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THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR, NO. 1995

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023 \$5.00

NEWS

Repatriation order for men in Syria raises questions about Canada's consular obligations

BY NEIL MOSS

Former diplomats say Canada should have moved to repatriate four men from northeastern Syria without a court order, avoiding another decision from the federal bench that casts more doubt on the country's obligations to its citizens held for wrongdoing in foreign countries.

A day after the government came to an agreement to repatriate 19 women and children, the Federal Court ruled on Jan. 20 that four men held in detention camps for suspected ISIS members in northeastern Syria must be repatriated, too, noting that their living conditions are "even more dire than those of the women and children who Canada has just agreed to repatriate."

The government has yet to indicate whether it will appeal the case. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) said on Jan. 23 that the government is looking at the situation "carefully" and is "making sure we're



The decision to repatriate four Canadian men from detention camps in northeastern Syria will rest on whether Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly and the rest of cabinet decide to appeal a recent Federal Court decision. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade and photograph courtesy of Human Rights Watch

NEWS

Poilievre's First Nations consultations demonstrate 'maturity,' reconciliation no longer partisan issue, say strategists

BY STUART BENSON

Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre will have plenty of work to do to convince Indigenous communities that his recent "change of tune" on Crown-Indigenous relations is genuine, given his history of controversial comments, but if he can show First Nations he's truly committed to building relationships and reconciliation, strategists argue it would be "game-changing," putting Liberals on the back foot.

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OPINION

House clerk selection process needs a non-partisan refresh

BY ROBERT MARLEAU

The eighth clerk of the House, Alistair Fraser, like his predecessor, was a failed Liberal Party candidate and appointed by the majority Liberal government in 1967.

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Mike Lapointe

Heard On The Hill

'It's going to take generational change': Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith sizing up Ontario Liberal Party leadership

Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, who has indicated he's exploring a potential leadership bid of the Ontario Liberal Party, has called for "purpose and principle in our politics" in looking toward "serious renewal" for the party that's suffered some serious shortcomings at the polls recently, in a video posted to Twitter.

"But we don't need gimmicks, open letters, and Hail Marys to find it," he said in the Jan. 29 post, putting his "exploratory" bid on surer footing.

The Ontario Liberals were trounced for the second provincial election in a row in 2022, with Premier Doug Ford's Progressive Conservatives winning 83 of the 124 seats and the NDP winning 31 seats under former leader Andrea Horwath.

The Liberals, under then-leader Steven Del Duca, won eight seats. Del Duca, who failed to win his own seat, stepped down following the election loss.

"That kind of change has to come from within if it's going to be serious and sustainable," said Erskine-Smith. "It's going to take hard work, it's going to take generational change, and it's going to take meaningful engagement with and accountability to our grassroots."

"And it's that opportunity to make a difference that has motivated Nate to explore the Ontario Liberal leadership," according to his website. "It's a huge opportunity, but it's one that Nate will pursue only if we can build a serious and diverse team in every corner of our province."

Ontario Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner, who won the party's first seat in history in 2018, made headlines earlier this week when a group of Liberals urged him to join the provincial party and take a shot at the top job, as reported by the *Globe and Mail*. In response, Schreiner said he wants time "to think about their arguments."

The *Hill Times* has previously reported that Liberal MP Yasir



Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith is highlighting party renewal in his bid for leadership of the Ontario Liberals. The *Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Naqvi, who represents Ottawa Centre, Ont., and former Kingston Liberal MP Ted Hsu are also thinking about the leadership. Hsu currently holds one of the eight Ontario Liberal seats in Queen's Park.

C.D. Howe Institute announces speakers for its fourth Regent Debate

The C.D. Howe Institute is scheduled to hold its fourth Regent Debate, featuring some heavy-hitters looking to tackle some of the issues confronting Canadian health care.

The motion at stake: "Be it resolved: competition will save Canada's broken health-care system." Former British Columbia premier Christy Clark and Medicant chair and CEO Shaun Francis will speak in favour of the motion, while former NDP leader Thomas Mulcair and Danielle Martin, chair of the department of family and community medicine at the University of Toronto, will speak against.

"As our health-care system cracks under the overlapping

pressures of an aging population, surgical backlogs, staffing shortages, and the lingering effects of the pandemic, is now the time for greater private sector involvement?" reads the release. "What reforms are required? How do we build a healthcare system that is affordable, accessible and reliable?"

Clark served in B.C.'s top job for more than six years, retiring from political life in 2017 as the longest-serving female premier in Canadian history. Mulcair served as leader of the NDP from 2012-2017, as well as in former Quebec premier Jean Charest's Liberal cabinet as environment minister from 2003-2006. He was one of the architects of the 2011 "Orange Wave" that saw the NDP take three-quarters of the seats in Quebec.

The debate will take place on Feb. 23 from 5:15-8 p.m.

Former senator, actor Viola Léger dies at 92

Former senator Viola Léger, who served in the Red Chamber

from 2001-2005, died at the age of 92 in Dieppe, N.B., on Jan. 29.

"I was saddened today to learn of the passing of Viola Léger, an iconic, celebrated and beloved comedian who held Acadian culture dear and worked tirelessly to defend it, both as a performer and as a senator," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in a statement.

"Viola Léger was best known for portraying the character La Sagouine, a humble Acadian cleaning lady, in the play of the same name," said Trudeau. "She



Former senator Viola Léger, who served in the Senate from 2001-2005, died at the age of 92 on Jan. 29. The *Hill Times* file photograph

played the role more than 3,000 times, and put the Acadian people in the spotlight in Canada and abroad."

The prime minister highlighted her win of the 1981 Dora Mavor Moore Award for her outstanding performance.

Léger was recognized for her lifetime achievement as a recipient of the 2013 Governor General's

Performing Award. Léger was also made an Officer of the Order of Canada, and was awarded the Order of New Brunswick.

'Children's Senator' dies

Landon Pearson, a fierce children's advocate, has also died at the age of 92, passing on Jan. 28.

Pearson, who was appointed to the Senate by then-prime minister Jean Chretien in 1994 and served for 11 years, was married to and shared five children with Geoffrey Pearson, son of former PM Lester B. Pearson.

"She was a true champion for children in Canada," Families Minister Karina Gould tweeted on Jan. 30. "Her commitment to ensuring children's voices were heard and rights respected was unmatched. She leaves behind a tremendous legacy for children's rights in Canada."

"The birth of her own five children sparked her intellectual curiosity in the study of childhood," her obituary reads. "In 1979, she served as vice-

chair of the Canadian Commission for the UN International Year of the Child, where she first articulated a program for bold action on behalf of Canada's children."

In 2006, Pearson launched the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights at Carleton University, remaining involved until beyond her 90th birthday.

Among her accolades, Pearson was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2008 for her work as a "powerful voice on behalf of young people in Canada and around the world."

A visitation will be held Feb. 4 at the Central Chapel of Hulse, Playfair & McGarry (315 McLeod St., Ottawa) from 2-5 p.m. A celebration of life will be held in Ottawa in the spring.

Sandstone Group nabs Elia Lopez

Following her stint as a policy adviser and tour and events planner for the Conservative leader's office, Elia Lopez has been hired by Sandstone Group.

Lopez started in the office under former leader Erin O'Toole in November 2021, staying through interim leader Candice Bergen's tenure and into the start of new chief Pierre Poilievre.

In her work there, Lopez "acquired a deep understanding of the parliamentary process and cultivated strong relationships," the government relations firm tweeted on Jan. 25.

"I am thrilled to announce that I have joined the Sandstone Group team as a Public Affairs Consultant based in [Ottawa]," wrote Lopez in a LinkedIn post, where she thanked firm co-founders Naresh Raghubeer and Kevin Bosch for the opportunity.

Kirsty Duncan taking medical leave

Liberal MP Kirsty Duncan has announced that, on the advice of her doctors, she will be taking a medical leave "to deal with a physical challenge, effective immediately."

"I want to assure you that my team will continue to care for you and serve you," said Duncan, in a note tweeted out on Jan. 26.

Duncan, a former gymnast, previously served as the federal sport minister, and has called for a national public inquiry into the abuse of athletes within the system.

Representing Etobicoke North, Ont., Duncan first won her seat in the 2008 election, defeating Conservative candidate Bob Saroya by just more than 5,800 votes. She's won her seat handily in every election since. Duncan is currently chair of the House Science Committee.

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WHAT TELUS DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT THE SHAW- VIDEOTRON- ROGERS DEAL.

Telus tried to 'kill, slow and shape' \$26-billion
Rogers-Shaw deal, board presentation shows¹

- *The Globe and Mail*, November 14, 2022

The Competition Tribunal determined that the Shaw-Videotron-Rogers deal will likely INCREASE COMPETITION.

"It bears underscoring that there will continue to be four strong competitors in the wireless markets in Alberta and British Columbia, namely, Bell, Telus, Rogers, and Videotron, just as there are today. Videotron's entry into those markets will likely ensure that competition and innovation remain robust.

The strengthening of Rogers' position in Alberta and British Columbia, combined with the very significant competitive initiatives that Telus and Bell have been pursuing since the Merger was announced, will also likely contribute to an increased intensity of competition in those markets."

- *The Competition Tribunal, Reasons, December 31, 2022, Paragraphs 6, 7*

Telus should be worried.

"In addition, the Merger will result in Rogers injecting a new and substantial source of competition into Telus' home markets... Adding to all of this will be the entry of Videotron, a proven market disruptor."

- *The Competition Tribunal, Reasons, December 31, 2022, Paragraph 389*

Shaw)

News

Canadian-facilitated Cameroon peace process right approach, but fraught with challenges, say analysts

The Cameroonian government said it hasn't 'entrusted' a foreign country with a mediation role in the peace process days after Canada said it has accepted the mandate.

BY NEIL MOSS

While the Cameroonian government is uncommitted to Canadian-led peace talks, foreign policy and conflict resolution experts say Canada is well-positioned to act as a mediator—but the solution can't be seen as being foreign-led.

Canada announced on Jan. 20 that it accepted a mandate to help facilitate the Cameroonian peace process, which includes the Government of Cameroon, the Ambazonia Governing Council and the Ambazonia Defence Force, the African People's Liberation Movement and the Southern Cameroons Defence Force, the Interim Government, and the Ambazonia Coalition Team.

The Cameroonian government denied that a mandate has been offered. "The Government of the Republic of Cameroon informs [the] national and international community that it has not entrusted any foreign country or external entity with any role of mediator or facilitator," a government spokesperson said on Jan. 23.

In a Jan. 21 statement, the Ambazonia Governing Council, the African People's Liberation Movement, the Interim Government, and the Ambazonia Coalition Team said they will engage in the process "cautiously," noting that there will be a United Nations observer present.

Despite that rejection from the Cameroonian government, foreign policy experts told *The Hill Times* that there is still hope the peace process can have an impact.

"The proper approach is to continue as if it's still going on," said University of Calgary instructor Christopher Roberts, who has researched and written on the crisis in Cameroon.

He said the Canadian-led approach has received more sup-



Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly, pictured with one of her parliamentary secretaries, Liberal MP Maninder Sidhu, said on Jan. 24 that peace talks are 'always messy and take time.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

port from the English-language separatist Ambazonian groups than past peace efforts, as well as having the backing of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Vatican.

"You wait for more official or unofficial responses from the Cameroonian government, but you continue moving ahead because you now have some international community support and broad-based support among Southern Cameroonians ... and you keep moving ahead because peace requires some form of negotiations," he said.

After the Cameroonian government's statement, Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.) told reporters on Jan. 24 that peace processes "are always messy and take time."

More than 6,000 people have been killed during the Cameroonian crisis that has divided the country over language rights in the French-language dominated western African nation, which has spawned a separatist conflict in Cameroon's English-language majority regions. More than 800,000 Cameroonians have been displaced and 600,000 children lack access to education, according to a Global Affairs release.

Joly said entering the formal process towards mediation is a "critical first step toward peace and a safer, more inclusive and prosperous future for civilians affected by the conflict."

"Canada has no colonial baggage on the continent," Akuffo added. "Since the independence movement started on the African continent, Canada has always played that friendly, mediator, facilitator role. It has a good track record on the continent—of course it isn't a perfect one—but it is also something former colonial powers cannot compete against."

He noted the work Canada has done in South Africa, as well as through the UN Sanctions Committee on Angola, which was spearheaded by then-Canadian ambassador to the UN Robert Fowler in 2000.

"I see Canada as strategically uniquely positioned to actually lead the facilitation process," he said.

Akuffo said it is an apt time for Canada, which is working towards launching its own African strategy, to help mediate the peace process in Cameroon.

He remarked that it would be wise for Canada to facilitate the African Union's participation in the peace talks, noting that Ottawa should be working hard to ensure that the AU is at the centre of the negotiations and any potential deals.

"It will give some credence to African solutions for African problems," he said.

University of Western Ontario professor Thomas Tiekou, an expert on African politics and negotiations, agreed that the African Union should be brought in.

He said the African Union has a mediation support unit that can assist with the peace talks, remarking that bringing the AU on board would give Canada political cover from any attacks of the mediation process being foreign-led.



Some say Canada should encourage the African Union to join peace talks to address the crisis in Cameroon. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, right, met with African Union Commission Chair Moussa Faki Mahamat in Ottawa last October. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Tiekou said having a UN representative helps to minimize concerns over foreign-controlled peace talks, but the United Nations can still be cast as a foreign agent for domestic purposes, unlike the AU.

He said he is "cautiously optimistic" that the talks can have a positive impact.

"The Government of Cameroon is not in the strongest positions," he said, noting Cameroon President Paul Biya, who has been in power since 1982, is aging and is not in good health. "I'm a little bit cautiously optimistic because of Cameroon's own domestic political calculus."

Tiekou said a mediation role is one where Canada can be successful in its engagement in Africa as it is cost effective and Canada can bring powerful allies along its side.

Roberts said bringing the African Union into the peace talks will be challenging given its past reluctance to push the issue. Cameroon currently sits as a member of the AU's Peace and Security Council.

"The African Union and its peace and security architecture have never publicly discussed the Cameroon crisis. So it's not a surprise to me that the African Union is not directly engaged at this point and that's unfortunate," he said, noting that if there is preliminary confidence building in the peace talks, the AU could come on board.

If the negotiations do get off the ground and develop momentum towards a potential agreement, then there will have to be discussion over how to implement what is agreed to.

RMC and Queen's University professor Jane Boulden, an expert on conflict resolution, said the UN representative at the mediation talks shows an envisioning of some kind of operation and on-ground presence after a deal is reached.

She said she foresees a UN observation and verification operation as opposed to a peacekeeping mission.

Boulden said the Cameroonian government's statement makes the situation "murky," noting that it could be a negotiating ploy or it could be a degree of miscommunication in the process.

"In terms of mediation, this is not a desirable sequence of events," she said. "Sometimes you take a step back before you take two steps forward in these situations."

She said she doesn't think it is a sign that the process is falling apart, but it is a setback.

"Mediation is most often very long term," she said. "It's rare something happens very quickly. There's usually a length of time before you see outcomes."

Boulden said the point is to give parties space to create dialogue and push the parties at the right moment and sit back at the right moment.

"Overall, you're there as a buffer [and] as a guide. Often, but not always, these things pay off when the process is quite secret," she said.

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News

Canada called to help clear Lachin corridor as accusations of 'de-facto ethnic cleansing' of Armenians fly at Foreign Affairs committee

Simply surviving has become an 'everyday problem,' says Armenian Canadian behind the blockade, while Azerbaijan alleges 'unimpeded' corridor used for smuggling landmines, explosives.

BY STUART BENSON

The Canadian government is being called upon to play a greater role in convening a peaceful resolution to the blockade of the only road connecting Armenia to the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. But as the conflict closes in on its second month, creating shortages of essential goods like food, medicine, and electricity, Canada must do more than "ask," says one Armenian-Canadian living behind the blockade.

On Jan. 25, the House Foreign Affairs and International Development Committee held two of its three scheduled meetings examining the blockade of the so-called "Lachin Corridor," the only connection between Armenia and the breakaway Republic of Artsakh, an Armenian majority state located within the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. On Dec. 12, 2022, the road was blocked by Azerbaijanis claiming to be environmental activists protesting an illegal gold mine in the region.

MPs on the committee heard from witnesses representing both the concerns of Armenia, describing the blockade as "de-facto ethnic cleansing," and Azerbaijan, which continues to deny that the protests are affecting traffic or the flow of necessary goods to the region, and accuses Armenia of creating a false narrative to embolden separatist groups.

For Huri Zohrabyan, an Armenian Canadian who moved from Montreal to Stepanakert, the Republic of Artsakh's capital, in 2021, the consequences of the blockade are very real, including the hours-long electricity blackouts she and her husband, Petros Asryan, deal with on an almost daily basis.

Zohrabyan, who spoke with *The Hill Times* on Jan. 30, the 50th day of the blockade, said that wires connecting the capital to the Armenian power grid had been damaged. The affected region is now controlled by Azerbaijan since the war between the two countries in 2020, which saw Azerbaijan reclaim much of the disputed territory.



A video provided by the Network of Azerbaijani Canadians purports to show Russian peacekeepers and Red Cross vehicles passing through the blockade of the Lachin corridor where 'environmental activists' have been protesting an alleged illegal gold mine since Dec. 12, 2022. Screenshot courtesy of YouTube

"Azerbaijan is not letting us go fix it, so now, for several hours a day, we don't have electricity," Zohrabyan said. "Sometimes we know the hours, and sometimes we don't; there's no guarantee."

Born in Lebanon, Zohrabyan immigrated to Canada as a teenager. After marrying her husband following the war in 2020, which saw Asryan's hometown of Shushi reclaimed by Azerbaijan, Zohrabyan decided she still wanted to fulfill her dream of moving to their shared homeland.

However, since the blockade began in December, that dream has turned into a nightmare, with shortages of electricity and fuel to heat her home during the region's frigid winter.

"We're freezing sometimes," Zohrabyan said, describing how the solution they had devised was to heat up one room in their home as much as possible while electricity supplies lasted in order to get through the blackouts inside with only blankets.

"It's part of a survival problem that [the blockade] creates," Zohrabyan explained, adding that simply surviving had become an "everyday problem."

There have also been multiple interruptions of the gas supply, prohibiting Zohrabyan from using her gas stove or accessing hot water, including a days-long interruption that had only been restored on Jan. 29.

Even when she can use her stove, Zohrabyan said all the grocery stores are mostly empty.

"We usually receive, like, 400 tonnes of essential goods daily, but now with this blockade, there's nothing coming in," she explained. "So we're left without normal food like vegetables, fruits, flour, eggs, rice, sugar ... even chocolate."

The shelves at her local pharmacy are equally bare, Zohrabyan told *The Hill Times*, with shortages of everything from medications to diapers and baby food.

Due to the lack of necessary medications and hospital supplies, there have also been reported interruptions of urgent surgeries, putting patients' lives at risk, with some having reportedly died waiting for transport into Armenia for treatment.

While the Red Cross has been able to move a few patients in dire conditions across the border, Zohrabyan said there were still "a lot of sick babies and people" awaiting treatment.

Not only was the blockade stopping supplies and medicine for the 120,000 people living in Nagorno-Karabakh, but it was also stopping some 1,100 Armenians, including 270 children, from reuniting with their families trapped behind it.

"There's a humanitarian crisis, and it's getting worse by the day," Zohrabyan said, adding that with each passing day, the feelings of anger, worry, and panic have only grown stronger.

"We don't have a guarantee of what's going to happen tomorrow, or after tomorrow, or in one month ... I can't even guarantee that we're gonna have electricity in one hour," she explained. "It's like we're cut off from the whole world and we're helpless ... we don't know what to do anymore."

What Zohrabyan can do, however, is raise as much awareness of the realities faced by Armenians like herself with the hope it will spur governments of larger countries, like Canada, to help.

NDP MP Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, Alta.), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and her party's critic, told *The Hill Times* that Canada should be using its diplomatic channels and its voice within the United Nations to put pressure on Azerbaijan to open the corridor.

"It needs to be opened up for humanitarian aid, food, and fuel ... that's international law," McPherson said. "I think there is a role for Canada as a country that still has some of that ... honest broker reputation, that we could play a bigger role to make sure that corridor is open."

When asked what Canada was currently doing to enable a peaceful resolution, Global Affairs Canada said it is continuing to monitor the situation, and is calling for Azerbaijani authorities to reopen the corridor and ensure freedom of movement to avoid any potential humanitarian impact.

"Canada also calls on Armenia and Azerbaijan to continue negotiating to resolve issues through peaceful dialogue," GAC spokes-

person Jean-Pierre Godbout wrote in a statement to *The Hill Times*. "Lastly, Canada will continue to respond to humanitarian appeals for the Nagorno-Karabakh region."

Still, Zohrabyan said more needs to be done than just asking Azerbaijan to stop the blockade.

"It's a humanitarian crisis," she reiterated. "We're humans, and we're struggling, so I would like Canada to be more active in this."

Zohrabyan said that without more forceful action to open the Lachin corridor, Azerbaijan would continue to pursue what she said is President Ilham Aliyev's goal of an "ethnic cleansing" of Armenians from the region, using the blockade to create panic and conditions so miserable that it forces them to leave for good.

'False' allegations meant to boost Armenian separatist groups: Azerbaijani network chair

Zohrabyan's accusation of ethnic cleansing was echoed during the second round of House committee witness testimony on Jan. 25 by professor Christopher Waters, who teaches international law at the University of Windsor, calling the blocking of humanitarian aid "de-facto ethnic cleansing."

In response, Network of Azerbaijani Canadians board chairman Anar Jahangirli said that Azerbaijan had "on numerous occasions" declared its willingness to embrace its Armenian citizens.

"There is no question ... that there is an intent of ethnic cleansing is an overstatement and an exaggeration," Jahangirli said in his testimony, arguing that Azerbaijan is advocating for "peace" and "the rules-based international order."

"Territorial integrity of states [should be dealt with first], and then we can talk about minority rights," Jahangirli continued.

In a written statement to *The Hill Times*, Jahangirli said the allegation the Lachin road was blocked for humanitarian and civilian access is false and is meant to justify the position of the

separatist groups in "Azerbaijan's Karabakh region."

"While we have not seen one photograph or video demonstrating any physical closing of the road (i.e. barricades, persons blocking access), countless videos are being released by the Azerbaijani protesters, attesting to the open road," Jahangirli wrote, noting that by Azerbaijani sources, "more than 1,000 trucks and vehicles had passed through the road," between Dec. 12, 2022, and Jan. 24, an average of roughly 23 vehicles per day.

While Jahangirli said the protesters staging the blockade are environmental activists demanding a stop to "illegal gold mining" in the region, he said that one of the reasons Azerbaijan isn't motivated to remove them is the allegation that the road is being used to smuggle landmines and weapons from the Republic of Armenia into Karabakh.

Artsakh State Minister Ruben Vardanyan, who spoke with *The Hill Times* via Zoom on Jan. 31, challenged Azerbaijan's count of the number of vehicles being allowed to travel through the Lachin corridor, describing the flow of vehicles as "a few hundred" since Dec. 12, most of which belonged to Russian peacekeepers and the Red Cross bringing medicine and humanitarian aid.

"For comparison, before the blockade around 800-1,000 vehicles were entering Artsakh every day," Vardanyan said, adding that the blockade had shut down more than just sufficient deliveries of medicine, fuel, electricity, or food.

"Our entire economy is shut down because we cannot bring any commercial vehicles, we cannot bring any resources or any materials for production or export any commodities that are produced here," Vardanyan explained, adding that due to the shortages of fuel and electricity, schools have also been forced to close.

Vardanyan is calling on Canada and the international community to pressure Azerbaijan to reopen the corridor. In the meantime, he called for the creation of an "air corridor" to fly in supplies to the region, and for sanctions on the government of Azerbaijan.

"It is unacceptable in a winter to put 30,000 kids in a situation where they have no food, no education, and no electricity or gas," Vardanyan added. "[Azerbaijan] needs to accept that there needs to be dialogue ... this cannot be solved with a military solution or by squeezing 120,000 people from their own homeland in an ethnic cleansing."

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Tanking support for the Armed Forces

The fact the Canadian Army has 82 Leopard 2 tanks but is hard pressed to part with just four of them to give to Ukraine is indicative of how neglected our armoured forces have been since we quit the combat mission in Afghanistan in 2011.

Scott
Taylor

Inside Defence



OTTAWA—On Jan. 26, Defence Minister Anita Anand made the announcement that Canada would be donating four Leopard 2 tanks to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. This announcement came on the heels of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz relenting to mounting international pressure and agreeing to provide Ukraine with 14 Leopard 2 tanks.

Just six days earlier at a NATO summit in Ramstein, Germany, Scholz had defi-

antly obstructed not only the donation of Germany's tanks, but also any other NATO country from providing their own German-built Leopard 2s.

This reversal from Scholz came about after the United Kingdom and United States announced that they would be sending their own Challenger and Abrams main battle tanks, respectively, to Ukraine. For the past two months, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been begging for donations of western tanks to break the current stalemate in eastern Ukraine. At the top of Zelenskyy's wish list has been the Leopard 2 tanks. International media reports began a steady drum beat of stories, which built an aura of the Leopard 2 being some sort of game-changing battlefield wonder weapon.

For their part, the Russians warned that any country providing such heavy weaponry to Ukraine would be escalating the conflict and would therefore face reprisals. Poland and Finland were the first two NATO countries that offered to provide Leopard 2s to Ukraine, but Germany realized that since they ultimately had control over any second export licence for those tanks, Russia could single them out for any retribution. The U.K. and U.S. cleared the way by making donations of their tanks. Ergo, if Russia does take punitive measures, Germany will not be alone.

For the record, Zelenskyy and his generals were asking for 300 Leopard 2

tanks. Contrary to what the media would have you believe, the Leopard 2 is a capable heavy tank, but not a modern super weapon. The model Canada is sending to Ukraine is the Leopard 2A4, which first entered service in the mid-1980s. As such, they will be older than the Ukrainian tankers manning them. Admittedly, they are better than the Russian T-72 and T-80 Soviet-era tanks of the same vintage. However, as we have seen in the combat to date in Ukraine, the advent of drones and sophisticated anti-tank rockets have made the modern battlefield extremely dangerous for tanks.

Added to this is the fact that instead of a homogeneous force of 300 Leopard 2s, what has been pledged to date are: 14 Challenger tanks from the U.K., 31 Abrams from the U.S., 14 Leopard 2s from Germany, and the additional four from Canada. Presumably Poland, Finland, and a few other NATO members will add Leopard 2s to that list, but we are looking at around 100 tanks in total. Worse yet is the reality that this donation includes three distinctly different types of tanks. This amounts to a stupidly wide spectrum of equipment for a Ukrainian army that is already trying to logistically support a huge range of weapon systems and vehicles already donated to them during this war.

The Challenger tank, for instance, was only ever used by the U.K., although a number were exported to Oman. The ammunition calibre for the main gun on

the Challenger is not NATO standard. There is a good reason why armies strive to minimize the diversity of their combat equipment. In addition to the headache of resupply, maintenance, obtaining spare parts, etc., there is also the challenge of training crews on a variety of platforms. For those expecting these new tanks to be rushed into battle against the Russians, think again.

According to U.S. doctrine, it takes 22 weeks to fully train an efficient tank crew. Granted, the Ukraine tankers have had 11 months of actual combat experience in their Soviet-era tanks. However, if they are to understand and best utilize the advantages of these western-standard tanks, they will still require weeks of intensive training.

The fact the Canadian Army has 82 Leopard 2 tanks but is hard pressed to part with just four of them to give to Ukraine is indicative of how neglected our armoured forces have been since we quit the combat mission in Afghanistan in 2011. If main battle tanks still have a place on the modern battlefield, I would suggest that Minister Anand commits to more than simply replacing the four Leopard 2s that we are giving away to Ukraine.

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

IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT TELUS AND BELL OPPOSE THE SHAW-VIDEOTRON- ROGERS DEALS.

When your competitors oppose you, you're doing the right thing.

"... when competitors oppose a merger, it is often a good indication that the merger will be beneficial for competition. In this case, the opposition from the Respondents' two national competitors has been vigorous and far-reaching..."

— *The Competition Tribunal, Reasons, December 31, 2022, Paragraph 1*

Shaw)

Editorial

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Editorial

There's no nice way to call out Islamophobia

The Jan. 26 announcement of Amira Elghawaby as Canada's new special representative on combatting Islamophobia was an important moment.

Elghawaby has a strong track record, with her past roles as a journalist and work with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, National Council of Canadian Muslims, and as a founding board member of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network.

And more than just doing the work, Elghawaby hasn't been hesitant to use her voice—a key element in making strides against the persistent and pervasive anti-Muslim sentiment and actions that stain Canada.

But using one's voice and platform to speak out against white supremacy and the systemic discrimination baked into the country's anglo- and franco-Christian formed institutions is always going to generate pushback from the people protecting the status quo.

Shortly after the announcement of Elghawaby for the role, amid commemorations for the Jan. 29, 2017, Québec City mosque shooting, Québec politicians thought it was a good time to get on the defensive.

The government of Québec Premier François Legault—who couldn't be bothered to show up to the weekend memorial, citing "family obligations"—said it wanted an apology from Elghawaby, or for her to hand in her resignation, based on a 2019 op-ed she wrote with a Jewish co-author criticizing Québec's secularism

law, Bill 21. The legislation bans some public employees, like teachers or police officers, from wearing religious clothing.

The piece cited a 2019 Leger poll's finding "that 88 per cent of Quebecers who held negative views of Islam supported the ban."

"Politicians who continue to pander to xenophobic tendencies must be called on the carpet," the piece reads. Although it shouldn't have needed saying, Elghawaby later clarified that she does not believe Quebecers are Islamophobic and that her comments in the op-ed were only in reference to the Bill 21 poll, according to the *Montreal Gazette*.

That hasn't stopped the Bloc Québécois from wanting to meet and make sure she's properly contrite to their standards, with leader Yves-François Blanchet saying he has "big doubts."

There's another saying that may be instructive here: "a hit dog will holler."

The message being sent from Québec is that anyone who calls out discrimination for what it is must be unfit for service. (But if they want to use the N-word in classrooms, more power to them.)

It's a bit rich to see politicians like Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh standing behind Elghawaby now, after throwing Shachi Kurl under the bus in 2021 for her direct questions about Québec and Bill 21 during that year's leaders' debate. Let's see if they keep up that same energy when it's time to directly court the province for votes again.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

International law doesn't support letter's claims: CJPME

Re: "History doesn't support giving Israel an 'occupier' label: HonestReporting," (*The Hill Times*, Jan. 25, p. 8). Mike Fegelman wants to deny the existence of Israel's occupation, and puts everything out in the open in his second paragraph when he asserts that "No UN resolution [...] can distort these historical truths."

You almost have to admire Fegelman's brazenness in throwing out the entire body of international law. It is an international legal consensus that Israel is indeed an occupying power over the Palestinian territories, including the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, a position which has been repeatedly affirmed by the UN Security Council, the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention (2001). Even Israel's own supreme court considers the West Bank to be under a regime of "belligerent

occupation." There is no serious debate on this matter.

In the coming months, the legal implications of Israel's occupation and annexation of Palestinian land are going to be centre stage. The ICJ has been asked to provide an advisory opinion on Israel's "prolonged occupation, settlement and annexation of the Palestinian territory"—in other words, on whether the occupation itself is now illegal. At the same time, Israel's new far-right government is promising to extend "the application of sovereignty" (a euphemism for annexation) in the West Bank, a blatantly illegal act.

Fegelman can choose to pretend that international law doesn't exist, but the rest of us don't have to take him seriously.

Michael Bueckert
 Vice-president of Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East
 Montreal, Que.

What's stopping us from stopping TB?

Canada, please do not back down. Last year, Canada committed \$11-million toward combating tuberculosis and it is imperative that this number does not lower in the coming years.

Tuberculosis is still a very real and present threat to the health and lives of many, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Thanks to the pandemic, the problem of TB has grown even more alarming as access to resources and health-care delivery systems have diminished.

TB is a preventable and treatable disease, so what's stopping us from con-

tinuing to help eradicate this disease? We have the resources, the financial ability, and thus the responsibility to support these communities in need.

This is why I call on the Government of Canada to continue working to realize the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and maintain its investment in TB REACH by committing at least \$33-million over three years. We must continue the mission to eradicate TB, especially in communities that otherwise do not have the resources they need.

Dena Sharafdin
 Newmarket, Ont.

Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict not so clear cut, says Toronto reader

Re: "Armenians are facing another genocide," (*The Hill Times*, Jan. 23). The opinion article by Raffi Sarkissian should not go unanswered as it is based on historical untruths and mischievously mixes propaganda with Canadian foreign policy.

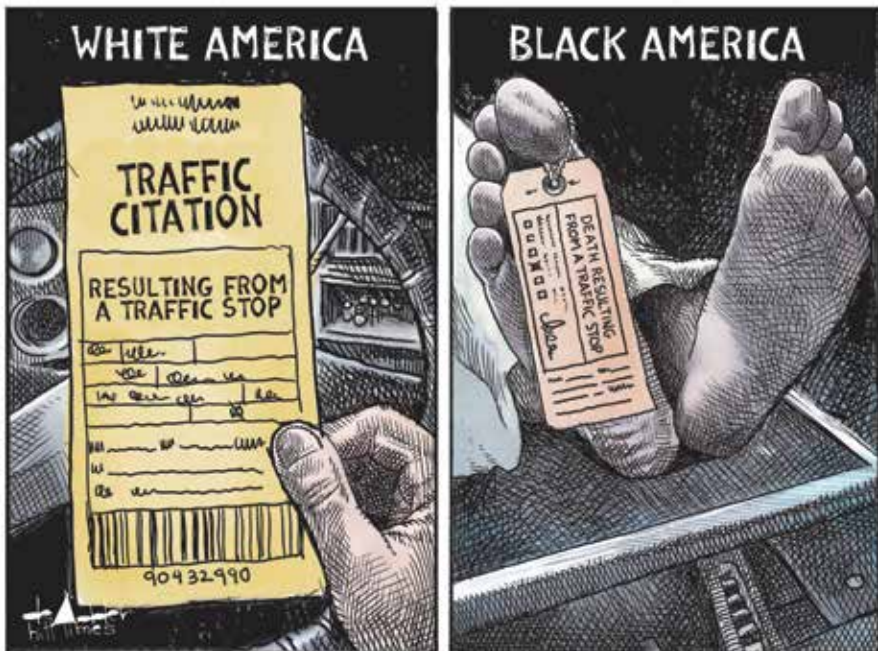
The key facts at issue can easily be summarized: (1) the Armenian illegal occupation of Azerbaijan territory since the fall of the Soviet empire, created some one million refugees; (2) the United Nations Security Council has repeatedly condemned Armenian occupation, while the Organization for Security and Co-op-

eration in Europe's Minsk mediation has been a total failure; and (3) finally last year, the Azerbaijan forces succeeded, by force of arms, to end Armenian occupation.

Canada must act in accordance with international law; anything else would be biased and in violation of international law.

Accordingly, Armenian propagandists attempting to link this conflict with what happened in the First World War are wrong and should be ignored.

Ozay Mehmet
 Toronto, Ont.



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DELIVERY INQUIRIES

circulation@hilltimes.com
 613-688-8821

THE HILL TIMES

Published every Monday and Wednesday by Hill Times Publishing Inc.

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

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

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Singh should stop raising spectre of health-care boogeyman

Canadians want politicians to pursue real solutions, not take things off the table simply because there is some political opportunity in posturing on a fairy tale.

Tim Powers

Plain Speak



OTTAWA—So here we go again: as Canadians call out for major health-care reform, the NDP wants to have a faux fight about privatization in our national health-care system. As Parliament resumed on Jan. 30, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh said he wanted an emergency debate

about private health care in the House of Commons. He also said it was something he would be pushing in his first meeting of the new year with the prime minister.

While Singh has every right to pursue whatever he wants—and certainly his pronouncements earlier this week got him headlines to score some political points—it's questionable how much of this will help with real health-care reform. This is neither 2000, when Canadian Alliance leader Stockwell Day held up a dumb cardboard sign in a national leaders debate with “No Two Tier” scribbled on it, nor 2021, when Justin Trudeau chided then-Conservative leader Erin O’Toole for wanting to privatize Canadian medicare.

Poll after poll shows legions of Canadians want a system that works. They recognize the current one doesn't and aren't storming the barricades, as Singh might hope, to protect the status quo. Equally, they are not demanding a new, completely private system, which no one is proposing. They do want politicians to pursue real solutions, not take things off the table simply because there



The only one talking about ‘American-style’ medicine is NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, who seems to prefer scaring people with another boogeyman as opposed to finding a solution that isn't a dated status quo approach, writes Tim Powers. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

is some political opportunity in posturing on a fairy tale.

Singh and the NDP seem to want to forget there is private service delivery in the system now. They seem to have forgotten that former leader, the late Jack Layton himself, in the 1990s, went to get a hernia removed at

the private Shouldice Hospital in Toronto. And the public system paid for that service. Let me venture into Singh territory here, and engage in a little hyperbole: was Layton wrong to get the relief he needed at the time there? Should Shouldice and other private hospitals that provide publicly funded services be cut across the country? I'd answer “no” to both of those questions. What about you, Mr. Singh?

I figure there have been occasions when Singh and other New Democrats have needed to do blood tests. Do they only go to public hospital-based settings to get this done, rather than the many private service providers that do the same work at no cost? I could go on, but I won't—though politicians should.

If we are going to do major systemic reform, let us see the data on what current private service delivery provision is doing well and what it isn't. The same should be true for publicly run services. Let's not do what Singh is doing: setting up political boogeymen.

Singh is right to say we have health-care staffing issues across

the land. But then he says more privatization would automatically mean people would leave the public domain to work in the private arena. Other than listening to entrenched interests in the system, how does Singh make that case? Well, he usually follows up with “American-style” medicine. OK, but the only one talking about “American-style” medicine is Singh. He seems to prefer to scare people with another boogeyman as opposed to finding a solution that isn't a dated status quo approach.

How about we talk about service delivery? Not from the dated prism of private versus public, but from an actual on-the-ground delivery model that deals with demographics, disease profiles, health-care service provision abilities, and broader health network options. They are trying to take this realistic approach in Newfoundland and Labrador—kudos to Premier Andrew Furey and his team for going down that path.

If we are going to have a real debate on the future of health-care delivery in Canada and get Canadians the outcomes they want, let's park the hyperbole of the past. Looking at you here, Mr. Singh.

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

The Hill Times

Newspapers should be treasured

The growing ignorance of the population and the rise in marginal ideas can be directly linked to the decline of quality media.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



KAMOURASKA, QUE.—It was 1960. I was eight years old, and my father would come in the door with the *Montreal Star* under his arm. My older brother and sister would grab a section each and I would follow them. We would kneel on the floor poring over the pages, then exchange sections until we were done. At dinner, my father would turn to us, and say “So?”—which was our cue to discuss the issues of the day. This routine followed for many years.

My love for newspapers led me to deliver the morning *Montreal Gazette* when I was 16, mostly to pay for weekend skiing and a



Postmedia is in its death throes, and it is time their papers were put out of their misery and brought back as trusts with community money, support, and strong newsrooms, writes Andrew Caddell. *Unsplash* photograph by Priscilla Du Preez

regular nickel of hash. But I read the paper very quickly as I cut the wires that held the bales of papers I delivered each morning.

When I became a reporter, I went into broadcasting, as I could never see myself as smart as any of the writers I had read in print, people like Charles Lynch, Brian Stewart, and Peter Desbarats. As a student reporter at Radio Carleton, I met many of them in the “hot room” on Parliament Hill. They encouraged me to write and gave me advice.

Still, print was a bridge too far, and I stayed in radio. A few times,

I ventured into big-city newsrooms and marvelled at the mobs of journalists banging away on their typewriters. They were all hardworking, brilliant, and could write a good yarn.

In short, I worshipped at the altar of print journalism. It is why I am so distraught at its slow, painful demise. Last week's news of mass layoffs at Postmedia included cuts at *The Gazette* of one-quarter of the staff; that was compared to 11 per cent in the chain.

The rise of the internet and the loss of newspaper revenue,

the adventures of Conrad Black, the Aspers, and the continuing decline of the industry has led to newsrooms emptying, readership diminishing, and of late, an American hedge fund killing the Postmedia chain.

Here in Kamouraska, we used to get *La Presse*, *The Gazette* and the *Globe and Mail* through the same distributor. When *La Presse* stopped delivering a print edition, the other papers stopped. I refuse to buy the trashy and biased *Journal de Montréal*. So I rarely see a “real” newspaper. When I do, I cherish it. I touch the pages, enjoying the pure unadulterated joy of reading: the layout, the printed page.

When I was doing research for my master's degree, I discovered studies that showed reading a printed page allowed the mind to learn differently. Evidently, the spaces between the words allow the brain to pause for a micro-second, a moment to pause and think. Looking at a screen does not allow that pause, as the light is constantly shining into your eyes. In short, print is good for you.

And newspapers allow for real journalism. As the late Joe Schlesinger of the CBC said, “Television news is the menu; if you want to eat, go somewhere else.” He meant print, which can do real investigative journalism.

A friend described a town in Quebec without a newspaper, where a local developer has the city council in the palm of his hand. The possibility of exposure would be greater with strong journalism.

When I began my first professional reporting job, I would get up at 6 a.m. to read the morning papers, to compare my take on a story with theirs. And because there was perpetual competition for stories, journalists were better. In radio, it was not uncommon for the morning news to be peppered with print stories.

We can't let all that die. This newspaper is an example of how good journalism can work with a solid business plan. And there are successful papers that combine the internet with a paper edition. But Postmedia is in its death throes, and it is time their papers were put out of their misery and brought back as trusts with community money, support, and strong newsrooms.

The growing ignorance of the population and the rise in marginal ideas can be directly linked to the decline of quality media. If we believe in the importance of democratic institutions, the most important—a free press—has to be revived.

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 town councillor in Kamouraska, Que. He can be reached at pipson52@hotmail.com.

The Hill Times

Opinion

House clerk selection process needs a non-partisan refresh

The clerk is, by law, the secretary to the BOIE. What kind of management board would accept that their most-trusted officer be appointed without their participation or consent?

Robert Marleau

Opinion



Continued from page 1

He served admirably until 1979, when the new Progressive Conservative minority government House leader “asked him to retire.”

After consultations with the official opposition, the PC government appointed the ninth clerk, Charles Beverley Koester, by order-in-council. He was the first career public servant so select-

ed, having long served as clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. He and the then Speaker Jeanne Sauvé wanted to create a corps of true professional procedural clerks.

A retired clerk of the U.K. House of Commons was commissioned to write a report proposing a career structure which sought to ensure the development of and progression of professional procedural clerks and table officers. That report was adopted by the then Board of Internal Economy (BOIE) in 1983. To this day, that career structure is still a House of Commons human resources management policy. The purpose is to develop and train procedural clerks, up to the level of table officers, as knowledge workers whose only loyalty and dedication is to the institution and all members of the House, regardless of party. That career structure does not apply to the clerk, the deputy clerk, the law clerk, and the sergeant-at-arms, whose appointments essentially remain a gift of the governor-in-council.

Following up on the work of the Lefebvre/McGrath reform committees (1982-1988), the House wrestled from the government the authority to select and appoint its most important servant: the Speaker.

It is time for the House to do the same for the appointment of all of its officers.



The method by which recently retired House of Commons clerk Charles Robert was selected in 2017 should not be repeated, writes Robert Marleau. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

I was the 10th clerk of the House. I was appointed in 1987 following the retirement of my predecessor. I was a 17-year career House officer. I was appointed by the Progressive Conservative government on recommendation of the new, all-party Board of Internal Economy. I served for 13 years and freely chose to retire, leaving behind a succession plan with the BOIE. It was not binding, but left the BOIE with choices.

My successor, William Corbett, was selected in the same manner as I was. The 12th clerk, Audrey O'Brien, was selected similarly and confirmed by a vote in the House as then and now required by the Standing Orders.

The manner in which the 13th permanent clerk, the now-retired Charles Robert, was selected in 2017 was egregiously flawed. I need not repeat my comments, which appeared in the *Hill Times* following that unilateral government decision. It pains me still that the House is so openly divided on the appointment of its most senior table officer and chief administrator. How can one serve impartially, build trust and confidence, when His Majesty's loyal opposition and other parties vote against the nomination of the individual charged with such a mission?

The clerk is, by law, the secretary to the BOIE. What kind of management board would accept that their most-trusted officer be appointed without their participation or consent?

Why would a Speaker, elected by his peers, accept that the government of the day chose his primary and closest adviser?

That should not happen ever again.

The decision of the House need not be unanimous on the choice of the individual recommended. At minimum, the official opposition should be in agreement. Ideally, all parties should be comfortable with the choice.

However, the selection process should be unanimously enshrined in the Standing Orders.

It need not be complex, nor the selection be limited to in-House candidates exclusively.

Here is what I suggest: candidates should be interviewed by an all-party panel appointed by the BOIE. The recommendation on a selected candidate should go to the House via the Speaker. Upon the tabling of said recommendation, the Speaker shall put the question for a vote. The adoption of the motion shall be an order of the House to the GIC to appoint. The governor-in-council status is important to keep the position in parallel to that of deputy ministers, both for classification and remuneration.

However, the clerk should not serve “at pleasure,” which means he or she can be summarily removed by the GIC. The clerk of the House should only be removed on a vote representing two-thirds of the voices cast, much like several other parliamentary officers like the auditor general, access to information commissioners, et al.

I no longer advise Speakers or House leaders or the BOIE. But if I were, this is what I would advise:

Keep it simple.
Keep it nonpartisan.
Keep it transparent.

Take control and proceed with caution. Your choice will affect all parties and all members of the House for years to come.

Robert Marleau is the former clerk of the House of Commons, former interim privacy commissioner, former access to information commissioner, and former integrity commissioner for the City of Ottawa.

The Hill Times

Workers are sounding the alarm and Parliamentarians must listen

No one understands the issues—and solutions—like workers themselves and they are champing at the bit to share their stories and experiences with decision-makers.

Bea Bruske

Opinion



Ask any worker in Canada how they are faring right now, and they will most likely tell you that they are struggling.

The issues facing workers and their families are stacking up. Eye-watering costs for food, housing, and other necessities are hammering workers' wallets. Inflation is sky high, although slowly moderating, and the double whammy of the Bank of Canada's aggressive interest rate hikes combined with stagnant wages has poured gasoline on the fire.

Communities from coast to coast are grappling with the effects of climate change, while public services are pushed to their limits. ERs are overflowing, and hospitals, long-term care homes, and other care facilities face critical staff shortages that threaten lives.

Workers' rights are under attack as wealthy CEOs seek to maximize their bottom lines at any cost; corporations report bumper profits while workers take real pay cuts, all while millions skip meals to make ends meet.

This is the reality for workers across Canada. Workers need

the government to invest in the solutions to these problems. Vital programs like dental care for low-income children and top-ups for low-income renters are a good start, but more is needed.

With the challenges mounting, Canada's unions are mobilizing hundreds of workers and labour leaders to Parliament Hill to meet with MPs and Senators.

Decades of sitting at the bargaining table have taught me that no one understands the issues—and solutions—like workers themselves. They are champing at the bit to share their stories and experiences with decision-makers.

For all our sakes, Parliamentarians would do well to take heed.

Workers in the care sector are being stretched thin after giving their all during the pandemic.

The prime minister will soon meet with premiers to discuss health funding, something Canada's unions have been calling for,

for a long time. Our care systems are at breaking point, with one-in-four people unable to access the care they need for themselves or a loved one. Our future depends on investment in care now. Care workers' calls for meaningful investments in Canada's public care system will improve Canadians' health and well-being and make life more affordable, building resiliency across our society and economy. By increasing health transfers and working with provinces and territories to implement care programs such as universal public pharmacare, dental care for all, universal mental health care, and public long-term care, Canada can find a path out of the care crisis.

Energy sector workers know the effects of climate change better than most of us. Many live and work in communities ravaged by the climate crisis, and know the need to diversify our energy sector. These workers need a plan for our economy to realize

the opportunities of new jobs in these emerging sectors, which is why they are urging decision makers to invest in unionized, sustainable jobs that protect their quality of life, employment, and communities.

Unions have deep roots in communities across the country, and the gains that unionized workers make benefit society as a whole. Workers are urging Parliamentarians to protect their rights by passing strong anti-scab legislation. Banning replacement workers will ensure work stoppages do not become long, drawn-out battles and will help tamp down employers' outsized power in the bargaining process.

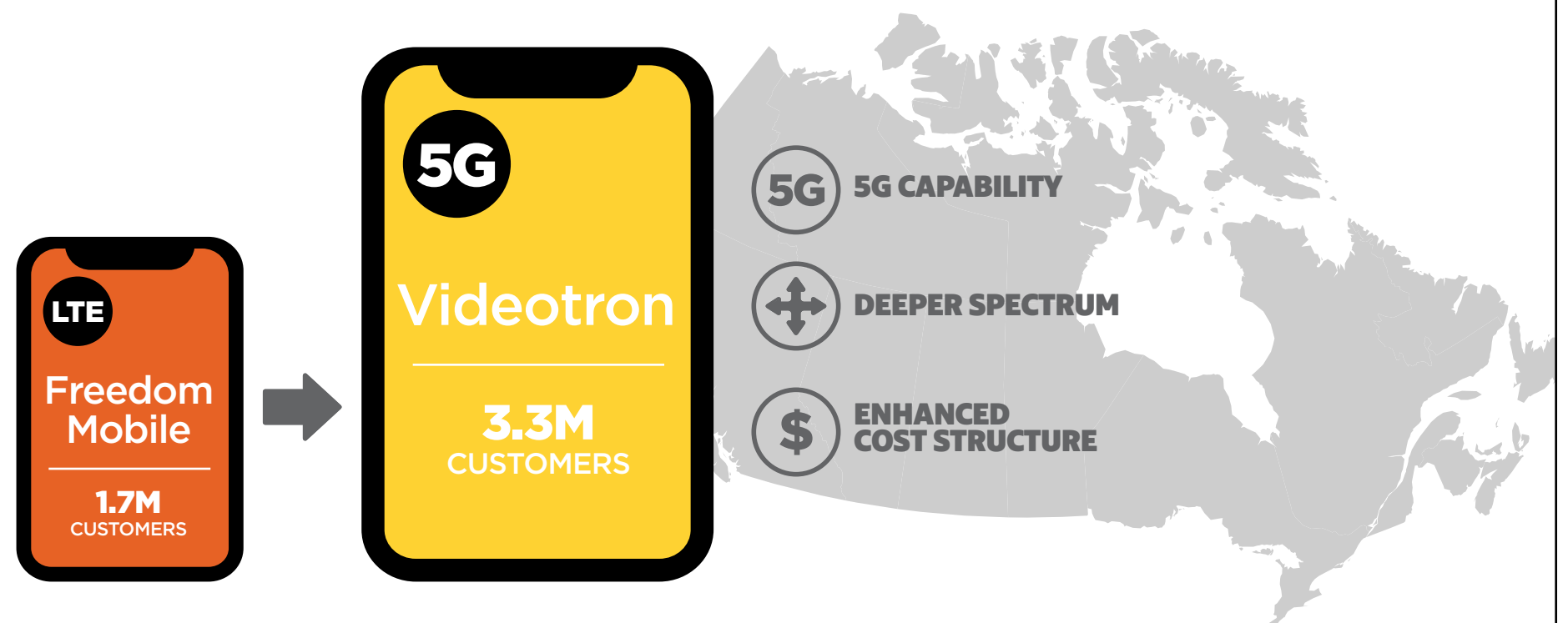
Our economy is skewed towards a wealthy few at the top, and too often, it is their voices that dominate the public discourse. But it is unionized workers who build a strong middle class by fighting for family-supporting wage increases, pensions, and social programs that help people keep working, such as health care and childcare. Decision-makers would be wise to remember this as they hear from workers from ridings across the country on Feb. 7.

Bea Bruske is the president of the Canadian Labour Congress.

The Hill Times

CANADA'S STRONGER FOURTH CARRIER.

Already a leader in providing wireless, internet and video services in **Quebec**, Videotron's acquisition of Freedom Mobile will create a **stronger fourth wireless carrier** with a significantly enhanced cost structure, greater scale, and better spectrum assets and 5G capability in **B.C., Alberta, and Ontario** – where Freedom Mobile currently operates.



The Competition Tribunal has determined Shaw-Videotron-Rogers will likely increase competition.

“It bears underscoring that there will continue to be four strong competitors in the wireless markets in Alberta and British Columbia, namely, Bell, Telus, Rogers, and Videotron, just as there are today. Videotron’s entry into those markets will likely ensure that competition and innovation remain robust.”

– *The Competition Tribunal, Reasons, December 31, 2022, Paragraph 6*

Shaw)

News

Interim House clerk named, but no word on process to appoint permanent successor

Government House Leader Mark Holland announced deputy clerk Eric Janse's appointment as interim clerk of the House of Commons on Jan. 30.

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

The House of Commons returned on Jan. 30 to news of the appointment of an interim clerk, with deputy clerk Eric Janse stepping into the role, but there's still no word yet on how the appointment of a permanent successor will be handled.

"Consultations have taken place with House leaders of recognized parties in the House and, pending the completion of the formal process, the government intends to nominate Mr. Eric Janse to fulfill the role of interim clerk of the House of Commons," Government House Leader Mark Holland (Ajax, Ont.) told the Chamber in the opening minutes of the new sitting.

Just as with the regular role of House of Commons clerk, the interim or acting clerk is appointed by the governor-in-council on the recommendation of the prime minister.

Janse has been deputy House clerk for procedure since October 2021, overseeing the four major directorates that make up the House's procedural services: committees and legislative services, international and interparliamentary affairs (IIA), House proceedings, and parliamentary information and publications.

Originally from Edmonton, Alta., Janse has been working for



Then-clerk Charles Robert, far right, takes part in the Speaker's Parade, which marks the beginning of each House sitting, in the West Block on March 24, 2020, alongside then-deputy Speaker Bruce Stanton, centre, and Sergeant-at-Arms Pat McDonnell, who carries the mace. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

the House since 1992. His past roles include as a table officer, principal clerk of the IIA, clerk assistant and director general of IIA, and as clerk assistant of the committees and legislative services directorate from 2015 to 2021.

"He played a pivotal role in transitioning committees to hybrid proceedings during the pandemic and, in his previous assignment, he was instrumental in developing the Parliament of Canada's international program that we know today," reads a biographical write-up on Janse provided by Amélie Crosson, head of communications for House Speaker Anthony Rota (Nipissing-Timiskaming, Ont.).

Up until late last week, there was no public indication of whether an interim clerk would

be named in time for the House of Commons' return.

Holland was not made available for an interview with *The Hill Times* on the subject last week, but his office indicated that conversations about the appointment of a new clerk are ongoing among House leaders. As part of the request, *The Hill Times* had specifically asked about the appointment of an interim clerk.

Robert announced his decision to retire as House clerk after some four-and-a-half years in the role on Dec. 7, 2022, citing the upcoming launch of a new strategic plan for the House of Commons in 2023, which he said "should be championed by someone who can carry it through from its beginning to its end" in order to "ensure its success."

Under the authority of the House Board of Internal Econ-

omy—an executive committee made up of MPs from all recognized parties (those with at least 12 MPs in the House) and chaired by the House Speaker—the clerk of the House of Commons is responsible for overseeing the House administration, including employees who "support the activities of the House, its committees, Members, and the Board of Internal Economy," explained Crosson in an email response.

Since Robert's retirement, which came into effect on Jan. 13, the House administration has continued its work "under the leadership and guidance of the deputy clerks and interim law clerk in their respective sectors." Along with Janse, Michel Patrice is deputy clerk for administration, and Michel Bédard is interim law clerk and parliamentary counsel.

While there are a "limited number of duties that can only be exercised by the clerk," Crosson said "any such duties that are financial or administrative are delegated to the clerk by the Board of Internal Economy and could either be exercised by the Board itself or delegated" to another House administration official. Some duties assigned to the clerk are also assigned to others, like the administration of the oath of allegiance for MPs, which Crosson noted the deputy clerks, law clerk, and sergeant-at-arms are all also able to perform. The "certification that proceedings were published under the authority of the House" can also be handled by the House Speaker, she said. Only the clerk, or interim clerk, can fulfill duties specifically assigned

by law, namely, oversight of the Members of Parliament Disability Allowance Regulations.

Following Robert's retirement announcement, Conservative and NDP MPs called for the opposition to be consulted on the appointment of his successor, with Conservative MP and deputy whip Chris Warkentin (Grand Prairie, Alta.) saying there should be unanimous agreement between all recognized parties in the House on who will become the next clerk, and interim clerk.

At the time of Robert's appointment in 2017, former House clerks Robert Marleau and Audrey O'Brien and a number of Conservative MPs were critical of the fact that Robert, who had been clerk of the Senate, was appointed without consultation with other parties, and chosen over then-deputy clerk Marc Bosc, who had been serving as interim clerk since O'Brien's retirement in 2016.

O'Brien was vetted by the Procedure and House Affairs Committee before she was appointed in 2005, and Marleau, who served as House clerk from 1987 to 2000, had his name put to the government by the House Speaker following consultation with opposition parties.

As part of the Trudeau Liberal government's open appointment process, the job opening last time around was posted online for all interested to apply, with Robert's selection determined by a four-person panel including one person from the Prime Minister's Office, two from the Privy Council Office, and one from the House leader's office.

During his time as clerk, Robert faced criticism of partisanship in favour of the Liberal government, as reported by the CBC.

Conservative House Leader Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.) provided comment by email in response to an interview request.

"The last time a clerk was chosen by this Liberal government, they inserted their preferred candidate for partisan reasons, leading to an appointment which has lasting ramifications for the institution and staff of Parliament. The government must do much better this time, engaging with all parties, so that we can have a clerk who can capably lead the chamber and House administration," said Scheer in the statement.

In a recent *Hill Times* op-ed, Marleau lamented that the House is openly divided on the appointment of its chief administrator. While he said he doesn't think the House needs to unanimously agree on the choice of the next recommended candidate for clerk—at minimum, he said the official opposition should be in agreement, and all parties "comfortable" with the choice—he said the selection process should be unanimously enshrined in the House Standing Orders. Marleau suggested that process should involve an all-party panel appointed by the BOIE, which would interview candidates, with the resulting recommendation put to the House for a vote as a motion directing the governor in council on the appointment.

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Eric Janse appears before the Procedure and House Affairs Committee as part of its hybrid Parliament study on Oct. 4, 2022. Screenshot courtesy of ParIVu

Convoy supporters mark protest anniversary

With police at the ready and Wellington Street closed to vehicular traffic, it was a far different scene on and around Parliament Hill on Jan. 28 than a year prior, as proponents of the so-called 'Freedom Convoy' marked the anniversary of the start of the 2022 demonstration that would go on for three weeks and have a marked effect on the Canadian political climate.

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade



Comment

Will Canadians opt for co-operative progress or nihilistic post-COVID chaos?

It seems 2023 will be the year that begins to clarify the aftermath—political, economic, and otherwise—of the once-in-a-century virus.

Les Whittington

Need to Know



OTTAWA—We've been talking about exiting from the pandemic for about two years now.

But, despite continuing cases of COVID variants, it does seem that 2023 will be the year that begins to clarify the aftermath—political, economic, and otherwise—of the once-in-a-century virus.

Like the day-to-day aspects of the pandemic, the ramifications of the health emergency will be felt in almost every realm of life. And it increasingly seems as if the dislocations of COVID, coupled with the omnipresent impact of social media, are breaking down and rewriting the rules, conventions, and parameters around how Canadians conduct themselves and what is acceptable in public and personal activities.

Teenagers whipped up on social media have decided it's fun to terrorize transit workers and riders. Provincial premiers think nothing of using the notwithstanding clause to nullify Canadians' rights. Tens of thousands of people expressed support for agitators who blockaded the capital a year ago with the goal of throwing out Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's elected government. And howling citizens have accosted, verbally abused, and threatened progressive politicians across the country, including Trudeau, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, and others. No one even talks about the man



The 'Freedom Convoy 2.0' anniversary protests held at Parliament Hill on Jan. 28. When it comes to public life, the generally accepted notions about shared realities, the limits of advocacy, establishing the truth, and working toward reasonable solutions have been left behind in much of the western world, writes Les Whittington. *The Hill Times* photograph by Stuart Benson

who broke down the gates to Rideau Hall two-and-a-half years ago with the intent of confronting the prime minister while heavily armed.

When it comes to public life, the generally accepted notions about shared realities, the limits of advocacy, establishing the truth, and working toward (if not co-operating on) reasonable solutions on behalf of citizen and country have been left behind in much of the western world. While this development has reached a more destructive level in the United States, there's no doubt it has taken hold in Canada as well. The effects of populist politics can be seen all around, whether it's the normalization of hate, the dismissal of any requirement for facts on the public stage, conspiracy madness, or constant unapologetic anger farming.

You can see it in Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's relentless effort to reduce every problem to a matter of emotional outrage that can be simplistically directed at Trudeau; Alberta

Premier Danielle Smith's attempt to convince voters they are being cheated out of their provincial rights by power-mongering federalists; or Ontario Premier Doug Ford's blithely hypocritical aspiration to work with Trudeau to bring in more nurses when Ontario is in court trying to protect a law that enforces unfair nurses' wages.

How this plays out for the next year will give us a notion of what life will be like in 21st century democracy. Among other things, it will almost certainly determine Trudeau's political future. Having presided over the largely thankless task of trying to lead Canadians through the chaos of the last few years, his popularity is not surprisingly at a low ebb. But, with Poilievre showing few signs of connecting with voters in the key battlegrounds of Quebec and Ontario, the prime minister's options remain open.

The year's events will also likely provide important clues about the cohesiveness of the country, particularly when it

comes to petroleum/climate confrontations, Ottawa's ability to preserve public health care, the integrity of public institutions, federal-provincial relations, and the future of social-economic policy.

The interlocking problems of out-of-reach housing costs, a central bank-induced economic slowdown, the post-COVID inflationary bubble, pronounced wealth inequality, and the shortage of desirable, well-paying middle-class jobs are not going to be solved by any government overnight.

Since 2015, the Trudeau government has actually produced seemingly endless programs meant to address the above-mentioned problems—everything from financial help for low-income families, to huge investments in future-oriented business innovation, to increased taxes on the super-rich and more skills training for young people. But, whether it stems from Trudeau's communications weakness or something else, the government

often gets little credit for these efforts. Whoever mentions the fact that the Trudeau government actually made a bit of headway in reducing wealth inequality or that Ottawa is putting \$20-billion into a pipeline to help Alberta export more crude? Or that all the jobs lost during COVID, and then some, have been recovered?

Many Canadians are, of course, frustrated and discouraged by setbacks to their hopes before, and during, the pandemic. And it has to be said that the Trudeau government, despite its \$8.9-billion outlay under its new affordability plan, has been slow to grasp the public's angst and take comprehensive action to address the post-COVID dystopia.

Such deeply ingrained uncertainty is no doubt a factor in voters' willingness to buy into extremist thinking and share in the growing rejection of government authority and normal concepts of public and political behaviour. At its darkest, this is a path toward more racism, hate, and violence. At the level of public life, it portends additional efforts to mislead the public, increased polarization, continuing vilification of elected leaders, more unhinged policy prescriptions, worsening federal-provincial co-operation, and the regularizing of lawless

“
The effects of populist politics can be seen all around, whether it's the normalization of hate, the dismissal of any requirement for facts on the public stage, conspiracy madness, or constant unapologetic anger farming.”

disruptions of normal political and public life.

In short, the coming year will tell us a lot about whether Canadians will pull together to rebuild a better post-COVID society, or be further drawn into the destructive world of anti-democratic, nihilist populism.

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

INNOVATION

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Innovation Policy Briefing

Quantum innovation depends on diversified startups investments, say experts

The Liberal government unveiled its \$360-million National Quantum Strategy on Jan. 13 to support the growth of quantum sciences and technologies in Canada.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

To promote innovation in Canada's emerging quantum technology industry, the Liberal government should prioritize smaller funding announcements to help a greater number of startup companies navigate "the valley of death," according to quantum industry experts.

"[The Liberal government] should be looking at spreading their ability to help many more companies, instead of big, massive amounts to a few big companies," said Bruno Couillard, co-founder, CEO and chief technology officer of cybersecurity company Crypto4A. "I would hope that the implementation and the distribution of the money will be such that instead of helping nine companies with \$40-million each, they will go around and spread that money to ensure the small and medium enterprises ... all get to partake into this strategy."

The Liberal government unveiled its \$360-million National Quantum Strategy on Jan. 13 to support the growth of quantum sciences and technologies in Canada. The strategy commits \$141-million for basic and applied



Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne says Canada is 'at the forefront ready to lead' in the quantum technologies sector. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Quantum Strategy and support made-in-Canada technology so Canada remains a world leader for decades to come," Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice-Champagne, Que.) said in the press release.

Daniel Oblak, an assistant professor for the Institute for Quantum Science and Technology at the University of Calgary, told *The Hill Times* he agrees that smaller funding announcements spread out across a larger number of quantum technology companies might be prudent. He argued that innovation could be best served by funding startup companies that "don't have the whole machinery going."

"Startups and innovators, they need to get through the valley of death," he said. "It's not easy at any level to take things out of a university setting ... It becomes a lot of extra work to take on these entrepreneurship and innovation tasks."

Oblak said he has no major issues with the National Quantum Strategy, but it remains to be seen whether the strategy will work as intended. He said the strategy's focus on supporting basic research will potentially help development of quantum technologies that will add value to society over the long term.

"It may not be obvious right now, and not all of [basic research] will lead to those benefits, but this is how you develop things for the long run," he said. "You want Canada to come up with some of the groundbreaking things that will resonate for

Continued on page 18

research, \$45-million to develop and retain expertise in the quantum sector, and \$169-million to support commercialization through funding from agencies including the National Research Council, Global Innovation Clusters, and Innovative Solutions Canada.

Couillard said he is happy overall with the strategy, but questions remain about how quantum technology companies will benefit from the available funding.

On Jan. 23, the Liberal government announced an investment of \$40-million towards Toronto's Xanadu Quantum Technologies Inc., to build and commercialize a photonic-based quantum computer. In a June 2022 paper published in the research journal *Nature*, Xanadu described how Borealis,

the company's latest quantum computer, was capable of providing a series of numbers with a specified range of probability in just 36 millionths of a second—an operation they estimated would take the current most powerful supercomputers in the world more than 9,000 years to match.

Couillard argued that a \$40-million investment in Xanadu may make for an impressive headline in a press release, but is not necessarily as beneficial to the quantum sector as \$1-million investments spread across 40 startup companies.

Couillard argued that Xanadu "is not in great need of cash," and cited a Nov. 9, 2022, *Globe and Mail* story that said the company raised \$100-million from investors—including Canadian private capital firm Georgian and Porsche Automobil Holding SE—following the launch of Borealis.

"Hopefully, this is not going to be the trend, because there's not a lot of money in the pile. They've announced the strategy [and] I think it's a great strategy, but there's not a lot of money," said Couillard. "I'm hoping the government is not going to spend all of their money in these big splashy announcements that, in the end, is not really going to help the ecosystem."

Couillard serves as a board member of Quantum Industry Canada, a consortium of quantum technology companies that includes developers of technologies for quantum computing, quantum communications and cryptography. He is also a member of the

Canadian National Quantum Strategy committee.

Xanadu's \$178-million quantum computer project is expected to create 530 jobs in the high-tech and quantum computing fields, according to a Jan. 23 government press release.


"Quantum technologies will set the course of the future and thanks to companies like Xanadu, Canada is at the forefront ready to lead. With today's announcement, our government is strengthening Canada's position in quantum technology and helping to create more economic growth and good jobs for Canadians. We'll continue to build this sector through our National



Crypto4A's Bruno Couillard says the Liberal government should spread investments around in the quantum technologies sector, instead of 'big splashy announcements.' *Photograph courtesy of Bruno Couillard*



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks with reporters after a cabinet meeting in the West Block on Jan. 31. The release of Canada's quantum strategy follows similar quantum strategies that have been announced around the world in recent years. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



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Innovation Policy Briefing

Quantum innovation depends on diversified startups investments, say experts

Continued from page 16

decades or centuries, as well as making the new gadgets that are going to be sold on the market in the next 10 years.”

The release of Canada’s quantum strategy follows similar quantum strategies that have been announced around the world in recent years. Europe’s 10-year Quantum Technologies Flagship launched on Oct. 29, 2018, and the United States passed its National Quantum Initiative Act on Dec. 21, 2018.

Oblak said that Canada isn’t behind other nations when it comes to supporting the quantum industry. The funding for Canada’s quantum strategy was announced in the 2021 federal budget, which allowed a head start on investments into quantum technology companies prior to its official release, he said.

“In reality, this funding has already started to trickle into the research area. In that sense, I can see that there was probably a recognition that this is urgent, and we should start funding already,” he said. “Lag maybe allowed other places to catch up in the quantum area, but I wouldn’t say we’re behind. We’re still strong. And this will allow us to regain even more of the leadership that we have had for a long time.”

Investments under the national quantum strategy include an announcement by Champagne on March 15, 2022, of \$137.9-million through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada’s Collaborative Research and Training Experience grants and Alliance grants to help develop the talent pipeline needed to support growth in the quantum sector.

The Hill Times reached out to Conservative MP Rick Perkins (South Shore–St. Margarets, N.S.) and to NDP MP Brian Masse (Windsor West, Ont.), their parties’ respective innovation critics, to discuss the National Quantum Strategy, but did not receive a response by deadline.

Nadish de Silva, a Canada Research Chair in the Mathematics of Quantum Computation and an assistant professor in the mathematics department at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, said that Canada has historically “punched well above its weight in quantum information and technologies and we would be wise to maintain our position.”

“There will be greater competition with the rest of the world now. The race is both a sprint and a marathon in the sense that some quantum technologies are near fruition, whereas others will require sustained investment and effort over a longer timeframe,” he said in a Jan. 26 emailed statement. “I also wonder with respect to the goals of improving diversity in the talent pool, whether enough attention is being paid to the earliest stages of the pipeline. It may well be outside the scope of the [National Quantum Strategy] to address equitable STEM educational opportunities for pre-university students, but doing so is necessary for achieving the aforementioned goals.”

Stephanie Simmons, the founder and chief quantum officer of Photonic, a quan-

tum technologies company based in B.C. and a Canada Research Chair in Quantum Computing at Simon Fraser University, said that Canada is at a turning point when it comes to quantum technologies.

“It’s fantastic to move from a grassroots approach towards quantum technologies, because there’s still a lot of open questions on how best to implement these things, [and] how best to execute these things,” said Simmons, who also serves as a co-chair of Canada’s National Quantum Strategy’s Quantum Advisory Council. “It’s absolutely the right time to move towards a co-ordinated effort where we’re all rowing the boat in the same direction and maximizing the opportunity for the country and getting in front of this. A lot of other countries are making that same realization, so we are in good company.”

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The Hill Times

Canada quantum industry statistics

- According to a study commissioned by the National Research Council of Canada in 2020, the total economic impact of quantum technologies in Canada by 2025, including indirect and induced effects, will be \$533-million, with 1,100 jobs and \$188.3-million in returns.
- In 2045, quantum is expected to be a \$138.9-billion industry, with 209,200 jobs and \$42.3-billion in returns.
- Earlier investments by private and public sectors, including more than \$1-billion invested by the federal government between 2009 and 2020, has helped to produce a highly skilled research and development community in quantum technologies.
- Canada’s quantum sector currently includes more than 100 ecosystem players, including companies, research labs, academic institutions, accelerators and incubators.

Source: *National Quantum Strategy Consultations: What We Heard Report, July 18, 2022, Innovation Canada*

Global quantum computing information

- Public and private investments in quantum computing globally reached \$35.5-billion by 2022 across a range of quantum technologies.
- Private investments for quantum technologies added \$3.2-billion in 2021 alone and more than \$5.5-billion in the past decade.
- At the beginning of 2022, a total of 46 companies worldwide were actively developing quantum computing hardware.
- The quantum computing sector is experiencing a talent shortage. Globally, more than half of quantum computer companies are currently hiring.
- The fact that quantum technologies are still in their infancy means that most current jobs are highly technical, especially with academic specializations and PhDs. In the past year, however, more diverse profiles, such as marketing and sales roles requiring prior work experience, have begun to appear, showing that the market is maturing.

Source: *State of Quantum Computing: Building a Quantum Economy, World Economic Forum, Sept. 13, 2022*

Our regulatory stagnation is killing innovation

Innovation will never convert into productivity growth unless we constantly modernize our regulations, empowering businesses to implement innovative new practices that also protect consumers.

ISG Senator
Colin Deacon

Opinion



Regulatory stagnation can cause harm because technologies, products, and business models are rapidly changing, and our regulatory frameworks are not keeping up. This creates increasing economic and public risks. The response to this stagnation is often to promote deregulation, but this, too, can increase the risk of public harm through unsafe products, underperforming services, or hazardous conditions. How do we overcome regulatory stagnation while still protecting the public and embracing the need for innovation in our economy?

There is a proven solution. I’ll get to that in a moment, but first, let’s explore the problem.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) measures the degree to which competition and innovation policies are promoted or inhibited within member countries. Their Product Market Regulation Indicators measure and compare economy-wide regulatory and market environments. In terms of regulatory burden, Canada is one of the worst performing countries in the OECD, ranking 35th of 38 member countries.

Another bit of bad news lies within the most recent Global Innovation Index. Despite gradually improving in recent years, Canada is the only G7 country that produces less innovation output relative to its level of investment. In other words, our substantial investments in innovation are not producing commensurate results in terms of improved economic performance.

Despite increasing investments in innovation initiatives, we keep producing lackluster results, in part because of regulatory stagnation. In this ever-changing world, innovation will never convert into productivity growth unless we constantly modernize our regulations, empowering businesses to implement innovative new practices that also protect consumers.

Consider this example. Until last November, Canada’s electric metering legislation only allowed electric vehicle charging stations to charge for the amount of time used and not the actual cost of the electricity delivered. As a result, condo and rental property managers, and other po-

tential market participants, were disincentivized from investing in charging stations. Our regulatory stagnation prevented the market from helping to deliver on this top government priority.

This example illustrates the extent to which Canada desperately needs a major, whole-of-government strategy to meaningfully address our OECD-leading legacy of regulatory burden and stagnation. We must create the regulatory agility necessary to protect Canadians, spur innovation, and increase productivity growth.

Treasury Board’s current initiatives—the Annual Regulatory Modernization Bill and targeted regulatory reviews—are good steps in the right direction but barely scratch the surface. We need an approach that is far more fit-for-purpose—one that can increasingly create an efficient and modernized regulatory system that is pro-competitive, encourages innovation and investment, and accelerates the growth of business, while still protecting consumers from risks and harms.

Good news: there is a proven solution based on the use of standards. A standard is a set of criteria that is collaboratively agreed to by the stakeholders in a specific industry, including government. Standards differ from regulations in that they are developed through a rigorous and transparent process outside of government and then must be certified. Decades ago, the United Kingdom, European Union, and the United States, among others, created a strategic approach to incorporating standards into their legislative instruments.

In a recent op-ed, Keith Jansa, CEO of the Digital Governance Council, argued for the federal government to institute governor-in-council (GIC) powers to recognize standards, codes of practice, or certification programs that provide equal or greater protections to those required by law. Each departmental minister could then establish an expert advisory panel to carefully review each decision, before being approved by the minister and submitted to GIC.

In short, this approach would enable the adherence to an accredited standard to fulfil the requirements of a current regulation. Two conditions would have to be met: 1) they must be developed by an organization that adheres to best-in-class international practices; and 2) most importantly, they cannot reduce the public’s protections from unsafe products, underperforming services, or hazardous conditions.

There is an urgent need for ongoing agile regulatory reform across our entire economy. It is critical if we want to encourage businesses—large and small—to innovate, invest, and achieve productivity improvements. Prioritizing regulatory agility is an exceedingly low-cost way for Canada to become a globally competitive market for innovators, while delivering affordability and protection to consumers.

Senator Colin Deacon was appointed to the Senate of Canada as a representative of Nova Scotia in June 2018 and has since been part of the Independent Senators Group. He currently serves as deputy chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Commerce, and the Economy.

The Hill Times



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Benoit Boulet
Faculty of Engineering

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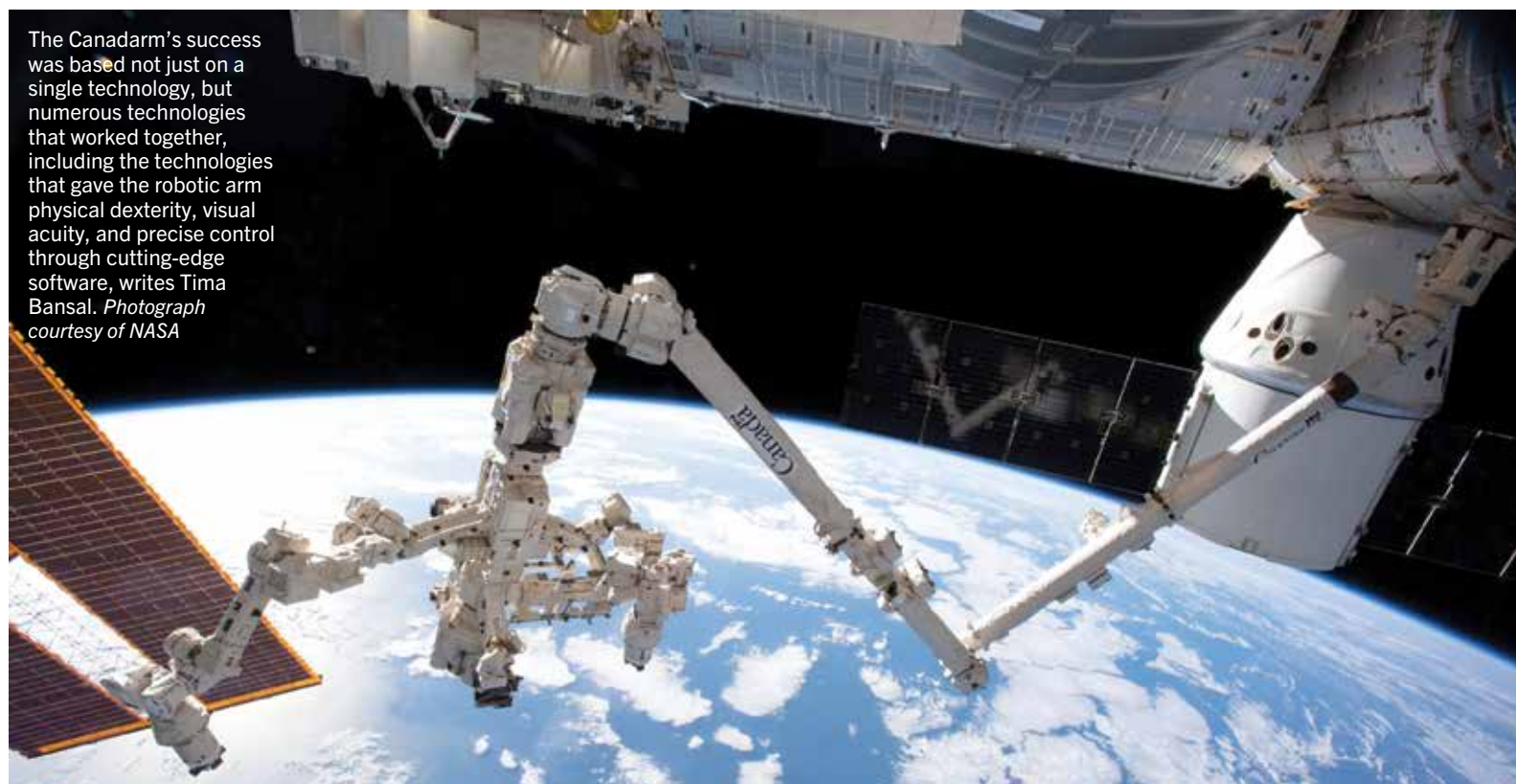


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Discover the project:



Innovation Policy Briefing



The Canadarm's success was based not just on a single technology, but numerous technologies that worked together, including the technologies that gave the robotic arm physical dexterity, visual acuity, and precise control through cutting-edge software, writes Tima Bansal. Photograph courtesy of NASA

Corporations need to embrace a made-in-Canada approach to innovation

It is time for Canadian companies to recognize that we shouldn't be looking to Silicon Valley for inspiration, but we need our own brand of innovation that requires collaboration.

Tima
Bansal

Opinion



When most Canadians think of the heartland of corporate innovation, they likely think of Silicon Valley. This is the home of creative destruction, failing

fast and cheap, open innovation, and chasing moonshots. But, what's good for Silicon Valley is not necessarily good for Canadian business.

Most of Canada's GDP is generated in the extractives and manufacturing industries, which rely on physical capital and heavy industry. This is a far cry from the tech sector, where innovations can be simply bolted onto a platform technology (the internet) and each innovation sits almost independently of others. An improvement in one technology simply catalyzes improvements in another. A failure in one technology rarely affects others.

In Canada's heavy and manufacturing industries, numerous technologies form a complex array that support each other to perform sometimes a single function. And failures are expensive—not just financially, but potentially to human life.

Take the example of the highly successful Canadarm that supported numerous space missions. Its success was based not just on a single technolo-

gy, but numerous technologies that worked together, including the technologies that gave the robotic arm physical dexterity, visual acuity, and precise control through cutting-edge software. Most companies excel at one of these technologies, not all. For the Canadarm to have succeeded, numerous technologies had to come together to support the overall function.

It is time for Canadian companies to recognize that we shouldn't be looking to Silicon Valley for inspiration, but we need our own brand of innovation—one that embraces the assembly of numerous technologies that require collaboration. These collaborations are not just with the usual suspects, such as suppliers and customers. They are also with competitors, local communities, NGOs, academics and governments.

Canadians are especially good at collaborating and working with others. We embrace diversity in all its forms. We are open to new ideas. And we are smart and creative.

How Canada's corporations will leapfrog Silicon Valley

This kind of systems-based collaborative innovation can be hard for policymakers and corporate leaders to understand. So, let me provide the example of Montreal-based Enerkem, a world leader in converting waste to biofuels and chemical products through an innovative gasification technology.

When Enerkem initially approached Suncor to fund the project, Suncor hesitated. To show the power of the gasification technology, Enerkem had presented Suncor the entire integrated waste-to-biofuels process in a commercial demonstration project. Enerkem had to pull together all the neighbouring technologies to demonstrate the power of their specific innovation. Suncor engineers, whose talents lay in process integration, focused on the flaws in the integrated process, such as potential equipment failures, weak standard operating procedures,

and a projected operating capacity that far exceeded the actual capacity. But, when they came back for a second look, they spotted the magic in the machine: gasification.

Suncor saw the power of the potential partnership combining Enerkem's technology with their operational and technical expertise. In 2019, Suncor invested \$50-million and worked with Enerkem engineers on process integration. In 2020, more partners jumped on board, including the federal and provincial governments, who collectively invested more than \$230-million.

Enerkem is now well placed to scale their gasification technology—which is good for the planet and for its shareholders—on the world stage.

The Canadian approach to innovation needs to be about systems

As the founder and leader of Innovation North at the Ivey Business School, our team is co-creating a made-in-Canada approach to innovation—one that embraces systems innovation. A topflight management research team works with approximately 20 of Canada's leading innovative companies to apply systems thinking to corporate innovation.

At Innovation North, we believe that all corporate innovation needs to fit within a system of technologies, as well as social and ecological systems. We are developing a systems design process that will not only make Canadian corporations more creative, it will also innovate more sustainable products and services that are more profitable in the long run and contribute to more prosperous societies and healthy ecosystems.

Both Suncor and Enerkem understand systems thinking. They understand the importance of integrating technologies to perform a function and support societal and ecological systems. This type of thinking has catalyzed a powerful innovation that will divert waste from landfills and create an alternative to fossil fuels.

Some of the challenges that we at Innovation North are undertaking include partnering with the Co-operators Group to make homes more resilient to climate change-induced weather events; partnering with Neo Exchange and the Royal Bank of Canada to innovate a new financial instrument to stem biodiversity loss; and partnering with the agri-food industry in southwestern Ontario to foster the circular economy.

We believe that systems-based corporate innovation is the key that will unlock Canada's research and development talents. If done successfully, supported by governments and corporate leaders alike, such uniquely homemade innovation can springboard Canada's companies on the world stage.

Dr. Tima Bansal is a professor and Canada Research Chair at the Ivey Business School. She is also the founder and leader of Innovation North—an initiative that is applying systems thinking to corporate innovation—and the founder of the Network for Business Sustainability.

The Hill Times

Achieving Canada's EV mandates requires more money for research and future talent

Federal investment to support a pan-Canadian, academia-industry research consortium will complement the government and industry investments on the manufacturing side and set our country on the path to significant opportunities for EV innovation.

Narayan Kar
& Madeline
McQueen

Opinion



Last year, the Government of Canada was prompted to introduce an updated emissions reduction plan due to the ever-increasing greenhouse gas emissions. The plan outlines steps for the Canadian economy to achieve emission levels well below that of 2005, by 2030. One of the steps in the plan is implementing “cleantech,” technology that aims to improve environmental sustainability, to the largest pollutant emitting industries in the country, including the transportation sector.

Transportation is responsible for 25 per cent of greenhouse emissions in Canada, while 11 per cent is from passenger vehicles alone. To reduce these figures, the government has mandated that 20 per cent of new vehicles sold in Canada must be electric vehicles (EVs) by 2026, 60 per cent by 2030, and 100 per cent by 2035. The automotive industry is responding to these mandates by producing more EVs than ever before. However, many Canadians are still unconvinced by the cost, driving range, and available charging infrastructure, despite the fact the government is providing incentives for the public to make the switch to EVs. Therefore, to overcome the limitations and alleviate the public's concerns, there is a need for further research and innovation to advance EV technology and achieve the government's desired objectives.

Although there have been significant investment in EVs and EV component manufacturing by industry, with supportive investments from governments over the past couple of years, we currently do not have enough of the specific know-how and talent pipeline in most areas of EV technology. A knowledgeable workforce is crucial to the success of new investments and manufacturing facilities. For example, the new Stellantis EV research and development (R&D) facility and LG Energy Solutions' EV battery plant currently being built in Windsor, Ont., will require nearly 3,000 engineers, technicians, and plant operators, necessitating the creation and training of more local technical talent.

Therefore, on top of the investments being made in manufacturing facilities to support the EV mandates, there must be a proportional investment in R&D at universities and colleges. Academic investments create opportunities for innovation, allow for collaboration with industry to advance technology, and most importantly, train future generations of researchers, engineers, and technicians. An example of an academic institution working closely with industry is the Centre for Hybrid Automotive Research and Green Energy (CHARGE) at the University of Windsor. This advanced EV lab collaborates with many automotive industry partners and other academic institutions to train future experts in a hands-on learning environment.

Canada has seen significant investments relating to EV batteries over the last year. In addition to having strong battery and battery component supply chains, improvement in electric motor, power electronics, and control supply chains are also required. Localized supply chains provide great potential for commercialization and economic benefits and will support EV manufacturing. Canada has unique competitive advantages in future EV supply chain development with our 100-plus-year experience in automotive innovation and manufacturing. As well, all minerals and metals required to produce EV components can be found in Canada. However, our future workforce will need to be trained in design and manufacturing of EVs, and in sustainable ways to extract the precious resources needed to produce them.

Industry, government labs, and academic institutions are very keen to produce research breakthroughs in the areas of an electric vehicle's battery, powertrain, and software. These are the most expensive components in an EV and are also the ones in need of the most development, as without them, you don't have an EV. Some specific examples of future innovation in battery and powertrain areas include power or energy density improvement, enhanced thermal management for improved performance and durability, and cost and weight reduction. On the software side, better control and energy efficiency improvement through artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms are required.

A federal investment to support a pan-Canadian, academia-industry research consortium will complement the government and industry investments on the manufacturing side and set our country on the path to significant opportunities for EV innovation in the future. The consortium can help improve battery longevity, electric motor performance, thermal management, automotive cybersecurity, and develop solutions for EV lightweighting and battery crash safety. This will help Canada become a leader in EV design and manufacturing, while working towards achieving public EV trust and the government's emission reduction goals.

Dr. Narayan Kar is a professor within the electrical and computer engineering department at the University of Windsor, where he also holds Tier 1 Canada Research Chair position in Electrified Vehicles. He is the director of the Centre for Hybrid Automotive Research and Green Energy (CHARGE) Lab at the University of Windsor. Madeline McQueen is the research and development engineer at CHARGE.

The Hill Times

Canada can become the international low-carbon innovator of choice

Canada brings more to the table than natural resources and a peaceable temperament, because its research strengths include the full panoply of needed disciplines.

Martha Crago
& Benoit
Boulet

Opinion



The war in Ukraine has made energy security top of mind for countries such as Germany. As leaders look for alternatives to Russian oil and gas, many also see an opportunity to accelerate the transition to clean energy and meet commitments to reduce emissions.

This heightened urgency to decarbonize economies is great news for Canada. Our country boasts abundant mineral reserves, needed for a world in which electricity will be king, as well as the environmental and labour standards to extract them ethically. We have a peaceful, trustworthy reputation on the global stage—an asset becoming more and more valuable as countries feel vulnerable.

Realizing the opportunities, the prime minister and the minister of innovation, science, and industry have been making the most of Canada's newfound allure, seeking out strategic new economic partners. The federal and provincial governments have been strengthening economic clusters centred on the energy transition. For example, the Vallée de la transition énergétique in Bécancour, Que., focused on the battery sector, has attracted both multinational giants such as BASF and General Motors, as well as made-in-Quebec enterprises.

As Canada courts investment, we must also think about building our attractiveness as a research and innovation partner—and that is where our universities add substantial value to the innovation ecosystem. In short, we must do more than become a *supplier* of choice; we must also become a global *innovator* of choice across the supply chain needed to build the low-carbon economy.

Canada brings more to the table than natural resources and a peaceable temperament. Its research strengths include the full panoply of needed disciplines: smart grids, microgrids, next-generation batteries and cells, electric vehicle development, new sustainable materials, renewable energy technology, vehicle automation, sustainable mining, battery recycling, and more. For example, McGill engineering professor Jeffrey Bergthorson has been working with Siemens Energy at advancing metal-water

reactors, which burn metals to create hydrogen as well as to create heat that could be used to generate cheap, carbon-free electricity.

Canada must build on our strong research foundation and strengthen its capacity to create new international partnerships across the research, development, and innovation (R, D & I) cycle. To do so will require timely, targeted investment.

First, we need to dramatically increase our pool of highly skilled personnel so Canadian companies have the workforce needed for expansion. The government should create internationally competitive stipends to attract and retain more than 500 graduate students in fields related to clean technology, critical minerals, and automotive and battery supply chains. In a red-hot global market for talent, the dollar value of fellowships for students will need to exceed \$50,000 net, after tuition is paid. These students would be trained in partnership with industry, preparing them to tackle critical industrial challenges.

Secondly, Canada needs funding to quickly connect researchers from university, industry, and government across the nation in the areas related to the energy transition. The mechanism needs to be selective, to build on existing industry relationships, and to provide adequate funding to enable real advances. Bringing Canada's R, D & I talent together will allow us to respond rapidly to emerging opportunities for international partnerships and strengthen our attractiveness.

Finally, we need the ability to create bilateral large-scale projects involving collaborations between post-secondary institutions and industry in Canada and in like-minded countries, collaborations that address urgent energy transition needs. Funding mechanisms could include a significant expansion of existing programs, new funding programs, or a network of centres of excellence between Canada and its chosen partner. Here, the Nov. 30, 2022, announcement that the government is entering into formal negotiations for close collaborations under Horizon Europe is welcome.

Driven by the war in Ukraine and very public commitments to rapidly lower emissions, countries are developing their low-carbon economies at a breakneck pace. Canada has the assets needed to thrive. But to lead, we must quickly put in place the necessary measures to attract and retain talent and build international R, D & I partnerships.

Martha Crago is the vice-principal, research and innovation, at McGill University and an internationally respected adviser on university research and partnerships. Benoit Boulet is the associate vice-principal, innovation and partnerships, at McGill University and an expert in the design and control of electric vehicles and green energy systems.

The Hill Times

Innovation Policy Briefing

The effect of climate crisis on Canadian coastal communities is an all-hands-on deck situation, but the Liberals aren't acting

If the Liberals keep delaying on disaster mitigation and prevention, our coastal environment will become more hostile.

NDP MP
Lisa Marie
Barron

Opinion



Members of the Canadian Armed Forces respond to Nova Scotia's request for assistance with relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona in September 2022. DND photograph by Corporal Connor Bennett

We are in a climate emergency and Canadians are already experiencing unprecedented and destructive weather events. In my riding alone, many coastal communities are seeing these devastating effects.

Hurricane Fiona's destruction on the East Coast was a shocking example of the consequences of more frequent and extreme weather events. Homes were dragged out to sea, small craft harbours decimated, and communities left without power.

On the West Coast, people are seeing similar tragedies, with harsh flooding and rising water temperatures.

As a parent, I'm beyond worried about the future we are leaving for our children.

Canada has an opportunity now to rebuild more sustainable weather resistant infrastructure and plan for the future. But advances in the blue economy will depend on good climate resilient infrastructure that meets the needs of coastal communities. The Liberal government needs to be investing in this critical infrastructure instead of dragging its feet on climate protections.

Right now, the Liberals' lack of a plan for disaster mitigation means that people's livelihoods are in jeopardy. The scale of damage caused by Hurricane Fiona is significant, and people are worried harbour repairs won't be completed in time for this year's fishing season. On the West Coast, flooding has caused devastating

personal and economic losses because of highway and railway closures.

Coastal and Indigenous communities, workers, and all Canadians are anxious about the future of our marine environments, their jobs, and their safety. This is a situation that will only get worse without disaster funding.

The key is readiness—maintenance, and prevention, which is less expensive than repairing damage. Researchers are already indicating that droughts, floods, and storms could cost Canada more than \$100-billion by 2050.

With the current situation, there is a need but also an opportunity for fishers, all levels of government, and industry to innovate together to create real solutions

for our changing environment. The Blue Economy Strategy has two critical goals: protecting the natural environment and fostering a stronger business environment. This is an opportunity to do both at once, and it should not be wasted.

Firstly, small craft harbour overhauls and modernization is needed—wharves need to be built higher, breakwaters need to be thicker, and more investments in resilient gear must be made. But beyond this, there is tremendous room for innovation.

Adaptation, research, and development are the way of the future and it's time Canada starts heading in this direction.

As change and innovation happens, we must make sure the

government and other stakeholders consult with those who live and work in coastal regions. Communities need clear and timely transition plans, developed with public input. But right now, it seems that the Liberals' involvement or distribution of information to those affected by coastal planning and policy is only an afterthought.

It's time to change this approach and instead listen to fishers and act quickly.

When independent fishers speak, they are doing so with generations of accumulated knowledge on their communities' infrastructure needs. It would be wise to listen.

As with many climate-related avenues, the window open to us now will not last forever. The Liberal government is in a position where it clearly sees what is coming—and an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. If the Liberals keep delaying on disaster mitigation and prevention, our coastal environment will become more hostile.

We can innovate now, in preparation for harder times ahead, or we can attempt to innovate under increased pressure, at a disadvantage, in the middle of those hard times.

The Blue Economy Regulatory Review provides a real opportunity to look at ways that we can encourage growth and innovation in climate preparedness. And now more than ever, the past year has taught us the importance of being prepared. Our coastal communities know that the climate crisis is an all-hands-on-deck situation; it's time to treat it like one.

MP Lisa Marie Barron represents the riding of Nanaimo-Ladysmith, B.C., and is the NDP critic for fisheries, oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard. Being born on the East Coast, and raising her children on the West Coast, she has a deep appreciation for marine habitats. She values the importance of Canada's blue economy, as well as the need for conservation efforts.

The Hill Times

The Government of Canada is advancing Canada's position as a global leader in innovation

It has become clear that we can't keep doing things the same old way; we need to make sure Canadians benefit from their own ingenuity.

Liberal MP
Andy Fillmore

Opinion



Canadians are innovative, taking on challenges and coming up with inventive ways to solve them. Consider insulin, road lines,

the paint roller, or the Java programming language: Canadians have great ideas.

It has become clear that we can't keep doing things the same old way; we need to make sure Canadians benefit from their own ingenuity. We know that we have to make a different kind of investment and work with industry in a new, collaborative way. In short, we need to innovate.

That is why our government fundamentally shifted Canada's innovation landscape with the launch of the Global Innovation Clusters and Innovative Solutions Canada. These two programs are reshaping how our nation supports—and benefits from—our own good ideas.

The Global Innovation Clusters are driving innovation across the country in five areas

where Canada has a significant competitive advantage: digital technologies, plant-based protein industries, next-generation manufacturing, artificial intelligence and supply chain logistics, and the ocean economy. These clusters are the Government of Canada's co-investment with industry to continue building ecosystems that accelerate innovation and take innovators further, faster through collaboration.

Canada's Ocean Supercluster is a prime example of how this approach generates success, tapping into the combined strengths of the small, medium, and large enterprises operating in Canada's oceans and forming partnerships to develop innovative projects and solutions that enrich the lives of all Canadians. The Ocean Cluster has approved more than 70 projects worth more

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In November 2022, Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne announced more than \$1 billion in funding to support scientists, researchers, and students, but only about 20 per cent (generously) will get tenure track positions, writes Sarah Lubik. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The Valley of Never- Having-Lived: Canada's innovation talent problem

In Canada, we celebrate how we support companies, but in reality, our innovation system is structurally and culturally stacked against entrepreneurial scientists from the start.

Sarah
Lubik

Opinion



As Canadian policy and investment encourages more innovative startups, we constantly hear about the “valley of death”: the point where a startup has some momentum but struggles for market traction. We hang lofty hopes on research-based startups getting past this to solve global challenges and grow into scalable companies. However, focusing on the valley of death will keep us ignoring a valley in even greater need of bridges: The Valley of Never-Having-Lived. This is where potentially world-changing startups and entrepreneurs never get the chance to realize their potential.

In Canada, we boast about the science-based companies that have grown to make substantial impact, including: AbCellera, behind solutions used to treat COVID patients, and STEMCELL Technologies, Canada's largest biotech firm. Such companies usually stay in Canada, create jobs to keep and attract talent, and provide Canadian solutions to pressing global challenges. We celebrate how we supported these companies, but in reality, our inno-

vation system is structurally and culturally stacked against entrepreneurial scientists from the start. This begs the question: *how many transformative ideas never got the chance to live?*

The federal government recently announced investments of more than \$1-billion into world-class research, graduate students, and post-doctoral researchers. But of these highly educated people working on transformational research, only about 20 per cent (generously) will get tenure track positions, and yet we train them as though they all will. Consequently, the remaining 80 per cent will pursue other careers, often with limited preparation in how to effectively apply their talents in industry, government, and other organizations, and end up changing careers without support. The failure to fully realize this potential represents a substantial loss of the full impact of that massive investment in talent, and ensures that the ideally placed people to take our research forward don't have the opportunity or skills to do it. Just as tragic, when we lose those highly skilled people from their own fields instead of helping them move into relevant positions in entrepreneurship or industry, we also undermine our national capacity to absorb innovation into industry, further weakening our return on Canada's substantial investment in research.

We need to realize this is a people problem before it's a venture problem. Many of these highly educated graduates have the tenacity, drive, and passion needed to be an entrepreneur or intrapreneur, but are not taught to communicate the potential of their science to broader audiences, or how to create a compelling plan for impact. They are rarely socialized to regard entrepreneurship or industry as an attractive path and, even if they are, they are often juggling their studies and several jobs to make ends meet, so lack the opportunity to focus or even try.

Addressing these challenges requires a bridge over that valley and accessible on-ramps. In the national Mitacs Inven-

tion to Innovation (i2I) program, research graduate students, post-docs, and faculty members from any university in Canada learn to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, learn to translate between science and business, and link into national networks of mentors. During the program, Dr. Ben Britton, co-founder of rapidly growing clean-tech venture Ionomr, learned to explain how their membranes would change the fuel cell industry for partners and investors. NanoSentinel's founder, Dr. Viridiana Perez, like many female scientist-entrepreneurs, didn't realize she was an entrepreneur until i2I. She pursued training first but began to identify as an entrepreneur later. Many others do not get an opportunity to participate or focus where stipends, internships, and post-docs could yield incredible returns. In Simon Fraser University's entrepreneurship Co-op (eCo-op) program, cleantech startup Moment Energy's student founders were given non-dilutive \$10,000 awards to spend a few semesters on their venture. With minimal investment, they pivoted into a cleantech company now working with Nissan and Mercedes-Benz.

These experiences show the incredible potential in front of us to catalyze an exponential return on Canada's investment in research and highly educated people by investing in targeted, insightful pathways, programming, and removing barriers for entrepreneurial scientists. With an early focus on people, Canada's innovation ecosystem could ensure that the next transformative science-based venture not only gets the chance to live, it gets set up to thrive.

Dr. Sarah Lubik is an award-winning researcher, ecosystem-builder, and educator focusing on developing the entrepreneurial mindset and supporting science-based innovation. She is the executive and academic director of the Charles Chang Institute for Entrepreneurship at SFU and the academic director of the national Mitacs invention to Innovation (i2I) Skills Training and i2I programming at SFU.

The Hill Times

Canadian innovation lacks forward thinking

If Canada focused more on the merits of the individuals who they are putting in charge and less on giving themselves diversity and climate change scorecards, perhaps we could get back to using the greatest public service I have ever known.

Aman
Chahal

Opinion



The challenge with Canada's innovation agenda is that it is all execution and no planning.

Billions of dollars have been deployed through agencies promoting cleantech development and innovation support with nothing meaningful to show for it. While one may want to blame some malicious scheme at the heart of the matter, the truth remains quite simple: the challenges of bias in the workplace compounded by the motivation to gain voters makes the Canadian government incredibly incompetent.

We love hearing the loud, obnoxious, cocky, and incredibly underqualified person in the room set the direction, right?

I have personally sat in rooms where marginalized founders gave the most eloquent of presentations to ask for government funding. They were decorated with degrees and experience, but were told they “just didn't have it.”

Meanwhile, people who manage places like Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) created a “seed” fund that doesn't give out money at the seed stage.

To be honest, I don't really care that those organizations are basically pushing all the money out the door to people who do not deserve it. I also would not care that they could, just as easily, send that money to the marginalized founder and make more of an impact. It does not even matter to me that their bonuses are tied to how much money they spend, not fund performance.

My problem is this: it is just so embarrassing. I could deal with being discriminated against. But if Business Development Canada is going to create the affirmative action “fund” for female entrepreneurs, can they also publish the list of male founders they are funding through all their other funds? The marginalized founders could try to become co-founders at those companies.

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Innovation Policy Briefing



A combination of advances is making 5G a major element in countries' digitalization strategies, upon which their prosperity increasingly depends, writes Martin Cave. *Unsplash photograph by Paul Hanaoka*

The U.K. spectrum policy is keeping wireless prices low—can Canada do the same?

Canada risks an inadequate supply of spectrum that may limit competition for 5G services, drive up both spectrum and 5G service prices, and delay access to a very significant new technology.

Martin Cave

Opinion



A group of economic consultants recently calculated that between 2010 and 2020, average smartphone speeds in advanced countries increased by 100 times, and data consumption per mobile subscriber went up 90 times. Quality-adjusted prices fell by similar amounts. It is thus not

surprising that the importance of the mobile sector to economic prosperity is recognized by governments, companies, and households.

In mobile technology, the last decade belonged to 4G. We are now in the era of 5G. In one sense, 5G is just a better version of 4G, based on a new technology which provides faster and cheaper internet access to all mobile users. In a more important sense, it is transformational. Its data capacity is huge; and it is versatile, in that a single network—its operation now largely transferred to the cloud—can be “sliced” to provide a range of different services in terms of speed, latency, and other characteristics. This combination of advances is making 5G a major element in countries' digitalization strategies, upon which their prosperity increasingly depends.

Clearly, the availability of spectrum is a precondition for the development of 5G, and the focus internationally has been on the 3.4-4.2 MHz range. Spectrum is the radio waves on which data travels, and getting this out and used in an efficient way is essential to the development of new services.

The norm for allocating spectrum is to auction it. Best practice is to get it out quickly: the sooner the spectrum is available, the sooner 5G can start. Most advanced countries have done so, starting as far back as 2018.

Another key choice is the amount of spectrum made available. Essentially, where more spectrum is available, the lower the auction clearing price will be. Some governments have restricted the offer in certain auctions to enhance auction revenues. But the alternative spectrum policy of “pile it high and sell it cheap” is likely to confer more benefit on customers and even on the government itself (through higher growth and tax revenues).

I have looked at the release of spectrum for 5G in Canada and the United Kingdom. The U.K. was quick out of the blocks in 2018, auctioning a mid-band (3.4-3.6 GHz) spectrum formerly used by the U.K. Ministry of Defence. After bidding for the 150 MHz of spectrum, all four existing mobile network operators gained between 20 and 50 MHz. With previous holdings, that left each of them with at least 40 MHz: the sole new entrant left empty-handed.

In the second 2021 mid-band (3.6-3.8 MHz) 5G auction, three operators came away with 40 MHz each. This left each operator between 80 and 100 mid-band MHz. Each nearly has the 5G holding recommended by the International Telecommunication Union. The prices per MHz per population have been calculated to be US\$0.16 in 2018 and US\$0.09 in 2021. Thus, each of the four operators got their hands on a good holding at a low spectrum price, which was consistent with expectations of competitive 5G service prices.

Things have gone differently in Canada, where the only mid-band auction to have taken place so far was not held until July 2021, when 200 MHz of mid-band spectrum were assigned. But 89 MHz of this already sat with three large mobile operators. Of the remaining 111 MHz, 47 MHz were reserved for regional carriers' mobile providers. This left the three national operators competing for 64 MHz. Hardly enough to meet Canada's needs.

This scarcity led to keen competition among them and high prices—US\$1.12 per MHz per pop (respectively seven and 12 times higher than the prices which were

observed in the U.K.). Such high prices may foreshadow higher service prices when the networks are in place. It is true that more spectrum is on the way, but it won't be available in cities until 2025 or rurally until 2027.

The two countries also differ in their enthusiasm for set-asides, or reserving spectrum at auction for new or smaller operators. Canada has a history going back many years of using set-asides, as described in my co-written 2010 paper for the CD Howe Institute, “Solving Spectrum Gridlock.” In my view, international experience shows it is quite difficult to promote entry or growth of small operators via set-asides. The cost in terms of lost opportunities of assigning valuable spectrum to this purpose should be subject to a rigorous risk analysis which takes full account of valuable spectrum being “sterilized” for years in the control of failing smaller operators.

In Canada, there is a risk that an inadequate supply of spectrum may limit competition for 5G services, drive up both spectrum and 5G service prices, and delay Canada's access to a very significant new technology.

Sir Martin Cave is a visiting professor at the Imperial College London. He was an academic co-director at the Centre on Regulation in Europe and is now a member of the board of directors. He is a regulatory economist specializing in competition law and in the network industries, including airports, broadcasting, energy, posts, railways, telecommunications, and water.

The Hill Times

The Government of Canada is advancing Canada's position as a global leader in innovation



The Liberal government fundamentally shifted Canada's innovation landscape with the launch of the Global Innovation Clusters and Innovative Solutions Canada, two programs that are reshaping how our nation supports—and benefits from—our own good ideas, writes Andy Fillmore. *Photograph courtesy of Unsplash*

through two streams: the Challenge Stream, where companies respond to departmental challenges for their early-stage research and development (R&D) needs, and the Testing Stream, where they can test their last-stage R&D with a department. The program's Pathway to Commercialization gives selected companies the opportunity to sell their innovation directly to the government without further competition.

As of January 2023, Innovative Solutions Canada's Challenge Stream has issued more than 330 awards for funding. And since 2010, its Testing Stream has awarded almost 705 contracts valued at more than \$372-million, enabling hundreds of Canadian SMEs to commercialize their innovations and create high-value jobs.

Together, these programs are supporting the advancement of economic outcomes for Canadians. The Global Innovation Clusters are building partnerships and developing technologies that will have applications around the world, opening up big markets for homegrown innovations, while Innovative Solutions Canada is helping Canadian SMEs advance and commercialize their R&D.

Both programs create well-paying jobs for Canadians, help companies scale up, and position Canada as a global innovation leader.

They are also positioning Canada to succeed in the economy of the future and in global markets. All Canadians will benefit from their continued success.

Andy Fillmore is the Member of Parliament for Halifax and parliamentary secretary to the minister of innovation, science, and industry. First elected in 2015, he has held numerous roles in government including parliamentary secretary for Canadian heritage, for democratic institutions, and for infrastructure and communities.

The Hill Times

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than \$360-million. These projects are delivering more than 120 new made-in-Canada ocean products, processes, and services to sell to the world. Together, these projects are positioning Canada as a leader in the blue economy and are expected to generate thousands of jobs for Canadians.

Across all five clusters, the numbers tell us that this approach

is working. The Global Innovation Clusters have exceeded expectations, approving more than 500 projects worth more than \$2.24-billion—\$1.4-billion from industry and other partners, which involved almost 2,400 partners, more than half of which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SME). More than 8,000 members can connect with like-minded peers, drawing on expertise and resources, to shape projects that

will have an undeniable impact on the everyday lives of Canadians. More than this, the clusters are on track to meet or exceed the overall job creation target of 15,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs by 2023, and 50,000 by 2028.

To keep building momentum, the government is doubling down with another \$750-million over six years for the Global Innovation Clusters, as announced in Budget 2022.

Complementing this, Innovative Solutions Canada is delivering strong results that benefit Canadians. The program is designed to take advantage of the government's capacity as the largest purchaser of goods and services in Canada (roughly \$22-billion annually) to support the growth and scale-up of SMEs.

Innovative Solutions Canada supports commercialization

Canadian innovation lacks forward thinking

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We all have biases about something. But certain biases leave us all paying the price. I would love to see an analysis for how many people left SDTC following its many "restructurings" that shows how many degrees and years of experience walked out that door. If I could venture a guess, you would find people from all walks of life on that list.

Bias operates at every level of the Canadian decision-making agenda.

In 2017, the House Standing Committee on Industry, Science,

and Technology chaired by then-Liberal MP Dan Ruimy submitted to the government one of the best-articulated policy papers on intellectual policy. It was a policy masterpiece. That entire report was overruled because in reality, politicians rely more on a handful of biased "industry experts." This shortsightedness has led to a focus on patenting only IP policies in Canada giving rise to organizations such as the Innovation Asset Collective. Granting agencies like SDTC then push companies to pay for ineffective advice from these or-

ganizations. No real checks and balances.

If Canada focused more on the merits of the individuals who they are putting in charge and less on giving themselves diversity and climate change scorecards, perhaps we could get back to using the greatest public service I have ever known.

Those of us consulting with the real experts, actual Canadians and the general "non elite," are a bit tired of the political messaging. This mess was made by reactionary execution, not researched public policy. No one cares about

the scorecards. You can't actually reduce emissions by projecting greenhouse gases saved. Those technologies must be commercial if we are to save this planet.

How is it even possible that Ottawa is a half-hour flight from Bay Street, but there are zero master of business administration (MBA) programs from the three most finance-focused MBA schools in Canada working to advise on funds? Just because we are giving out a grant does not mean most of your companies are successful, because most of the companies in normal funds fail. Am I the only one who studied at school?

Three things that can be done now to increase efficiency of all government "innovation" funding programs:

1. Create an independent ombudsman that can review complaints about decisions made by granting agencies;

2. Create an independent whistleblower line for all government agencies; and
3. Do a review of which individuals have been "acting" in high-level roles for more than six months.

Make all complaints anonymous and justify why.

Welcome to innovation.

Aman Chahal is the industrial professor for innovation and entrepreneurship at the faculty of mechanical engineering in the University of Alberta. Currently working on building an incubator to promote commercialization of research on campus, her specialization is in identifying commercialization barriers in the cleantech field and finding innovative business models to increase adoption. She worked in Ottawa in the innovation and cleantech field from 2016-2018.

The Hill Times

News

Poilievre's First Nations consultations demonstrate 'maturity,' reconciliation no longer partisan issue, say strategists

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's commitment to consultations with First Nations could mark a new chapter in Conservative-Indigenous relations, but strategists say he has to prove he's turned the page on his previous words and actions. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



If genuine, the Conservative leader's 'change of tune' on reconciliation could be a game-changer for the party's troubled relationship with Indigenous Peoples, say strategists.

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Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) announced on Jan. 24 that he would be "kicking off" consultations with First Nations, led by his caucus' roster of critics, into a proposal allowing communities to "opt-in" to more direct tax revenues from resource development projects on their territories.

"First Nations should have the right to bring home more of the benefits of their resources to their people," Poilievre said at a press conference in Vancouver. "For hundreds of years, First Nations people have suffered under a broken system that gives power over their lives to a faraway government in Ottawa that decides for them. ... That government has decided badly."

While the proposal is among Poilievre's first tangible policy announcements since becoming party leader in 2022, his critics were quick to question his sincerity.

In response, NDP MP Lori Idlout (Nunavut), her party's

Indigenous relations critic, accused Poilievre of attempting to "paper over his history of attacks on Indigenous rights," citing his vote against Canada's adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); his comments against compensation for residential school survivors; and, most recently, his appearance at the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, which ran radio ads in 2018 claiming to debunk the "myths" surrounding Canada's residential school system.

"It is incredibly difficult for Indigenous people to feel that Pierre Poilievre's consultations are genuine when they come on the heels of his repeated attacks on Indigenous people's rights, dignity and healing," said Idlout in a Jan. 25 statement. "This looks like a damage-control tour."

Cam Holmstrom, an NDP strategist and founder of Niipaw Strategies, said he also has "high doubt" about Poilievre's commitment based on his past words and actions, but is "curious to see how these consultations go, and where he takes it from there."

Holmstrom said he gives Poilievre credit for his improved rhetoric during the announcement.

"[He's] talking more about co-operation and collaboration rather than forcing down," said Holmstrom, adding that the true test of Poilievre's authenticity will be how he deals with communities that reject the proposal.

"Yes, there are First Nations that want to work on some of these projects and, by all means, help those people out," Holmstrom said. "But the problem with the Conservatives hasn't necessarily

been with those that agree; it's for those that disagree."

Holmstrom said his concern is how a Conservative government led by Poilievre would deal with communities that not only reject the proposal, but also the resource development projects themselves.

"For me, the bottom line has always been the power of individual nations to make their own choices for themselves—good, bad, or indifferent," Holmstrom said. "If that is what [Poilievre] is actually bringing to the table, that would be transformational."

But given the "big problems" of Poilievre's past attitude towards Indigenous issues, he said there needs to be "more proof than language" that the Tory leader has truly turned the page.

"I'll never forget, till the day I die, the comments he made on the day of the residential school apology. He was so tone-deaf and so ignorant," said Holmstrom, referring to comments Poilievre made in a radio interview hours before then-prime minister Stephen Harper apologized for the abuse Indigenous children suffered while forced to attend Canada's residential schools in the House of Commons on June 11, 2008.

In the interview, Poilievre questioned whether Canadians were getting "value" for the \$4-billion in compensation that accompanied the apology, arguing that instead of spending more money, the solution was to "engender the values of hard work and independence and self-reliance." He also questioned whether there was "too much power" concentrated in the hands of First Nations chiefs, and where all of the money would be going. Following widespread condemnation, including from his

own party, Poilievre apologized in the House the next day, calling his remarks "hurtful and wrong."

While Poilievre has his work cut out to improve how he's perceived by Indigenous voters, Holmstrom argued there's an opportunity for the Conservatives to win ground. If Poilievre is genuine and "true consultations" are taking place, he said it would be "game-changing," putting the Liberals on the back foot on the issue of reconciliation.

"I would argue that the Liberals don't have the best relationship [with Indigenous Peoples] either; they've always been the 'Johnny-come-lately's,'" Holmstrom said, pointing to the Liberals' slow uptake of UNDRIP as an example. "[The Liberals] aren't leaders on this stuff."

While the Liberals under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) have done some good in improving the federal relationship with Indigenous communities, there have also been "colossal failures" and "thumbs in the eye" of Indigenous people, said Holmstrom, including most recently with the amendments to the Liberal firearms ban, Bill C-21.

Holmstrom added that he's always been confused as to why there hasn't been a better synergy between Indigenous people and the Conservative Party, given its professed ethos of wanting "reduced red tape," freedom from government interference, and "getting off people's backs."

Proposal a 'sign of maturity' in relationship between Conservatives, Indigenous people: Powers

Conservative strategist Tim Powers, a former adviser to then-Progressive Conservative minister of Indian affairs and northern development Pauline Browes and later to the department, said Poilievre's announcement is a sign of "maturity" in the Conservative Party's relationship with Indigenous people.

"Conservatives have always had general difficulty connecting with Indigenous groups," said Powers, chairman of Summa Strategies and managing director of Abacus Data. "But this clearly creates an opportunity for Poilievre to begin a new chapter in his relationship with Indigenous people after some of the things he regrettably, unfortunately, and inappropriately said in the past."

Powers also pointed to more recent comments Poilievre made in an interview with Global News on Jan. 13, calling the Indian Act "a racist, colonial, hang-over that gives all the control to self-serving and incompetent politicians, bureaucrats, and lobbyists in Ottawa."

Powers said with plenty of previous federal white papers and government studies on the subject of revenue sharing with First Nations to draw from to ensure Poilievre's proposal is technically sound, the true obstacle will be proving that he's genuine in his commitment.

"As with any other group you enter into a relationship with,

Indigenous Peoples are going to want to see that this is legitimate and to build a trusting relationship," said Powers. "If that isn't there, the idea—no matter how well conceived it may be—will not succeed."

If it is genuine, however, Powers said the consultations are a potential big opportunity for the Conservatives to put themselves in a different light, opening them up to consideration by voters inside and outside of Indigenous communities.

Reconciliation 'not a partisan issue anymore,' says Liberal strategist Pujdak

Liberal strategist Dan Pujdak, a former director of policy to then-Crown-Indigenous relations minister Carolyn Bennett (Toronto-St. Paul's, Ont.), said Poilievre is championing an economic idea that Indigenous leaders have been bringing forward for "decades" that many provinces and territories already have in practice—a sign that the new leader is at least engaging and listening.

"I think the ideas that he's brought forward have been around for a while, and he's bringing them back to the forefront," said Pujdak, who's now chief strategy officer with Blackbird Strategies and a senior fellow with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute. "But I think, ultimately, he's demonstrating that reconciliation has secured a place in mainstream political dialogue and that it's not a partisan issue anymore."

That willingness to listen is a good first step, Pujdak said, but Poilievre's success will be judged on whether he's able to build relationships with First Nations and implement effective policy ideas in turn.

"Reconciliation, fundamentally, is about relationships ... and I think this is his opportunity to show everyone that he's serious," Pujdak said. "But the proof will be in the pudding."

Pujdak agreed with Holmstrom that Poilievre's rhetoric around "gatekeepers" would "ring true" for many First Nations, whose historical experience with the federal government has been one of "colonial paternalism."

But he noted that the diverse political views of First Nations across Canada mean Poilievre's rhetoric and proposals won't necessarily be universally welcomed.

"I think that there's a real opening here for him to demonstrate a real commitment to building relationships," said Pujdak.

"If he follows through, there will be Indigenous people who take a really good hard look at whether or not they want to support him."

Pujdak also shared Holmstrom's concerns over how a Poilievre government would deal with those First Nations that do not want resource development projects at all.

"Canada is still answering those questions and has been working on them for a long time," he said.

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News

Repatriation order for men in Syria raises questions about Canada's consular obligations

Successive court cases have undermined the government's policy of not having a 'positive obligation' for consular assistance, says former diplomat Daniel Livermore.

Continued from page 1
defending Canadians' safety and security."

Former Canadian diplomat Daniel Livermore, who was director general of security and intelligence in Canada's foreign service, said the Federal Court ruling will force Global Affairs to change its consular policy unless it is appealed.

"The tradition in consular service, the way it has been delivered ... it doesn't matter who you are and what you've done, you get consular service irrespective of background," said Livermore, who authored *Detained: Islamic Fundamentalism and the War on Terror in Canada*. "Now, that didn't happen with these people, and it didn't happen because of their background."

Livermore noted that there is little sympathy to provide any kind of assistance for those who are linked with allegedly going abroad to join a terrorist organization.

"I think the court case is really going to force the hands of Global Affairs to come up with something a lot better, and hopefully it is something that is anchored in a more sensible policy than they've pursued so far," he said.

He added that in an "ideal world," the case shouldn't have even come to court and the repatriation should have taken place long ago.

In its policy framework to "evaluate the provision of extraordinary assistance," the government notes that it has "no positive obligation under domestic or international law to provide consular assistance, including repatriation."

The framework was unearthed as part of the Federal Court case.

The policy notes that Global Affairs "may" provide consular assistance to Canadians abroad with their request and consent, and pursuant to the government's "royal prerogative on internation-



The Federal Court ruled on Jan. 20 that the government has to repatriate four Canadian men from Syria. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

al relations." The Federal Court ruled that the royal prerogative isn't "exempt from constitutional scrutiny."

Livermore said Canadian courts, in successive cases, have undermined the government's claim of not having to provide consular assistance, including the most recent January decision. He said the notion was also disputed in 2010 when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on Omar Khadr's case. The top court ruled it could order the government to ask the United States to repatriate Khadr from detention in Guantanamo Bay, but chose not to. Livermore also cited the case of Abousfian Abdelrazik, who the Federal Court ordered be repatriated from Sudan in 2009.

"[The three cases show] a nice little pattern, which undermines the royal prerogative argument and limits it very substantially," he said.

He said the consular policy is a "residue" of Canada's post-9/11 policies.

"A lot of our policies were changed without thinking them through," he said. "A lot of the security agencies at the centre, at the [Privy Council Office], began to exercise powers that they don't legitimately have a right to claim. Now we're starting to untangle all this stuff ... so presumably Global Affairs will have to work on that a bit and it will be interesting to see how it will come up with it."

Livermore said one solution for future consular cases is to remove the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) from the co-management of the situation, suggesting that could be done by invoking the individual's rights under the Privacy Act.

Under the government's framework, CSIS and the RCMP will determine the "potential threat" an individual poses to public safety and national security, which includes "the individual's involvement in, or association with, terrorist activity, and whether the risk of their return to Canada can be sufficiently mitigated in transit and upon arrival."

Unlike other countries, Canada has made little progress to repatriate its citizens who have been held in Kurdish-controlled camps in the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES).

The government has cited safety concerns for its inability to travel to the camps to assess the consular cases. Under its framework, it notes that one of the guiding principles is that government officials "must not be put in harm's way." Other countries'

diplomats, as well as academics, journalists, and civil society advocates, have gone to the AANES camps.

Patricia Fortier, who served as Global Affairs Canada's assistant deputy minister responsible for security, consular, and emergency management prior to her retirement in 2016, said the duty-of-care issue is a "very live issue."

"There is no question that it is more top of mind now than it was in the past," she said. "No one wants to order an officer into a place where they might not come back or they might be injured."

She said the recent Federal Court decision continues a "long string" of cases involving the post-9/11 context and return to Canada.

"In each of those, everyone predicted that it would change things and it didn't," she said.

She said that the repatriation of the women and children had to come, but the question of the men is a more difficult one for potential public safety reasons.

"It's going to be a really difficult security question," she said, noting the situation is unlike many other consular cases as the Kurds who have control over the camps want to offload all the detainees.

"It is an odd situation," she said, noting that it is unlikely that a similar case will have to be dealt with in the future.

Fortier said the situation will likely be resolved by Global Affairs and the security agencies, with the possible input of the defence department, before winding up on Trudeau's desk.

She also noted the concern of the Yazidi population in Canada. In 2016, the House of Commons passed a motion that recognized that ISIS was committing genocide against Yazidi people. CBC News reported that survivors of the genocide who have resettled in Canada feel "heartbroken and betrayed."

She said it is not always possible for the government to have a positive obligation to provide consular assistance, noting that could require Canada to repatriate a Canadian abroad who simply runs out of money.

Former diplomat Gar Parly, who was the director general of the consular affairs bureau in the foreign service, said he doubted that the government would be interested in using the Federal Court's decision as a foundation to change its consular policy.

He said that is why he thinks the government will appeal the decision.

Regardless of how the court process ends, Parly said the government should be repatriating its citizens in northeastern Syria.

"The Canadian government should join what other governments have done," he said, noting that many of Canada's allies have repatriated their citizens who were in Syria. "Why the Canadian government has not followed this path—it just doesn't seem to make any sense."

The NDP and Green Party have called on the government to move forward on repatriation.

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Global Affairs Canada, which is headquartered in Ottawa's Pearson Building, has a policy that it has no 'positive obligations' for consular assistance. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Estonia inaugurates new embassy

The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia



Estonian President Alar Karis, left, was on hand to help open the country's new embassy in Ottawa's Sandy Hill neighbourhood on Nov. 21, 2022, alongside Ambassador Margus Rava.



Trin Lemieux, left, assistant to the Estonian ambassador; Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces Martin Herem; and Anne-Ly Ader, consul at the Estonian Embassy.



Brunei Darussalam High Commissioner PG Kamal Bashah PG Ahmad, left, chats with Tiina Väljaste, the wife of the Estonian ambassador.



Albanian Ambassador Ermal Muça, left; Katerina Lizcova Kulhankova, wife of the Czech Republic ambassador; Czech Republic Ambassador Borek Lizec; and Canadian chief of protocol Stewart Wheeler.

Algeria marks national day



Algerian Ambassador Nouredine Bardad Daidj, left, shares a toast with Global Affairs Canada's associate deputy minister of foreign affairs Cindy Termorshuizen at the Château Laurier on Nov. 2, 2022.



Faiza Latrous, left, minister counsellor at the Algerian Embassy, and Conservative MP Gérard Deltell.



Housing and Diversity and Inclusion Minister Ahmed Hussen and Bardad Daidj.



Cuban Ambassador Hector Igarza Cabrera, left, Argentine Ambassador Josefina Martinez Gramuglia, Dominican Republic Ambassador Michelle Cohen de Friedlander, and chief of protocol Stewart Wheeler.

Canada Korea Society hosts AGM



Korean Ambassador Woongsoon Lim, left, joined Canada Korea Society (CKS) president Young-Hae Lee at the organization's annual meeting and dinner at the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club on Nov. 28, 2022.



Lee and CKS vice-president Andy de Schulthess, right, make a presentation to Lim after his keynote speech.



Senator Michael McDonald, left; Lee; David Watt, Global Affairs Canada's northeast Asia director; and Jae-kyung Park, minister at the Korean Embassy



Lee, left; former Canadian ambassador to Korea Len Edwards; former Canadian ambassador to Korea Arthur Perron; and Robert C. Lee, CKS special adviser.



Laura Ryckewaert
Hill Climbers

Deputy policy director Dylan Marando exits PMO



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks with reporters on his way into the House of Commons Chamber in the West Block on Dec. 13, 2022. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Meanwhile, Sandenga Yeba has been promoted to deputy director of policy to Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, who has a couple of new faces in his office.

Deputy director of policy **Dylan Marando** recently bade farewell to Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**'s office after almost two years clocking in at 80 Wellington St.

Marando first joined Trudeau's office as a senior policy adviser in March 2021 and was promoted to deputy director roughly one year ago. He officially switched to post-employment status as of Dec. 30, 2022.

Marando began working on the Hill in September 2016, starting as a senior policy adviser to then-families, children, and social development minister **Jean-Yves Duclos**. In April 2018, he was elevated to director of policy to Duclos.

A former Queen's Park staffer, Marando's past roles at the provincial legislature include as a special assistant to then-Ontario premier **Dalton McGuinty** and a senior adviser to then-premier **Kathleen Wynne**.

Allie Chalke continues as a deputy director of policy in the PMO—a title she's held since February 2022. **John Brodhead** is director of policy and cabinet affairs to Trudeau and oversees a team that includes: senior policy advisers **Jim Kapches**, **Tony Maas**, **Dani Saad**, **Katherine Koostachin**, **Rebecca Caldwell**, and **Laura LeBel**; policy advisers **Oz Jungic**, **Lionel-Fritz Adimi**, and **Nathalie Gahimbare**; policy adviser and senior co-ordinator **Harry Orbach-Miller**; and co-ordinator **Kristina Slodki**.

In other PMO news, issues management and parliamentary affairs adviser **Mary-Liz Power** announced her last day on the job on Twitter on Jan. 20.

"After nearly two years, a pandemic, and a few pieces of legislation, today is my last day at the Prime Minister's Office," she wrote. "What an amazing privilege to work

with such bright and motivated people. I'm so grateful to all my colleagues, the public service, and @JustinTrudeau for your confidence and your support."

Power originally joined the PMO as an issues adviser in the spring of 2021, after almost a year and a half as press secretary to then-public safety and emergency preparedness minister **Bill Blair**. (The portfolio was split after the 2021 election, with Blair now minister for emergency preparedness.)

Before coming to Parliament Hill to work for Blair in early 2020, Power was strategic communications and engagement lead for the Ontario Liberal Party. Like Marando, she's also spent time at Queen's Park, as a former assistant to then-Ontario Liberal MPP **Nathalie Des Rosiers** and then-Ontario housing minister **Peter Milczyn**.

Policy staff changes for Health Minister Duclos

Health Minister **Jean-Yves Duclos** has made a couple of tweaks to his policy staff roster of late, including giving director of policy **Jean-Sébastien Bock** the added title of deputy chief of staff.

Bock has been working for Duclos since his turn as president of the Treasury Board, having started in that office as a senior pol-



Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos speaks with media about the government's COVID-19 response in the Sir John A. Macdonald Building on Jan. 20. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Jean-Sébastien Bock is now deputy chief of staff and director of policy to Duclos. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

icy adviser after the 2019 federal election. He was promoted to director of policy in 2021, and after that year's election, Bock followed Duclos to the health portfolio.

A former funding and private partnerships co-ordinator for Montréal International, since coming to work on the Hill in early 2016 Bock has also held roles as: a policy adviser and special assistant to National Revenue Minister **Diane Lebouthillier**, a Quebec regional affairs adviser to then-employment minister **Patty Hajdu**, and as an operations and policy adviser to then-finance minister **Bill Morneau**.

Senior policy adviser **Sandenga Yeba** was recently promoted to the title of deputy director of policy to the health minister.



Sandenga Yeba has a new title in Duclos' office. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

A former senior policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser to Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister **Marie-Claude Bibeau**, Yeba has been working for Duclos since January 2022.

Yeba was an economic and commercial development adviser to Montreal Mayor **Valérie Plante** before joining Bibeau's office in the summer of 2020. He's also a former adviser to then-Quebec economic development minister and deputy premier **Dominique Anglade** and has worked as a co-ordinator with Montréal International.

Jill Pilgrim has returned to life as a political staffer and started on the job as a senior policy adviser to Duclos on Jan. 18.

Pilgrim previously worked on the Hill from 2017 until the end of 2021. Starting



Jill Pilgrim is now a senior policy adviser to the health minister. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

as an assistant to now-Rural Economic Development Minister **Gudie Hutchings** as the Liberal MP for Long Range Mountains, N.L., in early 2019, Pilgrim landed a job as Atlantic regional affairs adviser in Duclos' office as then-families minister.

After the 2019 election, Pilgrim moved over to Employment, Workforce Development, and Disability Inclusion Minister **Carla Qualtrough**'s team as a policy and Atlantic regional affairs adviser, later dropping her regional duties to focus on policy at the start of 2021. She left the Hill after the 2021 federal election and spent most of 2022 as an articling student with Abergel Goldstein & Partners LLP in Ottawa, having previously studied law at the University of New Brunswick.

Duclos' policy team also currently includes advisers **François-Olivier Picard**, **Nathanielle Morin**, **Jed Graham**, **Jordan Ames-Sinclair**, and **Stephanie Claxton**.

Shanzae Khan is another new face on Duclos' team. She was hired as an Ontario regional affairs adviser at the beginning of January.

Khan spent the last three-and-a-half years working for the federal Liberal Party, where she was first hired as a deputy field organizer in the fall of 2019, during that year's federal election, after completing a summer internship. After the election, she stayed on as a field organizer, and subsequently worked her way up to senior field organizer, senior field co-ordinator, and most recently senior manager for the national field.



Shanzae Khan is covering Duclos' Ontario desk. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Previously, Claxton covered the Ontario desk for Duclos, in addition to her policy duties, but she dropped the former to focus on the latter at the end of last summer.

Jamie Kippen is chief of staff to the health minister.

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Black History Month kicks off with Senate-hosted exhibit



Senator Marie-Françoise Mégie—right, with Dimitri St-Julien in 2017—and the Senate's African-Canadian Group is co-hosting a grand opening of an art exhibition in the Senate Foyer, on Wednesday, Feb. 1, marking Black History Month. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 1

House Sitting—The House resumed sitting on Monday, Jan. 30, and will sit for three straight weeks (Jan. 30-Feb. 17). It will break on Friday, Feb. 17, and will return on Monday, March 6. It will sit for one week and will adjourn on Friday, March 10. It will return on Monday, March 20, and will sit for two weeks (March 20-March 31). It will break again on Friday, March 31, for two weeks and will return on Monday, April 17, and will sit for five consecutive weeks (April 17-May 19). It will adjourn on Friday, May 19, for one week and will return again on Monday, May 29, and will sit for four consecutive weeks (May 29-June 23). It's scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23, 2023. It will break for 12 weeks (June 23-Sept. 18) and will resume sitting on Monday, Sept. 18. It will sit for three weeks (Sept. 18-Oct. 6), and will adjourn on Friday, Oct. 6, for a week. It will resume sitting on Monday, Oct. 16, and will sit for four consecutive weeks (Oct. 16-Nov. 10). It will break for one week (Nov. 13-Nov. 17) and will resume sitting on Monday, Nov. 20, and will sit for four weeks (Nov. 20-Dec. 15).

Black History Month Tales Exhibition—As part of Black History Month 2023, the Senate's African-Canadian Group, in collaboration with Mosaïque Interculturelle and the African-Canadian Cultural Centre of Montreal, invites you to discover the works of African-Canadian artists. The exhibition is accessible to the public from Feb. 1-28. Grand opening on Wednesday, Feb. 1, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Senate Foyer.

Policy Magazine Working Lunch—LNG and Net Zero, featuring Greg Ebel, president and CEO of Enbridge; David Coletto, chair and CEO of Abacus Data; Edward Greenspan, president and CEO of Public Policy Forum, and more panellists to be announced. The working lunch discussion will be moderated by L. Ian MacDonald and audience Q&A moderated by Don Newman. Tables of six, \$1,000 plus HST; singles \$175. Reserve by credit care online at policymagazine.ca

and for more information: lianmacdonald@gmail.com.

Indigenous Disruptions—Carleton University hosts a lecture, "Indigenous Disruptions: How Indigenous Self-Determination Practices Can Deepen and Expand International Theory," featuring Sheryl Lightfoot, Canada Research Chair in Global Indigenous Rights and Politics; and associate professor, First Nations and Indigenous Studies and Political Science at the University of British Columbia. This event will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 1, in Room 2220-2228 Richcraft Building, 1125 Colonel By Dr., 5 p.m. EST. Details: events.carleton.ca.

Canadian Club of Toronto Marks 125 Years—The Canadian Club of Toronto celebrates its 125-year history. A panel of past premiers including Jason Kenney and Kathleen Wynne will discuss with Steve Paikin how unified Canada is after more than 150 years of exploration. Niall Johnston will open the event with a creation story, and George Elliott Clarke will close the event with poetry. This event will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 1, at Malaparte, 350 King St. W., Toronto, at 5:30 p.m. EST. Details: canadianclub.org.

Webinar on 'MAID in early 2023'—Dalhousie University hosts a webinar, "MAID in early 2023: Where are We Now and Where are We Going?" part of its 17th Dalhousie Mini Medical School. This event will take place online on Feb. 1 at 6 p.m. EST. Details: events.dal.ca.

Lecture on 'Age of Anarchy'—The Balsillie School for International Affairs hosts a lecture, "The Age of Anarchy: Navigating a World Where Everyone is Connected and No One is in Charge," featuring Balsillie School fellow John Hancock, counsellor, World Trade Organization in Geneva. This hybrid event will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 1, at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, 67 Erb St. W., Waterloo, Ont., at 7 p.m. EST. Details: balsillieschool.ca.

THURSDAY, FEB. 2

Defending Democracies from Disinformation—The Macdonald-Laurier Institute, the Japan Foundation

Toronto, and the Embassy of Japan host a webinar, "Defending democracies from disinformation: An imperative for Canada-Japan strategic co-operation." Panelists will examine the current state of disinformation threats and countermeasures/practices in Canada and Japan, as well as the potential for Canada-Japan co-operation in fighting against potential disinformation campaigns. Japan's Ambassador to Canada Kanji Yamanouchi will deliver remarks. Thursday, Feb. 2, 8-9:30 a.m. Register via Eventbrite.

Keynote Speech on 'Investing in the Growth of Canada's Indigenous Economy'—Indigenous Services Minister and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario Patty Hajdu will deliver a keynote address, "Investing in the Growth of Canada's Indigenous Economy." A panel discussion will follow, moderated by Tabatha Bull, president and CEO, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. This event will take place at the Fairmont Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Thursday, Feb. 2, 11:30 a.m. Tickets available at canadianclubottawa.ca.

FRIDAY, FEB. 3

Finance Ministers Meet—Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland will host an in-person meeting with provincial and territorial finance ministers in Toronto.

MONDAY, FEB. 6

Pallium Canada's Parliamentary Reception—Pallium Canada will host a parliamentary reception from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. on Feb. 6 at the Métropolitain Brasserie Restaurant, 700 Sussex Drive. This reception will include cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and discussions centred on improving palliative care for all Canadians. For more information, contact ishwari.sawant@crestviewstrategy.com.

Lecture on 'Inside the IPCC'—Carleton University hosts a lecture, "Climate Diplomacy and its Histories: Inside the IPCC." Ruth Morgan, Aus-

tralian National University, will discuss how a planetary challenge like climate change suggests an international collaborative response, and how the expectation that climate diplomacy would follow scientific advances and produce multilateral solutions to the climate problem has proven to be complicated. This event will take place at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre, 355 Cooper St., 7 p.m. Details at events.carleton.ca.

TUESDAY, FEB. 7

Health Care Summit—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will host a first ministers' meeting in Ottawa.

Bank of Canada Governor to Deliver Remarks—Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem will deliver remarks at a luncheon event hosted by the CFA Society Quebec in Québec City. Tuesday, Feb. 7, 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. EST. Details via cfaquebec.org.

TUESDAY, FEB. 7—THURSDAY, FEB. 9

AFN Water Symposium—The Assembly of First Nations Symposium hosts its sixth Water Symposium and Trade Show, a chance to discuss safe drinking water and wastewater issues specific to First Nations across Canada. This event will take place at the Calgary Telus Convention Centre, Feb. 7-9. Details: afn.ca.

TUESDAY, FEB. 7—FRIDAY, FEB. 10

Sustainable Communities Conference—The Federation of Canadian Municipalities' hosts its Sustainable Communities Conference from Feb. 7-10. Under the theme "Connecting for the future," participants will discuss and share best practices for making Canadian communities more environmentally, socially and economically vibrant. This event will take place online and at the Westin Hotel, 11 Colonel By Dr. Call 613-907-6395. Details: fcm.ca.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 8

Bioindustrial Innovation Canada Reception—Join Bioindustrial Innovation Canada for a reception to learn more about Canada's growing sustainable chemistry innovation ecosystem. Come meet the people behind some of Canada's green start-ups and learn about what BIC's business accelerator has to offer. Feb. 8, 5:30 p.m., Renaissance Room, Fairmont Château Laurier, Ottawa. RSVP: mjackson@binCanada.ca.

Canada's National Security Challenges—The Toronto Metropolitan University International Issues Discussion Series (IID) is partnering with the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies to host former CSIS director, DND deputy minister, and PCO official Ward Elcock on Wednesday, Feb. 8. His talk on "Canada's National Security Challenges" will be in person in Toronto Metropolitan University's George Vari Engineering Building, room ENG 103 (245 Church Street, Toronto) beginning at 6:30 p.m. For further details about the IID series please see iid.kislenko.com or contact the IID student leaders at iidseries@gmail.com.

Ours To Tell—The Government of Canada is holding the 2023 Official Black History Month Celebration in Ottawa, hosted by Housing and Diversity and Inclusion Minister Ahmed Hussen, and organized by the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat at Canadian Heritage. The theme "Ours to Tell" is an open invitation to celebrate the people who have broken seemingly insurmountable barriers, while acknowledging the current trailblazers who are taking Black excellence to even greater heights. Wednesday, Feb. 8, at 7 p.m., in-person at the National Arts Centre - Canada Room, 1 Elgin St.

Doors and on-site registration will open at 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEB. 9

Bombardier CEO to Deliver Remarks—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts a luncheon featuring Éric Martel, president and CEO of Bombardier, who will speak on "Bombardier: Driving Canadian Ingenuity and Defending our Borders." This event will take place at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, at 11:45 a.m. Details at canadianclub.org.

U.S. Ambassador to Deliver Remarks—U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Cohen will deliver remarks on Thursday, Feb. 9, at 12 p.m. EST, at a roundtable luncheon hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. This event will take place at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Register: cdhowe.org.

FRIDAY, FEB. 10

Minister Sajjan to Deliver Remarks—International Development Minister and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada Harjit Sajjan will deliver remarks on international development as part of a luncheon event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations in Montreal, Que. Friday, Feb. 10, 11:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Details at corim.qc.ca.

MONDAY, FEB. 13

A Celebration of Canadian Brewing—Parliamentarians and staff are invited to a reception hosted by Beer Canada on Monday, Feb. 13, 2023, at 6 p.m., in the Sir John A. Macdonald Building. RSVP by Feb. 7 at cheers@beerCanada.com.

TUESDAY, FEB. 14—THURSDAY, FEB. 16

National MMIWG2S+ Gathering—The Assembly of First Nations hosts the 2023 National MMIWG2S+ Gathering featuring plenary and dialogue sessions to discuss the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, the First Nations Action Plan, and implementation of the 231 Calls for Justice. This event will take place Feb. 14-16 at the Westin Bayshore, 1601 Bayshore Dr., B.C. Details at afn.ca.

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The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental event in a paragraph with all the relevant details under the subject line 'Parliamentary Calendar' to news@hilltimes.com by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper.

+ HEALTH

What can the federal government do to help contend with staffing gaps in Canada's health-care system? Should Ottawa develop a pan-Canadian human resources plan for health, and what should such a plan look like?

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said "it wouldn't be the right thing to do to just throw money at the problem," in regards to an ailing health-care system, in an interview with the Canadian Press on Dec. 14. What actions are needed for health-care reform, beyond increased funding?

What can the federal government do to help address barriers facing Indigenous peoples in Canada when accessing health-care and mental health services?

Long COVID, a term for a range of health effects following a COVID-19 infection, can result in lingering symptoms including difficulty breathing, dizziness, chest pain and heart palpitations. Mental health symptoms may include anxiety and depression. Are current federal government programs, such as employment insurance and disability benefits, adequate to handle the demand of Canadians affected by Long Covid?

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