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THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-SECOND YEAR, NO. 1780

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020 \$5.00

News

Liberal MPs expect Biden to revive 'mature, working relationship' with Canada after four years of 'chaotic' Trump, and Sgro slams Trump's lack of concession: 'democracy has spoken'

BY ABBAS RANA

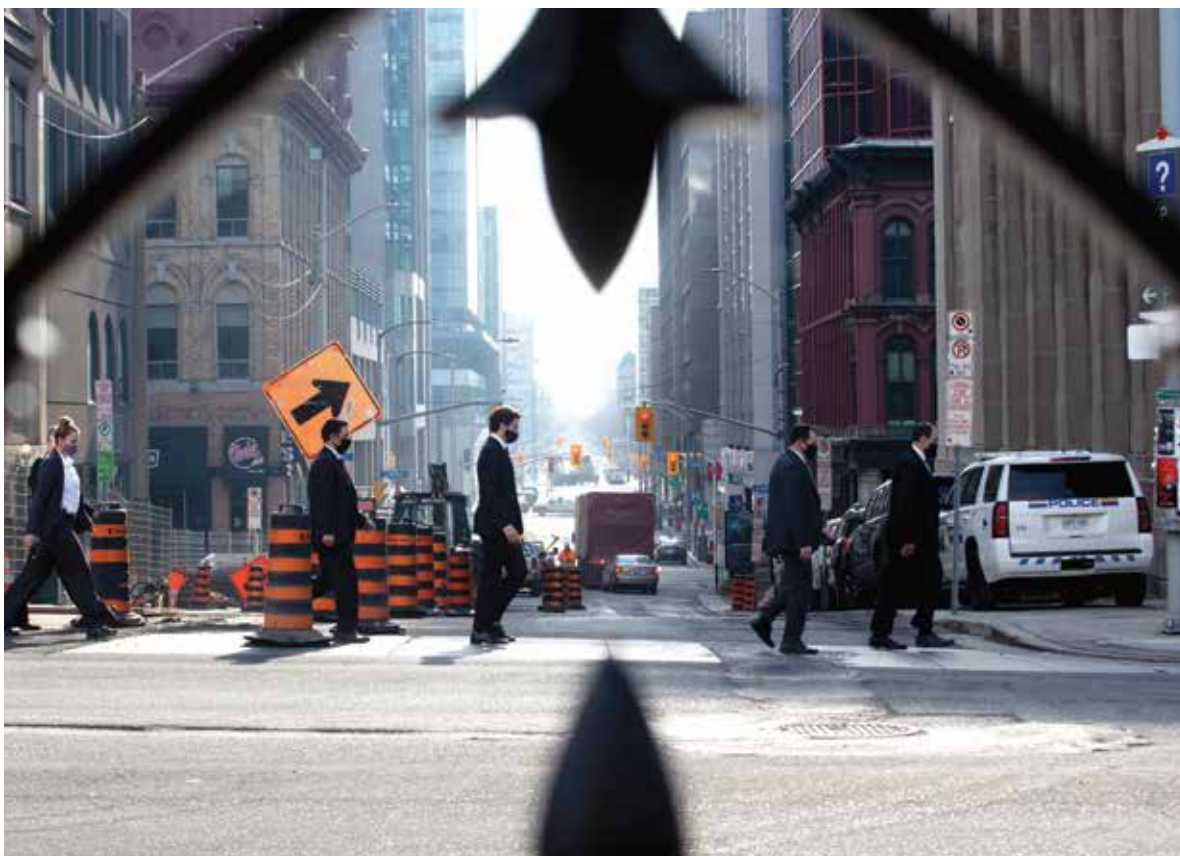
Incoming U.S. Democratic president-elect Joe Biden is expected to revive a "predictable" and "mature relationship" between Canada and the U.S., and will be a stark contrast to outgoing U.S. Republican President Donald Trump, who still won't concede he lost the presidential election and who over the last four years shocked and threatened allies around the world, including Canada, with his "chaotic" leadership style, say some seasoned Liberal MPs.

"I think that we will replace a chaotic regime with a working partnership where there will be disagreements, but like civilized people, disagreements will be worked out," said eight-term Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.), chair of the powerful House Public Safety and National Security Committee, in an interview with

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News

'A national emergency requires a coordinated, national plan': politicians, pollsters and top docs increase calls for coordinated federal-provincial-municipal response to COVID-19 crisis



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Nov. 9, 2020, along with his security detail on the way to a press conference in the Sir John A. Macdonald Building on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Six weeks out from the holiday season and following the worst week of the 'second wave' of

COVID-19 in Canada that's seen skyrocketing new case numbers in many provinces across the country, the NDP's health critic Don Davies says what the country needs right

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News

Canadian campaign strategists break down lessons from U.S. election

BY PETER MAZEREUEW

Hosting drive-in rallies, getting out the vote early, and downplaying policy platforms are some of the lessons Canada's federal parties can learn from this month's U.S. election, say Canadian political strategists who have helped to lead federal campaigns. U.S. president-elect Joe Biden bested incumbent U.S. President

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News

'They've been very interested in our ideas': what experts expect from feds' climate change bill

BY PETER MAZEREUEW

Green policy experts say they do not expect the government's upcoming climate change bill to include specific carbon emission targets for each step of the way towards a net-zero economy in 2050—and that's how it should be.

Despite promises to make the bill "legally-binding," however,

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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Palak Mangat

‘This is a national crisis, not a series of provincial pandemics,’ says columnist Gilmore, urging PM to take ‘national response’



The name is Gilmore: Scott Gilmore, a columnist with *Maclean's* magazine, is among those who think Ottawa needs to step in and carry out a 'national response' to the pandemic, instead of 'scolding premiers from the sidelines.' Photograph courtesy of Scott Gilmore

Recent high infection rates of COVID across Ontario and across parts of the country sparked calls for a “national response” last week for Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** to “stop scolding premiers from the sidelines.”

Maclean's columnist and entrepreneur **Scott Gilmore** wrote in a Nov. 10 piece that Mr. Trudeau “mostly side-stepped responsibility and decided 10 different provincial premiers should manage a national pandemic.”

“They in turn passed on responsibility to mayors and local health authorities. The result has been incompetence, chaos, and death,” he added.

Mr. Gilmore's piece was published the same day that Mr. Trudeau implored premiers and mayors “to please do the right thing, act now to protect public health.” His government has repeatedly urged Canadians to follow their local public health guidelines, which have varied across the country.

Mr. Trudeau added that “if [premiers] think something is missing in the support we're offering your citizens, tell us. We will work with you.” His comments came shortly before Ontario Premier **Doug Ford** came un-

der fire for his management of the pandemic. Ontario reported 1,368 new cases on Nov. 10, a figure that jumped the following day to 1,575 cases.

The Toronto Star reported on Nov. 11 that Mr. Ford's government ignored its own public health agency's advice when it announced its new colour-coded system to guide restrictions. Mr. Ford defended the plan, saying his cabinet signed off on what was ultimately brought forward by his province's chief medical officer of health, **David Williams**.

He also slammed the idea of the feds invoking the federal Emergencies Act, which would deem the pandemic a “public welfare emergency” and allow it powers to help curb the spread. Mr. Ford said it would be akin to “the nanny state telling us what to do.”

Hill + Knowlton hires former Harper staffer, McMillan Vantage hires former Trudeau PMO aide

Hill + Knowlton Strategies announced it had hired former **Stephen Harper** aide **Jason MacDonald**, who was his director of communications.

Mr. MacDonald also worked for then-aboriginal affairs minister **Bernard Valcourt** and ran unsuccessfully in the provincial riding of Ottawa South for the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party in 2011.



Jason MacDonald, former Harper-era PMO staffer, was recently hired by H+K. *The Hill Times* file photograph by Jake Wright

According to his LinkedIn account, Mr. MacDonald was a senior vice-president of corporate communications with the firm from March 2015 to January 2018. He then served with the Canadian

Chamber of Commerce for just under two years, and is the founder of communications agency Bailey & Bedford.

He will now guide the firm's corporate communications and brand and reputation management.

“I'm excited to return to H+K, one of Canada's leading public relations and public affairs firms,” said Mr. MacDonald in a Nov. 12 release. “Corporate communications has never been more important than it is today with companies and organizations faced not only with the COVID-19 pandemic but also with seismic shifts related to sustainability and social justice.”

Over at McMillan Vantage, the team is welcoming **Amreet Kaur**, who served as a media relations aide in Mr. Trudeau's Prime Minister's Office for almost four years before leaving in February.

“Here, she'll bring to life communications plans, raising profile & managing risk. Lucky to have this proud Mississaugan on the team!” tweeted the firm. Ms. Kaur said she is “excited to start my new chapter with this all star team!”

During her time in the PMO, Ms. Kaur was one of four press secretaries but the only one focused specifically on multicultural communications and outreach. She arrived at the office after working for the Ontario Liberals at Queen's Park.

Former NDP MP returns to mayoral post

Former NDP MP **Georgina Jolibois**, who narrowly won the Desnethé—Missinippi—



Former NDP MP **Georgina Jolibois**, pictured in March 2018, is returning to the mayoral role for La Loche, Saskatchewan. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Churchill River, Sask., riding in 2015 over Liberal **Lawrence Joseph**, was elected mayor of La Loche, Sask., last week.

NDP Leader **Jagmeet Singh** tweeted his congratulations to Ms. Jolibois, who was unable to retain her federal seat in the 2019 vote when she lost it to Conservative MP **Gary Vidal**, who won with 42 per cent of the vote to her 28 per cent.

“Congratulations to my dear friend and former colleague @GeorginaNDP on being elected the Mayor of La Loche. The people of La Loche have chosen a strong and compassionate leader to champion their cause,” wrote Mr. Singh.

This is not Ms. Jolibois' first crack in the mayoral post. It's a return to her roots; before she came to Ottawa, she spent 12 years as mayor of La Loche, from 2003 to 2015.

U.S. Embassy ‘under new management’

Someone had a bit of fun at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa last week, after **Joe Biden** and his running mate, **Kamala Harris**, were finally declared the winners on Nov. 7, four days after the Nov. 3 vote.

A passerby in Ottawa snapped a photo of the site that had a cardboard sign wedged between its doors, reading “under new management,” much to the delight of some social media users.



A passerby noted the doors of the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa carried with it a note to visitors that it was ‘under new management’ after the U.S.' Nov. 3 vote. Photograph courtesy of Jamie Anderson's Twitter

“Ottawa's pretty quiet, but people are putting up funny signs at the US Embassy,” remarked one user, in response to another who wondered how the rest of Canada was reacting to the news.

“Toronto is noisily celebrating. Pretty sure Vancouver's 3pm rally will be replaced with a dance party. We're already teasing we bankrupted & evicted our Trump Tower months ago,” said another user.

The embassy houses the U.S. ambassador to Canada, a post that was last occupied by **Kelly Craft**, who departed last summer for her new duties as the U.S. ambassador to the UN.

Mr. Trump's new pick, **Aldona Wos**, has not yet been confirmed by the Senate, but given the election results, the new administration will usher in a new pick from Mr. Biden.

The image made its way onto Radio-Canada parliamentary correspondent **Christian Noël's** radar, who noted the “impromptu poster” should come with a disclaimer of “from January 20.”

Days after ballot counting, Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris claimed the president-elect and vice-president elect roles, respectively, in a Nov. 7 speech. They will replace incumbent U.S. President **Donald Trump** and Vice-President **Mike Pence**, who are set to remain in the White House until the January inauguration.

Mr. Trump has promised multiple legal challenges in wake of the Nov. 3 election and spent much of his time after election day baselessly alleging voter fraud. His remarks have called into question the possibility of not witnessing a peaceful transition of power come January.

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MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE
DU CANADA



The College of Family Physicians of Canada
is pleased to announce

Catherine Cervin, MD, CCFP, FCFP, MAEd
2020-2021 President

Dr. Cervin, from Sudbury, Ontario, brings a wealth of experience in family medicine practice, education, and leadership to her role as the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) President. She has been involved with the CFPC for many years including terms as Chair of the Board of Examinations and Certification, Chair of the Honours and Awards Committee, and Chair of the Foundation for Advancing Family Medicine. Dr. Cervin has served on the CFPC's Board of Directors since 2018.

We welcome Dr. Cervin to her new role!

Le Collège des médecins de famille du Canada
a le plaisir de présenter

Catherine Cervin, MD, CCFP, FCFP, MAEd
Présidente, 2020-2021

D^{re} Cervin, de Sudbury (Ontario), assumera le rôle de présidente du Collège des médecins de famille du Canada (CMFC), où elle mettra à profit sa riche expérience du leadership, de la pratique et de l'enseignement de la médecine de famille. Impliquée au sein du CMFC depuis de nombreuses années, elle a entre autres présidé le Bureau des examens et de la certification, le Comité des prix et bourses et la Fondation pour l'avancement de la médecine familiale. D^{re} Cervin siège au Conseil d'administration du CMFC depuis 2018.

Nous sommes ravis d'accueillir D^{re} Cervin dans ses nouvelles fonctions!

Across Canada,
we remember...

Partout au Canada,
nous nous souvenons...



FPAC Remembrance Day
wreaths were laid in these
forestry communities

L'APFC a déposé des couronnes
dans ces localités forestières
pour le jour du Souvenir

Williams Lake, BC | Prince George, BC
Kamloops, BC | Fort McMurray, AB | Meadow Lake, SK
The Pas, MB | Thunder Bay, ON | Espanola, ON
Lac St. Jean, QC | Nackawic, NB

From coast to coast,

FPAC marked the 75th Anniversary of the end of World War II and paid tribute to the Canadian Forestry Corps by laying wreaths across our nation.

We are proud to honour this historic event — and our Canadian forest communities for their role in helping restore world peace in the past and growing a greener future in the present.

D'un océan à l'autre,

L'APFC a souligné le 75^e anniversaire de la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale et rendu hommage au Corps forestier canadien en déposant des couronnes de fleurs dans tout le pays.

Nous sommes fiers de commémorer cet événement historique et d'honorer nos collectivités forestières canadiennes, qui ont contribué à restaurer la paix dans le monde dans le passé et qui contribuent aujourd'hui à un avenir plus vert.

Opinion



The outskirts of Iqaluit, pictured. The federal government, along with the Government of Nunavut, have taken steps recently to put a dent in infrastructure gaps in Iqaluit. Perhaps bogged down in bureaucracy, things are moving slowly. It seems nothing will be changed in time for Inuit children in kindergarten today: they will live their childhoods restricted by the lack of necessities, writes Rose LeMay. *Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia*

Infrastructure gaps for Inuit are critical

Iqaluit, which is a Canadian capital city, lacks stable electricity, its power is diesel-based and the oil has to be shipped in, and it doesn't have a stable water source. The next first ministers conference should be held here so premiers can see it for themselves.



Rose LeMay

Stories, Myths, and Truths

OTTAWA—Did you know that infrastructure gaps for Inuit are critical?

As a southerner, I have been honoured to travel to Nunavut numerous times to support Inuit capacity and leadership development. Just like every other southerner, I was wide-eyed and awestruck the first time. The Arctic has that effect on all newcomers. I also experienced an ironic warp of perspective: I was so overwhelmed with the landscape that I overlooked the inequities.

Iqaluit does have land and views and waterscapes and beauty. As a southerner, I realized quickly that Iqaluit doesn't have Starbucks

or a 24-hour Tim Hortons, traffic lights, Costco, Home Depot or pretty much any of the retail choices that southerners take for granted. I admit it is a southerner's perspective. It turns out that these things are simply niceties when one doesn't have necessities.

Let's consider something else missing in Iqaluit: stable electricity. It's a thing that the city goes dark at about 5 p.m. on some NHL game nights as everybody turns on their stoves at once to cook dinner. Another fun fact: Iqaluit power is diesel-based and the oil has to be shipped in. Iqaluit doesn't have a stable water source; part of the city is on piped-in water and the pipes routinely freeze up and crack, the rest of the city is on trucked-in water to residential houses.

Is the gap really that bad across Nunavut? Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Nunavut's Inuit political organization, recently released a report titled Nunavut's Infrastructure Gap: Executive Summary, and it basically shows that, yes, it's really that bad. Health infrastructure is perhaps about half of southern Canada (human resources, techni-



The city of Iqaluit, pictured June 17, 2011. *Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia*

cal equipment, service availability). Nunavut housing includes 41 per cent of homes that need major repair, whereas in southern Canada the estimate is seven per cent. Waste management is really just physical dumps on the pristine land, and there is no recycling.

There is no high-speed internet over 25 Mbps. Think about it. The most remote communities in Canada cannot access consistent video conferencing, image-heavy websites, or today's bandwidth-heavy online learning. There is no hardline connection to the south so the internet is carried over satellite, after blocked by snowstorms.

Some might argue that low-speed internet is not unknown in

rural Canada. That is true, but it certainly is not true in any other provincial/territorial capital, nor for a whole province or territory. Imagine if Edmonton suffered these infrastructure gaps.

Limited water, outdated waste management, aging infrastructure, horrible housing conditions, a health system, which is more easily measured by its gaps than its outcomes, no university close to home, overcrowded jails, high levels of food insecurity, and no dedicated marine rescue units at all. This is the life lived by our neighbours in Nunavut.

The federal government along with the Government of Nunavut have taken steps recently to put a

dent in infrastructure gaps. Perhaps bogged down in bureaucracy, things are moving slowly. It seems nothing will be changed in time for Inuit children in kindergarten today: they will live their childhoods restricted by the lack of necessities.

The Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. report gently names the colonial legacy of treating Inuit as wards of the state rather than citizens and partners, as an underlying contribution to these glaring gaps in infrastructure. Is this one of the reasons why investment, urgency, and action are all subdued for Inuit? The fact is that Indigenous communities simply don't get the attention that any other Canadian community receives, despite all the rhetoric.

Let's put it another way. If there was another provincial or territorial capital suffering these glaring gaps in infrastructure, it would be considered a serious issue at the next first ministers conference. Alberta becomes a "have-not" province? Quebec complains about its share?

Please. Have you been to Nunavut? Hold the next first ministers conference in Iqaluit, and then we can talk.

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

The Hill Times

How Google supports news

The business model for newspapers has evolved as the Internet has changed consumer behaviour. Readers used to turn to the classifieds and the Sunday paper for used car listings and to cut out grocery store coupons. Today, they rely on online marketplaces and loyalty card apps on their smartphones. This shift to digital has changed the underlying advertising business of newspapers.

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Richard Gingras
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News

House Justice Committee expected to vote on Bloc motion to study ‘political vetting’ of judicial candidates, says Bloc MP Fortin

Anyone who raises questions about the Liberal government’s judicial appointment process is either ‘ill informed’ or playing ‘shameless politics,’ says Liberal MP James Maloney.

BY ABBAS RANA

The House Justice Committee is expected to vote this month on a Bloc Québécois motion calling for a probe into “political vetting” of judicial candidates, and all opposition parties are saying they have a “favourable view” of the motion.

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, Bloc MP Rheel Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, Que.), vice chair of the House Justice Committee, said the committee is currently studying C-7, the assisted dying legislation, that will likely be completed by next week. After that, he said, the committee will examine his motion, and he will know before the end of this month if the study will be launched or not.

“Hopefully, we’ll be discussing about my motion in the Justice Committee before the end of November,” said Mr. Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, Que.), in an interview with *The Hill Times*.

The 12-member Commons Justice Committee consists of six Liberal MPs and six opposition MPs. There are four Conservatives, one NDP, and one Bloc MP on the committee. To get the motion passed, all opposition parties would have to vote together.

In the motion tabled on Nov. 3, Mr. Fortin called on the committee to examine the role of political interference in the judicial appointment process. The motion has also called for at least six meetings to study the issue and file a report with the House. The motion asks that Justice Minister David Lametti (LaSalle-Émard-Verdun, Que.) be called before the committee as a witness.

The motion states: “The committee undertake a study of the federal judicial appointment process and that it examine, in particular, the use of information about political activities, donations to political parties and the party affiliation of candidates; That, as part of its study, the committee invite the minister of justice to appear and any other witnesses it deems relevant; That the Committee dedicate at least six (6) meetings to this study and that it issue recommendations in the form of a report to the House.”

Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) Liberals revamped the judicial appointment process in 2016 by making appointments through an open application process, and only on the advice of Independent Advisory Committees. But *La Presse* reported on Oct. 31, based on internal documents obtained by the newspaper, that advice from senior Liberals and the information from the party database are still used in the vetting process of candidates. According to the story, Mathieu Bouchard, a former Quebec adviser to Mr. Trudeau, in the past made inquiries about the status of appointments of specific candidates with the Mr. Lametti’s office. The story alleged that he still informally advises Mr. Lametti’s office on the appointments.

Mr. Bouchard, now chief of staff to Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, Que.), was not available for an interview with *The Hill Times* last week. The *La Presse* story also mentioned that former Quebec Liberal MP Nicola Di Iorio offered a negative opinion about a potential candidate for the appointment, describing her as a “separatist.” Mr. Di Iorio did not respond to an interview request with *The Hill Times* last week.

According to the stories in *La Presse* and *Radio Canada*, Liberals seek feedback from their own MPs, cabinet ministers and staffers about these appointments. The *Globe and Mail* and other news organizations have also reported in the past that the Trudeau government uses Liberalist, a party database of donors, volunteers, and party members, and the Liberal Research Bureau to check if specific candidates have ties with the Liberal Party.

Based on internal emails, CBC reported last month that a senior former adviser to Mr. Lametti raised concerns about the PMO involvement in the judicial appointment process. François Landry, a political aide to Mr. Lametti, who worked directly on the judicial appointment process, wrote an email last year to chief of staff Rachel Doran warning her about the PMO involvement in the appointment process, adding that it has created a “potential for a scandal.”

“Need to talk about what PMO requires us to do prior to a judi-

cial appointment. It raises some concerns,” Mr. Landry, now a former staffer, wrote on February 18, 2019, according to the email obtained by CBC.

“I think we need to be more cautious considering what is happening. I want to protect the minister ... and myself.”

Former justice minister Jody Wilson-Raybould (Vancouver Granville, B.C.), now an Independent MP, recently told the CBC that when she held the portfolio, she felt political pressure when she was appointing judges.

“During my time as minister, there were people in the centre, the Prime Minister’s Office, other ministers, Liberal partisans, who would take great interest in the appointments process,” Ms. Wilson-Raybould told CBC. “There is a sense that some people still carry that appointments, whether

Liberals and cabinet ministers are alleged to have played a role in the appointment process. He named specific judges in New Brunswick, suggesting that their connections with Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.) may have been the reason for getting these positions. But, Mr. Lametti vehemently denied the claim, adding that all judicial appointments are made without considering political associations of individuals.

“Our appointments are made based on merit after they are studied by an independent judicial advisory committee,” said Mr. Lametti on Nov. 5 in the House. “In their work, JACs [Judicial Advisory Committees] follow a transparent process based on the quality of the candidates and diversity. I am very proud of the results. We have appointed judges of all political stripes.”

Justin Minister David Lametti, pictured in the House, denies opposition parties’ accusations that the Liberal government makes judicial appointments based on political considerations. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In an email to *The Hill Times*, Rachel Rappaport, press secretary to Mr. Lametti said that all judicial appointments are made based on merit and on the recommendation of Independent Judicial Advisory Committees. Upon receiving the recommendations, she wrote, the minister evaluates the credentials

of recommended candidates and takes into consideration a number of factors, including the needs of the court, diversity of the bench, and each candidate’s expertise among others.

After the minister finalizes the names to recommend to cabinet, the staff conducts research, using publicly available information, on a candidate’s past political donations, media interviews, social media activity, previous lobbyist activity and any history of government grants and contracts. This information is collected, Ms. Rappaport said, to answer any questions that may come up in cabinet discussions, in the House or from the media.

“All candidates must undergo a comprehensive assessment by an independent Judicial Advisory Committee and receive their recommendation in order to become eligible for appointment,” wrote Ms. Rappaport.

Liberal MP James Maloney (Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Ont.), a member of the Justice Committee, said that anybody who says there’s anything wrong with the

judicial appointments either does not fully understand the process or is playing “shameless politics.”

Before getting elected as an MP in 2015, he said, he worked as a litigation lawyer. He said he was confident that Canadians are well served by top quality judges. Mr. Maloney said that every single judicial appointment that the Trudeau government has made is based on merit, not any other reason. He said it’s not unusual for lawyers to have affiliations with different political parties, but that was not a factor for someone to be appointed to a judicial position.

“It’s [judiciary] well respected and the process that we use now, should be viewed with admiration,” said Mr. Maloney. “So, this [criticism] is coming from a political place, not a not a place of real concern, in my opinion. We are proud of the high-quality of jurists that have been produced under our reformed system, and the positive feedback that we continue to receive from the broader legal community across Canada.”

Conservative MP Michael Cooper (St. Albert-Edmonton, Alta.) in an interview said that there’s nothing wrong with a lawyer getting involved in the political process. But, he said, he’s concerned about the perception that appointments are based on political considerations and not on qualifications of candidates.

“What is concerning is that there is a concerted effort to politically [interfere], that candidates [are appointed] based upon their support for the Liberal Party, and the fact that there’s direction; it appears to be coming from the PMO,” said Mr. Cooper. “It smacks of blatant political interference in traditional appointment process.”

NDP MP Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, B.C.), his party’s deputy justice critic, also said that even the perception of political interference in the judicial appointment process is problematic. He said that his party has not made a final decision on how to vote on the Bloc motion but is looking at it “favourably.”

“I have to echo what the Canadian Bar Association said, that anytime you have a process that can be suspected of having even the slightest bit of political interference, that’s a big problem,” said Mr. MacGregor. “I don’t have problems with individual judges supporting a political party of their choice. That’s the right and freedom that every Canadian citizen should enjoy. I think the problem is that when the government of the day starts using that information, or if there’s a perception of using that information to favour one candidate over another, that’s a very real problem.”

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The Hill Times



The perils of polling

Be wary of public opinion polls; all sorts of variables can cloud their meaning. In short, skepticism is warranted.



Gerry Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit

OKVILLE, ONT.—If there was a poll gauging American attitudes towards polling, I bet it'd show that a lot of Americans are skeptical about the accuracy of polls.

And that would lead to an interesting philosophical question: would people who are skeptical about polls believe a poll that says people are skeptical about polls?

At any rate, the reliability of opinion polls is a hot topic these days because once again, American pollsters seemed to have got it all wrong.



U.S. vice-president-elect Kamala Harris and U.S. president-elect Joe Biden, pictured Nov. 10, 2020. Photograph courtesy of Joe Biden's Twitter

For two presidential elections in a row, they seriously underestimated Donald Trump's support among voters.

In 2016, pollsters confidently predicted Trump would lose, but he ended up winning; in 2020 they predicted he'd get crushed in a Democratic landslide, yet he nearly eked out a win.

On top of that, pollsters didn't foresee the Republican Party's success in Congressional races.

MSNBC anchor Chis Hayes, likely spoke for many when he said: "It was a bad night for polling—an enormous polling miss."

So, what's going on here? Are pollsters just incompetent or is it something else?

Well, there's lots of theories floating around right now seeking to answer such questions.

Some argue, for instance, that the methods pollsters use to measure public opinion are actually flawed, which they contend throws polling into the realm of pseudoscience.

A friend of mine, who advocates this particular position, half-jokingly refers to polling as the modern equivalent of phrenology.

Others, meanwhile, assert that certain flaws in polling methodology might actually be deliberate.

For example, Republican pollster, John McLaughlin, (a former colleague of mine) has come out and bluntly accused major polling companies of deliberately boosting Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden's polling numbers in the hopes that this would suppress Trump's supporters.

Noted McLaughlin: "they (pollsters) went out of their way to under-poll Republicans because they knew that the president gets 90 per cent of his support from Republicans. And if you lower the percent of Republicans in a poll ... you know you're hurting the president."

Another theory concurs with McLaughlin's view that Republicans are undercounted in polls, but this one doesn't pin the blame on anti-Trump pollsters.

Rather, the argument goes that since Trump's supporters tend to distrust the mainstream media, they are much less likely to participate in polls, hence they essentially "self-select" themselves out of surveys.

My own theory is that while public polls might be good at telling us what people are saying, they're not necessarily so good at telling us what people are actually thinking, since they often provide only a superficial glimpse of public attitudes.

To take one example to show you what I mean, a poll might accurately tell us that "Candidate A" has more support than "Candidate B," but it might not reveal the intensity of voter feeling.

And that matters.

Maybe the supporters of "Candidate B," though smaller in number, are more determined and energized, than the supporters of "Candidate A."

This could have an impact on Election Day.

Indeed, I suspect this is why the American results surprised those who were following public polls.

As those polls indicated, Biden's supporters might have been more numerous, but they may also have been less motivated than Trump's supporters. Say what you will about Trump, if nothing else, he's good at energizing his base.

Anyway, the takeaway from all this is be wary of public opinion polls; all sorts of variables can cloud their meaning.

In short, skepticism is warranted.

Yes, public polls provide interesting data to help us comprehend the political world, but they shouldn't be regarded as fortune-telling tarot cards.

Besides, it's the unpredictability of politics that makes it fun.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

The Hill Times

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PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY BY
HILL TIMES PUBLISHING INC.
246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4
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Editorial

All federal parties should support Bloc Québécois’ Justice Committee motion to study judicial appointment process

In 2016, the Justin Trudeau Liberals reformed the judicial appointment process. As part of the new system, the government established independent Judicial Advisory Committees to make recommendations to the government on who should be appointed to vacant judicial positions across the country. It was a laudable step on the part of the Liberal government to take politics out of the process, as it’s critical for any civilized country to choose judges solely on the basis of a candidate’s qualifications, not on political connections.

Recently, there have been a number of news stories, based on internal documents obtained by different news organizations, that create a perception that political interference in the judicial appointments process is still alive and well.

Last month, Radio Canada reported on an email from François Landry, a senior staffer in Justice Minister David Lametti’s office in which he informed Rachel Doran, the chief of staff to the minister, that senior Liberals’ involvement in the appointment process could potentially produce a scandal. Based on internal documents, La Presse also reported late last month that senior Liberals, including staffers, MPs, and cabinet ministers still play a role in judicial appointments.

Jody Wilson-Raybould, now an Independent MP, has told CBC that as minister, she felt pressure when she made these appointments.

In Question Period, on Nov. 5, Bloc MP Rhéal Fortin pointed to specific judges in New Brunswick who he believed

may have gotten their positions because of connections with Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc. In response, Justice Minister David Lametti denied categorically in the House that political associations played any role in the process. He said that he fills vacancies in the judiciary based only on individual candidates’ personal qualifications.

Mr. Lametti may be right that political associations did not play a role in deciding those judicial appointments the Trudeau Liberals have made. But the media stories tell a very different story, and this casts serious doubt over the process.

Early this month, Mr. Fortin tabled a motion in the Justice Committee asking for a study of the process. It’s hoped that the committee members will undertake this study, as serious questions have been raised about that process.

The Liberals oppose the study, arguing that the Bloc is playing politics with this important issue. But, based on the media stories and Ms. Wilson-Raybould’s comments, it’s important that Liberals clear the air. The study must provide answers to Canadians who are wondering whether the Liberals are interfering or not. If the Liberals continue to block this study, then one will have no option but to conclude they have something to hide.

It is to be hoped the Liberal reform of the judicial appointment process will not turn out be another charade, like Mr. Trudeau’s commitments to hold open and fair nominations in his own party and to empower backbench MPs.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

Nicholls’ advice for O’Toole on carbon tax diminishes quality of political discourse, says letter writer

Re: “For O’Toole, a carbon tax should always be a bad idea,” (*The Hill Times*, Nov. 9). Columnist Gerry Nicholls advises Conservative Leader Erin O’Toole to keep opposing carbon pricing. The reason? Not because carbon pricing is necessarily a bad idea (Mr. Nicholls acknowledges there are many solid arguments for it), but rather because supporting carbon pricing is bad politics for a conservative politician.

Mr. Nicholls seemingly treats as irrelevant what Mr. O’Toole’s personal

belief might be about the merits of carbon pricing. Rather, Mr. Nicholls advises Mr. O’Toole that politics should trump (pun intended) principles. Not only does this approach diminish the quality of political discourse, it also prevents reasoned discussion of the important role that carbon pricing can play in addressing climate change.

Jeffrey Levitt
Toronto, Ont.

Etobicoke letter writer doesn’t follow Nicholls’ advice for O’Toole on a carbon tax

Re: “For O’Toole, a carbon tax should always be a bad idea,” (*The Hill Times*, Nov. 9). Among the zillions of possible rebuttals, the following flashed into my head: as the anti-carbon tax base becomes too small to win an election in Canada, Conservative Leader Erin O’Toole needs to expand his base into more enlightened territory; it shouldn’t be hard to explain to folks that it’s not a tax if the government

doesn’t keep the money; and Canada will have no feasible choice after the U.S. gets its own carbon pricing, along with carbon border adjustments penalizing nations that are (to quote the Biden Plan) “failing to meet their climate and environmental obligations”—like failing to meet their emission targets, perhaps?

John Stephenson
Etobicoke, Ont.

GST can hardly be held up as a reason for Conservatives to reject all taxes, writes Ajax letter writer

Re: “For O’Toole, a carbon tax should always be a bad idea,” (*The Hill Times*, Nov. 9). The GST can hardly be held up as a reason for the Conservatives to reject all taxes, much less the revenue-neutral carbon tax. It is true that the GST was deeply unpopular, but this is only one reason why Mulroney’s campaign failed. Being a sitting prime minister during the worst recession since the Second World War certainly didn’t help. Nor did the devastating picture of corruption painted by the Airbus affair.

Conservatives present themselves as frugal stewards of the public purse, and no climate policy is more frugal than the revenue-neutral carbon tax. The GST would have been perceived as a play by a corrupt administration to reduce an out of control deficit. The carbon tax is a cheap, effective, market-based instrument. Voters can understand the difference, and will support a party that does as well.

Patrick Salmers
Ajax, Ont.

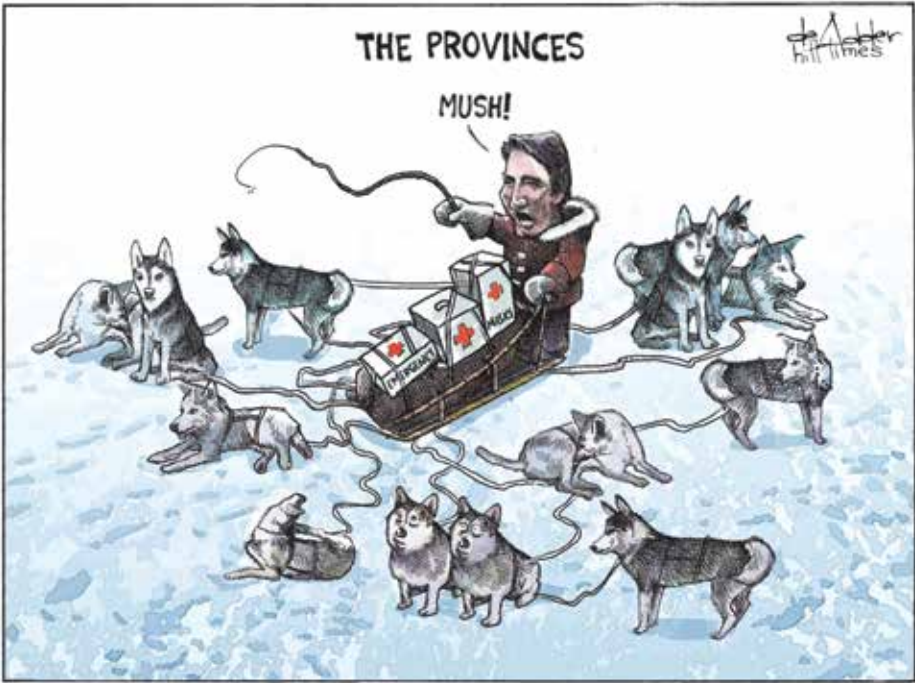
Feds should proceed with caution on bailing out airlines, says Calgary letter writer

I appreciate the airlines have been devastated. Handing over funding, financed ultimately by our grandchildren, to near bankrupt corporations should be done with great care. When we bailed out the auto industry in 2008, I believe we took shares. I think this approach should be repeated. Let’s face it; the airline industry

is volatile and the government has already sunk billions into supporting a risky industry (Bombardier for one). Who else would risk it?

I think we need to proceed with caution.

Ivor Green
Calgary, Alta.



EDITORIAL

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circulation@hilltimes.com
613-288-1146



Published every Monday and Wednesday by Hill Times Publishing Inc.

246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4
(613) 232-5952
Fax (613) 232-9055
Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
www.hilltimes.com

Please send letters to the editor to the above street address or e-mail to news@hilltimes.com. Deadline is Wednesday at noon, Ottawa time, for the Monday edition and Friday at noon for the Wednesday edition. Please include your full name, address and daytime phone number. *The Hill Times* reserves the right to edit letters. Letters do not reflect the views of *The Hill Times*. Thank you.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
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Minister of Public Services and Procurement

The Honourable Patty Hajdu,
Minister of Health

EVEN AS HOPE RISES, A NARROW FOCUS ON VACCINES IS A RISK CANADA CAN'T AFFORD

Dear Prime Minister and Ministers,

Over the past eight months, Canada has expended billions of dollars to battle the COVID-19 pandemic and to help individuals and businesses suffering economically. These expenditures include more than \$1.2 billion to secure access to a number of potential vaccines.

As of last Monday, with Pfizer's announcement that its COVID-19 vaccine prevented more than 90 per cent of symptomatic infections in a clinical trial, that investment seems set to pay off.

Although the news is encouraging, the new vaccine (frankly any new vaccine) still has hurdles to overcome. There are many unknowns — how long the immunity it provides may last; the degree of protection it provides to the most immune compromised and vulnerable; and its long-term safety. There are also formidable supply and distribution issues. Storage requirements alone will severely complicate distribution of this specific vaccine, especially in lower income countries. (The vaccine must be stored at about minus 75C, about 50 degrees colder than any other vaccine currently in use and colder by far than the current freezers in labs, doctors' offices and pharmacies go.) So, while there is hope on the horizon, that horizon may be further away than it seems.

Meanwhile, other nearer-term remedies, such as drug therapies, are being neglected.

Our own research team, made up of some of North America's leading experts on respiratory inflammation and led by one of this nation's best research institutes, is struggling to attract the relatively low level of funding we need to proceed with the Health Canada approved Phase III clinical trial of a repurposed generic drug developed by Pulmonem, a Canadian biotech start-up, which could provide a quick, safe and cost-effective treatment for COVID-19.

Combatting this virus requires several complementary approaches, based on good science including randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trials. Vaccines, certainly, but also antivirals, plasma trials, corticosteroids, and drug therapies — both old and new — are all part of an effective strategy to address the viral pandemic. While Canada is investing in all of these approaches, the focus on vaccines is disproportionate.

We call on the Canadian Government to reassess its strategic COVID-19 research response and urgently expand funding to accelerate the development of therapeutics.

Infection rates, hospitalizations and mortality rates are rising in a second wave that shows no signs of receding. In less than a year, the worldwide death toll of COVID-19 is already over a million. Let's not lose years and lives by putting all our eggs into the vaccine basket.



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Opinion

When does 'bold' start?

The Trudeau government has shown it can move quickly, and mostly effectively, when faced with a health crisis. Wasn't climate change supposed to be a crisis, too?



Susan Riley

Impolitic

CHELSEA, QUE.—So far Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's "bold," green, post-pandemic recovery plan appears to lack boldness. And detail. And deadlines. In fact, it is in danger of disappearing altogether this winter as all available political and media space is occupied by the pandemic and the other political contagion down south.

Historically, Liberal environmental promises have tended to surge, overlap, recede, and then reappear, like a restless surf. But a few months ago, in the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic, there was talk of using the crisis to create a cleaner, fairer, even more prosperous new world. Environmental spending would be the "cornerstone" of recovery, said the prime minister. With billions flying out the door in social and business support, why not throw some of that cash at clean energy, transformative technologies and green jobs?

But here we are. The only immediate carbon reductions we are likely to see are temporary and involuntary—the result of the economic slowdown caused by the global health emergency, notably declines in air travel and commuter traffic, on top of the market-driven retreat by the oil industry. Federal government policy has been, with rare exceptions, incidental to any progress.

Not that the federal government hasn't been recycling like mad, but mostly old environmental promises.

It has been a year, for example, since the government promised to plant two billion trees by 2030, a natural remedy for rising emissions. Easier, you would think, than challenging the Alberta government's recent decision to re-open parts of the foothills to open-pit coal mining. Easier by far than actually enforcing federal methane reductions in Saskatchewan and Alberta

(rather than defaulting to weaker provincial oversight), especially after a recent report by federal scientists revealed that emissions of the powerful greenhouse gas are probably two times previous estimates.

But, a year later, not a single tree has been planted—who could oppose baby trees?—and, more seriously, no money has been budgeted for the program. As to those damaging, newly discovered methane emissions, so much for the already-delayed federal target of halving emissions, mostly from oil and gas operations, within five years.

slowdown in plan-making is being blamed on the coronavirus—which will likely accomplish more than a library-full of federal plans in terms of lower emissions (however briefly).

Still, it is possible that Wilkinson's "government-wide effort" will yield a plan by Dec. 12 (lightening-fast by bureaucratic standards), just in time for an international online summit to mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris climate accord. Needless to say, neither Canada, nor the majority of signatories, have come close to meeting their original Paris pledges. So time for new ones, clearly.

Liberal party resolutions, prime ministerial speeches, previous Throne Speeches and campaign documents going back to Paul Martin's days as Jean Chrétien's environment critic.

They include that old chestnut—national energy efficiency standards for new commercial and residential buildings. So sensible, yet so curiously unattainable. Another favourite: incentives for homeowners to retrofit old, leaky houses (if lower energy bills aren't incentive enough.) This one comes and goes depending on the ideological bent of various federal and provincial

only \$75-million left until 2022. Nor is there any sign of a 2019 Liberal campaign promise to offer rebates for used, and more affordable, EVs.

Transport Minister Marc Garneau recently noted how "incredibly popular" the EV rebate program has been. Asked if it will be getting more money, he replied: "It's something that I would hopefully like to see continued, but it's something that we are looking at." There you have the federal approach in a nutshell: a burst of enthusiasm followed by a cloud of vagueness. As to his government's previous plan to



So far Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's 'bold,' green, post-pandemic recovery plan appears to lack boldness. And detail. And deadlines, writes Susan Riley. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

There has been a similarly sluggish approach to the government's oft-repeated pledge (most recently in the September Throne Speech) to exceed current 2030 emission reduction targets (30 per cent below 2005 levels) and to legislate interim five-year targets towards the ultimate goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. It is another promise first made a year ago, as emissions continued to increase; three months ago, in the Throne Speech, legislation was promised "immediately."

Pressed to explain why there is still no action, Environment and Climate Change Minister Jonathan Wilkinson recently told opposition MPs that his department is "leading government-wide work to develop further plans to exceed Canada's 2030 emissions reduction goal and firmly put the country on a path to net-zero by 2050."

This, in fact, appears to be the main work of Canada's environment department and has been for years: creating plans, that supersede previous plans, based on targets, that over-shoot previous targets, all with the goal of creating the illusion of progress. Eventually, normal people tune out. What does 30 per cent below 2005 levels even mean?

To underscore the absurdity of federal rhetoric, this latest

(Meanwhile, a Bloc Québécois MP has introduced a private motion that, essentially, insists the Trudeau government follow through with its legislated reviews of progress towards net-zero by 2050. We'll see how that vote goes.)

Not that targets aren't good and plans aren't necessary. They are. Also, climate change is a global phenomenon that requires a global response—and agreement on a problem that affects everyone living on earth, but is caused primarily by oil-exporting nations and wealthy consumer societies, is difficult.

It helps that U.S. president-elect Joe Biden intends to rejoin the Paris Accord; this is, at least, an acknowledgement from the world's largest economy that climate change needs to be addressed, not ignored. But Biden has long been a mainstream, consensus politician and was only pushed to include a green plan in his campaign by Democratic Party "radicals." So we'll see how serious he is about confronting his own country's powerful fossil fuel sector.

While the international community continues to dither, there are many useful steps the Canadian government could take to mitigate domestic emissions. They are outlined in decades-worth of

governments, while the construction industry increasingly offers green alternatives—but at a premium price.

Then there is government support for electric vehicles, another frequently re-announced bullet point. This includes rebates for consumers who buy cleaner vehicles, more charging stations, and incentives for the auto industry to start building commercial and passenger EVs, and components, including batteries.

Some of this is already happening—although hardly enough, given the transportation sector overall contributes 25 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, a portion of which is generated by ordinary cars and trucks. It is no accident that the still tiny electric vehicle market (fewer than one per cent of vehicles on the road) is centred in Quebec and British Columbia, where provinces have offered rebates for some years. Premier Doug Ford eliminated a similar program in Ontario and EV sales immediately dropped.

In May 2019, the federal government offered a three-year, \$300-million incentive to consumers to buy new, non-luxury EVs. The rebates range from \$2,500 for hybrids to \$5,000 for zero-emission vehicles. But, as of the end of September, some \$255-million had been claimed, leaving

have 10 per cent of Canada's passenger fleet electrified by 2025—a modest four to six percent is now looking more realistic, say analysts.

To summarize, the federal government's "bold" approach has produced this: an increasingly remote chance of meeting methane reduction targets; badly lagging targets for conversion to electric vehicles; a year-long delay in plans to better existing 2030 emissions targets, never mind getting to net-zero by 2050. And not a single tree planted.

Some will blame the backsliding on the intense demands, bureaucratic and political, posed by the pandemic. Others point to the limitations of minority government, to recalcitrant premiers still banking on oil, to federal opposition parties (all of them, except the tiny Green caucus) that give scant priority to climate.

But the greatest obstacle may be the Trudeau government's wavering commitment to its own "bold" vision. It has shown it can move quickly, and mostly effectively, when faced with a health crisis. Wasn't climate change supposed to be a crisis, too?

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

The Hill Times

America's losing its lustre as global beacon of democracy

The silence hovering over the Republican Party into the second week after Donald Trump's loss may be working in Washington, but in the rest of the world, it is simply exposing the country's claim to democracy as a sorry charade.



Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—America is losing its lustre as the global beacon of democracy.

It could be difficult to promote democratic principles elsewhere when most senior Republican politicians do not respect it at home.

The parody of the Trump-Biden stalled transition started off as a bit of a joke. Most people thought the Republicans were simply willing to give U.S. President Donald Trump a few days to let the defeat sink in.

But his promotion of the notion of a rigged election is shining a light into the inner workings of the Republican Party.

All senior members of the party are backing the president's bizarre lie about who won the election.

Four years of Trump's isolationism may have made a negative mark on the world, but it has not affected his popularity at home.

Like president-elect Joe Biden, Trump increased his own vote, and continues to claim that he won the election, but that officials stole the result by refusing to end the count.

The code of silence hovering over his party into the second week after the loss may be working in Washington but in the rest of the world, it is simply exposing the country's claim to democracy as a sorry charade.

The president's attack on Fox News and his claim of a stolen election has penetrated his base, with supporters across the country brandishing signs demanding that officials "stop the steal."

Trump continues to claim illegality in states like Pennsylvania and Georgia even when their Republican officials deny any illegitimacy.

Republican Philadelphia City Commissioner Al Schmidt was adamant that there was no skulduggery in his city. He

was immediately attacked by name, by the president.

But Schmidt did not back down. Instead he publicly questioned why people would so easily swallow lies about a fraudulent election.

Local Republicans like Schmidt and those who are distant from Washington seem the most likely to throw cold water on Trump's illegality claims.

Former U.S. president George W. Bush congratulated Biden on his victory shortly after the result was called by several media organizations on Nov. 7.

But the silence on Capitol Hill was deafening. Mitch McConnell led the revisionism charge, claiming that Trump had every reason to refuse to concede as long as the results had not been certified.

But almost two weeks after the vote, courts have found zero evidence of widespread fraud. Last week, the Republican lieutenant-governor of Texas offered a million-dollar reward for any evidence of malfeasance. This is the same politician who said grandparents were willing to die during the pandemic in support of the economy.

The Georgia recount is automatic since the margin of victory is less than 0.5 per cent. But with 99 per cent of the vote in, Biden was ahead on Nov. 12 by 14,005 votes even though the vote differential was only 0.3 per cent.

In my own political life, I underwent a recount in my first provincial election which was lost by 15 votes. In those days, a difference of less than 25 votes resulted

in a judicial recount. In the end, I ended up gaining one vote in the recount, legally losing the election by 14 votes.

The chance of turning thousands of votes around in Georgia is virtually impossible.

Back in 2000, the difference in the American presidential vote in Florida was little more than 500 votes. The finalized counting process took more than a month, and ultimately did not displace the initial victor, George W. Bush.

But Trump is not about to let the facts stand in the way of a good lie. And his legion of supporters in the Republican Party are listening.

Polls show that 70 per cent of Republicans now doubt the outcome of the election. That number has doubled since election night. The vast majority of them refuse to concede that the Democratic U.S. president-elect was chosen by the majority of voters and the electoral college.

The truth may be starting to set in. At press time, only four Senators from the Republican Party had broken with the majority by tweeting their congratulations to president-elect Biden. They included independent-minded Susan Collins and Trump enemy Mitt Romney.

Within the White House, some are already speculating about the pardon process, which is one of the last acts of an outgoing president.

Trump is allegedly considering a list of pardons, including one for Jared Kushner's father, a billionaire convicted of witness tampering, illegal election contributions and tax evasion. Trump is also considering an unprecedented self-pardon.

That should not surprise.

Nothing about the Trump presidency has followed precedent.

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

The Hill Times

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Opinion



U.S. President Donald Trump, pictured Oct. 30, 2020. America's worst reality TV show, featuring the Kardashians of politics, the Trump brood, is finally on the brink of being cancelled, writes Michael Harris. Photograph courtesy of Flickr

Trump's White House gig coming to a slow, but inexorable end

But don't be fooled. In political distance, Jan. 20, 2021, is as far away as Mars. There is plenty of time for the man who is still president until he isn't, to make mischief. And make mischief he already has.



Michael Harris
Harris

HALIFAX—America's worst reality TV show, featuring the Kardashians of politics, the Trump brood, is finally on the brink of being cancelled.

Their White House gig is coming to a slow but inexorable end, with the firing of Donald Trump as president. While this lame-duck "leader" disappears into the empty space of his alternate universe, the one where he retained the presidency, and COVID-19 is no worse than a cold, everyone

else seems to be catching on.

A multitude of world leaders, excluding, of course, most of the thugs and dictators, have doffed their hats to Biden's victory.

To his credit, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was one of the first. It was a welcome change from his tepid response to some of Trump's worst excesses.

Saudi Arabia, which did the sword dance with Trump, is now swaying to the diplomatic disco of the Biden beat.

Though a week late, China too has finally congratulated president-elect Biden.

Even the Bobsy Twins of hypocrisy, Republican Senators Mitch McConnell and Lindsey Graham, are moving towards their colleagues. Several Republicans have been broadly hinting it's time for Trump to throw in the towel, the duvet, and the tarpaulin.

Graham has even gone so far as to declare that Joe Biden should be getting the intelligence briefings that all incoming presidents receive before formally assuming office—the ones Trump is refusing to share with the man who beat him. Given his penchant for bending in whatever political winds are blowing (remember when he thought Trump was a bullying bigot?), Graham's words speak volumes about where this disputed election is going.

The only ones still backing the president are the Christian right, and a handful of reliably wrong sycophants and hangers on—AG Bob Barr, and the oleaginous Mike Pompeo, masquerading as secretary of state for a few more painful months.

But don't be fooled. In political distance, Jan. 20, 2021, is as far away as Mars. There is plenty of time for the man who is still president until he isn't, to make mischief. And make mischief he already has.



U.S. vice-president-election Kamala Harris, pictured Oct. 27, 2020, in Reno, Nevada. Photograph courtesy of Flickr

Some of it is merely the flailing of a drowning man before he disappears beneath the waves. That category includes his nasty tweets directed at Fox News for its failure to do enough to shore up his Lie Power during the campaign.

Ditto for the stark warning Trump offered to his White House staff: anyone caught applying for a job elsewhere would be fired immediately.

But some of Trump's rage agenda borders on the ominous. It is flatly ominous that this defeated president is messing with the Defence community, including its intelligence operations—immediately after an election result he does not recognize.

It started with the firing of Defence Secretary Mark Esper, who refused to go along with Trump's demand that the military be employed to quash protests in U.S. cities like the ones associated with Black Lives Matter.

Trump likes the idea of forcibly putting down peaceful protesters as he proved in Lafayette Square. There, he had authorities use tear gas and flash grenades to disperse crowds, for the high purpose of getting a presidential photo-op with a bible at historic St. John's Episcopal Church.

Esper, who took his oath to the Constitution, not the president, would not replace the eagle with a banana as the symbol of the Republic. And he left with a warning, "God help us" if his replacement is a "yes man." Americans will soon know if Christopher Miller fits that bill. But everyone knows, appointing yes men is Donald Trump's specialty.

Then key Pentagon officials who didn't drink the Trump Kool-Aid were dumped. These included the undersecretary of defence for policy, the undersecretary of defence for intelligence, and the chief of staff to the secretary of defence. What did it all mean? Admiral James Stavridis (Ret.) said Trump had "decapitated" the operational civilian leadership of the military.

These experienced operators were replaced by a dubious troika of Trump loyalists. It is inter-

U.S. Intelligence that Russia had interfered in the 2016 election.

In case anyone hasn't noticed, Donald Trump now has what amounts to personal control of the U.S. military through the elevation of his enablers. Since everyone knows that he is endangering U.S. national security by getting rid of the pros, the question is why would he do that?

Here is a worrying possibility. What if Trump is planning to use American military force in some new and perhaps unconstitutional way? Trump could trigger massive civil unrest across America if he makes good on his threat to take the election result all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Like the military, that court is now his Court—or so he believes. With his yes-men firmly in control at the Pentagon, would he use, or try to use, the U.S. military to sustain him in office—against the facts of a loss in both the popular vote and the electoral college?

And what would happen if Trump ordered a military strike in the dying days of his tenure? A strike, based for example, on bogus intelligence from his Defence Department that a country like Iran had suddenly become an imminent threat to U.S. allies and interests in the Middle East? Who could stop him, or verify that the intelligence was accurate?

And what if his spandex attorney-general were to come back with a report that after conducting an "investigation," which is now underway, the Department of Justice agreed with the president that the election had been stolen? That situation could become a lot worse should Trump also remove Gina Haspel and Christopher Wray, the respective heads of the CIA and FBI, as it has been reported he might.

It's worth remembering as a collective sigh of relief goes up in

the U.S. and around the world at Trump's defeat: a cornered cat makes strange jumps. And this cat is as strange as they come. Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist. The Hill Times

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia sign deal to end Nagorno-Karabakh war



Armenia is in shock, but what remains of the Armenian enclave in western Azerbaijan would quickly be overrun if the Russian troops were not there. As Arayik Harutyunyan, Nagorno-Karabakh's separatist leader, admitted on Nov. 10, 'had the hostilities continued at the same pace, we would have lost all of (it) within days,' writes Gwynne Dyer. Screen image courtesy of Al Jazeera, Nov. 10, 2020

Why Armenia couldn't exploit its diaspora more effectively is a mystery, but that's the difference. The military defeat was the eventual, inevitable result of a long-running political failure.



Gwynne Dyer

Global Affairs

LONDON, U.K.—This time, the truce will last. The 2,000 Russian troops flying into Armenia this past week and fanning out to police the ceasefire lines in Nagorno-Karabakh are being sent there for five years renew-

able, and neither Armenia nor Azerbaijan will challenge them.

Armenia is in shock, but what remains of the Armenian enclave in western Azerbaijan would quickly be overrun if the Russian troops were not there. As Arayik Harutyunyan, Nagorno-Karabakh's separatist leader, admitted on Nov. 10, "had the hostilities continued at the same pace, we would have lost all of (it) within days."

Azerbaijanis are jubilant about their victory, but they will abide by this ceasefire. It's enough: about three-quarters of the Armenian-occupied territory in Azerbaijan has fallen into their hands already, or will be handed over by Armenian forces by the end of this month. Besides, the Russians would be very cross if they broke their word.

Armenia won all that territory in a war that was almost inevitable after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan were 'republics' during the Soviet era, but the borders that Stalin had drawn for them left a significant ethnic Armenian population inside the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Armenians living in the 'Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (Province)' accounted for about four-fifths of the local population. They declared their independence in 1991, and when fighting broke out between them

and the Azerbaijanis, Armenia proper, also newly independent, sent troops and weapons to help them.

That war ended in an Armenian victory in 1994, after Armenian troops drove all the Azerbaijanis not only out of Nagorno-Karabakh, but also out of three times as much territory to the north, south and west of it. Armenia wound up with a large territory extending about 50 km east from its own eastern border.

The analogy with Israel's situation immediately after the independence war in 1948-49 is irresistible.

There were only 800,000 Jewish Israelis in former Palestine in 1949, surrounded not only by a million Palestinian Arabs but by another 50-100 million Arabs in other countries within military reach of them.

There were 3.3 million people in the Republic of Armenia in 1994, and another 145,000 Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. There were no Azerbaijani minorities left in Nagorno-Karabakh nor in the large occupied territories around it, but there were about 75 million Turkish-speaking Muslims in Azerbaijan and Turkey who saw the outcome as an outrage.

That was worrisome, especially for people who were survivors of a recent genocide (the Armenians in Ottoman Turkey in 1915-

18, the Jews in Nazi-ruled Europe in 1941-45).

However, both Armenia and Israel are supported by very large 'connected' diasporas: around seven million people in each case, the great majority living in relatively prosperous countries like the United States, France, Canada, and Russia. So how did they fare in terms of holding onto their lands?

Both countries have held their core territory as defined at independence. They are likely to do so indefinitely thanks to great-power guarantees, for Armenia by Russia and for Israel thanks to French guarantees until 1968 and subsequently by the United States.

Israel conquered quite a lot more territory in 1968, some of which (the West Bank) it is busily settling with Jews and will probably keep forever. Armenia also conquered extra territory in 1994, but it is losing most of it right now.

The ceasefire lines will probably become de facto borders. All the formerly occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh will be repopulated by Azerbaijani refugees, including the one road linking it to Armenia proper (but Russian peace-keeping troops will hold it open).

About a quarter of Nagorno-Karabakh itself was also captured by Azerbaijani forces, and

will stay in their hands. Most Armenians have already fled the enclave, and only a minority are likely to return given the precarious lifeline through the Lachin corridor and the fact that Azerbaijani troops will remain within five kilometre of Stepanakert, the capital.

Why such dramatically different outcomes? The obvious answer is that Azerbaijan is oil-rich and was spending nine times as much Armenia on 'defence.' But the Arab world is oil-rich too. How did Israel manage it?

By mobilizing the support of its diaspora a great deal better. Immigration has grown Israel's Jewish population from 800,000 to seven million since independence. In contrast, the population of the Republic of Armenia has actually fallen by a quarter-million, and there was no big influx of Armenians from overseas to Armenia proper, Nagorno-Karabakh or the empty occupied territories.

As with immigrants, so also with money for defence. Why Armenia couldn't exploit its diaspora more effectively is a mystery, but that's the difference. The military defeat was the eventual, inevitable result of a long-running political failure.

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

The Hill Times

Opinion

We need to get serious about our future

And we need to hear from Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland—and the sooner the better.

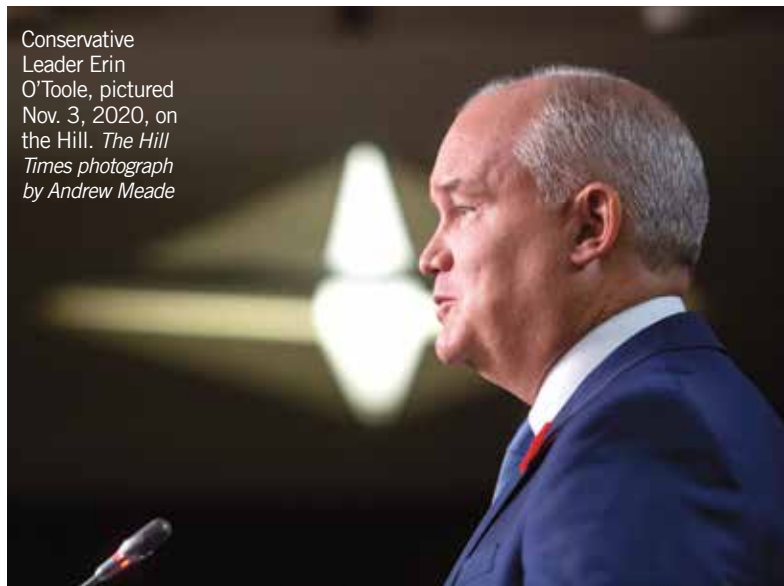


David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—We are still waiting for a serious statement from the Trudeau government on the country's road forward, on how it plans to rebuild the economy and put the country's finances on a stable and sustainable path in the future.

We had a vague and unhelpful fiscal update from then finance minister Bill Morneau on July 8, followed by an anodyne Throne Speech on Oct. 20 that led nowhere, and complaints since then by the Parliamentary Budget Office on the government stonewalling financial data.



Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole, pictured Nov. 3, 2020, on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

After all this, we are really none the wiser on where the country is headed, how the government plans, to use its words, "rebuild better," what the priorities are, or the strategy to ensure that we achieve fiscal health so that today's necessary fiscal spending isn't pushed down the road for future generations to pay.

This lack of an economic and fiscal plan feeds into the existing lack of confidence and further weakens our economic prospects—a lack of confidence by consumers to spend and a lack of confidence by businesses to invest. This means there is less demand in the economy and hence weaker consumer-led growth and less incentive for businesses to invest in new activities so there's less investment-led growth.



Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, pictured Sept. 15, 2020, on the Hill. Canada needs a clear and credible fiscal update, followed early on by a budget, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Most economic analysis assumes that the government is needed in the immediate future in order to boost demand in the economy, while over the longer-term raise the potential growth rate of the economy, and do this in a way that brings about the structural changes necessary to produce a more productive, more competitive, and higher-value economy.

table and pay the rent, as well as provide some support to the many small businesses that lacked the financial resources to manage the lockdown on their own.

That spending is not over and more may be needed as we head into the dark winter months. All of this has necessitated a massive increase in federal spending and an increase in the deficit and debt that one would normally associate with a world war.

I suspect that a majority of Canadians would agree that government will continue to have a central role in rebuilding the economy for some time. But that role should be centred on productive investments—for example, in infrastructure, the transition to a low-carbon economy, the reskilling of the workforce, investments in child care and early childhood development, research and development, in innovation supports including intangible assets and a financial system to scale up our best tech companies.

These are activities that can strengthen the economy, create opportunity, and encourage business by rebuilding confidence to hire and invest.

But the government must recognize it must become much more disciplined in where its

priorities lie. Debt has to be serviced and repaid so that, without a more productive economy with



New Democratic Party Leader Jagmeet Singh, pictured Nov. 5, 2020, on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

a higher potential growth rate, we can, as a country, afford to do all the things we would like to do.

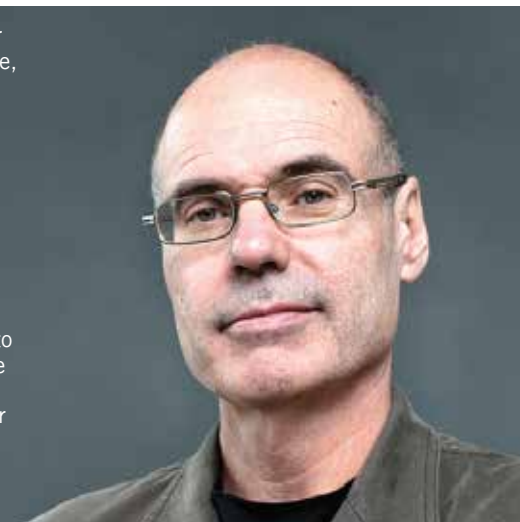
NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh can keep demanding the government bring in a wide range of new social programs, but this is meaningless unless we, and the provinces,

have the fiscal resources to do this. Taxing millionaires more may be justified but this will not be enough to pay for new social programs.

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole may like to believe that boosting the oil industry will deliver stronger growth but it won't. Low investment in the oil sands is not due to federal government policy but a lack of capital as investors move away from oil. So the opposition parties, as well as the governing Liberals, need much clearer—and more realistic and hence better—ideas for a more successful Canada.

In a sobering paper for the C.D. Howe Institute, Don Drummond calls for a national debate over our economic and fiscal future, warning that with a projected federal deficit of \$380-billion this year and \$120-billion next year we have to start planning now on how to avoid a situation where debt servicing costs take on a much greater share of tax revenues. Drummond is a former senior official from Finance Canada and former chief economist for the TD Bank. His paper sets out four scenarios but points to the one setting a goal to bring deficits down to an annual level

In a sobering paper for the C.D. Howe Institute, Don Drummond, pictured, calls for a national debate over our economic and fiscal future, warning that with a projected federal deficit of \$380-billion this year and \$120-billion next year we have to start planning now on how to avoid a situation where debt servicing costs take on a much greater share of tax revenues. *Photograph courtesy of Don Drummond*



of \$25-billion a year by 2030-31 as perhaps the most feasible.

This would mean a federal program spending equivalent to 14.1 per cent of GDP in 2030-31, compared to 13.1 per cent in the pre-pandemic plan. And it would mean 9.8 cents of every \$1 of federal revenue would go to interest payments, compared to 6.9 cents under the pre-pandemic plan. The higher debt payments mean an extra annual cost of \$15.3-billion, which is money not available for spending on new programs.

Drummond acknowledges that his assumptions are conservative, with low growth averaging 1.5 per cent a year, and acknowledges that interest rates may not rise as much as he expects. He also seems to rule out any future tax increase. Nonetheless, his paper is important because it provides a sobering basis for public discussion.

But now we need to hear from Freeland—and the sooner the better. David Crane can be reached at crane@interlog.com.

The Hill Times

‘They’ve been very interested in our ideas’: what experts expect from feds’ climate change bill

The Grits promised to make their climate targets ‘legally binding,’ but public embarrassment will likely remain the biggest threat to a government that ditches the plan, say green policy advocates.

ing with the 2050 net zero target, one that includes setting five year carbon budgets along the way.

“I think the model for this, really is the U.K.,” he said.

The U.K. government passed a law in 2008 that committed its government to reducing GHG emissions significantly by the year 2050, and set in place a “carbon budgeting” system to keep it on pace to meet that goal. Last year, the U.K. government replaced its emissions target for 2050 with a pledge to create a net-zero emissions economy by the same date.

Leaving the specific carbon budget totals out of the government’s forthcoming legislation would

Instead, the legislation should lay out clear obligations for the government to set five-year carbon budgets regularly along the way to 2050; to enshrine those budgets into regulations, or orders in council; and to report regularly and transparently on its progress towards each five-year emissions budget, she said.

The bill should also include a definitive commitment to reach that 2050 net zero end target. Language requiring the government only to make its “best effort” to reach the goal, for example, would be a red flag, she said.

Ms. Croome said members of the Liberal government had been

have also been contacted this fall and summer by several organizations registered to lobby on the climate targets legislation, according to the federal lobbyist registry. Lobbying records don’t disclose what was discussed during those meetings.

Ms. Croome said that the carbon budgets rolled out along the path to 2050 should include a firm figure for the total amount of emissions that can be produced, instead of a more ambiguous commitment to reduce emissions by a certain percentage in comparison to a previous year, as in the Paris Agreement.

The government’s bill should also include clearly defined roles and obligations for specific ministers, she said.

‘It’s a test of credibility’

Creating a net-zero emissions economy would require balancing out any greenhouse gas emissions produced in Canada by planting enough trees, or taking other measures, to remove an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. It will almost certainly require a steep reduction in the volume of GHG gases emitted as well.

The Liberal campaign promise to reach net-zero by 2050 was the latest in a series of climate change goals that the Canadian government has set since the late 1990s. Canada abandoned its 2012 target set by the Kyoto Protocol; it will miss its 2020 target; and it is currently on pace to miss its 2030 Paris Agreement target as well, though the Trudeau Liberals have pledged to meet and exceed it.

Former prime minister Stephen Harper also signed onto an international pledge in 2015 to stop the use and production of fossil fuels in Canada entirely by 2100.

Mr. Wilkinson and his cabinet colleagues have provided few details of how they will achieve a net-zero economy, or how the five-year target legislation they have promised to deliver will fit into that plan. He told MPs on the House Environment Committee on Nov. 4 that the five-year targets would be “informed by advice from experts,” and that the government would create “transparency mechanisms” that would serve as “enforcing functions for all future governments” that will inherit the 2050 pledge.

Making the terms of the law “legally binding,” as the Liberals have promised, is murkier than it may seem. The law could be amended or taken off the books entirely by a future government with enough support in Parliament. Even if it isn’t, the legal penalties for a government that fails to fulfill its legal duties are not straightforward.

Public embarrassment is the key pressure point that the law could apply to this or future governments that don’t do the legwork to set or meet their targets, said Ms. Croome and Mr. Bernstein.

“It’s a test of credibility and a test of public disappointment that will probably drive the need to hit the target,” said Mr. Bernstein.

Depending on the wiggle room in the language of the law, however, a government that

failed to fulfill its duties could also be taken to court, said Ms. Croome.

Bloc Québécois MP Kristina Michaud (Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia, Que.) introduced a short private member’s bill into the House of Commons in February that would essentially require Canada to fulfill the net-zero 2050 promise, and includes many of the terms described by Ms. Croome. Her bill, C-215, remains at first reading in the House.

Several organizations have registered to lobby the government on the net-zero pledge or the implementing legislation. The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), which lobbies for oil and gas companies, was among them; it has not made a formal submission to the government on the matter, but has an interest in how “net zero” is defined by the government, and which strategies will be used to get there with “the least impact to society,” according to CAPP executive Terry Abel.

Other oil and gas companies and associations are registered to lobby on the subject, as is Mr. Bernstein’s Clean Prosperity, and the Canadian Renewable Energy Association (CREA). Putting an emissions target into legislation would be a boon to the renewable business in Canada, providing confidence to potential investors that Canada is going to follow through with its climate promises, said CREA president Robert Hornung.

Businesses on the Prairies will no doubt be reading the legislation and any resulting regulations closely. Alberta produces the greatest share of Canada’s emissions among the provinces, and the Business Council of Alberta (BCA) is registered to lobby on the climate target legislation.

BCA president Adam Legge said it is “highly unlikely” that Alberta can become a net-zero province. It is home to a large oil and gas production industry, and natural gas and coal are the primary sources of energy for the province, according to Natural Resources Canada. Mr. Legge said some kind of carbon “equalization” program, taking into account differences between the provinces, could be a part of the path towards a net-zero Canadian economy.

“We need to then ask other provinces to step up from a carbon equalization frame of mind,” he said.

Flavio Volpe, the president of Canada’s Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association (APMA), said he had discussed the net-zero legislation with the government in the past year. He said he urged policymakers not to set vehicle emissions standards that are stricter than those in the United States, warning that automakers would rather pull up stakes than design vehicles especially for the Canadian market.

The APMA launched a showcase project in response to the net-zero 2050 goal, pulling together its members to produce a prototype, zero-emissions, Canadian-made vehicle, dubbed Project Arrow.

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The Hill Times

Continued from page 1

political embarrassment will likely remain the biggest consequence for a government that fails to live up to the terms of the legislation, they said, though lawsuits could be an additional deterrent, depending on how the law is worded.

The Liberals promised before the last election to introduce legislation to create legally-binding, five-year emissions targets that will set Canada on the path to having a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions economy by the year 2050. Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, B.C.) told *Macleans* magazine in October that he was planning to introduce that legislation before the end of this year.

The government has been quietly consulting experts about the content of the bill, and lobbyists have signalled their desire to shape its contents.

On Nov. 13, the CBC reported that the government would introduce the bill as early as this week, and that it would include mandatory five year targets for cutting emissions in Canada. The CBC did not attribute the source of that information.

U.K. law a model for Liberals: Bernstein

“It has been hard to get details about how this legislation is going to work,” said Michael Bernstein, the executive director of Canadians for Clean Prosperity, a non-profit organization that advocates for carbon taxes, and has lobbied the government on its 2050 goal.

However, Mr. Bernstein said he did not expect the government’s forthcoming legislation to include a specific number or amount of greenhouse gases that could be emitted under each five-year phase of the government’s plan. Instead, he said he expects the bill to set a “framework” for comply-



Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson has promised to introduce legislation before the end of the year that will enshrine in law his government’s commitment to creating a carbon neutral Canadian economy by the year 2050. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

be the right decision, said Julia Croome, an environmental lawyer with the advocacy group Ecojustice, and the lead author of a May 2020 report produced with five other Canadian environmental NGOs that outlined a “legal foundation” for the government’s net-zero 2050 goal, titled, “Policy Brief: A New Canadian Climate Accountability Act.”

Trying to nail down those emissions budgets in law now wouldn’t be sensible, said Ms. Croome, in part because the government hasn’t yet had the time to strike a panel of experts to give it advice on what the targets should be.

speaking with her and the report’s other authors and seemed “very interested in our ideas.”

The government has not held a large-scale formal public consultation on its forthcoming legislation, and Moira Kelly, Mr. Wilkinson’s spokesperson, said the government will wait until the bill reaches committee stage to gather feedback. But Environment and Climate Change Canada spokesperson Samantha Bayard confirmed that the government had “met with groups who have offered their expertise on such legislation.”

Top Liberal ministers and staffers and senior bureaucrats

Remembrance Day in Ottawa, in a pandemic

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade



Usually thousands attend, but only 100 people were allowed to publicly pay their respects at this year's Remembrance Day ceremony at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, including the prime minister, Gov.-Gen. Julie Payette, Chief of Defence Staff Jonathan Vance, Veterans Affairs Minister Lawrence MacAulay, House Speaker Anthony Rota, and other notables. There was no veterans' parade and no CAF parade. There were four armed sentries and one sentinel, posted at the National War Memorial by the Canadian Armed Forces.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his wife Sophie Grégoire Trudeau.



The armed sentry standing guard by the War Memorial.



An RCMP officer and three members of the CAF, all armed, march past the National War Memorial. There was also a trumpeter and one piper at Wednesday's ceremony who played the Lament.



Veterans lay wreaths at the War Memorial.



The prime minister lays a wreath.



An RCMP officer marches past the War Memorial.



Veterans Affairs Minister Lawrence MacAulay.

TRANSPORTATION

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Transportation Policy Briefing

Mixed reviews for government's transportation sector response, with hardest work ahead

The aviation sector is anticipating a relief package after Transport Minister Marc Garneau's Nov. 8 announcement. While much work has been done to ensure airlines are safe and continuing—albeit limited—operations, the hardest work is still ahead.

BY AIDAN CHAMANDY

Stakeholders, experts, and Parliamentarians are split on how effective Transport Minister Marc Garneau and his department have been at managing the diverse set of issues that have plagued the sector since the onset of the pandemic.

Some stakeholders praised the minister and the department for collaboration, and moving fast to implement, or relax, certain regulations that have allowed operations to continue in a COVID-19-safe fashion. The bulk of their criticism stems from the lack of sector-specific financial support, particularly for the aviation industry, which has seen a dramatic drop in revenue since March.

Now, with Mr. Garneau (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount, Que.) promising a relief package targeted at airlines, airports, and the broader aerospace sector, all the stakeholders who spoke with *The Hill Times* agreed that the hardest and most important work is about to begin.

Mike McNaney, president and CEO of the National Airlines Council of Canada, which represents Canada's larger airlines, praised Transport Canada's work helping to develop the international standards for safe air travel through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a UN agency.

In May, the ICAO released a framework through the ICAO Aviation Recovery Task Force for airlines and airports to follow to keep COVID-safe, including temperature screenings, increased ventilation, and much more. Mr. McNaney said the federal government, through Transport Canada, "played a lead role in developing" the standards, which have informed several other countries' return-to-flight plans, including the Europe-wide European Aviation Safety Agency's return to flight plan.

While most attention has been focused on the airline sector, Canada's ferry operators were also impacted by COVID and have worked well with the department.

"The department in the last eight months has done an amazing job in terms of policies, regulations and flexibility to deal with this pandemic. They've done work that normally would not be done in years," said Serge Buy, senior partner at Flagship Solutions and CEO of the Canadian Ferry Operators Association. Mr. Buy has lobbied dozens of Parliamentarians and Transport Canada bureaucrats since the onset of the pandemic, according to the lobbyist registry.

Mr. Buy cited relaxing the regulation that forced ferry riders to leave their cars during the voyage as a key example.

"Right at the outset they enabled passengers to remain in closed car decks. That enabled ferry operators to make sure passengers would not go on bridges and spread COVID," Mr. Buy said.

That regulation was intended to make it easier for ferry operators to ensure a safe and orderly evacuation, should that come to pass. On March 17, Transport Canada and the Canadian Ferry Association announced the regulation would be suspended so that passengers could stay in their cars and effectively maintain a distance from each other.

On Sept. 30, however, the regulation was put back into place because adequate safety measures had been put into place to ensure passengers could remain COVID-19-safe outside their cars, and remaining in one's car still presented a safety risk in the event of an emergency, the release said.

Mr. Buy said there are legitimate questions to be asked around whether this was the right decision, especially during the second wave of the pandemic, but that he understands the need to balance COVID safety measures with regular ferry safety measures.

For Green Party MP and parliamentary caucus leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.), reimposing the regulation was the wrong decision, calling it a "huge mistake."

"People clearly are safer in their cars than mingling with other passengers on the upper decks," she said. She said she understood "that people shouldn't be in their cars if a boat is sinking" but argued the B.C. waterways in question are very calm, and a departmental risk assessment could be done to figure out whether people remaining in their cars actually does present such a safety risk, even on calm waters, that it justifies forcing people out of their cars during a pandemic.

Daniel Robert-Gooch, president of the Canadian Airports Council, praised the department for its "tireless" work and "moving quickly in the spring" to help airports on regulatory matters as they grappled with the onset of the pandemic. Certain airport workers with specific technical skills need recurrent training, but the department has been flexible in allowing them to continue working without the normal cer-

tifications that would be logistically onerous, Mr. Gooch said. As the pandemic continued, however, some frustration set in.

Mr. Gooch said the work on introducing COVID testing at airports has not moved fast enough. On Oct. 22, the Alberta provincial government and the federal government announced a pilot program to test whether introducing a rapid testing and monitoring regime at airports could help reduce the 14-day quarantine for international travellers.



Transport Minister Marc Garneau and his department has been quietly working behind the scenes on a myriad of regulatory issues to help keep the transportation system COVID-19-safe. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In September, before the government-sponsored pilot project began, airports and airlines had taken matters into their own hands, partnering with universities to get testing done at airports to collect data to see if the 14-day quarantine could be reduced. These trials are currently underway in Toronto and Vancouver.

Currently, Calgary International Airport is the only airport in the country running the pilot project, which began on Nov. 2. Upon arrival, international travellers get a test and are still required to quarantine, but if the test comes back negative they are allowed to leave quarantine if they commit to taking a second test six or seven days later at a pharmacy. Individuals are also monitored through daily symptom checks.

"What we've seen is bookings have really gone up," Mr. Gooch said. "Since Calgary put that in, there is demand. People want to travel, they want to feel safe about it, and they don't want to be shamed for it."

"We want to see it expanded," he said.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford said on Nov. 9 that he is interested in doing a similar project in his province.

"I want to start getting people tested as they're coming off rather than isolating for 14 days. Let's get them tested immediately when they come off the plane, and test them again five or six days later," Mr. Ford said.

Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, Alta.), her party's transport critic, praised Mr. Garneau for how open he has been with sharing information and collaborating with the opposition. Ms. Kusie was named to the position after Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) won the Conservative leadership race and shuffled the critic roles.

"The minister has been more than gracious with me. We actually had a really nice personal conversation to kick off the

than the Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility (LEEFF) and the wage subsidy, but there's nothing there yet."

ISG Senator Donna Dasko (Ontario), a member of the Senate Transport Committee, said she thinks announcing a relief package took longer than other countries because "they just didn't know exactly what to do."

Ambarish Chandra, an economics professor at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto who specializes in aviation, echoed Sen. Dasko's comments.

"I think they were waiting to see, and I don't think that was a bad thing to do. A lot of sectors needed attention. I'm glad they didn't prioritize airlines as early as other countries. They needed time to get more information about the long term survival of key players in the sector," Prof. Chandra said.

He added that there is still a big potential risk to providing support given that the "competitive nature of the industry might look very different" because of the pandemic. He said there is a risk of providing support to a certain company that might have monopoly power in the future.

"So what you don't want to be doing is bailing out a firm that's going to be a monopolist in the future, which is then going to just extract monopoly rents," he said.

Prof. Chandra said that it will likely be very difficult for the government to actually ensure airlines continue to adhere to the conditions set on a relief package, like continuing to fly regional routes.

"It's difficult to encourage carriers to fly regional routes. The only way to do it is if you provide straight out subsidies for these routes or write it into the conditions. They could do that, but it's a difficult thing to micromanage," he said. "What I would rather see is, like we're seeing in Europe, for the government to take direct stakes in these companies."

He acknowledged this would spark huge opposition from the industry, but argued the industry has scant leverage. Prof. Chandra said it would probably be easier for the government to ensure compliance with the terms in the years down the road if they had a seat at the table.

Karl Moore, professor of strategy and organization at McGill University, said there are lessons to be learned from the German government taking a stake in Lufthansa. He said once the industry returns to some semblance of pre-pandemic operation, the German taxpayers "will gain from their investment in theory, and hopefully in practice" and that this is made more likely by the German government agreeing to be a "silent partner."

"In the ownership position, the challenge is, can the federal government be a silent partner? I think it would be tempting for politicians to not be a silent partner," he said.

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CN wants to build a **world-class, environmentally advanced** intermodal facility — in Milton, Ontario

The proposed shovel-ready, privately-funded Milton Logistics Hub would support Canada's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, while benefiting the environment.

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Shipping by rail is four times more fuel-efficient than trucking alone. A single intermodal train removes approximately 300 long-haul trucks from our clogged highways. Since it would receive four trains daily, the Milton facility would in effect remove more than 400,000 long-haul diesel trucks annually from Ontario roadways, significantly reducing greenhouse gas and other air emissions.

CN is investing in a strong, sustainable future for Canada.
It's why we want to build the Milton Logistics Hub.

Transportation Policy Briefing



The global collapse of air travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is without precedent in the century since the dawn of international commercial aviation. Many passengers have experienced frustration, including, for some, exasperation about not getting refunds for cancelled flights. Airlines, meanwhile, have curtailed operations, mothballed aircraft, and laid off tens of thousands of employees. All this happened just months after new Air Passenger Protection Regulations (APPR) fully came into effect on Dec. 15, 2019, writes Scott Streiner. *Image courtesy of Pixabay*

Air passenger protection during and beyond the pandemic

The Canadian Transportation Agency has been hard at work implementing the Air Passenger Protection Regulations, and CEO Scott Streiner writes that ‘consideration should be given to expanding airlines’ minimum obligations when flights are disrupted for reasons outside their control, to ensure that no passenger is ever again at risk of losing the value of a cancelled flight when rebooking doesn’t meet their needs.’



Scott Streiner

Opinion

The global collapse of air travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is without precedent in the century since the dawn of international commercial aviation. Many passengers have experienced frustration, including, for some, exasperation about not getting refunds for cancelled flights. Airlines, meanwhile, have curtailed operations, mothballed aircraft, and laid off tens of thousands of employees.

All this happened just months after new Air Passenger Protection Regulations (APPR) fully came into effect on Dec. 15, 2019.

The APPR were made by the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA)—an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal and regulator—pursuant to authorities given to it by Parliament. The APPR set out airlines’ minimum obligations towards passengers for a range of common concerns, including communications, tarmac delays, flight disruptions, denied boarding, lost baggage, and the seating of families together.

Of course, flight disruptions have been the air travel issue most on people’s minds since March. Consistent with the legislative framework, passengers’ rights under the APPR when flights are delayed or cancelled depend on whether that occurs for reasons fully within the airline’s control, within the airline’s

control but required for safety, or outside the airline’s control.

For delays and cancellations in the first category, airlines must pay compensation for inconvenience if passengers arrive at their destination three hours or more past the scheduled time. For both the first and second categories, passenger entitlements include, depending on the circumstances, things like food, drink, accommodation, and—of particular interest in the current circumstances—refunds if flights are cancelled and rebooking doesn’t meet a passenger’s need.

But for the third category—when a flight’s delayed or cancelled for reasons beyond an airline’s control—the legislation only allows inclusion of one airline obligation in the APPR: to ensure passengers complete their itineraries. Perhaps the law was framed this way because at the time it was passed, disruptions outside airlines’ control were expected to be localized and short-term. Regardless, the CTA works within the authorities and resources Parliament gives it.

Alongside the APPR, passengers get entitlements through each airline’s individual tariffs—the contracts of carriage outlining the terms and conditions of its service. Tariffs address matters beyond those covered by the APPR and, if the airline chooses, can go further than the APPR in the areas it does cover. For example, a tariff might provide for refunds for cancellations outside the airline’s control, especially when passengers pay extra for a refundable ticket.

If passengers think an airline hasn’t respected the APPR or its tariff and can’t resolve the issue directly with the airline, or if they believe tariff terms aren’t reasonable, they can complain to the CTA. We deal with every complaint on its merits.

Over the last 11 months, Canadians have filed complaints in record numbers. About 11,000 did so in the three months between the day the APPR fully took effect and mid-March, when the pandemic threw air travel into turmoil. Another 10,000 have submitted complaints since then. By way of comparison, the CTA received just 800 complaints in all of 2015. Such a massive surge in volumes is almost unheard of for any tribunal. In the interests of fairness, the CTA generally processes complaints on a first-in-first-out basis.

About 3,000 of the complaints made in the months immediately after the APPR came into force allege that airlines failed to respect their communications-related obligations under the APPR. The CTA launched a major inquiry to examine these allegations, and recently published the report of the Inquiry Officer assigned to collect evidence on them.

In addition, despite teleworking since the start of the pandemic, the CTA’s dedicated public servants have dealt with thousands more complaints through efficient, informal facilitation and mediation services, avoiding the need for more formal adjudication. Less than two per cent of the complaints on our books predate Dec. 15, 2019, and only one per

cent of complaints end up in adjudication.

Thanks to these efforts, we’ll soon be able to begin processing complaints submitted after the pandemic struck, half of which concern refunds for cancelled flights. It’s possible some of the refund-related complaints will be resolved in short order if recently announced negotiations between the government and airlines on financial assistance result in the issuance of more refunds. That would, of course, be welcome news for passengers. We’ll be monitoring developments closely and checking with each complainant to see if they’ve received a refund or want to proceed with their case.

Looking forward, consideration should be given to expanding airlines’ minimum obligations when flights are disrupted for reasons outside their control, to ensure that no passenger is ever again at risk of losing the value of a cancelled flight when rebooking doesn’t meet their needs. If the CTA is provided with authority to amend the APPR to address such situations, we’ll act quickly.

This has been a difficult time for passengers and airlines, but better days lie ahead. Eventually, conditions will allow growing numbers of Canadians to fly. Through and beyond the pandemic period, the APPR will be there to protect travellers—and the CTA will continue making sure its requirements are understood and respected.

Scott Streiner is the chair and CEO of the Canadian Transportation Agency.

The Hill Times

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Transportation Policy Briefing

Canada's aviation sector needs a plan

Canada cannot expect a full economic recovery without support for the aviation sector.



Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie

Opinion

Canada's aviation sector has been on the front lines of this pandemic since the very beginning. With the effects of the virus still very much unknown, airline workers stepped up to the challenge and focused on repatriating Canadians from abroad and delivering PPE. If the planes were not carrying the 10,673 Canadians home from abroad, they were transporting face masks and medical equipment to Canada from around the globe. However, in the months following the start of the pandemic, flight attendants and baggage handlers were furloughed, pilots struggled to get flight hours, passengers' flights were cancelled, air traffic controllers were laid off, and service jobs in airports became virtually non-existent.

COVID-19 has been devastating for aviation in Canada and around the world. Since the pandemic hit eight months ago, we have seen Canada's largest airlines face catastrophic financial losses and cut dozens of routes across Canada. The sector continues to suffer from a lack of passenger demand largely due to current travel restrictions and advisories, with no immediate end in sight. The devastation to the industry is not only impacting the aviation workers but will lead to severe consequences for Canada's economy.

Canadians are unfortunately no longer as interconnected as they once were before the pandemic. Due to a drastic decrease in revenues, Air Canada was forced to suspend 30 regional routes, and WestJet made the difficult decision to stop servicing Atlantic Canada altogether. Regional airports are large



Canadians are unfortunately no longer as interconnected as they once were before the pandemic. Due to a drastic decrease in revenues, Air Canada was forced to suspend 30 regional routes, and WestJet, pictured, made the difficult decision to stop servicing Atlantic Canada altogether. Image courtesy of Commons Wikimedia

economic proponents for small communities, generating 25,000 indirect jobs nationwide. Small communities rely on these regional routes, as they need to receive and transport essential goods and services. Regional service is also directly linked

to international service, as it is a proponent of tourism beyond major cities. Our carriers have been working hard for years to build regional networks across the country, connecting small communities to larger hubs. Unfortunately, restoring these

regional routes is not an easy fix and could have a lasting impact on transportation in Canada.

Canadian airlines are also struggling to compete internationally. In October 2020, the main carriers in the United States were operating at approximately 50 per cent of their typical capacity whereas Canada's airlines are only operating at approximately 25 per cent. As a result, there are substantial concerns about our airlines remaining competitive. Concerns around competitiveness are not just with the United States. In October of 2019, Canadian airline carriers held an approximate 64 per cent capacity share of transatlantic service while European carriers held 36 per cent, and by October 2020, Canadian and European carriers each held 50 per cent. Canadian carriers are forced to compete with foreign carriers who have received substantial government support. These foreign carriers will ultimately be better equipped to increase their levels of service, increase flight frequency and secure additional market shares. This is also something that is not easy to be regained by our airlines.

A failing aviation sector will inevitably have a detrimental effect on Canada's overall economy. While air cargo may only account

for one per cent of Canada's international trade by volume, it can represent as much as 25 per cent of exports outside of the United States by value. It is clear that air transportation is critical for international trade. Travel restrictions from COVID-19 are expected to result in drastic decreases to Canada's GDP by up to 1.7 per cent. We can also expect to see permanent job losses of up to 500,000 people, almost three per cent of total employment in the sector in 2019. Unfortunately, the longer travel restrictions are in place, the slower the economic recovery will be for the aviation sector.

The aviation sector has been calling on the government for months to develop a plan, but the government continues to keep us waiting. Our aviation workers were there for us since the beginning of this pandemic, and now it is our turn to assure them that they will have a viable aviation sector to return to when the fight against COVID-19 is behind us. Our airlines and airports needed to see federal action months ago and as a result of this delay our aviation sector and economy will face lasting impacts.

Conservative MP Stephanie Kusie represents Calgary Midnapore, Alta., and is the Conservative critic for transport.

The Hill Times



International arrivals inside the Vancouver International Airport, pictured July 20, 2019. COVID-19 has been devastating for aviation in Canada and around the world. Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia

Policy Briefing Transportation

Public transit in crisis

When we talk about transportation, we need to apply a climate and a social justice lens. Safe, reliable, convenient, zero-carbon public transit, whether for urban or rural Canadians, is within our reach, writes Green MP Elizabeth May.



Green Parliamentary Leader
Elizabeth May

Opinion

Greens have long called for significant investments in public transit. The reasons are obvious. Transportation, movement of goods and people, is a huge chunk of Canada's contribution to global warming. Second only to oil and gas, transportation at 186 megatonnes is 25.5 per cent of our total emissions (729 MT in 2018,

the last year for which figures are available).

Eliminating the internal combustion engine to move to zero-emission vehicles is key. Infrastructure discussions now include the need for electricity corridor connectivity between provinces, more inter-ties and smart grids. The House Environment Committee has been hearing evidence on the need for charging stations and ancillary issues of costs and jurisdiction. But as positive as those moves are, moving to zero-emission vehicles only deals with some of the downsides of dependence on the personal automobile. It leaves out people who cannot afford a car. And it allows cars to continue to occupy vast amounts of space, dominating urban design.

As well, most discussion of public transit almost invariably

focuses on urban centres. The real crisis in Canada's public transit system is in rural and remote areas. It was a clear finding of the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls that Indigenous women, marginalized and two-spirit people are put at risk by the lack of affordable and available public transit. Across most of Canada's vast geography getting from A to B requires a personal vehicle or a flight. The alternative, hitch-hiking, puts marginalized people at risk.

In the last few years, private sector bus service has disappeared from much of Canada. Bus service is no longer available in remote and rural areas of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Atlantic Canada. The need to focus on VIA Rail as a key part of Canada's public transit system has never been greater.

With the loss of bus service, people of limited income are turning in increasing numbers to VIA Rail's quite limited service outside the Windsor-Quebec Corridor. Only three days a week are trains available on the transcontinental routes (from Toronto to Vancouver and from Montreal to

Halifax). But riding economy does allow relatively affordable travel between remote and little serviced communities. VIA Rail crew members have told me the so-called "Greyhound effect" has created new stresses to meet increased demands in the economy cars.

Since early spring these routes have been suspended due to COVID-19. Only Vancouver to Winnipeg service is to be partially restored with one trip a week by December 11, with no word on the Montreal to Halifax route or Toronto to Winnipeg.

In 2016, a very disturbing recommendation was made by the Canada Transportation Act Review, chaired by David Emerson. Among many recommendations was the proposal to eliminate VIA Rail's transcontinental lines, reducing service to only the Windsor-Quebec corridor. In the context of loss of bus service, this is a non-starter. No modern society should kill its passenger rail service, but I fear we may be close to doing so.

Unlike in the United States where Amtrak has a statutory obligation to provide passenger rail service, VIA has no legislative framework. That is why I have introduced Bill C-251 to estab-

lish a statutory foundation and ensure VIA is managed in order to meet a fundamental need across Canada—passenger rail service.

Meanwhile, remote areas are also losing regional air service. Just as in the case of bus service, the private sector is walking away from obligations to meet the needs of Canadians living outside more profitable areas.

Can we meet the Speech from the Throne commitment to climate action and the commitment to invest in air service? It will not happen over-night, but perhaps we can achieve it with a commitment to move to zero emission flights. This is no longer a pipe dream. Harbour Air, the first carbon neutral airline in the world, is now aiming to be the first electric battery powered airline with zero-emissions. It took its first electric flight in 2019 and is now gearing up to convert its fleet of seaplanes. Electrification could meet short-haul flights and 75 per cent of all flights world-wide are under 1600 km. An investment in electrified flight could be a world-beater for Canada.

When we talk about transportation, we need to apply a climate and a social justice lens. Safe, reliable, convenient, zero-carbon public transit—whether for urban or rural Canadians—is within our reach.

Elizabeth May is the MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C., and the Green Party parliamentary leader.

The Hill Times

Electric vehicles alone are not a panacea

Electrifying Canada's fleet must be pursued alongside support for other, less carbon-intensive forms of transportation like busses, bikes, and trains.

BY ALEXANDRE MILOVANOFF, I. DANIEL POSEN & HEATHER L. MACLEAN

Electric vehicles (EVs) are finding their way onto our roads. But are they coming fast enough to help us reach our climate goals? And do they free us from the need to fundamentally rethink our transportation systems? Unfortunately, the answers are likely "no."

For EV enthusiasts like us, these are exciting times: Canada aims for all new sales to be zero-emission vehicles by 2040, the federal and Ontario governments have invested \$500-million in the production of EVs, and about 350 new EV models could appear on our roads in the coming years.

Of course, the term zero-emission vehicles paints a rosy picture that overlooks some important challenges.

Battery EVs, such as the Tesla Model 3—the best selling EV in Canada in 2020—have no tailpipe emissions. But they are not zero-emission vehicles. Their electric batteries are energy intensive to produce and predominantly come from China, a heavily coal-based economy. The electricity to charge EVs is not burden-free; 18 per cent of Canada's electricity is produced from fossil fuels with important associated greenhouse gas emissions. Even low carbon sources like nuclear and hydro have some emissions associated with fuel processing and plant construction.

To compare EVs fairly with conventional internal combustion vehicles, researchers like us compare the emissions over the full vehicle lifetime with a tool called Life Cycle Assessment. When we do so, EVs have about 60 per cent lower carbon emissions than conventional gasoline vehicles on average in Canada. But the reductions can reach 75 per cent with low carbon hydroelectricity, such as in Quebec, or can potentially disappear (at least compared to efficient conventional vehicles) in a heavily fossil fuel-based electricity system such as the 2019 grid in Alberta or Nova Scotia.

On balance, EVs have substantial climate (and air quality) benefits compared with conventional vehicles. Policies encouraging EVs are thus necessary and advisable. But, given the current

electrification pace, will they happen fast enough to hold the increase in global temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, as pledged by world leaders in 2015?

We asked this question for the United States in our latest study. And the results were worrying. We found that following current trends in travel behaviour and rapid electricity decarbonization, the U.S. would need 90 per cent of private light-duty vehicles to be EVs in 2050. That would require all new vehicles sold starting in 2035 to be EVs, just 15 years from now.

In comparison, EVs currently represent only about 0.3 per cent of the U.S. fleet, and the most optimistic projections from the International Energy Agency suggest that this number could reach 50 per cent in 2050, far below our 90 per cent projected requirement.

Faster EV adoption requires us to rapidly overcome many challenges: range anxiety, higher purchase price for EVs, and limited availability of charging infrastructure. And the current policy pathway in the U.S. is far from adequate.

But even if we overcome these challenges, more technical challenges lie ahead of us. A massive electrification of the fleet will create unprecedented stresses to the supply chains of many critical materials—such as lithium, cobalt and manganese. And vast new

capacity of renewable energy sources and transmission lines would need to be installed, and to be coordinated with the EVs.

This analysis provides lessons that are applicable to Canada. We have among the highest average energy consumption per vehicle—higher than in the U.S., because we love large and heavy vehicles—and one of the highest per capita private vehicle ownership rates in the world. And the current policy pathway falls short even to meet Canada's official target of 100 per cent EVs by 2040.

Maybe it is time to rethink our priorities and ask a critical question: Do we need so many vehicles on the road?

In a nutshell, strategies to reduce carbon emissions fall into three main categories: avoid the need for travel, shift to lower carbon transportation modes, and improve the technologies. EVs only deal with one aspect of the problem, the technological one.

Private vehicles are more energy intensive to operate per passenger than buses, trains or bikes. And, in many jurisdictions, EVs do not decrease the carbon emissions per passenger compared with public transit, even compared with internal combustion engine buses.

In the end, we must not lose sight of the primary need: to reduce the number of conventional private vehicles on the road. EVs

are one way to do this, but they are not the only way—or even the best way. Yes, we should electrify our fleet, but EVs must be pursued alongside strong support for buses, trains and bikes. The latter can also bring additional benefits in terms of equity, access, community and healthy living. We need larger, safer, and more reliable infrastructure for public transit and active modes like cycling and walking. And we need to electrify all cars and buses.

Unfortunately, this message is easily lost amid the excitement over easy technological solutions. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen decreases in public transit ridership in North America. At the same time, vehicle ownership and ride-hailing (Uber, Lyft) have gone up. And the pandemic has, understandably, worsened the trends.

If we truly want to solve our climate problems, governments need to massively invest in public transit, cycling and walking infrastructure, and in EVs. And we need to drive less, in smaller cars.

Dr. Alexandre Milovanoff is a researcher, Dr. I. Daniel Posen is an assistant professor and Dr. Heather L. MacLean is a professor in the Department of Civil & Mineral Engineering at the University of Toronto. Their research focuses on the environmental evaluation of energy systems.

The Hill Times

Transportation Policy Briefing

The future of sustainable urban environments after COVID-19

The time to support a vision for public transportation is now.



Jesse Steinberg

Opinion

The pandemic has highlighted the role of public transit in sustainable urban centres, and two visions of the future are taking shape. The first sees increasing remote work, changing consumer behaviour, and continuing ambivalence towards crowds and public spaces. In short, a future

of automobile-centric sprawl. The second leverages a post-pandemic recovery plan to support our renewed ambitions for low-carbon urban transformation.

Realizing this second vision will require a continued commitment to transit-supportive development, creating a national active transportation strategy, and supporting public transit agencies as they adapt to new and uncertain environments.

There are early warnings of the first vision coming true. Public transit ridership in Canada in June was almost 75 per cent lower than last year. Operating revenues were down by 77 per cent. Fortunately, this crisis has been acknowledged by federal, provincial and territorial governments. Public transit funding was prioritized through the Safe Restart Agreements and this infusion of funds is helping to stabilize transit operations.

However, commuting patterns during the pandemic are strongly favouring driving vehicles. Remote

work and public health concerns have led to much sharper reductions in the use of public transit. Less than one-quarter of people who commuted to work by transit before the pandemic are still doing so. If this persists, public transit could be condemned to secular decline.

Where does this leave us?

Over the last 15 years, governments have invested tens of billions of dollars in improving the quality of public transit. Combined with smart land use planning, these investments are encouraging more sustainable patterns of urban development and mobility. We should not turn our back on these hard-won gains. We should remain focused on creating cities that are environmentally sustainable and contributing to Canada's low carbon transition. Sustainable cities are vibrant, foster opportunities for active civic engagement, are efficient, economically productive, equitable and inclusive.

Changes in recent months prompted by COVID-19 highlight

the inequalities of living and working in a pandemic. Although three-quarters of transit commuters have made other arrangements, those who continue to rely on public transit tend to have lower incomes and are employed in front-line sectors where remote work is not an option. This reminds us of the critical role public transit plays in a sustainable vision for our cities.

These are uncertain times for urban transportation. The pandemic is magnifying the potential impacts of technological disruption. Innovations in shared mobility, micro-transit, and autonomous vehicles will continue posing deep questions about the future of sustainable transportation. It is here where we see the outlines of the second vision.

The resources of a post-pandemic recovery plan should support our renewed ambitions for low-carbon urban transformation. This vision affirms a commitment to sustainable mobility while adapting to new and uncertain

conditions. First, it prioritizes the ongoing renewal of public transit by investing in both strategic capital projects and operations. These investments need to continue being tied to integrated planning and quality urban design.

Second, a recovery plan for sustainable cities can capitalize on the popularity of cycling and active transportation. During the pandemic, these modes have benefited from a decline in traffic and the unlocking of urban space. This is an opportune time to create a national active transportation strategy.

Finally, this recovery vision supports public transit agencies as they innovate and adapt. In a post-pandemic context, for example, agencies may focus less attention on the problem of peak-hour commuting and evolve to become managers of more expansive shared-mobility ecosystems.

It is impossible to know exactly what the future holds for cities. Nevertheless, we should navigate this uncertainty guided by principles of sustainability. These are principles rooted in shared ideas about the kinds of cities we want to build and the kind of urban life we want to return to after the pandemic.

Jesse Steinberg is a research associate for urban transformation at the Conference Board of Canada.

The Hill Times

We must innovate today, so that we can fly tomorrow

COVID-19 continues to have devastating impacts on the air transport sector. Early in the pandemic, approximately 80 per cent of the world's passenger airline fleet was grounded. In a matter of months hundreds of thousands of airline employees worldwide were dismissed or furloughed (on unpaid leave).



Suzanne Kearns

Opinion

Federal petition e-2867 has been brought forward to support Canada's aviation sector, collecting more than 14,000 signatures thus far. This petition requests federal support for aviation financial sustainability, a national aviation strategy to support pandemic recovery, and a sustainable border control approach.

A key theme in the petition is supporting the sustainability of the air transport sector. Sustainability is made up of three pillars: economic, environmental, and social. Without question, Canadian aviation's most pressing need is financial support to help our operators survive this crisis. Managing environmental

impacts is also a critically important challenge that needs to be addressed. However, this pandemic has highlighted the lack of social sustainability in aviation, which should be a principal element of our national recovery strategy. Social sustainability considers aspects of quality of life, equity, diversity, and connectedness, and has sadly received little attention relative to economic and environmental considerations in aviation.

It's challenging to grasp the far-reaching economic and social harm this pandemic has caused to aviation workers and the sector at large. Not seeing a future in aviation, many aviators are choosing to leave the industry altogether to pursue professions in other fields. In October of 2020, hundreds of Canadian aviation workers demonstrated outside Parliament Hill to ask the federal government to release a plan to restart aviation, bringing awareness to this issue.

Setting aside the passion that aviators share for flight—there are various challenges inherent in aviation careers, including financial barriers to entry, low starting pay, challenging training and

travel schedules, rigorous medical standards, and a lack of gender and ethnic diversity.

Before the pandemic, there was a looming shortage of aviation professionals in Canada and across the globe (pilots, maintenance engineers, and others). At that time, aircraft operators were increasingly reporting cancellations of flights due to a lack of available crew.

Although there is no shortage of aviation professionals during the pandemic, we must look to the future and recognize that recoveries follow downturns. We began 2020 with pre-existing aviation personnel shortages. When this is coupled with thousands of aviation professionals leaving the sector mid-pandemic, and youth being discouraged from joining the field, international aviation will face desperate personnel shortages in the years ahead without support. Countries that invest in innovation and cross-sector partnerships during this time are likely to emerge as leaders supporting the future, more sustainable, air transport sector.

Boeing's recently updated 'Pilot and Technician Forecast' predicts between the years 2020 and 2039, 763,000 pilots, 739,000 maintenance technicians, and 903,000 cabin crew members will be needed internationally. After long-bouts in quarantine, travel and tourism demand will be high once society can return to a new normal.

A sustainable air transport sector will be a critical component of post-pandemic economic recovery. Yet, without a competent



Federal petition e-2867 has been brought forward to support Canada's aviation sector, collecting more than 14,000 signatures thus far. This petition requests federal support for aviation financial sustainability, a national aviation strategy to support pandemic recovery, and a sustainable border control approach, writes Suzanne Kearns. Image courtesy of René Rauschenberger/Pixabay

and ready workforce, this recovery will be difficult. Therefore, I propose that a national aviation strategy include the following elements with an explicit emphasis on the three pillars of economic, environmental, and social sustainability:

Research—to support the development of a competent and ready aviation workforce, we need to catalyze and grow science-based approaches to attract, educate, and retain the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP). NGAP research is multidisciplinary, for example, using modern learning technologies (such as virtual-reality flight simulators), machine learning, and artificial intelligence to improve the efficiency of pilot training.

Air & Space Centre of Excellence—our national aviation strategy should include the development of a 'think tank' that brings together strategic cross-sector partnerships to address the challenges facing aviation and aerospace in Canada.

IATA estimates that in normal times, air transport supports 633,000 Canadian jobs and accounts for 3.2 per cent of our GDP. Aviation has played a vital role in supporting Canadians during the pandemic, delivering life-saving medical goods and ensuring the global supply chain continues to deliver time-sensitive cargo. Air transport will also be critical in the timely distribution of an eventual COVID-19 vaccine.

Without swift action, Canada's air transport sector is unsustainable. Yet, this downturn presents an opportunity to analyze and resolve some of the critical challenges facing aviation pre-pandemic, innovate towards a better future, and support Canada's continued role as an innovation leader in international aviation.

Suzanne Kearns is an associate professor of geography and aviation at the University of Waterloo.

The Hill Times

Policy Briefing Transportation

Canada is slowly rolling towards low-carbon transport

If Canada wants to get serious about climate change, it needs to amp up on ambition, investment, and regulatory action within the transport sector specifically.



Ryan Katz-Rosene

Opinion

Last year, the federal government recognized climate change as an “emergency,” yet one doesn’t get much of a sense of urgency when reviewing the government’s efforts to curtail greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the transport sector. While every other sector of Canada’s economy has seen emissions reductions since 2005, emissions from transport have grown substantially over this time (by +14 per cent). It is the transport sector that is most responsible for keeping Canada from meeting its international commitments under the Paris Agreement. If Canada wants to get serious about climate change, it needs to amp up on ambition, investment, and regulatory action within the transport sector specifically.

True, the government has enacted some tools to help manage emissions growth in the transport sector—perhaps the most promising of these is the proposed clean fuel standard, which is supposed to be rolled out before the end of this year, and requires fuel suppliers to reduce the emissions intensity of the fuels they sell. Yet these tools, while helpful, amount to far too little as they remain mired by incrementalism and place too much faith in the power of market forces. Here are four main areas where the government needs to step up in a way that complements the clean fuel standard and carbon taxes through additional regulations and investments:

Place mandatory zero-emission vehicle production targets on big auto. First off, it is time for Canada to take a more aggressive regulatory approach to the big car companies. One of the main drivers of transport emissions growth in Canada is an increasing number of light-duty passenger trucks. But we need to ask, if



Transport Minister Marc Garneau, pictured May 1, 2019, using the charging station for electric vehicles in the West Block parking lot to mark the coming-into-effect of the Incentive for Zero-Emission Vehicles Program. If the climate emergency is to be addressed within the transport sector, the government will have to redouble its financial commitments to urban transit—there is simply no way around this, writes Ryan Katz-Rosene. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

we’re facing a climate emergency why are car companies allowed to produce and sell conventional gas-burning vehicles in the first place, when hybrid and fully electric models offer perfectly suitable alternatives? The federal government is currently aiming for only 10 per cent of the light-duty vehicle sales per year to be electric by 2025. While other jurisdictions like California or Norway have already met that threshold and implemented zero-emissions vehicle mandates, Canada is wasting precious time and cowing to pressure from the auto sector to delay ambitious action. Readers may recall that the government of Canada bailed out the auto sector to the tune of billions of dollars in 2008; it then wrote off much of the outstanding loans a decade later—why does it not seek to use that as leverage to make more ambitious demands from vehicle producers?

Develop a strategy for long-distance transport. Canada is a big country, and right now there are very few options for low-carbon transport for long-distance intercity travel. Not only are long-distance trains outside of the

Quebec-Windsor corridor more polluting on a per passenger basis than flying, but even within the corridor VIA Rail’s environmental performance is orders of magnitude worse than the international average rail emissions factors. Meanwhile, long distance coach bus services have been decimated in recent years, and plummeting demand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has placed this sub-sector on life support. In short, the situation is critical, as there is almost no way to travel between urban areas in Canada without generating a very large carbon footprint. Governments ought to intervene and invest in supporting low-carbon options for long distance travel, whether it’s supporting the development of alternative low-carbon fuels, buying new rolling stock and improving VIA’s access to rail infrastructure, or supporting regional projects aiming to connect Canada’s largest cities with both proven and experimental low-carbon transport technologies.

Make low-carbon urban transit part of the COVID-recovery. In late 2019, the newly formed Trudeau government took a step forward in

supporting the development of low-carbon urban transit infrastructure, in part by supporting the procurement of electric buses and urban rail projects. However, policy-makers must recognize just how significant the COVID-19 pandemic has been in terms of decimating urban transit operators. Like intercity coach services, urban transit “is in grave danger of entering a death spiral” in Canada (as Marco D’Angelo of the Canadian Urban Transit Association recently put it). If the climate emergency is to be addressed within the transport sector, the government will have to redouble its financial commitments to urban transit—there is simply no way around this. The post-COVID recovery is the perfect opportunity to make those ambitious investments, which tend to pay dividends in the long run, through a long list of social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Develop manufacturing capacity in low-carbon transport supply chains. The Canadian government could be doing much more to facilitate the transition from R&D in nascent low-carbon industries through to actual manufacturing. Be it in batteries, ‘green’ or ‘blue’

hydrogen fuel production, third-generation biofuels, etc., there is tremendous potential for Canada to be a global leader in provisioning these supply chains. But government has a crucial role to play in helping to get from the R&D phase to manufacturing. Electric vehicle batteries offer a poignant example: a hodgepodge of small targeted investments hasn’t resulted in any new industrial capacity, leaving experts to demand “bold and comprehensive action” from the federal government.

Canada is rolling towards low carbon transport at a snail’s pace. The incremental and mostly market-based mechanisms introduced thus far have yet to show dividends. If the Government of Canada truly believes that climate change present a genuine emergency—and there’s good reason to believe so—then it needs to step up ambition and put the pedal to the metal.

Ryan Katz-Rosene is an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa’s School of Political Studies, and the president of the Environmental Studies Association of Canada.

The Hill Times

Liberal MPs expect Biden to revive ‘mature, working relationship’ with Canada after four years of ‘chaotic’ Trump

Once the Biden administration takes over in January, the regular channels of communications between Canada and the U.S. are expected to open up and trade irritants to be resolved through proper negotiations. Also, Grit MPs say they expect disagreements to be worked out ‘like civilized people.’

Continued from page 1

The Hill Times. “It’ll be a return to something closer to a mature relationship.”



U.S. President Donald Trump, left, has refused to accept that U.S. president-elect Joe Biden, right, won the election on Nov. 7, but a number of world leaders, including Prime Minister Justin Trudeau have already congratulated Mr. Biden on his election win. Allan Lichtman, a distinguished professor of history at the American University in Washington, D.C., told *The Hill Times* that Mr. Trump's unprecedented refusal to accept the results is creating uncertainty about U.S. relations with international leaders. *The Hill Times* photographs Andrew Meade and photograph courtesy of the White House



vote on Nov. 7, Mr. Trump, in an unprecedented move, has refused to concede and has been making baseless claims about vote rigging without providing any evidence. His campaign has also taken the allegations of voter fraud to courts.

have died and more continue to die from COVID-19 and as the national and international economic downturn continues to damage economies around the world. As of Thursday, Nov. 12, there were 10.5 million confirmed cases of coronavirus in the U.S., the highest in the world.

“The problems become much more severe the longer this goes,” Max Stier, president of the non-partisan Partnership for Public Service, which assists on presidential transitions, including the current one, told *The Washington Post*, last week. “Our government is the biggest and most complex organization, not only in this country, but probably in the world and probably in history. So, taking it over effectively is a huge task.”

It’s unclear how an orderly transfer of power from the Trump to the Biden administration will take place if the incumbent refuses to accept the results.

Since running for the Republican Party candidacy for the 2016 presidential election, Mr. Trump has been blasting a number of countries, including Canada, for taking advantage of the U.S. on trade issues. Even before becoming president in 2016, Mr. Trump vowed that should he win the election, his administration would renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). After Mr. Trump came to power, Canada, U.S., and Mexico produced the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) that came into effect this summer. Throughout the four years of his government, Mr. Trump threatened to impose tariffs on Canadian exports to the U.S., and citing national security reasons, imposed hefty tariffs on the Canadian aluminium and steel in 2018, which were lifted in 2019. In August, the U.S. again imposed levies but backed off a few weeks later, as

Canada was about to announce its own retaliatory tariffs on U.S. exports to Canada.

Since Mr. Trump became president, the Trudeau government has been careful to not say anything that would annoy him, fearing that if anyone in his government did, then Mr. Trump could retaliate with trade tariffs or do something that would strain the relationship between the two countries. Even during the recently concluded presidential election campaign, the Liberals made sure not to say anything about the campaign as there was always a possibility that Mr. Trump might get upset.

est and weak,” and said the U.S. would not endorse a G7 communiqué.

Meanwhile, Mr. McKay said that once the new administration takes over, the regular channels of communications between the two countries would open up and trade irritants would be resolved through proper negotiations.

“I would imagine that once Biden settles into the White House, secretaries [cabinet ministers] are all briefed up and that the restoration of channels of communication will be priority No. 1, and the channels will look much more normal than what has happened in the last four years,” said Mr. McKay. “So a classic example of the on-again tariffs on steel and aluminum and off-again, and then threats to be back on and off again; I don’t expect the Biden administration to resort to the security exemption in order to be able to willy-nilly impose tariffs. So, it doesn’t mean that you won’t have softwood lumber disputes, doesn’t mean that there won’t be border issues. It just means that people will act like adults.”

Eight-term Liberal MP Judy Sgro (Humber River-Black Creek, Ont.) said that Mr. Biden’s election as president means more stability in the government compared to the “chaotic” style of governance of Mr. Trump. She said over the last four years it was always a concern for people to anticipate what the president would do if he did not like something or what he would do on any given issue, as



Liberal MP Wayne Easter, pictured left in this file photo with U.S. Iowa Republican Senator Chuck Grassley, who is today the longest serving Republican in the Senate and who last week joined the call for U.S. president-elect Joe Biden to receive daily intelligence briefings. The Trump administration is refusing to acknowledge Mr. Biden won the election. *Photograph courtesy of Twitter*

With Mr. Biden’s win in the Nov. 3 presidential election, the tumultuous Trump era—marred with domestic and international controversies—will officially draw to a close on Jan. 20, 2021, when the new president will take the oath of office. As of deadline last week, three states—Arizona, Georgia and North Carolina—were still too close to call. But Mr. Biden has already met the threshold of winning 270 electoral college votes needed to win the U.S. presidency. However, despite being declared the winner four days after the

Mr. Trump has ordered his officials not to cooperate with the Biden transition team, including refusing to provide intelligence briefings to the U.S. president-elect, refusing to release the funds necessary for the transition process, refusing to provide a secure telephone line for Mr. Biden to talk to international leaders, and refusing to release international congratulatory messages to Mr. Biden. After the election, Mr. Trump asked the U.S. Justice Department to find evidence of voter fraud.

All this is happening as more than 242,000 people in the U.S.



Liberal MP John McKay, chair of the powerful House Public Safety and National Security Committee, told *The Hill Times*: “I think that we will replace a chaotic regime with a working partnership where there will be disagreements, but, like civilized people, disagreements will be worked out.” *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

After the 2018 G7 meeting in Charlevoix, Que., Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) was specifically on the receiving end of a personal insult from Mr. Trump when on Twitter, he called the prime minister “very dishon-

his opinions changed frequently. Ms. Sgro said that stability is critical in any bilateral relationship, especially between Canada and

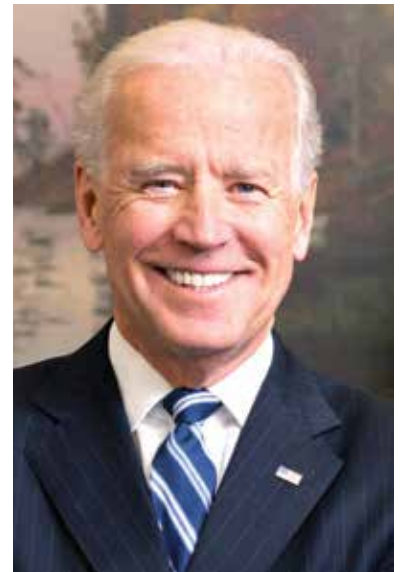
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Liberal MP Judy Sgro said U.S. president-elect Joe Biden will be a 'calm and steady hand,' and she criticized U.S. President Donald Trump for not accepting the election result, which she said is detrimental for democracy. *The Hill Times* photograph by Steve Gerecke

Drive-in rallies and scrapping platform announcements? What Canadian campaigns can learn from the U.S. election

'I can't think of an election where your advanced polls [are] going to be so integral to your ultimate result as the next one,' said John Delacourt.



Outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump, left, was defeated by Democratic challenger Joe Biden on Nov. 7, 2020, in this month's U.S. election, after the two ran campaigns with very different messages about the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Photographs courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

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Donald Trump in an election that was held Nov. 3, but in reality began weeks earlier, when voters began mailing in early ballots by the millions. Some ballots are still being counted, and Mr. Trump has refused to concede, but major U.S. news agencies are all projecting a victory for Mr. Biden, with the associated press reporting on Nov. 7 that he had won 290 electoral college votes, 20 more than is needed for victory.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump campaigned for the presidency while the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged the United States. In Canada, the second wave of the pandemic is continuing to grow, and an unstable minority national Parliament could trigger a federal election campaign on this side of the border before it subsides.

Mr. Trump held more than 300 public rallies during his campaign, packing tens of thousands of people at times into close quarters, contrary to the advice of public health officials around the world who have warned that large gatherings are spreading the virus quickly.

Canada's federal political parties are unlikely to imitate Mr. Trump's campaign rallies during a pandemic, said Robin Sears, a lobbyist at Earncliffe Strategy Group in Ottawa who has run four national campaigns for the NDP.

Canada's parties may, however, copy Mr. Biden's drive-in rallies if the pandemic has not subsided during the next campaign, he said.

Mr. Biden took to stages to speak to crowds of a few hundred people at a time, all of whom stayed inside their parked cars, a safe distance from one another. The smaller rallies were less risky, but could not accommodate nearly as many supporters.

Drive-in rallies would be the "conventional response" to the pandemic by every party in Canada, said Mr. Sears.

John Reynolds, a former Reform and Conservative Party MP who served as the co-chair for former prime minister Stephen Harper's successful 2006 election campaign, agreed that drive-in rallies would be a "good idea" for Canadian parties during a mid-pandemic election.

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the U.S., which was missing under Mr. Trump. She added that, unlike the outgoing president, the incoming president will bring American people together and not divide them.

"It's always been challenging dealing with President Trump," said Ms. Sgro, a former cabinet minister in the Paul Martin government. "And so I think now having President Biden at the helm, he's a calm, steady hand. And it'll be a salvation for the United States, the people of the United States, to have somebody that rather than incite them looks to try to bring them along in a peaceful way."

Ms. Sgro said that the current scenario where the incumbent president has lost the election, but is not accepting the outcome, is detrimental for democracy. She said this approach undermines the credibility of institutions in the eyes of the worldwide population. This situation is especially alarming because of the deadly pandemic which is wreaking havoc on the health and economic well-being of people in the U.S., and around the world, Ms. Sgro said. To deal with this deadly virus, everyone needs to come together, accept the election results and let the new administration come up with an effective strategy to deal with the pandemic, she said.

"Democracy is democracy, democracy has spoken," said Ms. Sgro. "And we need to move forward, we've got a pandemic to deal with. And that pandemic is affecting Canadians as well; affecting our ability to travel, the business [sector], the travel sector is hurting. If they care about the economy, then everybody needs to come together, wear their masks and follow the leadership of President Biden at this point."

Eight-term Liberal MP Wayne Easter (Malpeque, P.E.I.), chair of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group, said there will be significant differences between the substance and style of the outgoing and incoming presidents. But, he said, it will take six months to a year to get a good understanding of what the new administration means for Canada. The reason, he explained, is it's unclear what the final makeup of the U.S.

Senate will be or who will be in president-elect Biden's new administration. Also, he said, the pandemic has overshadowed everything and the first priority of the new administration will be to bring this spread of the virus under control. Mr. Easter said he does not know when the members of the Interparliamentary Group will hold their first meeting, but said it will be held once the results of the Senate are finalized, the new administration takes over, and the COVID-19 comes under control.

"I don't think you'll see much happen on that side [interparliamentary meetings] until we get out of COVID," said Mr. Easter. "The bottom line is that both our countries' wealth and prosperity is at stake, in terms of what we can do together to make North America competitive with the rest of the world."

Allan Lichtman, a distinguished professor of history at the American University in Washington, D.C., who has correctly predicted the outcome of all 10 presidential elections months before the election day, beginning in 1984, told *The Hill Times* that it's unprecedented for a U.S. president to refuse to accept the results of an election. As a consequence, Mr. Biden is not receiving the support from the administration in the transition process, which means he will not be properly prepared like other presidents when he comes to the office officially. Prof. Lichtman said this unprecedented response is creating uncertainty about U.S. relations with international leaders.

"We don't have kings and queens. We don't have that many rituals, but [we do have] the peaceful transfer of power, the concession by the losing candidate, the gracious concession speech, and the orderly transition is one of the most crucial democratic traditions in the United States," said Prof. Lichtman. "And not only does Donald Trump's direct attack on our democracy, but his failure to adhere to the normal processes of transition also undermine faith in American democracy, as well as weaken the ability of the incoming Biden administration to govern."

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Former Liberal strategist John Delacourt, who ran now-public safety minister Bill Blair's (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) 2015 election campaign, said the big parties are likely thinking about it already.

"It may be too early to say, but given the curve of the pandemic, I would think that all parties are seriously weighing this option," he said.

Door-to-door canvassing during a pandemic would be a challenge, but not impossible, said Mr. Sears. Campaigns should develop a plan to knock on doors that won't make voters uncomfortable—for example, securing phone numbers and texting ahead of time for permission to come knocking, wearing masks, and staying a safe distance away, he said.

Mr. Biden's victory was cemented by his large edge among voters who mailed in their ballots in swing states like Pennsylvania.

Getting out the vote early, by mail or through advanced polls, will likely be crucial for Canadian federal parties if the pandemic is still a threat when the next election campaign is underway, and Canadians look for a way to avoid the election-day crowds, the strategists said.

"People could look at the next election and say, 'hey, we'd better do a massive get-out-the-vote in advance for people who may or may not be able to get there.' You could win an election on that," said Mr. Reynolds.

To win the mail-in and advanced polling battle, local campaign teams will need to be able to contact supportive voters and "walk them through the process" of voting early, said Mr. Delacourt. If they don't, voters could be too confused to vote early, and too scared to vote on election day.

"I can't think of an election where your advanced polls [are]

going to be so integral to your ultimate result as the next one," he said.

Mr. Delacourt and Mr. Reynolds both said they did not expect the discrepancy in the use of mail-in ballots between Democrats and Republicans to carry over to Canada's right and left-leaning parties.

"I think the reasons Democrats did it and Republicans didn't is that they were just smarter," said Mr. Reynolds.

'The platform is written for the convention'

The simple communication strategy employed by Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump during the campaign is another lesson for the managers of the next federal campaign in Canada, said Mr. Sears.

"Biden basically gave the very same speech for a great number of days, and Trump did his sort of rant, with different components in different orders, but there was very little reference to policy out of the mouths of the candidates on the road," said Mr. Sears.

Canadian campaigns have in recent years tried harder to shape the media narrative with a new policy announcement each day, he said.

Mr. Sears said it is "arrogant" for campaigns to assume that they can convince the press to bend their coverage each day to reflect the policy issue that the campaign has chosen to highlight.

"I'm not sure that makes as much sense as repeated hammering home—with different anecdotes or stories to underpin it—what your message is."

"The platform is written for the convention," said Mr. Sears. peter@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

'A national emergency requires a coordinated, docs increase calls for coordinated federal-

'You don't have a lot of lead time—this is our lead time to prepare and to recognize that things are not going well,' said medical director of infection prevention and control at Toronto's University Health Network Dr. Susy Hota, six weeks out from the holiday season.

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pandemic will have on holiday planning—messaging that should come from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau—with Green Party Leader Annamie Paul calling for the establishment of an intergovernmental task force during a national emergency that requires a "coordinated, national plan."

"To me, the ideal responsible party for that [messaging] would be the federal government," said Mr. Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, B.C.), who noted that one of the major lessons of Canada's experience with SARS more than 15 years ago is that governments should look closely at adopting the "precautionary principle."

"That was the considered, studied, strong message that came out of a bad experience," said Mr. Davies. "Here we are, barely six weeks away from the holiday season, and policy-makers have a decision to make—do they want to apply the precautionary principle and take a cautious approach or do they just want to wing it and see what happens."

"To me, I think it's time to fully embrace and apply that very important principle, so that would mean a clear, consistent message right now to err on the side of caution for the upcoming holiday season," said Mr. Davies. "We can see what's coming on the horizon—this is certainly one of the pre-eminent times of year where people gather and come together—and you have to ask yourself this question on Nov. 12, is that a good idea? And I would say that it's very clear right now that it's not a good idea and we should be telling Canadians and preparing them now."

"And I think that should come from the prime minister," said Mr. Davies.

Ms. Paul said "this is a national emergency, and a national emergency requires a coordinated, national plan," in a follow-up



NDP MP and his party's health critic Don Davies says he thinks it's 'fully time to embrace and apply' the 'precautionary principle' when it comes to the pandemic, and that the federal government should be telling Canadians that coming together for the holiday season is 'not a good idea.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

interview with *The Hill Times* following her call on Nov. 12 for the creation of an intergovernmental COVID-19 task force of federal, provincial and city health officials on Twitter. "What we're doing now clearly is not working, it is sending mixed messages, it is confusing people."

"Every day, people have multiple sources of information that they need to go to in order to try to get a clear picture of what they are being asked to do and to not do, and so this is exactly what national governments were created for," said Ms. Paul, who also said "this is not a question of anyone imposing their will 'or riding roughshod over any other jurisdiction."

"It's a question of showing the leadership to bring all of the actors together, all of the stakeholders, to create a national strategy so people in Canada can see that governments are speaking with one coordinated voice with coordinated messaging on the pandemic."

British Columbia surpassed 20,000 cases on Nov. 12, with new daily case counts doubling every 13 days, according to provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry.

Alberta reported over 850 cases on Nov. 12, prompting the province to restrict recreational sports, bars and licensed restaurants in a bid to get through what Premier Jason Kenney called a "dangerous juncture" for the province.

Following a letter from more than 300 doctors in Saskatchewan calling for further steps to battle COVID-19, the province reported 111 new cases of the virus on Nov. 12, bringing the total to just over 4,400.

Manitoba moved into "code red" province-wide restrictions on Nov. 12, as

authorities made the move to limit social contacts to only those in your household, discouraging non-essential travel, and limiting capacity in grocery stores and pharmacies to 25 per cent capacity.

Modelling released by Ontario's science table on Nov. 12 shows that the province could see more than 6,000 new cases of COVID-19 by the middle of December, news that came on the same day Ontario reported 1,575 new cases. 1,396 new cases were reported on Nov. 13. As of press deadline, Ontario Premier Doug Ford's cabinet was scheduled to meet with the province's top public health official Dr. David Williams to hear his recommendations for next steps.

And in Quebec, 1,365 new cases were reported on Nov. 12, prompting Premier François Legault to indicate that the province is considering shutting down schools to get a better handle on the outbreak.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Nov. 13, 2020, is facing political pressure to in turn put more pressure on the provinces to do more to decrease the COVID infections. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

"We see that the second wave is very strong elsewhere in the world—right now, it's much less strong here than in the United States and Europe—and that's because of all your efforts, so I would like to thank all Quebecers for this," said Mr. Legault. "But we have to be very careful—it's the same virus, and we see that our numbers are starting to increase—we need to protect our health system and we need to do that in order to be able to treat everyone and save lives."

"The next few weeks will be difficult," said Mr. Legault.

'There's just too many hotspots'

Dr. Isaac Bogoch, an expert in infectious disease at the University of Toronto, said he thinks its completely unrealistic at this point to expect that Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's, and Diwali celebrations are going to be remotely close to what we remember them to be before COVID-19.

"The cases in most of the country are too high for any public health unit to greenlight large family gatherings and travel to large family gatherings," said Dr. Bogoch. "It's not just restricted to hotspots—there's just too many hotspots."

"I think that message needs to be [communicated] now, because clearly people need to be aware that that's going to be the expectation, and that it's unlikely, if not close to impossible, that we'll be able to get cases to such a low level where that can be conducted safely," said Dr. Bogoch.

Dr. Susy Hota, who is the medical director of infection prevention and control at Toronto's University Health Network, said the challenge with the rising case numbers amidst the pandemic is that the situation



Sara MacIntyre, pictured Dec. 11, 2019, with Kory Teneycke. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

can become out of control very quickly.

"You don't have a lot of lead time—this is our lead time to prepare and to recognize that things are not going well," said Dr. Hota in an interview with *The Hill Times* on Nov. 12.

"In the GTA area, there are already hospitals that are facing problems and higher volumes of patients coming, and the system does not have a lot of cushion," said Dr. Hota. "I think that with that trajectory, the only thing that will stop it is aggressive restrictions at this point."

Despite ongoing restrictions, the Peel and Toronto regions are among the major drivers of COVID-19 case count increases in the province.

"If that's not working, it's not enough," said Dr. Hota. "It means that people aren't actually following it or it's just at that point of the curve of exponential increase that it's not limiting contact enough."

Dr. Hota said modelling exercises done within the province "have been pretty spot on."

"And I would say if anything, they're a bit conservative," said Dr. Hota. "It's always harder to stop it, the steeper the curve is. The steeper the slope, the harder it's going to be to actually bring it down and the quicker we're going to get overwhelmed, and nobody wants to see the situation that we're continuing to hear about in Europe



Dr. Susy Hota, medical director of infection prevention and control at Toronto's University Health Network, says she thinks COVID-19 modelling in Ontario 'has been pretty spot on.' *Photograph courtesy of Twitter*

and different parts of the world of an overwhelmed system."

"It's too fragile to do that," said Dr. Hota. "I think the messaging should happen before this whole concept is allowed to fester—you'll get a lot of anger and lack of faith in the system and in our leaders if we let it fester."

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Green Party Leader Annamie Paul says 'what we're doing now clearly is not working, it is sending mixed messages, it is confusing people.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

national plan’: politicians, pollsters and top provincial-municipal response to COVID-19

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Canadians ‘want to hear a message of calm and peace and leadership’

People are feeling vulnerable and scared, said Sara MacIntyre, who worked as former prime minister Stephen Harper’s press secretary from August 2009 to February 2012.

“They’re tired of being told what to do and what not to do, they’re missing human contact and socialization, they’re uncertain about their jobs, their future, their country,



Canada’s Chief Public Health Officer Theresa Tam, pictured Nov. 6, 2020, at that day’s press conference on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

their neighbours, their trading partners, and they want to hear a message of calm and peace and leadership,” said Ms. MacIntyre. “That’s key for Christmas, for Hannukah, for Kwanzaa, and for every spiritual human being right now, is to hear a message of peace and that it’s going to be okay.”

“It may not be right now, but if we do the work—which is why I think it was smart for Ottawa, Peel and Toronto to do a 28-day continuance of a lockdown, because by the time that’s lifted, we’ll have gone through two 14 day cycles—and maybe you’ll be able to see your niece and nephew.”

Nik Nanos, chief data scientist and founder of Nanos Research, said he thinks what Canadians want to hear is that the federal and provincial governments are working together.

“They need to see it, they need to come up with a common message and a common concerted national approach to this,” said Mr. Nanos. “Canadians basically want



Nik Nanos, chief data scientist and founder of Nanos Research, said he thinks what Canadians want to hear is that the federal and provincial governments are working together. *The Hill Times* photograph by Jake Wright

certainty, whether it’s good or bad news, so they can move forward with their lives and can plan. That could include having a different type of Christmas. But dangling them on a rope until the last minute is not a sure-fire way to create confidence that our leaders are in control of the situation.”

Mr. Nanos said that if there was ever a time for the federal government to use its convening power to bring the premiers together and “hammer out a plan for the next year, for the next pandemic, whenever it will happen,” that time is now.

“Canadians are not experts—what they need to know is that governments are

doing everything they can possibly do, and they need to know that there is a plan, but right now it seems like it’s week-to-week, where Canadians in different provinces might not know what’s open and what might be closed, and whether closures or a stricter lockdown are going to be encouraged, and I think that’s a recipe for creating a very disgruntled and dissatisfied electorate,” said Mr. Nanos.

Pollster Frank Graves from EKOS Research has been following the numbers and the

medical research closely since the outset of the pandemic, and said he thought there is a tendency for the public to misunderstand the severity of the problem.

“Human minds don’t normally work with notions of exponential growth, they work with linear growth,” said Mr. Graves. “Secondly, they don’t really understand that the effects from the stage of testing to hospitalization to morbidities and mortalities are all lagged, and they tend to look at things in the present frame.”

“And [people] are concerned—our research suggests that the highest numbers think the worst is still ahead of us,” said Mr. Graves, which was a sharp reversal from early March when people thought it would be over within three to six months.

Mr. Graves said his sense was that there needs to a “blunter message” around the notion that we’re looking at 20 or 30,000 deaths in the next two months, many of which could be avoided with safe behaviour and includes a holiday season not spent with people outside of your household.

“It’s an awful message, but guess what, there’s a lot of lives to be saved and here’s what else: by Easter we should be good to go if everyone behaves and the vaccine arrives, as it will,” said Mr. Graves. “We should be out of the woods and see this monster in the rear-view mirror—not entirely, but really disappearing at that time.”

On Nov. 10, when asked about the emergencies act by a reporter during a press conference in Ottawa, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) said the issue has come up a number of times in multiple conversations with First Ministers, and that “he’s continued to reassure them that I don’t see it as being necessary right now.”

“I know that all Canadians are united in wanting to fight this pandemic,” said Mr. Trudeau. “I know that all premiers are thinking about the health of their citizens



Pollster Frank Graves from EKOS Research has been following the numbers and the medical research closely since the outset of the pandemic, and said he thought there is a tendency for the public to misunderstand the severity of the problem. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

as well as they think about the health of their economy and that’s why I’m confident we’re going to be able to continue to work together well and do the right things.”

In an interview with Global News Radio on Nov. 13, Mr. Trudeau said Christmas “depends on what people do right now. We’re seeing those numbers spike in the wrong direction and if people act now, we can stop that.”

“It’s going to get a little worse, at the very least, before it gets better,” said Mr. Trudeau. “But then it can start trending better pretty quickly after that in the coming weeks. But it means that people need to realize: now is the time to act,” according to Global News.

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Coronavirus cases worldwide, top 40 countries: source Worldometer, Nov. 12, 2020

Country	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	New Deaths	Total Recovered
USA	10,749,383	+40,655	247,681	+283	6,658,115
India	8,723,270	+39,231	128,559	+394	8,105,400
Brazil	5,751,485	+2,478	163,492	+86	5,064,344
France	1,865,538		42,535		133,696
Russia	1,858,568	+21,608	32,032	+439	1,388,168
Spain	1,484,868	+19,511	40,461	+356	N/A
UK	1,290,195	+33,470	50,365		N/A
Argentina	1,273,356		34,531		1,081,897
Colombia	1,165,326		33,312		1,070,423
Italy	1,066,401	+37,978	43,589	+636	387,758
Mexico	986,177	+7,646	96,430	+588	731,468
Peru	928,006		35,031		853,208
South Africa	742,394		20,011		686,458
Germany	739,686	+13,510	12,182	+100	467,800
Iran	726,585	+11,517	40,121	+457	541,566
Poland	641,496	+22,683	9,080	+275	254,349
Chile	526,438	+1,634	14,699	+66	502,475
Belgium	515,391	+7,916	13,758	+197	31,130
Iraq	511,806	+3,298	11,532	+50	439,228
Ukraine	500,865	+11,057	9,145	+198	227,694
Indonesia	452,291	+4,173	14,933	+97	382,084
Czechia	443,113	+4,308	5,708	+138	285,957
Netherlands	430,453	+5,634	8,304	+89	N/A
Bangladesh	427,198	+1,845	6,140	+13	344,868
Turkey	404,894	+2,841	11,233	+88	346,794
Philippines	402,820	+1,407	7,721	+11	362,417
Saudi Arabia	352,160	+311	5,605	+15	339,114
Pakistan	349,992	+1,808	7,055	+34	320,849
Romania	334,236	+10,142	8,510	+121	224,916
Israel	321,684	+358	2,700		310,605
Canada	280,001	+2,940	10,745	+60	224,960
Morocco	276,821	+6,195	4,570	+64	226,040
Switzerland	250,396	+6,924	3,168	+55	141,000
Nepal	204,242	+1,913	1,189	+15	164,592
Portugal	198,011	+5,839	3,181	+78	113,689
Austria	181,642	+9,262	1,608	+44	107,875
Ecuador	177,513	+883	12,946	+26	154,956
Sweden	171,365		6,122	+10	N/A
UAE	146,735	+1,136	523	+3	141,215
Bolivia	142,776	+112	8,818	+10	115,718



HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

Champagne hires new comms director from environment minister's team



Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne, pictured left on Sept. 14, and Environment and Climate Change Minister Jonathan Wilkinson, pictured on Feb. 24. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

Louis Hamann recently exited his role as director of communications to Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne.

Foreign Affairs Minister **François-Philippe Champagne** has a new director of communications in his office, having recently scooped up **Ricky Landry** from Environment and Climate Change Minister **Jonathan Wilkinson's** office.

Mr. Landry marked his first day on Mr. Champagne's team on Nov. 11 and replaces **Louis Hamann**, who has left the minister's office.

Mr. Hamann had been director of communications to Mr. Champagne for just under a year, having started in the role in February. Before then, he'd been a director

in the Quebec Government Office in Washington, D.C., and spent two years prior to that working in its office in New York as a director of its accelerated growth centre. He's also worked in the Quebec government's offices in Paris, France, and Sao Paulo, Brazil, and is a former spokesperson and senior adviser to **Michaëlle Jean** as then-secretary general of La Francophonie in Paris, among other things.

Mr. Champagne bade Mr. Hamann farewell on Twitter on Oct. 23, writing that his "expertise, humour and dedication have left their indelible mark."

His replacement, Mr. Landry, is a former CBC correspondent and has spent the last year running Mr. Wilkinson's communications shop.

Mr. Landry's career as a political staffer began at the end of 2018, when he was hired as director of communications to then-tourism, official languages, and La Francophonie minister **Mélanie Joly**. Before then, he'd spent a little more than three years as communications lead for the Canadian Olympic Committee.



Ricky Landry is now communications director to the minister of foreign affairs. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Prior to his work with the COC, Mr. Landry spent almost two decades working for the CBC/Radio-Canada, starting in 1998, according to his LinkedIn profile. Over the years, he was a regional reporter in Vancouver, Fredericton, and Charlottetown, and later a TV correspondent in Moncton, Halifax, and London, Ont. He also spent a year starting in September 2011 as a freelance correspondent for the broadcaster based in London, U.K., during which time he covered the 2012 London Olympics.

Daniel Lauzon is chief of staff to Mr. Champagne. Also tackling communications work in the foreign affairs minister's office right now are **Syrine Khoury** as press secretary and **Marianne Blondin** as a special assistant for social media.

With Mr. Landry's exit, **Sabrina Kim** has returned to the environment minister's office to fill in as acting director of communications to Mr. Wilkinson as of this week.

Ms. Kim previously spent almost two years working for the



PMO issues adviser Sabrina Kim has stepped in as acting communications director to Mr. Wilkinson. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

environment minister, starting in May 2018 as a special assistant for issues management and Ontario regional affairs to then-minister **Catherine McKenna**. She was promoted to press secretary to the minister in January 2019.

She's been busy as an issues management adviser in the Prime Minister's Office since the beginning of this year, taking leave from that post to fill in for her old boss.

In Mr. Wilkinson's office, she'll be working closely with the minister's press secretary, **Moira Kelly** and senior communications adviser **Jocelyn Lubczuk**.

Along with Ms. Kim, another familiar



Marjory Loveys is back in the environment minister's office as a policy adviser. *Photograph courtesy of Twitter*

face has returned to the environment minister's office: **Marjory Loveys**, who's back as a policy adviser after a year away.

A longtime staffer, Ms. Loveys previously worked in the office under Ms. McKenna for two years starting in the fall of 2017. First joining as an interim director of policy and Indigenous affairs (while **Jesse McCormick**, who's now director of rights implementation to Justice Minister **David Lametti**, was on paternity leave), she later stayed on as a senior adviser.

Ms. Loveys was a ministerial staffer on the Hill during **Pierre Trudeau's** second term, and later spent a decade as a senior adviser for economic development to then-prime minister **Jean Chrétien** from 1993 to 2003. Along with past work in the private sector, she's twice run (ultimately unsuccessfully) as the Liberal candidate in the former riding of Leeds-Grenville, Ont., going up against the late Conservative MP **Gord Brown** in 2008 and 2011. She's also a former board member for the Canadian Institute of Environmental Law and Policy, amongst other experience.

Leading policy work in Mr. Wilkinson's office are **Jamie MacDonald** as director of nature conservation and **Erin Flanagan** as director of climate, energy, and regulatory affairs. Their team includes: **Randi Anderson**, senior policy adviser and lead Indigenous liaison; **Matthew Geraci**, policy and Ontario regional affairs adviser; **Kurtis Layden**, policy and parliamentary affairs adviser; **Conor MacNeil**, policy and Atlantic regional affairs adviser; and **Fiona Simons**, policy and B.C. regional affairs adviser.

Marlo Reynolds continues as chief of staff to the environment minister.

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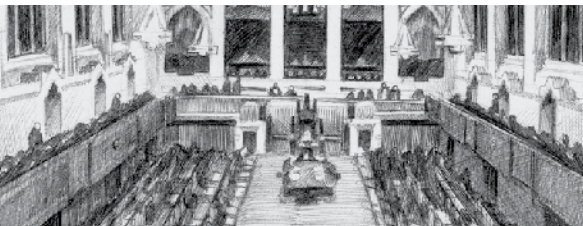
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Parliamentary Calendar



MONDAY, NOV. 16

House Sitting—The House of Commons is sitting in a hybrid format right now during the pandemic, with most MPs connecting remotely. The House is scheduled to sit every weekday from Nov. 16-Dec. 11, and that's it for 2020.

Senate Sitting—The Senate has approved a plan for hybrid sittings during the pandemic to allow Senators to connect remotely. The Senate is scheduled to sit Nov. 17-19 and Nov. 24-26. Nov. 16, 20, 23, 27, and 30 are all possible sitting days for the remainder of the month.

Moyra Davey: The Faithful—National Gallery of Canada host this new exhibition, *Moyra Davey: The Faithful*, featuring the work of one of Canada's most innovative conceptual artists, on now until Jan. 3, 2021. National Gallery of Canada, 380 Sussex Dr., Ottawa. This new exhibition features 54 photographs and 6 films by Davey, along with more than a dozen works from the Gallery collection. Developed by the artist and curator Andrea Kunard, the exhibition explores the artist's trajectory from early images of family and friends, through portraits of the detritus of everyday life, her mailed photographs, and films examining the work of authors, philosophers and artists. <https://www.gallery.ca/whats-on/exhibitions-and-galleries/moyra-davey-the-faithful>

Equal Voice National Campaign School—Equal Voice hosts its first online National Campaign School, designed to equip women and gender-diverse individuals with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to run for political office in Canada. The school will consist of eight online courses (Nov. 3-27) including a mix of group exercises, guest speakers, and networking opportunities. Registration is full, but visit equalvoice.ca for information about being added to the wait-list.

Global Conference for Media Freedom—Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne will co-host the second Global Conference for Media Freedom with Botswana. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, will deliver the keynote address. The High-Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom, chaired by Lord Neuberger and deputy-chaired by Amal Clooney, will also provide an update on its work.

Landon Pearson's 90th Birthday—Carleton University hosts a special celebration to mark former senator Landon Pearson's 90th birthday. She will offer reflections on 60 years of advocacy, and release the 2020 issue of the *Canadian Journal of Children's Rights*. This year's theme is "Respecting Children's Rights in Schools" and includes youth submissions based on their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Monday, Nov. 16, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Join in via events.carleton.ca.

TUESDAY, NOV. 17

Aerospace Industries Association of Canada Lobby Week—The Aerospace Industries

House and Senate back this week in last legislative push for 2020



Association of Canada hosts a virtual week on the Hill. From Nov. 17-20, AIAC will host an opportunity for Canada's aerospace industry to connect with members of Parliament, cabinet ministers, and government officials. Industry will have the chance to engage with leading Canadian policy makers and influence policy discussions on the issues affecting the aerospace sector.

The WHO, Canada, and the Way Ahead—Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization, will speak on "The WHO, Canada, and the Way Ahead," in a webinar hosted by the Empire Club of Canada. He will discuss the global effort to defeat COVID19, the agency's long and productive partnership with Canada, and where we need to focus our cooperative efforts in the months to protect and promote the public health of all citizens. Tuesday, Nov. 17, at noon. Register at empireclubofcanada.com/drtedros

U.S. Election 2020: Impacts and Opportunities—The Vancouver Board of Trade hosts a webinar on "U.S. Election 2020: Impacts and Opportunities," taking a deep dive into the election results and to discuss their impact on the Canadian economy and specifically B.C. industries. Panelists include former Conservative cabinet minister James Moore, now senior business adviser at Dentons; former U.S. ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman; and Shachi Kurl, president of the Angus Reid Institute.

Tuesday, Nov. 17, at noon PT. Register at boardoftrade.com.

iPolitics Hosts Panel Discussion on Head and Neck Cancer—iPolitics is hosting a panel discussion on head and neck cancer on Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 12 p.m. Conservative MP Peter Kent and Liberal MP Jean Yip, Life-Saving Therapies Network's CEO and throat cancer survivor John-Peter Bradford, and medical oncologist Dr. John Hilton will discuss opportunities to raise awareness of this disease and how to improve cancer care. For more information and to register, see <https://www.livemeeting.ca/profile/ipolitics/>.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 18

The 2020 Writers' Trust Awards Have Gone Digital—Join the Writers' Trust online Wednesday, Nov. 18 for the digital premiere of the 2020 Writers' Trust Awards: Books of the Year Edition, hosted by author Kamal Al-Solaylee. The Writers' Trust will be celebrating the finalists and announcing the winners of two of Canada's most notable literary prizes: the \$60,000 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction and the \$50,000 Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. 11am PT / 12pm MT / 1pm CT / 2 p.m. ET / 3 p.m. AT / 3:30 p.m. NT. Given for the year's best work of Canadian non-fiction, this prize spotlights books with a distinctive voice, as well as a persuasive and compelling command of tone, narrative, style, and technique. This year's finalists for non-fiction: Lorna Crozier for *Through the Garden: A Love Story (with Cats)*; Steven Heighon for *Reaching Mithymna: Among the Volunteers and Refugees on Lesbos*; Jessica J. Lee for *Two Trees Make a Forest: In Search of My Family's Past Among Taiwan's Mountains and Coasts*; Tessa McWatt for *Shame on Me: An Anatomy of Race and Belonging*; and David A. Neel for *The Way Home*. As well, recognizing Canadian writers of exceptional talent for the year's best novel or short story collection. Congratulations to this year's fiction finalists: Gil Adamson for *Ridgerunner*; Zsuzsi Gartner for *The Beguiling*; Michelle Good for *Five Little Indians*; Thomas King for *Indians on*

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Vacation; and Maria Reva for *Good Citizens Need Not Fear*. Watch the premiere or view the show afterwards at your convenience on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter writerstrust.com/WT Awards

What's Canada's Climate Plan?—The University of Toronto presents the Douglas Pimlott Memorial Lecture on "What's Canada's Climate Plan? Fairness, Safety, Justice, and Resiliency in a World on Fire." Dr. Tzeponah Berman will explore the social policy implications of climate change and fossil fuel conflicts in Canada. Berman is a professor at York University, international program director at Stand.earth, and chair of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Committee. Wednesday, Nov. 18, from 4-6 p.m. Register via Eventbrite.

Book Launch—McGill University hosts the launch of Dr. Paul W. Bennett's new book, *The State of the System: A Reality Check on Canada's Schools*, exploring the nature of the Canadian education order in all its dimensions. Daniel Béland, director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, will speak with Bennett about the book. Wednesday, Nov. 18, from 5-6:30 p.m. Registration required, at mcgill.ca.

Security of Research in Canadian Universities—The University of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) host a public talk on "Security of Research in Canadian Universities" with Tricia Geddes, deputy director of policy and strategic partnerships at CSIS. She will focus on CSIS's efforts during the past few months to work with medical and scientific researchers across the country to sensitize them to threats of foreign interference and espionage targeting their research, data, and other intellectual property. Wednesday, Nov. 18, from 6-8 p.m. ET. Register via Eventbrite.

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental event in a paragraph with all the relevant details under the subject line 'Parliamentary Calendar' to news@hilltimes.com by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper. We can't guarantee inclusion of every event, but we will definitely do our best. Events can be updated daily online, too.

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Dear Minister:

On behalf of the hundreds of thousands of businesses of all sizes across the country affected by the COVID-19 health and economic crisis, thank you for your continued engagement with and responsiveness as we continue to try to mitigate the devastating impacts of the pandemic on businesses and their employees.

Now is not the time to increase alcohol taxes on middle-class Canadians, our struggling restaurants and bars and domestic alcohol producers. Our request is that you repeal the escalator tax through the fall update to Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan or the next federal budget.

Read the full letter at www.freezeitforthem.ca

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Almost 50% of the price of beer in Canada is tax. During this time of economic uncertainty, the automatic tax increase scheduled for April 1, 2021 will increase prices without a vote by Parliamentarians and put 149,000 Canadian jobs connected to the production and sale of beer at risk.

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