



NEWS

With McKenna out, NDP sees opportunity to recapture Ottawa Centre

BY NEIL MOSS

Following the news that Liberal MP Catherine McKenna won't be seeking re-election in Ottawa Centre, Ont., the NDP is hoping to use the two-term MP's exit as an opportunity to flip the riding back to its orange ways.

The riding, which has been represented provincially by Ontario NDP MPP Joel Harden since 2018 and was represented by the NDP federally from 2004 to 2015, is seen by some as crucial for the Liberals to hold if the party hopes to reach a majority in the next election. While Ms. McKenna increased her margin of victory in 2019, garnering 48.7 per cent of the vote compared to 42.7 per cent during her first victory in 2015, some believe it will be a tougher road for the Liberals in the next race.

Angella MacEwen, who's running for the NDP's nomination in

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Following the announcement that Infrastructure Minister Catherine McKenna, pictured far left, won't seek re-election, former Ontario cabinet minister Yasir Naqvi jumped in the Ottawa Centre Liberal nomination race. There has been speculation that past Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, centre, will seek the nomination. For the NDP, school board trustee Lyra Evans and economist Angella MacEwen, pictured far right, are seeking their party's nomination. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade and photographs courtesy of Twitter/Wikimedia Commons/Facebook*

NEWS

Moon shot can't be the final frontier for Canadian space program, say sky watchers

BY ALICE CHEN

The Canadian government may be shooting for the moon, but there's still plenty of room for the space program to stretch among the stars, according to experts and observers, who say the country needs more of a plan to capitalize on investments and interest in the space industry.

There's been some movement on this file in recent months. On May 26, Innovation, Science, and

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NEWS

RCMP and Global Affairs haven't released previously completed ATIP requests since 2020

BY NEIL MOSS

The federal access-to-information system has slowed during the pandemic and a number of departments have been delayed in releasing already completed requests, including the RCMP and Global Affairs Canada, which have not released previously completed requests since last year.

The federal government publishes already completed access-

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FEATURE

'So long for now': Munson retires from the Senate after 17 years

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

When Jim Munson first came to Parliament Hill as a reporter in the 1970s, he never

expected he'd go on to work for a prime minister, and certainly not go on to sit as a member of the Red Chamber—but life is rarely what you expect. And now, the

Ontario Senator is looking back fondly on his time on the "dark side" as he prepares to retire.

"I loved politics, but I had no intention whatsoever of work-

ing, as you would say in journalism, on the 'dark side,'" said Sen. Munson (Ottawa-Rideau Canal,

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Politics in the age of conspiracy Les Whittington p. 7



Racial profiling on the Hill p. 11



Zainab Al-Mehdar

Heard On The Hill

Inuit rights advocate, former diplomat Mary Simon named first Indigenous GG



Meet the new GG: Mary Simon was announced as Canada's first-ever Indigenous governor general on July 6. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

In a "historic" appointment, Canada has its first-ever Indigenous governor general.

Mary Simon, 73, a longtime Inuit rights advocate and a former Canadian diplomat, said her appointment can help Canada as it reckons with its history and works towards reconciliation. She's the 30th person to hold the vice-regal role since Confederation.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said the country is taking "a historic step" with her appointment on July 6 and Ms. Simon is the right person to "meet the moment."

"I know that my assignment will bring to life her vision of a stronger Canada, a Canada that is stronger for everyone," said Mr. Trudeau, who recognized her work leading the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami as president for two terms from 2006 to 2012. "I know that she will use her many years of experience. She has been working for a long time to achieve a country that is fair to all."

Ms. Simon is no stranger to being the first. She became Canada's first Inuk ambassador when she was named the first Canadian ambassador to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (now the Inuit Circumpolar Council) and again, as ambassador to Denmark. She is also an officer of the Order of Canada and has been handed the National Aboriginal Achievement Award.

"I can confidently say that my appointment is a historic and inspirational moment for Canada and an important step forward on the long path towards reconciliation," said Ms. Simon, adding she can help Canada walk that path.

"I know that there are very important responsibilities associated with my role that will help the working relationship of Canadians and Indigenous people through reconciliation or through other means and I feel that the cultural differences that we have in our country will go away if we can learn to understand and respect one another," she said.

She said she didn't see a conflict in being Indigenous and serving as representative to the Queen, who she thanked in her address.

Born in Nunavik, in northern Quebec, Ms. Simon is fluent in Inuktitut and English, and committed to learning French so she can fulfill her Rideau Hall duties in both of Canada's official languages. She spoke of her childhood spent living a traditional lifestyle with her Inuk mother and grandmother as her mentors and a father from the South who had a "profound love and respect" for the North.

Together, these experiences "allowed me to be a bridge between the different lived realities that together make up the tapestry of Canada," she said.

Both Ms. Simon and Mr. Trudeau acknowledged her appointment comes at a difficult time for the Crown's relationship with Indigenous peoples. Over the last month, more than 1,000 unmarked graves have been discovered at three different former residential school sites.

Ms. Simon, who attended a day school in Nunavik in the 1950s, said she plans to work "every day" to promote healing and wellness across Canadian society amid this "reflective and dynamic time" in Canada's shared history.

"To me that means stopping to fully recognize, memorialize, and come to terms with the atrocities of our collective past that we are learning more about each day," she said, while Mr. Trudeau said Canada can benefit from her leadership.

"I think she is someone who will bring to bear a perspective and abilities that are very important to this country in this time of reflection and growth," he said.

The appointment comes five months after Julie Payette's resignation from the role, following complaints and an external review that found the former astronaut presided over a toxic work environment at Rideau Hall. Ms. Simon committed to "setting and maintaining the highest possible standard of work and ethic" in all aspects of her duties.

—By Samantha Wright Allen

MPs respond to devastating fire in Lytton, B.C.

As an investigation into the cause of the wildfire that recently devastated Lytton, B.C., gets underway, B.C. officials have said it may have been human-caused.

The small village in B.C. is said to have been 90 per cent wiped out by fires that started on June 30, causing more than 1,000 people to evacuate immediately. The fire has destroyed most of the village and killed at least two people.

The town falls within first-term Conservative MP Brad Vis' riding of Mission-Matsqui-Fraser Canyon, B.C. Mr. Vis, who worked as an aide to B.C. Conservative MP Ed Fast before his election in 2019, took to social media to share information notices and scenes from Lytton on June 30 and since.

Instead of marking Canada Day, Mr. Vis said in a Facebook post that instead he was "devoting all [his] time to the emergency situation in the Fraser Canyon." In a subsequent July 2 post, he noted he had travelled to the emergency reception centre set up in Merritt, B.C., that day "to meet with resident and community leaders."

"We are so thankful for the work everyone in emergency services is doing. My heart is with the families who have lost so much but remain strong in spirit," he wrote.



The wildfire has reportedly wiped out almost 90 per cent of the village of Lytton, B.C. Screenshot courtesy of CTV

Members of Parliament shared their condolences and support over Twitter, and celebrated community members coming together to help out.

Conservative MP Mark Strahl, who represents Chilliwack-Hope, B.C., highlighted the support his home community helped organize in a tweet on July 2: "Chilliwack filled a semi-trailer with supplies to send to the victims of the devastating wildfires in Lytton. Thanks to truck driver Gord VanLaerhoven for leading this initiative, and thanks to our community for helping our neighbours when they need it most."

There are now 180 active fires across B.C. and more than 100 out-of-province fire crews are expected to come in to assist, as reported by the CBC.

"So many parts of BC are tinder-dry! #SparksLake fires north of #Savona have also devastated families' homes and lands. My plea is that everyone be ultra-careful, and prevent human-caused," tweeted B.C. Liberal MP Joyce Murray on July 2.

Horwood joins *The Hill Times'* newsroom

Matt Horwood has joined *The Hill Times'* online news team. Originally from Belleville, Ont., after he graduated from Carleton University's journalism program in 2018, Mr. Horwood started as a reporter for the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*. From there, he moved on to work as a freelance writer for the *Ottawa Business Journal*, *Ottawa Life Magazine*, and *The Kitchissippi Times*.



Matt Horwood started with *The Hill Times* on July 5. 'I am over-the-moon excited to have joined *The Hill Times'* team and I look forward to bringing our reader in-depth and engrossing stories.' Photograph courtesy of Matt Horwood

He said he's always had an interest in Canadian politics, but he is especially captivated by the areas of economics, foreign policy, the Canadian Armed Forces, climate change, and the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I am over-the-moon excited to have joined *The Hill Times* team, and I look forward to bringing our readers in-depth and engrossing stories," said Mr. Horwood.

Lametti announces 13 judicial appointments

Justice Minister David Lametti announced a slate of judicial appointments on July 2, filling benches in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Quebec.

Since November 2015, more than 475 judges have been appointed under the Trudeau government's new judicial application process.

In Ontario, six new judges were named to the Superior Court: William D. Black, a partner at McCarthy Tétrault in Toronto; Ian R. Smith, a partner at Fenton, Smith Barristers in Toronto; Brian D. Dubé, from Windsor, Ont.; Jill R. Presser, with Presser Barristers in Toronto; P. Tamara Sugunasiri, most recently case management master with the court; and Tami L. Waters, a principal of her own firm in Oshawa, Ont.

In Saskatchewan, Keith D. Kilback was appointed as a new justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, replacing Justice D.B. Konkin. At the time of his appointment, he was a partner with Kanuka Thuringer LLP in Regina, practicing in multiple areas including civil litigation, administrative law, and transportation law.

In Quebec, four new puisne judges were appointed to the province's Superior Court: Yvan Poulin; Daniel Urbas, from Montreal; Louis Charette, a partner at Lavery de Billy LLP in Montreal; and Gabrielle Brochu, a partner at Langlois Lawyers LLP in Montreal.

In Alberta, Lorena K. Harris was named a new justice to the Court of Queen's Bench. Most recently a partner at Dentons in Edmonton, she's also practiced at Milner Fenerty and Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP, and her work has focused on complex commercial litigation and professional liability litigation.

Finally, in Nova Scotia, Frank Hoskins was appointed a judge of the province's Supreme Court. A former judge with the provincial court in Dartmouth, N.S., since 2008, he's also a former chief Crown attorney for the Halifax region and of special prosecutions and has practiced with Crosby Murtha and Pink Murray Law Firm.

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Neil Moss

Diplomatic Circles



‘We have to have visits’: New Romanian envoy hopes for renewal of high-level meetings post-pandemic

In a wide-ranging interview, Romanian Ambassador Bogdan Manoiu spoke about defence and economic co-operation with Canada, as well as the need to renew high-level visits between the two nations.

Romania’s new ambassador to Canada is hoping that future high-level meetings between Ottawa and Bucharest can be used to further develop the Canada-Romanian relationship.

Bogdan Manoiu said he hopes to see the leaders of the two nations meet shortly after public health conditions allow.

“The international agenda, unforeseen events, unforeseen processes—and the highest on this list is the pandemic—prevented the unfolding of the political dialogue as ... it could have been in normal circumstances,” Mr. Manoiu told *The Hill Times* in a June 25 interview at Romania’s Rideau Street embassy.

“My emphasis [is] on the need to increase the pace of the political dialogue between Romania and Canada,” he said. “We have to have visits.”

He noted that having those visits are impossible at this current moment, but once the public health conditions allow for it, there is a need to “renew the political dialogue at the highest level.”

Mr. Manoiu said that includes a meeting between Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** and Romanian President **Klaus Iohannis**.

“We need to put together again—after this period of absence—political leaders to steer the co-operation between the two countries,” he said.

He said both Canada and Romania are “aware” and “convinced” of the need to renew high-level political dialogue.

Despite the need to renew political dialogue that has gone virtual during the pandemic, Mr. Manoiu said the Canada-Romania relationship is “really excellent.”

The last high-level meeting with the two countries was between Mr. Trudeau and then-Romanian prime minister **Dacian Cioloș** in the summer of 2016.

That visit was focused on Canada’s soon-to-be finalized free trade deal with the European Union—the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). Romania was one of the last EU countries to agree to the trade pact as it wanted Canadian visa restrictions lifted.

“[That visit] had a very definite objective, which was achieved,” he said. “This specific priority on the agenda of both countries dominated the talks, so since then we didn’t have any visit at this level.”

While there haven’t been high-level visits since that 2016 meeting, there were a handful of virtual meetings between cabinet ministers in both countries during the pandemic.

A new ambassador to Canada but not a new face in Ottawa, Mr. Manoiu presented

his letter of credence to Canadian administrator **Richard Wagner** on March 22. The envoy previously was the Romanian mission’s charge d’affaires since 2018.

He also had a posting in Ottawa at the beginning of his diplomatic career from 1996 to 2000.

“It’s not common to have, as a career diplomat, a posting in the same country more than once,” he said. “I am very fortunate that I am for the second time in Canada.”

“I tell my younger colleagues that Canada is an excellent ... laboratory for foreign policy if you want to gather knowledge ... with a broad view. You can see from Canada the whole world,” Mr. Manoiu said.

After leaving the Canadian post in 2000, he went next to Luxembourg. Following two years in Luxembourg City, he returned home to Romania where he worked out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until coming to Canada for a second time. While in Bucharest, he served as the European Affairs adviser to then-president **Traian Basescu** from 2011 to 2014, as well as secretary of state to the minister delegate for European Affairs at the ministry in 2017.

Mr. Manoiu said he hopes to increase links at the provincial level in Canada.

“When looking at Canada, one should also notice and take advantage of the multiple opportunities shown to be exploited in the co-operation with the provinces,” he said. “One of the paths I will wish [to pursue] in this period is increasing the intensity of co-operation with the provinces.”

At the federal level, Mr. Manoiu there is close co-operation in defence, energy, and economics.

Romania joined more than a dozen EU countries when it ratified CETA last November.

Mr. Manoiu said the agreement has already shown the benefits of liberalizing free trade. But he noted there is “big margin” for improvement for Canada-Romania trade. He said while Romania continues to develop its economy, there is increased opportunity for foreign direct investment, which could be supplied by Canada.

Canada-Romania trade reached nearly \$590-million in 2020, which was down from more than \$707-million in 2018.

With Canada finishing its fifth NATO air task force deployment to Romania last year, Mr. Manoiu said defence co-operation remains consistent.

“We value that Canada delivers on its commitment and on its evaluation of the risks posed in the Black Sea region,” he said.

The air policing force helps to defend Romanian air space and bolster Romania’s air force.

“Canada is a constant presence there [and] Canada has a balanced approach on the eastern flank as a whole,” said Mr. Manoiu, noting Canada’s leadership of a NATO deployment in Latvia.

He added that the Ukrainian crisis remains a consistent topic on the Canada-Romania agenda. Canada has consistently raised concern for Ukraine’s sovereignty following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and subsequent Russian aggression along the border.

Mr. Manoiu said the continued Cana-



Romanian Ambassador Bogdan Manoiu presented his letter of credence to Administrator Richard Wagner on March 22. He previously served as Romania’s charge d’affaires in Ottawa since 2018. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

dian commitment in Eastern Europe is “essential.”

“When talking to high profile people in Global Affairs or DND, I always emphasize the need for continued Canadian commitment in that part of Europe,” he said, adding that Canada’s broader view for the region and its sensitivity about Ukraine is “fortunate” for Romania.

He said he’s hoping that Canada will increase its contributions to NATO’s defen-

sive infrastructure in Romania.

“In order to maintain the credibility of the deterrence and defence posture of NATO, we need those structures to be manned properly,” he said. “A constant point on my agenda when talking to Global Affairs or DND concerns this eventual, possible increase of contribution of Canada within those structures.”

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STRATEGIES

News

Moon shot can't be the final frontier for Canadian space program, say sky watchers

With a focus on lunar exploration, it's an 'exciting time' for the Canadian space sector, but there's room for more government engagement, intervention, and communication to boost the industry, say stakeholders and experts.

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Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice-Champagne, Que.) announced \$3-million worth of funding for "technology initiatives for lunar exploration," according to a press release.

This builds on the \$36.5-million given to prepare for future mission opportunities since 2020.

At a same-day virtual announcement, he said that in partnership with NASA, Canada will be aiming to land a rover on the moon within five years, and that a Canadian astronaut will be travelling around the moon within the next few years. This falls under a pre-existing \$150-million lunar exploration pledge made in 2019.



Former Conservative MP and space caucus chair Jay Aspin says there should be a focus on building Canada's satellite industry. Photograph courtesy of Jay Aspin

"We are at a significant moment in Canada's space history," Mr. Champagne said in an email statement. "Thanks to our efforts, Canada will be only the second country, after the U.S. to have an astronaut in deep space."

For Lisa Campbell, president of the Canadian Space Agency, these announcements are exciting, particularly the "major international collaboration" around the lunar gateway, a NASA-led program aiming to create an orbiting outpost around the moon, which

she said is a "stepping stone to Mars and beyond."

However, Jay Aspin, a former Conservative MP from 2011 to 2015 and previous chair of the parliamentary space caucus, said it's still "insufficient."

"Both Conservatives and Liberals have not taken space seriously," he said. "In terms of actually developing a space industry, I think we are woefully inadequate."

Still, Conservative MP Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, Alta.) said these recent investments are positive news for the industry. He did note, though, that it would be nice to see something more concrete put in place to support the jobs that orbit the space sector.

David Kendall, International Space University faculty emeritus, said this is an incremental step in the larger strategy that Canada's space agency released in 2019, one which included provisions to focus on satellite communications technologies and the delivery of health in isolated communities.

President and CEO of the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada Mike Mueller called it an "incredibly exciting time for the space sector."

"The space marketplace is just huge," he said. "There's multi-trillion-dollar growth projections."

Meanwhile, Marc Boucher, editor-in-chief of Canadian space news publication SpaceQ, was less impressed, noting that the most recent announcement is just a reiteration of what has already been previously announced, and that generally we don't spend that much on the sector. Even a 2019 announcement of \$2-billion for the space program generally wasn't that much, he said, when considering it was meant to be divvied out over 24 years.

On a different tack, Samantha Lawler, University of Regina professor of astronomy, said given Canada's solid history of political negotiation, an early presence on the moon could be useful in moderating militaristic influence from countries like the U.S. and China.

Government has role to play in boosting space industry, says Jeneroux

Even though impressions of the recent announcements are generally positive, there were still a number of suggestions for what the government could do on this file.

Noting that not every MP would agree with him, Mr. Jeneroux said he thinks there's a role for the government to play in helping the space industry.

Pauline Barmby, University of Western Ontario physics and astronomy professor, said that could come in the form of more predictable funding that lasts over the long term, which is needed to work on large-scale international proj-

ects, rather than the up-and-down funding that's currently available.

That money, astronomer and science communicator Ryan Marciniak said, should then be highly targeted.

"If it's just money being thrown at it, it's a great way to waste money. I always like to hear governments say 'not only do we want to allocate funds to this, we want to allocate funds to this specific area,'" he said.

For Canada, he said, this could be funding focused on bolstering engineering.



Conservative MP Matt Jeneroux says he believes the government should get involved in the space industry. The Hill Times file photograph

Ms. Campbell said there's already broad support for the space program across the federal government and she's satisfied with what is being done right now.

But Catherine Neish, assistant earth sciences professor at the University of Western Ontario, said that levels of funding equivalent to the Apollo program are needed to reasonably make things like the moon base happen. She also said there should be a broad community consensus on funding given, rather than just "out of nowhere" saying millions are put towards something.

As for the actual programs, Gordon Osinski, an earth sciences professor at University of Western Ontario, said there need to be more projects set up to come down the pipeline, as currently not much is being done outside of telescopes, radars, and lunar exploration.

Building on this dilemma is what Chris Gainor, a space historian, called a lack of a plan.

"[We] need to develop a bit of a way forward, because the government has a big role in the space sector," he said.

Specifically, this is because there is no unifying piece of space legislation in Canada, according to Cassandra Steer, an Australian National University College of Law senior lecturer and the previous executive director of the McGill Centre for Research in Air and Space Law.

While there is an existing space strategy, she said it doesn't say anything about the space defence strategy, and is largely civil and focused on just the space industry.

"You kind of have these piecemeal responses and if there were an overarching policy or Space Act, that would make a big difference," she said. A good policy in this area would lay out a specific vision and pathway for the future, she said, and generally align diplomatic, education, civil, and defence strategies and policies.

The approach taken should also be collaborative, with Ms. Campbell noting that this co-ordination is the "fundamental backbone to any space program," given the risk, challenge, and expense of exploring the final frontier.

In contrast, Mr. Aspin said we're too dependent right now, particularly on the U.S.

He pointed towards the growing industry of miniature cube satellites as one area where Canada could develop its own facilities and industry.

"We're trying to reach for the stars when we don't have the capability to match the U.S. or the Russians," he said. Canada should "direct money where we could develop an industry."

Similarly, Mr. Boucher said that Canada should support companies that are working towards building satellite launching capabilities.

Communication is also vital, Mr. Marciniak said. Making sure that there is proper outreach is important to garnering public support and leads to budget increases.



Innovation, Science, and Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne says we 'are at a significant moment in Canada's space history.' The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

"If we can show more people what Canadians are doing in space, why we do it, and help them understand what we're learning from that, it's really cool," he said, noting it could involve partnering with scientists and science organizations.

Lastly, Prof. Lawler pointed to the issue of regulating "mega constellations." With the high amount of satellites being launched privately, the light pollution reflecting off of them affects stargazing and astronomy research, she explained.

The government should evaluate these "externalities," she said, and make companies pay researchers for the impact they're having, while also updating laws around how to deal with falling or malfunctioning satellites.

There are also clear benefits to investing more in the space



Canadian Space Agency president Lisa Campbell says there's already broad support for the space program across the government and she's satisfied with what is being done right now. Photograph courtesy of the Government of Canada

industry, those interviewed told *The Hill Times*.

"We are continuously making the link between space and how it helps solve problems here on Earth. And it's one of those things that people realize how much space is ingrained in our everyday lives," Ms. Campbell said. She pointed towards the internet, weather forecasts, and even food production technologies relying on space investment for innovation and function.

There's also, Mr. Jeneroux said, the economic impact of the 20,000 jobs in the industry, and the GDP and technologies contributed by space investment.

"That's something a lot of people don't realize is that [it] generates a lot of jobs, high tech jobs, and in various parts of the country," Mr. Gainor said.



Astronomer Ryan Marciniak says he believes that science communication is important. Photograph courtesy of Ryan Marciniak

"There's a lot of expertise that we can build upon for AI, data management, a whole host of things," Mr. Mueller said.

There's also the philosophical aspect.

"I think it's that human nature to always want to explore what's over the next hill, what's across the next ocean, what's in the next world," Mr. Marciniak said.

Acknowledging that even combined with the economic impact, choosing space over, for instance, helping the homeless, "may not always be the best answer," he said, "but the space industry has an answer."

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RCMP and Global Affairs haven't released previously completed ATIP requests since 2020

The most recent completed ATIP requests released by RCMP and Global Affairs Canada date to March and September 2020, respectively. A number of government institutions have blamed the pandemic for contributing to release delays.

Continued from page 1

to-information and privacy (ATIP) requests on its Open Government portal with a policy of releasing completed requests within 30 calendar days. While some departments and corporations have released completed ATIPs from June and May of this year—like the Canadian Museum of History and the Canada Border Services Agency—many departments have only released requests from March and April, while others are even more delayed.

The RCMP hasn't released completed ATIPs since those completed in March 2020, while the most recent ones posted by Global Affairs Canada are from September 2020. A handful of departments—Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Indigenous Services Canada, and Western Economic Diversification Canada—last posted completed ATIPs from January of this year.

Ottawa journalist Dean Beeby, a freedom of information specialist, said it's a "big problem" that departments aren't publishing completed ATIP requests in a "timely way."

"It just creates more work for the bureaucrats if you have to start a request afresh because they haven't posted the previously released one," he said, noting it's just one of many problems with the access-to-information system.

Mr. Beeby added that the policy on publishing already completed ATIPs is not based on statute and there is no institution or individual policing it.

"It's just best efforts by the institutions to do it," he said. "And of course, this is low on their priority list. So they're not going to be diligent about updating this stuff."

"I don't think there's anything sinister about it. I think it's just a bureaucracy that feels overwhelmed and isn't going to do anything that isn't required by law. And some things that are required by law are still not done," he said.

Access to information has slowed during the pandemic, with some departments not completing ATIPs. In one instance, Information Commissioner Caroline Maynard launched a complaint after Canadian Heritage had suspended processing ATIPs from March 16, 2020, to July 10, 2020.

Ms. Maynard told *The Hill Times* in June that the pandemic has shown that Canada's access-to-information system is "very archaic," noting "a lot of institutions are still very paper-based."

Her office doesn't have jurisdiction over previously completed ATIPs.

Researcher Ken Rubin, a transparency advocate, said automatic disclosure is not a priority of the government.

"[The Open Government portal] is more part of a system of deception rather than a system of timely, quick, automatic use," he said.

Mr. Rubin said another issue when accessing previously released ATIPs is that the requests disappear from the Open Government website within three years.

Three departments and institutions pointed to the pandemic's effect on ATIPs as leading to a delay in publishing already completed ATIPs.

A spokesperson for the RCMP said the policing force is committed to being "transparent with Canadians with respect to its work and activities," and that it is committed to meeting its responsibilities outlined by the Access to Information Act and Privacy Act and policies under govern-



Foreign Affairs Minister Marc Garneau, left, and Public Safety Minister Bill Blair, right, oversee Global Affairs Canada and the RCMP, respectively, both of which haven't publicly released already completed access-to-information requests since last year. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

ment's directive on open government and its interim directive on the administration of the Access to Information Act.

RCMP spokesperson Sgt. Caroline Duval said the pandemic has "exacerbated" access to information challenges.

"To keep employees safe, the RCMP reduced the number of personnel working from the office, which created delays in processing times. This directly resulted in a delay in uploading records to the Open Government website since March 2020," she said, adding that the RCMP is working to make up for this delay. "Last week, the RCMP published 70 records to the Open Government website. Further records are currently being translated, with the anticipation of posting records from April-August 2020 in the coming weeks."

"The RCMP ATIP program recently assigned a full-time resource to work on publishing the summaries of completed access-to-information requests to the Open Government website, and are working vigorously to have the site up to date by fall 2021," Sgt. Duval said.

Global Affairs did not respond to *The Hill Times* before publication deadline.

CSIS spokesperson John Townsend said ATIP summaries from January and February 2021 have been sent to the Open Government portal and are waiting to be uploaded, and that summaries from March 2021 are undergoing final review and will be "shortly" sent to the Open Government portal.

"Given our unique mandate, access-to-information requests must be processed in a secure space where redactions can

be applied to classified information in order to protect national security. We are proud that we have prioritized and processed ATI requests at a regular pace despite the challenges imposed by public health measures from the pandemic," he said.

CSE spokesperson Evan Koronewski said the department "normally" publishes ATIP summaries on a quarterly basis on the Open Government website.

"However, end-of-year mandatory reporting obligations and operational priorities have delayed this process for the 2020-2021 Q4 reporting period. We are working on collecting the necessary information and expect to publish our Q4 summaries within the coming weeks," he said.

"Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to maintain an active, but sometimes reduced, ATIP operational capacity as we require access to classified documents within our secure facility on protected information networks. Our ability to respond to ATIP requests within the mandated legislative timelines takes priority and has been affected by the exceptional measures put in place to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus [COVID-19] and protect the health and safety of Canadians," he added.

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, and Western Economic Diversification Canada did not respond before publication deadline.

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Comment

Questions remain over DND's false Cyclone crash narrative

In this era, where we are constantly warned to be wary of malignant foreign actors spreading disinformation, it is all the more imperative that we can trust and rely upon the information we receive from official sources such as the DND.

Scott
Taylor

Inside Defence



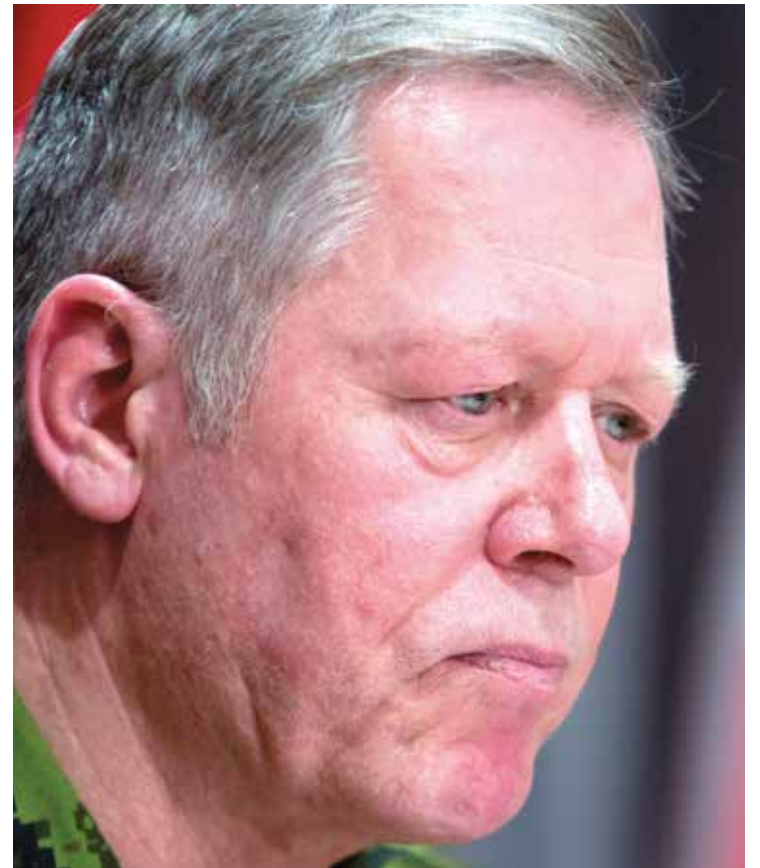
OTTAWA—On June 25, the Royal Canadian Air Force released its final report on the April 29, 2020, CH-148 Cyclone helicopter crash, which claimed the lives of six service members.

The investigators concluded that the autopilot system had engaged while the pilot was making a tight turn, causing the helicopter to plunge straight into the Ionian Sea. The report notes that neither the pilot's training nor the cockpit indicators would have given any warning that the autopilot was about to over-ride the flight controls. It was also noted that during the certification testing of the Cyclone, this potentially dangerous hazard was not uncovered, as no testing was conducted to ascertain what would happen if the pilot chose to over-ride the autopilot more than just "momentarily."

In this instance, the autopilot unexpectedly engaged in the middle of a complex manoeuvre known as a "return-to-target" turn. As the Cyclone was at a relatively low altitude, the pilot had no time to regain control prior to the aircraft's impact with the waves. While this incident report provides clinical details of just what went wrong mechanically that fateful day, it does nothing to lessen the tragic loss of captains Brenden MacDonald, Kevin Hagen, and Maxime Miron-Morin; sub-lieutenants Abbigail Cowbrough and Matthew Pyke; and Master Cpl. Matthew Cousins.

What also remains unexplained was the inexplicable manner in which the Department of National Defence (DND) conveyed the news of this tragedy to the Canadian public. Within hours of the crash, Greek news outlets were reporting the downing of the Sea King helicopter in the Ionian Sea. This, in turn, was almost immediately circulated on Canadian social media platforms. However, mainstream defence reporters were skeptical of the story as being potential "disinformation" as the Canadian Forces was no longer flying the Sea King.

On April 30, 2020, more than 30 hours after the incident occurred, the DND issued a formal statement advising the media that: "One member of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) was killed ... and five others remain missing following an accident involving a Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CH-148 Cyclone helicopter."



Initial statements by both Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, left, and then-chief of defence staff General Jonathan Vance implied that the helicopter had crashed some distance from HMCS Fredericton, writes Scott Taylor. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

We were also informed that "HMCS Fredericton and NATO allies continue to search for the other five members of the helicopter crew." Details on the cause of the crash were unknown, and the official story was that the crew of HMCS Fredericton "had lost contact with the helicopter" prior to the crash. The scenario DND painted was that of a mysterious crash sparking a major search-and-rescue operation by the entire NATO squadron.

Pundits took to the airwaves to discuss the challenges of mounting such a search for survivors in the vastness of the Ionian sea. As the hours dragged on, experts commented on the effectiveness of survival suits. Some of the usual

alarmists noted that a Russian submarine was known to be in the vicinity and that might somehow explain the downing of the Cyclone. Within the Canadian military community, social media posts expressed grief and sorrow for Sub-Lt. Cowbrough, who had been pronounced dead, whilst they all offered prayers and hope for the family, friends, and comrades of the five missing crew members. Initial statements by both Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan and then-chief of defence staff General Jonathan Vance implied that the helicopter had crashed some distance from HMCS Fredericton.

Finally, on May 1, 2020, more than 48 hours after the incident occurred, the DND issued an update announcing this

was now a search-and-recover mission, with all crew members presumed dead. It was around this timeframe that the CBC was informed of the actual details of the Cyclone crash. It turns out that the helicopter was doing a low-level pass right beside HMCS Fredericton when the aircraft suddenly nosedived into the waves. A number of the crew aboard the warship watched the crash in real time. The impact into the sea was so close to the ship that rescue craft from Fredericton were able to reach the crash site quick enough to recover the black box and the body of Cowbrough.

When confronted with this alternate version of events, the DND admitted the fact that there would be eyewitness testimony included in the accident report. No one has ever explained where the false narrative was inserted or why the DND allowed the media (myself included) to push out false details until a whistleblower contacted the CBC with the truth.

There would be no reason for HMCS Fredericton's crew to report anything other than the truth back to DND headquarters. In this era, where we are constantly warned to be wary of malignant foreign actors spreading disinformation, it is all the more imperative that we can trust and rely upon the information we receive from official sources such as the DND. Especially when it pertains to the lives of our service members. Once again, I offer my sincere condolences to the families, friends, and comrades of those who perished in this tragic crash.

Scott Taylor is the editor and publisher of *Esprit de Corps* magazine.

The Hill Times



A flight crew is lowered from a CH-148 Cyclone helicopter onto HMCS Montreal on April 20, 2016. Photograph by Dan Bard, Formation Imaging Services, courtesy of the Royal Canadian Air Force



Pro-Trump protestors are pictured in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 14, 2020. Six months after the Nov. 3 vote, polls show two-thirds of Republicans still believe Joe Biden's victory was illegitimate, with nearly one-third of independents voicing the same opinion, writes Les Whittington. Photograph courtesy of Flickr/Geoff Livingston

Politics in the age of conspiracy

Crazy, paranoid theories have now erupted into mainstream political thinking in a way that would not have seemed possible only a few years ago.

Les Whittington

Need to Know



OTTAWA—Yielding to conspiracy theories has been a human habit worth recording going back at least to the late 1800s, and has contributed to all kinds of mass hysteria, catastrophes, murders, and other mayhem.

But this kind of thing has generally been associated with fringe elements of society. Until recently.

At least in part because of the internet and social media, crazy paranoid theories have now erupted into mainstream political thinking in a way that would not have seemed possible only a few years ago. It's reached a point where, in the United States, conspiracy obsessions have emerged as a real threat to the country's democracy.

Donald Trump helped lay the groundwork for this phenomenon by promoting the birther conspiracy that Barack Obama, despite ample evidence to the contrary, was ineligible to be president because he was allegedly born outside the U.S. But that falsehood was minor in comparison to the big lie about being cheated out of the presidency in the 2020 election, a baseless idea pushed by Trump and far-right media outlets that is now embedded in the American state of mind. Six months after the Nov. 3 vote, polls show two-thirds of Republicans still believe Joe Biden's victory was illegitimate, with nearly one-third of independents voicing the same opinion.

This conspiracy theory is no doubt buttressed by the QAnon craziness. It is estimated that 30-million Americans are involved in QAnon, a multi-faceted movement built around the hallucination that Trump is secretly fighting liberal deep state actors tied to Satan-worshipping pedophiles running a global child sex-trafficking ring. The popularity of this cult, which contributed to the mob mentality that led to the Jan. 6 violence at the U.S. Congress, puts it in a league with major religions in the U.S.

Canada, of course, is not immune. Four-year-old QAnon has followers in 70 countries even though its founder seems to have gone off the air. Canadians who keep track of these trends say the fear, misinformation, and distrust of authorities arising

from the pandemic have led to an increase in QAnon's reach in this country. Researchers have found that Canada is among the four countries, along with the U.S., the U.K., and Australia, most driving QAnon content on Twitter. And it's notable that the Manitoba man who was sentenced to six years in prison as a result of his armed incursion on the grounds of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's residence last year had posted QAnon-related content on social media.



Former U.S. president Donald Trump, pictured during a rally in Las Vegas on Sept. 13, 2020. Screenshot courtesy of C-Span

Weird as it sounds, a woman in Victoria, B.C., (I'm not including the name) appears to have amassed thousands of online followers after being promoted on QAnon for her claim to be the new Queen of Canada. She is seen as part of the crowd fighting the deep state along with Trump, and claims to have been

appointed by the U.S. military. Declaring that people who disregard her orders to end COVID-19 restrictions will be executed, she has convinced some Canadians to deliver "cease-and-desist" orders to people providing COVID vaccinations. Apparently for lack of a better way to combat such blatant disinformation, the venerable Agence France-Press news agency seems to have put out a "Fact Check" on all this, saying Queen Elizabeth II remains Canada's head of state.

rasingam told the Canadian Press at the time. "Like it was showing evidence that there was this master plan at work, that COVID could have indeed been a hoax that was planned by powerful elites to then bring about all these new economic and social changes, or large-scale societal shifts."

This "Great Reset" conspiracy found a voice in the Parliamentary Precinct, with Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre responding with a warning that "global financial elites" are engaged in a "power grab" that Canadians must fight against to protect their freedom. There have also been questions about the Conservatives playing fast and loose with suggestions that scientists at Canada's microbiology lab in Winnipeg might somehow have had a role linking us to the COVID-19 outbreak, an idea based on the transfer from Winnipeg of samples of Ebola and Henipah viruses to the institute in Wuhan, China, where some think (although it has not been substantiated) COVID-19 originated.

Responding to the Conservatives, Liberal MP Robert Oliphant said: "What I am disagreeing with is far-fetched ideas that even hint at some association that makes no sense ... I think it's misinformation. I think it's drawing associations that should not be drawn together at a committee of Parliament. And I think it just seeds the oddest ideas in other people's heads."

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

Think all that is way outside the mainstream here? Researchers said QAnon channels came alive last fall when Trudeau suggested at the United Nations that COVID-19 gave nations a chance to "reset" their socio-economic and environmental policies. "They interpreted it as a kind of slip-up," Queen's University expert Amarnath Ama-

Editorial

Editorial

Canada's climate adaptation efforts need ramping up

Confronting climate change is, in a way, a two-sided coin. On one face lie the difficult decisions of how to slow the pace of global warming, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and try to reverse damage done. On the other side lie equally daunting questions of how to adapt to the realities, and risks, of our already changing climate.

The importance of this second side of the coin was driven home last week after a heat wave settled over Western Canada.

The small town of Lytton, B.C., set new national heat records three days in a row, peaking at 49.6 C on June 29. The next day, the town caught fire, forcing residents to evacuate and destroying most homes and structures. It's one of many wildfires now raging in the West and North. By July 2, B.C. had recorded 719 sudden deaths in the last week, with heat believed to be a factor in many, according to the province's chief coroner, Lisa Lapointe. B.C. recorded only three heat-related deaths in the last three to five years prior, she said.

"This, frankly, took many of us off guard," said Ms. Lapointe on June 30. "Many of our health services, our first responders, we haven't experienced anything like this in the province previously. It took a bit of time for us to ramp up our response."

In the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, which also saw record-breaking temperatures above 30 C, rapid permafrost thaw is now expected. Already, flood warnings have been issued amid rising water levels.

Once-in-a-century environmental events—like flooding and wildfires—are increasing in regularity. The UN Intergov-

ernmental Panel on Climate Change has indicated already rising sea levels will see "historical centennial events" become annual occurrences in parts of the world by 2050, and in most locations by 2100.

While countries around the world strive to slow the pace of global warming, the increase of extreme-weather events is a train that can no longer be stopped. Now, it's a question of how to prepare for it, from our infrastructure, to our first responders, to our climate modelling.

Earlier this year, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada launched a new public awareness campaign ("Get Prepared") encouraging people to ensure they're prepared for emergencies and natural disasters, and it's run a "Flood Ready" awareness campaign since 2016. In 2017, a \$2-billion federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund was announced, aimed at infrastructure projects, and federal adaptation policy and emergency management frameworks exist (the latter was last updated in 2019).

But it's clear there's much more work to be done, something Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson recently recognized. As noted in a Natural Resources Canada report released June 28: "There is evidence of an adaptation deficit or gap in Canada, demonstrated by the fact that households, business and infrastructure, etc. are under-adapted to current climate conditions and variability."

Increasing attention needs to be paid to ensure Canadians, and our cities and towns, are ready to meet the challenges of the years to come.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor

PMPRB's new regulations could be Canada's monkey's paw

Rapidly rising medication costs strain health-care systems worldwide. In 2018, Canada ranked 5th in per capita spending on pharmaceuticals. Canada's Patented Medicines Price Review Board (PMPRB) changes—recently delayed a third time, but still set for implementation on January 1, 2022—would bring us down to the middle of 36 OECD countries.

This sounds appealing, but be careful what you wish for. It reminds us of W.W. Jacobs' story, *The Monkey's Paw*, in which a family is granted three wishes by a cursed monkey's paw. The consequences are unanticipated and horrifying. The price for granting a wish is the death of the son.

PMPRB's new regulations could be Canada's monkey's paw. Effective new agents for lethal diseases are emerging at a breathtaking pace, but analyses by the Canadian Centre for Health Economics and by Life Sciences Ontario suggest that PMPRB's planned price reductions will further delay, or eliminate, Canada's access to many new agents. This will translate into thousands of life-years lost and unnecessary suffering. It will disproportionately affect older Canadians, who are more likely to have cancer and be helped by effective new drugs.

Canadians already wait too long for effective new therapies. PMPRB regulations will make this worse. High drug development costs drive pharmaceutical companies to apply for regulatory approval first in countries where there is a potential for profit. PMPRB's regulations will drastically reduce profits in Canada. Many companies would also delay or avoid Canadian marketing to reduce the risk of low Canadian prices dragging down prices in larger markets. Since the intended PMPRB regulations were announced, there has been a significant decrease in drug launches in Canada compared to the U.S. and Europe, and the number of clinical trials that companies have launched in Canada have also declined significantly.

Prices are high because drug development is risky. Only five to 10 per cent of new anticancer drugs entering clinical trials make it to regulatory approval. Profits from those that succeed must pay for the 90 to 95 per cent that are expensive failures. A pension fund, for example, would never invest in ventures with such a failure rate unless those losses could be recouped from those that succeed.

All told, it costs about \$2-billion and takes twelve years to bring a drug from discovery to approval. The cost of clinical research and labyrinthine processes drive



Canada's Patented Medicines Price Review Board changes would bring us down to the middle of 36 OECD countries, write Dr. David J. Stewart and John-Peter Bradford. Photograph courtesy of Unsplash

approval delays and drug development costs. Delays cost lives; high drug development costs make for high drug prices. High development costs also mean that only a few large companies with deep pockets are likely to succeed, and this reduces competition.

Regulation of clinical research is essential, but current regulatory approaches are much too expensive and are not cost-effective. We and others have published extensively on this. We have met with Health Canada and with members of the House and Senate about the urgent need for reform.

Investment will dry up and progress will suffer dramatically if we force drug prices down without bringing down the costs of drug development.

Government price controls in the 1970's failed miserably because they were treating the symptom (inflation) rather than the underlying disease (too much money being printed by governments). Likewise, PMPRB is tackling the symptom (high drug prices) rather than the disease (clinical research regulations that urgently need a major overhaul).

As they inevitably fail, the PMPRB price controls will magnify suffering and loss of life—especially among seniors. If governments are serious about bringing down drug prices, and creating meaningful pharmacare programs, they must tackle the regulatory morass strangling new drug development.

**Dr. David J. Stewart, medical oncologist at The Ottawa Hospital
John-Peter Bradford, CEO of Life-Saving Therapies Network
Ottawa, Ont.**

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The Kelowna Accord was a lost opportunity for Canada

The greater Canadian public has at last been awakened to the tragedy of First Nations in Canada. Politicians of all stripes and in all jurisdictions have a window of opportunity to act.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



KAMOURASKA, QUE.—The “what ifs” of history are the most fascinating, and yet the most frustrating concepts to contemplate. What if JFK had lived? What if Pierre Trudeau had lost the 1972 election? What if the “Yes” side had won the Quebec referendum in 1995?

In the current turmoil over Indigenous rights, Canada has been turned upside down. Churches have been burned to the ground, and every few days ground-penetrating radar images are interpreted as discoveries of bodies of children on the grounds of former residential schools.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, newly shaved, shorn, and prepped for a fall campaign, has been lurching from one crisis to the other. It does not give voters confidence the Prime Minister’s Office knows what it’s doing.

When I studied public affairs management at Carleton University, our class was told the only way to manage was through rational planning. Incremental planning—in other words, flying by the seat of your pants—was frowned upon. And yet, here we are, with a minority government bogged down in the mud and making things up while chaos rules.

It makes me wonder where we would be now if the Kelowna Accord had been implemented by Stephen Harper.

The Kelowna Accord came out of a conference in November 2005 led by then-prime minister Paul Martin. It brought federal ministers, provincial premiers,

and Indigenous leaders to the Okanagan Valley city.

The accord, which concluded 18 months of consultations with five Indigenous organizations, sought to establish a consistent funding program for education, health care, and employment. In all three categories, Indigenous people struggled. The objective was to close the gap in the standard of living for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians by 2016.

Martin, who was the driving force behind the accord as prime minister, spoke to me this week on what might have been. “We would certainly be farther ahead,” he said, adding, “Kelowna was a new way of working together, bringing the federal, provincial, and Indigenous governments to the table at the same time. We also encouraged Phil Fontaine [then-head of the Assembly of First Nations] to pick the agenda, the way it was negotiated, and return regularly to consult communities. It worked tremendously well.”

Martin points out the initial money attached to the accord, touted as \$5-billion, was an initial amount, with more to come over time. “But when you look at that kind of spending, you have to

think ‘How much does this save us on the long run?’”

In short, Kelowna would have been a down payment on the future of Canada. Many governments go out of their way to do the opposite of what their predecessors did, and so the Harper government chose to not implement Kelowna: it provided less funding and failed to consult with Indigenous leaders after it came to power in 2006.

In not implementing either the spirit or the letter of Kelowna, it can be argued the Harper government performed a disservice to Canada. But it is astonishing that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did not immediately come forward with a “Kelowna 2.0” within weeks of his election in 2015. Instead, he promised to implement the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and repeatedly emphasized a “nation to nation” relationship with Indigenous peoples. In doing so, he created expectations and failed to fulfill them.

It is not too late. The greater Canadian public has at last been awakened to the tragedy of First Nations in Canada. Politicians of all stripes and in all jurisdictions have a window of opportunity to act. A new “grand bargain,”

based on Kelowna, could set a timetable for repeal of the Indian Act, for provinces to transfer resource rights to First Nations on their land, and for funding for youth and adult education, health care, and entrepreneurship.

Martin, who established a foundation for Indigenous education after leaving politics, said “you cannot say, economically or morally, in a country of 36-million people, that you can ignore such a significant segment of the population.”

We cannot wait any longer. Violence and vandalism stemming from pent-up anger can never be justified. But acting effectively to respond to the crisis would go a long way to a better future and genuine reconciliation with our Indigenous fellow citizens. It is what the Kelowna Accord intended, 15 long years ago.

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

The Hill Times

Canada needs to cap its pipeline of fossil fuel supports

Rather than attempting to revive yesterday’s energy and economic systems, the federal government has an opportunity to ‘build back better’ by supporting the transition to renewable energy and a more equitable economy.

Angela Carter & Truzaar Dordi

Opinion



In the midst of unprecedented heat waves, Canada’s climate policy paradox—promising climate action, while instead supporting fossil fuel extraction—was exposed yet again this week.

A new report by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), an internationally reputed research institute, reveals new details about how federal and provincial governments continue to bankroll the fossil fuel sector. Supporting the sector with taxpayer dollars contradicts the country’s climate commitments and is an increasingly unsafe financial bet.

This new research found that the federal and provincial governments have given at least \$23 billion in support to oil and gas pipelines over the past three years—\$10 billion of this since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These staggering estimates are understated, due to a lack of transparency. Canada is among the worst-performing countries on government transparency and on phasing out fiscal support and public finance to fossil fuels; demonstrated most recently when the federal government redacted thousands of pages of documents on its financial support for the Trans Mountain project.

Financing for pipelines is the tip of the iceberg of support the industry receives. Data on foregone revenues from tax credits, accelerated depreciation write-offs, and other taxable deductions to the fossil fuel industry are not disclosed. From what we do know,

Canadian governments provide at least \$4.8 billion in fossil fuel subsidies every year.

Moreover, some public funds to the fossil fuel sector, including some pipeline support measures, are not counted as subsidies. Export Development Canada, for example, extends at least \$13 billion in public finance to the oil and gas industry annually. Canada’s Emergency Wage Subsidy is also not considered a fossil fuel subsidy, yet Canada’s four fossil fuel corporations collectively received over \$250 million in wage support. Imperial Oil alone received \$120 million in wage support while concurrently issuing \$320 million in dividends.

The federal government is artificially propping up fossil fuel production that is otherwise not economically viable. Last month, the International Energy Agency (IEA), globally renowned for providing energy advice to industrialized countries, urged governments to stop investing in new oil, gas, and coal development now. The IEA’s executive director also ominously cautioned that investing in oil and gas is likely a “junk investment.”

Here in Canada, the benefits of the sector are in decline: as oil and gas production reached

record levels over the last decade, the industry shed 53,000 workers as the revenues paid to governments nosedived. Meanwhile, wind, solar, and energy storage prices are “plummeting.” Global firms and investors are pivoting to seize the advantages, as is the labour movement. The International Labour Organization estimates 24 million green energy jobs will be created this decade.

What is more, oil, gas, and coal are driving the climate crisis and its own daunting economic and health costs. By mid-century, climate disruption will likely cause deaths “the equivalent of a coronavirus crisis every year,” as Mark Carney, the United Nations envoy for climate action and finance has warned.

In this context, support for fossil fuels is not in Canada’s national economic interest. Rather, it is a costly gamble of public funds. Case in point: Albertan taxpayers have lost at least \$1.3 billion of the \$7.5 billion their provincial government wasted supporting the cancelled Keystone XL pipeline.

Rather than gambling workers’ futures and more public funds on fossil fuel assets that may become stranded, Canada should invest in a just transition that supports workers and communities and ensures they can reap the rewards of the low-carbon economy of the future.

A just transition is a safe alternative to the wide-ranging costs of status quo fossil fuel development—and Canada’s pathway is clear, as are the employment ben-

efits: the renewable energy sector is predicted to employ 559,400 Canadians by 2030. Workers are needed to insulate homes, electrify transit, install and maintain small-scale renewable energy, and more. Canada’s major unions are preparing to lead this effort. Unifor has prioritized enacting a just transition and urges Canada to aim for a 60 per cent emissions reduction by 2030, while Blue Green Canada unites unions and environmental organizations to create and maintain good jobs while ensuring climate stability.

The transition requires the federal and provincial governments to redirect financial support for fossil fuels to a low-carbon future. It also means seeing subsidies and other support measures for what they are: a tax on the public. The \$10 billion governments gave to pipelines last year is equivalent to a \$263 “pipeline tax” on every Canadian.

Rather than attempting to revive yesterday’s energy and economic systems, the government of Canada has an opportunity to “build back better” by supporting the transition to renewable energy and a more equitable economy.

Angela Carter, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science and Balsillie School of International Affairs at the University of Waterloo. Truzaar Dordi is a PhD candidate in the School of Environment, Enterprise, and Development at the University of Waterloo.

The Hill Times

Opinion

Has the Canadian government turned its back on the Tibetan cause?

As a middle power with a working example of regional autonomy within its own borders, we believe that Canada is uniquely positioned to push the PRC for real dialogue with the representatives of Tibet.

Sherap Tharchin
& Anvesh Jain

Opinion



Amid deserving global attention on human rights violations in Xinjiang and Hong Kong, the international community, including Canada, seems to have forgotten about the cause of Tibet. After all, it's not as if Premier Xi Jinping has been making any special exceptions for Tibetans in terms of the level of atrocities being unleashed on minority groups across China.

In Canada, this abandonment was on full display last month, when the House of Commons denied unanimous consent to a June 22 motion on Tibet. All it asked was that Canada support the resumption of dialogue between the Chinese government and representatives of the Tibetan people, which last took place 11 years ago. How could such an innocuous motion not pass?

A national coalition of Tibetan groups and Tibet supporters came together to lobby Parliamentarians from across parties to garner support for this motion. Before that, the same motion was approved unanimously in the House of Commons' Special Committee on Canada-China Relations. There's even a precedent of similar motions on Tibet being passed by unanimous consent, such as one introduced by the NDP's Peggy Nash back in 2007.

Given the age of his Holiness the Dalai Lama, there has been a new urgency among Tibetans to resolve the seven-decade old conflict with China. The recently elected President (Sikyong) Penpa Tsering of the Tibetan government-in-exile has identified Sino-Tibetan dialogue as a top priority for his administration. Tibetans are ready to seek genuine autonomy for themselves within the framework of the Chinese constitution—even as communist authorities have repeatedly rejected peace overtures and calls for reconciliation.

We know why the People's Republic of China (PRC), in its current bent, might reject attempts at compromise. What



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has barely mentioned the word 'Tibet' since his election in 2015, write the Canada Tibet Committee's Sherap Tharchin and Anvesh Jain. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

we don't understand is why our Liberal government has chosen to do this work for them. In doing so they have abandoned Canada's traditional commitments to Tibet, ones that reflected a wholly Canadian blend of principle, mettle, and courage.

This latest disappointment follows on a pattern of sidelining the Tibetan cause by this government over the past many years. In 2019, a Senate motion in favour of Tibetan autonomy was introduced by Conservative Senator Thanh Hai Ngo, but never came to a vote.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has barely mentioned the word "Tibet" since his election in 2015. Between 2009 and 2012, the Dalai Lama (one of only six honorary Canadian citizens) made annual visits to Canada. Previous Canadian prime ministers, including Stephen Harper and Paul Martin, routinely defied Chinese warnings in order to meet with the renowned Tibetan spiritual leader. Under Trudeau, both of these trends have come to an abrupt and puzzling halt.

Canada's silence on Tibet puts us at odds with our European, Indian, and American peers, all of whom have expressed greater commitment to Tibetan democracy and human rights than we have as of late. The push for Sino-Tibetan dialogue has received support from the European, Italian, and Dutch parliaments, the European Commission, the German Green Party, and the U.S. State Department, among others.

While Canada sat on its hands, the United States Congress signed two separate bills on Tibetan affairs into law. These include the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 and the landmark Tibet Policy and Support Act of 2019, which calls for non-interference in the succession process of the Dalai Lama by the Chinese government, as well as the establishment of a U.S. consulate in Lhasa, the historic capital of Tibet. Canada should likewise take immediate measures to better co-ordinate its own Tibet policies in lockstep with our closest friends and allies.

In light of recent events, Canadians are increasingly finding that issues such as Tibet and China are not so remote and not so foreign. There are now more than 10,000 individuals of Tibetan origin residing in Canada, with the vast majority of them living in Parkdale-High Park neighbourhood in Toronto. Together, they form the largest and most vibrant Tibetan diaspora outside India in the entire world. They are proud Canadians, with an expectation that their government will advocate for human rights and advance Canada's role as a defender of liberty and justice everywhere.

As a middle power with a working example of regional autonomy within its own borders in the form of Québec, we believe that Canada is uniquely positioned to push the PRC for real dialogue with the representatives of Tibet. A non-violent, negotiated solution is still possible. Whether our current government is willing to embrace those responsibilities is a different matter altogether.

Sherap Tharchin is the executive director of the Canada Tibet Committee. Anvesh Jain is a research associate at the Canada Tibet Committee.

The Hill Times

Canada can, and must, do more to help Kovrig and Spavor

While there is the added American dimension to the Canadian problem, all countries fully understand it is well within the authority of the Canadian government to find a solution.

Gar Pardy

Opinion



The obduracy and obscurity by the government in its actions in support of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor continue.

Shortly after the passing of 900 days of their imprisonment, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau defended the government's "quiet diplomacy" on the matter, and said, in an award-winning understatement, "the approach on consular cases like this one, unfortunately, takes quite a long time and we don't always get to talk about what is going on. Much of this is wrapped up in global diplomacy, quiet pressure."

Given this illusory background, the prime minister went on to say, "there's a lot of momentum, a lot of pressure, and we're working very, very hard on this."

According to press reports, the prime minister raised the issue among his colleagues at the G7 in Cornwall, U.K., and there was a brief, indirect

reference to the matter in the conference communique. The communique stated the G7 "opposed the practice of arbitrary detention, including by amplifying the Declaration Against Arbitrary Detention in State-to-State relations."

To raise the issue is easy, but to expect anything more than supportive statements and wishes of good luck is a daydream, nothing much changes. It is not going to change because other countries have their own problems with China and they expect the government of Canada to find its own solution.

While there is the added American dimension to the Canadian problem, all countries fully understand it is well within the authority of the Canadian government to find a solution. Once doing so, it can

join the rest of the world in the ongoing discussions of the issues associated with China as a global power.

In the past weeks, there has been reporting on the role being played by Dominic Barton, Canada's ambassador to China. He spent three weeks in Washington in early April trying, in the words of one newspaper report, "to break a deadlock between the United States and China." Sisyphus had an easier task.

Foreign Affairs Minister Marc Garneau commented that Barton was sent to Washington because of his special expertise. "He is very knowledgeable about the situation with respect to Madam Meng Wanzhou as well of course ... the situation to which the two Michaels find themselves." And then the foreign minister revealed the astounding news that the Canadian ambassador was in touch with Huawei, Meng's employer. It is hard to make real news when there is nothing new to be said.

A few days before the comments by the foreign minister, the same newspaper, *The Globe and Mail*, reported on June 7 that it had been contacted by "three sources" revealing Barton's reason for his "confidential mission" to Washington. According to the press report, the mission was about an agreement for a "deferred prosecution agreement" for Meng and a "broader appeal for stronger U.S. action" to put pressure on Beijing "for the release of the two Canadians." This was under discussion last fall and faded from view as a basic element required Meng to plead guilty to some aspect of the American allegations.

According to the newspaper, the "three sources" were not identified "as they were not authorized to discuss Mr. Barton's mission to Washington." It is assumed these calls to the newspaper by the "three sources" were an effort to demonstrate the work of the government on the matter, and not an act of high public mindedness indicating how little was being done.

And the longest running craps game associated with the issue remains suspended between hope and despair in the extradition court battle in Vancouver. A few days ago, the court was presented with evidence by Meng's lawyers strongly supporting the view the American request for extradition had little to no validation. The American case, based on the idea that the senior management of the HSBC was not aware of what one of its main customers was doing with respect to Iran, stretches incred-

ulity to its very limits.

HSBC has been in business in Asia for well over 150 years and to suggest its senior management was hood-

winked in some illegal way by Meng and Huawei has been convincingly disproved by the documents now before the court. A more understandable interpretation is that Canada is being hoodwinked by the Americans.

The imprisonment for the two Canadians increases with the rhythm of days and nights, now more than 940 days. Unfortunately, as demonstrated above, there is less an effort to limit those days of imprisonment than there is in any effort to limit the rhythm of the sun.

Gar Pardy is a retired ambassador and former director general of consular affairs. His latest book, *China in a Changing World*, is available online and from Books on Beechwood in Ottawa.

The Hill Times



Michael Kovrig, left, and Michael Spavor, right, have now been imprisoned by Chinese authorities for more than 940 days. Unfortunately, writes Gar Pardy, there is less an effort to limit those days of imprisonment than there is in any effort to limit the rhythm of the sun. Photographs courtesy of Twitter and the International Crisis Group

Hill security racial profiling complaint highlights need for training, systemic change, say Senators, former MP

Not recognizing an MP is 'willful ignorance' says former Liberal MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes, after NDP Qaqqaq says she was targeted by security.

BY ZAINAB AL-MEHDAR

The Parliamentary Protective Service needs frequent and mandatory sensitivity training, says one Senator following NDP MP Mumilaq Qaqqaq's powerful farewell speech, in which the Nunavut MP revealed feeling unsafe while on the Hill and targeted by its security.

"There's a strong need for more training around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as strategies to address the systemic racism and other systemic oppression. And, I would say, mandatory training," said Independent Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard (East Preston, N.S.) in an interview with *The Hill Times*.

That training should be annual, said Sen. Bernard, adding it's as important for policies and practices to be changed.



NDP MP Mumilaq Qaqqaq, pictured June 15, 2021, delivering her farewell speech remotely to the House of Commons. Screen capture image courtesy of House of Commons

Listening to Ms. Qaqqaq's June 15 speech, Sen. Bernard said the first thing she thought about was the one-term MP's pain "and just how difficult it is to speak out about one's experiences of racism, because we have such a history in Canadian culture of not believing when people tend to speak their truth."

"What I found alarming about it was the fact that it was her farewell speech. The fact that she's speaking this truth at a time when she's leaving."

Sen. Bernard said when she filed complaints of racism on the Hill in the past, they were dealt with, but emphasized that that



In a June 15 farewell speech, NDP MP Mumilaq Qaqqaq, centre, says she was racially profiled by Hill security. Independent Sen. Wanda Thomas Bernard, left, says security guards should receive more training, while former Liberal MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes, right, says it's an example of 'willful ignorance.' *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade, Photograph courtesy of Wanda Thomas Bernard

will not solve the larger issues in Parliament.

"That doesn't lead to the systemic kind of change that we need, it's not just about the individual situations that are happening, we need more systemic change," said Sen. Bernard, who declined to detail those incidents, noting they were dealt with. In February 2019, however, she filed a public complaint with the Parliamentary Protective Services after a group of young Black Canadians on the Hill reported a security officer asking them to leave the Confederation Building cafeteria and calling them "dark-skinned."

She and Ms. Qaqqaq are among several racialized Parliamentarians who have reported being racially profiled, experiencing microaggressions, and feeling isolated within the institution as a result.

Ms. Qaqqaq addressed that reality in her farewell speech, during which she explained why she would not be running for re-election in Nunavut when the next election is called. She told her colleagues that she felt like she didn't belong since being elected in 2019 and she "never felt safe or protected" in her position. As a racialized woman, she said she felt targeted and like she constantly had to watch over her shoulder.

"I expect to be stopped by security at my workplace. I have had security jog after me down hallways, nearly put their hands



on me and racially profile me as a Member of Parliament," said Ms. Qaqqaq, who spoke to *The Hill Times* last month about her "isolating" experience as an MP, but did not respond to follow up questions about her experiences with the Parliamentary Protective Services (PPS).

It's the PPS' job to know the faces of Members of Parliament, noted former Liberal MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes. At the beginning of a new session, security guards are given a booklet bearing the names and faces of all 338 MPs, so she said there's no excuse for that behaviour.

"They are supposed to memorize them, that is their job," said Ms. Caesar-Chavannes, who raised the issue of racial microaggressions during her four years in Parliament between 2015 and 2019, including security not recognizing her and opening the door after she'd been elected for more than a year. Ms. Caesar-Chavannes, who left the Liberal caucus in 2019 to sit as an Independent, has also described the interactions as feeling "carded" by Hill security, invoking the widely-criticized police practice that targets racialized people.

"You can't recognize the one Black, the only Black woman, in your book?" she said of her experience, and tying that to Ms. Qaqqaq. "When you can't recognize the only woman with a face tattoo, that is not just an inability to do your job. It is a willful ignorance, and a blatant determination to say that you don't belong here."

"I'm not asking [security] to do any more. I'm not asking you to do any less. You signed up with a description that says you are to protect MPs, you should also memorize all of their faces.



There's no more 'what can we do?' Just let them do their damn job. That's it."

In a June 25 emailed statement, the PPS said it followed up with Ms. Qaqqaq after her speech, but did not respond to broader questions about the service's training and whether it makes changes when complaints, like this one, are brought to light.

The service said it contacted Ms. Qaqqaq "to engage in a conversation that may help bring to light the realities of her lived experience," but had not heard back.

"While the service takes pride in providing physical security to Parliamentarians, staffers, employees, and visitors on the Hill and in the Parliamentary Precinct, it recognizes the need to do so in a sensitive and culturally safe manner," the statement said.

Parliament 'needs to be educated and informed'

As more and more people of colour enter Parliament, the systems in place work against, and not for, racialized people, suggested Ms. Caesar-Chavannes.

The rules around how to be a Parliamentarian should change as its demographic make-up changes, she said.

"You cannot expect things to change within our systems if you expect people to conform every time they get in there," said Ms. Caesar-Chavannes.

"When you add women, they're going to receive the highest amount of harassment and when you add women with intersecting identities, that is going to increase. So, protect women of colour."

Part of fixing the glaring reality of racism on the Hill is the movement towards creating allyship and policies that reflect the diverse group of people being employed, as well as hiring more women and men of colour to push the needle forward, Sen. Bernard said.

On March 1, 2018, Sen. Bernard introduced an anti-Black racism initiative to the Senate in a stated effort to address systemic racism at the federal level and "create essential change at all levels of Canadian government, Canadian institutions, and communities."

During that speech, Sen. Bernard recounted a time she faced racism where she was asked to show ID before boarding a parliamentary shuttle bus on a cold winter day, but none of her colleagues had to. At that moment, "no one stood up to say, this is Senator Bernard. Please allow her to have a seat on this bus."

Still, Sen. Bernard said there is greater awareness to not be a bystander and MPs and Senators are learning from their colleagues. More needs to be done to address the overarching institution, she said, that is built on systems that do not favour women Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.



Former MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes says she thinks Parliamentary Protective Service members need to do their job and protect MPs. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

"The reality is that racism, colonialism, ableism, sexism, heterosexism—these are all deeply embedded in all of our institutions. So why should we think Parliament Hill would be any different. It's only going to be different when we make it different," said Sen. Bernard.

Work needs to be done from within Parliament Hill, agreed Independent Senator Ratna Omidvar (Ontario), who said Ms. Qaqqaq's address was powerful and relatable.

"What Canada needs is a deep dive into deconstructing structural and embedded forms of systemic racism," she said.

"I think the path forward is not magic. It is sustained efforts and educating people on the Hill. The community on the Hill needs to be educated and informed."

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News



Liberal MP Catherine McKenna, pictured on election night in 2019, last won her seat by a margin of more than 19 percentage points. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

With McKenna out, NDP sees opportunity to recapture Ottawa Centre

Ottawa Centre has historically flipped between the Liberals and the NDP at both the federal and provincial levels.

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the riding, told *The Hill Times* the riding has shown that it is “open” to flipping from the Liberals to the New Democrats at both the federal and provincial levels.

“Incumbency always has an advantage. And so when it’s an open seat, there’s definitely a bigger opening for the NDP here,” said Ms. MacEwen, a senior economist at CUPE National.

Ms. McKenna defeated NDP challenger Emilie Taman by a margin of more than 19 percentage points in 2019. In her first federal election, she defeated then-NDP incumbent Paul Dewar by a margin of 4.12 percentage points.

“This riding has always been winnable,” said NDP nomination candidate Lyra Evans, who added that while Ms. McKenna’s decision not to run for re-election removes the incumbency advantage, it also removes the ability to campaign against the decisions that she has made at the cabinet table.

“I think many people have had the scales fall from their eyes when it comes to the Liberals’ series of broken promises [that have been] broken across multiple elections now,” said Ms. Evans, an Ottawa-Carleton District School Board trustee for Rideau-Vanier/Capital. “I think Ottawa Centre, of all the Ottawa ridings certainly, is the one most likely to become an NDP riding.”

The NDP’s nomination meeting for Ottawa Centre will take place on July 17.

Former NDP staffer Cameron Holmstrom, a consultant with Bluesky Strategies, said Ottawa Centre is the “best organized, best resourced, best funded” riding for the NDP in Eastern Ontario.

“That’s only gotten better with the election of Joel Harden,” he said. “He’s a hell of an organizer and I fully expect him to be behind whomever wins the nomination for the NDP. The fact is that they have two very good candidates running for the nomination.”

Already, former Ontario attorney general Yasir Naqvi has put his name forward to represent the Liberals federally in the riding. He previously served as the MPP for Ottawa Centre from 2007 to 2018 before being defeated by Mr. Harden. There is also speculation that former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney could run for the Liberals in the riding.

Mr. Holmstrom said no matter who the Liberal nominee is, the NDP is much better positioned

in the riding now than it was in 2019.

Given the decline of the Conservatives in the polls, he suggested strategic voting will be less of a concern for progressive voters.

“That’s a danger for the Liberals, because now the civil servants and a lot of people in that riding are now able to vote more with their conscience,” he said. “I think McKenna would’ve been in more of a fight this time. I think she would have had an advantage, but it would have been more of a fight than 2019. Now that she has stepped aside, I think that opens it up that much more.”

Mr. Holmstrom said he thinks there is “no way” for the Liberals to get a majority without winning Ottawa Centre.

He said he is not convinced that Mr. Carney would have “a huge advantage” in Ottawa Centre if he was named the Liberal candidate.

“Carney has advantages, but he also has detractors,” said Mr. Holmstrom. “Some bureaucrats [who live in Ottawa Centre] may appreciate what Mark Carney brings. Other people, who may work in other sectors and are progressive voters, may not appreciate the idea of a banker being their MP.”

With Mr. Naqvi having announced his candidacy, Mr. Holmstrom said it will force the Liberals to have a nomination meeting in Ottawa Centre.

Liberal Party spokesperson Matteo Rossi said that in Ottawa Centre, like all ridings without a candidate, nominations are “moving forward in accordance with our party’s updated nominations process.”

Mr. Naqvi told *The Ottawa Citizen* that he is hoping for a “fair and open nomination process.”

Mr. Holmstrom said if Mr. Naqvi becomes the Liberal candidate, he would bring the advantage of already being a known commodity in the riding.

“He’s been elected there before. He has his own network. He has his own team. He already had identification with voters and they have voted for him in the past. ... In a riding like Ottawa Centre, Naqvi has to fight New Democrats his whole career to get elected,” he said, noting that Mr. Naqvi’s loss in 2018 was a referendum on the government of then-Ontario premier Kathleen Wynne and not his performance as a MPP.

Former Liberal staffer Greg MacEachern, senior vice-president at Proof Strategies, said the provincial election in 2018 was a “bit of a wake-up call for Liberals in Ottawa Centre.”

“It was part of a provincial trend, but still there are Liberals in Ottawa Centre that still haven’t gotten over that loss,” he said.

Whoever is the Liberals nominee will have strong polling numbers on their side, said Mr. MacEachern, but that doesn’t mean it will be a safe seat for the Grits. He noted that in 2004, there was a strong Liberal candidate in Richard Mahoney who lost to then-NDP candidate Ed Broadbent at a time when the Liberals had held the riding for the previous 15 years. Two years later, then-NDP candidate Paul Dewar—whose mother, Marion Dewar, previously served as mayor of Ottawa—held the riding for the New Democrats and was re-elected twice.

“Those two examples,” Mr. MacEachern said, “show that the best case for the NDP to win in Ottawa Centre is with a [candidate who is] very well known in the community and a very visible candidate. That also means the Liberals need to do the same.”

Conservative commentator Tim Powers, chair of Summa Strategies, said Ms. McKenna has been an “omnipresent” MP for Ottawa Centre, who had broad electoral support.

“Her uniqueness was her personal brand, her handwork, and the commitment she made to do so much in the riding,” said Mr. Powers, who lives in Ottawa Centre. He said that if the NDP has the right candidate with a bigger brand, it could have a shot to re-take the riding by building off its support at the provincial level.

Pollster Frank Graves, president of Ekos Research, said historically the NDP has been strong in Ottawa Centre both at the federal and provincial level. But he said at the current moment, he would give “the edge pretty strongly” to the Liberals in the riding.

“I wouldn’t say it’s a slam dunk,” he added.

Throughout Ontario, the Liberals are polling way ahead of

federal competitors, he said, and he would expect that to extend to Ottawa Centre as well.

But, Mr. Graves said, progressive voters might feel they don’t have to vote strategically given how poorly the Conservatives are polling.

“If a [Conservative government] is off the table, it frees some of these voters to pick their first choice,” he said.

Election a chance to hold government to account for promises: NDP nomination candidates

Ms. MacEwen said voters in Ottawa Centre are “disappointed” in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.).

“They were disappointed in 2019, but they were afraid of Andrew Scheer,” she said, noting that disappointment comes from the Liberal government having not lived up to its promises on climate change, housing affordability, and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

She said voters have seen the NDP push the government “to do better” in the minority Parliament.

“I think that people really see that there’s an opportunity to hold the government to account better, without that fear of Andrew Scheer, because Erin O’Toole is just not as scary for people,” Ms. MacEwen said.

Outside of the pandemic recovery, Ms. Evans said the most important election issue for Ottawa Centre voters is the cost of housing.

“Very few elections are determined by one issue alone,” she said. “But the Liberals’ soft action on the environment, the Liberals’ soft action on dental care or health care—there are many things that people could look at the Liberal Party and say, ‘I do not feel they represent the society that I want to see built.’”

Mr. MacEachern said the ballot-box question in Ottawa Centre will likely be the same one it is nationally: “Are people going to vote and judge this government in terms of their handling of the pandemic? If that’s the case, polling right now would suggest that Canadians seem to be fairly satisfied with the federal government’s response. But if people feel that it’s behind them, they are going to be looking at other issues. Is it going to be how Canada builds back after the pandemic? Or will it be around the issues such as Canada’s treatment of Indigenous peoples?”

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The electoral history of Ottawa Centre

- Liberal MP Catherine McKenna, 2015-present
- NDP MP Paul Dewar, 2006-2015
- NDP MP Ed Broadbent, 2004-2006
- Liberal MP Mac Harb, 1988-2003
- NDP MP Michael Cassidy, 1984-1988
- Liberal MP John Leslie Evans, 1979-1984
- Progressive Conservative MP Robert de Cotret, 1978-1979
- Liberal MP Hugh Poulin, 1972-1978
- Liberal MP George McIlraith, 1968-1972

‘So long for now’: Munson retires from the Senate after 17 years

Ontario Senator Jim Munson’s time in the Red Chamber officially ends on July 14, and while it was a job he’d never anticipated, he says he’s ‘enjoyed every moment.’

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(Ont.) during a recent interview with *The Hill Times*. “Even though I thought it was the dark side, I walked into an arena of enlightenment.”

“When I was a reporter, I wondered what all those old guys did down the hall in Centre Block, and then what I did discover, being appointed to the Senate, [was] that it gave me a structure to do something that I know in my heart I’ve always wanted to do, and that was to be an advocate” for children’s rights and the rights of those with disabilities.

Sen. Munson’s career on the Hill has come full circle, both starting and ending under a Trudeau as prime minister and in an office in the Victoria Building. He first occupied a space in the building in 1972, when he—then fresh from Montreal, where he’d covered Quebec’s FLQ crisis—was hired to report on Ottawa City Hall for the radio station CFGO.

Three years later, he crossed Wellington Street and joined the Parliamentary Press Gallery as a radio reporter for Standard Broadcast News, starting some seven years into Liberal prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau’s run as head of government. Talking to him today, it’s clear he still holds dear his days as a “corridor commando,” grilling politicians in the halls of Centre Block or outside near the Centennial Flame amid the “vibrant competition” between outlets covering Ottawa in those days, and returning to file in the third-floor Hot Room, then filled with smoke and the sound of clacking typewriters.

In 1979, Sen. Munson joined CTV, and went on to cover the

1980 constitutional debates and serve as president of the press gallery, before stepping away in 1984 to become CTV’s London bureau chief abroad. In 1987, he became its bureau chief in Beijing, during which time he covered the Tiananmen Square massacre on the ground. Five years later, he returned to Canada to head CTV’s bureau in Halifax, and by 1997 was back on the Hill in its parliamentary bureau.

Sen. Munson said he’d intended to spend his “whole life asking questions” as a reporter, but, in 2001, he became one of more than 100 people let go by CTV. Soon after, he was offered the job of director of communications to then-prime minister Jean Chrétien.

“What I discovered when I joined Mr. Chrétien’s office was a commitment ... [to] the idea of public service,” said Sen. Munson. “I think that if anybody has the opportunity to work for any prime minister, grab it, because it’s probably going to be one of the most unique opportunities of your life.”

Mr. Chrétien, amid mounting internal party pressure, resigned as Liberal leader in December 2003, but on his way out, he and then-chief of staff Eddie Goldenberg “wanted to make sure that those who worked in the PMO had jobs somewhere,” recounted Sen. Munson. He was first offered an ambassadorship in Singapore, an offer he declined, as his father had died and his mother was alone in Montreal. Then, two weeks before Mr. Chrétien’s time in the top office ended, Sen. Munson said he was asked if he wanted to be a Senator—a “pleasant surprise” he immediately jumped at.

Sen. Munson said he entered the job with a desire to advocate for children’s rights, inspired by children he’d seen in refugee camps during his days as a foreign correspondent and his own experience losing his nine-month-old son, who had Down syndrome.

Walking into the Senate for the first time in early 2004 was an “intimidating” experience, he said. After working in the PMO and spending years as a reporter, “you think that you have answers to a lot of things, but it was a big learning curve to figure it out. But



Outgoing Ontario Senator Jim Munson is pictured outside the Senate of Canada Building on his bike on June 23, after cycling his way to the Red Chamber for one of his last sitting days as a Senator. A former reporter, turned PMO staffer, he officially retires on July 14. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

as you build allies and engage people, I found a comfortable home working with the Special Olympics” and the autism and disability communities.

Now known for his autism advocacy work, Sen. Munson said he didn’t know much about it when he was first appointed. But one day, he came across a man, Andrew Kavchak, whose son has autism and who was demonstrating on the Hill to ask for support.

“He told [his] story and I was hooked, I was hooked on the idea that those with autism, on the spectrum, were the forgotten in the disability community and people didn’t understand what autism was about. So I jumped into it, and I guess the rest is history,” he said.

As a member of the Senate Social Affairs, Science, and Technology Committee, he helped bring about its 2006 study into funding for autism treatment and the need for a national autism strategy, and said its resulting 2007 report, “Pay Now or Pay Later: Autism Families in Crisis,” is among his proudest achievements as a Senator. Sen. Munson and his wife, Ginette, went on to help found the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance (last month, CASDA announced the creation the Jim and Ginette Munson Autism Leadership Award in their honour). In 2019, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) announced the development of a National Autism Strategy, which Sen. Munson proudly noted “we’re on the cusp of implementing.” That year also saw passage of the Accessible Canada Act, for which he was the Senate sponsor.

Sen. Munson further highlighted two public bills he managed to get passed—no small feat, given the predominance of the government’s agenda—as points of pride: one, passed in 2012, legally recognizing April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day, and another, passed in May, recognizing the third week of February as Kindness Week in Canada. As a



Sen. Munson, pictured far right, walks down Wellington Street with his then-boss, prime minister Jean Chrétien, PMO deputy communications director Steven Hogue, far left, and others in 2003. *The Hill Times* file photograph



Sen. Munson, pictured far right in the second row at a Liberal caucus meeting in 2007, seven years before Senators were ousted from the fold. *The Hill Times* file photograph

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Feature

‘So long for now’: Munson retires from the Senate after 17 years



Sen. Munson, pictured during a Senate Internal Economy Committee meeting in 2018. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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longtime advocate and supporter, he also helped get federal funding for the Special Olympics.

It's work, he said, he couldn't have done without the support of his staff: "You have to have buy-in from your office staff, they have to have empathy, and empathy goes a long way in helping create public policy."

Over his years, Sen. Munson has seen a number of tectonic shifts in the Senate, from the "uncomfortable" experience of being ousted from the Liberal caucus on Justin Trudeau's initiative in 2014 (ahead of changes to the Senate appointment process that he ushered in once prime minister); to the 2015 Senate expenses scandal, which resulted in a suite of reporting and accountability changes; to the Red Chamber's historic move out of Centre Block and into the old train station at 2 Rideau St., by the beginning of 2019.



Sen. Munson, pictured with a Special Olympics medallist, Michael Guyton, at a fundraising breakfast event in Ottawa in 2018. *Photograph courtesy of Jim Munson's Twitter*

"The Senate's an exciting place, and it's a place in transition," said Sen. Munson, who is now a member of the Progressive Senate Group, one of three groups formed since Mr. Trudeau's 2014 shake-up (there are also currently eight non-affiliated Senators). "There's more independence, individually, by Senators. I think that it's going to take time to see how successful this experiment is."

The new dynamics it's introduced—wherein three government representatives

"try to facilitate what a bigger caucus did in the past for the government," while going up against a united Conservative official opposition caucus—has made the passage of legislation a "delicate dance," he said.

But, "one of the positive things that has come out of this is the appointment of so many Indigenous Senators," he added.

The Senate's change of location, too, is "having a serious impact," he said. Now (temporarily) separated by a few city blocks from the House of Commons, the regular interaction Senators experienced with MPs in the halls of Centre Block has been lost, said Sen. Munson, and as a result, "we don't know the MPs as well, and I'm sure they feel the same way." The same goes to the staffing level.

"You feel like Parliament, physically, is divided," he said, and it's become "more difficult to build those relationships" which "are important to making Parliament work."

On June 23, *The Hill Times* caught up with Sen. Munson for a second time on his way into the Senate of Canada Building after biking to work along the Rideau Canal from his home in the Glebe (in the winter, he often skated to work). With two more sitting days to go—thanks to the Senate extending its sitting by two days to deal with bills C-6 and C-10—Sen. Munson said he was feeling "quite emotional."

"To be able to have so much time ... to help move along legislation and advocate for those with disabilities, and getting the Accessible Canada Act passed, working with autism groups, being part of the Special Olympics—it's really an affair of the heart. And to be able to give a voice, as I mentioned, to those who didn't have a strong enough voice on the Hill, it's been really an honour."

Sen. Munson will mark his 75th birthday, and last day as a Senator, on July 14. But he won't be idle: he's set to become executive-in-residence at the University of Victoria's Peter B. Gustavson School of Business and a special adviser for the Victoria Forum. Sen. Munson confirmed he'll be staying in Ottawa, a city he loves, and will travel to B.C. a couple of times a year to fulfill his new roles.

As he said in his parting words to the Senate on June 9, quoting the uncle after whom he was named, it's "so long for now."

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The Hill Times

Opinion

Raising minimum age for tobacco product sales in Canada is good public policy

If we don't act quickly and raise the minimum legal age to 21 to purchase vaping or tobacco products in every province in Canada, we may lose decades of work done by public health to decrease use.

Shalea Beckwith

Opinion



Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in Canada, and is currently responsible for more than one in six Canadian deaths.

Most people who use tobacco products start doing so as a youth or young adult. The use of vaping products and e-cigarettes has become a public health crisis. E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among young people, and use is rising at an alarming rate. The federal government's own surveys show that more than one third of high school-aged children have tried these addictive products. Measures to protect these young people are urgently needed.

Multiple factors contribute to the use of vaping products among youth. Individual risk factors include peer use, the desire to experiment, curiosity, a perceived lack of harmful effects from vaping, and a history of tobacco product use. Environmental risk factors include exposure to vaping-related marketing campaigns and easy access to vaping products at low cost.

Because vaping devices are relatively new, their long-term health effects are still largely unknown. However, scientists are concerned about the impacts on lung health and potential links to cancer. Additionally, the literature increasingly suggests that there are several short- and medium-term health risks associated with vaping, including vaping-related lung injuries, burns, nicotine poisoning, and nicotine and cannabis use disorders. Youth who use e-cigarettes are more likely to use cigarettes or other tobacco products.

Raising the minimum legal age to 21 to purchase vaping or tobacco products is good public policy for the following reasons. First, it will reduce access to these products among high school students, as many students get these products from social sources. Second, delaying the age when young people first experiment with nicotine or tobacco will reduce the risk that they will become regular tobacco users. Third, those who start smoking at a younger age are more likely to find it difficult to quit. And finally, nicotine is harmful to the developing brain.

Ontario should follow in the footsteps of many other big and small jurisdictions, which have raised the minimum sale age for tobacco products to 21 years. Close to home, the United States and Prince Edward Island adopted Tobacco 21 laws without difficulty last year, and governments as far away as Uganda and the Philippines have also done the same.

A number of studies have shown that Canadians support Tobacco 21 laws. An Ipsos Reid poll commissioned by Global News found that eight in 10 Canadians supported raising the minimum age to 21 for the purchase of vaping products. Compared to other countries such as Australia, the U.S., and the U.K., another survey showed that Canada ranks highest at seven in 10 in support of such minimum age laws. Finally, in response to Health Canada's consultation paper, "The Future

of Tobacco Control in Canada," about three out of four respondents supported the idea of raising the minimum legal age to 21.

Canadian health groups support laws raising the minimum age to 21, including the Canadian Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada,

The Lung Association, and Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada. The Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health also endorses raising the age to 21. Even some tobacco companies are supporting this idea, including JUUL Labs.

The message is clear, and the time is now. If we don't act quickly and raise the minimum legal age to 21 to purchase vaping or tobacco products in every province in Canada, we may lose decades of work done by public health to decrease the use of cigarettes and other forms of tobacco. We need to put measures in place to protect our young people from becoming addicted to tobacco and suffering the associated negative consequences.

Shalea Beckwith is a consultant pediatrician at Quinte Health Care and an assistant professor at Queen's University.
The Hill Times



We need to put measures in place to protect our young people from becoming addicted to tobacco and suffering the associated negative consequences, writes Dr. Shalea Beckwith. *Photograph courtesy of Pexels*

Parliamentary Calendar

Minister Ng heads to Mexico City for trilateral trade meeting July 7

TUESDAY, JULY 6—THURSDAY, JULY 8

Virtual Annual General Assembly and National Chief Election—The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is convening the 42nd Annual General Assembly hosted in Toronto, Territory of Six Nations of Grand River and Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (Toronto Purchase, Treaty No. 13), and taking place virtually from July 6-8. For information and to register, visit afn.ca/2021-annual-general-assembly/.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7

Liberal fundraising event with Minister Joly, MP Martinez—The Liberal Party is holding a virtual fundraising event with Quebec MPs Soraya Martinez Ferrada and Economic Development and Official Languages Minister Mélanie Joly to support the Hochelaga Federal Liberal Association, the riding represented by Ms. Martinez. It's \$500 per person and runs from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. ET.

Trilateral Trade Meeting—International Trade Minister Mary Ng, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai, and Mexico's Secretary of Economy Tatiana Clouthier Carrillo will hold a meeting in Mexico City on July 7 to mark the first anniversary of the coming into force of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).

THURSDAY, JULY 8

The Future of Elder Care in Canada—The Empire Club of Canada hosts a webinar, "The Future of Elder Care in Canada," a discussion of how the health-care system needs to be redesigned to improve the lives of Canada's elders. Participants include *Globe and Mail* health columnist André Picard; Linda Knight, CEO, CarePartners; and Dr. Samir Sinha, director of Geriatrics at Sinai Health System. Thursday, July 8, at noon. Register at empireclubofcanada.com/future-elder-care-canada.

The Future of Indo-Pacific Co-operation: An Australian Perspective—Natasha Smith, Australia's high commissioner to Canada, will take part in a webinar on "The Future of Indo-Pacific Co-operation: An Australian Perspective," a webinar hosted by the NATO Association of Canada. The discussion will focus on Canada-Australia relations, security interests, transatlantic relations, the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and more. Thursday, July 8, 2-3 p.m. Register via Eventbrite.

FRIDAY, JULY 9—SATURDAY, JULY 10

G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting—This third meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors is taking place in Venice, Italy, and will be the first in-person finance track meeting since February 2020.

SUNDAY, JULY 11

Meet & Greet with CPC Leader Erin O'Toole—Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is holding a meet and greet fundraising event for his party in Calgary, Alta., on July 11. The event starts at 7 p.m. MT at 12501 14th Street S.W., and is listed at \$500 per ticket on the party's website.

G20 Venice Conference on Climate—Being held in Venice, Italy, the confer-



International Trade Minister Mary Ng, pictured during a press conference with Treasury Board President Jean-Yves Duclos and others on May 25, 2020, is heading to Mexico City for a trilateral trade meeting on July 7 to mark the first anniversary of the new NAFTA. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

ence will include a keynote address from U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen.

TUESDAY, JULY 20

Virtual Meet & Greet with CPC Leader Erin O'Toole—Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is hosting a virtual meet and greet fundraising event for his party. It starts at 5:30 p.m. ET.

THURSDAY, JULY 22—FRIDAY, JULY 23

G20 Ministers Meetings—Taking place in Naples, Italy, an environment ministers' meeting will be held on July 22, followed by a climate and energy joint ministerial meeting on July 23.

SATURDAY, AUG. 21

65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference—One of the largest annual gatherings of Commonwealth Parliamentarians will take place in Aug. 21-27, 2021, at the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) hosted by the CPA Canada Region in Halifax. The annual flagship event will bring together over 500 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, and decision makers from across the Commonwealth for this unique conference and networking opportunity. The conference will be hosted by the CPA President (2019-2021), Anthony Rota, MP, Speaker of the House of Commons. All eligible CPA Branches will be contacted with further information and invitations.

MONDAY, AUG. 23

Institute of Public Administration of Canada's 73rd Annual Conference—For-

mer governor general David Johnston, Interim Clerk of the Privy Council Janice Charette, Nova Scotia Clerk Laura Lee Langley, Indigenous children's rights advocate Cindy Blackstock, and open government advocate Bianca Wylie are among the confirmed speakers for the Institute of Public Administration of Canada's 73rd Annual Conference. This conference will take virtually from the Ottawa-Gatineau region from August 23-24, 2021, on the theme of "Shaping Futures: A Public Service Positioned to Strengthen Canada's Recovery." Register today at www.ipac2021.ipac.ca.

MONDAY, SEPT. 20

House Sitting—The House which has been sitting in a hybrid format during the pandemic, is scheduled to return on 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.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 29

Energy Storage Canada Conference—As the Voice of the Energy Storage sector in Canada, our virtual Annual Conference will be held on Sept. 29-30, 2021. This year's theme is "Charged & Ready" featuring keynote speakers, informative panels, and virtual tours and workshops. Ticket information can be found at energystoragecanada.org/conference.

SATURDAY, OCT. 30—SUNDAY, OCT. 31

G20 Leaders' Summit—The 16th G20 gathering is taking place in

Rome, Italy. This year, under the Italian Presidency, the G20 is focused on three pillars of action: people, planet and prosperity.

MONDAY, NOV. 1—FRIDAY, NOV. 12

UN Climate Conference UNFCCC COP 26—The 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC will take place from Monday, Nov. 1 to Friday, Nov. 12, in Glasgow, U.K. Contact: UNFCCC Secretariat by e-mail at secretariat@unfccc.int; www: <https://unfccc.int/calendar>

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 24

Writers' Trust of Canada's Balsillie Prize for Public Policy—This new \$60,000 award for the best public policy book in Canada is sponsored by Canadian businessman and philanthropist Jim Balsillie and is part of his new \$3-million commitment to the Writers' Trust of Canada. Three prize finalists will be chosen by a jury composed of writers and experts in public policy selected by the Writers' Trust of Canada. Finalists will be announced on Oct. 13, with the inaugural winner revealed on Nov. 24. More details at writers.trust.com/BalsilliePrize

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