collectively valued at more than $8 billion annually and support more than 75,000 jobs. From a holistic perspective: the area is home to 107 million people, 51 million jobs, and a GDP of US$6 trillion according to the Council of the Great Lakes Region – making the Great Lakes Economy a powerhouse on an international level.

The implications of climate change on the entire Great Lakes ecosystem — like a shrinking ice cover, toxic algae blooms, and forceful invasive species – mean a cohesive, cross-border initiative, fully funded to achieve all the goals set out within the framework is more important than ever.

In a world currently trying to shake-off the economic impacts of a devastating international pandemic, proper maintenance of the Great Lakes will be intrinsically tied to the success of Canadians and Americans who utilize them. The Great Lakes fisheries can and must continue to be that success story. Canada must meet its obligation to fund the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission to signal to our American counterparts, friends, and allies, that Canada is serious about contributing its fair share to our mutual commitments and signal our intentions to be world-class stewards of the environment.

Hon. Wayne Easter, PC, MP
Malpeque (PEI)
Co-Chair, Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group

Great Lakes Fishery Commission

PROTECTING OUR FISHERY

Opinion

Who should lead Canada's public consultation on federal radioactive waste policy?

In the intervening years, it has become abundantly clear that public confidence in the field of radioactive waste management cannot be secured unless there is a scrupulous avoidance of conflict of interest.

Gordon Edwards & Susan O'Donnell

Opinion

Two weeks ago, Blaine Higgs revealed that, if re-elected as the premier of New Brunswick, he would announce a multimillion-dollar grant secured from the federal government to back new nuclear reactor development in the province.

Two companies, Moltex Energy and ARC Nuclear, from the U.S. and the U.K., now based in Saint John, have asked for a combined $70-million from the Strategic Innovation Fund to prepare to test their prototype reactors at the site of the Point Lepreau nuclear power plant. The New Brunswick government and provincial utility NB Power have already given $5-million each to the companies.

If built, these new reactors will generate radioactive wastes of all existing categories—low-level, high-level, and intermediate-level—along with new types of radioactive waste materials for which Canada has no experience and no specific provisions for dealing with in the very long term.

Last November, a multinational team of experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency recommended that Canada beef up its antiquated and very brief (143-word) radioactive waste policy framework, and to formulate a national strategy for the long-term management of radioactive wastes. In February, Canada accepted the IAEA recommendation and agreed to act.

But before Natural Resources Canada has even begun to engage in the radioactive waste file, it is eagerly promoting the development of a fleet of small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs) in Canada. Indeed, NRCAN has prepared an "SMR Action Plan" that anticipates "civil society consultation and engagement" from July to September 2020, and promises to "finalize and print" its action plan for new reactors in October. All of this with no explicit mention of the existing "policy vacuum" on radioactive wastes.

It makes sense that Natural Resources Canada identifies strongly with the needs of resource industries—oil and gas, pipelines, oil sands, uranium, and other resource extraction enterprises. But the long-term management of radioactive waste is more of a societal problem than an industry problem. Nuclear wastes will long outlive the nuclear industry that created it and the nuclear regulator that licensed its production.

Because radioactivity cannot be shut off or rendered harmless, these wastes will pose a potential danger to the health and safety of future generations and the environment with no discernible finite time horizon. Even low- and intermediate-level wastes remain hazardous for hundreds of thousands of years, and high-level wastes are known to be radiotoxic for millions of years.

There is a real conflict of interest in entrusting Canada's policy on radioactive waste to the industry that created the waste, or the department that champions that industry, both of whom are inclined to regard the matter as a "public relations" problem for the industry, rather than a safety concern for future generations.

In May, 100 public interest groups across Canada, including nine in New Brunswick, wrote to Natural Resources Minister Seamus O'Regan asking him to initiate a broad public process of consultation to involve Canadians directly in the formulation of a socially acceptable radioactive waste policy and associated strategy. The letter also asked the minister to suspend three controversial radioactive waste "disposal" projects, all of them appear to be in violation of existing IAEA guidelines, until Canada has an acceptable policy in place.

In the month leading up to New Brunswick's snap election last week, NGOs wrote to Minister O'Regan offering to host public consultative sessions in New Brunswick on Canada's yet-to-be-determined radioactive waste policy. The groups were responding to the minister's promise in July to "consult and engage with all Canadians" to develop a socially acceptable policy and to formulate a national strategy for the long-term management of all categories of radioactive waste.

The situation is even more urgent when promoters plan to "recycle" high-level radioactive waste—used CANDU fuel. The two new reactors proposed for New Brunswick intend to access the plutonium contained in the solid used fuel bundles already stored at NB Power's Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station, the only operating CANDU reactor in Canada located outside of Ontario.

Extracting plutonium from used nuclear fuel is dangerous and highly controversial, raising international concerns about nuclear weapons proliferation, since plutonium is the primary nuclear explosive in the world's nuclear arsenals.

After India exploded its first atomic bomb in 1974 using plutonium extracted from a Canadian reactor, "recycling" used fuel in this way was banned in the U.S. even for civilian purposes because of proliferation concerns. South Korea was prevented from acquiring plutonium-extraction technology by its American ally, and to this day, has been prevented from using the extraction technology now planned for New Brunswick. This raises global concerns affecting not only Canada's reputation, but the grim prospect of an increasingly nuclear-armed world.

Extracting plutonium also requires converting solid fuel bundles into a highly corrosive liquid form, complicating the handling and long-term management of the resulting waste. Less than one percent of the used fuel is recuperated for useful purposes.

Evidently, Canada's revised radioactive waste policy and associated strategy will have to address these thorny questions of safety and security, and NRCAN alone is not well equipped to negotiate such a tricky political obstacle course.

To avoid a conflict of interest between the waste producers, and those in charge of safeguarding the public and the environment from the toxic byproducts, several countries have established independent agencies for the long-term management of radioactive waste and the decommissioning of nuclear facilities—agencies that have no direct ties to the nuclear industry or to the nuclear regulator. Some examples include: ANDRA in France, NDA in the UK, and BGE in Germany.

In 1998, following a 10-year environmental assessment process with public hearings in five provinces, the Seaborn Panel unanimously recommended that Canada create such an independent radioactive waste agency, but the government of the day chose otherwise.

In the intervening years, it has become abundantly clear that public confidence in the field of radioactive waste management cannot be secured unless there is a scrupulous avoidance of conflict of interest. If safety and environmental protection are to be paramount, those supervising the long-term management of the wastes must be seen to be immune from undue influence from the industry and its promoters and enablers: AECL, CNL, CNSC, and NRCAN.

Minister O'Regan, by virtue of the position he occupies, appears to be in a conflict of interest. Other federal ministers from Environment, Health, Global Affairs, the Treasury Board, and even the Prime Minister's Office, in addition to Natural Resources, must be involved. We suggest that a multi-departmental oversight committee of cabinet would be appropriate to ensure Canada meets its treaty obligations to have a policy and strategy on the long-term management of radioactive wastes in Canada.

For pragmatic reasons, the Government of Canada is normally reluctant to involve more than one department in the execution of any particular program. However, we face an unprecedented situation: a hitherto unsolved problem of the human race, with multidimensional aspects.

The policy objectives are manifold, ranging from protecting the environment and safeguarding public health, to reinforcing non-proliferation objectives and bolstering Canada's reputation as a trend setter in state-of-the-art waste management, while ensuring that the best value is obtained in exchange for the expenditure of billions of dollars of public money.

According to recent thinking from UNESCO, it will also be necessary to carefully archive all necessary information in imaginative ways, so that future generations can understand the nature of the radioactive legacy we are leaving them, and how they might best deal with it if things go wrong. Our descendants must be given the tools needed to cope with any eventuality.

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

The Hill Times

Empowering Canada's world-class, innovative ports to help spur a strong, sustainable economic recovery

As forward-looking and sustainable generators of prosperity, ports are in an ideal position to help ignite Canada's post-pandemic recovery, all while helping Canada meet its sustainability goals.

Wendy Zatylny

Opinion

If you started your day with a coffee, turned on your computer to check your emails before joining your first Zoom meeting, or made a call on your mobile phone today, you can thank a Canada Port Authority for helping to make your day a little easier. And lately, Canada's Port Authorities have also played a vital role moving personal protective equipment and other supplies essential to fighting COVID-19.

The importance of this lifeline is not surprising, since 80 per cent of all goods Canadians consume and use in their daily lives are delivered via the marine shipping industry.

Today, Canada's ports are about so much more than simply managing ships and loading and unloading cargo. For years, innovation has been at the heart of Canada's port operations. From coast to coast, port authorities have been reinventing themselves into state-of-the-art, world-class logistical hubs. So when the pandemic hit, Canada's 17 port authorities already had in place the operational procedures, technologies, training, and infrastructure to pivot quickly and meet the unprecedented challenges presented by this crisis.

A key driver of local and economic regional development, CPAs directly and indirectly create higher-than-average paying jobs for more than 213,000 people across the country. Canada's port authorities are responsible for handling more than $200-billion worth of goods a year—with a direct economic impact of $36-billion annually. And while they are part of a sector that dates back millennia, Canada's port authorities recognize that future economic strength requires cutting-edge innovation and updated operations essential to staying competitive globally.

Managers of data as much as they are movers of cargo, our ports are part of a global logistics chain using new technologies such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and the internet of things to move cargo and people in a greener, safer, and much more efficient manner. For instance, using AI-enabled applications, ports can identify and track essential goods aboard containers, which has been particularly helpful during the pandemic to track PPE and other important cargo quickly. There is great potential to leverage the innovative work CPAs are doing to help drive Canada's innovation agenda and grow into our potential as IT leaders globally. But federal government support is needed.

As managers of trade-enabling infrastructure, ports are significant generators of jobs and economic growth, no matter what country they are in. One OECD study demonstrated that, for every one million tonnes of new cargo moved through a port, 300 new jobs are created. But to ensure ports can maximize their contribution to Canada's economic recovery, the federal government must—as part of its recovery strategy—provide additional funding to the National Trade Corridors Fund (NTCF).

During a recent speech, Transport Minister Marc Garneau said the government is looking at options to stimulate the economy through the NTCF and "use infrastructure funding in an innovative way perhaps to get those projects jump-started as quickly as possible." Port authorities have numerous such projects ready to go, but these have been deferred to maintain liquidity in the face of declining revenues as a result of the pandemic.

To enable sustainable port projects and infrastructure to be built in a timely and appropriate manner for the economic recovery, the government must ensure NTCF funding is adequately replenished. To further empower port authorities to leverage their infrastructure capabilities, the government should address the need to increase port authorities' borrowing limits and waive the 2020 gross revenue charge levied on Canada's ports to allow them to preserve liquidity for investment in economic recovery. These steps would be very beneficial as port authorities gear up for much-need infrastructure development.

Canada's port authorities know that economic prosperity and robust environmental stewardship go hand in hand. Marine shipping is the lowest emitter of GHGs per tonne/kilometre. We have long championed Green Marine initiatives and related actions that have made our operations world-class examples of how technology is fuelling environmental protection and sustainability. And of course, ports continue to play a vital role in supporting Canada's important export economy. This too will be a key aspect of Canada's post-pandemic recovery. The government should empower ports—as part of their core mandate—to engage in trade-facilitation activities which may include logistics facilities, inland ports, and supply-chain related uses.

Wendy Zatylny is president of the Association of Canadian Port Authorities.

The Hill Times

Opinion

Canada can't hide behind NATO in refusal to sign treaty on nuclear weapons prohibition

Justin Trudeau has not yet learned how NATO contravenes the basic idea of nuclear disarmament, for he called the negotiations that led to the adoption of the Prohibition Treaty 'useless.'

Lloyd Axworthy, Jean Chrétien, Bill Graham, John McCallum, John Manley, and John Turner all signed an open letter, released on Sept. 21, that features 53 former high officials of NATO countries expressing support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It is an astonishing rebuke of NATO's moribund policies on nuclear weapons, and the most serious challenge to NATO's nuclear orthodoxy in the organization's 71-year history. Even two former NATO secretaries-general, Javier Solana and Willy Claes, as well as former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, joined in this protest. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade and Hill Times file photographs*

Douglas Roche

Opinion

EDMONTON—Lloyd Axworthy, Jean-Jacques Blais, Jean Chrétien, Bill Graham, John McCallum, John Manley, and John Turner.

These seven names hardly need an introduction to readers of *The Hill Times*, and certainly not to the Government of Canada. Two of them are former prime ministers, three are former foreign ministers, and two are former defence ministers, who ran and served Liberal governments.

All of them signed an open letter, released on Sept. 21, that features 53 former high officials of NATO countries expressing support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It is an astonishing rebuke of NATO's moribund policies on nuclear weapons, and the most serious challenge to NATO's nuclear orthodoxy in the organization's 71-year history. Even two former NATO secretaries-general, Javier Solana and Willy Claes, as well as former U.N. secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, joined in this protest.

The treaty, which bans the possession of nuclear weapons, was adopted by 122 states at the UN in 2017 and must be ratified by 50 states before it enters into force. To date, 44 states have ratified it, so it won't be long before the treaty becomes binding law for those who have signed it.

But NATO, following the lead of the U.S., the U.K., and France, has vigorously rejected the treaty because it "risks undermining" the Non-Proliferation Treaty and supposedly creates divisions in the international community. It would be hard to find a more pungent example of nuclear hypocrisy.

First, the treaty explicitly recognizes the NPT as the "cornerstone" of nuclear disarmament efforts. Second, it is the refusal by the nuclear weapons states to negotiate the elimination of nuclear weapons, as ordered by the NPT, that led to the development of the Prohibition Treaty.

NATO doesn't have a leg to stand on in maintaining that nuclear weapons are the "supreme guarantee" of security. It has now been called out by its own strongest supporters—former high officials in 20 NATO countries, Germany, Norway, Belgium, Italy, Denmark, and others, as well as the Canadians—who have signed the letter organized by the Nobel Peace Prize winning-International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons.

The Canadian government, under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Sept. 16, 2020, has said it cannot make such a commitment to sign the treaty because of its membership in NATO. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

The letter accuses the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, and China—permanent members of the Security Council that all possess nuclear weapons—of viewing the NPT "as a license to retain their nuclear forces in perpetuity." They are all flouting the NPT by modernizing their arsenals.

The letter adds: "With close to 14,000 nuclear weapons located at dozens of sites across the globe and on submarines patrolling the oceans at all times, the capacity for destruction is beyond our imagination. … Without doubt, a new nuclear arms race is under way."

The prohibition treaty is explicit in its condemnation of nuclear weapons, stating: "Each State Party undertakes never under any circumstances to develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices."

The Canadian government has said it cannot make such a commitment because of its membership in NATO. But the letter contests this stand, arguing that nothing in the new treaty precludes a NATO state joining, as long as it never assists the use of nuclear weapons. This was the stand taken by Canadian Pugwash, a prominent civil society group, which said that Canada should sign the treaty and argue within NATO councils to get the nuclear policies changed. Indeed, Lloyd Axworthy, one of the signatories of the letter, went to NATO when he was foreign affairs minister to get the policy changed, but was rebuffed.

Pierre Trudeau, the father of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, once told me that NATO's obsolete policies were one of the biggest thorns he had to endure as prime minister. Justin Trudeau has not yet learned how NATO contravenes the basic idea of nuclear disarmament, for he called the negotiations that led to the adoption of the Prohibition Treaty "useless." And his government has continued to use NATO membership as a block to the new treaty.

COVID-19 has upended the world order. It has dramatically shown the uselessness of piling up military hardwire to provide human security. Many steps need to be taken to boost cooperative security. One of the most important would be to renounce nuclear weapons. That is what the Prohibition Treaty does. The nuclear weapons states' plan to spend $1-trillion this decade on nuclear weapons is an outrage to a humanity crying out for resources to survive against the coronavirus.

The seven former Canadian high officials—all of them Liberals—have pulled the rug out from under the Liberal government's pathetic excuse for not signing the Prohibition Treaty. These seven are not alone among prominent Canadians calling for this action.

Other signatories include: John Polanyi, Ed Broadbent, John English, Gerry Barr, Bruce Kidd, Margaret MacMillan, Stephen Lewis, Ernie Regehr, Jennifer Simons, Clayton Ruby, Jane Urquhart, and many other distinguished recipients of the Order of Canada who have signed a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau by Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, calling for Canada to make nuclear disarmament "a national priority."

Another civil society organization, the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, representing 16 national organizations, wants Canada "to take a leadership role within NATO" to create the conditions for a nuclear weapons-free world. This was exactly what the House of Commons Committee on National Defence unanimously recommended in 2018.

Justin Trudeau and his deputy, Chrystia Freeland, should now look around and see what important people in the country are saying to them. Not least their own former colleagues.

Former Senator Douglas Roche was also Canadian ambassador for disarmament.

The Hill Times

The Hill Times

Politics & the Pen

A Special Tribute to This Year's Virtual Event on Sept. 23, 2020

Politics & the Pen goes all virtual this year

Johnathan Manthorpe on *Claws of the Panda*

Mike Lapointe

Adam Chapnick and Canada's role on the UN Security Council

Aidan Chamandy

Beverley McLachlin tells it like is in *Truth Be Told*

Beatrice Paez

Harold R. Johnson on *Peace and Good Order*

Samantha Wright Allen

Ken Roach talks about *Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice*

Samantha Wright Allen

Politics & the Pen guests pictured in 2018 at the Chateau Laurier.
The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Books & Big Ideas

Politics & the Pen goes virtual for 20th anniversary of Shaughnessy Cohen Prize

The Politics & the Pen event is a night 'to support free expression, deep scholarship, and gifted writers wrestling with historic and contemporary issues that shape our ever-changing and unfinished country.' This year, it's going virtual.

BY AIDAN CHAMANDY

Celebration is tricky in isolation. Logistics aside, when the isolation is imposed because of a rampant virus that has killed thousands, celebrating anything might come across as crass.

Life, however, does not wholly stop during a pandemic. Milestones happen and deserve to be marked with a celebration. The strictures to which daily life must now adhere also allow for a kind of constrained creativity. Hitofude-ryuu artists in Japan can draw an entire dragon with a single continuous brush stroke. So, maybe Zoom parties can actually be fun?

Organizers of one of political Ottawa's most anticipated events of the year are going to try. Politics & the Pen, which normally attracts 500 people, is going all virtual this year to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Writers' Trust Shaughnessy Cohen Award for Political Writing. Instead of gathering in the Château Laurier on Sept. 23, guests will be behind a webcam. It's still a black-tie event, but pants aren't mandatory so long as you stay seated.

"It's going to just be a fun, brief retrospective of Politics and the Pen over the years," said Catherine Clark, who sits on the event's organizing committee.

"We will have lots of photos from times past that will flash up on the screen, we will have a live presentation of the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize. And it's just meant to be something that's positive and uplifting and allows us still to recognize the incredible writers who've been nominated," she said.

The event raises a ton of money for the Writers' Trust of Canada. Jim Armour, vice-president at Summa Strategies and a member of the event's organizing committee, said some $4.5-million has been raised over the life of the event.

Ms. Clark and Mr. Armour said all the regular sponsors agreed to stay on for the pandemic version of the party. This is particularly important as the Writers' Trust has also committed to maintaining its support structures for struggling writers. They've already doled out some $400,000 to around 250 writers during the pandemic, according to Writers' Trust executive director Charles Foran, also an author, including of the critically acclaimed *Mordecai: The Life & Times*.

"We did that because it was important to show that we were committed to that core work, which is helping writers financially and giving them opportunities that come with prizes and fellowships," said Mr. Foran.

Five books are nominated for the $25,000 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing. All finalists get $2,500 for being nominated. The award, officially given out by the Writers' Trust of Canada, goes to "an exceptional book of literary non-fiction that captures a political subject of relevance to Canadian readers." It's named after the late Shaughnessy Cohen, a popular backbencher who represented Windsor-St. Clair, Ont., as a Liberal MP from Oct. 25, 1993, until her death on Dec. 9, 1998.

Adam Chapnick's *Canada on the United Nations Security Council: A Small Power on a Large Stage*, published by UBC Press, is the first definitive history of Canada's six terms on the UN Security Council. The recent failed campaign for a seventh term obviously fulfils the "relevance" condition. Independent of its timeliness, this book fills a much-needed gap in the study of Canadian foreign policy and will leave a mark in the academic world.

In *Peace and Good Order: The Case for Indigenous Justice in Canada*, former Crown prosecutor Harold R. Johnson offers an insider analysis of the Canadian justice system and how it fails Indigenous people. Inspired by the verdicts in the deaths of Colten Boushie and Tina Fontaine, it offers a critique beyond public policy worth reading for all who live above the 49th parallel. The book was published by Penguin Random House Canada.

Jonathan Manthorpe's *Claws of the Panda: Beijing's Campaign of Influence and Intimidation in Canada*, published by Cormorant Books, is both a history of Canada-China relations and a stinging critique of decades of Canadian foreign policy.

Former chief justice of the Supreme Court of Canada Beverley McLachlin's autobiography *Truth be Told: My Journey Through Life and the Law*, published by Simon and Schuster Canada, is the first such book by a Canadian Supreme Court Justice. It details her personal and professional life, giving insight into the most important court cases of the past two decades.

Canadian Justice, Indigenous Justice by Kent Roach, and published by McGill-Queen's University Press, was also inspired by Colten Boushie, a 22-year-old Indigenous man who was killed by a farmer in Saskatchewan in 2016. It carefully details the case, its failures, and the historical, political, and sociological context to show how Indigenous people are treated in Canada.

Last year, Rachel Giese took home the award for her book *Boys: What it Means to Become a Man*, published by Harper Collins Canada.

She said she didn't expect to win because she thought the jurors wouldn't think of her book as inherently political. She saw her win as validation that the traditional realm of politics is opening to more diverse voices.

"My book was not a biography of a prime minister," she said. "It was a book about the politics of gender and gender norms. It was a book about what I felt was a crisis in masculinity that resulted in male violence and in a lot of other social issues."

She used her acceptance speech, which was scribbled on napkins five minutes before delivery, to "create space" for "less dominant" voices in Canadian politics and journalism.

"I felt incredibly moved that my book was recognized in that way. That the things that I understood to be political were taken seriously by the jury as politics as well," she said.

Self-doubt is evidently a necessary condition for a successful author.

"I didn't think in a million years I would win," said Kamal Al-Solaylee, winner of the 2017 award for *Brown: What Being Brown in the World Today Means (To Everyone)*, published by HarperCollins Canada.

He took the same five-minutes-before, back-of-the-napkin approach as Ms. Giese. Like Ms. Giese, he, too, saw the award as validation that the issues he wrote about were "highly political."

"The fact that a book about race and racialization is … kind of a validation for that," he said. "It was a kind of precursor for that, for this moment. The issues around race matter, are considered Canadian, and they're considered highly political and charged. Race is a political issue."

Mr. Al-Solayee took his prize money to help fund his next book. He just finished the first draft, and while he can't share much, did say "it's about immigration in a time when borders and homelands have become so contested."

Whatever happens on Sept. 23, all the books are worth reading and all the authors across Canada are worth celebrating.

achamandy@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Former Conservative MP Lisa Raitt and former NDP MP Megan Leslie, pictured delivering a legendary song and dance number at the 2013 event. This year's ceremony will be held online. *The Hill Times file photograph*

Vox Populi on Politics & the Pen

"I've never been a particularly driven person but one outstanding ambition I have is to attend Politics and the Pen wearing an author's medallion, the badge of honour that separates the writers from the riff raff. This year was going to be that year–then along came COVID. I felt like Janis Joplin, after she was bumped from the cover of *Newsweek* by the death of former U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower. 'Fourteen heart attacks and he had to die in my week.'

"The literary gala has always been the apex of the political season during my two decades on Parliament Hill and I'm delighted that the tradition continues, albeit online. It is to the credit of everyone involved that it remains a crucial fundraiser for the Writers Trust and a relevant awards night—the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize is still the one we all want to win. Congratulations to the board."

John Ivison, author of *Trudeau: The Education of a Prime Minister*

"Politics and the Pen celebrates political writing but it celebrates all Canadian authors. My friend, Jay Bauchel, and I were both first time authors last year. Not only does the event raise money for the Writers' Trust, but we saw first-hand how it amplifies writers' voices. It brings some of the most powerful people in the country together on a night that gives the real power to our nation's authors. Plus, we got to wear medals. Where else on earth would Jay and I get medals?

Mark Critch, author of *Son of a Critch: A Childish Newfoundland Memoir*

"The Politics and the Pen jamboree has been a highlight in Ottawa for years. As an Ottawa-based writer (and former P & P judge), I've always been thrilled by the attention it has brought to political books, and also by the way that out-of-town authors, publishers and agents are mesmerized by the spectacle of federal politicians, lobbyists and reporters letting down their hair and partying together. 'Yes,' I like to tell them. 'A lot more goes on in this city than you realize.' I'll never forget the evenings when Conservative ministers John Baird and Lisa Raitt … oops, it would be breaking the rules to blab."

Charlotte Gray, author of *Murdered Midas: A Millionaire, His Gold Mines, and a Strange Death on an Island Paradise*

"For many years, I have watched politicians and writers come together at this event to celebrate the memory of Shaughnessy Cohen, to mark the best books in politics, and to embrace the many writers who contribute to the ongoing dialogue of what it means to be Canadian. For those not accustomed to seeing politicians beyond the cut and thrust of Parliament, one witnesses elected officials and staffers of all parties talking, laughing, and engaging in self-effacing fun. It is an event to support free expression, deep scholarship, and gifted writers wrestling with historic and contemporary issues that shape our ever-changing and unfinished country."

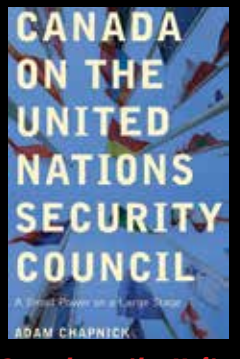
Tim Cook, author of *The Fight for History: 75 Years of Forgetting, Remembering, and Remaking Canada's Second World War History (2020)*

Writers' Trust of Canada

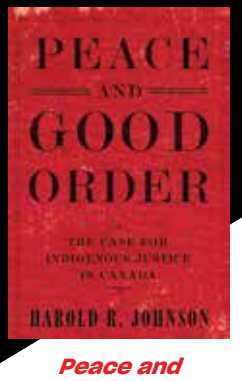
politics and the Pen / La politique et l'écrit

Congratulations to the Finalists

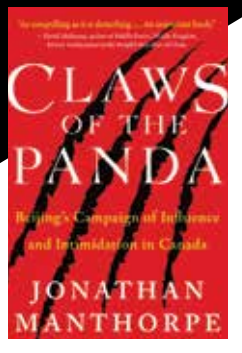
2019 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing



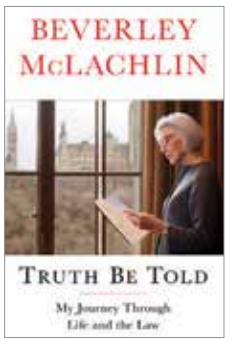
Canada on the United Nations Security Council
Adam Chapnick



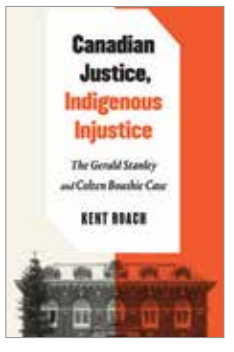
Peace and Good Order
Harold R. Johnson



Claws of the Panda
Jonathan Manthorpe



Truth Be Told
Beverley McLachlin



Canadian Justice, Indigenous Justice
Kent Roach

An empty ballroom won't stop us from celebrating great Canadian books.

Join us online at **writerstrust.com/polipen** on September 23 at 7pm ET for #PoliPen 2020, featuring past highlights and the presentation of the $25,000 #ShaughnessyCohen Prize.

Special thank you to our leading sponsors for their continued support of Canadian literature through the digital edition of Politics and the Pen:

‘Tinkering’ won’t fix legal system, communities need Indigenous jurisdiction, says former lawyer in new book

Harold Johnson’s book *Peace and Good Order* is among five shortlisted books for this year’s Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing.

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

Indigenous people must reclaim their jurisdiction over legal matters because healing communities and equal justice are impossible outcomes in Canadian courts and prisons, concludes Harold Johnson in his latest book.

In *Peace and Good Order: The Case for Indigenous Justice in Canada*, Mr. Johnson excoriates the legal system and the people working to sustain it, finding that even those with the best of intentions working within it—once himself—cannot bring about reform or better outcomes.

He came to that painful realization over the course of two decades practising law, both as defence and prosecution in northern Saskatchewan’s “high crime” communities, where the vast majority of the victims and perpetrators were Indigenous. As a Crown prosecutor, he said he knew he was “damaging communities,” and upholding a model that over-incarcerates Indigenous people.

“Everything that has been done to Indigenous people has been legal,” Mr. Johnson wrote, and after witnessing first-hand how the law functions, determined “all it can do is take a hurt person and hurt them more.”

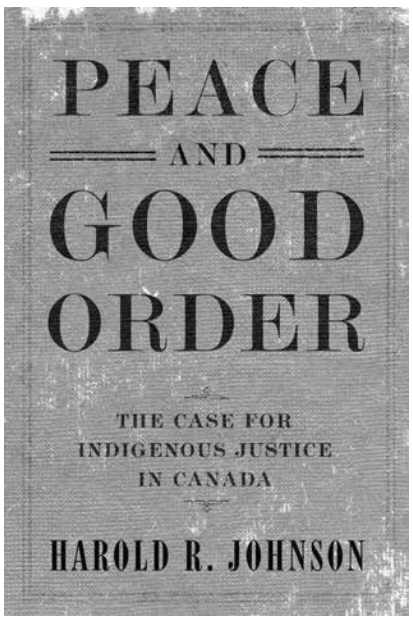
He ends the book by concluding the best chance is for communities to reclaim legal jurisdiction, but said he has no immediate plans to expand on that idea in a book.

“The way we make change isn’t by tinkering with the justice system,” he said in an interview with *The Hill Times*. “We make change by healing our communities because damaged communities create damaged people.”

The following Q&A has been edited for length and clarity. Mr. Johnson’s book has been shortlisted by the Writers’ Trust for this year’s Shaughnessy Cohen Prize, one the of best non-fiction political books of the year.

You started this book in February 2018, pretty well immediately after the trial and an all-white jury found Gerald Stanley not guilty of [Colton Boushie’s] murder, and it seems to be a jumping off point for conclusions you’ve long had about Canada’s justice system and your shame at being part of it. What about this moment inspired you to put pen to paper, and as you say, take responsibility for your “actions and inactions”?

“It was just a culmination of a whole bunch of different factors, everything piling up. I couldn’t go on in that system; it wasn’t even so much the decision, the jury’s finding, not guilty. I was prepared to just shut off social media, turn off the radio in the news and ignore it. It was when a retired judge texted me the next morning to say how sorry he was, and it was hearing him apologize that brought out my own apology and my recognition of what I have done in the justice system. And how everything we had done—he’d been there longer than I had—and we all go in, we want to make it better, and after you’re there a full career and recognize you made it worse.”



Harold Johnson’s book *Peace and Good Order: The Case for Indigenous Justice in Canada* is among five shortlisted for the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing.

You’ve served as both a defence lawyer and the only Indigenous prosecutor in the region. What did your years as a lawyer working in northern Saskatchewan’s “high crime” communities teach you and do you think it would’ve been different if you were practising in another part of the country?

“I don’t know what it’d be like to practise in another part of the country because I never did. I wanted to be home. I thought I could do the best in communities that I was familiar with. And it’s true. By knowing the players, I was better able to achieve the small goals that I set for myself. By knowing who your family was, I could get a witness to talk to me as a prosecutor, just remind them that you know, I know the same people that you know; I grew up here.

“Witnesses would talk to me. The biggest problem that prosecutors have in aboriginal communities is getting witnesses to testify. I wasn’t perfect at it, but I was more successful than other prosecutors.”

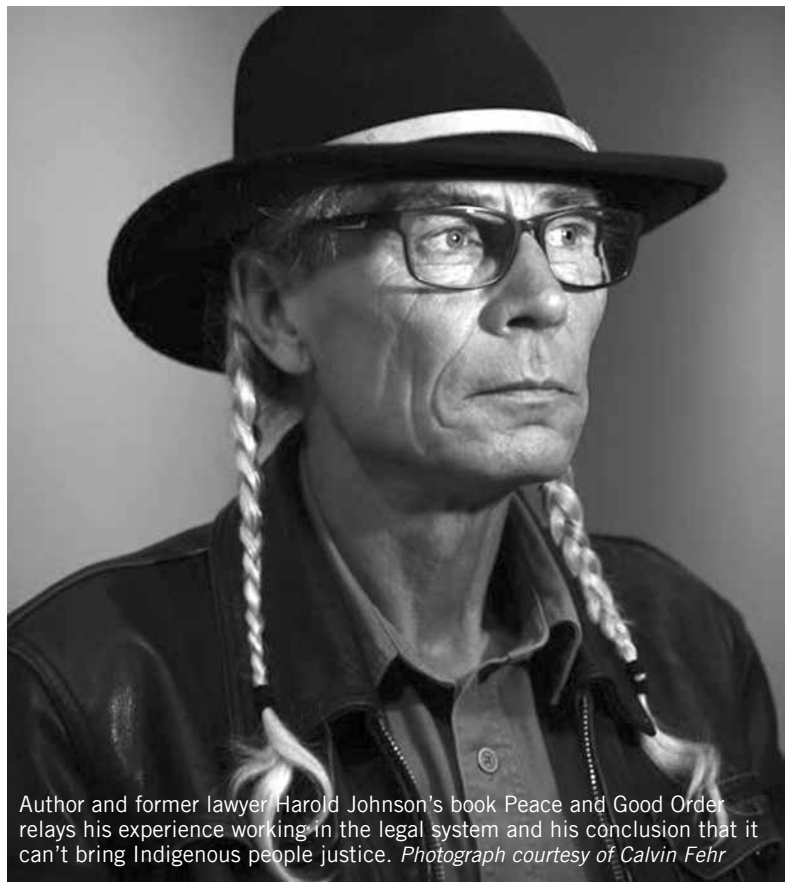
But you do ultimately conclude that representation, including having more Indigenous lawyers, or people serving on juries won’t lead to better justice or outcomes for Indigenous offenders and victims. Why do you think that? And if you could rewrite your life, would you again be a lawyer?

“No. I went to law school to prove a point. I didn’t have a clue what a lawyer did. And I had no experience with justice. I went to law school to prove that Harold Johnson wasn’t stupid, and I picked the law because it was supposed to be hard. And then I went to Harvard to prove that nobody gave me anything. And then for 20 years, I was stuck being a lawyer.

“I could have used that time better, to make my communities healthier outside of the justice system than in. The reason we can’t make changes from within, as aboriginal people, is because you have to hold the system up with one hand while using the other hand to help the community, and it’s the system that’s destroying them. And then you have to believe in that system. If you don’t believe, you can’t do it as I found out.

“So to get into the system, first you have to finish school, so that’s 12 years before you go to university and then to get into law, nowadays, you need an undergrad degree and then three years of law school, and then I added another year to get a master’s degree on top of that. That’s a lot of years in a colonizing place.

“To get through that education, you have to allow yourself to be colonized. You have to become one of them. And once you become one of them, then you’re outside of your own community. If you believe in that system, then you’re put outside. You’re going to struggle to connect again. You can even start blaming the people for the situation that they’re in because of the stories that you tell yourself.”


Author and former lawyer Harold Johnson’s book Peace and Good Order relays his experience working in the legal system and his conclusion that it can’t bring Indigenous people justice. *Photograph courtesy of Calvin Fehr*

The influence of alcohol is a key theme in your analysis of the justice system and who comes into contact with the law. What role does alcohol play?

“In all the years as a lawyer versus defence counsel then as a Crown prosecutor, I never saw anybody I would call a criminal. I only saw people who got drunk and did something stupid, up to and including committing atrocities. I only ever prosecuted one man for murder who was sober at the time. I never prosecuted or defended a case of sexual assault that did not involve alcohol. Alcohol is still your No. 1 date-rape drug. And the alcohol story is a very powerful story.

“We’re not going to change it overnight; 85 per cent of Canadians use alcohol and about 20 per cent of them use it excessively, including judges and lawyers and attorney generals and ministers of justice and deputy ministers of justice and judges.”

How did that analysis fit in with personal responsibility?

“There is no safe level of alcohol consumption. Zero. We have low risk drinking guidelines … [but] there are no safe drinking levels. We know that it’s responsible for over 200 illnesses and injuries. We know its huge impact on the justice system. We know about the violence that results.”

So is prohibition the answer or what do you think needs to happen?

“We need to change the story we tell ourselves about alcohol. We have to quit telling ourselves that this is something pleasant, that this is something socially acceptable. Prohibition would be using the justice system and the justice system is broken. It doesn’t work for anything else, it certainly isn’t gonna work to solve the problem with alcohol. The alcohol industry creates the story that people tell themselves about their use of alcohol.”

You open yourself up in this book, in a way that invites criticism for your part in a system, and open up in how you explain violence, including your experience with two brothers killed by drunk drivers, and as a boy who was sexually assaulted. Why did you write the case for Indigenous justice as an almost-memoir and make it so personal in this way?

“The only true story I can tell is my own. I could have written a different way, hidden myself from it, but that wouldn’t be a true story. I’d be trying to tell somebody else’s story. To tell some stories, we have to put ourselves between the pages.”

What do you think the federal government should be doing?

“I think the federal government and the provincial government should just get out of the way. I don’t see elected people as leaders. They don’t lead. They look at the direction that the people are going and then run out front and pretend that they’re leading. They don’t create change. We do have leaders. They’re not elected, they’re in the communities. I have something to say to the community champions, to the real leaders; I’ve got nothing to say to politicians. They’ve had their chance.”

***Peace and Good Order: The Case for Indigenous Justice in Canada,* by Harold R. Johnson, McClelland & Stewart, 160 pp.**

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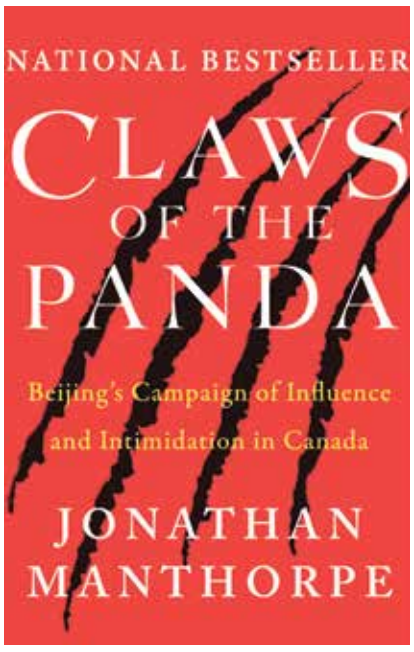

'I think that one of the most important themes from the book are the attacks and intimidation of Canadians of Chinese, Tibetan, Uighur, and Taiwanese-heritage here in Canada,' says journalist Jonathan Manthorpe, author of Claws of the Panda. *Photographs courtesy of Jonathan Manthorpe, Cormorant Books*

Many Canadians have been 'naïve at best and self-delusional at worst' in dealings with China, says journalist and author Manthorpe

Patterns of interference, intimidation, and harassment of individual Canadians by the Chinese Communist Party 'demand a response' from the Canadian government, says veteran journalist Jonathan Manthorpe in his 2019 book.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

As Canada approaches the 50th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations with China—and as politicians in both countries continue to grapple with the fallout from the recent detention of Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou in British Columbia and the ensuing arrests of Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor by the Chinese government—journalist and author Jonathan Manthorpe calls it a "great irony" that after decades of engagement, we're now ensconced in "the greatest crisis in the relationship that there has been over this period."

But Mr. Manthorpe's recent deep dive into the history of Canada's engagement with China over the course of the 20th century and into the 21st reveals an ongoing pattern of "interference by the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] in and attempts at the perversion of public life in Canada, coupled with the intimidation and harassment of individual Canadians."

These patterns "demand a response," according to Mr. Manthorpe, and it is "the responsibility of any government to protect its citizens against intimidation by foreign agents," writes the author in his 2019 work, *Claws of the Panda: Beijing's Campaign of Influence and Intimidation in Canada*.

Mr. Manthorpe hones in on how Canada's relationship with China—a relationship with roots leading back to the late 19th century when this country started sending Christian missionaries to the Middle Kingdom—has now "become a battleground on which the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks to terrorize, humiliate, and neuter its opponents."

With 50 years in journalism, Mr. Manthorpe has worked as a foreign correspondent for *Southam News*, as the European bureau chief for the *Toronto Star*, as well as the national political reporter for *The Globe and Mail*.

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, Mr. Manthorpe said that his involvement with this ever-unfolding story began in the 1960s and early 1970s.

"I didn't always deal with the story directly, but the story was going on all around of Canada's establishment of diplomatic relations with China," said Mr. Manthorpe. "When I started, I became aware of the Canadian involvement pretty early on, I read up a lot about it, and once my interest was sparked on these things, I had plenty of resources at hand to develop the background."

Particularly interested in providing the historical context behind news stories throughout his career, Mr. Manthorpe accomplishes this goal in *Claws of the Panda*, which spans 13 chapters and nearly 150 years of history.

"It's one of the things I've specialized in as a journalist, is trying to give as much context behind the story as is possible, so readers can hopefully understand how and why things have happened and not just what has happened," said Mr. Manthorpe.

Claws of the Panda has been shortlisted for the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing, which is awarded annually "for an exceptional book of literary nonfiction that captures a political subject of relevance to Canadian readers," according to the Writers' Trust of Canada.

The following Q&A has been edited for length and clarity.

Your book has been published at a remarkable time in political and diplomatic relations—not only between Canada and China, but between China and the rest of the world. Why did you decide to write this book?

"I think that probably the first major building blocks of this story came to me when I was the Southern News Asia correspondent based in Hong Kong, and not only was I there fairly shortly after Tiananmen Square—things we're still settling down—but I was also there for the beginning of the first 'Team Canada' trade missions to China.

"Several of the hints that, particularly the Chinese Communist Party, saw the relationship very differently from the way the Canadians saw it, were in front of my face every day, particularly after the trade missions started in 1994."

"I could see very clearly that the Chinese Communist Party saw this as an opportunity, not only to get investment from Canada, but also to get Canadian technologies of one sort or another."

"The number of befuddled Canadian businessman who I talked to who just couldn't understand what happened to them, suddenly, all their intellectual property had been stolen once they'd signed a contract, was very consistent, and was just one of the elements that came into the picture later on."

The 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Canada is coming up in October at a time of increasingly strained relations. Can you speak about how that process unfolded under former prime minister Pierre Trudeau?

"Canada was the stalking horse for many other countries, and I think the Americans in particular, but also several European countries, looked to see how Canada established the relationship and how it went, what the requirements were, and followed our lead.

"One of the central issues over which there was much debate, were the attempts by the Chinese Communist Party to get Canada to recognize the Communist Party's claim to Taiwan, which of course at that point, was the refuge of the old Nationalist Party regime of Chiang Kai-shek.

"Trudeau, to his credit, refused to go along with that, because Trudeau is often being portrayed as being soft on the Chinese Communist Party and soft on the Beijing regime, but my research didn't sustain that. He insisted that Canada not go along with the Chinese Communist Party's claim to Taiwan, and that Canada merely 'notes' that Beijing is making that claim.

"It's interesting that most of the countries that followed Canada in recognizing Beijing took that Canadian model, and the one country that didn't was the United States, and somehow Henry Kissinger got bushwhacked into accepting the word 'acknowledge' China's claim to Taiwan, and of course the Chinese Communist Party translates 'acknowledge' as 'acceptance,' so that has caused a lot of problems.

"The irony of course is that 50 years later, we have the greatest crisis in the relationship that there has been over this period."

Who is your book directed to? Who would you like to see read your work?

"One of the themes that runs right through the book, is that Canadians of many stripes who have had dealings with China, have been naïve at best and self-delusional at worse as to what is possible within that relationship.

"I think it's a book that should be read, and I think is being read by a wide variety of Canadians who have associations with China. Just last month, there's also a Chinese edition, and there's a very good prospect we're on the verge of signing a contract for a Japanese version as well.

"You have to look at this in the broader context, too—I was not aware when I wrote the book that very similar campaigns of influence and intimidation were being run by the CCP in Australia, New Zealand, and in the United States—I was aware of some of it, and some of it is mentioned in the book, but I was not aware how similar all these campaigns were.

"This story has a much wider audience than simply here in Canada—it speaks to a whole international political offensive by the CCP."

Is there a particularly important theme within the book that you would like to highlight?

"I think that one of the most important themes from the book are the attacks and intimidation of Canadians of Chinese, Tibetan, Uighur, Taiwanese-heritage here in Canada.

"There is this massive campaign against these people, particularly those who are involved in pro-democracy movements, by agents of the United Front, which is the Chinese Communist Party's main political warfare organization.

"I am appalled, quite honestly, that our security agencies and police have not been given the authority and the wherewithal to counterattack. It's an appalling situation that a foreign government is being allowed to intimidate Canadians because of their political feelings and activities. It's been going on for years, and nothing serious has been done about it. Part of it, I think, has been because the political powers that be of both major parties have felt that they don't want to stir up the Chinese Communist Party and that the economic detriment to Canada would not be worth it.

"One of the blessings of the Huawei affair has shown that we cannot lie down under this stuff, that we are not dealing with the sort of nice, friendly, agrarian reformers we've been kidding ourselves into thinking we've been dealing with for 50, 60 years.

"On several occasions, when I've been talking to audiences who are predominantly Canadians of Chinese heritage, I've had a consistent message all over the country.

"Will you try to get mainstream Canada to understand the daily pressure we are under from the agents of the Chinese Communist Party? I think that is perhaps one of the most important messages from the fallout of the book, that our political leaders are allowing this intimidation of Canadians, and it shouldn't be allowed to carry on."

***Claws of the Panda: Beijing's Campaign of Influence and Intimidation in Canada,* by Jonathan Manthorpe, Cormorant Books, 291 pp., $24.95.**

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The Hill Times

Books & Big Ideas

Canada's first female chief justice still hasn't shaken the impostor syndrome

'I kind of just go ahead and do what I feel I should do, and get myself into situations where I'm thinking, "Oh, everybody here knows more than I do. But anyway, here goes." It served me very well,' says former Supreme Court chief justice Beverley McLachlin.

BY BEATRICE PAEZ

Former Supreme Court chief justice Beverley McLachlin's journey to the highest position on the highest court has been nothing short of extraordinary.

From humble beginnings as a bookish Prairie girl, growing up in the 1940s in the small town of Pincher Creek, Alta., where she was raised by deeply religious parents whose educational opportunities were limited by circumstances, to her swift ascent to the top court, her legal career was not necessarily preordained.

The longest-serving chief justice, who retired in late 2017, is often asked when she decided to become a lawyer, or the first woman to assume the title of chief justice, and the response is always, "Never." In fact, the fear of hitting a ceiling and spending the rest of her career as a county court judge almost dissuaded her from accepting a spot on the bench.

It was her late husband, Rory McLachlin, who suggested that she was suited for law and who later predicted she would eventually sit on the Supreme Court. On a bit of a whim, and with that small nudge from Rory, she reached out to the dean, requesting information to apply to law school and was accepted in response. She convinced herself it would just be a trial.

In *Truth Be Told: My Journey Through Life and Law*, Ms. McLachlin chronicles the experiences that shaped her trajectory and character and offers insights into some of the biggest decisions she's presided over during her tenure on the Supreme Court.

Early on, she was already a keen observer of racial injustices and discrimination and could, to a degree, relate to those experiences, having grown up with a German last name among a predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon community.

Truth Be Told: My Journey Through Life and the Law is among five shortlisted for the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing. But as the first memoir by a Supreme Court justice in Canada, it stands on its own in the annals of the court's history, offering a glimpse into the rarefied world that had long been the domain of men.

The following Q&A has been edited for length and clarity.

This is the first autobiography by a judge in the Supreme Court's history. What do you hope the broader public, particularly for those who aren't close observers of the court, gains from reading your memoir?

"I hope they get a sense of familiarity with how the court operates, what they do, what the judges do, how the process through which cases go. I hope they have a sense of some of the big issues the court decides and the pros and cons and the kind of things that go into the mix of deciding these critical issues.

"Also, maybe an appreciation of how difficult the job is. People often think judges just vote according to their first impression or their political bias, they allege, etc. People, I think, will see that it's a lot more complicated than that, and that it involves a great deal of deliberation, objectivity."

Growing up in Pincher Creek, you were implicitly taught to be welcoming of people who were different, and observed that in your hometown, there were degrees of discrimination, depending on the colour of one's skin and ancestry. How did you seek to make sense of the lived experiences of others? Did people at the time have the vocabulary to talk about racism and discrimination?

"Not as much as now, but of course, I think people knew about it. But they didn't feel it was so wrong. A lot of people felt it was alright, that different people belong in different categories, and that is the way it is in the world.

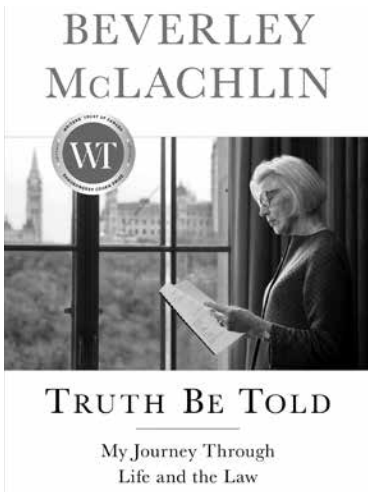
"But there were other people, too. And I think my parents were among them, who felt that everyone was basically equal and worthy of respect, and that you should never exclude people from your activities or your home or your life, just because of their colour, or race, or whatever other feature it might be."

The fear of hitting a ceiling and spending the rest of her career as a county court judge almost dissuaded Canada's first female chief justice of the Supreme Court Beverley McLachlin from accepting a spot on the bench. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

How important do you think it is to have that shared vocabulary when discussing issues of race, especially amid the reckoning Canada is having on racial justice?

"I think it's very important to learn this when you're young. It strikes me that if you're brought up in a racist home and you're listening to this, you probably, when you grow up, are going to, at some deep, core level, have some of those ideas. So I think it's very important that children, in particular, be free of that kind of instruction.

"It's very hard. That's one of the reasons why racism is so persistent because people will act one way in public, but around the family table, they make comments that are racist, and the kids breathe that in. That's why I think race is such a difficult issue that just keeps perpetuating itself from generation to generation."



Photograph courtesy of Simon and Schuster Canada

You didn't grow up around that. Through your parents' action, you learned to be accepting of others.

"Yeah, my parents were kind of deeply religious in an unorganized way. They were evangelical. They thought, 'God loved everybody.' And that's what I was taught. They were also very welcoming. They never seemed to draw judgments based on a person's characteristics of race or whatever it might be. They make judgments sometimes, but more on the way people behave."

In numerous instances in the book, you talk about how, even as you progressed in your career, including when you became the first woman to sit on B.C.'s appellate court, you felt like an impostor. At what point did you finally shake the impostor syndrome?

"I don't know if I ever have. But I always say, 'What am I doing here?' Even in my writing career, I say, 'How did I end up here?' There are always people around me who seem to be at least more learned or more rooted or more appropriate. I kind of just go ahead and do what I feel I should do, and get myself into situations where I'm thinking, 'Oh, everybody here knows more than I do. But anyway, here goes.' It served me very well."

Can you tell me how you managed carrying the weight, as you phrased it, of being the first woman on B.C.'s appellate court?

"It's never all black. There's lots and lots of light, and I was always surrounded by very fair people. The men I joined were struggling to find their way, too, how would this be with a woman, etc.

"It is a little intimidating sometimes to think, 'Oh, if I don't do a good job, if I slip up, make a mistake, do something inappropriate, it won't just be that the judge did something inappropriate.' It'll be that the first woman on the court did something inappropriate, and therefore, one draws that inference that women shouldn't be here, so that's the extra weight to carry."

You took the heat for Seaboyer, a decision that ruled that, under some circumstances, sexual assault complainants' sexual history could be interrogated, cross-examined. Why did you take up the lead in writing the judgment and the principles that would undergird its application?

"I was never strategic. I don't even know if it occurred to me. I thought, 'I'm a judge, and I'm going to write the case the way I feel it and the way I think the law requires it to be decided.'

"I wasn't thinking about the fact that people, women's groups would be upset with this decision. For me, it was just another criminal case. When I saw the hostility and criticism the decision brought, it was a bit of a surprise.

"Sometimes you have to make a decision that's considered unpopular with one group or another. The fact that I'm a woman doesn't make me any different. I have to perform that role as a judge as objectively and disinterestedly as I can."

Do you feel that they've been able to see your side of things now, looking back?

"I think everybody now sees the guidelines that I set out resulted in a lot of protection, a maximum degree of protection for witnesses that is consistent with the charter. I think this very small exception has seldom been used.

"Parliament went on to pass legislation based on that and confirm all the protections, while accepting this minor possibility that in certain cases, you might have to allow cross examination into a person's sexual past. But it's never become an abuse. You don't hear much criticism now."

Some critics have appealed to you to resign from your post on Hong Kong's appellate court amid deepening concerns about the erosion of civil liberties in the territory. What do you make of their criticism, and do you intend to finish out your three-year term?

"Well, we'll see. Right now, the court I am a member of is operating in a totally independent way. The Basic Law in Hong Kong guarantees an independent judiciary, so as far as I'm concerned, nothing has changed on the ground. We'll just have to see whether judicial independence is preserved. That will be my criterion. As long as I can sit on an independent court, then I will do so. Of course, I would not be part of an organization that's not independent. But the court, thus far, is independent and making independent rulings."

***Truth Be Told: My Journey Through Life and Law*, by Beverley McLachlin, Simon and Schuster Canada.**

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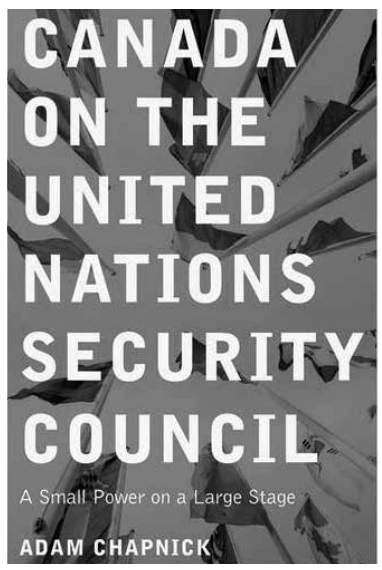
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on March 16, 2016, announcing Canada's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The ultimately unsuccessful campaign for the seat had all the hallmarks of a partisan campaign, something that Adam Chapnick says is detrimental to Canada's success on the UNSC. *Prime Minister's Office photo courtesy of Adam Scotti*

The definitive history of Canada's role on the United Nations Security Council

The first definitive history of Canada's time on the UN Security Council is a must read for anyone interested in Canadian foreign policy.

BY AIDAN CHAMANDY



Adam Chapnick, author of *Canada on the United Nations Security Council: A Small Power on a Large Stage*, published by UBC Press, is a finalist for this year's Shaughnessy Cohen Award for the best political book of the year. *Images courtesy of the Writers' Trust*

Canadians no longer have to delve through old news reports and obscure academic works to understand how their country operates at the United Nations Security Council, though this reporter is not sure many have tried. A highlighter, pencil, and 190 pages of Adam Chapnick's *Canada on the United Nations Security Council: A Small Power on a Large Stage* are all that is now required.

The book is the first definitive history of Canada's time on the UNSC and truly earns the definitive label. It is a detailed look at Canada's six terms on the UNSC, bringing in archival material from Canada, the U.S., France, and the U.K., in addition to dozens of interviews with key players.

The following is an interview with Mr. Chapnick conducted on Sept. 11, 2020. It has been edited for length and clarity. Mr. Chapnick's book has been shortlisted by the Writers'Trust for this year's Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for one of the best Canadian political books of the year.

One of the first things that strikes you about the book is how you call Canada a 'small' power in the title. Many Canadians like to think of the country as a 'middle' power, so I'm wondering if that word choice was conscious and why you chose to phrase it that way?

"On the Security Council there are two cohorts. There are permanent members and there's everybody else. So if you are not a permanent member, there is no middle there. You're small. There are a group of political scientists who study small states, and the way they describe small state foreign policy is exactly the same way that people describe how elected members work on the council. The language is the same, the examples are the same, the priorities are the same. So to me, whether or not Canada is a middle power or not outside of the council, you come to the council, you don't have that veto. You aren't there day in and day out; you don't have the institutional understanding. You don't have the same size delegation as the great powers do. You are the underclass."

So this book goes back to the 1940s and 1950s and continues right through to the present day. How do you think your understanding of a particular individual or event was conditioned by being able to actually talk to participants? Were there any people who you would have liked to talk to about their choices or certain events who you didn't get the chance to?

"Being able to speak to someone personally builds empathy that is more difficult to acquire reading someone's papers, 20 years after that person has passed away. That said, I tried very hard not to rely on a single source for anything. So that if somebody was particularly personally appealing, I wouldn't be shaped by my personal impression of them when I was writing things up. We have had some truly fantastic, permanent representatives, but they're imperfect. Everybody's flawed. And the thing is, by speaking to enough people, you could get a sense of, 'Yes, this was the best boss I ever worked for, but they weren't perfect.' And I think that's important. If I'm trying to present the reader with the entire story, the words have to be included."

In the conclusion, you write, "on rare occasions, [UNSC service] has also resulted in unique opportunities to advance specific, short-term foreign policy objectives." Accomplishing those short-term foreign policy objectives seems to me like the thing that would be most visible to Canadians and most likely to encourage the Canadian population to support the government's work on the UNSC. But if those are the rarest accomplishments, how can the Canadian government do a better job of communicating the value of the UNSC and Canada's role on it?

"I think the big disappointment of this campaign, in some ways, the previous one as well, was that the expectations presented to the public of what we could achieve on the council were quite likely exaggerated. To me, you pursue the council for three reasons in a particular order of importance. The first is not sexy, it's access. You have access to the permanent five on a 24/7 basis for two years. Maybe you can do something to get the Michaels out of China because you can't help but build a relationship with the Chinese permanent representative because you see them every day, COVID notwithstanding.

"Next is relevance. There are 170-plus countries that don't have it. And as a result, they want to be your best friend for the next two years.

"Finally, the third is influence. I understand that it's not sexy to say to the public that, 'That seat is in our interests, because being at the table in and of itself is consistent with our interests.' To be honest, I think the government could have said something like that because, in the grand scheme, I don't think the public thought this was a big deal until the government made it a big deal. It's not something that the public would normally pay attention to. And even if you go back to the 1980s, expectations were set way too high. We had a terrific term on the council, but it was not a term that had flash. And as a result, the analysts afterwards said, 'What did we do?' Well, actually, we were very effective, but the council was working. So we didn't have to do explicit things. We had to keep the machine moving effectively, and that's actually a very important thing. I think it's hard, I don't think we're patient enough, or our political leaders are always patient enough in terms of the way they explain diplomacy to the public. Everyone in the public now knows, at least anyone under 30, that networking is important to getting a job. And we teach everyone the importance of networking, build your network, manage your network. That's what diplomacy is most of the time. I'm not sure why governments have failed to communicate that if people need to network, governments do, too. And that's what the council offers you that you can't get in quite the same way anywhere else."

You write that the post-2000 domestic politicization of the UNSC is something both major parties do and significantly harms our ability to get elected and be constructive members of the council. I'm wondering how you see the latest UNSC campaign aligning with that argument and if you see the problem getting better or worse in the future?

"It didn't get better in the last campaign. They reached out to Joe Clark and Jean Charest, but they are the reddest Tories left. So yes, there was some sort of effort to be a little bit less partisan. But it wasn't as effortful as it could have been.

"We didn't have to run in 2020. We could've had broader consultation before we declared. We could've at least invited the opposition parties to the conversation because it's not the government seat on the council, its Canada's seat.

"The Reform Party sent a letter to Chrétien in the 1990s, pledging full support for the campaign. Reform was big on partisanship having a place in foreign policy, but even then, when it came to the council seat, they were onside. That was a national campaign. I think we can get back to that. But I think that we kind of have to leave discussion of the seat alone for a little bit to let it pass. And my hope would be that we put in another bid for an uncontested seat that is supported by all parties. That would be ideal. I don't think we could do that quite yet. It's helpful that there's a new leader in the opposition, because maybe there's a cleaner slate."

Do you have a particular time horizon in mind?

"I don't think it's a matter of hours and days and weeks as much as it's a matter of attitudes. If there were at some point a consensus on something in world affairs that we could then build off of, I think that's the way that we could go about it. There will have to be more dialogue about world affairs before we see something that all the parties agree on. I would want to build off that because in order to pursue a seat in the 2030s, we do have to announce fairly soon because this government learned the lesson that you don't put in for a seat that already has two bidders."

***Canada on the United Nations Security Council: A Small Power on a Large Stage*, by Adam Chapnick, UBC Press.**

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The Hill Times

Books & Big Ideas

Jury reform 'not nearly enough,' says law professor in book meant to fill gaps after no appeal in Stanley acquittal

'The trial transcript doesn't tell the whole story,' says Kent Roach, who tried to fill the gaps apparent in the Gerald Stanley trial in his new book Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice.

BY SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

Law professor Kent Roach offers a close legal analysis of the Gerald Stanley trial as well as the social and political backdrop in his new book Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice: The Gerald Stanley and Colten Boushie Case. *Photograph courtesy of Kent Roach*

When Saskatchewan farmer Gerald Stanley was acquitted of second-degree murder in the death of Colten Boushie, the major missteps made in that courtroom proved to law professor and author Kent Roach that jury reform was only one step in the "fundamental change" needed to make the legal system fair for Indigenous people in Canada.

The 2018 verdict may likely be a case of a wrongful acquittal said Prof. Roach who has long studied wrongful convictions and felt inspired to write a book critical of the case because there was no appeal or effort within the system to parse what happened, and he said key legal principles were in "danger of getting lost."

Race was "absolutely" the elephant in the courtroom, he said, and it "defies belief" that jurors weren't questioned about racial bias given Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall's "extraordinary intervention" when he publicly spoke against the swirling "racist and hate-filled" social media commentary a few days after Mr. Boushie's death.

"The trial transcript doesn't tell the whole story," he said. "It was the erasing of race even though that was very, very present throughout both what happened on Mr. Stanley's farm, the reaction to it, and in the courthouse."

Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice: The Gerald Stanley and Colten Boushie Case is one of five shortlisted for the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing, and examines the case through exhaustive research, pulling first-hand evidence from the April 2017 preliminary hearings, the trial, parliamentary proceedings, media reports, case law and statistics ranging from gun ownership and crime to the disparity in income and prisoners by race. Prof. Roach said it was important to lay out the political, social, and legal context—including that of changes in self defence laws, the politics of gun ownership and rural policing—that underpinned the 22-year-old Cree man's death in August 2016.

Something "very tangible" came out of the case—the Liberal government's Bill C-75 last Parliament—to address the fact that Mr. Stanley's defence was able to object to and exclude, without explanation, the only five visibly Indigenous people who appeared for jury duty in a process known as peremptory challenges that granted each counsel 12 removals. Prof. Roach last week filed with the Supreme Court of Canada, which agreed to consider the constitutionality of this law reform.

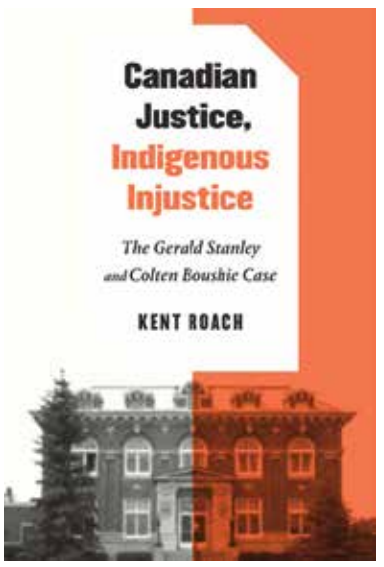
"I support the abolition of peremptory challenges, but they're not nearly enough," said Prof. Roach, who started working on the book's ideas while teaching the case to his first-year University of Toronto law class as it was before the courts in early 2018.

The following Q&A has been edited for length and clarity.

You called the Stanley/Boushie case a warning sign, and said it didn't happen in a vacuum. Why focus on this case? What does it tell us about Canada and our legal system?

"I focused on the case, partly because it wasn't appealed and the Saskatchewan government refused either to appoint an inquiry or even hold a coroner's inquest into Colton Boushie's death. So, I thought that it was one of these cases that was in some danger of getting lost.

Jury reform is not enough to deal with the sorts of conflicts and misunderstandings that ran through the Stanley/Boushie case. One of the things that I did in the chapters on forensics on the hang fire, particularly, is I applied some of the learnings that we've developed on wrongful convictions and applied them to what may be a wrongful acquittal, because I think there was a fairly basic scientific mistake made in the Stanley trial that may have left the jury with the impression that there could be a delay of 30 to 60 seconds between pulling the trigger and a bullet exiting a gun, whereas the very few experiments that have been conducted suggest that it's more like less than half a second delay. And of course, that was really critical given the timeline, where Mr. Stanley said that he fired warning shots and then ran to the car, looked under the car, and then only later went back and his testimony was it was then that his gun accidentally discharged into the back of Colton Boushie's head."



Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice by Kent Roach is one of five shortlisted for the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing.

Why did you think it important to go as far back in history to discuss this case—to 1876 and the signing of Treaty 6, the territory where the Stanley farm sits?

"Well, that's something I really kind of learned from Indigenous colleagues and John Borrows [who wrote the book's foreword] throughout the process, but I was really struck by how Indigenous commentators on the case almost always started, if not, with Treaty 6, with 1885 [when eight Indigenous men were publicly hanged] and kind of a sense of place."

In your chapter looking at rural crime, you write race is the elephant in that room. In your dissection of the trial, you're critical of the lack of instruction from the judge around bias. Was race also the elephant in the trial courtroom deliberations?

"It absolutely was. And it defies belief that there was not an attempt to question jurors about possible racist bias given [then premier] Brad Wall even had to intervene and kind of say, 'Knock it off' with the racist tweets. So, I mean, it was the sound of silence so that when you get to that part of the transcript where all of this is happening, there's nothing on the physical page. You know, the Crown doesn't ask to question people about pretrial publicity, which was a big, big issue, and also doesn't ask the question about racist bias. When the stand-asides are exercised again, you read the page, and there's nothing there. The trial transcript doesn't tell the whole story and there's a sense that we're not talking about race.

"It was the erasing of race even though that was very, very present throughout both what happened on Mr. Stanley's farm, the reaction to it, and in the courthouse. The fact that race was not mentioned, I think is part of the problem, because unless we start talking about this problem, we're not going to make any headway in dealing with this.

"It just seems to me that there is a case that the judge should have intervened, or at least asked whether the Crown had any objections when the third, fourth, and the fifth time someone who looks like they're Indigenous is being subject to a peremptory challenge.

"I also got into the legal details of what this jury was told. Self defence was hanging in the air, but the jury was never instructed about the requirements of self defence. It's very important that it has to be reasonable self-defence. So, self-defence that is motivated by racist fears—even if they're subjectively held—I don't think that that is something that in Canada should be seen as reasonable. But the fact that the jury was never taken through the different elements of self-defence, meant that the jury was never reminded of that requirement that self-defence must be reasonable in order to produce an acquittal."

You said it's difficult to be optimistic about reform and that it's more realistic that it comes from Parliament than the judiciary, but also that Bill C-75 fell far short. So where does that leave us?

"It doesn't leave us in a very optimistic position. The fact that so many people are opposing what I thought was a necessary, but insufficient reform—just hanging onto that one, relatively token reform—is proving to be very, very difficult. I'm trying to do my little part in it, but it is a little bit demoralizing to see kind of the backlash that has come from many people in the legal community who basically just don't want to be able to have their peremptory challenges [removed] because they've always had their peremptory challenges. And so it's made me reflect upon how the community that I'm a part of, the legal community, is quite a small c conservative community. And given that policing and criminal justice are the sharp ends of Canada's colonial relations with Indigenous people, it doesn't make me terribly optimistic if we're looking for the future.

"Reading another one of the books [by Harold Johnson] that is nominated, he kind of ends at the same place where he says we couldn't possibly do any worse than the existing system, that we need to move to a system based upon Indigenous law, and the treaties and I tend to agree with that, but unfortunately, we're still miles and miles away from that sort of fundamental change."

In the forward John Borrows praises your work especially for examining the potential role of treaties to address justice issues. Why was it such a focal point in the book if you believe that fundamental change is needed but so far off?

"As someone who still kind of makes my living training lawyers, I want to believe that we can make things better. I do think that the abolition of peremptory challenges is something. Part of being implicated by the system is you have some sort of duty to try to point out its flaws and to ask for changes. I certainly testified before the parliamentary committee and I proposed a number of amendments to Bill C-75 that I think would have strengthened it in order to force more diverse juries, and I put the idea of mixed juries on the table. Unfortunately, at this point in time the government decided not to go that far and I guess they're getting a lot of pushback even with respect to how far they did go abolishing peremptory challenges.

"Hopefully things will get better, but it's not something that seems to be happening anytime soon."

Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice: The Gerald Stanley and Colten Boushie Case.
Kent Roach
McGill-Queen's University Press
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Reflections on four years in the Senate

It will take more hard work, and less politics, to regain the public trust in the Senate.

BY TONY DEAN

After four years in the Senate of Canada I've now seen the worlds of public administration and politics from both sides. I'm also participating in the most significant reform of the Senate in its 153 year-old history.

In 2015 I applied for a seat in Canada's Senate under newly-elected Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's new independent appointment process. Then teaching graduate students in public policy at the University of Toronto, I had formerly served NDP, Progressive Conservative, and Liberal premiers and their administrations in Ontario. As head of Ontario's public service I had seen policy-making and politics at the highest levels, working as closely with Conservative policy guru Guy Giorno as with his Ontario Liberal counterpart Gerald Butts.

I was particularly attracted by Trudeau's commitment to Senate reform, which envisaged not just a more independent appointment process, but a more independent and less-partisan Senate. This followed on the heels of a series of Senate-tarnishing own-goals on the watch of the previous government.

Prime Ministers earn the right to chart their own course. Stephen Harper, the former PM, was inclined to micro-manage the Senate through his Conservative Senate appointees, and had previously tested with the Supreme Court his government's ability to reform the Senate in areas such as term limits, consultative elections, and abolition. He came away empty-handed.

The court was clear in saying that such changes would need Constitutional reform, requiring parliamentary approval plus the support of two-thirds of provinces with at least 50 per cent of Canada's population (and support from all provinces for abolition). This meant that the only realistic option for reform in the short to medium term would be change from within the Senate itself.

Trudeau knew that Senate reform was unlikely under the die-hard, take-turns-in-power Liberal-Conservative duopoly, and so set out to prompt an evolution towards a more independent Senate—a move which initially drew a cynical reaction from his Conservative opponents. But in a move not previously seen in the institution's 153 year-old history, Trudeau gave some teeth to his reform initiative on at least three fronts.

First, in a move that shook the old Senate to its partisan foundations, the PM ousted the Senate Liberals from his parliamentary political caucus, resulting in considerable unhappiness on the part of Liberal Senators and leaving Senate Conservatives scratching their heads in disbelief.

Second, Trudeau's appointments have been consistently non-partisan, with dozens of new appointees drawn from the worlds of academia, public administration, business, charitable and community organizations. Some have deep experience in Constitutional law, others are experts in banking, financial and energy regulation, the environment and the senior levels of Canada's public services. There is also a smattering of former legislators. As a result of these appointments and a shift of some Senators away from political caucuses, about 80 per cent of Senators have now declared their independence from partisan caucuses.

Third, the Senate has gender parity for the first time in its history and is considerably more diverse, particularly in terms of Indigenous representation. There is also a greater diversity of ideas and approaches to how the Senate operates. There has been a distinct shift away from the long-standing "us versus them" government-opposition duality in the Senate, which tended to look like a cheaper knock-off of the elected and partisan House of Commons.

Independent Senator Tony Dean worked at the top of Ontario's public service and taught at the University of Toronto before his appointment to the Senate in 2016. *The Hill Times file photograph*

The reaction of Independent Senators to government bills has been unpredictable. Tough questions are asked of government ministers, and there have been more amendments to government bills than seen in the old system; in the 42nd parliament, when the Independent Senators group was first formed, 34 bills were passed with 429 amendments. As opposed to taking direction from political parties, Independent Senators have been much more likely to make individual determinations based on their own research and information arising from Senate Committee reviews of bills.

Fourth, we have also seen a more activist Senate led by Independent Senators through motions, inquiries and Senate bills, especially in the areas of social policy and justice system reform. Look no further than Senator Kim Pate, an expert in justice reform and particularly prisoners' rights and issues associated with solitary confinement.

In June of this year Senators Rosemary Moodie, Wanda Thomas Bernard, and Marie-Françoise Mégie put a broad Senate lens on anti-Black racism as part of the widespread reaction to the May 25, 2020 killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. We saw a rare emergency debate on the realities of anti-Black racism in Canada and a "Committee of the Whole" in which government ministers were called to the Senate Chamber to answer questions on government policy and responses.

Senators Frances Lankin, who led a major review of social assistance in Ontario, and Ratna Omidvar, whose career has focused on immigration and refugee settlement, are among fifty Senators who have advocated powerfully for a Guaranteed Basic Income.

Senator Murray Sinclair and his Indigenous (and many non-Indigenous) colleagues are highlighting the social and economic issues affecting the country's Indigenous peoples, and also some obvious responses such as legislation confirming Canada's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The Senate's review of Canada's first Medical Assistance in Dying Bill (MAID) in 2016 and of Cannabis legalization bill C-45 in 2017-18 signalled a shift towards bringing a more research and policy-based approach to reviewing bills. By this I mean, looking closely at the government's stated policy goals, and the degree to which the proposed legislation was likely to meet those goals effectively, or not.

For both reviews, there was also rare agreement on getting the Senate's debates and key votes on these bills scheduled on the calendar, as opposed to the more haphazard and unplanned approach to Senate business that has been mostly the norm for decades. Senator Peter Harder (the former government representative in the Senate and now a member of the Progressive Senators Group) has advocated for the formalization of this sort of planned approach to our work through the creation of a Senate business planning committee. There has been a surprising degree of resistance to this on the basis that "we don't do things like that here," an argument that wouldn't last very long with Canadians who expect the Senate to work efficiently on their behalf.

Independents evolve, and the future

Most of the new independent appointees initially coalesced in the now-majority Independent Senators Group (ISG), which was formed in the early stages of reform by the first group of Independent appointees, together with some pre-existing reformers. Not surprisingly, this has now evolved.

The former Liberal caucus, recently re-branded itself as the Progressive Senators Group (PSG) and now has 11 members, including several of Trudeau's independent appointees. A third, more conservative-minded independent group, the Canadian Senators Group (CSG), formed last year under the leadership of former Conservative Senator Scott Tannas, and has drawn members from the three other Senate groups. The creation of new independent groups in the Senate is a healthy development and had been anticipated for some time. I believe that all of us share an interest in building a modern, more responsive and less-partisan Senate.

What's next?

It's clear that the now-smaller Conservative caucus would love things to go back to normal. Following the initial shock of reform, our Conservative colleagues regrouped and chose to pretend that the old duopoly remained in place, hoping that everything would return to normal if their leader won the 2019 federal election. They have denounced Senate reforms as "Liberal window-dressing." Independents have been regularly assailed in Trump-like terms as "Fake Trudeau Independent Senators" (I am not kidding here). I'm sure it hasn't seemed that way to government ministers who have faced tough questioning and criticism from some of the most capable independent social justice advocates in the Senate.

The Conservatives say that as the "official opposition" their job is to oppose the government, and they certainly do this—sometimes in the most simplistic ways, unfailingly following in lockstep with their Conservative colleagues in the House of Commons. The Senate's Question Period is a replay of QP in the House of Commons, and for the most part so are Conservative contributions to debates and commentary on the legislation that is supposed to be held up for close scrutiny and "sober second thought" once it arrives in the Senate. Instead, Senate business is often just held-up.

While most of these shenanigans can be shrugged off as partisan game-playing, the most damaging behaviour is the intentional use of Senate rules for the purpose of delaying or killing legislative initiatives. The Conservatives used these built-in delays to hold up for over a year a simple vote on a proposed bill to make the National Anthem more gender neutral.

There are myriad examples of costly and non-productive delays, including shutting down debate by introducing serial amendments and sub-amendments, and requiring one or two-hour delays by invoking one or two-hour periods of bell ringing to summon Senators while we are obviously all present in the Senate Chamber. If this sounds a little juvenile, that's not the half of it. These delays hold up Senate business for hours at a time and at a cost of thousands of dollars in additional security and staff support. Senators Sinclair and his Quebec counterpart Senator Pierre Dalphond have initiated a discussion on tackling these delays through changes to Senate rules, but of course this discussion could be held up almost indefinitely by delays provided for by the very rules many of us would like to see change. But we will get there because it's the right thing to do.

The new Senate's majority of independent Senators will not be quickly or easily replaced by a successor government wanting a return to partisan appointments. It's clear that Canadians don't want this: an April 2019 Nanos poll suggested that 77 per cent of Canadians want future governments to carry on with the new Senate appointment process. Only three per cent of Canadians wanted a return to the old partisan appointment process, while the remaining 20 per cent were unsure.

It will take more hard work, and less politics, to regain the public trust in the Senate. This will have to be earned one day at a time, by demonstrating that the institution is working on behalf of Canadians as opposed to the interests of any particular political party.

This means fulfilling our Constitutional responsibility to take a hard look at proposed legislation and providing our best advice, representing our home jurisdictions, and advancing the rights of those in our society who would otherwise have no voice.

We have to fulfil those responsibilities effectively, efficiently and responsibly. This is what a reformed Senate of Canada looks and feels like and it's a privilege to contribute to the reform process alongside my independent colleagues.

Tony Dean is an Independent Senator representing Ontario.

The Hill Times

News

PM should create permanent emergency preparedness cabinet committee, say experts, political players

Richard Fadden, who worked as the national security adviser to the prime minister between January 2015 and March 2016, says that 'if this country wants the national security agencies to worry about a pandemic, then they need to raise it on the list of priorities set by cabinet.'

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as we should" and that he believes "there should be a cabinet committee to deal with emergency responses—not just the pandemic," with one Liberal MP saying it would "go a long way towards minimizing the various silos that exist and that we can no longer afford."

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.) said he believes the establishment of a cabinet committee devoted to emergency preparedness "is a sensible idea," and that it should operate under the auspices of the public safety minister.

"I would centre it around the public safety minister, and the reason for that is that the public safety minister covers a very broad domain, from intelligence to policing to borders to international responses to incidences," said Mr. McKay. "If there was an early warning mechanism at the cabinet level, it wouldn't just simply be one minister applying his or her judgment to whether this was something to be shared with their colleagues."

"If ever there was a truism that health is wealth, the pandemic has demonstrated that, and if you don't have a healthy population, you'll soon have an impoverished population, and any security measure that reduces the siloing of information I think has merit," said Mr. McKay.

Richard Fadden, who worked as the national security adviser to the prime minister between January 2015 and March 2016, as well as the deputy minister of national defence prior, told *The Hill Times* that although it's "difficult to argue that the pandemic itself is a national security issue," it "certainly is a public health issue" and that "if this country wants the national security agencies to worry about a pandemic, then they need to raise it on the list of priorities set by cabinet."

Former clerk of the Privy Council and top Canadian bureaucrat Mel Cappe suggested in a piece written for the Centre of International Governance Innovation (CIGI) that the Cabinet Committee on COVID-19 should "be turned into a standing committee on emergencies" and that "being prepared for the next natural disaster, terrorist act or health crisis is the objective."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured speaking with reporters on Sept. 14, 2020. Former clerk of the Privy Council and top bureaucrat Mel Cappe suggested in a piece written for the Centre of International Governance Innovation (CIGI) that the cabinet committee on COVID-19 should 'be turned into a standing committee on emergencies' and that 'being prepared for the next natural disaster, terrorist act or health crisis is the objective.' *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Richard Fadden, who worked as the national security adviser to the prime minister between January 2015 and March 2016, as well as the deputy minister of national defence prior, told The Hill Times that although it's 'difficult to argue that the pandemic itself is a national security issue,' it 'certainly is a public health issue' and that 'if this country wants the national security agencies to worry about a pandemic, then they need to raise it on the list of priorities set by cabinet.' *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

"The committee would ensure the planning function gets done during quieter times and the emergency response is robust during crises," wrote Mr. Cappe in the piece published on August 24.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) created the cabinet committee on COVID-19 on March 4, and designed it to "complement the work being done by the Incident Response Group." The cabinet committee was intended to "meet regularly to ensure whole-of-government leadership, coordination, and preparedness for a response to the health and economic impacts of the virus," according to the PMO.

As of March 4, members of the committee included now-Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University Rosedale, Ont.), Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos (Québec, Que.), Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains (Mississauga-Malton, Ont.), Public Safety Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.), Heath Minister Patty Hajdu (Thunder Bay-Superior North, Ont.), Economic Development Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.), Employment Minister Carla Qualtrough (Delta, B.C.). At that point it also included former finance minister Bill Morneau, who resigned as an MP in August amid the fallout from the WE Charity scandal that continues to dog the government.

Liberal MP Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Ont.) the deputy government House leader, has also been a core participant of the COVID-19 cabinet committee meetings. Ms. Duncan, a career scientist, has done research on the spread of the 1918 influenza pandemic.

"One of the things that characterizes the national security institutions of Canada is that they can only investigate, report on, and analyze matters that are under the national security of Canada, and the law would have to change to make that any different," said Mr. Fadden.

"On the other hand, CSIS has a vast array of bilateral relationships with countries around the world and they can gather information there," he said.

"The first thing that would need to be done to deal with the relationship between cabinet and the national security agencies is that cabinet would have to clearly establish that pandemics, to give a current example of a disruptive event, [are] a priority."

Mr. Fadden also said that he wasn't sure that the Chinese government's actions during the pandemic constituted a threat to national security.

"Nobody knew what the hell was going on, but that's a different issue," said Mr. Fadden. "A view has slowly developed that for one reason or another, the Chinese government haven't been as forthright as they could be as to how things are going in China. I'm not sure that's a national security issue either."

"On the other hand, what is a national security issue, if reports are to be believed, that institutions of the Chinese government are trying to break into all sorts of institutions in the West, including Canada, and steal IPs to try and get a heads up on vaccines or treatment—that clearly is a national security issue, and CSIS and CSE should try and deal with that issue."

Mr. Fadden also said the COVID committee should "stay as it is until we've beaten it back."

"I'm confident we will at some point—but eventually, it's going to go away, and if it goes away entirely, my broader issue around emergency preparedness, for what are called disruptive events—they can be anything from terrorist events to earthquakes, massive hurricanes, fires, pandemics—they need a focal point within the cabinet system that they do not have now."

According to Conservative strategist Tim Powers, "as has been demonstrated through this pandemic and previous pandemics, it only makes sense that there be a more permanent, properly funded body that address these things."

"We have to take all of the learnings from this pandemic, as was supposed to be the case after SARS, and incorporate them in our planning for other, future global health challenges," said Mr. Powers in an interview with *The Hill Times* on Sept. 16.

"Just look at the economic costs already of this pandemic—if we had a regular, standing body, could we have done better in dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, would we be in the $350-billion deficit position? For what it would cost to stand up a cabinet committee like that, keep it consistent and have it staffed as it would need to be, why wouldn't we?"

Conservative strategist Geoff Norquay, a principal at Earnscliffe Strategy Group who also served as director of communications for former prime minister Stephen Harper while in opposition in 2004-2005, said he doesn't believe there needs to be a "permanent" cabinet committee structure.

"I don't think that such an approach needs to be permanent in terms of a cabinet committee structure—what the current pandemic has taught us is that the federal government cannot go to sleep at the switch when gathering intelligence and being prepared to act on this intelligence. In the case of the arrival of another virus or superbug, it doesn't require a permanent cabinet committee to do this, it requires the federal government to fix the damn system," said Mr. Norquay. "Not ignore advice from international agencies, have an early warning system that provides as much advanced intelligence as can be obtained, and listen to it."

Mr. Norquay also said that the the federal government has to do a "much better job at intelligence gathering, understanding that intelligence, feeding it into key decision makers, and taking action."

"Strictly speaking, it doesn't require a permanent cabinet committee to do all that, it requires the federal government to get on the ball and smarten up, and not go to sleep as they did on COVID-19."

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'These jobs are not coming back': economists pour cold water on O'Toole's Canada First policy

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole, pictured Sept. 9, 2020, in Ottawa alongside chief of staff Tausha Michaud and national campaign manager Fred DeLorey. Mr. O'Toole has begun his tenure atop the Conservative Party by courting voters outside of the party base, including unionized labourers. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

'Some people are going to win from a Canada-first policy. Most people are going to lose,' says Queen's professor Ian Keay.

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In a video ad released around Labour Day, Mr. O'Toole railed against "bad trade deals with the U.S. and countries like China." He acknowledged the widespread layoffs in the auto manufacturing, forestry, and energy sectors in recent years, and promised, if he wins power, to "introduce a Canada First economic strategy—one that doesn't cater to elites and special interests, but fights for working Canadians."

"The goal of economic policy should be more than just wealth creation, it should be solidarity, and the wellness of families—and include higher wages," he said in the 90-second clip.

In an interview with TVO's Steve Paikin, Mr. O'Toole said, "we are the only party that supports building things in Canada."

"I want to bring back some critical manufacturing to Canada, starting with [personal protective equipment]," he said

"We need to see some manufacturing return to southern Ontario, and it may involve Canada having to look at tariffing other nations," he said.

University of Calgary economist Trevor Tombe, however, told *The Hill Times* that an economic policy that promotes self-sufficiency at the expense of free trade would be "quite dangerous for the Canadian economy."

Imports and exports underpin two-third of Canada's economic production, said Prof. Tombe. Economic policy that pushes Canadian industry to be self-sufficient would hurt the workers whose jobs are connected to international trade, he said.

Many Canadian manufacturers rely on imported materials in order to build their own product, and putting up trade barriers like tariffs would hurt those manufacturers, he said.

Without trade barriers, he said, "We're able to focus on the things that we do particularly well, and import the other things."

Mr. O'Toole was "absolutely right" to say that GDP growth is not the only measure of a successful economy, said Prof. Tombe. Inequality in the economy should be corrected through tax policy, not reducing international trade, he said.

Erecting trade barriers won't only block imports; other countries will respond in kind, applying corresponding tariffs on Canadian exports, said Mark Manger, a political economist who serves as co-director of the University of Toronto's Global Economic Policy Lab.

"They're just going to close their border to us," he said.

Many of the industries that have suffered the most in Canada in recent years, including the forestry sector, are geared towards exports, he said.

"These industries are only viable if they are exporting, especially to the U.S. And subsidizing them, and protecting them, and then expecting to have markets overseas that we can access, that's not going to work."

"The fact is, these jobs are not coming back, no matter what we do, unless we pump boatloads of subsidies into it," said Prof. Manger.

'The script has flipped again'

U.S. President Donald Trump claims to have put in place an "America First" economic policy, and has started trade wars with Canada repeatedly to protect the interests of U.S. aluminum and forestry businesses. Mr. O'Toole told CBCs Vassy Kapelos that his policy would be similar, focusing on Canadian "self-sufficiency" for food, energy, and personal protective equipment. He also said he was "more of a free trader" than Mr. Trump.

Canada's Conservative Party has a long history of protectionist economic policies, covering much of the time up until the 1970s and 1980s, and progressive conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney's Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, when Conservatives began to embrace free trade and markets, said Ian Keay, an economics professor at Queen's University.

"The script has flipped again. This is old-school economic nationalism," he said.

Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's protectionist National Policy was effective at the time, helping protected Canadian businesses grow to the point where they could compete internationally, said Prof. Keay, who specializes in economic history. A similar policy likely would not work for today's complex Canadian economy, he said.

"In a world where technology is based primarily on information and specialization, closing yourself off to complementary economic activities in other countries, this is not a recipe for growth, for employment, for productivity improvement," said Prof. Keay.

Economic policies that protect Canadian businesses from foreign competition—through trade barriers or significant subsidies—can become very difficult to remove once the protected industry grows and matures, he said.

"I can't think of one [example], off the top of my head, where that economic nationalism was applied, and then kind of judiciously removed when it was necessary. It just becomes too hard to do," he said.

Protecting Canadian industries from competition on a broad scale would result in higher prices for Canadian consumers, and lower "real wages"—a measure of purchasing power—for many Canadian workers, said Prof. Keay.

"There's a redistribution: some people are going to win from a Canada-first policy. Most people are going to lose."

'Minor tinkering' no threat to economy, says Cross

However, Philip Cross, a former chief economic analyst for Statistics Canada, said that Mr. O'Toole's proposals—specifically backing away from more trade with China—are not cause for concern.

Mr. Cross said it is "unimaginable" that Mr. O'Toole would pull Canada out of existing trade agreements with Europe and Pacific countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or that he would try to negotiate the new CUSMA deal with the United States and Mexico. Mr. O'Toole called the CUSMA a "bad" deal, but has not signalled that he would pull Canada out of any existing agreements.

Canada has already reaped most of the benefits it can get from free trade agreements, said Mr. Cross, who is now a senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute.

"Does Canada need more free trade deals? Probably not," he said.

The new trade barriers and protections for the United States negotiated by Mr. Trump through the CUSMA were only "minor tinkering," he said.

"If that's the kind of pull-back that O'Toole is signalling that we're going to get from free trade, I'm not overly concerned about it," he said.

He said that a public backlash against free trade had been "building for some time," and Canada's political leaders who pushed for free trade deals in years past hadn't done enough to help workers who lost out from those deals.

'Auto jobs didn't go to China'

Mr. O'Toole has attacked "trade deals with China" as the root of the troubles facing Canada's labour-intensive industries. Canada does not have a free trade agreement with China. The previous Conservative government signed an investment protection agreement with China, and the current Liberal government began negotiations toward a free trade agreement with China, but those have been stalled since 2018.

Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne told *The Globe and Mail* last week that he did not "see the conditions being present now for these discussions to continue at this time."

"Auto jobs didn't go to China, they went to Mexico," said Mr. Cross. "And they're not coming back from Mexico."

However, Mr. Cross agreed that pursuing free trade with China would be unwise.

"There is no such thing as free trade with China. Free trade with China means they have access to our markets, and they don't care about opening up their markets," he said.

Canada's government struggled to procure the needed supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies essential to controlling the pandemic after it raced around the world this spring. Most of the production of PPE is done in China.

Those PPE shortages have mostly been resolved now, thanks in part to a coordinated effort by Canada's federal and provincial governments.

Protecting or subsidizing Canadian production of personal protective equipment, as Mr. O'Toole suggested, would not make or break the economy, said Mr. Cross.

Prof. Manger, however, said it would make more sense to stockpile PPE than to begin manufacturing it.

"It's not like we will have a constant use for personal protective equipment for the next 10 years," he said.

Canada's federal government maintained a stockpile of PPE before the pandemic struck, but it was inadequate, and a large portion of the stockpile was allowed to expire without replacement shortly before COVID-19 arrived in Canada. The stockpile had its budget, staff, and storage space whittled down by successive Conservative and Liberal governments over the past decade, *The Globe and Mail* reported in April.

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Erin O'Toole's Labour Day video, word-by-word

"I was raised in a General Motors family, my dad worked there for over 30 years. I represent a riding of auto workers—one that depends on manufacturing for its prosperity. And I have to say, things are not okay. Thousands of auto workers have been laid off. Hundreds of thousands of energy workers, forestry workers, have lost their jobs. Too many people are living on the brink, living in quiet desperation. For them, there isn't a lot to celebrate this Labour Day.

"Part of the problem is big government, one that signs bad trade deals with the U.S. and countries like China, or that kills entire industries by saying they're going to phase out the energy sector. But part of the problem is big business, corporate and financial power brokers who care more about their shareholders than their employees. They love trade deals with China that allow them to access cheap labour.

"Under my leadership, Conservatives will introduce a Canada First economic strategy, one that doesn't cater to elites and special interests, but fights for working Canadians.

"I believe that GDP growth alone is not the end-all-be-all of politics. The goal of economic policy should be more than just wealth creation, it should be solidarity, and the wellness of families—and include higher wages.

"My name is Erin O'Toole, I grew up in Bowmanville, Ontario, and I'm here to fight for you and your families."

News

‘Ping-pong’ gun politics continue to divide voters, as O’Toole courts GTA seats

‘I think it’s going to help some of the Conservative candidates in some of those swing ridings,’ says Ontario Tory MP Alex Ruff of the Liberal ban on ‘assault weapons.’

Continued from page 1

after the ban was announced. The petition was initiated by Alberta resident Jesse Faszer, and sponsored by Conservative MP Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, Alta.).

Mr. Faszer’s petition has received more signatures than any other electronic petition to Parliament since it began to accept online petitions in 2015. In a typical year, roughly 200 electronic petitions have garnered about 500,000 signatures in total—just more than double the number on Mr. Fraszer’s petition alone, according to the House of Commons.

The next most popular electronic petition attracted 175,000 signatures between mid-December 2019 and mid-February 2020. That petition was also about the government’s then-upcoming “assault weapon” ban.

Gun control policy has been a hot political issue for decades. Rural Liberal MPs are still reminded of the widespread backlash to the long-gun registry introduced in the mid-1990s by Jean Chrétien’s government, and eventually dismantled by Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper in 2012.

Conservative MPs and firearms lobby groups do well to ensure that gun owners don’t forget. The Conservative Party has run online ads warning of a Liberal plot to bring back the long-gun registry regularly since Mr. Trudeau’s Liberal took power in 2015. The National Firearms Association worked hard to rally gun owners to defeat Liberal candidates in the last two elections. New Conservative Leader Erin O’Toole promised during his campaign for the party leadership to “leave legal gun owners alone.”

Mr. Trudeau’s Liberals have not reintroduced the long-gun registry, but have taken and promised numerous other new steps to restrict gun ownership and use in Canada, making gun control a signature of their political agenda. Those include a promise to expand background checks for those seeking a possession and acquisition license (PAL), creating a registry for the sale of guns, promising new controls on gun storage and transport, and more, as well as the ban on “assault weapons”—a term that has no technical meaning in the world of recreational gun sales.

‘When I’m prime minister, I’ll put an end to Trudeau’s attacks on law-abiding gun owners:’ Conservative Leader Erin O’Toole campaigned for the party leadership on a promise to roll back Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s new gun control measures. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Though he rarely discusses it, Mr. Trudeau is a former gun owner and sport shooter. He told *The Hill Times* in 2011—when he was an MP in then-interim leader Bob Rae’s Liberal caucus—that he had a license to own both long guns and restricted weapons, including handguns. Mr. Trudeau said he was “raised around guns,” and learned how to shoot from RCMP officers assigned to protect his father, former prime minister Pierre Trudeau. He said he did not hunt recreationally, but was “quite good” at shooting clay pigeons and other targets with long guns.

PMO spokesperson Ann-Clara Vaillancourt said that Mr. Trudeau does not currently own any guns. She did not answer questions about whether Mr. Trudeau still holds a PAL, when he got rid of his guns, or the last time he used one.

Why are Conservatives and gun owners on the same side?

Gun control has “been reduced to political ping-pong” between the Conservatives and Liberals over the past three decades, said Tracey Wilson, the spokesperson for the Canadian Coalition for Firearms Rights, one of two prominent pro-gun lobby groups in the country. She described gun policy as “super political” and “super polarizing” at the federal level.

Gun owners are “particularly motivated” to get involved in politics, said Ms. Wilson, because political leaders regularly promise to change gun laws one way or another. Many gun owners have gun collections worth tens of thousands of dollars, she said. They have an incentive to vote to protect that collection, and often have the money to donate to politicians who promise to do so.

Gun owners and Conservative politicians typically land on the same side of the issue. “I think because they know it sort of speaks to their base,” said Ms. Wilson.

However, only a small portion of Canadians with a PAL are Conservative Party members. At the end of the leadership contest won by Mr. O’Toole in August, the party had just shy of 270,000 members. Roughly 2.2 million people in Canada have gun licenses.

“Gun owners didn’t show up for the party” said Nicolas Johnson, who writes about gun policy and politics regularly on TheGunBlog.ca.

Mr. Johnson said he believes some Conservatives oppose more gun control measures simply because Liberals have historically favoured them.

“Whatever the Liberals do, they have to do the opposite,” he said.

“Every party wins some voters on that and loses some voters on that.”

Not all gun owners are politically conservative, said Ms. Wilson, but left-leaning politicians who promise gun control turn some into “one issue voters.”

Conservatives place a high value on individual rights, and that’s part of the reason they typically go to bat for gun owners, said Alex Ruff, the Conservative MP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Ont.

That overlap doesn’t necessarily extend to all varieties of guns, however. An Angus Reid poll of 1,581 Canadians in May found that 60 per cent of those who voted Conservative in last fall’s election supported a ban on assault weapons, while 40 per cent opposed it. That same poll found that a slim majority of current gun owners—55 per cent—opposed the ban, while 45 per cent supported it.

Mr. Ruff said the governing Liberals have misled the public about the ban.

“Assault rifles have been banned in this country for decades,” said Mr. Ruff, a Canadian Forces infantry veteran who says he used a variety of military rifles during deployments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Bosnia.

Fully automatic rifles were banned in Canada in 1978. Semi-automatic rifles, which fire each time the trigger is pulled, remain legal, apart from the roughly 1,500 varieties banned by the Liberals earlier this year.

“I get very frustrated with the word salad and the partisan comments that aren’t based on fact,” said Mr. Ruff.

RCMP can’t keep up with background checks: Wilson

It’s not clear how the government chose which semi-automatic rifles to put under the ban, and which to leave out. Ms. Wilson estimated that the ban covers about 20 per cent of the semi-automatic rifles available in Canada. She said that some of the guns that were banned function in an identical way to others that were not.

“These are token, symbolic bans,” she said.

The Liberals came under pressure to deliver their promised ban after a gunman killed 22 people in Nova Scotia in April. According to the RCMP, three of the guns used by the shooter were smuggled illegally from the United States, and a fourth was obtained illegally in Canada.

Mr. O’Toole has made plain his desire to court voters outside of the party’s traditional base. According to the Angus Reid poll, a majority of Canadians in every region of the country support a ban on “assault weapons.”

Mr. Ruff said he doesn’t think the party’s opposition to the Liberal ban would hamper its efforts to win seats in suburban ridings in the Greater Toronto area.

“There are so many doctors, dentists, teachers [who are] urban sport shooters,” he said.

“I think it’s going to help some of the Conservative candidates in some of those swing ridings.”

Mr. Ruff and Ms. Wilson both said that the government’s decision to ban some varieties of semi-automatic rifles wasn’t grounded in any evidence that those guns, when legally-owned, are often used to hurt people.

“If they want to make that case, then make that case, crystal clear. But again, where’s the data that you’re talking about that supports that hypothetical?” he said.

The imprecise definition of the guns banned by the government make that difficult to verify either way. According to Statistics Canada, guns were used to murder 1,073 people in Canada between 2014 and 2018. A majority, 623, were killed by handguns, while another 242 were killed by full-length rifles or shotguns that were not fully automatic. Statistics Canada did not further break down the type of long gun used in those crimes.

“You’re trying to solve a problem that doesn’t exist,” said Mr. Ruff.

Ms. Wilson said she did not believe that the RCMP’s Canadian Firearms Program was being given enough resources to enforce the gun control measures already on the books. Canadians are required to list references, including their spouse, on their applications for a PAL or PAL renewal. The intent is to allow the RCMP to check on the mental health and fitness of the person applying to possess a gun, through the eyes of those closest to them.

“I have never had any of my references called. My spouse, who I’d been married to for 16 years, was never called,” said Ms. Wilson.

“The problem is that the RCMP and the Firearms Program in particular are unable to keep up with what’s going on now,” she said.

“If they’re not using those resources, what makes [the Liberals] think they’ll be able to do even more extensive background checks,when they literally don’t have the time to call two references?”

The Liberal government has not yet released the details of its plan to buy back the banned rifles from gun owners. Some of the provisions from the gun control bill passed in the last Parliament have yet to come into effect.

With Parliament suspended and government resources tied up the COVID-19 pandemic, the government also has yet to introduce its second promised piece of gun control legislation in this Parliament.

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HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

O'Toole gets his OLO in shape, names Bélanger as his deputy chief

Veteran Conservative staffer Martin Bélanger will be working closely with new leader Erin O'Toole's chief of staff, Tausha Michaud.

New Conservative Leader **Erin O'Toole** and team have been busy in recent weeks transitioning into the official opposition leader's office and getting a new staff line-up in place, and recent decisions include naming **Martin Bélanger** as deputy chief of staff and **Mélanie Paradis** as director of communications.

Mr. Bélanger was last acting chief of staff and Quebec adviser to then-leader **Andrew Scheer**.

Before stepping in as acting OLO chief of staff this past spring, Mr. Bélanger had spent almost a decade as head of the Conservative research bureau—previously called the Conservative Resource Group, it was renamed Conservative Caucus Services (CCS) earlier this year. He's been serving as a senior Quebec adviser to the Conservative leader since 2017, and before this spring also wore the hat of deputy chief of staff.

Mélanie Paradis is now the OLO's director of communications. *Photograph courtesy of Facebook*

Ms. Paradis recently ran the communications shop for Mr. O'Toole leadership campaign, having done the same for his previous bid in 2017. During the 2019 election, along with helping out the national Conservative campaign, Ms. Paradis was deputy campaign manager to Mr. O'Toole in Durham, Ont.

Most recently a director with McMillan Vantage Group, Ms. Paradis is also a former director of lands, resources, and consultation for the Métis Nation of Ontario, and has a background in public affairs. During the 2018 Ontario election, she helped with communications for now-Premier **Doug Ford**'s Progressive Conservative campaign, amongst other past roles. She is currently second vice president of the Ontario PC Party.

Soon after his election as leader on Aug. 23, Mr. O'Toole appointed **Tausha Michaud** to run his office as official opposition leader. It's Ms. Michaud's second time serving as Mr. O'Toole's chief of staff; she previously ran his office during his time as veterans affairs minister under **Stephen Harper**'s Conservative government in 2015, also serving as a senior adviser. During the leadership race, she was a principal secretary for Mr. O'Toole's campaign.

After the Conservatives lost government in 2015, Ms. Michaud stayed on to run Mr. O'Toole's office as the MP for Durham, Ont., for the next two years. Since then, she's spent time as director of public affairs at National Public Relations and most recently as a director with the McMillan Vantage Policy Group in Toronto.

A former Ontario Progressive Conservative staffer, Ms. Michaud first came to the Hill in 2013 to work as an assistant in Mr. O'Toole's MP office.

Since being named to the top OLO job, Ms. Michaud has been busy overseeing the office's transition and new staff roster.

A source told **Hill Climbers** that Mr. O'Toole and team are aiming to bring on fresh, but experienced, staff from across the country to work for the new leader, and ultimately have a more slimmed-down OLO.

Mr. Scheer's OLO team—counting both the leader's office and research bureau, which work hand-in-hand—included around 80 staff throughout his tenure.

Former Conservative MP **Alupa Clarke**, who represented Beauport-Limoilou, Que., in the House of Commons from 2015 to 2019, has been named senior Quebec adviser to Mr. Scheer and is helping to build the OLO's Quebec team.

Mr. Clarke, a former intern in Mr. Harper's office as prime minister, led Mr. O'Toole's leadership campaign in Quebec. In his new role, he'll be working closely with the party's 10-member Quebec caucus.

Axel Rioux will be overseeing Quebec communications as an associate director. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Axel Rioux has returned to the Hill to serve as associate director of Quebec communications.

Mr. Rioux previously helped tackle communications and media relations work in Mr. Harper's PMO from 2012 to 2015. Since then, he's been busy as manager of communications and policy for the Quebec Trucking Association.

Kelsie Chiasson is staying on in the OLO and will be working closely with Ms. Paradis as associate director of communications.

Ms. Chiasson (née Corey) was last acting communications director in the office, having been associate director of media relations and issues management and caucus press secretary, respectively, before that.

A longtime Hill staffer, Ms. Chiasson is also a former special assistant to then-fisheries minister **Keith Ashfield** and a former policy adviser and caucus liaison to then-minister of state for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency **Rob Moore**.

Chelsea Tucker, who served as a press secretary for Mr. O'Toole's leadership campaign, has joined the OLO to continue tackling media for the new leader. Originally from New Brunswick, Ms. Tucker is bilingual, but will be focused on English media in her new role.

She's a former communications assistant in Mr. Harper's PMO and spent time as a special assistant for communications in then-fisheries minister **Gail Shea**'s office, amongst other past experience.

Chelsea Tucker is press secretary to Mr. O'Toole. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Over on the digital side of things, **Marc Lemire** has been named associate director of digital production.

Mr. Lemire is another holdover from Mr. Scheer's OLO team, having done the same job for the ex leader. He's been doing graphic design and video production work for the Conservative caucus for more than a decade, starting during its time in government.

Renze Nauta will also be sticking around as director of policy in the OLO. He helped draft the party's 2019 platform and last wore the title of director of policy and research to Mr. Scheer. Before then, Mr. Nauta worked in Mr. Harper's PMO, including as a special assistant for personnel, administration, and appointments, and later as regional adviser for the Prairies and territories.

Also confirmed as remaining in the OLO are **Allison Lamb** and **Christine Wylupski** as director of tour and director of finance and administration, respectively.

Ms. Lamb was similarly in charge of Mr. Scheer's tours as leader, having been promoted to the role earlier this year. Before then, she'd worn the title of manager of tour and events since November 2018. A former special assistant for appointment in Mr. Harper's PMO, Ms. Lamb later spent time as an assistant to then-environment minister **Peter Kent** and then-employment minister **Jason Kenney**.

Ms. Wylupski has been keeping an eye on the OLO's books since 2015, previously (before 2019) under the title of manager of finance, human resources, events and the official residence, after starting out as an assistant and office manager under then-interim leader **Rona Ambrose** before that. Before 2015, she was an assistant to Mr. Scheer during his time as Speaker of the House of Commons, and she's also a former executive assistant to then-trade minister **Ed Fast**.

Laura Kurkimaki is back on the Hill as head of outreach and stakeholder relations to Mr. O'Toole. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Laura Kurkimaki is returning to the Hill as director of stakeholder relations and outreach for the OLO.

A former issues manager in Mr. Harper's PMO, she's been working in the private sector since 2015, including as a senior public affairs adviser for Payments Canada, diretor of government relations with HEXO Corp., and as an account director with Hill and Knowlton Strategies, among other titles.

Ms. Kurkimaki was part of Mr. O'Toole's leadership bid, having served as campaign secretary. She also previously lent a hand to his 2017 leadership campaign, amongst other past experience.

Mitch Heimpel has been recruited from Queen's Park to serve as director of parliamentary affairs to Mr. O'Toole, after helping out with policy work and debate prep for his leadership campaign.

Mr. Heimpel was last chief of staff to Ontario Associate Minister for Children and Women's Issues **Jill Dunlop**. He's spent almost a decade working at the provincial legislature in all, and is also a former director of legislative affairs to Ontario Government House Leader **Todd Smith**.

Brad Davey is so far continuing as associate director of the CCS, a role he first took on in December 2019. Before then, he was manager of caucus services, and is also a former caucus liaison and Ontario regional adviser.

Finally, in confirmed staff so far, **Lynn Kreviazuk** has been named scheduling assistant to Mr. O'Toole. Another holdover from Mr. Scheer's OLO, she was last executive assistant to the chief of staff. She's also a former special assistant to then-minister of state for sport **Bal Gosal**.

Brad Davey continues as associate director of the Conservative caucus' research bureau. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

In terms of OLO departures, perhaps the most notable—though entirely unsurprising—so far is that of former Harper chief of staff **Ian Brodie**, who'd returned to Ottawa to step in temporarily as a senior adviser to Mr. Scheer back in January. Mr. Brodie, who's been a professor at the University of Calgary since 2017, stayed on to help at the beginning of Mr. O'Toole's post-leadership transition before once again exiting the Hill.

Other confirmed departures include now-former CCS head **Hannah Anderson**, who **Hill Climbers** understands has returned to B.C., and **Stephanie Scanlan** (née Keron), who had been a stakeholder relations adviser and has left for a new job as manager of Western University's Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management, as noted on her LinkedIn profile.

Stay tuned for more OLO news in the coming weeks.

Bolduc named chief to new CPC House leader

The Conservative caucus' new slate of House officers are also settling into new offices.

Conservative MP **Gérard Deltell**, who has replaced now-deputy leader **Candice Bergen** as House leader, has already tapped **Phil Bolduc** to take over as his chief of staff.

Mr. Bolduc was last working in the OLO as director of parliamentary affairs to Mr. Scheer, having first joined that office in November 2017 as manager of parliamentary affairs and Question Period adviser.

Before joining the OLO, he was a senior adviser to Ms. Bergen as House leader. He's also a former director of parliamentary affairs and issues management to then-trade minister Mr. Fast, and as a result, previously worked with Mr. O'Toole during the new leader's time as Mr. Fast's parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Bolduc replaces longtime staffer **John Nieuwenhuis**, who'd been running the office under Ms. Bergen. Stay tuned to **Hill Climbers** for an update on where Mr Nieuwenhuis lands.

The rest of the House leader's team has remained in place, including veteran staffer **David Prest** as senior parliamentary affairs adviser. **Colin Thackeray**, another longtime staffer to the Conservative House leader, continues as a senior adviser, as does **Adam Church**, a former chief of staff to then-House leader **Peter Van Loan**.

Rounding out the team is **Nathan Ellis**, who remains a senior adviser for parliamentary affairs and communications. Mr. Ellis joined the House leader's team back in 2017, prior to which he was an assistant to then-Conservative MP **David Sweet**.

Over in new Conservative Whip **Blake Richards**' office, **Sean Murphy** is chief of staff. A longtime Whip's office staffer, Mr. Murphy last wore the title of manager of parliamentary affairs and was a senior lobby co-ordinator before that.

Sébastien Togneri, a former Harper-era cabinet staffer, continues as a lobby co-ordinator, while **Kelly Williams**, who previously did the same, is now a senior administrator in the office.

Emily Thibert, who joined the team last year as a committee co-ordinator, continues to fill that role, now working alongside **Elizabeth Beauchamp** to track committee work. Rounding out the team is administrative assistant **Saica Pierre-Louis**.

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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Palak Mangat

Ex-staffer welcomes new line of seltzers

Continued from page 2

"Speaks to Josh and the team's ability as well as the excellent supporters of DCBC. … The team he has built there is the reason for ongoing success and more importantly keeping people employed in these times." Mr. Powers is an owner of the company, which tweeted out the news last week. "Yo! Water, bubbles and 100% natural flavours, that's it! We're City Seltzer and we're stoked to hang," read a tweet from the line's account.

The drinks are available in four flavours: berry whip, city citrus, orange cream, and cool melon, and can be ordered online or found at some grocery stores, cafes, and bars. "Every can of City Seltzer supports Ottawa Riverkeeper and their mission to keep the watershed clean for all generations and all species," the company added in an email pushing the line. The drinks are "naturally calorie and sugar-free," it added.

Bellegarde welcomes new staffer

Assembly of First Nations National Chief **Perry Bellegarde** welcomed a new chief of staff last week in **Dakota Kochie**. Mr. Kochie tweeted that he was appointed to the post "in addition to getting engaged this weekend."

The new chief of staff to AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Dakota Kochie, is now engaged. *Photograph courtesy of Dakota Kochie's Twitter*

"I'm proud to work at an organization that fights for Indigenous priorities, rights, and families. Couldn't be more blessed," he wrote on Sept. 14.

Previously Mr. Bellegarde's deputy chief of staff and a political advisor with the assembly, Mr. Kochie is Anishinaabe and has worked on files involving immigration, conflict resolution, and restorative justice.

"Dakota has given his time to Pride festivals, newcomer support organizations, and Indigenous voter mobilization causes," his bio reads, adding he has lived in Halifax, Quebec, Winnipeg, and now Ottawa. Mr. Kochie shared on Sept. 12 that his partner, **Taylor Provak**, "said yes!! Here's to a lifetime of cheesy jokes," along with a photo of donuts with "will you marry me?" written on them in icing. According to her LinkinIn, Ms. Provak served as an advocacy coordinator with Impact Public Affairs from last November to May of this year.

New chief of staff to AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Dakota Kochie, shared these sweet treats with his soon-to-be partner, Taylor Provak, this month. *Photograph courtesy of Dakota Kochie's Twitter*

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Firm scoops up former Conservative MP

Hill+Knowlton Strategies welcomed a new addition to its roster last week. Former Conservative MP **Ted Menzies** joined the firm as a senior associate, and will be based in Alberta. His appointment is effective immediately.

"Ted is respected both across party lines and across the country. He'll be a huge asset to us here in the West and in Ottawa," said **Stephen Smart**, a general manager with the firm's western Canada region, in a release. Mr. Menzies held the Macleod riding from 2004 to 2013 and served in former prime minister **Stephen Harper**'s cabinet as minister of state for finance.

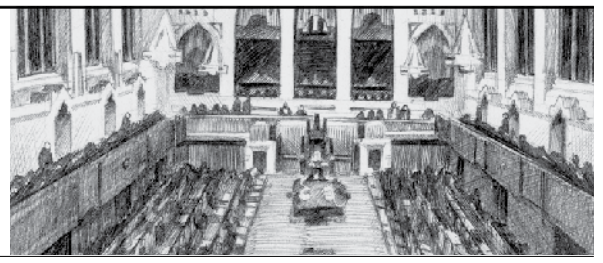
Before that, he was a parliamentary secretary to then-finance minister, the late **Jim Flaherty**.

Mr. Menzies stepped down in 2013 at the age of 61 to head up CropLife Canada as its president and CEO. Mr. Menzies is a former grain farmer.

He wrote then that he "never intended to be a career politician." Mr. Menzies, who served in minority and majority Parliaments, added in the release: "I understand the challenges that are being faced by both public and private sector organizations in these difficult times as well as the incredible global opportunities that exists for Canadian farmers and the agri-food sector as a whole."

Former Conservative MP Ted Menzies is joining Hill+Knowlton Strategies. *The Hill Times file photograph*

Parliamentary Calendar



Throne Speech shakes down Wednesday on Parliament Hill

It's Throne Speech-o'clock: Senate Usher of the Rod John Gregory Peters, pictured Dec. 5, 2019, in the Senate of Canada Building, with Senate Speaker George Furey, and shortly before the Throne Speech was delivered. It was only nine months ago, but so much has changed. This year's Throne Speech will be different in this global pandemic. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia*

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 the Throne Speech.

Politics and the Pen 2020: Digital Edition—Politics and the Pen will hold a virtual event on Wednesday, Sept. 23. Politics and the Pen is a highlight of political Ottawa's social calendar and an important annual fundraising event benefiting the Writers' Trust. The in-person event regularly attracts 500 guests from Canada's political and literary circles. The 2020 digital event will feature a special presentation of the 20th Shaughnessy Cohen Prize as well as memorable moments from past galas. To date, Politics and the Pen has raised more than $4.5-million to support the programs of the Writers' Trust. This year's finalists are: Canada on the United Nations Security Council: A Small Power on a Large Scale, by Adam Chapnick; Peace and Good Order: The Case for Indigenous Justice in Canada, by Harold R. Johnson; Claws of the Panda: Beijing's Campaign of Influence and Intimidation in Canada, by Jonathan Manthorpe; Truth Be Told: My Journey Through Life and the Law, by Beverley McLachlin; and Canadian Justice, Indigenous Injustice, by Kent Roach. For information and sponsorship, contact Julia Yu, events manager, at jyu@writerstrust.com.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 24

Canada Briefing for Ambassadors and High Commissioners—Former Liberal cabinet minister Gar Knutson continues a longstanding tradition of offering ambassadors, high commissioners, and senior officials within the diplomatic community a behind-closed-doors analysis of the current political landscape and the impacts on domestic and foreign relations. Knutson will speak on "Trudeau's Liberal Agenda: Challenges that Lie Ahead" and former Liberal cabinet minister David Pratt will deliver remarks on "Towards a Darwinian Foreign Policy for Canada: Adapt and Thrive." Thursday, Sept. 24, from 10-11 a.m. Register via Eventbrite.

Donald Trump: Four More Years?—The University of Ottawa's Centre for International Policy Studies hosts a webinar on "Donald Trump: Four More Years?" exploring the state of the U.S. presidential campaign, the Democratic Party, and U.S. democracy in the Trump years. Former columnist Jeffrey Simpson will moderate the discussion featuring three Americans: Regina Bateson, political scientist at the University of Ottawa; James M. McCormick, professor of political science at Iowa State University; and David M. Shribman, former executive editor of the Post-Gazette and Globe and Mail columnist. Thursday, Sept. 24, 4:30-6 p.m. Register via Eventbrite.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 25

Examining the Options—ISG Senator Diane Bellemare will take part in a panel discussion on "Examining the Options," part of a four-day online conference on "Choosing the Right Target: Real Options for the Bank of Canada's Mandate Renewal," hosted by McGill University. She will be joined by former Bank of Canada governor David Dodge; Evan Siddall, CEO at the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; David Andolfatto, professor of Economics at Simon Fraser University; Kevin Carmichael, journalist at the Financial Post; and Angela Redish, professor at the Vancouver School of Economics, University of British Columbia. Friday, Sept. 25, at 3 p.m. Conference registration available at mcgill.ca/maxbellschool.

Vulnerable: The Law, Policy and Ethics of COVID-19—The five editors of the new open-access book discuss a range of topics on the impact of the pandemic and take Q&A in a free webinar for all audiences. Registration is required for the zoom link at https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/vulnerable-the-law-policy-and-ethics-of-covid-19-tickets-117933635679. 12– 2 p.m. (EDT).

SUNDAY, SEPT. 26

Green Party Leadership Online Voting Begins—Online voting to choose the next leader of the federal Green Party begins today and will continue until Oct. 3.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 27

Commanding Hope with Thomas Homer-Dixon—Calling on history, cutting-edge research, complexity science, and even Lord of the Rings, Thomas Homer-Dixon lays out the tools we can command to rescue a world on the brink. Journalist John Geddes sits down with the bestselling author and thinker to discuss his latest book, Commanding Hope: The Power We Have to Renew a World in Peril. The free, pre-recorded event is Sunday, Sept. 27, at 2 p.m. RSVP at writersfestival.org.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 30

Munk Dialogues Returns—The Munk Debates announced a second series of Munk Dialogues, live, hour-long conversations with some of the world's sharpest minds and brightest thinkers. The autumn 2020 Munk Dialogues will focus on the big issues transforming our world, from the U.S. election to the continuing fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic to geopolitics and international relations. The series will air weekly for 10 weeks launching Wednesday, Sept. 30, 8 pm ET with New York Times' White House correspondent, Maggie Haberman, in dialogue with Munk Debates Chair, Rudyard Griffiths. Ms. Haberman, one of world's leading investigative journalists, will talk about the behind the scenes of U.S. President Donald Trump's re-election bid. The Munk Dialogues will be available live and on-demand on the free CBC Gem streaming service (cbcgem.ca) and on the Munk Debates website (www.munkdebates.com/dialogues).

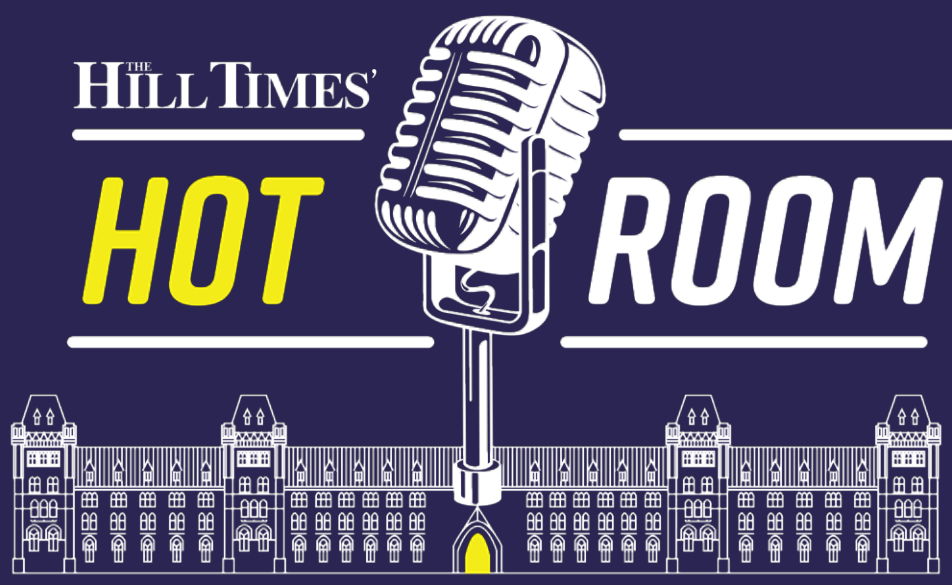
SATURDAY, OCT. 3

Green Party Leader Announcement—The Green Party of Canada is set to announce its new leader in a virtual event at 8 p.m. EST.

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

The Hill Times

New podcast for Canadian political junkies



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