

News

Should feds intervene in provincial vaccine rollout? **Experts** in health, governance, and politics weigh in News

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The federal government should VID-19 vaccine rollout from the provinces-or at least not now, say a pandemic policy expert, a former Liberal MP and general, and a former top Ontario public servant. One Toronto physician, Dr. Vincent Lam, however, said the

Continued on page 19

News

Regular updates and 'keeping politics out of it' key to COVID-19 vaccine rollout, say experts, politicians

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

s both public health experts Aand politicians express concern over the slow rollout of Canada's vaccination regime so far, one of the country's top

Continued on page 18

Trump's incitement of mob hopefully a wake-up call for senior **Republicans**, but America's standing as 'beacon of democracy' damaged, say Canadian Parliamentarians



BY BEATRICE PAEZ & SAMANTHA WRIGHT ALLEN

utgoing U.S. President Donald OTrump's incitement of hundreds of his supporters to stymie the certification of the electoral results may leave him somewhat diminished, serving as a wake-up call for Republican leadership, say some

Parliamentarians, but the violent attack is likely to scar America's image as a beacon of democracy.

Continued on page 17

A mob

Hill Climbers

Ng makes some staffing changes

New year, new staff roster for International Trade Minister Mary Ng. p. 22

Mail Agreement #40068926

Public

9492281130



Economy

Canada shouldn't be happy hunting ground for foreign corporations

R&D branch plants of Big Tech are using Canadian talent to generate jobs and wealth elsewhere. p. 13



Climate Change

Canadians' appetite for climate action growing, but beware of polarization

How keen are Canadians for climate action in these extraordinarily trying times? p. 7

Arts

Arts and artists need a new deal

Supporting the arts as part of the creative class is essential to innovation and economic development. p. 15



Heard on the Hill

Media closely tracking politicians' travel

David Akin is asking every incumbent if they travelled outside the country since last March **p. 2**

News

Trudeau told Liberals' national board of directors 'it looks like' a spring election, according to a Liberal source, but it will happen based on important conditions

BY ABBAS RANA

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, whose Liberals are enjoying a comfortable lead in public opinion polls, told members of the party's national board of directors before Christmas that "it looks like" the next election

Continued on page 4

News

'It seems to have hit a nerve': no margin of error left for politicians caught in travel controversy over holidays, say MPs and political insiders

BY ABBAS RANA

Elected politicians who travelled abroad during the Christmas break have no margin

Continued on page 20





HEARD ON THE HILL

by Palak Mangat

Global News' Akin gets good uptake in probing MPs' and hopeful politics' travel plans, CTV News' McGregor focuses on current 338



CTV News' Glen McGregor, left, and Global News' David Akin have been asking federal politicians about their travel itineraries in recent days. Mr. Akin is expanding his data to include those hoping to run in the next election, while Mr. McGregor shared a list of the current 338 MPs last week. *Photograph courtesy of Glen McGregor's Twitter, The Hill Times file photograph*

Parliament Hill's Global News' chief political correspondent David Akin could be onto something.

The veteran reporter said he was "kind of thinking out loud" to his some 83,000 followers recently, when he tweeted that he's going to be asking all election candidates when they last left the country and under what circumstances since the pandemic started last March.

Tracking social media, columns, watching political fallout, and having recent chats with those involved in campaigns, Mr. Akin told *The Hill Times* that, amid the global pandemic, he expects the topic will come up in opposition digging and when party headquarters vet candidates for the next federal election.

He said his goal is not to "pronounce whether someone's travel was illegitimate or not,"but said it became clear through the slow trickle of new stories this month that some politicos may have been jetsetting to "play golf or get a tan" over the break, which doesn't look good while the rest of the country is being told that it's not a good idea to travel.

"This is also part of getting to know some of the candidates, people we don't know,"he said last week, noting that usually party whips can speak for their MPs, but not for candidates or for those publicly interested in running.

He said he expects to be focusing his efforts mainly on the ridings "in play" in the next election. "It's not like I'm going to have this story or this database ready this week. It's something to start collecting information for, if and when we have an election," he said.

CTV's **Glen McGregor** is also building a list of MPs' personal travel and shared the responses he received from all 338 MPs when he asked if they travelled after limits were imposed in March 2020. According to his data, at least nine MPs have been out of the country since then.

Alberta Senator Elaine McCoy, who cut 'a stylish [swath] through Alberta political culture,' dies

Alberta Independent Senator Elaine McCoy, who served four decades in public office, died last month. Appointed to the Upper Chamber by then-prime minister Paul Martin in 2005, McCoy was remembered as an "icon of Alberta politics."



Independent Senator Elaine McCoy, pictured in April 2019, was an 'icon of Alberta politics,' said Independent Senator Paula Simons. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

"Elaine McCoy was an icon of Alberta politics. She followed in the footsteps of Peter Lougheed, succeeding him as MLA for Calgary West. She was a cabinet minister in Don Getty's government, handling some tricky portfolios in a time of transition," tweeted current Independent Alberta Senator **Paula Simons**, who's a former reporter.

"When I first started work as a journalist, she cut a stylish swarth [swath] through Alberta political culture. She was beautiful, elegant, always fashionably groomed," Sen. Sen. Simons. "She brought glamour and charisma to the Getty government, when neither was in abundant supply."

McCoy, who served in the Alberta legislature from 1986 to 1993, held the consumer and corporate affairs portfolio in Getty's Progressive Conservative cabinet, along with serving as the minister responsible for women's issues. Years later on the Hill, she helped found and lead the Independent Senators Group before joining the Canadian Senators Group in 2019, noted Senate Speaker **George Furey** in a statement. Mr. Furey called her a "respected member of the parliamentary community" who will be remembered as "a proud Albertan, an ardent defender of fairness, and a tireless champion for the people she represented."

Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** said in a statement that McCoy "championed human rights and environmental causes" during her time in the Senate, while advocating for "effective Senate modernization."

McCoy died on Dec. 29, 2020, at the age of 74. Though she faced health challenges in recent years, the cause of death was not immediately shared.

Conservative MP McLeod's Kamloops office broken into, says she was called a 'Nazi-like collaborator' because she supports COVID-19 vaccines

Conservative MP Cathy McLeod, who represents Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo, B.C., took to Twitter last week to share news of a recent break-in at her Kamloops constituency office, which happened on New Year's Day, according to Castanet Kamloops.

"It has been suggested I am a Nazi-like collaborator because I believe COVID is serious and support vaccines. ... Not a U.S.-scale polarization but we do have issues," she tweeted on Jan. 6, adding that the Kamloops office had also been "rifled through."

Her tweet came the same day angry mobs storming the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., dominated much of the news cycle, as supporters of U.S. President **Donald Trump** disrupted the ceremonial Congressional certification of the 2020 presidential election results. At least one woman was fatally shot in the riots.

Ms. McLeod said she understands that "people are feeling very upset about politicians travelling," amid a growing list of public officials who have been caught in recent days travelling abroad, either for pleasure or for personal reasons, during COVID—all while public health officials continue to tell Canadians to avoid non-essential travel to help curb growing COVID cases.

"They say, 'You're not looking at things independently.' Certainly in the last week or so, there's been a really awful tone to a lot of the engagement," said Ms. McLeod.

The MP, who has served since 2008, said the people who broke into her riding office appeared to use a crowbar and "opened a number of drawers and cupboards," though nothing was taken. "I don't keep a lot of valuable information in there. But it was rifled through."

TVO's *Blind Date* features Greens' May, two Tory MPs

Speaking of Ms. McLeod, the MP will be among other Hillites featured on TVO's *Political Blind Date* show, a six-part series that brings together politicians of different stripes to talk shop on important topics to voters.

She tweeted last July that the show was filming in Kamloops with COVID-19 precautions in place, though it was unknown at that point who she was paired up with. But according to a schedule shared this month by TVO, her partner for an episode on the fourth season is Green MP Elizabeth May.

The two will "explore the pros and cons of the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion and its impact on Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities" in B.C., TVO said in an email to *The Hill Times*.

Other episodes of the season will explore hallway medicine, clean water, religious symbols, and migrant labour. The show returns on Jan. 19 at 9 p.m., and episodes will be posted online after that.

Conservative MP **Dave Epp** will also take part in the show and will chat about

the implications of COVID on migrant workers with Ontario NDP MPP **Taras Natyshak**.

Poloz to talk shop in Jan. 13 webinar

Canada's long-term prosperity, ever the hot topic amid the far-reaching impacts of the pandemic, will be among the subjects discussed by former Bank of Canada governor **Stephen Poloz** this week.

Joined by *Maclean's* magazine's writer **Paul Wells**, Mr. Poloz, who joined Western University's Ivey Business School last summer, will offer his thoughts on the nation's current economic climate and policy priorities for the future. The webinar is being framed by the university as part of "revelations" coming out of the new year, with the duo set to "contemplate" the country's "economic playbook."

The event will be live-streamed on Jan. 13, and starts at 4:30 p.m., running about an hour. Those interested can register and submit questions online.

Chen joins *Hill Times* newsroom, Wright Allen new deputy digital editor

The Hill Times has hired a new reporter. **Alice Chen**, who hails from the not-soremote suburb of Richmond Hill, Ont., started on Jan. 4.



Alice Chen, left, is a new reporter at *The Hill Times*, and reporter Samantha Wright Allen is now our new deputy digital editor. *Photographs courtesy Alice Chen and The Hill Times file photograph by Jake Wright*

Ms. Chen studied journalism in a joint degree program at the University of Toronto and Centennial College and graduated with a set of internships under her belt, spanning work at magazines, community news, and communications at Pride Toronto.

She said she entered the field of journalism with "a strong desire to help people through coverage of important issues." Ms. Chen will be covering the federal political parties, political fundraising, federal elections laws, the House Affairs Committee, Hill life and people, LGBTQ issues, and will be filing Wednesday's HOH. When not working, you'll find her nestled in her bed playing video games.

Meanwhile, *Hill Times* news reporter **Samantha Wright Allen**, who first joined the newsroom in 2017, is our new deputy digital editor.

Ms. Wright Allen, who will be assisting online editor **Beatrice Paez** and joins online reporter **Palak Mangat**, will continue to report as well.

Ms. Wright Allen moved across the country to join Hill Times Publishing in 2017 and started first as a reporter and editor for *The Lobby Monitor* and moved over to *The Hill Times*' newsroom a few months later. Born in Coquitlam, B.C., Wright Allen graduated with her master's in journalism at Carleton University in Ottawa in 2014. She has previously written for the *Prince George Citizen*, the Ottawa Citizen, and the Saint John Telegraph-Journal.

At *The Hill Times*, Ms. Wright Allen covers justice, lobbying, and Indigenous issues, the Senate, and all-things-data on federal political fundraising and voting patterns. She also focuses on foreign affairs and the diplomatic community, but will be turning over her **Diplomatic Circles** column to *HT* reporter **Neil Moss** who covers foreign affairs, Canada-U.S. relations, trade, security, and defence.

pmangat@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Opinion

Will 2021 be any better than 2020?

We can be horrified by the actions of those among us, by systems that perpetuate racism, and by the people who uphold the system, the white supremacists in our midst. I'm not sure we've learned the lesson yet about how to work through this horror. What will we collectively do about white supremacists? What will we collectively do about systemic racism?



Rose LeMay Stories, Myths, and Truths

TTAWA—The first five days of 2021 seemed promising, until the American insurgency went down on Jan. 6. The world stood wide-eved in shock, Twitter lost its collective mind, and there went all hopes of a dry January

In 2020, the moments of calm were even more notable when surrounded by grim numbers of COVID cases and deaths, interspersed with some can't-makethis-shit-up news from America. We'll tell our grandchildren about 2020 through memes, the ones with the undercurrent of fear. What horror movie will come to life next?

A funny thing about horror movies is that the horror is culturally based. Each culture pictures its deepest fears and horrors differently. Some have argued that the classic English haunted house was about the British fear of the Nazi in one's own house; and that the zombie is about the American fear that they look like us but are no longer us. More likely, there are all sorts of unconscious fears and anxieties reflected in horror movies and stories.

Indigenous cultures also have scary characters that are unique to their culture or cultural group. On the West Coast, First Nations have a story about the woman in the forest, which is a both a horror story and one to keep the kids close to home. Then there's the story about the people who almost were lost at sea but somehow returned to shore but never can return to full human. There re stories about humans wi have lost their moral compass and who threaten the community. In the horror stories in Indigenous cultures, there's usually a message about avoiding a risk, or protecting the Earth, or maintaining the balance of the community. That's the other side of horror stories; sometimes there's a lesson to be learned.

So what's the lesson from 2020? Whatever it is, we need to get with the program, because

Elders in this part of the country would say that if we don't learn it, we will continue to be given opportunities to learn the lesson or the horror. So what is the lesson? There are possibly a few good

lessons.

We need to fix some systems that aren't working, and now's the time to do that. There's nothing like a pandemic to prove that systems are not equitable for all Canadians. And there's nothing like a pandemic to slay the myth that the economy will make us all healthy. How can we ensure that we fix systems so we don't go through this again?

We can be horrified by the actions of those among us, by systems that perpetuate racism, and by the people who uphold the system, the white supremacists in our midst. I'm not sure we've learned the lesson yet about how to work through this horror. What will we collectively do about white supremacists? What will we collectively do about systemic racism?

We can cope with more than we thought we could. But this is framed against the horror of being alone, and this is a such a strong horror for so many of us. The lesson may be that we truly belong in community, despite all the messages of individualism that pummel us daily. We belong in community. We do better together.

We just went through the winter solstice last month, the shortest day of the year and the longest night. But in our reality, we are in the solstice of 2020 and it won't be over for months. That gives us time to put our minds to fix the systems that elevate some and bar others from inclusion. It gives us time to remind ourselves that being part of a society is first about responsibility and accountability to each other. And it gives us some more time to acknowledge the strength and fortitude of those around us.

Here's to our collective learnng in 2021

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



An angry mob of Trump supporters stunned the world on Jan. 6, 2021, when thousands stormed the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., to interrupt the certification of Joe Biden's successful election as president of the United States. The Trump supporters were encouraged by outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump, who told them 'We love you,' and who still hasn't congratulated Mr. Biden on winning the presidential election. Image courtesy of CBC NEWS screen capture



The first five days of 2021 seemed promising, until the American insurgency went down on Jan. 6. Screen capture courtesy of ABC NEWS





king News Pro-Trump mob storms U.S. Capitol

CBC News reporter Katie Simpson, pictured at the scene on lan 6 2021 Image CBC NEWS screen capture

Trudeau told Liberals' national board of directors 'it looks like' a spring election, according to a Liberal source, but it will happen based on important conditions

Political insiders and some Liberal MPs expect the next election to be called on the federal budget which is usually tabled in March.

Continued from page 1

would happen this spring, said one source, but other sources say a spring election will only happen if the vaccine rollout is successful, if the COVID cases decrease significantly, and if the Grits remain popular in the next few months.

So, if your PM is saying that and he's feeling very confident about it, then there's a very good chance it'll be a spring election," said the Liberal source, who spoke to The Hill Times on a notfor-attribution basis. "He said, 'It looks like it,' [next election will happen in spring]."

Mr. Trudeau is a member of the 35-member national board of directors of the Liberal Party that oversees the election readiness process, among other responsibilities, but he does not regularly attend meetings. He made a special appearance in a Zoom call in a mid-December meeting to offer his Christmas greetings to mem-

bers of the national board. "He was just talking very generally that the election will be coming,"the source said."And we all need to be ready for it, potentially [it] could be a spring election."

According to the Liberal Party website, its board of directors "works together to provide oversight and guidance to the party in matters both fiduciary, and strategic." Also, it says the board members "meet regularly in person and by phone with the objective of ensuring the party is prepared for the next federal election.'

Braeden Caley, senior director of communications for the Liberal in eman a respons The Hill Times, did not confirm or deny Mr. Trudeau's comment, but said the Liberals are focused on helping Canadians through the COVID-19 crisis. However, he accused the opposition parties of being focused on trying to provoke an election, but did not say how.

"While other parties have pushed for an election, Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party of Canada are focused on doing

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Dec. 15, 2020, in the Sir John

everything it takes to keep Canadians safe and supported through this global crisis,"said Mr. Caley. "As a party, we are continuing

to stay connected with Canadians in virtual ways that respect public health guidelines as we work to keep Canada moving forward."

Mr. Caley sent The Hill Times

officially been nominated and one

Liberal source told The Hill Times

that a "slew" of other candidates

along with the names of national

Two other members of the

national board of directors-Jim

Burton from Newfoundland and

declined to confirm or deny Mr.

Trudeau's comment last month,

Sachit Mehra from Manitoba-

will be announced this month

and provincial campaign co-

chairs in the coming weeks.

a list of 20 candidates in held

and un-neid ridings who have

saying they could not confirm internal party meeting discussions. Both said the party is focused on governance and effective management of the pandemic.

We're in unchartered waters: what's first and foremost here is the safety of Canadians, and making

> Eight-term Liberal MP Judy Sgro says she's focused only on helping her constituents through this COVID-19 crisis and is not thinking when the next election will be called. The Hill Times file photograph

sure we look after those who are most vulnerable in our community," said Mr. Burton, director, Libera Party of Canada in Newfoundland and Labrador, told The Hill Times. "And I think the Liberal government is definitely doing that."

Mr. Mehra, chair of the federal Liberal Agency of Canada, echoed that view: "Obviously, government side and party side, two different things, right? Certainly I can tell you that, from my understanding, and observations, everybody's focus is right now on COVID."

But other sources also told The Hill Times that there are a few caveats for the spring election to happen, including a smooth rollout of the vaccinations, a significant decline in COVID-19 cases, and Liberal Party remaining popular in polls until then, among others.

If the Liberals did maintain their dominance in the polls giving them hope they can win a majority, the next election will most likely be called on the federal budget, sources told The Hill *Times*. Usually, federal budgets are tabled in February or March. These sources said that the next budget would make "a splash" as it will contain some major ideas that the government will announce, but were held back in the fall fiscal economic update. These same sources said they expect the election to happen between April and May, depending on when it's called and the duration of the campaign. The minimum writ period is 37 days and the maximum 18 51.

"Trudeau will make use of this [COVID-19 crisis] to make very big, significant moves [in the next budget]," said one Liberal MP, who also spoke to The Hill Times on a not-for-attribution basis.

[The election will be called] this spring. There are certain factors, or caveats, of course. One is that the vaccination rollout should go on [without any major hiccups], may not be the best, but they should keep increasing [the

number of people] vaccinated. And the number of reported cases should keep coming down. I think the budget will be presented in March, and the election will be called in April or May, probably May will be the election. That's my take as of today," said the Liberal MP, adding that things could change if there are any surprises between now and the spring.

In a minority government, an election could be called in one of the two ways—either the prime minister requests the Governor General to drop the writ, or the opposition parties defeat the government in the House on a confidence vote. Considering the party standings of all federal parties in the House, all three major opposition parties in the House will have to vote together to defeat the government.

The Liberals have 155 MPs in the 338-seat House of Commons. They need support from one of the three other recognized parties in the House to get any bill assed. The Conservatives have 121 MPs, the Bloc Québécois 32, and the NDP 24. The Green Party, which does not have party status in the House, has three seats, and there are three Independent MPs. In the 338 members House, a simple majority requires 170 votes.

A recent Nanos Research poll released on Jan. 1, suggested the Liberals were leading the second







Continued from page 4

place Conservatives by a margin of 15 per cent of the votes. The Liberals had the support of 40.3 per cent of Canadians, the Conservatives 25.7 per cent, the NDP 18 per cent and the Green Party seven per cent



And a second poll conducted by Nanos Research for the Institute of Research on Public Policy (IRPP), released late last week, suggested that 58 per cent of Canadians thought the country was headed in the right direction, the highest since 2015 when 63 per cent of Canadians felt this way, and 17 per cent higher than 2019 when only 41 per cent of Canadians said that the country was headed in the right direction. The survey also revealed that 17 per cent of Canadians described the current govern-ment's performance as very good, and 30 per cent somewhat good. In 2019, six per cent considered the Trudeau government's performance as very good and 21 per cent somewhat good. The survey of 1,048 Canadians was conducted between Dec. 27-30 and had a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

It's not unusual for governing parties, in a minority government, at the federal or provincial level to pull the plug when

Liberal Party's National **Board of Directors**

- 1. Leader Justin Trudeau
- President Suzanne Cowan 3. National Director Azam Ishmael
- National Vice-President (English) Mira Ahmad
- National Vice-President (French) Elise Bartlett 6. Policy Secretary Omar Raza
- Party Secretary Sam Bhalesar-Saran
- Past President Anna Gainey
- 9. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Newfoundland and Labrador) Jim Burton
- 10. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Prince Edward Island) Emily MacDonald
- 11. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Nova Scotia) Joseph Khoury
- 12. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (New Brunswick) Joel Reed
- 13. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Quebec) Chelsea Craig 14. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario) Geoff Carpente
- 15. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Manitoba) Alex Gilroy 16. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Saskatchewan) Meghan
- McEacherr 17. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Alberta) Eleanor Olzewski
- 18. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (British Columbia) Gabe Garfinkel
- 19. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Yukon) Clarence Timmons 20. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (North West Territories) Charles Blvth
- 21. Director, Liberal Party of Canada (Nunavut) -
- 22. Caucus Representative Liberal MP Francis Scarpaleggia
- o-Chair Indigenous P 24. Co-Chair, Indigenous Peoples' Commission (Male) Conrad Desiarlais
- 25. President, Native Women's Commission Amy Robichaud
- 26. President, Young Liberals of Canada -27. Co-Chair, Senior Liberals' Commission (French) Roger Légaré
- 28. Co-Chair, Senior Liberals Commission (English) Doug Brydges
- 29. Leader's Representative Liberal MP Omar Alghabra 30. Treasurer John Herhalt
- 31. Revenue Chair Stephen Bronfman
- 32. Chair, Federal Liberal Agency of Canada Sachit Mehra
- 33. Campaign Chair Suzanne Cowan
- 34. Constitutional and Legal Adviser (English) Michael Fernick
- 35. Constitutional and Legal Adviser (French) Prachi Shah -Source: Liberal Party of Canada

they see an opportunity to win a majority government or to avoid being negatively affected by a political storm coming their way. Also, the opposition parties do the same when they see an opportunity to unseat the governing party or to increase their party standings to gain more influ-

ence

In British Columbia, the NDP's John Horgan called the snap election in the fall even though he had signed a written power-sharing agreement with the Green Party at the start of his minority government in 2017, promising not to call the provincial election prior to the fixed election date in the fall of 2021. But sensing an opportunity to win a majority, Mr. Horgan reneged on his agreement and

went to the polls in the hopes of winning a majority government and he did. He won a majority government with 57 seats and the highest share of the popular vote in the party's history. He also became British Columbia's first two-term NDP premier.

In recent months, two other provinces-New Brunswick and Saskatchewan—have had provincial elections right in the middle of the pandemic. The minority government of the New Brunswick Progressive Conservatives was converted to majority government. The Saskatchewan Party, which held a majority government, was re-elected with another majority.

Since the October 2019 federal election, all federal political parties have been busy plotting, planning, strategizing, raising funds, nominating candidates, and making outreach phone calls to Canadians to prepare for the next election because in a minority government an election could be triggered at any time.

Greg MacEachern, a former Liberal cabinet ministerial staffer and senior vice-president, government relations for Proof Strategies, told The Hill Times that he would not be surprised if an election is called this spring after the budget.

'The reality is most minority governments in Canada last 18 to 24 months," said Mr. MacEachern. "So we're in that time window. As well, the prime minister could justifiably say, 'I want my own mandate' and the opportunity for them to go to the polls could be following the tabling of a spring budget. The Liberals could use that budget as their platform."

However, Mr. MacEachern said, the government has to keep its focus on handling COVID-19, a once-in-a-century crisis affecting the health and economic wellbeing of Canadians, and they don't want to see any party taking political advantage of the situation. Mr. MacEachern also said for a spring election to happen, the rollout of the vaccinations has to be done reasonably well and the COVID-19 cases have to be under control.

"The government has to walk a fine line here, where they don't seem to want to enhance their own standing during a time of real strife," said Mr. MacEachern. "It's also a time where Canadians seem to not want anything to do with partisanship."

He also predicted that in the coming weeks, Mr. Trudeau will issue new updated mandate letters for some cabinet ministers assigning them additional responsibilities in their respective portfolios related to the management of the pandemic crisis. A PMO spokesman told *The Hill Times* that new mandate letters will be issued, but did not provide any specifics.

The mandate letters are built off of the Speech From the Throne and will be released in due course," said Alex Wellstead,

press secretary to Mr. Trudeau, in an email to The Hill Times.

off going to the polls sooner rather than later. He said in the new year, there are a number of uncertainties, including the state of the economy, the vaccine rollout, and the possibility of a third wave of

COVID-19. Any, or, the combined effect of, all of these uncertainties could derail the Liberal Party's ambitions to win a majority government. If the Liberals wait longer, it will likely give an advantage to the opposition parties, he said.

The budget document is already a quasi-political document, it's the economic and political platform for the government of the day," said Mr. Nanos. "So the budget would be a natural launching point because it allows the government to proactively message and make promises. And then to have an election saying, 'If the Liberals aren't elected, maybe these other parties might take away these things that were promising for Canadians.' So I would say that the budget would probably be the one thing that the Liberals would want to have an



Pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research says that strategically speaking, the sooner the Liberals go to the polls the better chances they have to win a majority government. The Hill Times file photograph

election on them believing that it's going to be, that it will have all sorts of supports for Canadians in order to get them through the pandemic."

Eight-term Liberal MP Judy Sgro (Humber River-Black Creek, Ont.) said that she does not know when the next election will be called. She said that her party is focused on managing the COVID-19 crisis and, as an MP, she's not thinking when the next election will be called.

"I think we should stay focused as long as we can on helping Canadians get through this terrible pandemic," said Ms. Sgro, a former cabinet minister. "That's our priority and what we should stay focused on is governance. This is not the time to be talking about elections."

arana@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

HILL TIMES CAREERS

Government Relations Coordinator

Summary:

The Government Relations Coordinator provides administrative support to the Government Relations team, and may additionally be required to conduct research and work with stakeholders to support the team in addressing the evolving list of active policy issues.

Core Competencies:

- Communication
- Project Management
- Attention to Detail
- **Customer Service**
- Collaboration

Position Accountabilities:

Provide administrative support to the Government Relations team. Duties include:

- Type, format and/or distribute general correspondence/reports/notices of meetings/
- agendas/minutes/dispatches Set up conference calls and coordinate other
- meeting logistics Establish and maintain files and departmental records

Policy Research

- Provide operational and research support to the Government Relations team, including analysis of legislation and regi ומנוטווג ווווףמכנ ing the real estate sector and homebuyers.
- Maintain a current awareness and expertise regarding ongoing policy and program issues related to the real estate industry

Committee Responsibilities:

Assist the Government Relations team in ensuring Committee plans are implemented on time and on budget, including coordination as required with internal staff. Committee Members, volunteers and external parties.

Membership and Other Related Responsibilities:

- Respond to enquiries from Boards/Associations, staff, REALTOR® members and the
- general public Undertake other projects and duties as as-
- signed by the Director, Government Relations and/or Vice-President, Advocacy.

Qualifications

- College diploma/university degree or equivalent combination of education and experience
- 3-5 years working experience with an association and/or federal government environment
- Strong organizational and communication skills Experience with document management and
- filing systems an asset Able to work evenings/weekends when
- required (infrequent) Ability to work on multiple projects with time
- sensitive deadlines Flexible, cooperative and able to take initiative
- Excellent interpersonal skills, highly team oriented
- Fluently bilingual in English and French is preferred

Please direct your application to: careers@crea.ca

At CREA, we are committed to fostering an inclubarrier-free and accessible environment. Part of this commitment includes arranging accommodations to ensure an equitable opportunity to participate in the recruitment and selection process. If you require an accommodation, we will work with you to meet your needs.







Opposition MPs raise concerns around procurement policies, security oversight following cancelled \$6.8-million standing offer with Chinese company Nuctech

The purpose of the standing offer was to replace Global Affairs Canada's older, conveyer-style parcel x-ray machines currently in use at Canadian embassies worldwide. NDP MP Matthew Green says he was 'astounded that we didn't have a higher security clearance protocol on, particularly, technology relating to our foreign embassies and our missions abroad.'

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Opposition MPs continue to question why the federal government's security apparatus did not play a larger role throughout the procurement process following the recent cancellation of a standing offer with partially state-owned Chinese security company Nuctech for the installation and operation of X-ray scanners in Canadian embassies around the world.

The \$6.8-million standing offer was rejected in mid-November.

"I was astounded that we didn't have a higher security clearance protocol on, particularly, technology relating to our foreign embassies and our missions abroad," said NDP MP Matthew Green (Hamilton, Ont.) in an interview with *The Hill Times* last week. "But even domestically here, given the state of international free trade, when we have a national electronic security establishment set up, that they're not actually front and centre in this."

"Or CSIS, or any of the other intelligence agencies that ought to be guiding this," said Mr. Green. "And I think that's been a theme time and time with procurement."

The OGGO committee moved to undertake a study of the standing offer beginning on Nov. 23, 2020, with relevant documents to be provided to the committee by Dec. 10, 2020. The purpose of the stand-

ing offer was to replace Global Affairs Canada's (GAC's) "older, conveyer-style parcel X-ray machines currently in use at Canadian embassies worldwide," according to a letter submitted to the committee by the Department of Public Works and Government Services signed by Assistant Deputy Minister James Stott in the policy, planning and communications branch with Public Services and Procurement Canada, the new name for Public Works and Government Services.

The letter also highlights that a standing offer is not a contract, and that it "is an offer from a supplier to provide goods or services at prearranged prices, under set terms and conditions, when and if required."

PSPC confirmed to the committee that while Nuctech received a standing offer for the machines, nothing had been purchased.

'It's a several step process'

Mr. Green alluded to comments made by Christian Leuprecht, a Munk senior fellow, policy studies professor at Queen's University, and professor in leadership at the Royal Military College during the Dec. 7, 2020, OGGO meeting, who called for "a comprehensive strategy" when asked which federal organization should play key roles in the security assessment process.

"I think it requires an entire process, from devising a policy to actually executing that policy," said Prof. Leuprecht. "It's a several step process that needs to have much more consistent attention at all points throughout it."

"That would already be a very good beginning in terms of getting a more equitable approach," said Prof. Leuprecht.

According to the security expert, Nuctech was founded in 1997 by the son of former Chinese leader Hu Jintao, "which makes him part of the notorious 'princelings' of the 'red royalty' that are widely despised across China."

"Doing business with Nuctech is bad for Canada's image, bad for China, and bad for [our image] with the average Chinese," said Prof. Leuprecht on Dec. 7.

In August 2020, senior management in GAC approached professional services firm Deloitte LLP to perform a review of the procurement process that ultimately resulted in the now cancelled standing offer awarded to the state-owned Chinese firm.

Although reviewers found that they "did not observe any instances of non-compliance" with the procurement policies in place, Deloitte's review "identified opportunities for improvement for future procurements of security equipment," including increasing the integration of security considerations into the materiel management life cycle, which could include involving security subject matter experts during the development of the procurement plan. want to buy some materials from the Chinese government,"he said in an interview with *The Hill Times.* "It's critical and should be started as soon as possible."

When asked by Mr. Paul-Hus about the direct relationship between Nuctech and the Chinese Communist Party during the Dec. 7, 2020, OGGO meeting, Charles Burton, senior fellow with the Centre for Advancing Canada's Interests Abroad at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, said "there is no question in my mind that the Chinese government seeks capabilities that may

> Pierre Paul-Hus, Conservative MF for Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles, Que., pictured at a press conference on Nov. 26, 2020. Mr. Paul-Hus says 'something fell through the cracks, absolutely,' in regards to the federal government's standing offer made with partially state-owned Chinese security company Nuctech for the installation and operation of X-ray scanners in Canadian embassies. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

be useable if its intent comes later."

"Capability plus intent is a threat," said Mr. Burton. "I think in general we have to be very cautious about any firm that is connected to the Chinese state."

Bloc Québécois MP Julie Vignola (Beauport-Limoilou, Que.) echoed her committee colleague's remarks, saying their first concern throughout the process was security.

"You don't want them to have contracts in privileged places for information like embassies," said Ms. Vignola. "When we all dug into that situation with Nuctech, we realized that there were no screening processes, no security levels put on the table, and it was an open banquet, let's say."

"What we were told is that there's no danger there, it's not in a place where there is a lot of information because it's only in the entrance, it's only X-rays to know what people are bringing with them,"said Ms.Vignola."I don't want to be in a James Bond movie in real life, but technology is what it is now, and it's now possible to have in something that seems quite usual like an X-ray machine, it's quite possible to have Wi-Fi [capability] that can gather information."

"When the technician comes, just a USB key will do the job and bring back all the information, important or not, to the Chinese government,"she said.

Ms. Vignola said although the committee heard from both individuals who raised concerns about internal USB ports or hard drives, as well as those who believed it was not as simple as that, "can we take any chance with our security?"

"Is there a chance of failure around our security? Yes there is a slight chance, so don't take a chance," said Ms. Vignola.

Another underlying challenge facing Canada is the relationship that China has with it's "quasiprivate entities, if there is such a thing there," said Mr. Green, pointing out that China's national domestic legislation requires companies and technologies coming out of the country have to be cooperative with the government.

"I should also state that given the scope of companies like Amazon, Google, Facebook and Instagram, I'm unsure if it's even that different in terms of America's own reach within it's own technology sector," said Mr. Green. "It's been well documented that there's a close relationship between U.S. intelligence and technology companies."

"I think that it's an increasing threat,"said Mr. Green. "Globally, it just so happens that China has shifted to be one of the more hostile actors."

Although Mr. Green suggested that the "excessive way in which we're examining Nuctech is politically motivated, in the process we have revealed significant inefficiencies, gaps, and security threats."

"And so it's incumbent on the committee to come up with recommendations from this study to help direct the government perform these things in a better way,"said Mr. Green.

Request for comment from GAC, PSPC, and the Canadian Border Services Agency was not returned by press deadline. mlapointe@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

The Hill Times

House Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates

Chair—Robert Kitchen (Conservative) Vice-Chair—Francis Drouin (Liberal) Vice Chair—Julie Vignola (Bloc Québécois)

Members:

Matthew Green (NDP) Majid Jowhari (Liberal) Irek Kusmierczyk (Liberal) Dane Lloyd (Conservative) Steve MacKinnon (Liberal) Kelly McCauley (Conservative) Pierre Paul-Hus (Conservative) Patrick Weiler (Liberal)



The review also recommended broader consultation throughout the procurement process for security equipment, and additional guidance with respect to publishing technical requirements.

'Our departments are not working together,' says Conservative MP Pierre Paul-Hus

"Something fell through the cracks, absolutely," said Conservative MP Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles, Que.), his party's shadow minister for public services and procurement and also a member of the OGGO Committee. "The problem is that our departments are not working together."

Mr. Paul-Hus also said the government should add an external review of all procurement processes within a digital environment.

"Our government must do [more] to research each time we

Opinion

Canadians' appetite for climate action growing, but beware of polarization

How keen are Canadians for climate action in these extraordinarily trying times? New survey results from the University of Ottawa's Positive Energy program and Nanos Research suggest that enthusiasm may be on the rise, despite the unprecedented fiscal. economic, and health situation, writes Monica Gattinger.



Monica Gattinger Opinion

ast fall, the federal government released a flurry of new climate measures: net zero by 2050 legislation, a climate plan that will increase the carbon price to \$170 per tonne by 2030, and strategies for hydrogen and small modular nuclear reactors. Ottawa says these measures pack the policy muscle needed to hit the country's 2030 emissions targets and 2050 ambitions.

But how keen are Canadians for climate action in these extraordinarily trying times? New survey results from the University of Ottawa's Positive Energy program and Nanos Research suggest that enthusiasm may be on the rise, despite the unprecedented fiscal, economic, and health situation

We asked Canadians on a scale of zero to 10, where zero means absolutely the worst time and 10 absolutely the best, how good a time it is for Canada to be ambitious in addressing climate change even if there are costs to the economy. We first asked this tracking question in June 2020. Canadians' views are divided. But

since June, climate ambition has grown: a small majority of Canadians (52 per cent) answered seven or higher, a seven per cent increase from June. Just over a quarter (27 per cent) answered three or lower, a two per cent decrease from the summer. Less than one in five (18 per cent) answered four to six (a five per cent decrease).

On the face of it, this is good news for Ottawa. It suggests the majority of Canadians are behind the government. But dig deeper into the numbers, and it's not all sweetness and light.

The zero to 10 scale helps to reveal the strength of disagreement among Canadians. Disagreement over policy issues need not prevent policy progress, but strong disagreement can. When views are con-



centrated at either end of a spectrum, they tend to be hardened and resistant to compromise. This is where the survey results are a bit concerning.

Almost 40 per cent of respondents hold very strong views on whether now is the best or worst time to address climate change, answering zero or 10. Nearly one in four Canadians (24 per cent) answered 10, while 15 per cent answered zero. This is up from June, when the figures stood at 17 per cent responding zero, and 17 per cent responding 10.

Governments will need to tread carefully. Interestingly, we do not see opinions get much more polarized when we break the data down based on age or gender. Regionally, respondents from the Prairies are more likely to say now is the worst time (27 per cent). Respondents from British Columbia are more likely to say now is the best time (30 per cent).

But dig into ideology and party affiliation, and opinions get very polarized. We asked respondents to score themselves on a scale of zero to 10 for their political views, where zero means left and 10 means right. Among left-leaning respondents (those answering zero to three, about 30 per cent of those surveyed), 48 per cent answered 10 on climate ambition. Among right-leaning respondents (those answering seven to 10, about 23 per cent of those surveyed), 42 per cent answered zero.

When it comes to partisan views, 40 per cent of Conservative Party supporters answered zero, while over one-quarter (27 per cent) of Liberal supporters answered 10, as did 46 per cent of NDP, 30 per cent of Bloc Québécois, and 66 per cent of Green Party supporters.

The results underscore that those charting Canada's energy and climate future will need to understand how to navigate polarized contexts. This means listening to

We asked respondents why they answered the way they did. For those who said now was the worst time (zero to three), the most common responses were that there are other priorities, like health and the vaccine, (32 per cent, up from 22 per cent June) and that we should wait until the economy has recovered from the pandemic (23 per cent, down from 47 per cent in the summer). For those saving now is the best time (seven to 10), by far the most common answer was that we need to act now and climate change can't wait (60 per cent, up from 39 per cent in June). People also said the pandemic offers a good opportunity for change and highlights the extent of our potential impact (20 per cent, down from 38 per cent in the summer).

Decision-makers need to remain attuned to these concerns. Recent experi-

The oilsands, pictured in Fort McMurray, Alta Decisionmakers need to remain attuned to these concerns. Successfully charting Canada's energy and climate future depends on it. The Hill Times photograph

ence shows that strong, concentrated opposition is enough to derail initiatives that have majority support-particularly if that support is broad but not particularly deep. This is especially important as the full brunt of the second wave bears down on the country. Successfully charting Canada's energy and climate future depends on it.

The survey was an RDD dual frame (landand cell-lines) hybrid telephone and online random survey of 1,096 Canadians, 18 years of age or older, between Nov. 26 and Nov. 29, 2020, as part of a Nanos Omnibus survey. The margin of error for this survey is ± 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Monica Gattinger is director of the Institute for Science, Society and Policy, full professor at the School of Political Studies and chair of Positive Energy at the University of Ottawa. The Hill Times

Appointment notice / Avis de nomination



MARTIN IMBLEAU

'Administration portuaire de Montréal (APM) est heureuse d'annoncer la nomination de Martin Imbleau au poste de président-directeur général. M. Imbleau a occupé différents postes de haute direction à Énergir où il a acquis une grande expérience en énergies variées, en environnement et en gestion de projets d'infrastructures majeures. Il occupait plus récemment la fonction de vice-président en stratégie d'entreprise et développement des affaires à Hydro-Ouébec. M. Imbleau est titulaire d'une maîtrise en droit de l'Université de Montréal, membre du Barreau du Québec et auteur de plusieurs ouvrages en droit international des droits de la personne. Il est entré en poste le 1^{er} janvier 2021 au Port de Montréal, le plus important port de l'est du Canada et le 2^e en importance à l'échelle du pays.

he Montreal Port Authority (MPA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Martin Imbleau to the position of President and Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Imbleau held several senior management positions at Énergir, where he developed extensive experience in such various fields as energy, environmental and major infrastructure project management. More recently, he held the position of Vice-President, Corporate Strategy and Business Development at Hydro-Ouébec. Mr. Imbleau holds a Master's degree in Law from Université de Montréal, is a member of the Quebec Bar and the author of several books on international human rights law. He started his new position on January 1, 2021 at the Port of Montreal, the largest port in Eastern Canada and the second largest in the country.



EDITOR Kate Malloy MANAGING EDITOR Charelle Evelyn DEPUTY EDITORS Peter Mazereeuw, Laura Ryckewaert ASSISTANT DEPUTY EDITOR Abbas Rana DIGITAL EDITOR Beatrice Paez

HILL TIMES

Editorial

Trudeau should be slamming Trump's demagoguery, more vociferously

Last week, Canada joined the rest of the world in watching a group of rioters seemingly try to literally burn down their democracy.

The mob that descended on Capitol Hill on Jan. 6 was stirred up, incited, and ultimately directed by U.S. President Donald Trump, who, along with his allies and family members, had for months, if not years, been telling anyone who would listen that something was rotten in the not-state of D.C. and that it had to be rectified through force.

Mr. Trump has adamantly refused to accept last November's election result and congratulate president-elect Joe Biden, saying shortly before the siege began on Jan. 6 "we will never concede."

Hours later, while people who carried flags bearing his name, along with Confederate flags, anti-Semitic, and Nazi paraphernalia, weapons, and more, rampaged through the Capitol Building—blocks away from where his lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, from the same stage as the president, called for "trial by combat"—Mr. Trump expressed his love and support for the mob, while making the weakest of calls for them to "remain peaceful."At least five people associated with the melée have died.

Here in Canada, other parties called the president out, with Conservative foreign affairs critic Michael Chong and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh both specifying that the violence was incited by Mr. Trump.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who mostly held his tongue, initially, had this to say about the galling display, summed up in a Jan. 6 tweet: "Canadians are deeply disturbed and saddened by the attack on democracy in the United States, our closest ally and neighbour. Violence will never succeed in overruling the will of the people. Democracy in the U.S. must be upheld—and it will be." It took him until Jan. 8 to mention that the "president and other politicians" played a role in the whole affair, and that it's a reminder that "the choices we make" as politicians have consequences.

The prime minister could have gone even further. His fallback excuse is always that the Canadian head of government has to work with whomever is elected to sit as the American head of state, ergo the U.S. president is seemingly always going to be beyond reproach.

But in avoiding that reproach and refusing to name the problem—that Mr. Trump cozies up to and encourages the white supremacists who act in his name—or even use the president's name, it gives tacit approval, or at least indifference, to those who hold the same views here at home.

While the pro-Trump riots were going on in the U.S., similar, albeit tiny, parallel demonstrations cropped up in Canadian cities. The Proud Boys hate group, who the president helped shine an international spotlight on, were present in Washington and got their start thanks to a Canadian.

The Canadian Armed Forces is already having to publicly crack down on far-right extremists and white-supremacists to try to stamp it out from within its ranks.

Systemic racism carries on unabated in Canada, with no sight of the longannounced "work plan" to address it the government promised last summer.

Continued silence, or muted commentary, about the U.S. says more about Canadian leadership than it does of the U.S. because if it's good enough for our"closest ally and neighbour,"surely it's good enough for us, and anyone who asks"could it happen here?"isn't paying attention.



EDITORIAL

DEPUTY DIGITAL EDITOR Samantha Wright Allen NEWS REPORTERS Aidan Chamandy, Alice Chen Mike Lapointe, Neil Moss, and Palak Mangat PHOTOGRAPHERS Sam Garcia, Andrew Meade, and Cynthia Münster

EDITORIAL CARTOONIST Michael De Adder COLUMNISTS Cameron Ahmad, Andrew Caddell, Andrew Cardozo, John Chenier, Sheila Copps, fric Couture, David Crane, Jim Creskey, Murray Dobbin, Gwynne Dyer, Michael Geist, Dennis Gruending, Cory Hann, Michael Harris, Erica Ifill, Joe Jordan, Amy Kishek, Rose LeMay, Alex Marland, Arthur Milnes, Tim Powers, Mélanie Richer, Susan Riley, Ken Rubin, Evan Sotiropoulos, Scott

Taylor, Lisa Van Dusen, Nelson Wiseman, and Les Whittington.

ADVERTISING VICE PRESIDENT MARKETING AND MULTIMEDIA SALES Steve MacDonald

DIRECTORS OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Craig Caldbick, Erveina Gosalci, Martin Reaume, Ulle Baum

PRODUCTION PRODUCTION MANAGER Benoit Deneault SENIOR GRAPHIC, ONLINE DESIGNER Joey Sabourin DESIGN MANAGER Serena Masonde WEB DESIGNER Jean-Francois Lavoie ASSISTANT WEB DESIGNER Ian Peralta

CIRCULATION

DIRECTOR OF READER ENGAGEMENT Chris Rivoire SUBSCRIPTIONS AND LICENSING EXECUTIVE Daryl Blackbird, Lakshmi Krishnamurti VICE PRESIDENT OF CONTENT LICENSING SALES Sean Hansel CIRCULATION MANAGER Dan Lahey

ADMINISTRATION HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Tracey Wale

DELIVERY INQUIRIES circulation@hilltimes.com 613-288-1146

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

PUBLISHERS Anne Marie Creskey, Jim Creskey, Leslie Dickson, Ross Dickson GENERAL MANAGER, CFO Andrew Morrow

Letters to the Editor

High time Canada finally and fully invest in feminist policies at home and abroad: KAIROS

Re: "Bring back core funding for women's groups, say MPs as new report warns sector at risk of 'financial devastation,' "(*The Hill Times* online, Dec. 16). The pandemic's impact on women and womenled organizations is not limited to Canada. KAIROS can attest to the profound effects that COVID-19 have had on women-led grassroots partners in the Global South. The virus has not only challenged critical service delivery to women impacted by conflict, it has accelerated gender-based domestic and state-driven violence.

Despite these growing threats, local organizations have found creative solutions to offer women a life line, educating communities about the virus and providing critical supplies, in addition to their work in helping women heal from war, earn incomes, and become agents of positive change in their communities and countries. To say their work is essential is an understatement.

Acknowledging the critical role they play, the minister of foreign affairs recently announced \$14.9-million in new funding for women peace-builders globally, with \$5-million of that targeted at grassroots organizations. This support is welcome. And, more must be done to support local women-led groups and peace-builders. Yes, Canada needs to increase its overseas development assistance from the current 0.28 per cent of national wealth to closer to the international standard of 0.7 per cent. But, as noted in this article, it is not only about money. It is about ensuring that these funds reach local women-led grassroots organizations, including support for their recovery and transformation efforts in response to the pandemic.

For funding to reach these organizations, it must be accessible, flexible, predictable, and long-term. This core funding is paramount to building strong institutions and social movements that drive social change in Canada and internationally. It's high time that Canada finally and fully invest in its feminist policies at home and abroad and ensures that this investment reaches the essential work of local women's organizations.

Jane Thirikwa Global partnerships coordinator KAIROS Canada Toronto, Ont.

No, not all nuclear materials and by– products are safely stored in a highly regulated environment, says letter writer

Re: "We cannot afford to be naive about climate change—renewables and nuclear must work together," by John Gorman, *The Hill Times*, Dec. 14, 2020.

Mr. Gorman states "the nuclear industry is the only energy industry that can account for all its by-products. While fossil-fuel emissions go into the atmosphere and other industrial waste goes to landfill, all nuclear materials and by-products are safely stored, managed, and monitored in a highly regulated environment."

Mr. Gorman appears to be unaware that all CANDU nuclear reactors routinely emit large volumes of radioactive water vapour and other radioactive gases into the atmosphere. CANDU reactors also routinely emit radioactive materials such as tritium, carbon-14 and radioactive cesium, strontium and cobalt into water bodies (including drinking water sources).

There are numerous leaking radioactive waste areas on the Chalk River Laboratories site north-west of Ottawa-Gatineau on the Ottawa River. These leaking waste sites were described in detail in an Ottawa Citizen article in 2011 by

HHILTIMES

Published every Monday and

Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926

Wednesday by Hill Times

246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4

Publishing Inc.

(613) 232-5952

Fax (613) 232-9055

www.hilltimes.com

Ian McLeod, entitled "Chalk River's Toxic Legacy."

The multinational consortium running Chalk River Laboratories is planning to build a gigantic above-ground landfill for one million tonnes of radioactive waste including plutonium and other materials that would remain radioactive for more than 100,000 years. This way of dealing with radioactive waste contravenes international safety standards and best practices.

The consortium's own studies show that the mound would leak during operation and after closure. The mound is expected to eventually disintegrate in a process referred to as "normal evolution" described in a study called the "Performance Assessment," produced by the proponent as part of a protracted and controversial environmental assessment that is ongoing.

So much for Mr. Gorman's assertion that "all nuclear materials and by-products are safely stored, managed, and monitored in a highly regulated environment."

Lynn Jones Ottawa, Ont.

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 RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO: CIRCULATION DEPT. 246 Queen Street Suite 200, Ottawa, ON K1P 5E4



8

Trump's ugly legacy has unleashed a venom in America

The American claim to 'exceptionalism' and its history of support for democracy around the world has been delivered a severe blow.



Sheila Copps Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—Whether or not Donald Trump remains in office for the next two weeks is hardly the point.

His ugly legacy has unleashed a venom in America that will be very difficult to suppress.

The world has watched in horror as domestic terrorists stormed the capital, wreaking havoc and death on the ultimate symbols of American democracy.

We have witnessed extremists becoming so mainstream that one

of them, Georgian Marjorie Taylor Greene, is now sitting in the House of Representatives.

The American claim to "exceptionalism" and its history of support for democracy around the world has been delivered a severe blow.

Lindsey Graham's ridiculous response to the Washington attack was to claim equivalency between the attackers and Black Lives Matter activists who took to the streets to protest the death of multiple Black citizens at the hands of the police.

Does anyone truly believe that if the same group of Washington attackers had been racial minorities, there would have been so few arrests?

Graham's claim that Democrats needed to call out protesters of police brutality at the same time as he was criticizing the terrorists simply reinforced the fact that the day Donald Trump leaves office will not be the end of this reckoning in America.

The CBC revisited footage from the summer protest at the Lincoln Memorial, where row upon row of riot police were lined up to truncheon protesters. That footage was compared to the police treatment of emboldened white supremacists and conspiracy theorists who considered the attack a victory for their cause.

Some television outlets carried footage of those storming the capital taking selfies with police guarding the gates. And the Confederate flag was carried into



the Senate by those who paraded their hatred right onto the floor of the Senate.

At the same time as the anarchists were outside of the Senate, chief representatives inside were speaking about the "incredible" four years of Trump rule and some of them were still trying as of last week to claim the election was stolen.

The attack on the Senate was greeted with glee by the president, who tweeted his love for the protesters.

At the same time as the state of Georgia elected its first Black Senator and its first Jewish Senator, most people are not talking about how those elections made history.

Instead, we are witnessing a country that is still deeply divided on racial grounds, and whose leadership actually promotes Donald Trump, pictured July 10, 2020.Pre-Trump, racists were largely in the shadows. But his sick vision for America has enlisted millions of followers. This past week has only emboldened them, writes Sheila Copps. Photograph courtesy of White House Flickr/by Tia

the supremacy of one race over another.

Trump illustrated his true colours more than three years ago, when white supremacists stormed Charlottesville and killed an innocent bystander while shouting slurs against Jews and minorities.

Trump was the first to lay out this false equivalency when he tried to claim that there were "very fine people on both sides" of the Charlottesville protest.

And multiple members of the Senate still cling to the view that there is validity in the absurdly false claims of election interference.

Notwithstanding these shocking perspectives, even in the consequential Georgia Senate runoffs, the state was almost evenly split on those who supported Trump's choice and those who opposed. Largely due to the incredible organizational work of Stacey Abrams and Fair Fight Action to oppose voter suppression, the Democrats were able to pull off razor-thin victories in both instances, thus securing the balance of power in the Senate. That vote paves the way forward for president-elect Joe Biden and vice-president-elect Kamala Harris to receive support in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

But they still have to face the job of uniting a country where almost half of the population oppose their vision.

All those who chose Trump were not voting based on his racial record. But the fact that they could overlook it and cast their ballot for him in such large numbers, is truly frightening.

From misogyny to racism, from his affinity for dictators versus democrats, the president still managed to garner the support of almost 75 million voting Americans, the largest number in the history of the country to vote for a Republican candidate.

Even when the president vacates the office, whether of his own accord or not, his leadership scars will endure long past his departure.

The suspension of Trump's Twitter (temporarily), Facebook and Instagram accounts are not enough to stem the flood of hatred that has been unleashed during his presidency.

Pre-Trump, racists were largely in the shadows. But his sick vision for America has enlisted millions of followers.

This past week has only emboldened them.

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

Trudeau brands himself as Canada's Climate Change Churchill

If Justin Trudeau is going to win the next election, (which some speculate could come as soon as this spring) he'll have to inject his leadership persona with more toughness.



Gerry Nicholls
Post Partisan Pundit

OAKVILLE, ONT.—"We shall fight climate change at our gas stations, we shall fight it with our furnaces, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength with windmills and solar panels, we shall defend our planet's environment, whatever the cost may be."

Okay, that's not a real quote, but it's the kind of Churchillianstyle fighting words I expect Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to utter in the near future. Why?

Well, if Trudeau is going to win the next election, (which some speculate could come as soon as this spring) he'll have to inject his leadership persona with more toughness.

I say that because when society is going through a period when anxiety is the ruling emotion of the day (such as now) the public tends to gravitate towards leaders whom they think can keep them safe.

Everything else goes on the back burner; frightened people want strong leaders.

Hence Trudeau will need to undergo something of an image transformation before the next federal election, altering himself from the "fun guy" who wows us with his adorable yoga stances and costume changes to more of a leader who exudes confidence and strength.

However, this won't be easy for the prime minister.

After all, his persona has always been more about compassion and empathy than about firmness and fortitude, a branding that works since it actually reflects who he is as a person.

So how can Trudeau go about convincing Canadians that, despite his inherent amicable niceness, he's got the internal toughness necessary to guide a nation through both the COVID crisis and any looming economic downturn that might be coming our way?

Well, I think we already have the answer to that question: Trudeau will make fighting climate change the defining issue of his leadership.

This is why, in my view, Trudeau recently announced his bold plan to quintuple the carbon tax over the next ten years, a move I'd argue was calculated to make Trudeau look like a leader who has the courage and determination to be a "eco-warrior," a leader willing to wage an all-out war against climate change.

In short, the Liberals are betting that if Canadians accept Trudeau's toughness credentials when it comes to fighting climate change, they'll also be more likely to believe he'll be tough when it comes to confronting the country's other challenges.

Plus, by putting a focus on battling climate change, it offers Trudeau an opportunity to make himself look relatively stronger, by making his chief political rival—Conservative Party leader Erin O'Toole—look relatively weaker. I say that because Conservative politicians lack credibility when discussing environmental issues; it's just not their turf. O'Toole is in a stronger tactical position whenever he's taking on Trudeau over issues related to national defence, or to law and order, or to fiscal concerns; whenever he's talking climate change or other environmental issues, he's on shakier ground.

Indeed, if the electoral debate centres on climate change, Trudeau can easily degrade O'Toole's brand by saying something along the lines of, "Whereas, I'm willing to do whatever it takes to save our planet, my opponent O'Toole lacks the strength to stand up to his oil industry pals."

Mind you, this strategy of going all out on climate change also entails some risk for the Liberals.

If O'Toole can divert the debate on carbon taxes away from the environment and make it about economics, he might persuade voters that Trudeau's scheme is not so much courageous as it is ruinous.

At any rate, my point is watch for Trudeau to offer Canadians his blood, toil, sweat and a quick image change.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant. The Hill Times

Opinion

Opinion

Trump loyalists abandon ship, but can't outrun their treachery to America

Who is the King Rat among the president's former enablers? It's hard to tell.



Michael Harris Harris

HALIFAX—And so the lame schmuck presidency of Donald Trump lurches toward the exits.

A few weeks back in this space, I opined that his leaving would be ugly. With five dead on the Capitol Grounds after Trump's pitchfork brigade's antics, I stand by that observation.

This U.S. president, a liar, a bully, a masher, an egomaniac, and very likely a psychopath, unleashed his followers on the seat of American democracy because he lost an election to a better man, and can't accept that. Two months after Joe Biden thrashed him, and with more than 4,000 Americans dead from COVID-19 in just one day last week, Trump remains fixated on floating his debunked theory of a stolen election.

Now in the wake of Jan. 6, it's all the rage to loath the Marmalade Mussolini. There is talk about another impeachment, a Section 25 removal from office, demands for resignation, and at the low end of outrage, a sanction.

Let me offer another option: jail. After all, five people are dead because of his incitement to storm the Capitol. And this president took an oath to protect, not kill Americans. Has there ever been a clearer case of inciting a riot and sedition?

It will be interesting to see if the criminal investigation into the death of a Capitol police officer will include a conversation with the man who rallied this posse of domestic terrorists, Donald J. Trump.

Missing in most of the coverage of Trump's perverted and calamitous presidency, is that host of Americans who handed him power, and then proceeded to enable him through his worst excesses.

These same rats are now swan-diving off the trampsteamer of the Trump presidency. The cavalcade of hypocrites is long and disgraceful, from White House staff and cabinet, to members of the House and the Senate. The top of that list of infamy is the Republican Party itself.

Vice-President Mike Pence, now apparently furious with his boss, makes Uriah Heep look like a piker. For four painful years, Pence resolved every doubt in favour of a man who locked up children in cages, bragged about grabbing women by the pussy, and extorted foreign leaders to do his political bidding by withholding already authorized financial and military aid. That is not loyalty. That is snivelling subservience. Pence is the King of Snivel.

Mitch McConnell, whose dance with the devil ended with sore toes and a demotion, enabled Trump to avoid the consequences of being impeached. The former majority leader in the Senate assisted Trump in imposing a new appointment to the Supreme Court, just weeks before a presidential election—something McConnell once said he would never do.

And now this reliably spineless creature stands up to Trump on challenging the election results—after the Republicans lost the majority in the Senate, and Trump lost the presidency. How very brave.

Ted Cruz, who once said that Trump was a "pathological liar" and torched him for insulting the senator's wife, was prepared to argue the president's fantasy claim that the election was stolen from him in front of the U.S. Supreme Court.

That's not what Harvardtrained lawyers usually volunteer for. After all, sixty court decisions, including one from the U.S. Supreme Court, countless state election officials, fifty governors, the Electoral College, and even the Department of Justice found the election to be fair and free of mass fraud.

So how does Cruz denounce the violence at the Capitol, and then vote in favour of Trump's baseless claim that the election was stolen from him? By setting a new world record for sucking and blowing at the same time, that's how. And daydreaming of tapping



President Donald Trump spurred on supporters who attacked Capitol Hill last week, overwhelming police officers and leaving five dead. Photograph by Andrea Hanks, courtesy of the White House

into Trump's base for a run for the presidency in 2024. Cruz is the death march of blind ambition. Who is the King Rat? It's hard

to tell.

Rudy Giuliani comes to mind. It was the former New York mayor who whipped up Trump's mob, and then piously denounced their violence on Capitol Hill. His denunciation was as bogus as the conspiracy theories he's been whispering in the president's ear. How could he condemn the rioters, when it was Giuliani himself who incited them with the battle cry "trial by combat" before they marched to the Capitol?

But Bill Barr, Trump's former Attorney-General, is also in the running for the lowest honours. He now says that Trump "betrayed" his office by inciting a mob to interrupt the constitutional process of transitioning power from the current administration to president-elect Joe Biden. But this is the same Bill Barr who was Trump's chief accomplice in sinking the Mueller Report with spin and deceit, in order to save the president from facing the consequences of what he had done.

This is the same Bill Barr who effectively said in decision after decision that the executive branch should have more power than Congress—an authoritarian rebuke of the separation of powers that the founding fathers prescribed as the basis of U.S. governance.

And finally, this is the attorney general who directly intervened to dismiss cases or lessen sentences against the president's felonious cronies. Michael Flynn had actually entered a guilty plea to the charge of lying to the FBI, when the DOJ dropped the case because Barr said Trump's former national security advisor should never have been charged.

Barr now presents as a man appalled by the assault on the Capitol Building. Strange stuff from the legal handmaiden of a tyrant who had shown his colours long before he hatched a desperate coup to keep himself in power. Barr's belated moral judgment of Trump is a fraud. He was not so much attorney general, as the president's lawyer. As one wag put it, it was a case of "conservative ideologue meeting grifter."

A large swath of the Christian Right has a lot to explain for its years of support for a man who might be described as the op-





posite of Jesus. They looked the other way at his torrent of lies. They ignored his moral turpitude in cases alleging everything from sexual harassment, to out-andout sexual assault. No one in that religious community seemed to care about his relentless dance around the golden calf of wealth and Wall Street. Simply put, they had turned their religion into just another lobby group, clamouring for a judge who would reverse Roe V. Wade. When you start thinking of Donald Trump as the . vou know you is in trouble.

It is now in vogue for social media giants like Facebook and Twitter to lock the president's accounts or suspend him indefinitely for his role in inciting the smash-up on Capitol Hill. But these same super platforms allowed Trump to poison millions of minds during his presidency with half-baked conspiracy theories, lies, and racism. Where were they when Trump and his minVice-President Mike Pence, now apparently furious with his boss, makes Uriah Heep look like a piker. For four painful years, Pence resolved every doubt in favour of a man who locked up children in cages, bragged about grabbing women by the pussy, and extorted foreign leaders to do his political bidding by withholding already authorized financial and military aid. Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia

Ted Cruz, who once said that Donald Trump was a 'pathological liar' and torched him for insulting the senator's wife, was prepared to argue the president's fantasy claim that the election was stolen from him in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia

ions were creating their dark, alternate universe on these sites? Unwittingly or not, Facebook and Twitter were the recruiting office for the very digital soldiers who invaded the Capitol Building, every bit as much as Fox News.

It comes down to this: some very powerful people, some in the Republican Party, some in the religious community, some in business, and some in the media allowed Donald Trump to run amok. They allowed him to be protected by the aura of the office he held, even though he abused it outrageously time after time. With their self-interested enabling of this monster, they were not protecting the presidency, but a brazen man who recognized no rules but his own.

Democracy deserves better treatment than that. If she doesn't get it, it's never very long before it leaves.

Michael Harris is an awardwinning author and journalist. The Hill Times



Maybe don't take that sunny trip during a global pandemic, people: Provincial politicians who chose to leave the country for tropical holidays found themselves with different jobs when they came home, including former Ontario finance minister Rod Phillips, left, former Alberta municipal affairs minister Tracy Allard, and former Quebec Liberal critic Pierre Arcand. *Wikimedia Commons photograph, Facebook photograph, and Quebec UK Flickr photograph*

Jet-setting politicians shouldn't be surprised when the public asks for heads to roll

An uber majority of elected officials followed the rules they set out and lectured us to follow, but a few highprofile rule breakers have damaged the credibility of the politician as public health messenger.



Tim Powers
Plain Speak

Ortrawa—"Do as I say, not as I do" seems like an apt proverb for the times as more stories emerge about politicians who, during the holiday period or prior, thought they'd take some personal foreign travel when the rest of us were told by them not to. While it is true, based on available public reporting, that an uber majority of elected officials followed the rules they set out and lectured us to follow, a few high-profile rule breakers have damaged the credibility of the politician as public health messenger.

The damage assessment is still being done and it will vary across different jurisdictions, but at a time when Canadians are tired, frustrated, and probably uncertain about certain public health efforts, selfindulging politicos wasn't the booster we needed. We all need escapes, we all need vacations, but we are all living with limitations-or at least most of us are. The colossal error of judgement made by the elected good-time travellers was to misjudge the heightened moral policing that is being done by the public in this pandemic. And when you were an author of the COVID-19 criminal code and you decide to step outside its established practices, you can be damn sure public lynching is prescribed. We all want this pandemic to be over and return to something like a 2019 world. Many of us are finding ways daily to keep our sanity and health—jetting far afield would be a great option. But it is not a realistic or sanctioned one in most jurisdictions unless for an essential purpose. Regular readers will have heard me opine or whine about the fact that I have not been able to come home to Newfoundland and Labrador since the pandemic began. For now, as painful for me to accept it, that he way that it is. The mos travel I have done is by car and it has been in the eastern Ontario-western Quebec region for short, safe, allowable mental

health breaks. Suck it up buttercup, as a dear departed friend of mine used to say. Ontario Premier Doug Ford lost a finance minister and, by all reports, an extremely capable public servant after Rod Phillips needed some time in St. Bart's. For days now, Ford's team has had to manage

Phillips needed some time in St. Bart's. For days now, Ford's team has had to manage that mess and it has irritated locked-down Ontarians who remain aghast that the formerly second-most powerful political figure in the province was so cruelly tone deaf.

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney is in a full-on political crisis. His chief of staff has

resigned, and a senior minister removed from cabinet because they decided they should be Christmas travellers. Other numerous elected legislators from Kenney's United Conservative Party have also admitted to foreign jaunts. Kenney initially said it was his fault because he wasn't clear with his team about what travel rules should be. Regular Albertans seemed to know what was expected of them and have gone apoplectic over the UCP frequent flyers. Kenney, who was already struggling with public opinion prior to the caucus Club Med binge, has not been helped with his government's re-election chances. Sanctimony was always his greatest enemy—now it is bludgeoning him. It wasn't just provincial conservative

It wasn't just provincial conservative politicians freely floating about—this story has found Liberal culprits, NDP exceptionalists, CPC journeymen, and other provincial politicians. They have all struck a nerve and created a legitimate challenge to ongoing public health communications. If more people become skeptical and throw their hands up in air because of the behaviour of this lot, that has the potential to create conditions for COVID-19 spread and lengthening the pandemic.

While there are certainly more pressing issues in our lives, because none of us has been free of the pandemic's punch, don't expect this tale to end anytime soon. People are pissed off.

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

HILTIMES CAREERS

Senior Policy Advisor

Summary:

The Senior Policy Advisor conducts research, provides technical expertise, and engages with government in order to support the real estate sector and find solutions to the policy challenges currently facing the housing industry. A team-oriented, highly-motivated, and strategic-minded professional with a strong background in policy development and analysis.

Core Competencies:

- Policy development
- Communication & Presentation skills
- Strict attention to detailAdaptability
- Good judgement and political acuity

Position Accountabilities:

- Provide thorough, timely, and accurate analysis of complex policies and issues impacting homeowners, homebuyers, and the real estate industry.
- Monitor the development and progression of major federal legislation and regulation and provide timely and relevant updates to the Government Relations team.
- Develop policy proposals, recommendations and discussion papers based on research, analysis, envirepresentations and exeminational anisystems.
- ronmental scanning, and organizational priorities. Provide written and oral briefings to CREA col-
- leagues, management and senior leadership.
 Monitor and assess source reliability and bias when it comes to information gathering and policy development.
- Maintain effective working relationships with Boards, Associations, stakeholders and Departmental Officials within the federal government.
- Monitor developments in government relations and lobbying and determine any relevant implica-
- tions for CREA.Research and synthesize complex concepts and
- information to inform policy development.Undertake other projects and duties as assigned
- by the Director, Government Relations and/or Vice-President, Advocacy.

*Some travel is required post pandemic

Qualifications:

- College diploma, university degree or equivalent combination of education and experience
- 3-5 years' work experience in an association, federal government and/or financial industry
- Experience developing policies that cut across government departments and program areas
- Proven track record of working effectively with external organizations, experts, academia, and government officials
- Strong business acumen / financial industry knowledge, with a high comfort level working with and interpreting financial data to inform policy development
- Advanced research, analytical, and problem-solving skills Strategic and creative communicator with the abil-
- ity to brief effectively to inform communications, government relations, and leadership decisions
 Innovative thinker, with an ability to test/reject/
- refresh policy optionsStrong interpersonal skills, including an ability to
- develop and maintain relationships with internal and external stakeholders Experience managing multiple projects and deliv-
- experience managing multiple projects and delivering quality results under tight timelines
 Previous experience in the real estate industry is a
- definite assetFluently bilingual in English and French is preferred

Please direct your application to: careers@crea.ca

At CREA, we are committed to fostering an inclusive, barrier-free and accessible environment. Part of this commitment includes arranging accommodations to ensure an equitable opportunity to participate in the recruitment and selection process. If you require an accommodation, we will work with you to meet your needs.



Opinion

COVID is exacerbating regional, provincial, and inter-personal tensions



While some politicians exacerbate these divisions—Ontario Premier Doug Ford warning of 'hordes' of Quebecers, flooding into Ottawa; Alberta Premier Jason Kenney, and Quebec's François Legault, criticizing the federal government for slow vaccine roll-outs—there are rare, and welcome, voices of compassion and unity, writes Susan Riley. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade*

'Shaming and blaming people does not prevent the spread of COVID. It creates stigma. It drives people underground,' says Nova Scotia's chief medical officer of health, and ain't that the truth.



Susan Riley Impolitic

CHELSEA, QUE.—The most indemic is the way it turns strangers into threats and everyone into a stranger.

This is most obvious, perhaps, in border cities like Ottawa-Gatineau, where interprovincial bridges were closed during the first wave. As cases in the National Capital Region rise again not quite in tandem on both sides of the Ottawa River, but close—so do suspicions. Ottawa residents skiing in Gatineau Park, on the Quebec side, are told by locals that they shouldn't be on the trails, even though there is no official prohibition (yet) on crossing the border. By the same token, Quebec licence plates in Ottawa shopping areas sometimes draw hostile stares. And, as always, festering linguistic tensions underlie every uncomfortable interaction.

Similarly, residents of some interior British Columbia towns, where COVID cases have been low, look askance at Alberta licence plates. The Atlantic provinces keenly patrol their own borders, intent on blocking visitors from COVID hot spots like Quebec and Ontario. There is even hostility among regions within the same province. People living in Toronto's satellite cities, like Vaughan, resent Toronto shoppers flocking to their shopping malls when commerce is all but shut down in the red-zone provincial capital.

People wealthy enough to own a second property flee their city homes for cottages to the dismay of small resort communities. They worry that incoming cottagers from Toronto, or Ottawa, or the B.C. Lower Mainland, will spread their big-city germs in local grocery stores and pharmacies. Or that they will overwhelm local businesses, unprepared for holiday crowds in winter.

Residents of northern British Columbia, including First Nations communities, worry about major work camps that house construction workers for the LNG site in Kitimat, the Coastal GasLink project on Wetsu'weten traditional territory, the controversial Site C hydro dam, the TMX pipeline project, and others. Even with reduced numbers imposed by the province, these camps house hundreds of men in close quarters and outbreaks are both inevitable and have spread, during the first wave, to neighbouring communities.

This resentment of outsidersa normal instinct for self-protection that can tip easily into paranoia-extends, naturally, to international travellers. Both the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and Canada's Chief Medical Health Officer, Dr. Theresa Tam, conclude that the spread of the virus among airplane passengers is rare. Most carriers, like Air Canada, have air filtration systems as good as those used in hospital surgery rooms. And passengers have been required to wear masks since early (not early enough, but early) in the pandemic.

There have been recent, belated improvements, too. All inbound air travellers to Canada must (finally) present a negative COVID test before boarding and agree to quarantine upon arrival. And the short-lived prohibition on all inghts from the U.K., prompted by the discovery of a more infectious form of COVID across the Atlantic, was lifted last week. The new strictures are supposed to prevent further imported transmission, and, besides, the variant has already been discovered in this country.

That doesn't mean public nervousness about flying foreigners, or returning Canadians, has abated, however. If anything, it is amplified by politicians, like Doug Ford, who recently blamed the federal government for lax surveillance of arriving passengers at Toronto's major airport. Ford was right about the weak federal response, but wrong to suggest that arriving passengers are a major source of his province's recent surge in cases. They play a very minor role.

That said, no one (according to polls) wants to open land borders to American visitors, or even to Canadians returning from Florida, Arizona, or other infection zones—for understandable reasons. Understandable, but not necessarily reasonable.

It is behaviour, not geography, that spreads COVID. Blaming foreigners, young people, immigrants, the poor, the province next door, is a futile effort that only undermines social cohesion and adds more misery to a miserable time. People lucky enough to work at home, smart enough to follow health protocols, and considerate enough to bring their supplies with them before they depart for the cottage present a minimal threat—as long as they don't throw large dinner parties, or parade around unmasked in tight quarters. Benaviour, not geography.

Similarly, while Montreal is a recurring hot-spot, that doesn't make everyone from the city a public health menace. As always, wealthier neighbourhoods where people are comfortably retired, able to work at home, and close to outdoor recreation—have a distinct advantage by virtue of their economic privilege. It is harder to avoid the virus if you live in a crowded apartment block, have to take public transit to work, deal directly with the public, or work in long-term care. If these people, many from racialized groups, are more vulnerable to illness, it is not from any moral failing.

Those who deserve oppro-brium are the anti-maskers, often white and middle class—and their ideological cheerleaderswho care more about their own comfort than about their fellow citizens. Some blame belongs to political leaders, too, who have issued a welter of conflicting and constantly changing advisories that only breed public disdain. (Even last week, under "severe" lockdowns in Ontario and Quebec, the Canadian Tire in Gatineau remained open while, in nearby Ottawa, the hardware giant provided only curbside service. And while indoor masks have been mandatory in many provinces for months, Alberta only signed on last week.)

Maybe the problem is also the very structure of our country, where individual provinces often prevail over the broader national interest—even in a pandemic.

While some politicians exacerbate these divisions—Premier Ford warning of "hordes" of Quebecers, flooding into Ottawa; Alberta Premier Jason Kenney, and Quebec's François Legault, criticizing the federal government for slow vaccine roll-outs—there are rare, and welcome, voices of compassion and unity.

One is Dr. Robert Strang, chief medical officer of health for Nova Scotia. Last week, he lamented the "blaming and shaming" he has witnessed—smaller Nova Scotia communities refusing service to people from Halifax; workers who must travel outside the province for jobs, facing "serious and intimidating communications," and even harassment of their families.

"Shaming and blaming people does not prevent the spread of COVID," he said. "It creates stigma. It drives people underground." Some people are going to test positive, he said; it is a pandemic after all. He urged a caring and compassionate approach, "caution, but not fear." And he wants Nova Scotians to recognize that "everyone's situation is different."

These are words the entire country needs to hear. Along with another straightforward reminder from University of Toronto infectious disease expert, Dr. Isaac Bolgoch: "The driver of this infection is people who are in close contact with others in indoor settings. It's as simple as that."

Behaviour, not boundaries. With the important caveat that is easier for some to behave responsibly than others, through no fault of their own.

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

The Hill Times

Canada shouldn't be a happy hunting ground for foreign corporations

R&D branch plants of Big Tech are using Canadian talent and our university professors and research institutes to develop intellectual property to be owned by the corporate parents and used to generate jobs and wealth elsewhere.



David Crane Canada & the 21st Century

TORONTO—Belatedly, Industry Minister Navdeep Bains is now voicing concerns over the potential takeover of promising Canadian tech companies by foreign corporations, a trend that could accelerate as a result of the pandemic. Rich with cash, Big Tech is roaming the world to buy up promising tech companies that are struggling financially. And we have companies they would like to buy.



According to an interview in The Financial Post, Bains said he had asked Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland to help Canada deal with future takeovers of Canadian tech companies. It will be interesting to see whether Freeland responds in her first budget. Bains' concern is over the sale of tech companies short of capital due to the pandemic. But what foreign multinationals really want are our most successful companies. So to be effective, changes would be needed in Investment Canada

What's remarkable is that it was Bains, the minister responsible for Investment Canada, who made it much easier for multinationals to acquire many more of our promising tech companies without any kind of screening to

> According to an interview in The Financial Post, Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains said he had asked Finance Minister Chrvstia Freeland pictured Nov. 23, 2020, to help Canada deal with future takeovers of Canadian tech companies. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Minister Navdeep Bains, pictured Nov. 17, 2020, is now voicing concerns over the potential takeover of promising Canadian tech companies by foreign corporations, a trend that could accelerate as a result of the pandemic. Rich with cash, Big Tech is roaming the world to buy up promising tech companies that are struggling financially. And we have companies they would like to buy, writes David Crane. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Belatedly, Industry

see whether the takeovers delivered a net benefit for Canada.

Bains did this by raising the threshold for Investment Canada net benefit reviews from \$600-million in enterprise value when the Liberals took office in 2015, to \$1.613-billion today for investors from countries with which we have a free trade agreement; notably the U.S., and \$1.075-billion for other WTO-member countries. Even the \$600-million threshold was too high-it was raised from \$369-million to \$600-million in early 2015 by the Harper government, with plans to see it rise to \$1-billion by 2017.

What Bains did was to open the doors much wider and much more quickly than the Harper government planned to enable foreign investors to acquire the very same companies that we are spending billions of dollars in grants, tax incentives, education, and basic research to encourage as start-ups and scale-ups for our future economy—the companies we need for the jobs and wealth generation for future prosperity. Almost all of our tech companies fall below the thresholds. In fact. Canada has been a happy hunting ground for Big Tech for many years, often with active encouragement from successive governments.

This represents a colossal contradiction in federal policy. On the one hand, we are making it extraordinarily easy for foreign investors to buy up our potential future champions, turning Canada into a farm team for other countries to exploit for our intellectual property and talent; while on the other hand, we have a growing investment of tax dollars to train future talent, foster Canadian start-ups and scale-ups and develop intellectual property for our future economy. So we are spending our own public money to create seed corn that will benefit investors from other countries.

What is the point of the \$52.4-million Bains pledged to three Ontario tech hubs to grow 30 small tech companies into companies with revenues of \$100-million or more by 2024, if Big Tech can simply come in and take them over, garnering the intellectual property and talent team Canadian taxpayers have helped to develop?

Thresholds that opened the doors to easier takeovers of our tech companies originated with the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement negotiated by the Mulroney government in 1984. Although much lower then—it was set at \$192-million for 1992 company valuations were much lower than today.

In the three fiscal years from fiscal 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, some 1,772 Canadian businesses have been sold to foreign owners without any kind of review by Investment Canada to see whether there was a net benefit to Canada. In the same three years, just 40 foreign investments were reviewed for net benefit, and all were approved. We don't know how many Canadian businesses were sold in the 2019-20 fiscal year, which ended last March since



What we ended up with were R&D branch plants of Big Tech which used Canadian talent and our university professors and research institutes to develop intellectual property to be owned by the corporate parents and used to generate jobs and wealth elsewhere, as well as takeovers of some of our best up-and-coming tech companies.

This summer, the House of Commons Committee on Industry, Science and Technology—over the opposition of Liberal MPs held four sessions to review Investment Canada, including whether the thresholds for net benefit reviews were too high. The committee now has a draft report but Liberal MPs may try to water it down.

Yet, this is a serious issue that will determine whether we will continue to be a farm team for Big Tech so it can exploit our intellectual property and talent for its own profit, or whether we can build up a new generation of world-competitive businesses headquartered and owned here, and which can generate the jobs and wealth for our own future prosperity.

This wouldn't mean a ban on all takeovers. But it would require some radical new thinking, including the use of national security as a reason to screen below-threshold takeovers based on strategic criteria to bar the takeover of key Canadian tech companies, the use of a government agency such as the Canada Development Investment Corporation to recapitalize promising tech companies because of immediate financial difficulties, find ways to ensure that Canadian



Investment Canada has failed to provide a 2019-2020 annual report, more than nine months after the end of its fiscal year.

In their first years in office, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, along with Bains, seemed keener on courting Big Tech companies

In his first years in office, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. seemed keener on courting Big Tech companies like Google and Amazon rather than in promoting Canadian-owned tech companies, writes David Crane. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

pension and other funds invest more of their money to support Canada's future, and require much greater transparency from Investment Canada itself. David Crane can be reached at crane@interlog.com. The Hill Times

13

Global



The obvious way to continue this article would be to point out that Joe Biden won the election, that thanks to the run-off elections in Georgia, the Democrats will control both houses of Congress, and that the joint session of Congress withstood the assault of Trump's storm-troopers on Jan. 6, 2021, pictured, writes Gwynne Dyer. Screen capture image courtesy ABC NEWS

Democracy has nothing to do with being American or 'Western'

American democracy will probably survive its current difficulties. Democracy as the default mode in the world certainly will.



Gwynne Dyer Global Affairs L ONDON, U.K.—If I have to read one more hand-wringing article about the 'crisis of American democracy' and what it means for the world, I'm going to retch. The last straw was an article

in The New Yorker last week by Adam Gopnik, an accomplished journalist whom I usually admire. It was called 'What We Get Wrong About America's Crisis of Democracy,' and the strapline read: "The interesting question is not what causes authoritarianism but what has ever suspended it."

No, that's the wrong question. It assumes, as Gopnik says, that "The default condition of humankind is not to thrive in broadly egalitarian and stable democratic arrangements that get unsettled only when something happens to unsettle them. The default condition of humankind, traced across thousands of years of history, is some sort of autocracy."

The obvious way to continue this article would be to point out that Joe Biden won the election, that thanks to the run-off elections in Georgia, the Democrats will control both houses of Congress, and that the joint session of Congress withstood the assault of Trump's storm-troopers on Jan. 6.

Trump's storm-troopers on Jan. 6. All that is true, but Gopnik is correct in saying that American democracy is still in serious trouble and that the populist tide is running strongly in the world. The problem is with his view of the rest of the world and America's place in it.

Gopnik grew up in Canada, but he seems to have drunk the American Kool-Aid. That is the familiar mythology in which the United States is not only the first mass democracy but the indispensable one, the shining example without which the others would wander hopelessly in the darkness.

That's not true. Democracy, not autocracy, is the default mode political system, even though it is "the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time," as Winston Churchill said in the House of Commons in 1947 (quoting an unknown predecessor).

Almost every dictator in the world holds fake elections so he can claim legitimacy, however fraudulently. No democratic leaders falsely claim to be dictators or tyrants (although some, like Donald Trump, Bolsonaro in Brazil, Orbán in Hungary, and Duterte in the Philippines, secretly aspire to it). So default mode democracy wins in a walk.

This was not true before the 18th century. There are indeed "all those thousands of years of history" when the norm was "some form of autocracy." But before that there are all those hundreds of thousands of years of prehistory when all humans lived as equals, reaching their decisions by discussion and consensus, in little hunter-gatherer bands.

We know this because some of those bands, living in out-of-the-way places, survived long enough for anthropologists to study them—and they were all egalitarian. In fact, they had no formal leaders, and the worst social crime was for one adult man to give an order to another. They didn't hold elections, because the bands were hardly ever more than a hundred strong and they could just talk things over. But the core belief of democracy is that everybody has equal rights including a share in the decisionmaking process, and our distant ancestors all believed that. They believed it for so long that it became a basic human value.

That basic human belief went underground when the first mass societies appeared around 6,000 years ago. The only way to run them was from the top down, by force, because without mass communications (and they hadn't even invented writing yet) there was no way for tens or hundreds of thousands of people to make decisions together as equals.

So the tyrants took over and had a very long run, but the belief in equality never died, as all the slave and peasant revolts attest. And by the 18th century a kind of mass communications had finally emerged. Just the printing press plus mass literacy, but that meant everybody could get back to making decisions together as equals, and so the democratic revolutions began.

The United States was the first, perhaps because it then had the highest rate of literacy in the world. The far more radical French Revolution came only 13 years later (it even abolished slavery), and democracy just kept spreading. By now half the governments on the planet are genuinely elected, and the other half pretend to be.

Democracy has nothing to do with being American or 'Western.' China was the first country with printing, and if it had also had mass literacy it could well have been the first country to have a democratic revolution. American democracy will probably survive its current difficulties. Democracy as the default mode in the world certainly will.

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

Arts and artists need a 'new deal'

Supporting the arts as part of the creative class that is essential to innovation and economic development does not require the costs of building hard infrastructure, and the impact may be intangible.



Deanna Horton

The government has recognized the necessity of fiscal stimulus not only to revive the economy, but also to support the most vulnerable. Artists and the arts sector are at serious risk during the pandemic. For example, a recent Nordicity report noted a survey of live music which indicated that 96 per cent of surveyed venues were at risk of failure—only one sector of the arts spectrum, many without access to enough government support.

Using additional fiscal stimulus to support the arts would be an investment in our future, it would help rebuild our communities, and improve quality of life for artists and audiences alike. And it would allow artists to make an immeasurable contribution to a better post-pandemic future.

Why not a 21st-century Canadian version of the Depression-era New Deal? Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the U.S. was an ambitious program integral to his New Deal. Support for bricks and mortar infrastructure was only part of the story. The WPA also employed thousands of artists, musicians, actors and writers through a WPA program known as Federal One, enthusiastically promoted by Eleanor Roosevelt.

The WPA supported American artists, such as Jackson Pollock, and others who went on to become icons of the postwar abstract expressionist movement—Mark Rothko, William de Kooning and Lee Krasner. The WPA program allowed more than 5,000 other artists to work in their chosen fields and develop their skills.

The Federal Theatre project, also a part of Federal One, not only supported theatre across the country, but also the professionals who went on to illustrious careers, such as Arthur Miller and Orson Welles.

Federal One made up only a minuscule (0.5 per cent) portion of WPA expenditures—just US\$27-million of the nearly US\$5-billion that had been earmarked for WPA work programs went to the arts.



Red Sky Performance dancers, pictured on Sept. 30, 2019, at the Honouring National Day for Truth and Reconciliation ceremony at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Que. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

What's more, the U.S. Farm Security Administration sent photographers across the country—who can forget the iconic photographs of Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans that documented the hardships of life in rural America?

Fast forward 85 years to a pandemic-instigated recession where high-touch sectors, such as culture, are uniquely vulnerable. ences. The government's Nov. 30 economic statement, which announced additional funding for Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts is a welcome step, but institutions are still fighting for their survival.

Most importantly, however, the artists who depend on these institutions should be given more support for their work. Artists



Franklin Roosevelt, left. pictured on Oct. 24, 1932, campaigning with Anna Roosevelt Halsted and Eleanor Roosevelt, in Warm Springs, Georgia. Photograph courtesy of Commons Wikimedia/ FDR Presidential Library

ences. Their creativity forms the lifeblood of our communities. Many are volunteering or working at a fraction of what they would normally earn, because just as we need them, they need us. There is nothing that can replace the shared experience of viewing visual and performing arts, and our cultural sector is demonstrating its talent and commitment to audience engagement, even if only virtual.

Cultural industries are a vital part of the "creative class," the term coined by renowned urban geographer Richard Florida. As we move deeper into the global digital economy, the services and software-related industries will underpin our competitiveness. Supporting the arts as part of the creative class that is essential to innovation and economic development does not require the costs of building hard infrastructure, and the impact may be intangible. But there is little doubt that the government's support for cultural institutions and artists will prove a wise investment for Canada's future. Let's put them to work to help us thrive.

In a recent speech, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities Catherine McKenna quoted Roosevelt's maxim for the intangible impact of the New Deal as "inspiring hope for the future."The arts are an intrinsic part of Canada's brand, and of our innovation edge. If Canada is to lead on the world stage, cultural industries and the artists who support them should be given the support they need to play their roles.

Deanna Horton is a former Canadian ambassador to Vietnam and previously served as a trustee of the Royal Ontario Museum. Currently, she is a senior fellow at the Munk School. She resides in Stratford, Ont., and is a theatre devotee. The Hill Times

613.714.9495

physiocarephysiotherapy.com

Programs are necessary to ensure that the largest cultural institutions in Canada—those that attract both Canadians and visitors—are given sufficient funding to tide them over, and to use their innovative skills to create new ways of reaching audi-

creating on their own or in groups are critical to reweaving Canada's cultural fabric now and into the post-pandemic era.

This past year, performing artists have demonstrated their ingenuity by embracing online technologies to engage their audithe Hill Times







Now serving 4 locations: Carling Ave - Hazeldean Rd - Greenbank Rd - Innovation Dr - Free Parking

Opinion

Trudeau's move to wait his turn for vaccine signals difference in political dynamics with U.S., say experts

Some experts say it's an open question whether having political leaders or other high-profile figures get their shots first will actually be effective at shoring up confidence in the safety of the vaccine.

BY BEATRICE PAEZ

▶anada's political leaders are hewing to the vaccine guidelines the federal advisory committee has issued in waiting their turn for the shot, a departure from some of their American counterparts that some experts say speaks to differences in political dynamics.

While a number of high-profile political leaders in the U.S., such as incoming president Joe Biden and current Vice-President Mike Pence, have rolled up their sleeves in the early days of the immunization campaign in a bid to curb vaccine hesitancy, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), who just turned 49 and is far down the vaccine priority list, said he intends to wait his turn. "I am super enthusiastic about getting vaccines, and I certainly want to show people they're safe and that we trust our doctors But there's a lot of vulnerable people who need to get these vaccines much quicker than I will, and we're going to make sure that they get it first, because that's the priority," he told CP24, a news channel in Toronto, back in December.

With vaccines still a scarce commodity across much of the world, Canada and the U.S. have both turned to advisory committees to issue recommended guidelines

for allocating the initial limited supply. In Canada, for example, Ottawa is poised to receive about 1.2 million doses of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines by the end of January. Priority is being given to those most at risk of contracting and suffering severely from the virus, such as seniors living in congregate settings, and those more likely to get infected and transmit it because of their occupation, such as medical workers, before the campaign widens to other groups.

Neither list puts politicians first in line, noted Françoise Baylis, university research professor at Dalhousie University

Prof. Baylis said some politi-

cians in the U.S. view images

of themselves getting a vaccine

as key to fostering public trust

among those skeptical about

political leaders appear to be

leaning on the message they've

been repeating for months that

the pandemic demands a commu-

nity response, requires collective

best scientific evidence available.

That includes abiding by the pre-

Advisory Committee on Immuni-

zation (NACI), Canada's federal

task force, she added.

scriptions, as much as possible,

handed down by the National

sacrifice, and adherence to the

overcome the challenge that this virus represents unless we stand together as a community, that we all accept that we have to act in accordance with the best evidence," said Prof. Baylis.

Some experts said it's an open question whether vaccinating political leaders or other highprofile figures will actually be effective at shoring up confidence in the safety of the vaccine.

"I don't know of any evidence indicating that public leaders publicly taking the vaccine [is convincing]. ... They're proceed-ing on the assumption that if someone who is vaccine hesitant sees Joe Biden or Justin Trudeau, that's going to make them more likely to take the vaccine," said

and the process. But the flip side is, people in positions of privilege will receive a scarce resource," she said."What if you're on the other side of the fence, receiving this message from someone you don't value, trust? It's a bit of a double-edged sword."

Prof. King said Mr. Trudeau's decision signals to the public that they should trust the guidelines many politicians likely don't want

The public outcry over politi-

Kate Harrison, partner at Summa Strategies, agreed that there could be some backlash if Canadians politicians were seen as jump-ing the queue, saying there would likely be more of a "knee-jerk reaction" if they were afforded special access. "Canada is a much smaller place; constituencies are smaller," she said."Politics is local everywhere, but I would say that the role a local politician plays is just fundamentally quite different than a senator or congressperson in

the U.S.," she said. "They have an expectation that [politicians] are not all that removed from themselves.3

The pandemic has also laid bare what's considered essential to keep society humming, said Prof. King, which should prod the broader public to reckon with the treatment afforded to front-line essential workers such as grocerystore clerks and workers at meatprocessing plants-many of whom are in precarious economic and social positions. He said it's "an open question" whether politicians can reasonably fall within that category of essential workers.

'I would hope that out of fairness, and recognition of their im-

portance, they [essential workers] would be paid more, offered more protection. It's easy to say an MP is more essential to the functioning of society than a bunch of people who are checkout clerks, and that justifies the esteem and pay differences," said Prof. King. "But those grocery store workers are far more essential.

Such moves by politicians to cast themselves as spokespersons for the inoculation campaign haven't been without criticism.

Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez was among those who publicized her vaccine appointment, sharing a video of herself getting the shot in late December with her 8.2 million followers on Instagram.

In a tweet defending her deci-sion to get a vaccine not long after it was approved for use, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said she hoped that, by demonstrating she wasn't hesitant about receiving the shot, many Americans would trust the regulatory process, noting widespread resistance to pandemic restrictions and measures like mask-wearing made her call necessary."Our job is to make sure the vaccine isn't politicized the way masks were politicized," she tweeted in response to Republican Senator Rand Paul.

There could be other dynamics at play in Canada's calculations that speak to long-standing political traditions.

Sheamus Murphy, partner at Counsel Public Affairs, said many of Canada's political leaders have resisted making investments that would benefit themselves by dint of their position at the public's expense, pointing to how 24 Sussex Drive, the prime minister's principal residence, has fallen into disrepair over the years, and also how a pair of Challenger jets used by high-profile federal officials are no longer up to modern aviation standards.

"There's just years and years of examples of prime ministers who've refused to make those types of investments relative to world leaders," he said. "It's part of the dynamic in this country. They don't want to be seen as feathering their own nest." The Hill Times

Nicholas King, associate professor at McGill University's department of the social studies of medicine, of the approach some U.S. politicians are taking.

Shannon MacDonald, assis tant professor at the University of Alberta's faculty of nursing, said there's a tradeoff in having a scarce resource at the moment and it may not ultimately end up having the intended effect of shoring up trust, especially in the U.S., where partisanship has hardened.

"If we have our leaders get vaccinated early, it sends the message that they trust the vaccine

"We're not going to be able to

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says priority

should be given 'vulnerable people who need to get these vaccines

much quicker. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

are the fairest process, adding to be seen as "cutting in line."

cians who took trips abroad over the holidays and ensuing fallout-several have been stripped of their duties-also suggest that many Canadians wouldn't tolerate seeing politicians get preferential treatment because of their

occupation, he added. Outgoing U.S. his wife, an appointment that was captured live on television. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Vice-President Mike Pence, pictured with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in May 2019, during a visit to Ottawa, got his shot alongside

politicians get first dibs on what's



Trump's incitement of mob hopefully a wake-up call for senior Republicans, but America's standing as 'beacon of democracy' damaged, say Canadian Parliamentarians

The images of rioters donning Trump regalia and neo-Nazi garb as they wrested control of the Capitol has undermined America's push to promote democracy and has implications for Canada's own efforts, say Parliamentarians.

Continued from page 1

For many, the assault on the Capitol Building on Jan. 6 was shocking, but not incomprehensible.

"Things were moving towards a flashpoint because of his denial of the election results. He was trying all kinds of means to try to overturn the results," said Independent Senator Peter Boehm (Ontario) of the storming of Capitol Hill. "His last gambit was to have the vice-president overturn the election—and obviously, what precipitated things was the fact that the Vice-President [Mike] Pence was very clear that he could not do that constitutionally, that he'd sworn an oath to the Constitution."

For weeks, after losing the presidential race, Mr. Trump has baselessly claimed electoral fraud, stoking the fury of his supporters who also turned out in record numbers to vote for him. Many senior Republicans also refused to immediately recognize U.S. president-elect Joe Biden's victory.

Despite reports that pro-Trump supporters were openly plotting an occupation on Capitol Hill to overturn the election results, Capitol Police were overrun and unable to prevent rioters from ransacking the Senate Chamber and several offices as a joint session convened to certify Mr. Biden's win. The mob temporarily halted proceedings, after police reined in the rioters, both chambers reconvened and formally recognized Mr. Biden would be the next president. Five people died as a result of last week's shocking attack on the Capitol Building, CNN reported on Friday.

Independent Senator Donna Dasko (Ontario) said Republicans who backed Mr. Trump in his drive to delegitimize the election for apparent political advantage



bear some brunt of the blame. "They seemed to think they could do that without negative consequences, because he was going to lose anyway," she said.

Sen. Boehm said Mr. Pence and Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's refusal to lend any credence to Mr. Trump's claim that they can invalidate the results during the *pro forma* exercise, and the decision to press forward with the proceedings, has left Mr. Trump "quite diminished."

"I think senior Republican leadership has received a wakeup call," he said.

In the immediate aftermath, at least two cabinet officials resigned and there were discussions of invoking the 25th amendment of the U.S. Constitution to try to remove Mr. Trump from office in the waning days of his presidency. Mr. Biden's inauguration is on Jan. 20. Mr. Trump tweeted Jan. 8 that he would forgo the tradition of past presidents appearing at the event to mark the transfer of power.

Green parliamentary leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.) said the violent episode may be sobering for many Republicans. "I definitely think there was a rupture within the Republican Party over what happened," she said. "When they came back to vote on some of the objections, they no longer had adequate sponsors to force a twohour debate."

Though nearly 150 Republicans refused to recognize the results after the riots, some who had tied their political fates closely to Mr. Trump, including Senator Lindsey Graham, broke with the president. After facing backlash from his own ranks, Mr. Trump released a video pledging he would co-operate in the "orderly" transfer of power and that a new administration would be sworn in. He did not, however, concede that the election was free and fair.

Even as Ms. May and Sen. Boehm were hopeful that some Republicans have been chastened, they said Mr. Biden's effort to unify the country amid deep partisan rancour will be no small feat.

"[Mr. Trump] has set alight some very dangerous fuses, and they still remain a threat,"Ms. May said.

Independent Senator Frances Lankin (Ontario) said it's a terrifying prospect that there's a crowd, essentially, ready to be mobilized to thwart the peaceful transition of power, because they've been fed unsubstantiated claims. "That's a very dangerous situation when one can only hope that, with time, things will calm down," she said.

As difficult as it will be for Mr. Biden, who has a track record for embracing bipartisanship, to bridge the partisan divides, Sen. Dasko said, a change at the top can help reset the tone. And, without access to the levers of power, including the unfettered ability to tweet without consequence, she added, Mr. Trump won't have the same clout and profile. (Mr. Trump was temporarily locked out of his Twitter account for posting a video urging his supporters to "show strength" at the rally.)

"The change in leadership is going to be really important. It's going to be absolutely crucial. He brings a completely different set of values,"she said.

Green Party Leader Annamie Paul said the Biden administration has an "extraordinary opportunity" to address the challenges, and that the cross-partisan outcry that's followed should be "empowering" for him. That, she said, along with securing Democratic control of the Senate and the House, gives him all the legislative and executive levers he needs to "bring society together and reduce the climate inequality, the racial and societal inequality, and economic inequality that has led to the rise of populism over the past years."

'Damage has been done'

The images of rioters donning Trump regalia and neo-Nazi garb as they wrested control of the Capitol likely left many across the world astonished that such events could unfold in a country that has held itself up as the leader of the free world.

Progressive Senator Dennis Dawson (Lauzon, Que.), a member of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group, who has long been involved in efforts alongside his U.S. counterparts to promote democracy abroad, said America's ability to cast itself as a beacon for democracy has been tarnished. He added it's also going to undermine Canada's own efforts.

"The damage has been done. [That image] is going to be weakened forever,"he said. "Who are we now? Who are they to talk about respect for orderly transfer of power?"

Canadian Senators Group's Diane Griffin (Prince Edward Island) agreed. "It is an embarrassment for them, an embarrassment for all democracies," she said. "Who would ever believe that we'd see the Capitol Building being stormed by its own citizens? There's no need for us to be cocky—that it would never happen in Canada."

NDP MP Jack Harris (St. John's East, N.L.), his party's foreign affairs critic, said it's landed "a significant blow" to America's standing on the world stage. "It's very worrisome not only for the U.S., but for the standing of democratic institutions throughout the world," he said. "Any penetration, for political reasons, on an institution like the U.S. Senate is totally unprecedented in a country that's supposed to be a beacon for democracy."

Those in charge of securing the Capitol Building, including the sergeants-at-arms, have resigned. There have been bipartisan calls for an investigation into the breach. News media have reported that the Capitol Police turned down offers for reinforcement, including from the National Guard, even as some feared civil unrest.

Mr. Harris' Conservative counterpart, Michael Chong (Wellington-Halton Hills, Ont.), issued a press statement a day after the riots, pinning blame on Mr. Trump for inciting an "unruly mob" and calling on him to "respect the will of the American people."

The events have also prompted Canadian political leaders to reflect on Canada's own brush with politically motivated violence.

Watching the endless stream of images of the chaos unfolding brought Progressive Senator Jane Cordy (Nova Scotia) back to the stressful hours six years ago, when a 32-year-old gunman, suspected of being an extremist, killed Nathan Cirillo, an honour guard posted at the National War Memorial, before storming Centre Block on Parliament Hill. Sen. Cordy and other Parliamentarians had to hunker down, unaware of the exact details of the events unfolding above them before travelling through the tunnels to East Block.

There were TVs in the room broadcasting live coverage, but early information had suggested there could be more than one shooter.

"It was that feeling of—'what's going on?'—because you were locked inside,"she said. "You could only imagine what [U.S.] staff and Senators and House representatives who were there, what they must've been going through."

Ms. May suggested it's a testament to their commitment to democracy that a majority of American lawmakers were determined to see the certification process through after the threat they faced.

"When we got through what happened [in 2014], we reconvened for long enough to say, 'We're not doing anything today. We are adjourned,'"she said. "Imagine if we said, 'We're going back to work.'"

bpaez@hilltimes.com swallen@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

News

18

Regular updates and 'keeping politics out of it' key to COVID-19 vaccine rollout, say experts, politicians



Health Minister Patty Hajdu, left, and Chief Medical Officer of Public Health Theresa Tam pictured speaking with reporters in Ottawa on Dec. 11, 2020 at a technical briefing on the government's roll-out of vaccines and response to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade*

been a lot of finger pointing in terms of whose to blame, but the reality is, is we have these vaccines and they haven't been given to people who need them."

With COVID-19 cases increasing quickly in many provinces, and longstanding problems within long-term care homes, getting those vaccines into those most vulnerable people as quickly as possible should be the priority, according to Dr. Tuite.

"It hasn't happened, and that's problematic," she said, pointing out that we currently have a lot fewer vaccines now than we're going to have in the coming months.

"If we can't figure out how to get those to the people who need them quickly, what are we going to do when we're starting to talk about vaccinating tens or hundreds of thousands of people a day?" said Dr. Tuite.

'The goal is to achieve as high as possible immunizations across the population'

Experts don't yet know what share of the population must be vaccinated in order to stamp out COVID-19, said Dr. Susy Hota, medical director of infection prevention and control at Toronto's University Health Network.

The measles is even more infectious than COVID-19—and also transmits differently—and outbreaks of measles begin to occur when less than 85 per cent of a population is not vaccinated against the disease, she said.

"The goal is to achieve as high as possible immunizations across the population, because nobody truly knows exactly what it's going to take."

"We want this to end—we don't want to just be stomping out fires for the rest of our lives, so it's an opportunity," said Dr. Hota.

Dr. Hota said a lot of the focus at the moment has been on procurement and assuring the public that Canada will have enough vaccine available.

"What we also need to supplement is enough expert voices on the safety and effectiveness of—and what the actual vaccines are—and what people can expect in terms of how to monitor yourself afterwards," said Dr. Hota.

On Jan. 7, Ontario reported its deadliest day since the pandemic began, with 89 deaths as a result

of the virus. Just over 3,500 new cases were also reported in Canada's most populous province.

The day previous, Quebec imposed a four-week lockdown complete with an 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew—which was scheduled to begin on Jan. 9.

In Alberta, another particularly hard-hit province, Premier Jason Kenney announced on Jan. 7 that COVID-19 restrictions will remain in effect for at least another two weeks following reports of 24 more deaths and 968 new cases of the virus.



British Columbia will keep restrictions in place until Feb. 5. Provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said the number of infections was trending up once again.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau convened a virtual meeting with First Ministers on Jan. 7, where they discussed the rollout of the vaccine across the country.

"We agreed that it is vital to work together as 'Team Canada' to get vaccines delivered, distributed, and administered as quickly and efficiently as possible," said Mr. Trudeau in a press conference on Jan. 8. "The premiers and I also discussed ways to combat misinformation—vaccines are safe and effective, and everyone should be doing their part by getting vaccinated when it's their turn."

The prime minister said the government is on track to deliver approximately 1.3 million doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines by the end of January, with quantities expected to scale up in February.

"Remember, Canada has the most vaccines secured per capita in the world, which means that by September, we will have enough vaccines for every Canadian that wants one,"said Mr. Trudeau. "Frankly, it's frightening to see cases rise at home and around the world day after day, but you're not in this alone—we continue to be there for you,"said the prime minister.

'Politics has absolutely no place in this'

When asked what the role of politicians should be in the next nine to 12 months in order for the vaccine regime to be effective, Green Party Leader Annamie Paul told *The Hill Times* that "politicians need to keep politics out of it."

"Politics has absolutely no place in this, our decisions about who gets vaccinated when and in what order need to be guided by the recommendations of the [national advisory commission on immunization] and needs to be guided by the recommendations of that commission, and need to be guided by health experts," said Ms. Paul. "As soon as political considerations get into the mix, it sows doubt, it creates a lack of confidence, it creates divisiveness, and we don't want any of that to come into the system."

"At the very least, it's a distraction, and at the worst it will slow down our efforts to get to that herd immunity percentage," said Ms. Paul.

NDP MP Don Davies (Vancouver-Kingsway, B.C.), his party's health critic, told *The Hill Times* that from the beginning, he's said there should

Infectious disease expert Dr. Isaac Bogoch says 'in a perfect setting, you would have the same person show up at the same place at the same time, every single day to provide an update and to take questions from the media and the general public.' Photograph courtesy of Twitter

be a national vaccination plan that should be coordinated by the federal government. "It doesn't mean that the actual vaccination rollout isn't a complicated,

actual vaccination rollout isn't a complicated, coordinated set of responsibilities between all levels of government," said Mr. Davies. "If the federal government doesn't

pull together and publish a national vaccination plan, than nobody is going to do it, and they haven't done that yet."

"Other jurisdictions are doing it, and that's why I'm particularly critical of them because I've seen other countries do it, like Australia,"said Mr. Davies.

There are two main reasons for the efficacy of that approach, according to the NDP MP.

"If you don't have a well thought out, published plan, as any financial planner will tell you, you're unlikely to meet your goals,"said Mr. Davies."And second, I think it's important for public confidence and transparency and communication."

Basically we live "day-to-day" with whatever the prime minister or health minister deigns to tell us on that particular day.

"And I think it's purely politically managed—it's a cheap way for the government to kind of withhold information and dole it out as they see fit," said Mr. Davies. "I think its paternalistic, I think it's poor public policy, and I think Canadians are starting to see that."

mlapointe@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Public trust is key for effective public health initiatives, says top infectious disease specialist Dr. Isaac Bogoch. 'Obviously that's multi-faceted, but one of them is openness, honesty and transparency about what you're doing, what's going well, what's not going well, and how you're going to fix what's not going well.

Continued from page 1

infectious disease experts says the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the associated push for widespread vaccinations against the virus"is a crisis; it needs a crisis management approach, and [that] includes crisis management communication."

Dr. Isaac Bogoch, an expert in infectious disease at the University of Toronto, told *The Hill Times* last week that "part of crisis management communications means that you have to have very regular updates, and in a perfect setting, you would have the same person show up at the same place at the same time, every single day to provide an update and to take questions from the media and the general public."

"That's how it's done," said Dr. Bogoch, who sits on the government's COVID-19 testing and screening expert advisory panel.

There are six key points in this approach, according to Dr. Bogoch: what's happened today, what's going well, what's not going well, how are you going to improve on what's not going well, and the big picture—with time available at the end to allow for questions from the public and from the media.

"In addition to that, if you don't have an answer to someone's question, everybody knows that you're going to be at the exact same place at the exact same time to address the questions again," said Dr. Bogoch.

Even though it might still be a crisis, at least people have a better understanding of what the response is, according to the infectious disease expert, who also said it's likely that around 70 per cent of Canadians need to be immunized to provide some degree of herd immunity. "I think we're going to see a

lot of benefits much earlier on as we vaccinate priority populations like those who are in long-term care," said Dr. Bogoch. "We will certainly alleviate some pressure from our healthcare system and certainly prevent so many deaths by vaccinating long-term care, so you'll see much earlier benefits."

Public trust is key for effective public health initiatives, said Dr. Bogoch.

"Obviously that's multi-faceted, but one of them is openness, honesty and transparency about what you're doing, what's going well, what's not going well and how you're going to fix what's not going well,"he said.

Getting vaccines into the most vulnerable as quickly as possible should be the priority

Dr. Ashleigh Tuite, an infectious disease epidemiologist and mathematical modeller at the University of Toronto, told *The Hill Times* that the slow rollout of the vaccine so far "has been a disappointment, in the sense that it's kind of miraculous that we have a vaccine a year after this virus was first recognized, and the fact that we have it in Canada available to roll out."

"I think there was a huge potential win for politicians, for people working in public health, for the medical community, to get those vaccines deployed and in people's arms," said Dr. Tuite. "And it's been a series of things that haven't gone quite as one would expect. There's

Should feds intervene in provincial vaccine rollout? Experts in health, governance and politics weigh in

'Declaring an emergency under the Emergencies Act is unlikely to actually be a helpful route forward at this point,' says pandemic expert Steven Hoffman.

Continued from page 1

government should step in and use the Emergencies Act to marshall local resources in the fight against COVID-19, something Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) has said he does not wish to do.

COVID-19 cases have surged across parts of Canada in recent weeks, prompting Quebec to impose a curfew, and Ontario to shutter schools. The federal and provincial governments have pointed fingers at each other for the slow pace of vaccinations, with Mr. Trudeau saying on Jan. 5 he was "frustrated" that more vaccines hadn't been administered. Several provincial leaders responded that the federal government hadn't yet provided them with enough vaccines.

The University Health Network, which is made up of four hospitals in Toronto, was on pace to run out of COVID-19 vaccines by Jan. 8, CEO Dr. Kevin Smith tweeted on Jan. 7.

The leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, Steven Del Duca, called on Ontario Premier Doug Ford on Jan. 6 to ask the Canadian Armed Forces to step in and help coordinate the province's vaccine rollout.

Mr. Trudeau spoke with the premiers about their efforts to administer federally-procured vaccines during a Jan. 7 virtual meeting. The press release that followed the meeting did not reveal much detail about the discussion. "First Ministers agreed to continue working together to allocate, distribute, and administer vaccines as efficiently and equitably as possible," it said.

Having the federal government or military help provinces to manage the logistics behind mass public vaccinations could be helpful, but a total federal takeover of the vaccine rollout now might not produce a better result, said Steven Hoffman, an expert in international health threats leading the Global Strategy Lab in Toronto.

"Declaring an emergency under the Emergencies Act is unlikely to actually be a helpful route forward at this point,"he said. "The federal government would essentially be swooping in, tak-



ing control of a provincially-run healthcare service. And it would unlikely be able to do any better than the provinces, because of course [it hasn't] prepared for doing that over these last 10 months."

Former Liberal MP Andrew Leslie told *The Hill Times* that Mr. Trudeau should have invoked the Emergencies Act to take greater control over the country's pandemic response back in the spring of 2020, when COVID-19 was first taking hold in Canada.

"If Trudeau were to try to do it now, he would get pushback from just about everybody, not the least of which is the federal government and a variety of his ministers, because they're not used to actually running the frontline battle. They have no experience in it,"he said.

When invoked, the Emergencies Act gives the government extraordinary powers to dictate the movement of people and resources, spend money, use property, and more in the event of a public welfare emergency. It imposes numerous constraints on those special powers, including requiring that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms be respected. It allows the federal government to use those powers across the country without permission from the provinces, but does not allow the government to intervene in just a single province without permission from that province's government.

Some Canadian doctors and health experts have also said they are frustrated over the slow pace at which provincial governments are administering COVID-19 vaccines delivered to them by the federal government. *The Globe and Mail* quoted several of them in a story published Jan. 5.

Mr. Hoffman told *The Hill Times* it was "perplexing" that the provinces had not managed to dole out more of the vaccines given to them by the federal government. "Provinces have had at least 10 months to prepare for this moment when we have vaccines," he said.

As of Jan. 8, the provinces and territories had administered about 48 per cent of the nearly 485,000 vaccines delivered to them by the federal government, according to COVID-19 Tracker Canada, a website run by University of Saskatchewan student Noah Little and populated with data by volunteers. Canada's federal government has placed orders for millions more vaccines that have not yet been delivered.

Dr. Lam said family doctors and frontline health workers in Ontario are frustrated that they weren't being involved in the province's effort to vaccinate people.

Dr. Lam treats people for opioid addiction at Toronto's Coderix Medical Clinic. He previously worked as an emergency room physician in the city for years, including during the SARS outbreak in 2003.

Provincial governments should not delay the administration of vaccines in order to funnel them to the priority groups such as healthcare workers or long-term care home residents, he said.

"This is a situation where it is probably better to be a lot faster, even if it means that we're a little bit less precise, in terms of the order in which people receive the vaccine."

Dr. Lam wrote an op-ed in the *Globe* in late November calling on the government to invoke the Emergencies Act, take a bigger role in supervising provincial and local efforts to fight the pandemic, and take more direct actions where needed.

The federal government has a duty to step in if the provinces are failing to contain the spread of the pandemic effectively, he told The Hill Times. Invoking the Emergencies Act would allow the federal government to direct local health agencies to report directly to the federal government; use cell phone data for contact tracing without first obtaining permission; order Amazon or other businesses to help the government quickly deliver vaccines from one place to another; or use commercial refrigeration facilities to store vaccines, he said.

The act would also give the federal government the ability to pay businesses or individuals for such extraordinary services quickly.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said repeatedly he won't use the Emergencies Act to intervene in provincial efforts to dole out the doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

"I'm not particularly keen on using the federal Emergencies Act," Mr. Trudeau said during a Jan. 5 press conference. He said that different regions of Canada are being challenged in different ways by the pandemic, and a "one-size-fits-all" solution from the federal government wouldn't be an improvement to provincial and territorial efforts.

Ontario has pandemic 'governance problem' says former cabinet secretary Tony Dean

It's more likely that the federal government would intervene with permission from, or at the request of, a provincial government, said Independent Senator Tony Dean (Ontario), who served as Ontario's top public servant from 2002 to 2008.

Sen. Dean said he believed the sluggish pace of vaccinations by the provinces could in

Parliamentarians on use of the Emergencies Act

"I'm not particularly keen on using the federal Emergencies Act. I think on a practical basis, the challenges faced in different regions are very different, and a one-size-fits-all approach from the federal government isn't automatically the best thing."—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during a press conference, Jan. 5, 2021

"In terms of the Emergencies Act in the context of distributing vaccines, at this point I do not think we need to use the Emergencies Act. We are having incredible collaboration with provinces and territories."—Health Minister Patty Hajdu in the House of Commons, Dec. 3, 2020

"In light of what is happening in Canada, in the U.S. and around the world, could the prime minister please tell us if he intends to invoke the Emergencies Act, as our COVID crisis continues to seriously endanger the lives and health and safety of Canadians? Further, is he confident his actions and his leadership today will not see demands for an apology for not invoking the Emergencies Act 50 years hence?"—Independent MP Jody-Wilson Raybould, a former Liberal justice minister, in the House of Commons, Oct. 29, 2020

part be chalked up to the speed at which COVID-19 vaccines have been developed and approved. "I'm not sure that we expected to receive vaccines this quickly," he said.

However, Sen. Dean said it was a mistake for the Ontario government to pause its vaccination program over the holidays. He said that Ontario has a "governance problem," with too many questions about who is making decisions about pandemic management, and how.

"We obviously have problems with our emergency management structure, and I think a number of people in the province—those who run hospitals, public health experts and academics—would look at this and say, 'that governance structure is either too big, or you don't have the right people there," he said.

Invoking the Emergencies Act would only make sense if there were a "renegade" provincial government that was refusing to take the pandemic seriously, said Mr. Hoffman, who added that none of Canada's provincial governments fit that description now.

If the federal government were to take charge of some aspect of provincial healthcare delivery, it would have to replicate payment systems, regulations, and a host of other provincial responsibilities on the fly, which would inevitably have "downstream" consequences, he said.

Taking control of just one aspect of a province's healthcare system—such as vaccine delivery—at this stage would create two systems within provinces competing for the same resources, said Mr. Leslie.

Staying out of provincial turf good politics but 'not necessarily in the best interests of the nation' says Leslie

The Liberals have been "ruthlessly focused on getting reelected," said Mr. Leslie, a former parliamentary secretary in the Liberal government and retired Canadian Armed Forces general. Staying away from provincial responsibilities during the pandemic has been "either intentional or unintentional clever politics, but not necessarily in the best interests of the nation "he said

interests of the nation," he said. "I think [the Emergencies Act] was needed back in March, and everything that the government is struggling to try to do now could have been done a lot more effectively and efficiently, but and this is a very big but—it's been good politics for the Trudeau government," he said.

"I agree with [Trudeau] that doing it now would not make it better, because that means it's a complete admission of failure by the provinces, so they would have their noses out of joint. And the level of cooperation would be tough to implement, because the federals have no experience in actually running the frontline fight against the pandemic. The provinces do," said Mr. Leslie, who now works as a consultant at Bluesky Strategy Group in Ottawa.

peter@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

News

'It seems to have hit a nerve': no margin of error left for politicians caught in travel controversy over holidays, say MPs and political insiders

NDP MP Charlie Angus described politicians' choice to travel abroad, despite public health advisories, as 'entitlement' and 'hypocrisy.'

of error left for their credibility, and any more mistakes could prove to be fatal for their political careers, say some political players and MPs.

They can put it behind them as long as there are no more breaches of the rules," said Nik Nanos, founder and chief data scientist for Nanos Research, in an interview with The Hill Times. "But now the problem is that even if there's another minor transgression, it'll be rolled up with the major transgression, which was the vacation trip. Now there'll be a big magnifying glass on these politicians. So it would be fair game now to see are there any other rules that they might not be respecting? Are they having more people over at their home during a dinner? Are they caught in a public place without wearing a mask?"

Mr. Nanos and others interviewed for this article said that in this era of social media where "twitter supercharges opinions," this controversy would dog the politicians for a long time. And at election time, their political opponents will make this a character issue. In this day and age, people expect their leaders to do what they preach, political insiders and MPs said; otherwise these politicians get exposed before the people.

"In today's environment, any politician that travels outside of the country for a vacation risks becoming a political pariah," said Mr. Nanos. "Voters expect their elected officials to lead by example. You can't expect on one day to say, 'stay home, don't visit your parents, don't leave your house, we need to fight the pandemic,' and then the next day for you to go on what is a vacation. Can they shake it? Yes. Will it dog them? Absolutely."

As of deadline last week, a number of MPs and Senators from all major national parties had publicly confirmed travelling outside of Canada over the holiday weeks even though the public health officials had issued advisories against non-essential travel. Before going abroad, some of these politicians had encouraged Canadians to do their part to flatten the spiking COVID-19 case curve by following public health advisories.

They include: NDP MP Niki Ashton (Churchill-Keewatinook Aski, Man.), Liberal MP Kamal Khera (Brampton West, Ont.), Liberal MP Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds-Dollard, Que.), Conservative MP David Sweet (Flamborough-Glanbrook, Ont.), Conservative MP Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, Alta.), Conservative Senate Leader Don Plett (Landmark, Man.) and Ontario Canadian Senators Group Sen. Vern White. Three other Liberal MPs, including Alexandra Mendès (Brossard-Saint-Lambert, Que.), Lyne Bessette (Brome-Missisquoi, Que.), and Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard-Saint-Michel, Que.) had travelled abroad last year during the summer or fall when travel restrictions were loosened. All three



Despite public health advisories, Liberal MP Kamal Khera, left, Liberal MP Sameer Zuberi, Conservative MP David Sweet, Conservative MP Ron Liepert, and NDP MP Niki Ashton travelled abroad over the holidays. MPs and political insiders have described their choice to travel internationally in the midst of COVID-19 as 'entitlement' and 'hypocrisy.' *The Hill Times file photographs*

MPs' travel was approved by the Liberal Whip.

Some of these MPs who travelled out of country last month did so to visit their relatives who were seriously ill or to attend their funerals. Others travelled for vacation.

Ms. Ashton travelled to Greece to visit her seriously ill grandmother. She did not get permission from her party leadership before leaving and now has been removed from her shadow cabinet critic position. Ms. Khera went to the U.S. to attend a memorial service for her uncle. She has resigned from her position as parliamentary secretary to the minister of international development. Mr. Zuberi travelled to Delaware to spend some time with his wife's ill grandfather. He's stepping down from his com-mittee roles. Mr. Sweet received permission from the Conservative whip to travel to the U.S. to deal with a property issue but later stayed for "leisure." He has announced that we will step down as chair of the Ethics Committee and will not seek re-election in the next election. Mr. Liepert also travelled to the U.S. to deal with a property issue.

Sen. Plett went to Mexico for vacation while Sen. White went to Finland to visit his wife's family. As of deadline, it was not known if Mr. Liepert or the two Conservative Senators had faced any consequences.

A significant number of provincial politicians, including some cabinet ministers and senior staffers in Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, and Saskatchewan also travelled abroad for non-essential reasons and ended up in trouble, having to resign or being demoted from their parliamentary positions.

As of Jan. 6, there were 626,799 cases of COVID-19 in Canada. Among those, 531,227 people had recovered, 79,203 were still ill, and 16,369 had died.

On Jan. 7, Ontario reported a record high of 3,519 new cases of COVID-19, above the previous record that was set on Jan. 2 with 3,363 new cases. The second wave of COVID-19 has been turning out to be deadlier than the first. Ontario and Quebec have been in lockdown since late last month. The government of Quebec also imposed a curfew from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. in an effort to bring the spread of the pandemic under control.

Pollster Frank Graves of Ekos Research said that this controversy has struck a chord with Canadians because of the hypocrisy of politicians who travelled abroad while asking Canadians to avoid non-essential travel. Since March, Canadians have been making personal sacrifices by observing social distancing requirements in an effort to contain the spread of COVID-19. They missed important family events, including in some cases of funerals of close family members, to follow the rules. When they learned that some of the politicians have failed to do the same, it drew a sharp reaction from them, Mr. Graves said.

"It seems to have hit a nerve, for sure," said Mr. Graves, founder and president of Ekos Research. "It's not entirely surprising given that the public mood right now is not normal. I mean, under normal circumstances, people like to jump on politicians for various indiscretions and mistakes. But in this context, we have a public who are just worried about a burgeoning pandemic that is reaching record levels in terms of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths."

NDP MP Charlie Angus (Timmins-James Bay, Ont.) said in an interview that on a personal level, he's sympathetic with MPs who travelled abroad because of a family member's death or illness. But, considering the dire consequences of the COVID-19 on people's health and economic well being, all Canadians have to follow the guidelines provided by the health officials. He said that he has not seen his elderly mother in a year in order to follow the social distancing requirements. For MPs who travelled out of the country for a vacation, Mr. Angus described this as "dereliction of duty."

"That is an abandonment of your fundamental obligation in the middle of a crisis, that we are in the worst part of the crisis," said Mr. Angus. "And you go to a beach: not having it, not having it at all."

He said that he has no qualms about the three party leaderships disciplining their caucus members. He said that politicians ignoring the rules while asking people to follow them is "hypocrisy" and "entitlement."

"It is entitlement," said Mr. Angus."And there need to be consequences. People need to be stripped of their portfolios for that."

Pollster Darrell Bricker told *The Hill Times* that at this point people are not making a distinction between those who travelled out of country for vacation or those who travelled to attend a funeral or visit a family member who is sick. But at election time, if this becomes an issue, people might consider the reasons why someone ignored the travel advisories. He said that it's too early to make a prediction at this time about what this means for the political careers of these politicians.

"It's different circumstances for different people," said Mr. Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs. "We've seen problems that have occurred in the past for other politicians where they've gone on to win elections. So, time will tell, and I don't think that you could treat every single individual as being in the same situation, or potentially suffering the same level of consequence."

Conservative MP Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.), a former member of the Ethics Committee who is not seeking re-election, declined to say if the indiscretion of MPs traveling abroad will have any negative implications for their political careers. He said it's up to their constituents to decide. "Will it's not for me to got."

"Well, it's not for me to say what impact their discretionary non-essential travel might have on their political careers, that's for their constituents in the upcoming election," said Mr. Kent.

He however said it's "hypocritical" for politicians to ask Canadians to follow the lockdown rules while they choose to travel internationally.

"It was a matter of poor judgment for those that chose," said Mr. Kent. "I haven't heard any stories of essential nature to those travels. And I think it's between the advice that many of those politicians were offering on social media, and the fact that they took those trips displays a certain amount of hypocrisy. It was improper and unwise."

Liberal MP Judy Sgro (Humber River-Black Creek, Ont.) told The Hill Times that it's "unfortunate" that so many people wanted to go away, and that in most cases they were going to the U.S., where the COVID-19 situation is even worse than Canada. She said it appears these people"were not thinking it through." She said that the infraction will negatively affect these politicians' credibility, but any electoral consequences would depend on the p ontica environment and the timing of the election.

"It will depend on the mood of the voters at the time," said Ms. Sgro. "If it's a year from now, they probably will care less. But if it is in the next six months, there are those people who will feel like, 'I had to stay home, I couldn't travel. What right did you have to do that?'."

> arana@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

20

Continued from page 1

Not yet clear if MPs will pay steeper price for holiday travel abroad, say politicos, but damage could come at polls

'If anybody's going to cut them some slack, I think it would be me, and I have no room for any slack,' savs former veteran NDP MP David Christopherson, of the growing list of public officials who travelled overseas in defiance of public health recommendations over the holiday break.

BY PALAK MANGAT

It is too early to say if some poli-ticians caught travelling abroad over the holidays will face longterm consequences, say some Hill observers, as timing will play a big role in determining if they lose their jobs in the next vote.

Speaking to The Hill Times, former NDP MP David Christopherson said he was "outraged" at this week's trickle of stories about political leaders who travelled overseas in defiance of public health recommendations over the holiday break.

'If anybody's going to cut them some slack, I think it would be me, and I have no room for any slack," said the former veteran MP of 15 years.

The issue has become "explosive" in recent days, with politicians in Alberta and Ontario, and at the federal level, coming under fire, as public health officials continued their months-long plea to Canadians to stay home in order to curb the spread of the virus.

The consequences have so fai included resignations, firings, and demotions.

For many Canadians, including those who have been forced to "watch their loved ones" pass away over Zoom or through a window to limit the likelihood of catching or spreading the virus, he said it's an issue in which it's easy to understand and relate to the public backlash.

Everybody gets this. So, can you recover from this? Yes, but it

comes down to the relationship you have with your constituents," said Mr. Christopherson. "At the end of the day, the fundamental relationship is between the elected person and their constituents.'

That will put rookie MPs on shakier ground, he noted, as they were already faced with an unknown time limit to maintain the trust of voters during a minority Parliament, which can send voters to the polls at any moment. Among the nine MPs so far

who have travelled during the pandemic, three are rookies: Libthis ... they can hold that for a while.'

Mr. Zuberi announced last week he would be stepping down from his committee roles after travelling to Delaware on Dec. 18 to visit his wife's sick grandfather. He returned Dec. 31, and the party whip's office said it was "not previously made aware" of his trip.

In a Jan. 3 statement, twiceelected Liberal MP Kamal Khera (Brampton West, Ont.) also announced she was stepping aside from her parliamentary secretary duties, supporting International

go beyond being stripped of one's parliamentary duties.

"Any place that has an election sooner rather than later, this is going to be more problematic, said Prof. Small, as voters will have their MP's travel itinerary over the holidays in recent memory to take stock of.

The degree to which individual violators, or political parties, need to repent and regain a specific constituency's trust will also hinge on whether that riding is considered a safe or swing seat. "The party leader can only do what the party leader can do,' she said, noting leaders are not necessarily an MP's "boss."That role is fulfilled by the "people of that riding.'

Tom Parkin, a NDP commentator who sought the party's nomination last year in a Toronto-area riding, said the storyline of politicians travelling during the second wave of the pandemic has resulted in a "mishmash" of "individual stories," which are filled with "inconsistencies" like if their travel was approved by parties.

'Some of these MPs said that they were going to visit an elderly and infirm relative. That's wrong, he said in a phone interview."It's like going 110 in the 100 km/hour zone, but not 180 like some others." He said Ms. Khera's and Mr.

Zuberi's travels did not sit well



NDP MP Niki Ashton, pictured top left in February 2020, Liberal MP Kamal Khera who's a nurse, pictured at right in front, and Conservative MP David Sweet, pictured at left in 2011, are part of a growing list of MPs who travelled abroad, for different reasons, over the holidays. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade, photograph courtesy of Kamal Khera's Twitter. The Hill Times file photograph

eral MPs Lyne Bessette (Brome-Missisquoi, Que.), Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds-Dollard, Que.), and Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard-Saint-Michel, Que.).

Mr. Christopherson advised andling apologizing for travelling amid the pandemic will help speed up any attempted recovery."If you don't have a history of a lot of accumulated negatives ... then you can overcome almost anything in the right circumstances," he said.

'If you haven't had the benefit of four years, to lay down some markers so people can understand what kind of person you are, and suddenly, the biggest thing they've seen about you is

Development Minister Karina Gould (Burlington, Ont.).

Ms. Khera said she travelled to Seattle on Dec. 23 for a "private memorial" to mark the passing of her father, who passed in Sepember, and uncle who passe a few weeks later. She returned to Canada on Dec. 31, and wrote that while "the purpose of my travel is deemed essential," she was stepping aside "in an effort to ensure my choices do not distract" from Ottawa's work to battle COVID.

Tamara Small, a political scientist at the University of Guelph, agreed that timing could be at play in determining if the consequences are long term and

with him, and Ms. Khera's statement also did not"cut it."

"Is it as wrong as people going and tweeting pictures of themselves by a fireside in Ajax and then being in St. Barts? No, it's not that bad; that's far worse, he said, referencing former Ontario finance minister Rod Phillips who resigned from his post 48 hours after news of his holiday getaway went public.

While Ms. Khera's choice"is maybe something she can come back from, she has to show a little bit of acceptance," he said. Mr. Parkin added that an apology was missing in her statement, unlike Mr. Zuberi, who called it an "error in judgment."

Ms. Khera, a registered nurse who contracted COVID-19 earlier in the pandemic and volunteered at a long-term care home, wrote that she hopes to "do my part in the vaccine rollout where there may be nursing shortages" in the future

She could use that as goodwill to restore public trust and "retell her story with hard work in her community," said Mr. Parkin. "Voters are not that unreasonable that they can't recognize if people do acknowledge their mistake. But again, she didn't apologize.'

The NDP also said a member of its caucus, Niki Ashton (Churchill-Keewatinook Aski, Man.), got approval to enter Greece by its officials who only allow people to enter the country if they can prove their trip is essential. She did not inform NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) or the party whip of her plans to visit her "ailing grandmother," and was then removed from her critic roles by Mr. Singh.

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) said earlier this week that his whip, Blake Richards (Banff-Airdrie, Alta.), approved MP David Sweet's (Flamborough-Glanbrook, Ont.) request to travel to the U.S. for a "property issue," but he was unaware that Mr. Sweet decided to stay down south "for leisure." Mr. Sweet resigned from his role as chair of the House Ethics Committee and announced he would not be seeking re-election as an MP. The whip also allowed MP Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, Alta.) to travel to his property in California for "emergency repair" issues

Stéphanie Chouinard, a political scientist at the Royal Military College, agreed that "it will be up to voters to decide" Ms. Ashton's future in light of her recent travel. "In the case of some Alberta politicians, the election is not coming soon, whereas for someone like Ms. Ashton, the memory of her travelling to Greece may still be fresh in voters' minds," she said. (Albertans are expected to next hit the polls in 2023.)

Patricia Sibal, a consultant with Crestview Strategy, said the "instinct" of party leaders to react quickly after learning about travel of a caucus member "is very much related to, 'We're still very much in this crisis period.'

While it's possible for politicians to recover from this, Ms. Sibal said "we're quite far away from seeing that happen just because of the urgency of the current situation.'

In Ontario, for example, officials reported a record high of 3,519 cases on Jan. 7, above the previous record that was set on Jan. 2 with 3,363 new cases.

The list of public officials who nave come under fire also grew Tuesday, to include an Ontario hospital CEO who apologized for his non-essential travel to the Dominican Republic.

The main mood is, 'Act quickly now and ask questions later,' "said Ms. Sibal, noting that mirrors the quick response time that Ottawa has had to adjust to in drafting relief measures since the pandemic hit.

pmangat@hilltimes.com The Hill Times



New year, new staff roster for International **Trade Minister** Ng, including **Catenaro's exit**

Plus, Digital Government Minister Jovce Murray has officially promoted Erik Nosaluk to the title of press secretary, a role he's been acting in since last spring.

 $S {\rm mall \ Business, \ Export \ Promotion, \ and \ S} {\rm International \ Trade \ Minister \ Mary \ Ng}$ is starting the new year with a couple of changes to her staff roster after recently bidding farewell to her director of communications, Eleanore Catenaro.



communications director to Ms. Ng. Photograph courtesy of Facebook/Haley Withers Photography

Ms. Catenaro ended her time in the minister's office last month after roughly a year on the job, starting in January 2020. Before then, she'd spent four years tackling communications in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office, beginning in February 2016 as executive assistant to then-director of communications Kate Purchase. She was promoted to press secretary in the PMO in March 2017.

Prior her time with the PMO, Ms. Catenaro spent a little more than a year and a half as a special assistant to Lac-Saint-Louis, Que., Liberal MP Francis Scarpaleggia, who has served as Liberal national caucus chair since 2011.

Stay tuned to Hill Climbers for an update on where she's landing. Lauren Conway, who joined Ms. Ng's

team as a senior special assistant for communications on Nov. 16, is now acting director of communications in the minister's office. She's a former executive assistant to ex-prime minister Paul Martin through his work for the Martin Family Initiative, which "works together with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation People to support education, health, and overall well-being for children, youth, and adults," as described on its website.



Lauren Conway is currently acting as Ms. Ng's director of communications. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Ms. Conway has also previously worked as a program manager for the France Canada Chamber of Commerce Ontario, a French non-profit organization, and as an events and communications officer for the American Chamber of Commerce in France. As well, she has experience as a campaign organizer south of the border,



government's COVID-19 response. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

including for the Pennsylvania Democratic Party in 2016 and the New York State Democratic Committee in 2017.

Youmy Han continues as press secre-

tary to Ms. Ng. Along with Ms. Catenaro, senior policy adviser Zara Rabinovitch left Ms. Ng's office in December. Ms. Rabinovitch first became a senior policy adviser to theninternational trade diversification minister Jim Carr in August 2018. Before then, she'd spent almost two and a half years handling policy files for Mr. Carr as minister of natural resources.

In turn, two special assistants for policy, Yash Nanda and Alessia Avola, have both been promoted to the title of policy adviser.



Alessia Avola has been promoted to the title of policy adviser to the trade minister. *Photograph* courtesy of Facebook

A former summer intern in Ms. Ng's office as minister of small business and export promotion in 2018 and 2019, Mr. Nanda was hired on full-time to her trade team in December 2019. He's got a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Montreal's McGill University and while there co-founded and served as executive director of the McGill Policy Association

Ms. Ng added on the international trade portfolio after the 2019 federal election.

For her part, Ms. Avola has been working for Ms. Ng since 2018, starting as an operations and communications assistant in her office as small business and export promotion minister. She became a special assistant for policy in January 2020. A former Jaimie Anderson parliamentary intern, Ms. Avola has a bachelor's degree in international relations, and ethics, society, and law from the University of Toronto.

Former PMO Canada-U.S. relations manager Simon Beauchemin is director of policy to Ms. Ng, whose office is run by chief of staff Jason Easton.

Meanwhile, over in Digital Government Minister Joyce Murray's office, Erik Nosa ${\bf luk}$ has officially been promoted to the title of press secretary, after having covered those responsibilities since last spring.

Mr. Nosaluk first joined Ms. Murray's office as a special assistant for communications in January 2020, around the same time as the minister's former press secretary, Farees Nathoo, left to work for Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland.



Erik Nosaluk now officially wears the title of press secretary to the digital government minister. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Mr. Nosaluk is a former IT assistant with the Liberal research bureau, and has also offered technical assistance to now Transport Minister Marc Garneau's 2013 leadership campaign, Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux's successful by-election campaign in Winnipeg North, Man., and to the federal Liberal Party during the 2011 election. He was also new media director for the Manitoba Liberals during the 2011 provincial election, according to his LinkedIn profile. Before joining Ms. Murray's office, he was working as a technical expert for Apple in Winnipeg.

Sarah McMaster is director of communications to Ms. Murray.

In another Hill Climbers update for the office, Cid Cabillan is now director of parliamentary affairs to the digital government minister.

He first joined Ms. Murray's team in early 2020 as a special assistant for operations and communications. Mr. Cabillan has also briefly worked as a parliamentary affairs and issues management assistant to then-democratic institutions minister Karina Gould in 2018, provided communications support to Liberal candidates during the 2019 election, and spent time as an opposition researcher for the Liberal research bureau and as an assistant to Liberal MP Gary Anandasangaree in 2017.

Shaun Govender is chief of staff to Ms. Murray. lryckewaert@hilltimes.com

The Hill Times





Joly, Freeland top lobbying targets as activity continues to grow

Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland were both cited by lobbyists in 21 filings each for the month of November, according to figures released last month.

BY PALAK MANGAT

L obbying numbers spiked in November as MPs marked the second full month of regular proceedings after the pandemic disrupted the legislative calendar, with a more than 300 per cent increase in activity from the previous year.

Consultants, corporations, and organizations logged a total of 3,284 communications reports in November, compared to 818 the year before, which followed the fall election. It was also a bump from the previous month's filings of 2,656 and 2,485 in September.

According to lobbying figures posted last month, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), which represents cities across the country, was the busiest group last November, logging 60 disclosure filings that cited priorities around housing, infrastructure, and transportation. The National Police Federation (NPF) followed not far behind in reporting 50 communications reports, just above IBM Canada's 49 and the Mining Association of Canada's 47.

As usual, Innovation, Science, and Economic Development topped the list of most-lobbied departments. It was followed by Finance Canada and Global Affairs Canada, with the Senate and Employment and Social Development Canada coming in fourth and fifth, respectively.

Economic Development Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.) was the most-lobbied minister, who was mentioned in 25 filings from hoteliers, tourism associations, and other arts and cultural groups that have taken a hit amid the pandemic. Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.), who delivered the feds' fall economic statement later that month, and Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, B.C.) were both cited in 21 filings each. Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains's (Mississauga-Malton, Ont.) name was attached to 17.

Mr. Wilkinson was a target for outreach by groups like the B.C. Wildlife Federation, the Mining Association of Canada, Suncor Energy, and Imperial Oil, shortly before he joined Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) in December in announcing the Liberals' revamped climate agenda.

The party, which had initially promised not to raise the price of emissions past 2022, presented an updated plan that comes with a proposal to boost the federal carbon price from \$50 per tonne of emissions in 2022 to \$170 per tonne in 2030. Mr. Wilkinson acknowledged that getting provincial buy-in may be tough, as Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario have all gone to court to oppose the policy, while Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.) has vowed to scrap the levy entirely.

The blueprint, which includes \$15-billion in commitments such as new building codes and regulations, aims to bind Canada to hitting a netzero emissions target by 2050. It had observers like veteran pollster Nik Nanos wondering last month if the party is positioning itself to prepare

News

Economic Development Minister Mélanie Joly, pictured in July 2020, topped Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, pictured in September 2020, in being the most-lobbied member of cabinet for the month of November. The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade

for an election later this year. (Like all federal party leaders, Mr. Trudeau has insisted that he is "not eager" for an election this year, but says his party will be ready to hit the campaign trail.)

Reached last week, FCM president Garth Frizzell said in an email that discussions with federal officials in November centred around the ongoing pandemic that is "stretching through 2021." The group focused on how to keep cities "stable, ready, and prepared to drive a green and inclusive economic recovery for Canada when the time comes,"he added.

Ms. Freeland, in her economic statement, announced the feds are ready to spend up to \$100-billion as part of a short-term stimulus package over three years to kick start the post-COVID economy.

Spending will begin once impacts of the COVID crisis have damped down, with details to be fleshed out in the coming months in the 2021 budget, its first since 2019. (Ottawa has not shared a full budget since the pandemic began, with Mr. Trudeau citing uncertainty around COVID as a reason.)

In an email last week, NPF spokesperson Fabrice de Dongo said the group's efforts with Ottawa in November included a week of meetings with MPs, Senators, ministers, and other officials to "reiterate" its funding requests that traced back to its asks at a House Finance Committee in August.

They included \$190-million to help boost the RCMP's training capacity, \$40-million to speed up the replacement of "aging and unsafe" service pistols for the force, and \$50-million to implement body-worn cameras.

In its economic statement, Ottawa earmarked about \$240-million over six years to help bring in those devices, noted Mr. de Dongo. "The NPF believes that the federal government must address these timely and pressing challenges, and more, to ensure ongoing community, member and public safety,"he said.

The federation's efforts follow months of worldwide protests, including across Canada and the U.S., decrying police brutality and authorities' treatment of, and interactions with, Black and Indigenous people. In mass solidarity demonstrations across North America last year, many activists urged policymakers to consider redirecting funds to community and social services instead of police forces. - With files from Beatrice Paez pmangat@hilltimes.com

The Hill Times

) 1•

Parliamentary Calendar Biden inauguration happens at noon Jan. 20 on Capitol Hill



U.S. vicepresident-elect Kamala Harris, and U.S. president-elect Joe Biden, pictured Dec. 1, 2020. Photograph courtesy of Kamala Harris/Facebook

MONDAY, JAN. 11

House Not Sitting-The House will likely be sitting in a hybrid format during the pandemic, with most MPs connecting remotely. It's scheduled to return on Monday, Jan. 25-Feb. 5. It will take a one-week break and return on Tuesday, Feb. 16 and sit every weekday until Friday, Feb. 26. It will take a one-week break. March 1-March 5. and will return again for one week, March 8-12, before taking another break, March 15-19. It's scheduled to sit March 22-26, will take a two-week break, March 29-April 9. It's then scheduled to sit every weekday for the next five weeks, April 12-May 14. It will take one-week break after that, from May 17-May 24. It will sit May 25 every weekday until Wednesday, June 23, and will then break for three months, until Monday Sept. 20. In the fall and winter, the House is scheduled to sit for 11 weeks over September. October. November, and December. It will sit Sept. 20-Oct. 8; Oct. 18-Nov. 5; and Nov. 15-Dec. 17.

TUESDAY, JAN. 12

Maclean's Magazine's 12th Annual Parliamentarians of the Year Awards—Hosted by Peter Van Dusen, *Maclean's* will hold this virtual and invitation-only reception to honour the top Members of Parliament in the following categories: best mentor, best orator, best represents constituents, hardest working, lifetime achievement, most collegial, most knowledgeable, rising star, and parliamentarian of the year, on Jan. 12, from 7 p.m.-8 p.m. To watch the show, visit: https://www.macleans.ca/ parliamentarians-of-the-year/ and enter your email address with the password 'MACLEANS.'

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 20

Biden Inauguration—Despite last week's storming of Capitol Hill by a mob of Trump supporters, U.S. president-elect Joe Biden will be sworn in on Jan. 20 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and will be joined by his wife, Jill Biden, and vice-president-elect Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff. The inauguration, which starts at noon EST, will include a "virtual parade across America," and Mr. Biden will review the readiness of U.S. military troops and he will receive a traditional presidential escort from 15th Street to the White House, but "providing the American people and world with historic images of the president-elect proceeding to the White House without attracting large crowds," the Associated Press reported last week.

MONDAY, JAN. 25

House Sitting-The House will likely be sitting in a hybrid format during the pandemic, with most MPs connecting remotely. It's scheduled to return on Monday, Jan. 25-Feb. 5. It will take a one-week break and return on Tuesday, Feb. 16, and sit every weekday until Friday, Feb. 26. It will take a one-week break, March 1-March 5, and will return again for one week, March 8-12, before taking another break, March 15-19. It's scheduled to sit March 22-26, will take a two-week break, March 29-April 9. It's then scheduled to sit every weekday for the next five weeks, April 12-May 14. It will take one-week break after that, from May 17-May 24. It will sit May 25 every weekday until Wednesday, June 23, and will then break for three months, until Monday Sept. 20. In the fall and winter, the House is scheduled to sit for 11 weeks over September, October, November, and December. It will sit Sept. 20-Oct. 8; Oct. 18-Nov. 5; and Nov. 15-Dec. 17.

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

The Hill Times

HILL TIMES CLASSIFIEDS

Information and advertisement placement: 613-232-5952



IN THE EAST MARKET (383 CUMBERLAND) Totally renovated 1 bedroom on 2nd floor facing west. New floors, kitchen and appliances, bathroom, Parking available at additional \$200,-/month. 613-884-9108



Do you have a house to rent or sell? Items or products to sell?

DOWNTOWN 1 BEDROOM + DEN (OR 2ND BEDROOM) AT BANK AND LAURIER Downtown, high-end bedroom +

> FOR INFO, CALL OR EMAIL classifieds@hilltimes.com 613-232-5952

23

Events Feature

OUR TELEVISION LANDSCAPE IS Stronger When our Public Broadcaster is distinct AND COMPLEMENTARY

As a society, we've made a choice to rely on a Canadian public broadcaster to ensure the sharing of our national conciousness and identity.

In the race to win ratings and advertising revenues by purchasing foreign and dubbed content, all of which are for commercial gain, it's our national television content that's losing. Our public broadcaster is moving away from its culture and duty of public service and needs to resume its role, first and foremost, as a public broadcaster.

A public broadcaster that's open to the world and dares to take risks that encourage discovery.

A public broadcaster dedicated to investing more in investigative journalism, international news, and documentaries that portray Canadian local and regional diversity.

A public broadcaster that promotes Canadian creativity by showcasing original programming.

The future of our television and the diversity of its offering depend on a balanced ecosystem where each broadcaster has an important role to play.

The time has come for the CRTC to refocus CBC/Radio-Canada's mandate to ensure private television sustainability.



