



# System racism in Canada's security and intelligence community is a persistent threat, says former CSIS intelligence officer

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## THE HILL TIMES

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### News

## New Green Leader Paul says she's been invited to run in ridings 'across the country,' as she sets sights on Toronto Centre byelection

BY ABBAS RANA

New Green Party Leader Annamie Paul, who made history last

week when she was elected as the first Black person to lead a major political party, says she has received invitations from Green riding as-

sociations across the country to run as their candidate if she is unsuccessful in her bid to win the Toronto Centre byelection on Oct. 26.

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, Ms. Paul said she was optimistic she would win the Toronto Centre riding. She also said she

would run in a different riding if she doesn't win Toronto Centre.

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### News

Conservative Fund says it can't keep O'Toole's promise to return election rebates to riding associations because of a possible fall or spring election

BY ABBAS RANA

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole won't be able to keep his leadership campaign promise to return candidates' election rebates the party received in 2019 back to the riding associations, the chair of the Conservative Fund told associations across the country, because of the possibility of a fall or spring election.

James Dodds, the newly appointed chair of the Conservative Fund, recently told riding associations that, because an election could be called at any time in a minority Parliament, the party

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### News

## 'Much more gets accomplished when hyper-partisanship is taken out of politics': MPs, experts, politicians weigh in on leadership during global pandemic

'This is exactly the time that you need to have confidence that your political leadership is going to be making those types of decisions with one thing in mind, and that is what is best needed to save the lives of people,' said new Green Party Leader Annamie Paul.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

With the 'second wave' of the COVID-19 pandemic confronting the highest levels of lead-



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, and newly-anointed Green Party Leader Annamie Paul. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew

ership in both politics and in the health community, as confirmed cases continue to increase in jurisdictions across Canada, both MPs and experts say that "this is

the time when we need to work for the health and safety of every Canadian," according to Bloc Québécois MP Christine Normandin, that "the nature of leadership

demands a level of cooperation that is exceptional," according to NDP MP Don Davies, and that

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## HEARD ON THE HILL

by Palak Mangat

# It's The Fly! Canadian politicians let the bug jokes rip after U.S. vice-presidential debate between Harris and Pence



**Poli LEGO** @PoliLego · 23h  
The fly.



Twitter users had some fun last week after incumbent Republican vice-president Mike Pence fell victim to an insect incident that featured a two-minute cameo by a fly during the vice-presidential debate. Image courtesy of Twitter

Canadian politicians tuned into the U.S. vice-presidential debate last week, joining Twitter users who were abuzz about a fly that landed on incumbent Republican **Mike Pence's** head.

The fly, which stuck on an unfazed Mr. Pence's head for about two minutes, appeared to have stolen the show, prompting the creation of multiple Twitter accounts and a tweet from one popular user, @PoliLego, which often depicts politicians in Lego form.

Ekos Research pollster **Frank Graves** joked: "quick nature lesson, what are flies irresistibly attracted to? A metaphor from God." He later added that Mr. Pence had "a promising career as Lord of the Flies," if the whole "VP thing doesn't work out"—a prospect that also got a nod from revered sci-fi and crime novelist **Stephen King**.

Others, like *The Hill Times* columnist **Erica Ifill**, commended the debate performance of California Senator **Kamala Harris**, Mr. Pence's challenger and **Joe Biden's** running mate in the Nov. 3 vote. "I'm convinced that Kamala started running for 2024 with this debate performance," she tweeted.

Liberal strategist **Greg MacEachern** of Proof Strategies also got in on the fun, tweeting that "I think the big question tonight is if this debate helped [former Conservative leader] **Andrew Scheer** make up his mind on who he will vote for."

As revealed by the *Globe* on the campaign trail last fall, Mr. Scheer holds dual citizenship thanks to his father, who is an American by birth and passed along his citizenship to his children. Mr. Scheer said then that he was in the process of renouncing his American citizenship, but said in May he scrapped those plans after his party's election loss. "Given the fact that I won't be prime minister, I discontinued the process," he said.

## Hillites pay tribute to former Alberta Senator Nick Taylor

Former longtime Alberta Liberal Party leader and retired Senator **Nick Taylor** passed away this month at the age of 92. The Alberta native died at the Peter Lougheed Centre in Calgary from health complications that plagued him for a few months, noted the *Calgary Herald*.

Taylor was remembered for his sharp wit, bravery, and sense of humour last week. "Nick was on the front lines fighting Alberta separatism in the dark days of the early 80's. Funny as hell. Loved Canada," tweeted **David Herle**, a former Liberal campaign strategist and host of the popular weekly podcast, *The Herle Burly*.

Taylor led the Alberta Liberals from 1974 to 1988—a tough time and place to be a Liberal, following the implementation of then-prime minister **Pierre Trudeau's** National Energy Program. Taylor's tenure saw the party grow from zero seats in the legislature to four, and paved the way for his successor, late and former Edmonton mayor **Laurence Decore**, to claim 32 in the 1993 election. (Decore was one of three challengers to Taylor during the 1987 leadership contest).

An oil and gas man through and through, Taylor, in a rare move, defended the NEP, and even faced down mobs during the western separatist rally of November 1980, according to one *Herald* columnist. He spoke to the Senate Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee in 2019 while in his 90s, a testament to his dedication, said Alberta Independent Senator **Paula Simons**.

"So very sad to hear of the death of Nick Taylor, one of Alberta's most remarkable political figures: oil man, Liberal party leader, and Senator. He was a man



Independent Alberta Senator Paula Simons, pictured with former late Alberta Liberal leader Nick Taylor in April 2019, says the former Senator had 'remarkable conviction and great humour.' Photograph courtesy of Paula Simon's Twitter

Now the only place we have dinosaurs is in the provincial legislature."

A geologist by training, Taylor rarely shied away from telling it like it was, once saying his favourite place for debate was in the Liberal caucus: "It's nature in the raw, politics as it should be. Quite often the prime minister is pilloried by the sons of bitches who give him hell." Taylor was named to the Senate by then-prime minister **Jean Chrétien** in 1996, and rode out his days until the mandatory retirement age of 75 in 2002.

His passing sparked @PoliLego to pay tribute to the late figure. "His legendary wit was outmatched only by his love for his province and its people," the account tweeted.

## Columnist Matthew Fisher seeking Conservative nod in Kanata-Carleton

**Matthew Fisher**, one of Canada's longest-serving foreign correspondents, is seeking the Conservative nomination in the Kanata-Carleton riding, he announced last week.

As noted by the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, Mr. Fisher was born and raised in the Ottawa Valley and spent more than three decades abroad as a foreign correspondent. He has worked for the *Globe and Mail*, Sun Media, and Postmedia, and his travels have taken him to 162 countries.



Longtime foreign correspondent Matthew Fisher revealed last week that he is seeking the Conservative Party nod in an Ottawa-area riding. Photograph courtesy of Matthew Fisher's Twitter

According to his website, he has also covered eight Olympic games and speaks English, German, and French. In a video shared to his YouTube page, Mr. Fisher said he is "worried about the legacy of debt" that will be left behind by the Trudeau government.

"I want to join **Erin O'Toole's** team to take down **Justin Trudeau's** corrupt, entitled, and incompetent government," he said. "It is time to cancel cancel culture and restore freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and to protect your property rights."

Mr. Fisher moved to the riding with his family in 1966 and "was in the first class [that] attended Stephen Leacock Public School and played hockey in West Carleton." Noting his career has led him to "see the worst of the worst," he said the experiences "have made me appreciate even more the peace and prosperity of Canada and how fragile that can be."

Mr. Fisher acknowledged in a statement that the race will be "tough" to win: the riding is currently held by Liberal MP **Karen McCrimmon**, a retired Canadian Forces alumna, who won 43.1 per cent of the vote in last fall's federal vote.

The Conservative candidate at the time, **Justina McCaffrey**, was dogged by (and dodged questions about) her relationship

with far-right activist **Faith Goldy** last fall. Ms. McCaffrey was hoping to flip the historically Conservative region back to Tory blue, but fell short, claiming 36.5 per cent of the vote in 2019.

Mr. Fisher's father, the late **Doug Fisher**, the former national affairs newspaper columnist, once held the former riding of Port Arthur, Ont., for the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and then the NDP during the 1960s.

Praised by some for the "gutsy" move on Twitter, Mr. Fisher's announcement had others already dreaming big: "You'd make a super foreign affairs minister! Break a leg!" tweeted **Licia Corbella**, a *Herald* columnist who came under fire last year for endorsing **Jason Kenney** in the United Conservative Party's 2017 leadership race.

Others, like Independent Ontario Senator **Peter Boehm**, congratulated Mr. Fisher and wished him well in the race. "Good luck! My father was a huge fan of your father going right back to federal CCF beginnings. Your vast international experience and acumen will serve you well," he tweeted.

## New boss at Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Heritage Minister **Steven Guilbeault** announced last week that the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's new boss is **Mohammed Hashim**, a Mississauga, Ont., native who will lead the group for a five-year term.

A human rights advocate and labour organizer most recently with the Toronto & York Region Labour Council, Mr. Hashim also serves with the United Way of Greater Toronto, is a member of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, and is a founding advisor of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network.

Mr. Hashim's post "will strengthen the voice and extend the reach of the [f]oundation," said the group's chairperson, **Teresa Woo-Paw**, in a release. "Our team looks forward to working with Mohammed as we continue to add the voice of the CRRF to those who work through these challenging times to build an inclusive Canada."

Mr. Hashim takes over from **Alicia Damley**, who held the position on an interim basis since August, after the retirement of **Lilian Ma** on July 31.

Tweeting his congratulations, **Walied Soliman**, a fellow Mississauga alum who was the campaign chair for Mr. O'Toole's successful leadership bid, noted he went to high school at Clarkson Secondary School with the new boss.

"Don't forget that the Canadian Race Relations Foundation Act was proclaimed in 1991 under a [Conservative] government," he said. "Good luck, my friend!"

Mr. Hashim replied: "I would love to work with you and the [Conservative] members to bring a greater awareness of systemic racism. In fact, I have a list of things I would like to go over."

## Former veteran CBC Ottawa reporter O'Kelly dies

Ottawa journalists paid tribute to one of their TV colleagues, **Cory O'Kelly**, who died recently, CBC Ottawa announced last week.

"We are very sad to report our friend and former colleague, Cory O'Kelly, has died. Cory was a one-of-a-kind reporter and a unique and talented storyteller," it tweeted, sharing a nine-minute clip of the "best of" Mr. O'Kelly's work.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. O'Kelly reported on **Terry Fox**, helped run a lifestyle show, *Metro*, and notably went to a nudist colony for stories, before coming to Ottawa in 1984 to report on city hall.

He started with CBC in Thunder Bay during the late 1970s, and retired in 2014 after three decades in the newsroom.

"There was a hole in the newsroom when he retired. Cory turned mundane city hall process stories into Shakespearean drama," wrote **Judy Trinh**, a veteran reporter with CBC's *The Fifth Estate*.

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# Pandemic throws line-by-line approval of billions of dollars in spending off course

The main spending estimates won't be approved until at least December and may be considered alongside the next instalment of supplementary estimates, says Conservative critic Luc Berthold.

BY BEATRICE PAEZ

**B**illions of dollars in spending to keep government operations going have yet to be formally approved by the House after the pandemic forced MPs to defer scrutiny to December, throwing off the usual course of parliamentary business.

This year's main estimates, setting out \$304.6-billion in federal spending, were first introduced in February but were never studied and approved. They were re-tabled last week after Parliament returned from prorogation. The Standing Orders stipulate they have to be reintroduced at the start of every session.

The main package of spending estimates for the current fiscal year, which began in April, won't be approved until at least December and may be considered alongside the next instalment of supplementary estimates. Of the \$304.6-billion requested, only \$125.1-billion has to be voted on by Parliament, while the balance (\$179.4-billion) goes toward statutory spending, which doesn't need approval because it already has legislative authorization.

In an email response to questions about the approval process, Martin Potvin, spokesperson at the Treasury Board, said that, with Parliament back from prorogation, committees will be able to "continue the consideration of budgetary spending, in advance

of a final appropriation bill for the balance of the main estimates in December."

Mr. Potvin confirmed that the reintroduced estimates remain unchanged from the document tabled in February.

Given that committees are responsible for their own agendas, it would be up to each one to decide whether to resume interrupted hearings on the main estimates and to request appearances from cabinet ministers to testify on their department's spending plans, said NDP Whip Rachel Blaney (North Island-Powell River, B.C.).

The House passed the last batch of supplementary estimates for the 2019-20 fiscal year before Parliament shut down in mid-March and the first set of supplementary spending estimates, worth \$87-billion, for the current fiscal year in mid-June. Parliament has also agreed to grant the government temporary emergency-spending powers, which allows the cabinet to approve spending in response to the pandemic without having to routinely seek parliamentary approval, until December.

Conservative MP Luc Berthold (Mégantic-L'Érable, Que.), his party's newly appointed Treasury Board critic, said committees will likely wait until the next batch of supplementary estimates are released before resuming studies on the main estimates. He noted that, since the government has introduced massive spending drives since February to cope with the pandemic, the main estimates will be somewhat outdated.

"We may have the ministers for the main and supplementary estimates; it will be up to each committee to decide," he told *The Hill Times*. "They announced a bunch of new spending from the Speech from the Throne that deserves real scrutiny."

The government passed the latest COVID-19 relief package on Sept. 30, which included the creation of new benefits for workers facing hardship because of the pandemic.

Under the agreement reached by political parties on Sept. 23, some of the eight key committees—including Access to Information, Privacy, and Ethics; Finance; and Health have

sury Board officials last week to get a rundown of the portfolio.

He said officials walked him through what to expect in a normal fiscal year, noting that the pandemic has injected a lot of uncertainty around the timing for approving the appropriations bill.

"Nothing is like normal, so for a new critic like me, it's a lot to learn, but I'm working hard to learn," said Mr. Berthold. "It's not business as usual, so we need to adapt."

At the same time, Mr. Berthold lamented that prorogation effectively hampered efforts to scrutinize spending for several weeks, arguing the government had chosen to suspend Parliament to stymie committee probes into the WE Charity controversy. (The government and WE Charity parted ways over the administration of a since-abandoned student-service program after facing backlash from opposition parties

due to the prime minister's close ties to the group.)

Kevin Page, president and CEO of the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy and former parliamentary budget officer, said though the situation is far from ideal, it's "understandable" in the context of the pandemic that Parliament hasn't had a chance to do a line-by-line scrutiny of the main estimates this late into the year.

"The whole world has been upset and turned over; it's not a normal financial cycle," said Mr. Page. "Hopefully, next year, it'll be more of a normal cycle. ...Fingers crossed—maybe there's a vaccine by year end, and it'll be a normal budget cycle."

The Trudeau government's initial plan to table a budget in late March was scrapped due to the pandemic, and since then, it has just released a "fiscal snapshot" that projected a \$343-billion deficit. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (Papineau, Que.)

Throne Speech promised an update on the feds' COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, suggesting a budget is not likely to come by the end of this year.

Under normal circumstances, Mr. Page said, through the various committees, Parliament should be able to hold individual votes on departmental spending, rather than having cabinet, in interim, decide on its own through emergency powers it's been given. For example, he noted MPs on the East Coast deserve the opportunity to track changes in spending at departments such as Agriculture and Fisheries that would affect key industries in their region.

"The government is trying to save lives, but they also have the job of making sure all other programs and services are being provided," he said. "We need that mode of transparency."

The current system for approving the main estimates has not been without criticism.

In 2019, the Liberals abandoned their two-year pilot project, which resulted in a central vote worth billions of dollars in budget expenses that opposition critics said amounted to setting up a "slush fund." The project was intended to reform the system that it has since reverted back to. It aimed to align the budget and main spending estimates in an effort to ensure the latter document reflected new promises, but critics said it came at the expense of parliamentary scrutiny.

Mr. Page noted that, after the 2019 election, the Liberals appeared to be less keen to revisit efforts to reform, and that the pandemic has likely further stalled such efforts to reconcile the budget and the main estimates.

"The system needs to be fixed. After the 2019 election, some of the previous efforts by the Liberals were let to kind of slide," he said. "Hopefully, Parliament can get back to strengthening the links between budget and the system."

—With files from Samantha Wright Allen  
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The Hill Times



President of the Treasury Board Jean-Yves Duclos is pictured March 16 at the National Press Theatre for a press conference on the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. His department reintroduced the main spending estimates, first tabled in February, which have yet to be approved due to the pandemic. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

been able to meet in recent days to elect chairs and to plan their agendas. The rest are meeting in the coming days.

The 2020-21 estimates document came with a 1.7 per cent increase in spending compared to the previous year, which requested \$299.6-billion from Parliament. Half of the spending is tied to four departments: Finance, Employment and Social Development Canada, National Defence, and Indigenous Services. The Department of National Defence, or DND, for example, projected a budgetary increase of 6.5 per cent, bringing it to \$23.3-billion, with \$1.4-billion earmarked for capital expenditures.

## 'It's not business as usual'

Mr. Berthold, who is now a month into his new critic role, said he had a briefing with Treas-

# New oversight for Senate fails to make Senators accountable

As it stands now and under the new oversight plan, the Senate remains completely unaccountable, such that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms doesn't apply to the Senate's governance, the Senate has ignored former auditor general Michael Ferguson's recommendations.



Daniel Tsai

Opinion

**T**ORONTO—In an era when everything in politics seems to be shrouded in spin, re-

serve a special place for Conservative Senator David Wells. As he unveiled the Senate's new "independent" expense oversight plan, Sen. Wells claimed, "the Canadian Senate will be a world leader with this structure in place." In fact, for a decade the British Parliament has had a completely independent and transparent expense oversight regime, far superior to what the Canadian Senate has adopted.

Wells' new plan rejects the key recommendation in the auditor general's 2015 report on Senate spending which said: "The oversight of Senators' expenses should be performed by a body (the 'oversight body'), the majority of whose membership, including its chair, is independent of the Senate."

Peter Harder, as the Trudeau government's representative in the Senate, warned that anything less than complete transparency creates "the perception that the powerful Senators constituting the Senate Internal Economy Committee may protect their own allies, shelter the Senate from scrutiny or even, in an overtly partisan context, settle political scores."

The Senate's new oversight regime rejects all of that. The committee will consist of three Senators, and two hand-picked non-voting outsiders as token observers. Unlike the U.K. system, where there are lawyers, accountants and retired politicians, in Canada's Senate, these external experts will have no power and no voting rights, allowing the inmates to continue running the asylum. This system also pro-

hibits former parliamentarians from sitting on the Senate's Oversight Committee.

The new oversight body will operate in secret and will be even more powerful than the CIBA (Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration), the Senate's version of the U.K.'s Board of Internal Economy.

As a result, under the new proposal, "Senators who are not members of the committee shall not attend or participate in its meetings unless they appear as witnesses."

That's clearly at odds with the view of Sen. Harder who has said "In terms of the spirit of disclosure, I certainly believe sunlight kills germs."

The Senate does not publicly disclose how much it spends on pending litigation or out-of-court settlements made to former employees.

But in 2019, the *Huffington Post* reported the Senate "financial statements indicate \$678,833 was paid in 'benefits' under this category in the last financial year. That number is more than double the \$337,399 amount paid out in the previous year."

We now face the prospect that this committee will have oversight over the budget for the Red Chamber, which is estimated to be \$115.6-million. Senator Tony Dean said the oversight will extend over budgetary items from IT to infrastructure and security.

Secrecy has prevented Senators like Josée Verner, (CSG Quebec) and Marilou McPhedran (ISG Manitoba) from learning more. How pervasive is harassment in

the Upper Chamber? Have the harassers been punished? Only a select few Senators know, and they're not talking. Despite its obvious deficiencies, Wells' scheme was endorsed without objection.

Sen. Dean, a member of the Independent Senators Group, said agreement on the new committee follows months of "significant discussion."

"This is a compromise, it is a compromise that moves us down the road, that gives us that important external oversight," he said.

Retired Sen. Marjory LeBreton spoke often about the "old boys' club" that ran the Senate, so it's no surprise they want to preserve the status quo.

However, this new regime brings secrecy to a new level, and runs counter to the idea of a new improved Senate envisioned by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, when he began appointing non-partisan independents, like Tony Dean to the Upper Chamber.

As it stands now and under the new oversight plan, the Senate remains completely unaccountable, such that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms doesn't apply to the Senate's governance, the Senate has ignored former auditor general Michael Ferguson's recommendations, and it has ignored and covered up other claims of alleged harassment, such as former Sen. Don Meredith's sexual harassment scandal.

With their quiet adoption of Sen. Wells' plan, the new supposedly independent Senators have moved the Senate back in time. The old boys' club has fought off the challenge, and remains well and truly in charge in the Senate of Canada.

*Daniel Tsai is a law professor at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management and a former senior policy adviser in the Government of Canada (recruiting policy leaders program).*

*The Hill Times*

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# New Green Leader Paul says she's been invited to run in ridings 'across the country,' as she sets sights on Toronto Centre byelection

'If Annamie Paul could win a riding on her own, based on her own work, and her own accomplishments, and running a good campaign, that will really put wind in the sails of the Green Party movement in Canada,' says pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research.

Continued from page 1

"I've been receiving invitations from members and EDAs across the country saying, 'We'd love you to be our candidate in our riding in the next election,'" she said.

She said that she would only consider running in another riding if she has been invited to do so by the local Green electoral district association.

"So that's what you want to see, it has to come from them. There's no parachuting, and I will run anywhere," she said.

She declined to say which ridings have extended her an invitation.

"Just across the country: East Coast, West Coast, Ontario, I think maybe even Alberta."

Ms. Paul said she would also consult senior party officials before making a decision about running elsewhere, and would allow other would-be Green candidates to challenge her for the nomination.

Ms. Paul said no one chose to run against her in Toronto Centre, and therefore she was acclaimed as the party's candidate in that riding.

Ms. Paul said that she had already decided to run in Toronto Centre before winning the leadership election. She added that she was born and raised in Toronto Centre and wants to serve people in the riding. This is the second time Ms. Paul is running in this

riding; she secured just seven per cent of the vote in an unsuccessful 2019 campaign in Toronto Centre.

"We're running to win," said Ms. Paul, who won the Green Party leadership on Oct. 3 on the eighth ballot in the eight-candidate race. Ms. Paul is quadrilingual, speaking English, French, Spanish, and Catalan, a language spoken in parts of Spain.

"If that's not the outcome that we get, then when and where I run next is going to be a collective decision, one that I would take consulting with our other leadership and with the members."

Toronto Centre, one of the safest Liberal ridings in the country, became vacant last month after the abrupt resignation of former finance minister Bill Morneau from cabinet and the House. He said he was stepping down to seek the position of secretary general of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Mr. Morneau also said that when he started his elected political career, he had no intention of serving as an MP for more than two terms. But before he stepped down, a number of media stories cited differences between Mr. Morneau and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) over the handling of COVID-19 and the WE Charity controversy. He served as Mr. Trudeau's finance minister for five years.

In the two elections that Mr. Morneau contested, he won with very comfortable double-digit margins. In 2019, he won the seat with 57.7 per cent of the vote while second place NDP candidate Brian Chang garnered 22.2 per cent, and third place Conservative candidate Ryan Lester won 12.1 per cent. Ms. Paul came in fourth place with seven per cent of the vote.

In 2015, Mr. Morneau won 57.9 per cent of the vote, with second place NDP candidate Linda McQuaig winning 26.6 per cent and third place Conservative candidate Julian Di Battista carrying 12.1 per cent of the vote. The fourth place Green candidate Colin Biggin garnered 2.6 per cent of the vote.

Toronto Centre has been represented by both Liberal and Conservative MPs since its

creation in 1872, but the last time anyone other than a Liberal won there was in 1978, when Progressive Conservative MP David Crombie represented the riding for about a decade until 1988.

Over the years, the riding boundaries and name have been rejigged a number of times. Currently, it covers areas such as Cabbagetown, the Church and



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has fixed Oct. 26 as the date for the byelection in Toronto Centre. Candidates are: Annamie Paul, left, for the Green Party; Marci Ien for the Liberal Party; Benjamin Sharma for the Conservative party; and Brian Chang for the NDP. The Hill Times file photographs and Twitter

Wellesley enclave, a well known LGBTQ neighbourhood, Regent Park, St. James Town, Ryerson University, and Bay Street.

Mr. Morneau announced his plans to step down on Aug. 17 and Mr. Trudeau called the byelection on Sept. 18, to be held on Oct. 26. A byelection was also called for the same date in York Centre, which opened up on Sept. 1 after Liberal MP Michael Levitt stepped down to take on a new role as CEO of the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies. Mr. Levitt had announced his intention to step down on Aug. 4.

Considering the climbing number of COVID-19 cases in Toronto, it remains to be seen if the byelection will proceed as planned. As of Wednesday, Oct. 6, there were 21,315 cases of COVID-19 in Toronto, according to Toronto Public Health. Of those, 17,700 have recovered, 83 have been hospitalized, and 1,308 have died.

In Toronto Centre, Marci Ien, a CTV broadcaster, has been appointed as the Liberal candidate, while businesswoman Ya'ara Saks has been appointed in York Centre.

Mr. Lester was originally nominated as the Conservative candidate for the byelection, but he withdrew his candidacy last week citing "some technical requirements with Elections Canada." The party now has appointed Benjamin Sharma as the new candidate to replace Mr. Lester.

Mr. Sharma is the Conservative Party riding association president in York Centre. In the 2014 byelection, he ran unsuccessfully in the Trinity-Spadina riding, finishing in third place. Adam Vaughan, then a Toronto City councillor, won that riding handily, besting NDP candidate Joe Cressy by a margin of 19.5 per cent of the vote. Mr. Sharma won 5.8 per cent of the vote.

The NDP has again now nominated Mr. Chang as the candidate in Toronto Centre.

Green Party Parliamentary Leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.), last week, called on other parties to show courtesy and not field candidates against Ms. Paul allowing the first Black federal party leader to win a seat in the House. She singled out NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) against whom the Greens did not run a candidate. However, the NDP is running a candidate against Ms. Paul, and it appears highly unlikely if other parties will with-

"So there's no significant honeymoon for the Liberals right now. The other thing is that if the Liberals lose one seat, they're still going to be the government, which means that even for voters who are disappointed, it's a low risk endeavour to vote for the Greens," he said.

"What the Liberals have to watch out for are progressive voters who are disappointed, who can vote knowing that Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) will still remain Prime Minister, but they want to send him a message."

According to weekly Nanos Research tracking last week, the Liberals and the Conservatives were running neck and neck with 34 per cent and 33.5 per cent support, respectively. The NDP had the support of 16.5 per cent of Canadians, and Green Party support was at 6.7 per cent. Until late June, the Liberals were 12 points ahead of the Conservatives.

If Ms. Paul loses the byelection it would be bad news for her leadership, said Mr. Nanos, but a lot depends on the size of the margin by which she loses. Losing by a close margin would still mean progress compared to the last election, he said, but if Ms. Paul loses by a wide margin, things could become complicated for her.

If she loses, Ms. Paul should look at other winnable ridings across the country, said Mr. Nanos, and give the Greens a chance to add one more MP to their the caucus, adding it would not be a good idea for her to ask an incumbent Green MP to step down and run in that MP's riding. Mr. Nanos argued that candidates and MPs should be relying on Ms. Paul's popularity to win their ridings, not the other way around.

In order to find a winnable riding, Mr. Nanos said, Ms. Paul could look at the Green-held provincial ridings right across the country, in Ontario, British Columbia, and Atlantic Canada, and choose an overlapping federal riding.

"If Annamie Paul could win a riding on her own, based on her own work, and her own accomplishments, and running a good campaign, that will really put wind in the sails of the Green Party Movement in Canada," said Mr. Nanos.

As for running a campaign in the midst of a pandemic, Mr. Nanos described COVID-19 as a "great equalizer" for all parties, as almost all candidates are campaigning online and relying heavily on social media. He said that Ms. Paul could activate her national team of volunteers to help her out, campaigning online. Compared to in-person campaigning, which would have given an advantage to the governing Liberals, online campaigning is a good opportunity for the Green Party, he said.

"This new paradigm of less personal interaction actually helps challenger parties like the Green Party, especially in a byelection situation, because she can mobilize the national movement for an online campaign targeted to Toronto Centre, and [be on] relatively equal footing with any political party," said Mr. Nanos.

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# Conservative Fund says it can't keep O'Toole's promise to return election rebates to riding associations because of a possible fall or spring election

'Ridings will receive the full equivalent of their candidate rebate for every election going forward,' says Cory Hann, the Conservative Party's director of communications.

Continued from page 1

has to have enough money to ensure its leader is able to run a competitive campaign.

"With all signals out of Ottawa pointing to an election this fall or spring, I am here to report to you that we would be in a disastrous position trying to retroactively correct this program," wrote Mr. Dodds in his email, which was sent Oct. 1 to the presidents of riding associations, obtained by *The Hill Times*. "I will not and cannot put our party or our leader in that financial position. We owe it to the country to do what we can to set Erin O'Toole and our team up for success, and give Canada the compassionate, ethical, intelligent leadership it sorely deserves."

But Mr. Dodds said after the next federal election, the party will return all election-spending rebates to the Conservative riding associations.

"We recognize that in the past, funds from the candidate rebates were an important source used to replenish the ridings' bank accounts after an election and/or pay off any campaign debt," said Mr. Dodds. "As such, for the next election, while the assignment of the candidate rebate needs to remain in place to ensure the party qualifies for the various tax rebates (similar to the NDP

and Liberals) the leader has instructed the fund to establish a new program that will disperse funds to all ridings that qualify for a candidate rebate. This will ensure that ridings are made whole for the full equivalent of their candidate rebate that they would normally be due after the next election."

Mr. Dodds estimated that the party would send \$5.5-million back to the riding associations after the next election, but didn't explain how it came up with the figure.

"Simply put, this is a massive commitment that the leader is insisting on and the fund is agreeing to undertake and fund here," said Mr. Dodds. "But it is the right decision."

For the first time in the 2019 general election, all Conservative candidates signed a written contract with the party, giving permission to the headquarters to claw back 50 per cent of the candidates' rebates for election expenses they would receive from Elections Canada. Before 2019, the Conservatives were the only one of the three major parties that did not get a major chunk from candidates' election rebates. The Liberals and the NDP have been clawing back 60 per cent of candidates' rebates.

After an election, candidates who have won 10 per cent or more of the votes in the ridings and file an expense report, are eligible to receive a reimbursement from Elections Canada for 60 per cent of their election expenses. For example, if a candidate spends \$100,000, Elections Canada would send back a \$60,000 election-expenses rebate. Based on the contract that the Conservative candidates signed with the headquarters, the party would keep \$30,000 and the candidate would receive the balance of \$30,000 in this case.

Because of this contract, Elections Canada will send all candidate rebates to the Conservative



Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole, pictured in Ottawa on Sept. 9, 2020, promised during the leadership election that under his leadership all riding associations will be able to keep 100 per cent of the candidate rebate money. Conservative Fund Canada told riding association presidents that, starting next federal election, all ridings will get all rebates back, but the party can't return the money it clawed back for the 2019 election.

*The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Party, which will then transfer 50 per cent of the money to candidates' accounts.

During the most recent leadership election, riding associations in all regions of the country raised the issue with all candidates, asking them to let the electoral district associations, or EDAs, keep 100 per cent of the rebates. All four candidates who ran for the party's top job—Mr. O'Toole, Peter MacKay, Leslyn Lewis, and Derek Sloan (Hasting-Lennox and Addington, Ont.)—pledged that, should they win the party's leadership, they would let the riding associations keep the full rebates. They also promised that if the party has already received any rebates from Elections Canada, they would instruct the party to return that money back to candidates and ridings.

Mr. O'Toole included this pledge in his leadership election platform. His platform stated: "Erin has called on the party to switch back immediately and return any money clawed back from 2019 election rebates. If they don't, he will when he becomes leader."

After winning the leadership election, Mr. O'Toole repeated this commitment in at least one conference call with riding association presidents last month.

For the 2015 election, the Conservative candidates received \$16,778,265 in rebates in total, the Liberals \$14,146,482, the NDP \$9,469,792, the Bloc Québécois \$1,406,006, and the Green Party \$773,165.

As of last week, Elections Canada was still in the process of examining the 2019 campaign filings, and the final amounts were not available by deadline.

In response to a question from *The Hill Times*, the Conservatives' communications office echoed Mr. Dodds' views in explaining why the party has not been able to keep Mr. O'Toole's leadership election promise.

"Ridings will receive the full equivalent of their candidate rebate for every election going forward," wrote Cory Hann, the Conservative Party's director of communications, in an email. "With all signals out of Ottawa pointing to an election coming soon, the Conservative Fund calculated that retroactively correcting the candidate rebate sharing program would leave the party in a disastrous financial position. We owe it to the country, and our supporters, to do what we can

to set Erin O'Toole and our team up for success, and give Canada the compassionate, ethical, intelligent leadership it sorely deserves."

In March, Mr. Hann told *The Hill Times* that the Conservative Party decided to claw back money from its candidates to be able to qualify for the approximately \$6-million HST/GST rebate from Canada Revenue Agency, which is based on how much money a party receives from the government. Without rebate sharing, Mr. Hann said his party would lose the rebate, while the Liberals and the NDP would receive it, leaving the Conservative Party at a disadvantage.

"The Liberals and NDP have been benefiting from an HST/GST rebate from CRA worth millions per election cycle because of the amount of government funding they receive through their own candidate rebate sharing programs," Mr. Hann said in an email to *The Hill Times* in March.

"With our previous Conservative government's correct decision to abolish the per vote subsidy, it didn't just mean a \$20-million loss to our budget, it also eliminated our ability to meet the government funding threshold [the] CRA uses to measure eligibility for the rebate. Because of our opponents' own version of the rebate sharing, it gave them upwards of a \$5.5-million advantage over our party. We've done the responsible thing by significantly re-structuring and doing everything we can to make up the difference, but it still left us short."

Only a few days after winning the Conservative leadership election in late August, Mr. O'Toole appointed Mr. Dodds as chair of the Conservative Fund, the fundraising arm of the Conservative Party. He assumed the position in early September, succeeding Irving Gerstein.

In the email, Mr. Dodds, vice-president at the TD Bank and a fundraiser for Mr. O'Toole's two leadership campaigns, praised Mr. Gerstein's effective stewardship of the Conservative Fund and noted the party has already paid off the 2019 election loan.

"I have now been chair of the Conservative Fund for several weeks, and my first task given to me by our new leader, Erin O'Toole, was to look at our party's finances," said Mr. Dodds. "I am pleased to report that under Irving Gerstein's leadership, the party has been left in great shape. In fact, I am happy to report that

we have already been able to pay off our 2019 election loan, saving tens of thousands of dollars in interest payments. Fundraising for the first few weeks of September have been extremely strong across all platforms."

Jack Gordon Perry, the Conservative riding association president for Sarnia-Lambton, Ont., told *The Hill Times* that he and his riding association executives are "disappointed" with the Conservative Fund's decision not to pay back the rebates. He said the leader had made a commitment, and the party should have been able to keep the leader's word. Mr. Perry added the fund should have consulted riding associations before making the decision rather than informing them after making the decision.

"I feel they should have honoured the proposal; I guess if they [Mr. O'Toole] said they were going to do something, they should have done it," said Mr. Perry. "That, to me, is what we want to be a team and [the decision] makes us feel like we weren't part of the decision. They should have consulted before they did it [and should have explained] this is our position that we're taking. And here's why [we're making this decision] instead of this is what we're doing."

Mr. Perry said his riding association would raise enough money to run a competitive campaign by the time next election comes around. But, he said, he has heard that some riding associations in rural areas not held by the party are unhappy about this decision. He said they are concerned fundraising will be tough at a time when COVID-19 is wreaking havoc on the economic and health well-being of Canadians.

Brian Cargill, Conservative riding association president for Oakville, Ont., told *The Hill Times* that he was hoping that all ridings will get their rebates back as the leader had promised. But, based on the explanation by the Conservative Fund, he said it's understandable why the party changed its position.

"He made the statement too soon [about returning rebates], if you wish, because he wasn't aware of just how much money there was so forth and so on," said Mr. Cargill of Mr. O'Toole.

"He shows all signs of being a very conscientious guy."

Mike Britton, the Conservative riding association president for St. Catharines, Ont., said the party's decision would not affect its riding association's fundraising plans.

"We won't be hit that hard," said Mr. Britton. "We had feared in that we would only be getting the 50 per cent [rebates] for our budgeting going forward."

Richard Hoffer, the Conservative Party's riding association president for Pontiac, Que., said he's not upset about the party's decision, as it appears the leader made the decision without having a full understanding of the party finances.

"It's not really a very big deal," said Mr. Hoffer. "When you're running for election or leadership, you're sometimes forced to make promises or make gestures in the heat of the moment without thinking things through as well as they might."

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Editorial

# In this minority Parliament, parties can choose to do great things

Worldwide, 36,733,728 people in 213 countries have contracted the coronavirus, which has, so far, killed more than one million people, including 9,556 Canadians, as of Oct. 8. It's estimated that by Jan. 1, 2021, there could be as many as 16,000 COVID-19 deaths in Canada, according to a model recently released from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington. The United States has so far seen more than 217,644 deaths; India, 106,554; Brazil, 149,034; Russia, 22,056; Columbia, 27,331; Peru, 32,098; Spain, 32,688; Mexico, 82,726; France, 32,521; Iran, 27,888; Italy, 36,083; Chile, 13,167; and the U.K., 42,592.

The virus has also had a massive impact on the global economy, including Canada's which is now in a recession. Canada's unemployment is lower now, but was at its highest rate in May with 13.5 per cent unemployed. Between February and April, 5.5 million Canadian workers were affected by the pandemic, including three million who lost their jobs and 2.5 million who were absent from their jobs, according to Statistics Canada. Every sector in Canada has been hit hard by the COVID-19 virus, including real estate, tourism, the arts and entertainment industry, retail sales, festivals, the air industry, travel, public transit, agriculture, sports, casinos, gaming, the media, stock markets, small and large businesses, the restaurant industry, and much more.

Canada's Parliamentary Budget Officer expects the federal deficit this year to be \$328.5-billion due to COVID-19, which is having a "permanent impact" on the Canadian economy, and predicts that the deficit level will be "unsustainable" within one to two years. The federal government has

been spending billions to help out businesses hardest hit by the pandemic and people who have lost their jobs.

Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem, in a speech last week to the Global Risk Institute, said the country is in a second recession in a little more than decade and that managing risks from the pandemic will be more critical than ever to the livelihoods of Canadians, according to a CP report. But he also said there's overwhelming uncertainty on the Canadian economy and said the Bank of Canada will be keeping a close eye on how companies and households can keep up with debt and mortgage payments. He also warned about the destruction of infrastructure caused by climate change and its long-term impacts on Canada's financial system and domestic economy, according to CP.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has made it painfully clear that how well we manage risks has a huge impact on our well-being," Mr. Macklem. "Globally, I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that the quality of risk management will increasingly influence the success and stability of societies."

This is why our federal political leaders need to work together for the sake of the country and for the future, right now. This is a critical and pivotal moment in Canada's history and they should put aside the more trivial issues and look at the bigger picture. They should find ways to work on policies that will get Canada through this stronger than ever. This might sound pie in the sky, but these are serious, critical times, and our federal lawmakers should be doing their best to figure out which policies will better position Canada to weather this crisis and those yet to come.

*The Hill Times*

Letters to the Editor

# Senate's spending, expenses oversight committee not good enough, says former Senate ethics officer Fournier

In 2015, in the wake of the Senate expenses scandal, then-auditor general Michael Ferguson issued a scathing report on Senate expenses calling for a "transformational change in the way expenses are claimed, managed, controlled, and reviewed." Specifically, he recommended the creation of an independent five-member body to provide oversight of Senators' expenses of which three, including its chair, would be non-Senators, outside members independent of the Senate, as well as two existing Senators.

The oversight body would review all expenses incurred by individual Senators and make final decisions on whether they comply with the rules. Moreover, the meetings of the body would be open to the public, and all its reports, minutes, decisions and reasons would be published on the Senate website. The AG came to this recommendation after examining more than 80,000 expense items, including travel, living, and office expenses which are part of the Senate's \$114-million annual budget.

For five years, Senators delayed, dithered and dawdled, and finally rejected the AG's recommendation. This reflects very poorly on the Senate. Now a majority of three Senators will review the spending of their peers and make final decisions on whether those expenses comply with the rules, policies, and guidelines, and whether the amounts should be repaid by Senators.

This is not good enough. Put simply, this is a matter of public trust and integrity.

If Senators want to regain the public trust, they must be far more open when it comes to matters as important as expenses. The U.K. (2009) and Australia (2017) both established totally independent parliamentary expenses authorities. There are no members of the House of Lords or the Australian Senate on those bodies. They are fully independent as they should be.

This is what it's all about: public confidence, trust, integrity, transparency and accountability. The Senate should immediately reconsider its decision, and do this properly this time. Simply put, the Senate should adopt the late AG Michael Ferguson's recommendation, or better still, in my view, the U.K.-Australia model. If this works in the House of Lords and the Australian Senate, it will work in Canada. What are Senators waiting for? Another expenses scandal? The Senate is better than this. I should know. I was the Senate's first and longest serving Senate ethics officer, from 2005 to 2012. Let's get with it, Senators.

Should the particular model adopted by the Senate on Oct. 1 prove to be unworkable in practice, for whatever reason, the two other options referred to above should be given serious consideration by Senators.

**Jean T. Fournier**  
Ottawa, Ont.  
*(The letter writer is the former Senate ethics officer.)*

# Please allow me a moment to rant about some of your cutlines and about Question Period

I am writing you to express my great annoyance with the way some of your photo captions describe how an MP is pictured "arriving at Question Period." Why is it necessary to mention Question Period? Would it not be much more accurate to state that these MPs were actually on their way into the House of Commons? No MP was ever elected to something called Question Period, but they have all been elected to the House. So why don't you have your caption writers refrain from referring to Question Period from now on and instead, where applicable, refer to MPs going into the House of Commons?

And, while I'm at it, who cares what entrance an MP is at when entering West Block? I'm sure the vast majority of your readers couldn't care less if an MP is at the "south entrance" or any other entrance, so why mention the entrance at all?

The thing called Question Period is a mere 45-minute event in a long parliamentary day and it need not be elevated to the level of importance you seem to give it in

your photo captions. I never capitalize it because it's only one segment of a parliamentary day, and most often it's not the most important part of the day. It's more theatre than anything useful, in my opinion.

Unfortunately (and, here's another rant) the Canadian media focus far too much time, attention, and ink on Question Period and less time on the more important stuff that takes place in Parliament. When I do an occasional scan of the media in some other countries, such as Australia or the U.K., their respective versions of their parliamentary Question Period sessions are rarely mentioned. Most often, their PMs, ministers and MPs are shown or quoted speaking in Parliament, never in Question Period. For some reason, most Canadian media have this notion that the only thing that happens in our Parliament is Question Period. Maybe it's because of their short attention span, but that's my observation, for what it's worth.

**Jae Eadie**  
Winnipeg, Man.



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# Harris opts for a risk-free evening, but she was no doubt screaming inside

If elected on Nov. 3, Kamala Harris is literally a step away from the president's job. Her boss is already 77 years old and has mused about serving one term. Maybe that is why she is always smiling.



Sheila Copps

*Copps' Corner*

OTTAWA—The vice-presidential debate reinforced every element of exclusion that women in politics and business have experienced for years.

It was almost like riding a time capsule back into the 20th century, when men were in charge and women were supposed to smile and look pretty.

Notwithstanding a clear set of rules negotiated by the Commission on Presidential Debates,

U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence cavalierly walked all over his opponent, ignoring moderator questions and talking over Kamala Harris. The Democratic nominee kept smiling and weakly demanding that her two-minute speaking slot be uninterrupted.

The moderator made the situation worse by constantly apologizing to the vice-president for his failure to respect the rules. Susan Page from *USA Today* is a print journalist, so she might not have much experience in cutting off overbearing debate participants. Her timid, apologetic treatment of Pence allowed the man to run roughshod over the rules and his opponent.

Harris kept a grin on her face, but you just know she was screaming inside. Her lack of forcefulness was also gratifying because it reminded so many women, including me, of the double standard that still

applies to women and men in public life.

Harris was too nice. She should have demanded the vice-president respect the rules. Even the moderator should have had her knuckles rapped. Instead, Harris played nice, constantly smiling at the vice-president whilst she was trying to shut him down.

The Democratic vice-presidential nominee was trying to balance the twin objectives of protecting her ticket's lead and remaining collected and composed.

Her appearance was designed to make people believe that she was vice-presidential material. In that effort, she succeeded.

But the exit polling showed that her opponent, Pence, scored even higher than Harris as a potential vice-president.

There is already a huge gender gap in the support for Biden and Trump. The vast majority of women don't like Trump and will be voting for Biden. The debate reinforced that schism.

The vice-president's propensity to answer the questions he wanted, instead of those posed by the moderator, should have been aborted.

Instead, Page's performance was nothing short of appalling.

The constant apologies to the vice-president, while he simply ignored the rules and kept talking

were a stark contrast to her more aggressive demands when Harris ran overtime, usually cutting her off within 15 seconds.

Maybe Harris could have simply followed the lead of Pence, ignoring the moderator and barrelling ahead with minutes of airtime stolen from the opponent.

But had she done that; Harris would have been characterized as a hectoring woman who disrespected the vice-president and was not ready for prime time.

Harris faced the dilemma that has been experienced by every woman trying to make it in a man's world.

While her opponent ignored the time limits and even the questions posed by the moderator, Harris kept a permanent smile on her face. Even when frustrated, she simply repeated "Mr. Vice-president, I am speaking, I am speaking." She remained demure and ladylike. That too, reminded me of a gender identity throwback to the last century.

As a woman in a man's world, I know what it's like to be boiling inside and demure on the outside. Sometimes, too much demure is not a good thing. If the Twitter-sphere were any indication, the uneven treatment of Harris and Pence was painfully obvious.

In particular, women weighed in to say things like: "He interrupt-

ed me, and I'd like to just finish please, is a line every woman who has ever attended a meeting with men can relate to." One tweeted: "The gendered dynamics of interruption and the power to interrupt is always so in your face in these settings." Another tweeted: "Just as women get paid 20 cents on the dollar less than men, Harris appears to get 20 seconds less on the minute than Pence."

I was hoping Harris would speak out more forcefully, to demand that the moderator start applying the principle of equal treatment.

But she opted for a risk-free evening, so as not to reduce the 10-point lead that her ticket with Biden is currently enjoying.

Harris achieved that risk-free evening. But she reinforced a frustrating perspective that women need to "play nice" if they are going to be accepted in a man's world.

If elected on Nov. 3, Harris is literally a step away from the president's job. Her boss is already 77 years old and has mused about serving one term.

Maybe that is why she is always smiling.

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

*The Hill Times*

## The question politicians need to answer

Too often politicians get so caught up in their personal echo chambers that they sometimes come to believe that if something is popular within their own socio-economic class it will also be popular across the board.



Gerry Nicholls

*Post-Partisan Pundit*

OKAVILLE, ONT.—One of my worries about modern-day politics is how bad communication strategies are creating a

chasm in our society, a divide that's disconnecting political leaders from citizens.

In other words, more and more citizens are coming to believe their political leaders are disconnected from them and from their concerns.

Such a belief can lead to frustration, to resentment, and to apathy—none of which are good for our democratic system.

If you don't believe me, just take a look at what's currently happening around the world.

So, what's causing this disconnectedness, what's creating this chasm?

Well, the answer is complicated, it would take a book to explain it properly, but one simple theory I'd like to propose is that all too often when politicians concoct their communication plans, they fail to answer the question that matters most to voters—why does it matter to me?

A good political communications plan will usually answer that question in one of two ways, (a) my plan matters to you because it will protect you from bad things, or (b) my plan matters to you because it will help make your life better.

Yet politicians sometimes forget this basic communications principle.

For instance, consider the case of former Alberta premier

Rachel Notley, who during her term in office decided it would be a good idea to more or less ally herself with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured at a press conference on Oct. 5, 2020, on the Hill.  
*The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

She did this even though Alberta traditionally hasn't exactly embraced the federal Liberal Party, mainly because Albertans, generally speaking, tend to see the Trudeau Liberals as the province's enemy, at least when it comes to energy issues.

After all, the Trudeau Liberals cancelled the Energy East and Northern Gateway oil pipelines, and Trudeau himself once publicly mused about eventually "phasing out" Alberta's oil sands production.

Nor have Albertans forgotten about the old National Energy Program.

Hence, rather than having a strategy that says my "plan matters to you because it will protect you," Notley basically did the opposite, as she seemed to be siding

with the guy who was actively trying to hurt them.

That's a communication disconnect.

Another example of a disconnected communication strategy occurred when the Trudeau Liberals grandly trumpeted to the media its decision to dole out a whopping \$12-million to Loblaw's so the food giant could convert its refrigeration systems making them more environment-friendly.

Yes, I know this move was part of the Liberal climate change strategy, but I guess it never occurred to the Liberals to wonder if it really mattered to the

average Canadian if a rich corporation had more environmentally efficient refrigerators.

If anything, many average Canadians were probably wondering why the Liberals were making things better for the rich, rather than doing something that would matter to them, such as making their lives better.

So why is it that smart politicians like Notley and Trudeau, make the mistake of disconnecting from the public?

Lots of reasons, I suppose.

But one possible explanation, I think, is that all too often politicians get so caught up in their personal echo chambers that they sometimes come to believe that if something is popular within their own socio-economic class it will also be popular across the board.

And that, of course, isn't always the case.

Mind you, I don't think we're at a point yet where politicians in Canada have adopted a "Let them eat cake" attitude.

But, I fear, we could be heading in that direction.

So, I hope politicians, and their strategists, will do their utmost to connect with voters.

It's not a difficult task.

You just need a little sensitivity.

*Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.*

*The Hill Times*



360Kids Support Services, A & O: Support Services for Older Adults, Inc., Abri de la Rive-Sud, Accès Psy, Algoma Family Services, Alternative Naissance, Association québécoise des parents et amis de la personne atteinte de maladie mentale, Association québécoise pour la réadaptation psychosociale, Atlantic Wellness, Black Creek Community Health Centre, Blue Door Shelters, Brigadoon Village, CAMÉÉ, Canadian Mental Health Association – Newfoundland and Labrador, Centre d'Expertise Poids, Image et Alimentation (CEPIA) de l'Université Laval, Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Lévis, Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Québec, Centre de pédiatrie sociale Laval, Centre de Prévention du Suicide de Senneterre, Centre de Rétablissement le Renfort, Centre Inter-Section, Centre prévention suicide Faubourg, Cercle des 4 vents, Childreach, Children's Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville, Choices for Youth, Cirque Hors Piste, CMHA Central Alberta, CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth Branch, Community Care Durham, Compass/Boussole/Akii-Izhinoogan, Dépôt centre communautaire d'alimentation, East Hants Family Resource Centre, École de musique Alain-Caron, Eva's Initiatives For Homeless Youth, FamilySmart, FIREFLY, Fondation À Notre Santé

Centre jeunesse de Montréal, Etchemin, Fondation Santé Foundation, Hawkesbury Foundation, Home Horizon Services, Hope+Me-Mood Ontario & Toronto, Hopewell Centre, Horizons for Youth, in Mental Health (I AM), Community Organization Intègr'action Jeunesse, Khalil des Femmes, Lady Ballers d'apprentissage parallèle Québec, LOFT Community Mackenzie Health Foundation, Montréal, Maison RadoActif, Mobile Mental Health Inc., du Monde Canada, Mental d'Intervention et de Thérapie Minwaashin Lodge: Indigenous Mon Shack... Mes choix... NEED2 Suicide Prevention Brunswick Association of Fire Health Foundation Inc., North Children's Services, North End Northwestern Health Unit, Oak Oakville Meals on Wheels, Mental Health, Orillia Soldiers'

Our Kids Count, Pembina Counselling Pitquhinnikuk Ilihautiniq / Kitikmeot Il, ressource alternative en santé mentale, Rainbow Resource Centre, Inc., Répit Jeunesse, Ressource Anxiété et Trouble Panique, Rideau Lakes Public Library, ROBSM 04-17, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre Foundation, Scarborough Women's Centre, School District #36 (Surrey), Second Story Women's Centre, Seeds of Hope Foundation, Sentier Urbain, Smilezone Foundation, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, Société de réadaptation et d'intégration communautaire (SRIC), Société Québécoise de la Schizophrénie et des psychoses apparentées (SQS), Stella's Circle, TAO TEL-AIDE, Teach For Canada, The Alex Community Health Centre, The Do More Agriculture Foundation, The Fort McMurray School Division, The John Howard Society of North Island, The Milton District Hospital Foundation, The Neighbourhood Group Community Services, The Psychology Foundation of Canada, The Sashbear Foundation, Victim Services of Durham Region, Ways Mental Health Support, Windsor-Essex Therapeutic Riding Association, Youth Impact Jeunesse, YWCA NWT.

## Let's talk about the remarkable organizations selected for the 2020 Bell Let's Talk Community Fund.

### Congratulations to the 118 recipients!

Each year, Bell awards grants of up to \$25,000 to organizations that provide support and services to Canadians living with mental illness.

Over 750 grants have been awarded to grassroots groups across the country since the Community Fund launched in 2011. We applaud all these organizations for helping improve the mental health and well-being of people in their communities each and every day.

To learn more about the Bell Let's Talk Community Fund and how to apply for a grant in 2021, please visit the "Funding Opportunities" section of [bell.ca/letstalk](https://bell.ca/letstalk).



de l'hôpital HDA, Fondation du Fondation Santé Beauce-Urbaine, Grand River Hospital & District General Hospital Georgian Triangle Residential Disorders Association of Eating Disorder Support Institute for Advancements Immigrant & Refugee of Manitoba Inc. (IRCOM), Center, L'Amarrage, La rue Camp, Le 2159, Le CAP (Centre de Montréal), Les YMCA du Services, Logis Rose Virginie, Maison l'Éclaircie de Maison Réalité, Maskwacis Massey Centre, Médecins Health Foundation, Milieu en Agression Sexuelle (MITAS), Women's Support Centre, Mon avenir! (Mon Shack), Education & Support, New Chiefs, Noah's House Mental Eastern Ontario Family and Community Health Centre, Park Neighborhood Centre, Ontario Shores Foundation for Memorial Hospital Foundation,

Centre, Inc., Pembina Trails School Division Educational Support Fund, Inc., Heritage Society, Power To Be, Prince Edward Island Ground Search and Rescue, Prise mentale, Rainbow Resource Centre, Inc., Répit Jeunesse, Ressource Anxiété et Trouble Panique, Rideau Lakes Public Library, ROBSM 04-17, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre Foundation, Scarborough Women's Centre, School District #36 (Surrey), Second Story Women's Centre, Seeds of Hope Foundation, Sentier Urbain, Smilezone Foundation, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, Société de réadaptation et d'intégration communautaire (SRIC), Société Québécoise de la Schizophrénie et des psychoses apparentées (SQS), Stella's Circle, TAO TEL-AIDE, Teach For Canada, The Alex Community Health Centre, The Do More Agriculture Foundation, The Fort McMurray School Division, The John Howard Society of North Island, The Milton District Hospital Foundation, The Neighbourhood Group Community Services, The Psychology Foundation of Canada, The Sashbear Foundation, Victim Services of Durham Region, Ways Mental Health Support, Windsor-Essex Therapeutic Riding Association, Youth Impact Jeunesse, YWCA NWT.



# America hurtles down an open elevator shaft during Trump presidency

America's commander-in-chief has always been a brash and bullying liar. As of last week, though, he has become a gruesome threat to the country he insists he loves.



Michael Harris

Harris

**H**ALIFAX—I have to write about Donald Trump again. To borrow a phrase from Joseph Conrad, it is the fascination of the abomination.

America has walked into an open elevator shaft during the Trump presidency, and has been hurtling downwards ever since.

No honour, no duty, no class.

Just a country run by a narcissistic something-opath, who monetized the highest office in the land, stocked the White House with family members as if it were his personal trout pond, and sucked up to every dictator on the planet. And all the while, barely keeping ahead of the law over past deeds—strictly because of the job he holds for now.

Impeached, he slithered through a political loophole called a partisan Senate. Party affiliation, not facts, won the day, or lost it.

Refusing to reveal his taxes (what taxes, one might legitimately ask), Trump is running out of appeal courts to forestall the inevitable; the Southern District of Manhattan will ultimately get the documents.

Trump's ace in the hole?

A Supreme Court he has stuffed like a Thanksgiving turkey with ardent conservatives. Another loophole, another slither. Only Donald Trump could see the death of Ruth Bader Ginsberg as a partisan opportunity.



U.S. President Donald J. Trump, pictured Oct. 5, 2020, departing the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. It looks increasingly likely that the only way Mr. Trump will leave the White House is strapped to a chair and carried out like Hannibal Lecter, writes Michael Harris. *Official White House Photograph by Joyce N. Boghosian*

America's commander-in-chief has always been a brash and bullying liar. As of last week, though, he has become a gruesome threat to the country he insists he loves.

It is not just that he decided to go back to the White House while still infected with COVID-19, showing his utter contempt for the health and safety of the poor bastards who work there.

Or his determination to return to the campaign trail with rallies that put at risk the very supporters on whose shoulders he stands.

Or cancelling life-saving stimulus package negotiations with Congress, only to reinstate them a day or two later as though this is no big deal. The big deal is apparently which side of the bed Trump gets up on.

Nor was it his boorish performance in that event that only a comic could call a presidential debate, or his mindless ramblings on Presidential Pravda, otherwise known as Fox News.

Or telling a pack of vigilantes to "stand back and stand by," as though they might be needed after Election Day to keep the King

of Queens in office—no matter what the vote count says. Trump never misses an opportunity to play his favourite instrument—the dog whistle.

There is a lot of political sludge puddling at this man's feet. But now Trump has carried the art of sinking to new lows and everyone in the world should take notice.

The president now wants his attorney general, the reliably sycophantic William Barr, to indict Trump's chief rival, Joe Biden, and, oh yes, former president Barack Obama. That is the stuff of tin-pot despots, not U.S. presidents. The glory of the Republic is the fierce separation of justice and politics.

Kamala Harris became the first Black woman to run for the vice-presidency of the United States. She is the daughter of immigrants, who pulled herself up with education and hard work to become attorney general of the most populous state in the union, California.

After that, Harris became a U.S. Senator. And if the Demo-

crats should win the election in three weeks, and if anything should happen to 77-year-old Joe Biden during his term, Kamala Harris would become president of the United States.

Donald Trump saw none of the accomplishments of this amazing woman, nor the historic moment to be honoured here, no matter what your political stripe. He merely saw a political enemy to be slandered in his usual vicious fashion.

Consider how he demonized Harris as soon as he was able to put in a call to Fox News. Trump said that the Democratic candidate for vice-president was a "monster."

We all know what the townsfolk do to monsters in the movies.

But it was not enough to call the first Black woman running for the White House some kind of political Frankenstein. Trump also declared that Harris was a "Communist."

That charge coming from a major politician resonates with anyone with a sense of American history. Senator Joe

McCarthy nearly destroyed his country in the 1950s by alleging that hundreds of communists had infiltrated every department and institution of government. Interestingly, McCarthy's lawyer was Roy Cohn, who later became the Trump family lawyer—and Donald's mentor.

Two of Trump's phobias were put on display in his attack on Kamala Harris—his tacit racism, and his hatred of strong women. The president clearly remembers how Harris summed him up in just eight words: "I know a predator when I see one." It is always get-even time with this president. Spite and malice are his specialties.

Trump's scurrilous attack on Harris perfectly squares with the way he treats women. They are either trophy wives or nothing at all.

Recall how he dissed women in his own party for their looks. Fellow Republican Carly Fiorina couldn't be president because of "that face." (Fiorina plans to vote for Biden.) Stormy Daniels, whom the president paid off after an alleged affair with Trump, had a "horse-face." Some of his other epithets of abuse for women include "fat pigs," "slobs," and "dogs." "Monster" is a new addition to the diss list.

If there was any doubt about Trump's sexism and misogyny, the president's reaction to a kidnapping and murder plot against the governor of Michigan removed it. After the FBI arrested a group of chocolate-encrusted nutbars who were planning to overthrow the state government, and kidnap Gretchen Whitmer, Trump attacked the governor, not the plotters.

He fumed that Whitmer should have phoned to thank him after "his" FBI foiled the plot against her. The president complained that she had instead called him a "white supremacist" because of his dubious endorsement of the Proud Boys during the debate with Joe Biden.

In the hours after the plot was foiled, Trump used his two favourite tools—Twitter and Sean Hannity, to declare that Whitmer had done a terrible job as governor because she had locked down her state to combat the pandemic.

It looks increasingly likely that the only way Trump will leave the White House is strapped to a chair and carried out like Hannibal Lecter.

*Michael Harris is an award-winning journalist and author. The Hill Times*



## Opinion

# Trump: the odds



U.S. President Donald J. Trump, pictured Oct. 4, 2020, during a drive-by outside of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. We must recognize the possibility that Outcome C in some form is already inevitable because Mr. Trump contracted COVID days earlier, concealed it, and is already safely past Day 10. In which case this entire drama is just pantomime, writes Gwynne Dyer. *Official White House Photo by Tia Dufour*

**Outcome C:** Donald Trump recovers, and is back out campaigning within a week. Probability: more than 70 per cent. Consequence: he still loses the election (just look at the numbers), but he is fit and able to build on the foundations he has already laid and lead a campaign from the White House (not necessarily non-violent) to dispute the postal vote.



Gwynne Dyer

*Global Affairs*

LONDON, U.K.—Now is when it gets interesting. The announcement on Oct. 2 that U.S. President Donald Trump had fallen ill with COVID-19 hardly came as a surprise. His political strategy of playing down COVID-19 required him to be reckless about his own health, and other Republicans were already dropping like flies.

Fourteen Republican Senators and Representatives have now tested positive, compared to six Democrats.

Some journalists who were up against a deadline started speculating right away about what would happen if Trump died from COVID, but that felt kind of ghoulish. Besides, the odds were long against it.

The death rate for people in their 70s who are hospitalized with COVID symptoms is much higher than for younger people, but it's still only 8.5 per cent. Being male and fat with a heart problem are all additional risk factors for Trump, but they are probably counterbalanced by the fact that he gets excellent medical care 24 hours a day. So wait and see.

Wait how long? After a million deaths (almost a quarter of

them in the United States), we now know a good deal about the pattern of this disease, and it is rarely life-threatening in the first week after symptoms develop. Some suffer from a constant dry cough, fever, headache, fatigue, and/or a loss of the sense of smell and taste, but at worst there's a certain shortness of breath.

We know that Trump was briefly put on oxygen last Friday and again on Saturday, but that does not mean he's deathly ill. On the other hand, the fact that the doctors let him go home to the White House on Oct. 5 doesn't mean they are hugely confident either.

Trump would have put immense pressure on the doctors to let him go, since that would let him do some macho posturing about having defeated the virus. They would have shrugged their shoulders and given in, because the real crisis was not due until later anyway.

Trump did indeed indulge in some major chest-beating when he got home. "Feeling really good!" he tweeted. "Don't be afraid of COVID! Don't let it dominate your life! ... I feel better than I did 20 years ago!"

Well, of course he's feeling better. He's on a steroid high. His doctors have put him on dexamethasone, a steroid medication that is not normally given to patients who are non-critical.

(He's also taking remdesivir, monoclonal antibodies, zinc, vitamin D, famotidine, melatonin and aspirin, but none of those makes you feel like Superman.)

The doctors doubtless told Trump that the real make-or-break time with COVID-19 is seven to ten days after symptoms first develop, when some patients who have been feeling reasonably well suddenly go into a steep decline, with severe lung problems. That's when you get put on the ventilator. But it probably didn't register.

"Now I'm better, and maybe I'm immune," he said at the White House. Then he took his mask off and, still highly contagious, walked back into the White House among the staff who were standing by inside. (Or to be more precise, those who were still standing at all. A dozen White House staff have already gone down with the disease.)

If Day 1 for Trump was Oct. 1, as his doctors say, then Days 7 to 10 were Oct. 8 to Oct. 11. So it's now reasonable for us to discuss how those days might define the future of the presidential election, and perhaps of the United States. Tastefully, of course, and with no ghouliness.

**Outcome A:** Trump dies. Probability: less than 10 per cent (see above). Consequence: Vice-President Mike Pence takes his place, and loses the election.

**Outcome B:** Trump gets very ill and is re-hospitalized. He survives, but cannot resume the campaign. Probability: around 10 per cent. Consequence: Joe Biden wins the presidency with a margin big enough that Trump's people cannot plausibly dispute it. Normal service is resumed, and Trump spends the rest of his life in court.

**Outcome C:** Trump recovers, and is back out campaigning within a week. Probability: more than 70 per cent. Consequence: he still loses the election (just look at the numbers), but he is fit and able to build on the foundations he has already laid and lead a campaign from the White House (not necessarily non-violent) to dispute the postal vote.

He is desperate enough, and ruthless enough, to comprehensively muddy the waters, possibly with the help of his carefully packed Supreme Court. Perhaps the United States becomes a banana republic, perhaps not.

And we must recognize the possibility that Outcome C in some form is already inevitable because Trump contracted COVID days earlier, concealed it, and is already safely past Day 10. In which case this entire drama is just pantomime.

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

*The Hill Times*



# Racism kills, we demand justice

We will neither understand nor eradicate racism without the courage to examine what produced it, and question what perpetuates it. The time to face our duty to memory, truth, conscience, and justice is now.

BY MICHAËLLE JEAN

Joyce Echaquan, a 37-year-old Atikamekw woman, died on Sept. 28 under a barrage of racist slurs at a hospital in Joliette, Que. The hateful words that she was able to record in her final moments, while crying out for help, visibly plunged her into a deep state of distress. She wanted us to see and hear, and we did, with a heavy heart and a dying soul.

Like George Floyd, Joyce couldn't breathe. Those who, at one time or another, may have faced an affront to their dignity, and similar disparagement, gasped for air.

We suffocate from air so thick with hatred of the other.

The women who uttered such heinous insults did so with perfect assurance, absolutely certain they were within their rights and in good form within the walls of a public institution. The Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec by Jacques Viens—another report among many—had already pointed out the impacts of systemic racism, a latent poison seeping into society. It's made more deadly when it is denied and trivialized from the highest level. The dismissal of a nurse and an orderly, caught in the act by the victim's recording, will not be enough to solve the problem, because the issue runs much deeper than a crime story in the news, or the sorry deeds of a few individuals.

Racism against oppressed people must be addressed on the whole, from its genesis. We have yet to emerge from the centuries of humanity denied to us through colonization. We will neither understand nor eradicate racism without the courage to examine what produced it, and question what perpetuates it. The time to face our duty to memory, truth, conscience, and justice is now.

Racism humiliates, offends, and kills, in all forms. Racism is a crime, a weapon of



Racism is made more deadly when it is denied and trivialized from the highest level, writes former governor general Michaëlle Jean. *The Hill Times* file photograph

hatred and indifference, from physical and psychological violence to failure to assist a person in danger.

We must hear and receive those who demand that the system driving this violence be dealt with, not just its symptoms. The

collateral effects are devastating. Joyce Echaquan died as a result. She is not alone. This cannot be allowed to continue.

*Michaëlle Jean is the former Governor General of Canada.*

*The Hill Times*

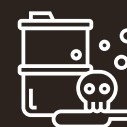
## Is big oil really helping our economy?



Oil and gas employment peaked before the 2014 oil price crash, resulting in an estimated **53,119 jobs lost by 2019.**



**The industry owes nearly \$200 million in back taxes** to municipalities, and meanwhile receives around \$5 billion a year in government subsidies.



They have left behind thousands and thousands of abandoned wells, and trillions of litres of **toxic tailings, estimated to cost as much as \$260 billion to clean up.**

## Canada: Support Canadians, not big oil.

Read more about Canada's fossil fuel subsidies at [environmentaldefence.ca/report/federalfossilsubsidies2020](https://environmentaldefence.ca/report/federalfossilsubsidies2020)



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## Opinion

# Systemic racism in the Canadian security and intelligence community is a persistent threat

Systemic racism is a threat to our national security. Failure to tackle it can compromise our ability to protect Canadians from terrorism, foreign interference, cyber threats, and classified information, and seriously erode public trust. We need to recruit smartly and change the unwelcoming workplace cultures in S&I organizations. Failures in national security are detrimental and may not always be regained or repaired.

BY HUDA MUKBIL

OTTAWA—In Canada, the Security and Intelligence community has seen a moderate rise of women in leadership positions and national security decision making. Yet, visible minorities across gender and racial lines are systemically deprived of national security careers and from serving their country. More hurtful, too many Muslim-Canadians face harassment and discrimination by national security providers. They are also not served and protected by the same organizations, even amidst a surge in far-right rhetoric and violence targeting, amongst others, the Muslim communities.

In March 2020, the top-secret National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) published its findings on diversity with little media or public attention. According to the report, challenges to increasing diversity, after decades of legislation and calls for change, persist. The report found that women are underrepresented at executive levels and cited a lack of data on aboriginal peoples' representation at the same level. It found that persons with disabilities and visible minorities are overall underrepresented. Worst, it concluded that the recruitment of members of visible minorities has stalled or decreased in several of the organizations under review for the past three years. It noted the government's settling of lawsuits alleging widespread harassment,

violence, and discrimination, affirming that they are unacceptably high, with limited accountability for diversity measures.

The report also revealed that employment equity groups are reluctant to self-identify out of fear of personnel repercussions and deduced a larger systemic problem.

Wesley Wark, a professor at the Centre for the International Policy Studies University of Ottawa, described the NSICOP findings as "a portrait of persistent deficiencies in reaching diversity goals and ensuring inclusivity." He is not wrong; the NSICOP commented that there is a lack of organizational buy-in and resistance to their implementations. Some RCMP leaders have misunderstandings about diversity and even resistance to their implementation. Let that sink in—some leaders within the S&I community do not buy-in to the said group's legal and democratic rights.

RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki surprised us all with her lack of understanding of what constitutes systemic racism, as if it's a side concern, out of mind. That is because visible minorities working in the S&I community are voiceless both inside and outside their organizations. The NSICOP could have conducted closed-door hearings with current and former officers, but it did not. To date, individual career officers' personal experiences in the S&I community with diversity are censored. How can we drive change without providing safe spaces and demonstrate that their experiences count and that their voices matter?



The lack of leadership to tackle diversity is best demonstrated through the 2017 initiative termed the S&I Diversity and Inclusion Tiger Team. According to the NSICOP report, Prime Minister Justice Trudeau directed leaders in the security and intelligence community to establish the Tiger Team to implement joint efforts to learn from one another and share best practices to enhance diversity. The NSICOP committee found that the Tiger Team, suffering from a lack of diversity among its members, not unlike the NSICOP, had no measurable objective, met infrequently, did not consider systemic challenges, and then just gave up on its

Huda Mukbil was a senior intelligence officer at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service for 16 years and she was often the only visible minority at the table. 'I brought a different perspective and insight into counter-terrorism, counterintelligence and counter-proliferation operations, given my linguistic skills and knowledge of other cultures. As a multilingual Muslim woman, I was an anomaly in the Canadian security intelligence community.'

Photograph courtesy of Huda Mukbil

mandate in 2018 by not meeting altogether. Poof, and just like that, they decided the initiative wasn't worth their time. Wark rightly suggested that it was "time perhaps, for the prime minister to crack the whip" at the Tiger Team. I recommend the prime minister

RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki surprised us all with her lack of understanding of what constitutes systemic racism, like it's a side concern, out of mind, writes Huda Mukbil. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

does that before the three to five years the NSICOP committee may take to conduct a more comprehensive study—the tactical and familiar solution to these disturbing trends: take more time.

When it comes to diversity in the security and intelligence community, our governments across the political spectrum celebrate snail-paced progress to the detriment of our collective security. Some of our allies are making leaping progress tackling the recruitment, retention and development in leadership of women and visible minorities. In late September, I attended an online two-day conference provided by the Harvard Kennedy School,

titled, *Agents of Change: Driving a More Diverse and Capable Intelligence Community*. It was surreal and validating, listening to current, and former analysts and officers share their experiences with diversity, including historical and present-day racial issues in the intelligence community. Forward focussed, the conference examined ways to create and engage a new pipeline of future national security and intelligence practitioners and address the "macho" culture in operations and deployment environments.

At the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), where I worked for 16 years as a senior intelligence officer, I was often the only visible minority at the table. I brought a different perspective and insight into counter-terrorism, counterintelligence and counter-proliferation operations, given my linguistic skills and knowledge of other cultures. As a multilingual Muslim woman, I was an anomaly in the Canadian security intelligence community. At international diplomatic functions, I was dogged for recruitment by foreign spy agencies, and my director-general would jokingly suggest that I wear a red and white hijab with the maple leaf. Of course, as an investigator in Toronto, I also encountered CEOs scheduled to meet with me, looking past me for a white officer, with a nervous smile once they realized I was it.

National security threats are ever-evolving, and fear of a cyber 9/11 is real. Our heavy reliance on the United States for our security isn't sustainable. We need to leverage all of our talents and build a diverse, innovative, and

able S&I community. We need to reach out to and attract Canada's brightest minds and find ways to keep them here.

Allow me to give you an example from my world of spy-hood. The intelligence world heavily relies on intelligence gathered by persons (HUMINT) and signals intelligence (SIGINT). You cannot do both without Canadians who have diverse linguistic skills, technical skills, and cross-cultural communication skills. Take a look at our Canadian universities' engineering and technology campus, and you will find that visible minorities make up more than half of the student body. Do we want to encourage Canadians with foreign language skills and graduating from scientific and technical expertise to join the security and intelligence community? Should the security and intelligence community leaders do better to leverage such talent? Absolutely.

Systemic racism in security and intelligence is a threat to our national security. Failures to tackle it can compromise our ability to protect Canadians from terrorism, foreign interference, cyber threats, and exposure of classified information, and seriously erode public trust. We need to recruit smartly and change the unwelcoming workplace cultures in these organizations and adopt forward-thinking. Failures in national security are detrimental and may not always be regained or repaired.

Huda Mukbil is a national security expert and a former senior intelligence officer with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS).

*The Hill Times*



# Urban-based Indigenous populations matter, let's start acting like it



ISG Sen. Mary Jane McCallum, pictured in her Senate office on Feb. 26, 2020. As Parliamentarians, we have researched and highlighted the many gaps that exist for Indigenous populations. These persistent gaps are rooted in the social determinants of health, but come into focus more publicly in the midst of crises or pandemics, such as H1N1 and COVID-19, writes Sen. McCallum. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

We have an extraordinary responsibility to ensure that this structural violence does not continue to play out in lives of the urban-based First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples. They matter.

BY ISG SENATOR MARY JANE MCCALLUM

When I was finally able to leave residential school and then high school, I moved from place to place for many reasons. I no longer had a physical residence on the reserve. I had very few job prospects and a non-existent support system. I ventured out, as a very vulnerable young woman, taking odd jobs which included working in a fish plant in Co-op Point, as a nurse's aide in The Pas, and finally as a chambermaid in Winnipeg, where I had arrived in 1971.

These limited opportunities, including access to education, are some of the reasons why many First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and non-status peoples continue to migrate to the urban settings, in search of a better life.

It is important to dispel what is false about us as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and non-status peoples: that we were meant

to be poor; that we are weak; that we are stupid or lazy; that we are victims.

On the contrary, we know the reach of our stories—across time and distance—and across generations. Stories like ours don't end, they only grow. That is part of our resilience. In light of the current pandemic, these stories now speak to the determination, perseverance, love, and commitment made by our Indigenous leadership, specifically in the urban settings, and done in the face of incredible adversity.

COVID-19 exposed the serious underlying conditions that continue to exist with the First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples in urban settings. One of the major chronic and inter-jurisdictional problems is the inability of urban-based peoples to have their identities and benefits recognized, thereby ensuring they receive appropriate resources and supports. This has manifested in a concerted effort to ignore the treaty rights for these groups. Society, including Parliament Hill, has learned to live, uncomfortably but quietly, with the symptoms of this deliberate exclusion and power imbalance.

As the current pandemic has demonstrated, the municipal arena is where many federal public policies and laws continue to play out for many First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples. While all four orders of government play a part in their lives, none of them provide seamless and uninterrupted support and resources as their responsibility dictates. Rather, they

continue to use jurisdictional issues as an excuse.

Without the benefit of the blatant responsibility that the federal government has with the on-reserve population, the inequity rears its head much more clearly with the lack of supports for the burgeoning urban-based population. The effects we see in light of COVID-19 are even more skewed because this inequality has been tolerated for so long. It is time this long-standing inequity and inequality

is redressed, thereby ensuring that public health supports be grounded in the assurances of equality, safety and security as noted in the Canadian Charter.

The consequences of the current, and historical, lack of guaranteed support for urban issues are well-known and documented. These consequences include: social exclusion, marginalization and lack of portable rights of identity and benefits. These issues are not merely the byproduct of misguided policies and laws—they have become human rights violations in a country which prides itself as a global champion of human rights.

The government had 10 years to prepare for this pandemic following H1N1 in 2009. Yet the conditions in the urban areas remain the same. Why would we expect COVID play out differently if actions to address the underlying inequalities, including those that especially disadvantage women and girls nationwide, were not corrected? The COVID-19 crisis has served to highlight cracks in the existing system and the disproportionate risks to the most vulnerable in the urban settings—it is now time we do something about it.

I have spoken directly with Indigenous women in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Ontario who have taken a lead role in their communities in addressing homelessness, food insecurity, domestic violence, health-care access, and many more connected issues. They do this with what limited funds and human capital they have, oftentimes going beyond the scope of their service provision mandates. Some have not been refunded for the pandemic-related out-of-pocket expenses they have incurred to deal with new challenges that have arisen. This is despite an appeal to be reimbursed for shouldering responsibilities that should have been undertaken by the government.

These advocates and their organizations are determined to change the system because accepting the status quo means a continued negative outlook in what has become a life-and-death situation for some of the individuals and families that they serve.

As Parliamentarians, we have researched and highlighted the many gaps that exist for Indigenous populations. These persistent gaps are rooted in the social determinants of health, but come into focus more publicly in the midst of crises or pandemics, such as H1N1 and COVID-19. We have an extraordinary responsibility to ensure that this structural violence does not continue to play out in lives of the urban-based First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-status peoples. They matter.

ISG Mary Jane McCallum (Manitoba) is a First Nations woman of Cree heritage and an advocate for social justice. *The Hill Times*

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## Opinion

# Immigration virtue signalling in both directions

Greater awareness should allow for deeper conversations that either clarify points of divergence or, ideally, commonalities that bridge differences or at least improve civility.



Andrew Griffith

Opinion

**O**TTAWA—As discussions about immigration levels and issues such as temporary foreign workers are likely to increase post-COVID, it is important to appreciate that these will occur at a number of levels, ranging from factual, to the underlying values that inform and shape narratives, and to how the arguments are presented.

Selection of facts often reflects conscious and unconscious decisions, which in turn are influenced by our values and beliefs. Understanding these influences is helpful to discussion, as it allows one to engage at a deeper level, appreciate the basis of different perspectives and, hopefully, find some common ground for discussion.

After all, meaningful discussion and debate cannot happen within a bubble of the like-minded, but we all need to engage different viewpoints and perspectives. My personal journey to this realization occurred during my time working under former then immigration minister Jason Kenney on citizenship and multiculturalism issues, where I was regularly challenged with respect to my values, biases and orientations, as recounted in *Policy Arrogance or Innocent Bias*.

Taking a look at a number of immigration issues, it can be useful to try to identify the underlying meanings of common and current immigration “catch phrases.” The following seeks to unpack some of the narratives used by both sides:

## What are the narratives behind asylum seekers?

Characterizing asylum seekers as “illegal migrants” fits into a law and order narrative, emphasizing controlled or managed immigration and fairness in that there is one process for all. It implies possible fraud or misrepresentation in their claims. It is a narrative that can appeal to immigrants



Consciously or not, we all use narratives to drive our arguments and positions. The narratives we use reflect a mix of interests and values. Narratives have elements of identity politics (policies targeted to narrow constituencies) and virtue signalling (superficial support for positions) designed to target and attract individuals and groups, writes Andrew Griffith. *Photograph courtesy of Pixabay*

and non-immigrants alike. But the managed immigration narrative downplays the humanitarian aspects of people, many of whom would be at risk if returned to their homelands, who are worried about their future in the U.S., particularly under the Trump administration.

Characterizing them as “irregular arrivals” fits into the welcoming or inclusive narrative that accepts that how people arrive is less important than giving them the chance to make their case before the Immigration and Refugee Board. Similarly, it downplays the management aspect of immigration and that these claimants are essentially exploiting a loophole in the Safe Third Country Agreement. As the technical arguments “illegal or irregular” are not simple to explain, this tends to resonate more with those who favour a more open and inclusive approach.

## What are the narratives behind ‘old-stock Canadian’ or ‘a Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian?’

While the former can be used in a neutral message to indicate Canadians of three generations or more, its use more often suggests a more exclusionary narrative implying a citizenship hierarchy based upon the period of immigration, with earlier largely white arrivals more “Canadian” compared to more recent visible minority arrivals. Moreover, it reinforces concerns that more recent immigrants are not adapting to Canadian values.

“A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian,” on the other hand, signals inclusivity, that no matter the time of arrival or their ethnocultural identity, all are and should be treated equally. At its extreme, it justifies citizenship rights as divorced from residency and connections to Canada, as seen in debates over birth tourism, voting rights, and arguments in favour of

citizenship transmission beyond the first generation.

## What are the narratives behind ‘extreme multiculturalism’ or ‘diversity is our strength?’

“Extreme multiculturalism” signals that the values and practices of immigrants and visible minorities are different and divisive, thus undermining Canadian society and consensus. It implies that multiculturalism is based on an “anything goes” approach, one that leads to “unreasonable accommodation” demands to the disadvantage of “old-stock” Canadians.

“Diversity is our strength,” on the other hand, welcomes diversity as a good in itself. By stressing inclusivity and flexibility regarding accommodation requests, it expands the space of Canadian identities to incorporate other identities. On the other hand, it can lead to downplaying the constraints to accommodation, whether legal, economic or social.

## What are the narratives behind ‘social cohesion’ or ‘social inclusion?’

Social cohesion stresses common values and standards that all are expected to understand and comply with. While differences exist, these are portrayed as more cultural (language, food, etc.) than fundamental values. People need to “fit in,” with explicit or implicit limits on societal accommodation. Back in 2009 (the Discover Canada Citizenship Guide) and, again in 2015 (a tip line), the previous Conservative government’s use of the term “barbaric cultural practices” for “honour killings” and female genital mutilation can be seen in this light.

Social inclusion, on the other hand, implies a greater openness to accommodating cultural, religious or other practices and

identities. While subject to Charter protections and the need to balance rights, the emphasis is more on accommodation of difference and a reluctance to state limits or qualifications. It can lead to silence on issues within communities about such real concerns as extremism, spousal abuse and female genital mutilation, and the resulting impact on women and other vulnerable members.

## What are the narratives behind ‘anti-Muslim hate’ or Islamophobia?

Anti-Muslim hate allows those uncomfortable with the term Islamophobia to situate issues of anti-Muslim bias, discrimination, and racism in the context of individual rather than group rights and those of a religion, Islam. The focus on individual rights maintains some space for legitimate criticism of the religion or its practices (e.g., role of women, LGBTQ, etc.) and more explicit recognition of balancing religious and other rights.

Islamophobia, on the other hand, emphasizes the religion itself, with a greater focus on systemic racism and the rights of the religion as such in contrast to individual rights. Criticism of specific religious practices becomes more difficult as it is can be viewed as criticism of the religion and its institutions rather than criticism of the impact on individual rights.

## What are the narratives behind individual acts of racism or systemic racism?

By stressing individual acts of racism, the emphasis is on the individual, the “few bad apples” in any organization or community, with government interventions more focused on education and enforcement of anti-hate crimes legislation. In so doing, it largely sidesteps issues pertaining to societal and socioeconomic barriers.

Systemic racism, on the other hand, situates racism in the context of societal and socioeconomic barriers that result in inequalities, intended or unintended. Individual practices and policies of governments and organizations can inadvertently make it more difficult for individuals and groups to have comparable outcomes to more established groups, as seen with respect to the economy, education attainment, incarceration rates, health and political representation.

## What are the narratives behind multiculturalism, interculturalism or pluralism?

All three are “plastic” terms to describe civic integration that range from more integrationist to more separatist. All three can be used positively or negatively. Multiculturalism has been decried by European leaders as having failed at integration in contrast to how it is generally positively viewed by Canadian political leaders and society. It is important to note that what Europeans understand as “multiculturalism” may not be how it is understood in Canada. Interculturalism, while substantively comparable to Canadian multiculturalism with a stronger reference point of Quebec as a French-speaking society, is largely used to emphasize Quebec as a distinct French-speaking and identity-based society. Pluralism is broader in that it includes all forms of diversity (ethnocultural, gender and other) but with more emphasis on tolerance than integration.

## Conversation not confrontation

Consciously or not, we all use narratives to drive our arguments and positions. The narratives we use reflect a mix of interests and values. Narratives have elements of identity politics (policies targeted to narrow constituencies) and virtue signalling (superficial support for positions) designed to target and attract individuals and groups.

When listening to discussions and debates, we need to be alert to the interests, values and signals behind stated positions to improve our understanding of them. In formulating our own arguments, we similarly have to “know thyself” and be more mindful of how our interests and values are shaping our positions and narratives. Greater awareness should allow for deeper conversations that either clarify points of divergence or, ideally, commonalities that bridge differences or at least improve civility.

Andrew Griffith is the author of *Multiculturalism in Canada: Evidence and Anecdote and Policy Arrogance or Innocent Bias: Resetting Citizenship and Multiculturalism*. He is the former director general for Citizenship and Multiculturalism and is a fellow of the Environics Institute and of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

The Hill Times



# Now more than ever, the world needs data stewards

In the context of COVID-19, while agencies and statisticians cannot control the outcome and recovery of the virus, they can and must continue to play a prominent role in helping society better understand the impacts of the current crisis, by providing good data stewardship and methodological support that allows for better tracking changes, and allows policy makers to focus on measuring the outcomes of decisions and course correct as needed.



Anil Arora & Rohinton P. Medhora

Opinion

Canadians are surrounded by data that impact their opinions and actions. A recent innovative study from Statistics Canada estimated the value of the stock of data, databases and data science in Canada at \$217-billion in 2018. From consuming suggested content on social platforms to apps that help us manage our interactions during a pandemic, data is a constant presence. Because of its strong influence, it is important to understand the difference between good, unclear and bad data, and the impact it can have in shaping policy. It is important to be critical of the source, quality, and positioning of data and statistics in our decision-making processes.

The COVID-19 crisis is the latest illustration of the importance of statistics to guide policy and individuals' actions. For example, differences in rates of testing,



Canadians are surrounded by data that impact their opinions and actions. A recent innovative study from Statistics Canada estimated the value of stock of data, databases and data science in Canada at \$217-billion in 2018, write Anil Arora and Rohinton P. Medhora. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

varying approaches to the cause of deaths, and how the cause of death is registered in public records, create a challenging situation to paint an accurate picture of the extent of the pandemic in many jurisdictions across the globe. As a result, public policy decisions to counter the pandemic are even more complicated.

The pandemic has exposed data gaps, timeliness gaps, and raised questions about privacy and confidentiality, trust and access to personal data by private and public organizations. But it has also demonstrated the fundamental importance of data and key aspects of good data that should always be considered: pertinence, timeliness and accuracy.

gence of digital and intangible economies called for new sets of statistics. The extent of the growth of the intangible economy is typically portrayed by the value of intangibles in firm-level valuations. A new set of conventions on what constitutes intangibles and how these might be measured is required.

Timeliness in data-gathering is manifest in many ways. The current pandemic has demonstrated the value of rapid gathering and dissemination of data around key aspects of COVID-19, both to develop responses and also for public information and education. The development of digital technologies is a key part of timeliness, even for traditional measures such as GDP.

the infrastructure needed for access, sharing and analytics. In the case of Statistics Canada, investments in cloud technologies, data analytics as a service, real-time remote access to researchers. Virtual data labs, combined with new approaches such as web-panels and flash estimates are paying dividends in addressing data gaps and connecting challenging public policy questions with data expertise and analytics. As well, Statistics Canada is breaking new paths with the use of crowdsourcing as a flexible collection method to provide timely insights on the impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians' mental health, their ability to finish school, their businesses as well as the impact of the pandemic on people with disabilities or from



Statistics Canada, along with other national statistical offices, have gone beyond their traditional roles of providing good data and analysis towards that of an active data steward and provider of micro data repositories including the needed infrastructure for access, sharing and analytics. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

At the start of data gathering, "what to measure and why?" should always be the question.

The pandemic has illustrated that statistics and statistical systems are not static. Well before the pandemic hit, the emer-

Statistics Canada, along with other national statistical offices, have gone beyond their traditional roles of providing good data and analysis towards that of an active data steward and provider of micro data repositories including

visible minority groups. This will continue to be developed and may play an important role as Canada begins to navigate toward recovery.

The development of digital technologies has also enabled

national statistical offices to make better use of alternative data sources. The requirement for more granular and real-time information is leading to the increased use of sensor data: a more continuous data stream that includes scanner data, GPS positioning data (i.e. trucking loggers) and earth observation data. Such as is the case with Statistics Canada's AgZero project, which aims to employ satellite and AI technology to provide the agri-food community with timely, accurate and detailed data, while requiring farmers to complete fewer traditional surveys.

The phenomenon of "night-time lights" is another instance. Starting in the mid-2000s, space-based monitoring of ground illumination patterns has added speed and accuracy to conventional forms of data gathering. A recent survey of developments found that satellite-based data is more robust in measuring economic activity across a wide spectrum of countries and even provides new insights missing in traditionally gathered data. Similar possibilities are being exploited in monitoring emissions from outer space, thus providing fast, accurate and dispassionate indicators of, for example, progress towards climate change goals and commitments.

In 2016, it was estimated that bad data cost the U.S. economy US\$3-trillion annually. This includes the costs of hunting for data and cleaning, organizing and correcting it, and the costs of inefficient decisions that were taken based on the bad data. Although an estimate for Canada has not been made, it would be reasonable to assume that the loss from bad data in Canada amounts to about C\$400-billion (a tenth of the U.S. estimate) annually given the similarity in corporate and government processes in the two countries. To minimize errors in the use of big data, testing, estimates as "experimental series" and feedback play a key role prior to regular production.

In the context of COVID-19, while agencies and statisticians cannot control the outcome and recovery of the virus, they can and must continue to play a prominent role in helping society better understand the impacts of the current crisis, by providing good data stewardship and methodological support that allows for better tracking changes, and allows policy makers to focus on measuring the outcomes of decisions and course correct as needed.

Anil Arora was appointed chief statistician of Canada in September 2016. He has led significant transformational initiatives throughout his career, with experience and partnerships spanning all three levels of government, the private sector and international organizations, including the UN and the OECD. Rohinton P. Medhora is president of the Centre for International Governance Innovation and previous vice president of programs at Canada's International Development Research Centre. His fields of expertise are monetary and trade policy, international economic relations and development economics.

*The Hill Times*



# ‘Much more gets accomplished when hyper-partisanship is taken out of politics’: MPs, experts, politicians weigh in on leadership during global pandemic

‘This is exactly the time that you need to have confidence that your political leadership is going to be making those types of decisions with one thing in mind, and that is what is best needed to save the lives of people,’ said new Green Party Leader Annamie Paul.

Continued from page 1

the Green Party believes that “much more gets accomplished when hyper-partisanship is taken out of politics and we look for areas of commonality,” according to newly-appointed Green Party Leader Annamie Paul.

The pandemic has made cooperation and collaboration between political parties is even more necessary than it was before, said Ms. Paul in an interview with *The Hill Times* on Oct. 7. “We believe that much more gets accomplished when hyper-partisanship is taken out of politics and we look for areas of commonality,” said Ms. Paul. “Wherever possible, that’s going to be where we are working towards and supporting.”

“The job of a party like ours, as an opposition party, in a period of pandemic, is to cooperate and collaborate, but it’s also to hold the government to account and make sure that politics doesn’t enter into those kind of important decisions,” said Ms. Paul. “This is exactly the time that you need to have confidence that your political leadership is going to be making those types of decisions with one thing in mind, and that is what is best needed to save the lives of people.”

Ontario’s new COVID-19 cases have ramped up dramatically this week, as the province announced new confirmed cases will exceed 900, and prompted an emergency cabinet meeting from the prov-



**Political leaders:** Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Conservative Leader Erin O’Toole, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, and new Green Party Leader Annamie Paul. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

ince’s leaders to decide whether or not to return to a modified version of Stage 2 restrictions that were in place during May and June earlier this year.

In Quebec, as CBC has reported, health minister Christian Dubé announced on Oct. 8 that nearly all the municipalities between the Montreal region and the Quebec City area along the St. Lawrence river are now considered “red zones,” and that new measures will be soon enacted to combat the pandemic.

According to CTV, Quebec Premier François Legault reported 1,078 new cases of COVID-19 in the province on Thursday, bringing the total number of cases since the start of the pandemic to 82,992.

In British Columbia, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry also announced on Oct. 8 that 10,000 cases have been confirmed to date, and that 110 more cases of the disease have been confirmed.

“That is not going to be about the next election, that is not going to be about what focus groups say, but that is what’s going to

protect the most amount of people,” said Ms. Paul. “I’m the leader of a political party, but I’m also part of the greater community. People on our campaign team lost loved ones during this pandemic, I have people that are out of work in my family because of this pandemic, my son is not in school because of this, and my message would be that we are living this the same way that you are, and my concern is to make sure that we all get through this as intact as possible, and that no one, if we can help it, falls through the cracks and we’re going to keep calling the government to account to make sure that that doesn’t happen, and we’ll work with the other parties in the spirit that puts people first and that values human life and puts partisanship aside to make sure that their urgent needs are taken care of.”

When this is done, and Ms. Paul said she believes “it will eventually be done.”

“We will work with anyone who wants to build a more resilient society. When the next crisis hits, we aren’t thrown into such disarray and people know that

they will be taken care of, and that’s my personal commitment to them, and that’s something I hope all of the other leaders are committed to.”

As previously reported by *The Hill Times*, Ms. Paul’s next race is set for a byelection in Toronto-Centre on Oct. 26, a riding which was previously held by former finance minister Bill Morneau, who stepped down amid the fallout that continues with the controversy surrounding WE Charity.

## ‘Been a little bit of a retreat in the House of Commons’

Liberal MP Darren Fisher (Dartmouth-Cole Harbour, N.S.), who is currently in isolation following his return to the ‘Atlantic bubble’ after a trip to Ottawa, told *The Hill Times* that although we’re seeing a resurgence, which some might call “the second wave,” from day one, there’s been a significant level of cooperation between the provinces, territories and the federal government.”

In the early days of COVID, we saw “a very high level of cooperation of collaboration inside the House of Commons at the federal level,” says Liberal MP Darren Fisher.

“We saw unanimous support for a lot of the things that we rolled out, we saw a lot of collaboration with Dr. Tam and the public health officials in each province and territory, and something that I don’t think has existed in the past, was, regardless of political stripes, a real willingness to work together, and I’m quite proud of that.”

“There has been a little bit of a retreat in that in the House of Commons in the last little bit. I think that’s somewhat to be expected, but with something like COVID and this pandemic that’s scorched the world, it’s so important that we all put partisanship aside.”

Bloc Québécois MP Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, Que.), who is the party’s deputy house leader, told *The Hill Times* that there is always a fine balance

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between partisanship and collaboration.

“We’re always open to collaboration and we’ve proven it during the first wave, where we gave the government extra powers through the first wave and we were collaborative,” said Ms. Normandin. “But it doesn’t mean, on the other hand, that we have to rubber stamp everything—we still have to have a second balance in the House, and that’s the role of the opposition and I think we’re doing it quite well.”

Ms. Normandin also noted the importance of health transfers during this time, something which the Bloc has been outspoken about in the media and in the House.

“We spoke about that even prior to the pandemic,” said Ms. Normandin. “We were already thinking that about the fact that all provinces and Quebec needed a raise in the health transfers and it would have helped through the first wave, and it’s now even more urgent that we have unconditional health transfers through the second wave, and we’re really the only ones asking for that in the House.”

Ms. Normandin also said there’s a significant possibility that we have to go through a second lockdown, an opportunity where all parties must show leadership.

### At this time, ‘the nature of leadership demands a level of cooperation that is exceptional’

NDP MP Don Davies (Vancouver-Kingsway, B.C.), his party’s health critic, he said he “definitely thinks, in a time of global and national challenge, that the nature of leadership demands a level of cooperation that is exceptional.”



‘There is always a fine balance between partisanship and collaboration,’ says Bloc Québécois MP Christine Normandin. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

“To some degree, it’s incumbent upon leaders to put aside personal interests, partisan interests, to a large degree and focus on the common good in an extraordinary way,” said Mr. Davies. “On the other hand, [partisanship] is not a four-letter word, it’s not necessarily a bad thing—at it’s best, what it means is that we come from different perspectives.”



**Being prime minister in a global pandemic:** Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured in Ottawa on Oct. 1, 2020. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

“I think there must be a way, in that greater mélange of cooperation, for everybody, for all leaders to let down their guard enough that we can open to the best ideas from all perspectives,” said Mr. Davies. “I think we have to create portals of dialogue, and with that, there has to be a lot more cooperation. Our political system, in normal times, is not set up for that—it’s set up for conflict, so I think cooperation without dialogue is, I think, mythical.”

Mr. Davies also said he thought Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau Que.) should have invited former Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, Green Party Elizabeth May and the Bloc

need an unprecedented level of cooperation to match the unprecedented challenge before us.”

### ‘The Atlantic bubble is doing phenomenally well’

Different provinces are experiencing the second wave differently, according to Isaac Bogoch, who’s an expert in infectious disease at the University of Toronto.

“It’s clear that many parts of Canada are experiencing rising cases, it’s safe to say that this is the second wave, but of course we know that the different provinces are experiencing this differently.”

“The Atlantic bubble is doing phenomenally well, you can count the cases on one hand, and they certainly seem to have policy aligned with keeping their population safe, and it’s successful to date,” said Dr. Bogoch.

“It’s too soon to celebrate, but it looks like the rise in cases in British Columbia are starting to flatten out. But I think the two more heavily impacted provinces will be Ontario and Quebec, which is pretty obvious.”

“At the end of the day, what are we going to do to keep the second wave under control? We know how this virus is transmitted, and our policy should basically revolve around keeping community transmissions as low as possible.” Keeping indoor spaces safe. It sounds so simple, but obviously it’s very challenging. With Canadian winters, there’s a lot of time spent indoors, but if we really focus on keeping indoor spaces safe, we’ll be headed in the right direction.”

### ‘It’s not the time for division, it’s not the time for pointing fingers, it’s not the time for class warfare’

John Manley, former deputy prime minister of Canada, told *The Hill Times* that what is fundamentally important is the establishment of trust.

“When we’re going through a crisis like this—this may be the biggest one in my lifetime—the public has no patience for petty political games, name-calling and finger-pointing,” said Mr. Manley. “If there was ever a time that we need political leaders to get together, this is it.”

“When London was being bombed in the Blitz, they had a unity government—Churchill brought the opposition into his government,” said Mr. Manley. “This isn’t the time for playing games.”

“This isn’t the time for a lot of shots being taken back and

press a common vision and to get people on side – not by nagging them, but by appealing to their common purpose.”

Mr. Manley said that it was his sense that the population of Canada is getting fatigued of the COVID-19 situation and “bad news,” and that where we need to go is a place where we’re not quite ready to be.

“People have to be freed up to carry on, more or less, as normal, while wearing masks, washing and social distancing, buttressed by easily-accessible and rapid testing capabilities,” said Mr. Manley. “Maybe God will send



‘To some degree, it’s incumbent upon leaders to put aside personal interests, partisan interests, to a large degree and focus on the common good in an extraordinary way,’ says NDP MP Don Davies. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

forth—and the prime minister’s biggest job in this, in addition to leading the government, is to try and bring Canadians together. It’s not the time for division, it’s not the time for pointing fingers, it’s not the time for class warfare, it’s none of those things.”

“We’re all in this together—I think the biggest obligation in a crisis is unifying, trying to ex-

us a vaccine and we’ll all take it and we’ll be back in business, but in the meantime, you have to have testing and it’s got to be quick and responsive to people’s needs.”

“The necessity to line up for five hours and wait for five days is just not going to cut it.”

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*The Hill Times*



## Opinion



Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, pictured in Ottawa on Aug. 18, 2020. With a projected federal budget deficit in the range of \$350-billion in the current fiscal year, there are understandable worries over whether we are pushing ourselves over a fiscal cliff. While that is always a risk, the evidence suggests the answer is 'no,' so long as we make sure that we are careful in how we spend and what we spend, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

# Forget the deficit doomsters, the IMF's got it right

We need productive public investment now for a clean and smart post-pandemic economy if we are to avoid long-term unemployment and economic stagnation.



David Crane

*Canada & the 21st Century*

**T**ORONTO—With a projected federal budget deficit in the range of \$350-billion in the current fiscal year, there are understandable worries over whether we are pushing ourselves over a fiscal cliff.

While that is always a risk, the evidence suggests the answer is “no,” so long as we make sure that we are careful in how we spend and what we spend. Rather, our biggest challenge is to get the economy back on a growth path that will create good jobs,

put the economy on a productive future footing, and generate growth in incomes and profits. This means more public spending now.

This will help provide a stronger tax base to help keep the debt in an affordable zone and bring the debt down in the future. What we will need is a credible fiscal monitor to track our fiscal health. We will, to be sure, also have to face the prospect of tax increases once the economy is well-positioned for growth. But it will be a small price to pay for averting a major health crisis, keeping families and businesses afloat during the lockdown, and making the investments for future growth and jobs.

In the meantime, it will take more public spending to get us into the post-pandemic and low-carbon world.

The question is what kind of spending? In its latest Fiscal Monitor, the International Monetary Fund argues that at the present time, government policy should focus less on debt, with richer countries such as Canada boosting its spending on public investment to get the world back on a sustainable growth path in the post-pandemic economy. With near-zero interest rates and expectations of continued low inflation, “we can easily borrow to finance an investment scale-up,” the IMF contends.

Public investment covers a wide arena—from hospitals and schools, public transit, affordable housing, public research and development, and clean energy, to smart grids, digital infrastructure for rural communities, water sanitation and clean

water projects, roads and highways, rail networks, and high-speed broadband.

All these things can contribute to productive growth and taxable returns, the IMF says. It calculates that increasing public investment by one per cent of GDP would likely increase GDP by more than two per cent after two years. In other words, there’s a clear pay-off.

Public investment now is more timely, not only because of the dampening effect of COVID-19 on business investment, but also because there is a large and growing pool of underused savings that can be tapped.

This means that public investment can have a more powerful impact than at normal times, the IMF argues. “Public investment and its crowding-in effects on private investment could mitigate secular stagnation and the savings glut, which predate the onset of COVID-19,” it says.

This savings glut—capital that could be put to productive work—has been “exacerbated by the crisis, since uncertainty about the course of the pandemic has further dampened private investment and spurred higher levels of precautionary savings.” But “public investment can encourage investment from businesses that might otherwise postpone their hiring and investment plans.”

One of the fast ways in which public investment can foster new jobs and economic activity is by boosting spending on infrastructure maintenance. This kind of spending does not lead to public ribbon-cutting ceremonies and is often underfunded as a result. But as the IMF argues, maintenance spending can be started quickly, consists of large numbers of relatively small projects spread across the country, and can have major economic benefits, including putting people to work quickly—road and highway repairs are just one example—as well as alleviating the wear of assets and extending the life of infrastructure investments.

The IMF urges as well that countries should review and reprioritize active projects—such as bringing high-speed digital access to rural and remote communities—while creating and maintaining a pipeline of projects that can be delivered within the

next 24 months, and starting to plan for the new development projects stemming from the pandemic crisis.

A second IMF report, its latest World Economic Outlook, includes an extraordinarily urgent warning on the need to move swiftly in dealing with climate change—but it also argues that a much stronger climate policy could play an important role in restoring economic growth—and jobs—for a post-pandemic economy.

“Without further action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the planet is on course to reach temperatures not seen in millions of years, with potentially catastrophic implications,” the IMF warns.

But, more positively, it also finds that “a mix of carbon pricing and an initial green stimulus would help with the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis in the near term while putting the global economy on a sustainable growth path at moderate transitional costs.” The needed fiscal stimulus to get us back on a post-pandemic growth path “can be an opportunity to boost green and resilient public infrastructure.” A green fiscal stimulus could do much to help steer Canada towards its 2050 net zero emissions promise by boosting investment now in the low-carbon economy.

The critical challenge is to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, which is essential to avoid “reaching climate tipping points and imposing severe stress on natural and socioeconomic systems,” the IMF warns. The Trudeau government has said it is committed to this goal but there is no strategy yet on how it would be done and, in the meantime, it is still actively promoting expanded fossil fuel production.

While the chorus of deficit doomsters is likely to rise over the coming year, the IMF has got it right. We need productive public investment now for a clean and smart post-pandemic economy if we are to avoid long-term unemployment and economic stagnation, with a declining tax base, while at the same time averting a climate crisis whose social and economic costs would far exceed those of the current pandemic.

David Crane can be reached at [crane@interlog.com](mailto:crane@interlog.com).

*The Hill Times*





Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and New Democratic Party Leader Jagmeet Singh are unlikely to strike a formal coalition, say some politicians, but the recent deal they reached has injected some stability for the minority Parliament, according to Liberal MP John McKay. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

# NDP's openness to backing Liberals for full mandate likely won't be reciprocated, say politicians

'The Liberals will, at some point, have their ducks in order,' says Liberal strategist Elliot Hughes. 'They'll set things up so the NDP is unable to support an initiative, and maybe not meet a demand.'

BY BEATRICE PAEZ

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh's openness to supporting the Liberal government over the course of its mandate will likely not be reciprocated in the long term, say strategists, arguing that, when certain conditions are in alignment, the Liberals may be the ones to orchestrate the demise of the minority Parliament.

The government has survived two tests of confidence since Parliament returned from its mid-August suspension, including the vote on the Throne Speech on Oct. 6 that required the support of the NDP. Mr. Singh's (Burnaby South, B.C.) vote was conditioned on the government's willingness to accede to his push to ensure affected workers' pandemic benefits wouldn't be reduced and his

request for two legislated weeks of paid sick leave.

In an interview with *HuffPost Canada's Follow-Up* podcast on Sept. 25, Mr. Singh said the ultimate test for him, in deciding whether to offer up his caucus' 24 votes, is if it translates into support for people. "For me, it's not about finding a reason to tear down government. I want to use my position to get the help to people. And sometimes, that means we have to go to an election. But I don't want that," he told *HuffPost Canada*.

NDP Whip Rachel Blaney (North Island-Powell River, B.C.) said the NDP's support is far from unconditional. "For the NDP, we will work bill by bill," she said of Mr. Singh's comments. "It's not an offer for three years."

Echoing Mr. Singh's comments, Ms. Blaney said the government has a willing partner, provided that the policies it puts forward benefits Canadians. She added the pandemic, which has claimed more than 9,000 lives in Canada alone, has underscored that "political posturing" isn't what's needed.

Karl Bélanger, president of Traxxion Stratégies and former NDP national director, said it serves Mr. Singh's party well if it's seen by Canadians as co-operative.

"You're trying to show that you're being proactive and ready to get down to work. That's the signal the NDP is sending, so therefore, the responsibility is not

solely on his back if the government were to fall," he said.

At the same time, Mr. Bélanger added, "it wouldn't take much for the government to fall," given the "unprecedented measures" it's had to usher in to prevent a economy from crashing due to the restrictive lockdown measures that swept much of the country in the spring.



NDP Whip Rachel Blaney says her party's support is not unconditional. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Though it's impossible to predict which issue will bring the minority Parliament down, Mr. Bélanger said it's likely the Liberals would want to hold elections when conditions are favourable. "If the timing is right, and the polling is right, the Liberals will choose to go down on their own terms."

Elliot Hughes, senior adviser at Summa Strategies and former aide to ex-finance minister Bill Morneau, agreed. "The Liberals will, at some point, have their ducks in order," he said. "They'll set things up so the NDP is unable to support an initiative, and maybe not meet a demand."

Mr. Hughes said the Liberals will need time to figure out when to ideally hold the next election and which policies to campaign on, to hone in on the messaging, to ensure they have a slate of electable candidates, and to have enough money in the coffers. "All that takes time, energy, and effort. In normal times, it's hard. It's going to be even harder," he said. "One benefit you have, though, is controlling the timing and agenda."

He noted that having more time is also in the NDP's favour, given that its finances have been in rough shape, and the pandemic has dampened efforts to improve its financial standing.

Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.) said his party can use this time to figure out a "coherent and rational way" to respond to the "twin challenges" of the pandemic and an ailing economy.

"I don't think [the situation] is necessarily predictable," he said of the minority Parliament. "Having said that, I think there's an element of stability that's developed. It'll take us through the balance of this year and into the next quarter."

Beyond the first quarter of next year, Mr. McKay said, it's anyone's guess whether election speculation will heat up again.

The next general election must take place on or before Oct. 16, 2023.

If an election were to be held amid the pandemic, Elections Canada on Oct. 6, formally recommended that the polling day, usually a Monday, be held over a weekend and extended to two days. It's also looking at how to administer the vote at long-term care facilities to make it easier for seniors and people with disabilities to vote while mitigating the spread of the vi-

but it's a completely different level of effort."

Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and British Columbia's governments all moved to hold elections amid the pandemic, but the effort of holding a provincial election is smaller in scale. New Brunswick's vote resulted in a majority for Progressive Conservative Premier Blaine Higgs, while B.C.'s is set for Oct. 24 and Saskatchewan follows two days later.

## 'Unnecessary drama'

The Liberals' 2019 Throne Speech was peppered with appeals for dialogue and co-operation, reflecting the fact that voters had resoundingly chosen to diminish their majority standing.

Asked how the Liberals have adjusted to their reduced position, Mr. Bélanger said it hasn't always shown restraint, pointing to the government's attempt to grant itself "excessive powers" to tax and spend unfettered amid the pandemic for up to 21 months. Opposition parties balked at the proposition when the government tried to seek consent from Parliament in March, forcing it to retreat and to reduce the timeframe of its request. (It has temporary emergency-spending powers until December.)

"They're basically trying to govern as if they were a majority—and that creates unnecessary drama," said Mr. Bélanger.

Former NDP MP Peggy Nash, who now chairs an advisory committee at Ryerson University's Centre for Labour Management Relations, said the Liberals have demonstrated more willingness to consult with other parties.

"What we've seen since the Liberals have been in a minority is greater consultation. That's partly because of the pandemic," she said, adding "a lot of goodwill" has been achieved throughout the crisis. "I'm someone who thinks a minority Parliament is good for democracy. It forces governments to dialogue and negotiate. If they get a majority of the seats, they basically call all the shots."

Ms. Nash said the NDP is in a better position working with a Liberal minority, because there are many areas of alignment, rather than under a Conservative minority. "It's how we ended up with a majority of social programs we enjoy today," she said, alluding to how the Pearson government, with support from Tommy Douglas, ushered in national health care in the 1960s.

She pointed to "concrete gains" the NDP was able to secure in exchange for its support for the speech, saying that consultation led the Liberals to agree to maintain pandemic-relief support for workers facing unemployment at \$500 per week, rather than a slimmed-down version of \$400 per week under the Canada Recovery Benefit.

While there are areas of agreement between the two, Ms. Nash said it's unlikely that a formal coalition will be struck. "It keeps [the Liberals] in the driver's seat and gives them the flexibility," she said. "They'll be New Democrats when they need to, and Conservatives when they feel the winds are in their favour."

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rus. The agency's Chief Electoral Officer Stéphane Perrault has asked Parliament to "act swiftly" in considering the measures proposed.

"The government has made it clear they're in no rush to go to the polls, for a variety of reasons," said Mr. Hughes. "That hasn't stopped provincial governments,



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## Opinion

# Majority of Canadians support our natural gas and oil sector, says CAPP



CAPP recently published a Vision for Canada's Recovery to outline the natural gas and oil industry's role in helping Canada recover from COVID-19. This includes a discussion about policies needed to encourage the growth of a strong natural gas and oil sector—one that can help advance the federal government's objectives related to both Indigenous reconciliation and climate change, writes Tim McMillan. *The Hill Times* file photograph by Jake Wright

Canadians want natural gas and oil to be part of our economic recovery. The recent Ipsos poll showed 63 per cent of Canadians believe the natural gas and oil industry should be encouraged to grow if it has a plan to fight climate change, says Tim McMillan.



Tim McMillan

## Opinion

**C**ALGARY—The majority of Canadians support our natural gas and oil sector, and believe that now, more than ever, support for the industry is essential as it is needed to kick-start our economy. That's from a recent country-wide poll conducted by Ipsos.

Yet, Environmental Defence has once again peppered the natural gas and oil industry with accusations; this time, questioning the industry's commitment to fighting climate change. This isn't the first time Environmental Defence has targeted the energy sector. One of its campaigns against the industry stated specific objectives of raising the negatives, increasing costs and

stopping infrastructure. This only serves to drive investors away from Canadian industries, which are essential to reviving our economy and creating jobs across the country.

Canadians want natural gas and oil to be part of our economic recovery. The recent Ipsos poll showed 63 per cent of Canadians believe the natural gas and oil industry should be encouraged to grow if it has a plan to fight climate change.

And yes, the industry *does* have a plan, and is actively investing in and creating real action on climate change. This is the story anti-industry groups won't tell you.

Innovation and new technologies are key to addressing climate change, and Canada is becoming a leader in this space.

Innovations in liquefied natural gas (LNG) development mean that Canadian LNG will be among the lowest-emissions in the world.

The oilsands industry (through Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance—COSIA) has invested about \$1.5-billion developing and sharing more than 1,000 distinct environmental technologies.

The NRG COSIA Carbon XPRIZE, a competition currently underway, challenges international teams to convert carbon dioxide into valuable products—incentivizing and accelerating new and impactful technologies to address CO2 emissions.

Canadian natural gas and oil producers are global leaders in environmental, social and governance performance—and leaders in clean technology innovation. Of all clean technology investment made in Canada, 75 per cent comes from the natural gas and oil industry.

Since 2012, the biggest Canadian oil sands players have increased annual investment in research and development by approximately 150 per cent and consistently spend more on research and development per barrel than global oil and gas majors, according to a report by BMO Capital Markets.

Over the last decade, this amounts to about \$9.3-billion in innovation spending, and BMO suggests companies are now just at the cusp of demonstrating the full impact of innovation on environmental performance.

If Canada is serious about climate action, the natural gas and oil industry will play a vital role as it is the largest investor in clean technology in the country.

Environmental Defence is an organization that has campaigned against every major energy infrastructure project, including Keystone XL and the Trans Mountain Expansion Project. These projects create jobs for Canadians, support a supply chain that stretches across the country, and provide a path for growth of the Canadian energy sector.

Think of what happens if Canada's natural gas and oil industry disappears. Large-scale collaboration and innovation are lost. Production leaves Canada and goes to other places where emissions are higher and innovation is not a priority. There is no environmental benefit, and Canadians lose jobs while our economy loses one of its most productive industry sectors.

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers is an industry association proudly representing upstream producers who account for about 80 per cent of the natural gas and oil produced in Canada.

CAPP recently published a *Vision for Canada's Recovery* to outline the natural gas and oil industry's role in helping Canada recover from COVID-19. This includes a discussion about policies needed to encourage the growth of a strong natural gas and oil sector—one that can help advance the federal government's objectives related to both Indigenous reconciliation and climate change.

It's a vision all Canadians can get behind. Let's work together, plan for the future, and always stay informed.

Tim McMillan is president and CEO of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

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# HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

## O'Toole's OLO hires new regional advisers, speechwriter



Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole, pictured Sept. 9, 2020, with his chief of staff, Tausha Michaud, on their way to his first caucus meeting as leader. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

International Trade Minister Mary Ng has a new press secretary in her office, with Youmy Han recently replacing Ryan Nearing.

Conservative Party Leader Erin O'Toole is continuing to build his team, recently promoting Katie Hillman to serve as a new caucus press secretary, and naming a slate of new regional affairs advisers, among other moves.

Mr. O'Toole also recently tapped veteran staffer Steve Outhouse to serve as his deputy chief of staff. In this role, he'll be in charge of overseeing the Conservative research bureau, known as Conservative Caucus Services (CCS). Mr. Outhouse joins former CCS head Martin Bélanger as deputy chief of staff, with Tausha Michaud in place as chief of staff to Mr. O'Toole.



Steve Outhouse was named deputy chief of staff. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Mr. Outhouse recently ran Leslyn Lewis' campaign for Conservative leadership. A former Harper-era cabinet staffer, he's been busy as president of Intercede Communications since the 2015 election.

Mr. Outhouse is a former chief of staff to Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre as employment minister, and also previously ran then-fisheries minister Gail Shea's office, and served as communications director to then-health minister Leona Aglukkaq, amongst other past experience. A former pastor at Greenbelt Baptist Church, Mr. Outhouse previously ran former MP Pierre Lemieux's 2017 leadership campaign.

For her part, Ms. Hillman has been working in the official opposition leader's

office since 2017, previously as a caucus liaison and Atlantic regional affairs under then-leader Andrew Scheer. A former correspondence intern at Conservative Party headquarters, she has a bachelor's degree in political science and government from Cape Breton University, and while at the school, worked in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality's mayor's office.



Katie Hillman is now a caucus press secretary. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Ms. Hillman joins fellow caucus press secretaries Christopher Martin-Chan and Matthew Clancy, both of whom are holdovers from Mr. Scheer's team. As previously reported, Chelsea Tucker has been hired as press secretary to Mr. O'Toole.

Dianna Hann has joined the OLO as a communications co-ordinator. She's a former executive assistant to Ontario Premier Doug Ford and recently completed a diploma in digital marketing from McMaster University.



Dianna Hann is now a communications co-ordinator in the OLO. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Ms. Hann has a bachelor's degree in political studies and art history from Queen's University. Mélanie Paradis is director of communications in the OLO, with Kelsie Chiasson in place as associate director of communications.

Mr. O'Toole has hired a new speechwriter, Jordan Matte.

Mr. Matte was most recently advising Mr. O'Toole on policy in his Durham, Ont., MP's office. He has a bachelor's degree in

political science and Hispanic studies from McGill University, a master of public policy from Oxford, and a master of global affairs from Beijing's Tsinghua University through the Schwarzman Scholars Program, during which time he interned as an analyst with the Canada China Business Council. Mr. Matte is also a former government and community relations adviser with Via Rail Canada.

"Jordan's experience in China has strongly informed his Conservative political views on the dangers of Communism and his desire to stand up for Canada," Ms. Chiasson told *Hill Climbers*.



Angie Zinck is a new Atlantic regional affairs adviser to Erin O'Toole. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Four new regional advisers also recently joined the OLO: Angie Zinck, who's covering the Atlantic; Daniel Muys, who's covering Ontario; Arundeeep Singh Sandhu, who's covering Alberta; and James Mitchell, who's covering

Ms. Zinck is a former director of communications and issues management for the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia and previously worked as a political staffer at the provincial legislature. She was most recently director of communications and outreach for 211 Nova Scotia, a helpline funded by the provincial government.

A former staffer to Conservative MP David Sweet,

who represents Flamborough-Glanbrook, Ont., Mr. Muys has a background in communications and public relations, including as a former senior marketing communications adviser with TransCanada and as director of public relations with Quarry Integrated Communications and Adculture Group before that. His LinkedIn profile also indicates he worked as a public affairs associate for Monsanto Canada from 1995 to 1997.



Arundeeep Singh Sandhu is a regional adviser for Alberta. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Conservative leadership campaign.

Mr. Mitchell was a B.C. regional organizer for Mr. Toole's leadership campaign, having done the same for his 2017 bid. In 2018, he was campaign manager for Mike Little's ultimately unsuccessful mayoral bid in North Vancouver, B.C., and that year also advised now-Burnaby, B.C. mayor Mike Hurley's successful campaign. Mr. Mitchell is also a former communications adviser for Seaspan and for the University of British Columbia's Institute for Veterans Education and Transition, and a former public affairs adviser to the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, as noted on his LinkedIn profile.

On the flip side, recent OLO staff departures include that of CCS associate director Brad Davey and special adviser for strate-

gic communications David Murray.

A longtime Conservative research office staffer, Mr. Davey was manager of caucus services before getting promoted to associate director of the CCS in December 2019. Before then, he was a caucus liaison and Ontario regional affairs adviser.

Mr. Murray first joined the OLO in 2017 after doing analytics for Mr. Scheer's leadership bid. He was a pollster for the Conservative Party during the 2019 election.

### Minister Ng has a new press secretary

Small Business, Export Promotion, and International Trade Minister Mary Ng recently promoted a new press secretary in her office, with Youmy Han replacing Ryan Nearing in the role.



Youmy Han officially took over as press secretary to Mary Ng on Oct. 9. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Ms. Han officially took over the role on Oct. 9, Mr. Nearing's last day on the Hill.

She's been working in Ms. Ng's office since January, previously as a special assistant for Western and Northern regional affairs. Before then, Ms. Han was

a constituency assistant in Digital Government Minister Joyce Murray's office as the Liberal MP for Vancouver Quadra, B.C. She's also a former field organizer for the federal Liberals in B.C. and has a bachelor's degree in international relations and history from the University of British Columbia.

A former assistant to Liberal MP Darrell Samson, Mr. Nearing went on to work as a communications assistant in the Liberal research bureau, and in the fall of 2018 became a special assistant for communications and Atlantic regional affairs to Ms. Ng as small business and export promotion minister. He was promoted to press secretary (keeping his Atlantic adviser duties) in January, after running Mr. Samson's successful 2019 re-election campaign in Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook, N.S.

Senior communications adviser Laurel Sallie has also left Ms. Ng's office. A former assistant to Ms. Ng as the Liberal MP for Markham-Thornhill, Ont., she joined her ministerial office in 2018 as a special assistant for communications.

Francis Chechile is a new addition to Ms. Ng's team, starting as a special assistant for social media as of last week. Before then, he'd been an assistant to Quebec Liberal MP Anju Dhillon.

Eleanore Catenaro is director of communications to Ms. Ng, working under chief of staff Jason Easton.

In more belated news, Sandenga Yeba joined Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau's office as a senior policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser in July.



Sandenga Yeba is a senior policy and Quebec adviser to Marie-Claude Bibeau. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

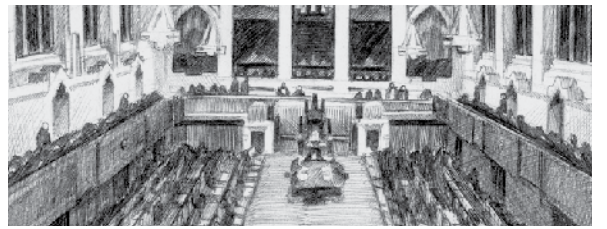
He's a former economic and commercial development adviser to Montreal mayor Valérie Plante and an ex-adviser to Dominique Anglade while she was Quebec deputy premier and minister of economic development. Mr. Yeba is also a former co-ordinator with Montreal International.

Jérémy Gauthier is director of policy to Ms. Bibeau, and also currently oversees policy advisers Pearson Crony-Clark and Hilary Peirce. Alison Porter is chief of staff to the minister.

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# Parliamentary Calendar



## MONDAY, OCT. 12

**House Sitting**—The House of Commons is sitting in a hybrid format right now during the pandemic, with most MPs connecting remotely. But the House is scheduled to take a one-week break, Oct. 12-16, and will then sit again Oct. 19-Nov. 6. It will then take another one-week break, Nov. 9-13, and is then scheduled to sit every weekday from Nov. 16-Dec. 11, and that's it for 2020.

## WEDNESDAY, OCT. 14

**Lessons From the Frontlines of Democracy**—Ryerson University's Democracy Forum hosts a webinar: "Lessons from the frontlines of democracy: how to run an inclusive voter engagement campaign?" As political polarization and authoritarian regimes threaten core democratic principles in established and emerging democracies around the world, PhD candidate Semra Sevi (Université de Montréal), Kojo Dampfey (Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion), and Doha Suliman (Canadian Muslim Vote) will discuss the challenges and opportunities for building a vibrant and inclusive democracy in a Canadian context. Wednesday, Oct. 14, from 1-2:30 p.m. Visit <https://www.engagedemocracy.ca/democracydialogues-canadianvotesummit> for more information.

**Munk Dialogues**—On Wednesday, Oct. 14, at 8 p.m. EDT, the Munk Dialogues series will feature dialogue with Robert Reich, former U.S. labour secretary, economic inequality activist, and filmmaker, on how to meet the once-in-a-generation societal challenges presented by COVID-19 and its shakeout of the global economy. The Munk Dialogues will be available live and on-demand on the free CBC Gem streaming service ([gem.cbc.ca](http://gem.cbc.ca)) and on the Munk Debates website ([www.munkdebates.com/dialogues](http://www.munkdebates.com/dialogues)).

## THURSDAY, OCT. 15

**Strengthening Ties of the Global Francophonie**—The Montreal Council on Foreign Relations hosts a webinar on "Strengthening Ties of the Global Francophonie" featuring Catherine Cano, administrator, Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. This online event takes place Thursday, Oct. 15 from noon to 12:30 p.m. Register online at [corim.qc.ca](http://corim.qc.ca).

**Racism in Canadian institutions**—Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Digital Government Greg Fergus will take part in a French-language webinar, "Le racisme dans les institutions canadiennes," (Racism in Canadian institutions). He will be joined by former governor general Michaëlle Jean and Daniella Ingabire with the University of Ottawa. This online event takes place on Thursday, Oct. 15, from 4-5 p.m. Register via Eventbrite.

**PPF Testimonial Dinner and Awards**—The Public Policy Forum's Honour Roll is going virtual. The PPF Honour Roll virtual sessions with our 2020 Testimonial Dinner & Awards will be held from 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. which includes networking sessions. Join us virtually on Thursday Oct. 15 and Thursday Oct. 22 as we celebrate Elyse Allan, Sen. Peter Harder, Anne McLellan and Sen. Murray Sinclair and their achievements. Rob Russo, formerly with CBC will be receiving the Hyman Solomon journalism award. Data scientist, AI literacy expert and author, Shingai Manjengwa, is the recipient of the Emerging Leader Award. The 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Testimonial Dinner and Awards honours Canadians who have made their mark on business, policy and leadership. They will take their place among a cohort of other stellar Canadians who we've honoured over the last 33 years, people who have dedicated themselves to making Canada a better place through policy leadership and public service.

**Challenging Canada's \$19-Billion Warplane Purchase**—Join a webinar with Green MP Paul Manly, NDP MP Leah Gazan, and researcher & activist Tamara Lorincz on Oct. 15 about the social, ecological and economic impact of Canada's plan to purchase new fighter jets. Are 88

## Trade Minister Ng to speak at virtual event hosted by Montreal Council on Foreign Relations on Nov. 2



Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade Mary Ng (Markham-Thornhill, Ont.) will deliver remarks at a virtual event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Monday, Nov. 2, from 12-12:30 p.m. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Green MP Paul Manly, NDP MP Leah Gazan, pictured left, and researcher & activist Tamara Lorincz on Oct. 15 about the social, ecological and economic impact of Canada's plan to purchase new fighter jets. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

more information: [www.foreignpolicy.ca](http://www.foreignpolicy.ca)

## SUNDAY, OCT. 18

**War: How Conflict Shaped Us with Margaret MacMillan**—Margaret MacMillan shares her insights into the very nature of war—from the ancient Greeks to modern times—with CBC's Adrian Harewood. In her sweeping new book, international bestselling author and historian MacMillan analyzes the tangled history of war and society and our complicated feelings towards it and towards those who fight. It explores the ways in which changes in society have affected

the nature of war and how in turn wars have changed the societies that fight them, including the ways in which women have been both participants in and the objects of war. The free, pre-recorded event is Sunday, Oct. 18, at 2 p.m. RSVP at [writersfestival.org](http://writersfestival.org).

## WEDNESDAY, OCT. 21

**Munk Dialogues**—On Wednesday, Oct. 21, at 8 pm EDT, the Munk Dialogues series will feature dialogue with Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of U.S. House of Representatives and bestselling author, on the legacy of U.S. President Donald

Trump's first term as president, and the future of U.S. politics, two weeks out from November's vote. The Munk Dialogues will be available live and on-demand on the free CBC Gem streaming service ([gem.cbc.ca](http://gem.cbc.ca)) and on the Munk Debates website ([www.munkdebates.com/dialogues](http://www.munkdebates.com/dialogues)).

## SATURDAY, OCT. 24

**B.C. Election**—On Sept. 21, B.C. Premier John Horgan called a snap election for his province, to be held on Oct. 24.

## MONDAY, OCT. 26

**Voting Day for Toronto Byelections**—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced on Sept. 18 that byelections to fill two previously Liberal-held ridings—Toronto Centre, Ont., and York Centre, Ont., won by Bill Morneau and Michael Levitt, respectively, in 2019—will be held today.

## WEDNESDAY, OCT. 28

**Munk Dialogues**—On Wednesday, Oct. 28, at 8 pm EDT, the Munk Dialogues series will feature dialogue with James Carville, U.S. Democratic Party stalwart, political strategist, and bestselling author, on the likely outcomes of the Nov. 3 U.S. election, one week out from this high-stakes global event. The Munk Dialogues will be available live and on-demand on the free CBC Gem streaming service ([gem.cbc.ca](http://gem.cbc.ca)) and on the Munk Debates website ([www.munkdebates.com/dialogues](http://www.munkdebates.com/dialogues)).

## MONDAY, NOV. 2

**Trade Minister speaks to Montreal Audience**—Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade Mary Ng (Markham-Thornhill, Ont.) will deliver remarks at a virtual event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Monday, Nov. 2, from 12-12:30 p.m. Register online by Oct. 30 at 5 p.m.

## TUESDAY, NOV. 3

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

## FRIDAY, NOV. 13

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

## TUESDAY, JAN. 12, 2021

**65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference**—One of the largest annual gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians will take place in August 2021 at the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) hosted by the CPA Canada Region in Halifax. The annual flagship event will bring together over 500 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth for this unique conference and networking opportunity. The conference will be hosted by the CPA President (2019-2021), Hon. Anthony Rota, MP, Speaker of the House of Commons. All eligible CPA Branches will be contacted with further information and invitations.

*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](mailto:news@hilltimes.com) by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper. We can't guarantee inclusion of every event, but we will definitely do our best. Events can be updated daily online, too.*  
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