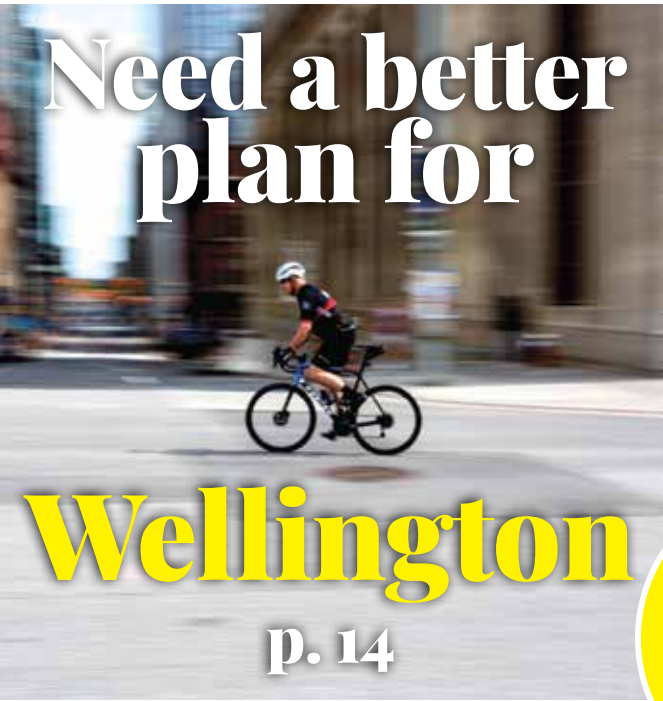




# Nuclear threat is real

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# Need a better plan for Wellington

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# THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR, NO. 2028

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

MONDAY, MAY 29, 2023 \$5.00

NEWS

**'Great damage to our democratic system': Senator Woo takes aim at media in wake of foreign election interference report**

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Independent Senator Yuen Pau Woo (British Columbia) says Canadian media have done a "great disservice to this country" and "great damage to our democratic system" in casting a "pall of trust and faith in the electoral system" in recent remarks following the release of special rapporteur David Johnston's report into foreign election interference.

Woo was one of a number of panellists to attend a session hosted by the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University, titled "Talking Freely: A Chinese-Canadian Conversation," on May 24.

In addition to a discussion about the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which Woo described as legislation that, at the time, was "heartily supported by all parliamentarians and given much encouragement from both Senators and Members of Parliament, particularly from British Columbia," the panel touched on headlines surround-

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NEWS

# Johnston report 'a new world of pain' for Liberals, creates new 'risks' with public, and ups the odds for early election, say political players

David Johnston's report is the 'worst of all circumstances' for Justin Trudeau, continuing to keep the government off its message and agenda, says Ipsos Public Affairs CEO Darrell Bricker.

BY ABBAS RANA

David Johnston's first report into foreign interference in Canadian politics was supposed to stop the ongoing drubbing the Liberals have been getting for

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Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured recently scrumming on the Hill, will likely be off-message as long as opposition parties push for a full public inquiry into foreign interference in Canadian elections; either way, it will be a tough slog for the Liberals over the coming months. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

NEWS

**Feds should absorb retroactive RCMP staffing costs, say NDP MP Johns and Conservative MP Falk**

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

Two MPs who represent rural ridings say the federal government should cover the hundreds of millions of dollars in retroactive costs owed by municipalities due to a collective bargaining agreement reached with RCMP members in 2021, warning that passing on the costs could affect community programs, recreation services, and infrastructure projects.

"[Municipalities] don't have the tools to absorb these significant, unbudgeted increases that have just dropped on them," said NDP MP Gord Johns (Courtenay-Alberni, B.C.), his party's public services critic, in a phone interview with *The Hill Times*.

"The federal government needs to go back to the table, rethink what they're doing here, and fill this gap."

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), provincial municipal associations, and individual local governments campaigned for the 2023 federal budget to include a commitment to absorb the retroactive costs of a collective bargaining agreement reached with RCMP members.

But the March 28 budget did not include the request, indicating that the costs will be passed on to

Continued on page 33





Mike Lapointe

## Heard On The Hill

# Journos, pundits and politicians, including a ‘flabbergasted’ former party leader, weigh in on foreign election interference report, special rapporteur’s integrity



Former governor general David Johnston, appointed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as special rapporteur tasked to look into foreign election interference allegations, released his first report on May 23, 2023. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Former governor general David Johnston, who was named special rapporteur in the government’s investigation into foreign election interference by Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**, issued his first report last week.

In his report, Johnston found that although foreign governments “are undoubtedly attempting to influence candidates and voters in Canada,” he stopped short of calling for a separate public inquiry.

Politicians, journalists, pundits and politicians wasted no time weighing in on social media and on various substacks.

“The Johnston report is really, really depressing, and almost all the early coverage of it has missed the critical point here: to the extent he’s exonerated the government, it’s only on grounds to total, crippling incompetence.”

—**Matt Gurney**, journalist and co-founder of *The Line*  
“You can disagree with David Johnston’s recommendations without calling the man a bunch of names. His [60-plus] years of public service should grant him that basic courtesy.”



—**Gerald Butts**, former principal secretary to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau  
“My take on David Johnston’s report: ‘It boils down to: trust

me. If you could see the intelligence I have seen, you’d see there is no story here, and no significant failing on the govt’s part. Take my word for it, as I have taken theirs: uncritically.”

—**Andrew Coyne**, columnist for *The Globe and Mail*

“Watching the *Globe*’s Andrew Coyne on the *At Issue* panel saying critically that David Johnston is saying to take his report on faith. But isn’t that what the *Globe* has done with their sourced reporting and Op/Ed?”

—Political commentator **Greg MacEachern**

“It’s a cover-up! David Johnston denied a public inquiry, protecting Trudeau’s secrets. Whistleblowers exposed foreign interference and CSIS reports link the Trudeau Foundation, but it conveniently goes unmentioned. Canadians deserve the truth! Demand an open, independent public inquiry now!”

—Conservative MP **Lianne Rood**



“David Johnston harmed his considerable reputation by taking this assignment and then compounded the damage with this report. If there was a Public Officer Penalty Box, he’d be in it.”

—**Ken Boessenkool**, past policy advisor to **Preston Manning**, **Ralph Klein**, **Christy Clark** and **Stephen Harper**

“I think some have inflated expectations of what a public inquiry could do. A lot would have happened behind closed doors and not publicly. And a lot of the ground it would have covered is covered by NSIRA, NSICOP and other bodies. The value added in practice would have been limited.”

—**Thomas Juneau**, University of Ottawa professor and former national defence department analyst

“You might understand how disappointed I was to learn halfway through my meeting that Johnston’s report was already undergoing French translation. I was flabbergasted and realized that nothing I was going to provide to the special rapporteur was going to impact his work. I was left with the clear impression that my meeting was nothing more than a box checking exercise.”

—Former Conservative Party leader **Erin O’Toole**, also noting his office had “only had two days to make the meeting work.”



## National Police Federation releases book to celebrate Mounties’ 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary

The National Police Federation has released a bilingual coffee table book to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

*Why We Serve: Stories of Today’s RCMP Members: Celebrating 150 Years*, was released on May 23, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the police force’s founding. The sesquicentennial birthday book includes 150 short stories from Mounties across the country.

In a press release on May 23, the NPF, which represents approximately 20,000 RCMP members, said the accounts come from across the police service’s branches, including the Police Dog Services, RCMP Musical Ride, and the Depot training facility in Ottawa.

The stories focus on a range of topics, such as crime prevention and investigation, anti-drug and gang education, and mental health impacts from the stress and trauma of policing, “including in-depth stories about mental and physical health.”

“These are the real stories of our members, replicated every day thousands of times over, all across and beyond Canada,” said



*Why We Serve: Stories of Today’s RCMP Members – Celebrating 150 Years* includes 150 stories from RCMP members about their work. Book cover image courtesy of the National Police Federation

**Brian Sauvé**, the NPF’s president and CEO, in the press release. “Their stories provide a unique and too-often overlooked glimpse into the experiences and dedication of the approximately 20,000 members we proudly represent here and internationally.”

The limited edition book is available from the NPF website.

## Builders behind floor project pick up National Terrazzo and Mosaic Association’s Annual Honour Award



In updating the Senate’s flooring, the contractors salvaged the existing Mississquoi grey marble used in the building’s floors, baseboards, and stairs. Photograph courtesy, copyright of Senate of Canada

The architects and builders responsible for a terrazzo floor in the Senate of Canada building have been awarded for their re-use of local material in the project.

The National Terrazzo and Mosaic Association’s (NTMA) annual Honour Awards recognized Ottawa-based KWC Architects, the Chatham, Ont.-based Franklin Terrazzo Company, and Toronto-based Diamond Schmitt Architects, according to a May 12 press release.

“In this striking, ingenious example of in-situ recycling, heritage marble was repurposed to complement the aesthetic of a 1909 former railway station,” the award description stated.

The contractors salvaged the existing Mississquoi grey

marble used in the building’s floors, baseboards, and stairs. The material was then cut into two-by-one-and-a-half-inch slabs of random lengths. The marble bars were set in hallways in the Senate building in a grid pattern, before being filled with epoxy.

The NTMA, based in Fredericksburg, Tex., is a trade association representing terrazzo and mosaic companies primarily in the U.S., with the Terrazzo, Tile and Marble Association of Canada included as a regional associate. Other winners in this year’s awards included projects at the University of San Diego, Boston Children’s Hospital, and the Deutsche Bank building in New York, N.Y.

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## News

# Stellantis holding governments ‘to ransom’ with threat to pull out of Windsor battery plant, says environmental advocate

The federal and Ontario governments have sparred in public recently following demands from auto giant Stellantis to top up its subsidy agreement to match the deal with Volkswagen.

BY KEVIN PHILIPUPILLAI

The federal government is stuck having to sweeten its billion-dollar agreements to subsidize Ontario’s electric vehicle supply chain as it faces “brinkmanship” from automakers that threaten to chase larger subsidies offered by the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act, say observers.

Despite previous success in joint negotiations, the federal and Ontario governments have sparred in public in recent weeks about how much each should contribute to meet demands from the auto giant Stellantis to top up its \$1-billion subsidy agreement from March 2022, to match the \$13-billion subsidy agreement the two governments reached with its competitor Volkswagen in March 2023.

Nate Wallace, clean transportation program manager at the advocacy group Environmental Defence, told *The Hill Times* Stellantis was holding the federal and



Nate Wallace from Environmental Defence says Stellantis is engaging in ‘high stakes brinkmanship’ by threatening to scrap its battery production plant in Windsor, Ont. Photograph courtesy of Environmental Defence



Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne’s office says the federal government is negotiating ‘in good faith’ with Ontario and Stellantis ‘to secure the future of Canada’s auto industry.’ *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Ontario governments “to ransom” by threatening to pull out of existing commitments in Windsor and elsewhere in southern Ontario if the governments don’t retroactively “top up” the subsidies laid out in last year’s deal.

“What we’re seeing is a massively profitable corporation engaging in pretty high stakes brinkmanship, and effectively holding Canadian communities hostage to get a ransom from the Canadian government,” said Wallace in an interview.

Wallace pointed out that Stellantis—a multinational conglomerate that owns Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Fiat, Opel, Citroën, Peugeot, Alfa Romeo, and other previously independent automakers—saw its net profits for 2022 rise by 26 per cent over the previous year, an increase of \$16.8 billion, or more than \$24-billion.

“Our view is that, if you get handed a billion dollars in Canadians’ money, and you announce a deal, you don’t get to walk away from that deal to try and extract more money for the same investment later. That’s just pure corporate greed, and it’s wrong,” said Wallace.

When offered the opportunity to respond to Wallace’s comments, Stellantis spokesperson LouAnn Gosselin said in an email that the company was “not commenting at this time.”

John Delacourt, senior vice president at Counsel Public Affairs, told *The Hill Times* “you cannot look at this story” without considering the fact that the Stellantis deal was signed before the United States’ Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which introduced massive subsidies to promote regional economic development in the U.S.

He called the March 2022 Stellantis deal “a signal achievement in revitalizing Windsor’s economy,” but said neither the federal nor the provincial governments knew what the Americans would be putting on the table later that year. He said it makes sense that Stellantis would be looking to catch up to the much larger subsidies Volkswagen secured from Canada in the wake of the IRA, and that Canada is “particularly vulnerable” to having to keep pace with American subsidies given its regional proximity.

Delacourt highlighted the “constructive and pragmatic tone” Ontario Premier Doug Ford has taken more recently when discussing the Stellantis negotiations after the two levels of government broke ranks in public about which should contribute more to meet Stellantis’ demands.

On March 23, 2022, Stellantis and the South Korean firm LG announced they had finalized agreements on a \$5-billion joint venture in Windsor, Ont. This would be Canada’s first large-scale electric vehicle battery production plant. Construction began in 2022 and the plant was scheduled to be operational in early 2024.

But Stellantis, the world’s fourth-largest automaker by sales, announced on May 15 that it was pausing construction on the Windsor plant and implementing “contingency plans” because it said the federal government had not followed through on promises to top up the earlier subsidy agreement.

Volkswagen, the world’s second-largest automaker by sales, has committed to building a \$7-billion battery gigafactory in St. Thomas, Ont. This plant

will have roughly double the production capacity of Stellantis’ Windsor plant—90 gigawatt hours compared with 45 gigawatt hours—when it is operational in 2027.

Wallace said the federal government is being asked to “pony up additional money” in subsidies for Stellantis without getting anything beyond what was promised in the original deal. He said he would like to see the government push Stellantis to expand its battery plant to match Volkswagen’s more ambitious plans, or attach additional strings requiring the use of net-zero electricity.

Laurie Bouchard, a spokesperson for Innovation, Science and Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice-Champlain, Que.), said in an email to *The Hill Times* that “we continue to negotiate in good faith with our partners” and that the government’s top priority is “getting the best deal for Canadians.”

Bouchard added that Champagne is working “to secure the future of Canada’s auto industry,” which is crucial to the national economy and to “hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers.”

Champagne and Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University—Rosedale, Ont.) have both spoken about the importance of securing the future of the auto sector by investing heavily to convince auto giants to build elements of electric vehicle supply chains in Canada, generally in the same southwestern Ontario communities that have traditionally been home to the auto sector.

Champagne told the House Industry Committee on April 26 that the Volkswagen announce-

ment played a major role in addressing concerns about the decline of Canada’s auto sector. “I can tell you that my phone is ringing like crazy, because if it’s good for Volkswagen, it’s good for the world. Now everyone wants to come,” Champagne told the committee.

Conservative MP Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L’Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, Que.) responded in committee that Champagne’s phone was ringing because he had just given Volkswagen “a record amount in subsidies,” and the rest of the auto industry, sensing an opportunity, was lining up to empty out the federal treasury.

Conservative MP Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, Alta.) further developed that line of criticism in his questions to Champagne at the same committee meeting, arguing that using government money to subsidize “every step of the value chain” was “not exactly a business plan for Canada going forward.”

Freeland’s office did not respond to questions from *The Hill Times*, but Freeland acknowledged concerns about large subsidies to Ontario’s auto sector in a May 20 interview with the CBC Radio’s *The House*.

“There’s a race right now for where the clean economy is going to be built, and it is absolutely essential that Canada seize this moment” by investing heavily, said Freeland. “But we also need to be really, really careful and thoughtful about every single deal.”

Freeland told CBC’s Catherine Cullen she has told other world leaders that the objective with such subsidies should be to increase the overall global investment in the green transition, and “not to simply poach deals from each other,” in a “race to the bottom that I think is bad for everybody.”

Freeland also said she has heard from MPs and from provincial premiers about the importance of “regional equity,” which is why the federal government has been pushing the Ontario government to increase its contribution to the Stellantis deal.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford told CBC News on May 24 that his government has agreed to put more money on the table to save the Stellantis plant, and that it is now up to the federal government to close the deal with the auto giant.

Delacourt said he didn’t want to discount concerns about regional balance in economic development, but that these were “a bit of a red herring” in this case, given the size and scope of the auto industry and what it means to the larger economy.

He described the Windsor corridor in south-western Ontario as “the seat of auto manufacturing in this country,” and added that “if this was another sector that had the same kind of regional economic footprint,” the need for governments to step in to address the massive subsidies available south of the U.S. border would be just as clear.

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*The Hill Times*



# What if we rebuilt entire curriculum for policing right across Canada?

Instead of reducing education requirements for police officers, we need to dramatically increase the training and strengthen the curriculum to give candidates the best possible tools to do the job well.

Rose  
LeMay

*Stories, Myths,  
and Truths*



OTTAWA—Policing has an issue with hiring and retaining officers, just like every sector in Canada these days.

The Ford government in Ontario has decided to remove any post-secondary education prerequisites for police officers in Ontario to address the staffing gaps in

forces. Now candidates will only need 13 weeks at the provincial police college.

It's a nightmare for Indigenous Peoples, who are already at high risk of being shot by police. Less education, less knowledge and judgment is not the mix we need for police officers.

There's a long list of sectors that didn't celebrate this move. Premier Doug Ford probably created some serious cringing amongst another group: police officers.

In British Columbia, candidates go through a 42-week program in class and in the field through the Justice Institute of British Columbia. The RCMP does just half of that, with a 26-week training regime at the Regina Depot.

It turns out that the education and training required to become a police officer in Canada is different in every jurisdiction. We might be doing better than the United States, which averages about 21 weeks, but we are failing in comparison to other countries. In Finland, the prerequisite to become a police officer is a three-year bachelor of police services, including field placement. In Brazil, it seems the training can take a full year.

A rough measure of policing quality is the number of police shootings, albeit complicated by the number of guns in circulation per country. The assumption here is that police officers

are supposed to avoid shooting citizens and use communication, mediation and de-escalation instead. Finland has a rate of one per year, the United States a rate of almost 1,000 per year. Canada sits at about 35 to 40 per year.

There seems to be a correlation between the length of police training and number of police shootings. More training can reduce police shootings of citizens, but can't eliminate it. But it's more complicated than that.

The quality of the education is important. Setting aside how it might work for the military itself, a military approach to training appears to instill hierarchy instead of public service and integrity when it's applied to policing. This is what it appears to do in Brazil, with accusations of abusive military-type regime training for police candidates. Brazil also hit a mark of more than 5,800 police shootings per year.

Instead of reducing education requirements for police officers, we need to dramatically increase the training and strengthen the curriculum to give candidates the best possible tools to do the job well. This is not the time to do it half-way or just partly. The safety of our officers is important. The safety of citizens is important.

Policing in Canada is a public service. Curriculums for candidates should be based on a value of public service, shored

up with ethics and judgment. Teaching adults how to make ethical decisions under stress is an advanced course.

In addition, police candidates need to have strong knowledge of justice principles and the legal system, communication, how trauma can affect an individual's reaction to stress (both in citizens and self as a police officer), cultural competence, and how to build strong relationships with social services for referrals of citizens. Then there are police competencies. A three-year or four-year educational path sounds just about right.

I want the next police officer I have the fortune of meeting on a street to have excellent education and training, and to have excellent cultural competence. And I bet I share my hope with that officer's partner.

(For transparency, this writer is on the board of the Coalition for Canadian Police Reform. My opinions and sometime rants are my own.)

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

# DO IT, NOW!

## We are way overdue for anti-scab legislation.



**CUPE**



## News

# Public interest in AI offers ‘unique moment’ for regulatory action



A spokesperson for Canadian Heritage, led by Minister Pablo Rodriguez, said the department is monitoring advancements in AI as it relates to its work regulating online platforms. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In government, ‘everybody’s talking about’ artificial intelligence, but ‘nobody knows quite what to do,’ said Daniel Araya of CIGI.

BY IAN CAMPBELL

As the federal government struggles to regulate the digital economy through controversial bills like C-11 and C-18, the next big regulatory challenge is quickly emerging: artificial intelligence.

Governments presently have a “window of opportunity” on the “urgent issue” of regulating AI, because lessons learned from the governance of social media platforms show that “it’s really hard to regulate these things after the fact,” says Camille Carlton of the non-profit Center for Humane Technology.

Carlton, a senior policy manager for the U.S.-based advocacy organization that seeks to “align technology with humanity’s best interests,” told *The Hill Times* the present rapid advancements in AI mean governments are facing another wave of technology that will cause societal transformation

on the scale that occurred with social media.

“It was kind of the first time this really powerful technology interfaced its way into our society, politics, economy,” said Carlton on the impact of social media. “And what we learned is that it’s really hard to regulate these things after the fact, despite that more and more evidence is coming out about the potential impacts of this technology.”

Looking at AI, she said there is presently a “unique moment” where public policy-makers, tech companies, and the public are talking about the issue, and this interest should be used to propel action on policy.

Some jurisdictions, like the European Union, have leaned heavily towards regulation, while others like the United States are taking a “light touch” approach to date, according to Daniel Araya of the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

Araya, a senior fellow specializing in technology policy and governance, said he believes Canada should look to fall somewhere in between these two examples in order to mitigate the risks of AI while also encouraging innovation.

However, Araya told *The Hill Times*, based on conversations he has had with officials in the Prime Minister’s Office, his sense is “everybody’s talking about it, nobody knows quite what to do.”

He said this stems from the rapid shift that has taken place with AI in recent months, particularly as large language models like ChatGPT move from something “pretty theoretical” to what now has the potential to have a significant real-world impact on labour markets and decision-making.

“It’s not that Canada is behind the curve per se,” said Araya, “because everyone is behind the curve, in the sense that we’re surprised by it.”

## Whole-of-government approach

The federal government’s lead piece of legislation on AI is Bill C-27, which would establish the Artificial Intelligence and Data Act. But the issue of AI will touch almost every area of policy, and experts say a whole-of-government approach is needed.

AI is “going to be utilized across everything from agriculture to education,” said Carlton. “So I cannot see a government agency that isn’t going to have to interact in regulating AI, or utilizing AI, eventually.”

However, she said, governments should also avoid a “highly decentralized system” between departments “where there’s huge silos, and they’re not communicating, and they’re regulating things completely differently.” This is a potential downside to the more

decentralized approach across departments that the United Kingdom is taking, she pointed out.

*The Hill Times* reached out to several federal departments to ask whether they were monitoring the rapid changes happening in AI, and if they were considering how their departments may need to respond.

In an email reply, Daniel Savoie, a spokesperson for Canadian Heritage, led by Minister Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Que.), said the department is monitoring advancement in AI as it relates to its work regulating online platforms—including the online harms legislation the department is expected to introduce. He said Canadian Heritage is monitoring this while working with the Department of Innovation, Science and Industry, which has the lead on Bill C-27.

Savoie said AI has the potential to be a “valuable tool” for online safety, but also “poses a number of challenges related to transparency and accountability.”

Social media companies, noted Savoie, can deploy AI as part of their toolkits to enforce community guidelines. However, during the government’s roundtables on online safety—one of the steps leading towards the expected online harms legislation—Savoie said participants expressed a desire for social media platforms to exhibit greater transparency in this regard.

“Participants were interested in ensuring greater transparency over the usage of AI by social media platforms to moderate content,” said Savoie.

Sonja Solomun, deputy director of McGill University’s Centre for Media, Technology and Democracy, said the government’s work on online harms should be one of its top priorities when it comes to its approach to AI.

“We need to focus on online safety first,” Solomun said. “The rapid uptake of unregulated AI coupled with the harms it is proven to produce—along with its potential for seamless integration within existing [social media] platforms—only reinforces the need for robust accountability from the companies making decisions around how to use these systems.”

Carlton said that in an information environment that is already “super clouded with fake images, fake texts,” AI has the potential to further increase social media as a force for polarization.

“Canada has an opportunity to craft legislation that develops a best-in-class approach to online safety by learning from other countries,” said Solomun. “It’s a unique moment where we can look ahead at the known and evolving harms posed by AI as further evidence that we need regulation that empowers and safeguards users.”

## Social media offers lesson across AI regulation

Carlton said several lessons learned from social media regulation can be applied broadly to how governments look at AI across policy areas.

One of those, she said, is to focus on the design of these

technologies, rather than content moderation.

“We’ve seen the fight to reform social media get stuck on this debate about content and free speech,” said Carlton. “And so the more successful reforms have focused on design. I think that’s going to be the same when it comes to AI.”

Dealing with the “information asymmetry” that exists between the public and tech companies when it comes to public understanding of these technologies is another priority for regulation to address, said Carlton.

“It’s going to allow us to not only build regulation, but to truly understand the impact of these technologies,” she said.

Finally, she said, governments should look at what business models and incentive structures are driving AI.

“We think that the most sustainable solutions are ones that look at the driving factor,” said Carlton. “So changing technology from the beginning. How do we incentivize AI companies to develop these technologies in a way that’s better for us?”

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The Hill Times

## Multiple federal departments are exploring the impact of AI

Two other departments also replied to *The Hill Times* about how they are approaching AI.

### Finance Canada

Marie-France Faucher, a spokesperson for the Department of Finance, said “a safe and secure financial system is a cornerstone of Canada’s economy. However, the digitalization of money, assets, and financial services—which is transforming financial systems and challenging democratic institutions around the world—creates a number of challenges that need to be addressed.”

Faucher pointed to a commitment in Budget 2022 to launch a financial sector legislative review “to ensure we maintain the integrity of the financial system, promote fair competition, and protect both the finances of Canadians and our national security.” She said the first phase of the review is focusing on the digitization of money.

### Health Canada

Marie-Pier Burelle, a spokesperson for Health Canada, said “artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies have the potential to transform health care by deriving new and important insights from the vast amount of data generated during the delivery of health care every day.” She pointed to software algorithms as a way to learn from real-world situations and improve the performance. However, she said, these also present “unique considerations due to their complexity and the iterative and data-driven nature of their development.”

Burelle noted the department has worked with allied countries to introduce a set of guiding principles on developing a regulatory framework for medical AI devices, an area in which she said international co-operation would be crucial.

She said Health Canada is also working on guidance for manufacturers about medical devices that will use AI. These are expected to be posted for public consultation in 2023.



# Russia: the least bad option?

The soldiers and secret policemen around Vladimir Putin hate Yevgeny Prigozhin, but if Putin goes, so will most of them. Does Prigozhin see himself as a pretender to the throne? Well, he is just withdrawing his entire private army from Bakhmut for a couple of months of rest and retraining. Somewhere near Moscow, perhaps.

Gwynne  
Dyer

Global Affairs



LONDON, U.K.—Let us suppose that the current Russian regime collapses, with or without a Ukrainian military victory to give it

a final shove. Who would be the least objectionable candidate to take over in Moscow?

What we should look for, in this exercise, is not necessarily the kindest individual, but the one with the firmest grasp of reality. What makes the current regime so dangerous is precisely the fact that most of its members are to a greater or lesser degree unhinged, as quickly becomes evident when you review their public statements.

Start with President Vladimir Putin himself. Not only did he launch his invasion of Ukraine last year in complete ignorance of the victim's ability and willingness to resist—he expected three days to crush the Ukrainian resistance and then a victory parade in Kyiv—but from the start he saw them in purely stereotypical terms.

At first the Ukrainians were Nazis (including even the Jewish ones, like Volodymyr Zelenskyy), and so bound to fail because they were evil. When they thwarted his invasion, they were American puppets without motives of their own, and Putin's attack only failed because he was really fighting all of NATO.

By last September, he claimed that the West was trying to “dismember” Russia and turn it into a collection of weak mini-states. (He has “written proof,” he says.) He was forced into what looked like an unprovoked attack on Ukraine by the forces of “outright Satanism,” as he put it when annexing four provinces of Ukraine last September.

He's not telling lies, although what he's saying is untrue. His reality is infinitely

flexible, and can be restructured as needed so that he is never wrong. A lot of the people around him have the same reflexes, and are willing to invoke even the supernatural to justify their actions.

Russia's mission in Ukraine is to “stop the supreme ruler of hell, whatever name he uses—Satan, Lucifer or Iblis,” said Dmitri Medvedev, Putin's faithful sidekick for two decades. (Medvedev stood in for the boss as president in 2008-2012 while Putin was getting around the constitutional ban on more than two consecutive presidential terms.)

Ramzan Kadyrov, Chechen leader of one of Russia's private armies, agrees: “Satanic democracy is when children are taken from traditional families and transferred to same-sex families. I see degradation and Satanism in this.”

They're all delirious, and none more so than Nikolai Patrushev, Putin's closest adviser and frequently tipped as his successor. Patrushev followed Putin as the head of the FSB secret police and now chairs the Security Council. But it's not Satanism that is driving events, in Patrushev's view. It's geology.

Earlier this month, Patrushev gave an interview to Russian newspaper *Izvestia* in which he focused on the Yellowstone super volcano in the western United States. He referred to (imaginary) research which said it might erupt soon. If it does, he said, it would mean “the death of all living creatures in North America is inevitable.”

Ah-ha! Now it becomes clear. “Some people in America insist that Eastern Europe and Siberia will be the safest places on Earth in case of a possible eruption,” Patrushev explained. “This seems to be the answer to the question why Anglo-Saxon elites are aching to capture (the Russian) heartland.”

This is what passes for strategic thinking in Moscow today—so which of these moral and intellectual giants would you like to see take over from Putin when the time comes? None of the above? Well, then, how about Yevgeny Prigozhin?

He's a thug, to be sure, but you'll never hear him spouting the kind of fake geopolitical nonsense the others talk, nor the mystical pseudo-religious stuff either. He clearly knows how to run both a business and an army. And most importantly, Prigozhin has credit as a patriot for capturing Bakhmut, but no implicit obligation to fight the war until the end.

The soldiers and secret policemen around Putin hate Prigozhin, because he's from entirely the wrong background, but if Putin goes, so will most or all of them. Does Prigozhin see himself as a pretender to the throne? Well, he is just withdrawing his entire private army from Bakhmut for a couple of months of rest and retraining. Somewhere near Moscow, perhaps.

Gwynne Dyer's new book is *The Shortest History of War*.

*The Hill Times*

## Senators:

Stand with us to support sustainable innovation in Canadian agriculture  
— pass Bill C-234 into law.

Canadian farmers, growers and ranchers are **committed to sustainably feeding a growing world**. With no viable alternative, we must ensure carbon surcharges don't constrain their productivity.

Senators, support Bill C-234 in order to **unlock the full potential of our agriculture sector**, drive sustainable innovation, and help us meet our environmental goals.

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# Editorial

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## Editorial

### Before insisting on public inquiry, leaders should review confidential information

David Johnston released his first 55-page report last week on his investigation into foreign meddling in Canadian politics. Contrary to most of political Ottawa’s expectations, Johnston recommended not to call an independent inquiry into the controversy. Instead, he said that he would hold public hearings. Johnston will file his second and final report at the end of October.

Johnston said he did not find any evidence that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, his cabinet ministers or staffers ignored any intelligence about Chinese interference in Canadian elections, nor that they knew the Communist government of China was targeting Conservative MP Michael Chong. Johnston also said that based on his review of confidential documents, the allegation against Liberal-turned-Independent MP Han Dong that he secretly asked a senior diplomat in the Chinese consulate in Toronto to delay the release of Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor is “false.” After a Canadian news outlet reported the allegation against Dong, the MP gave an emotional speech in the House, tearfully denying the allegation and stepping away from the Liberal caucus as the matter was under investigation. Dong also commenced a defamation lawsuit against the news outlet that reported this allegation.

Last week, Dong said he had been vindicated.

Johnston put together this report after consulting dozens of cabinet ministers, top government officials and reviewing classified and unclassified information. Johnston has also invited all opposition party leaders, the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency to review the evidence he used to come up with his conclusions in the report. As of last week, only one opposition leader—the NDP’s Jagmeet Singh—had accepted Johnston’s offer to examine the confidential documents. Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre and Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet have declined. They say the only acceptable solution to this controversy is an independent inquiry.

It is disappointing that these two senior parliamentarians would make up their minds without reviewing the relevant confidential material on this important subject. Poilievre and Blanchet should reconsider their positions. They should take up Johnston’s offer and go over the confidential information before insisting on a public inquiry. After reviewing the documents, if the two opposition leaders still think an independent inquiry is needed, they should speak up with their reasons and make a case to Canadians about their position. In that case, Trudeau would be compelled to call one.

The Hill Times

## Letters to the Editor

### How about Doug Ford’s election meddling, asks reader

Re: “China’s meddling single most important reason for slipping Liberal support in polls, say political players,” (*The Hill Times*, May 22, by Abbas Rana). There has been a public outcry, most notably by Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, accusing the federal government of complacency and even collusion with respect to potential Chinese meddling in the last election. In Ontario, where a looming democratic mayoral election in Toronto is threatened by comments from Doug Ford, our Progressive Conservative premier, there’s not a sound. He is back-

ing particular candidates and threatening the city with undisclosed ‘consequences’ if a ‘lefty’ mayor is elected. This is blatant, upfront election meddling, but it appears that most Torontonians see nothing wrong with it. This we know about, but what is going on behind the scenes? One must also suspect that Ford’s chosen candidate will be well-supported. This is democracy? These are the tactics used in Moscow and Beijing. It is time for it to stop.

Tom McElroy  
Toronto, Ont.

### The Hill Times is free to cite Powers, but he’s not a ‘Conservative strategist,’ writes Conservative Party’s Fischer

Re: “Poilievre wants ‘culture war’ between elites and common sense” on safe supply: Tory strategist Powers,” (*The Hill Times*, May 24). Wednesday’s issue of *The Hill Times* falsely identified Tim Powers as a “Conservative strategist.” You identified Mr. Powers as a Conservative strategist in the context of discussing current events involving the Conservative Party and its leader.

We expect that *The Hill Times* recognizes that it must be honest with its audience and, in accordance with the Canadian Association of Journalists’ ethics guidelines, “make every effort to verify the identities and backgrounds of [your] sources.”

I am writing to confirm that Mr. Powers is not a strategist for the Conservative Party of Canada or its leader. It under-

mines public trust to describe Mr. Powers in a way that is reasonably likely to lead your readership to believe that he has some role in developing strategy for or otherwise advising the current Conservative Party or its current leader.

If, at any time, *The Hill Times* wishes to have a “Conservative strategist” comment on current events, please let me know and we will recommend an actual strategist for the Conservative Party. However, if you choose to continue to cite Mr. Powers, as you are free to do, you should no longer falsely pass him off as a Conservative strategist.

Sarah Fischer  
Director of communications  
Conservative Party of Canada  
Ottawa, Ont.

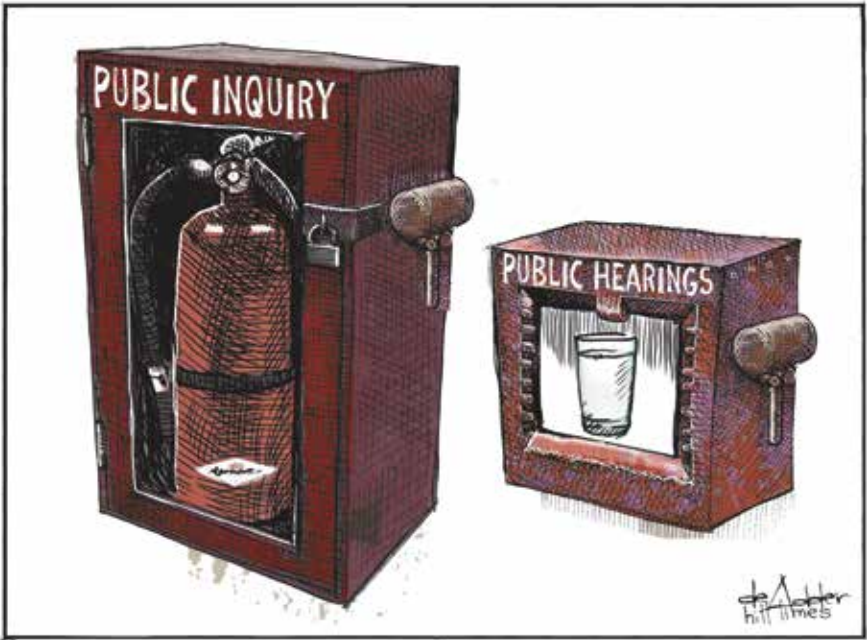
### Trudeau should have appointed Wilson-Raybould ‘special rapporteur’: British Columbia reader

Once again, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has demonstrated he lacks common sense. Why would he appoint a perceived friend of his family to investigate something as important as foreign interference when many Canadians—rightly or wrongly—believe Trudeau had previous knowledge about China’s meddling, but he did nothing because China’s intimidation tactics would benefit him at the ballot box?

Trudeau has never wanted a public inquiry and, lo and behold, the “family friend” takes on the investigation and then

recommends against an inquiry. Now David Johnston, former governor general and Trudeau’s rapporteur, is asking Canadians to trust him. Apparently, he didn’t have the wisdom to foresee the results of this report would be perceived by many to be tainted. If Trudeau had appointed former justice minister Jody Wilson-Raybould to head the investigation, then the vast majority of Canadians would have accepted her results without hesitation, because she personifies integrity.

Lloyd Atkins  
Vernon, B.C.



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# China interference story has legs, but no body

The request for a public inquiry is more about political damage than solutions.

Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner



OTTAWA—The China interference story is a political scandal with legs, but no body. Opposition leaders did not like the outcome of David Johnston's inquiry into the issue. They obviously prefer a two- or three-year process that would keep the issue percolating in public consciousness.

According to March polling by the Angus Reid Institute, the majority of Canadians believe that China likely interfered with the last election.

Canadians may not be convinced by Johnston, whose report makes it clear that the government did not have knowledge of any Chinese interference, but a public inquiry is not likely to provide any more clarity.

It will simply keep the questions in the public domain, promoting the stench of a scandal without evidence.

Another poll by Nanos released earlier this month shows the Liberals have been lagging seven points behind the Conservatives since the allegations on Chinese interference first surfaced.

So, it stands to reason that opposition parties would like to keep the issue front and centre.

It also stands to reason that if the majority of information sources gathered by security and intelligence services in Canada is classified as top secret, there would not be much use in having a public inquiry into state secrets.

That was why Johnston offered a top-secret briefing to each of the opposition leaders. The only one to take him up on his offer was New Democratic Leader Jagmeet Singh.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre not only refuse the briefing, he also attacked Johnston personally, and characterized his findings as fake, a reaction that provoked a rebuke even in Tory circles.

Conservative pundit Tim Powers pulled no punches in his column for *The Hill Times* in which he accuses Poilievre of taking "the built-in cantankerous critic role of his job to new dimensions. ... Poilievre basically suggested Johnston, a fine man, was some kind of partisan dirtbag political trougher." Powers went on to say that "he has cultivated a persona for himself that projects a nasty ruthlessness."

Powers decries the approach and basically says that everyone loses when our leaders hike up the nasty quotient in politics. Poilievre certainly displayed that quotient when he attacked Johnston's character as the former governor general has nobly served both the Liberals and the previous Conservative government of which Poilievre was a minister.

When the public is focussed on foreign interference allegations, the opposition wins.

It matters not that the first person to resign based on those allegations was Ontario Progressive Conservative MPP Vincent Ke at Queen's Park.

Media attention has primarily focused on the Liberal government in Ottawa.

In a minority situation, the Conservatives want to issue a summons to force Johnston to the standing committee on procedure and House affairs for a grilling about the contents of his report and his refusal to recommend a public inquiry.

The governing Liberals do not want to issue a summons as Johnston has already agreed to voluntarily appear at the committee.

Opposition parties collectively penned a letter in which they called Johnston's decision "a slap in the face to diaspora groups who are subject to abuse and intimidation by hostile foreign governments."

Johnston is calling for public hearings instead of a public inquiry. The public may not understand the nuances of difference between inquiry and hearings, but political parties certainly do.

A public inquiry would likely drag on for a couple of years, with multiple in-camera hearings as information leaks out.

Public hearings in different regions of the country would allow those involved in local riding

election to have their say, but would likely not shed much light on specific foreign strategies to influence elections.

Every foreign embassy has a direct interest in Canadian elections. In many communities across the country, differing diaspora interests play a role in electing representatives who share their policy objectives.

On the ground, nomination battles can be aggressive between mainland Chinese and Taiwanese supporters, between Tamils and other Indian subgroups, and between two different groups of Sikhs.

In the olden days, the battlegrounds were religious. Today, they are based on the differing diaspora populations in political constituencies.

All foreign governments follow nomination battles closely in communities where their former citizens are populous.

This is not just a Chinese challenge. It is a foreign government challenge.

Johnston's report makes several recommendations, including better communications between politicians and secret service agencies when any threat is linked to a foreign government.

But the request for a public inquiry is more about political damage than solutions.

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

*The Hill Times*

# A lesson from a Communist café

Why not consider supporting non-political party actors that are pushing for values and ideals you believe in, i.e., advocacy groups, charitable organizations, or even YouTube channels?

Gerry Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit



OKVILLE, ONT.—I recently got an unexpected lesson in Communist ideology when I came across a report detailing the demise of an "anti-capitalist" café in Toronto called The Anarchist.

It's an interesting tale, which oddly enough, brings together the worlds of high-end specialty coffee and Marxist dogma, since apparently the goal of the café's



In a surprise plot twist, the owner of The Anarchist café announced that "thanks to a huge influx of support, and a very generous donation of publicity and attention from the Christian Conservatives of Texas and Florida, the Anarchist will continue to operate after May 30," writes Gerry Nicholls. *Image courtesy of the Anarchist café*

founder, a guy named Gabriel Sims-Fewer, was to create a "subversive" alternative to the usual model of workers "producing wealth for their parasitic employers."

Sims-Fewer told the media his aim wasn't to seek "short-term profits," but "to perform whatever function the workers decide, in whatever way the workers decide to do it."

Indeed, in good Marxist fashion, The Anarchist featured a system where patrons could pay whatever they could for coffee.

Alas, after only a year in operation, Sims-Fewer announced his café would close its doors on May 30, saying "the lack of

generational wealth/seed capital from ethically bankrupt sources left me unable to weather the quiet winter season, or to grow in the ways needed to be sustainable longer-term."

Of course, much of the media's coverage of the Anarchist's decline and fall had a mocking tone to it.

And it's easy to see why. First off, Sims-Fewer's archaic and pompous Marxist rhetoric (compared to him, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh sounds like Donald Trump) comes across as comical.

Secondly, conservatives took satisfaction in adding The Anarchist's downfall to their ever-grow-

ing list of examples which prove "communism just doesn't work."

Thirdly, it's funny to think of someone setting up a café to push a fringe political viewpoint that would alienate anybody to the right of Leon Trotsky or Joseph Stalin.

But maybe Sims-Fewer will have the last laugh.

In a surprise plot twist, Sims-Fewer announced on his café website a last week that "thanks to a huge influx of support, and a very generous donation of publicity and attention from the Christian Conservatives of Texas and Florida, the Anarchist will continue to operate after May 30."

So clearly, Sims-Fewer deserves a lot of credit.

After all, he came up with a unique and imaginative way to promote his ideology.

In other words, even though its business model might not be sustainable in the long run, in the short term, The Anarchist café was a propaganda success.

In fact, it could be argued The Anarchist has turned out to be a better vehicle for promoting Marxism than Canada's official Communist party.

After all, in the last Canadian federal election, the Communist party garnered less than one per cent of the vote.

Few Canadians likely know it even exists.

By contrast, the closing of The Anarchist café generated international media coverage, giving Sims-Fewer a massive platform to—if only briefly—espouse his left-wing creed.

As a matter of fact, all that attention resulted in Sims-Fewer receiving enough support to keep his café alive, at least for a little bit longer.

This is a lesson for all those out there who believe in certain political principles, but are disillusioned with traditional party politics.

Unfortunately, too many of these people give in to apathy and simply drop out of the political process.

But as The Anarchist example proves, there are ways to promote your values that don't involve joining or supporting a political party.

Now I'm not suggesting anyone set up their own ideologically themed cafes that are probably doomed to fail.

But why not consider supporting non-political party actors that are pushing for values and ideals you believe in, i.e., advocacy groups, charitable organizations or even YouTube channels?

As Sims-Fewer might put it, you have nothing to lose but your chains of apathy.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

*The Hill Times*



## Opinion

# On foreign interference, Poilievre wants to stir up scandal without knowing the facts



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, left, has called for NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh to force a public inquiry into foreign interference, but Singh should think twice about the request, writes Michael Harris. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

As Jagmeet Singh considers Pierre Poilievre's call to force a public inquiry, he must ask whether protecting democracy is the Conservatives' main motivation.

Michael Harris

Harris



HALIFAX—Poor Pierre Poilievre.

He wants to be prime minister so badly that he has started to tell NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh how to do his job.

Poilievre finds a scandal under everyone else's pillow (under his own, of course, is a shiny bitcoin from the tooth fairy). He wants Singh to renounce his supply-and-confidence deal with the Liberals. He wants Singh's help to force a public inquiry into alleged

Chinese interference in Canadian elections despite what Special Rapporteur David Johnston had to say about that.

A few things you should consider before joining Poilievre, Jagmeet: the man who is giving you orders to force an inquiry may soon be the star of a comic strip by Margaret Atwood!

Here's what she recently wrote on her Substack: "I'm tying my hands to the chair to keep myself from starting a comic strip called *PP Comix*, about our perky PM challenger. 'PP and his Rage Coach.' He does do a lot of raging. 'PP and his Style Consultant.' Should he do the front-buttoned knitted vest or not? Stop me before I harm myself. I'll keep you posted."

Apart from wriggling on the end of Atwood's clever pencil, think of Poilievre's notion of what 'doing your job' means, Jagmeet. When Poilievre was in government, his idea of 'doing his job' was supporting the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act, and advising Indigenous Peoples to improve their work ethic.

The first thing to ask yourself is whether Poilievre and the remnants of Stephen Harper's army that he leads are really doing this because they believe in protecting democracy. Remember robocalls?

Back then, Canadians received thousands of calls directing them to the wrong polling booths. In all, 1,394 complaints across 234 ridings—a real Batman heist. The Federal Court found that there was election fraud.

Strangely, it looked like the numbers used to misdirect people came from the Conservative Party's own CIMS computer, though no proof was ever found that the party had authorized someone to send out all those electronic spit-balls.

When the Council of Canadians tried to challenge the electoral hanky-panky in court, the Conservatives filed a 750-page brief asking the court to dismiss the challenges. Odd behaviour for a party so dedicated to protecting the integrity of our elections, right? Nor did they ask for a public inquiry into who allegedly tried to steal a Canadian federal election either. Funny, that.

But they weren't idle. Then-Prime minister Harper promised to come up with a spanking new electoral reform package that would fix everything. And he had just the guy for the job: Pierre the Obedient.

Poilievre crafted the Fair Elections Act. It was something of a reverse miracle. He managed to make a Frankenstein doll out

of a broken Barbie. The rotten tomatoes immediately rained down from all directions. Critics said the legislation made it easier to cheat and harder to catch cheaters. Instead of strengthening Elections Canada, the Harper government de-tuned it.

That prompted Canada's chief electoral officer to issue a terse critique of his own. Instead of giving Elections Canada more tools to fight fraud like robocalls, Marc Mayrand said of Poilievre's handiwork that it "would take the referee off the ice" and make voting harder for some people.

Poilievre being Poilievre, he struck back like the one-trick, attack-trained sparrow that he is. Mayrand, Poilievre said, criticized the legislation because he wanted a "bigger budget, more power and less transparency." That, folks, is what is called projecting your own agenda onto others.

You should also remember, Jagmeet, that Poilievre is asking you to dismiss David Johnston as a sycophantic hack of the PM, a flunky who loves his big per diem, and is incapable of being impartial. Be careful here.

Johnston's resumé is not the stuff that flunkies are made of. Degrees from Queen's, Harvard, and Cambridge. Con-

stitutional expert. Chancellor of McGill University. Dean of the Faculty of Law at University of Western Ontario. And when Stephen Harper needed a governor general, who did he choose? The guy Poilievre says can't be trusted.

Which brings me to Johnston's report. There is a lot in it that should make you pause before throwing in your lot with the "Everything is Broken" crowd. According to Johnston, both some of the political ranting and some of the media coverage had it wrong.

The Trudeau government neither allowed, nor tolerated, Chinese electoral interference.

Then-Liberal MP Han Dong didn't tell a Chinese consular official to lengthen the detention of the Two Michaels.

No Chinese cash found its way into the hands of those 11 Canadian political candidates—seven Liberals and four Conservatives—everyone has been talking about.

Political players acted in an "excessively partisan way," and some media accounts "misconstrued" intelligence information, and in some cases just plain got it wrong.

There is a way of putting Johnston to the test, Jagmeet. Since you have sensibly accepted a security clearance, you will be able to view the classified documents that formed the basis of Johnston's conclusion that a public inquiry is not needed. Because of that, you can make an informed opinion.

That stands in stark contrast to the man who wants you to force the government to call such an inquiry, despite Johnston's report. Poilievre wants to stir-up his scandal soup without knowing the facts, probably because he realizes that once he sees the basis for Johnston's conclusions, the heartiest of his accusations will have to be abandoned. As long as he doesn't know what he's talking about, he can rant on until everyone is asleep.

Jagmeet, Johnston has done no more than state the obvious when he says that a public inquiry wouldn't be public at all, given the subject under investigation.

Just as he had to, a public inquiry would need to take evidence in secret and keep much of the information it dealt with confidential. That's because it's against the law to reveal this stuff. You are a lawyer and understand that.

So read the top-secret stuff, complete with the classified annex that walks you through exactly what Johnston saw that convinced him a public inquiry was unnecessary. And then it's up to you to choose the side of the canal you walk on.

And remember, whatever you decide, Johnston's homework is going to be checked. It will be examined by both the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency, and the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians.

If that isn't enough for you, there's always the comic strip guy.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

*The Hill Times*



## Opinion

# The nuclear threat is real

Canadian policy on nuclear disarmament can be summed up in one word: ambiguity. It's not a pretty word, nor is it a pretty sight watching Global Affairs Canada and the Prime Minister's Office trying to get their stories straight.

Douglas Roche

Opinion



EDMONTON—Despite Prime Minister Justin Trudeau signing onto a G7 statement in Hiroshima, Japan, on May 19 calling for “meaningful dialogue” on nuclear disarmament issues, Global Affairs Canada is digging deeper in its opposition to Canada attending a meeting this fall of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

NATO is vigorously opposed to the treaty, which calls for the outlawing of nuclear weapons, a stand that directly contradicts the organization's claim that nuclear weapons are the “supreme guarantee” of security. Canada meekly goes along with NATO, even though UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the new treaty “historic.”

The Prohibition Treaty, which entered into force in 2021 and is now ratified by 68 states, held its first meeting of states parties last year. Despite frowns from NATO headquarters, four NATO states—Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and Finland—attended the meeting as “observers.” But they received a lot of blowback from NATO bosses for their attendance.

So it seems that a possible slap on the wrist now cowers Global Affairs Canada, the very department that, years ago, led the world in developing the Anti-Personnel Landmines Treaty, the International Criminal Court, and the Responsibility to Protect doctrine. Even though the prime minister has said publicly that Canada would remain engaged in nuclear disarmament discussions “in all multilateral fora,” it appears that Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly did not get the message.

Here we have, on the one hand, Trudeau signing onto the “G7 Leaders' Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament,” which pledged to promote “meaningful dialogue,” and, on the other hand, Global Affairs Canada saying that the Prohibition Treaty does not count as a legitimate forum for dialogue.

No wonder the public doesn't know what's going on in the nuclear disarmament field.

The lengthy G7 statement, done at the behest of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who comes from Hiroshima, seems at first glance to support nuclear disarmament. It says: “We reaffirm our commitment to the ultimate goal of a world without

nuclear weapons with undiminished security for all, achieved through a realistic, pragmatic and responsible approach.” That sentence, however, is loaded with code words that allow the nuclear powers, who continue to possess 12,705 nuclear weapons to escape their obligation, under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), to pursue negotiations for nuclear disarmament, an obligation that has been reinforced by the International Court of Justice.

The nuclear powers cling to the NPT while at the same time ignoring its central provision. That is why the Prohibition Treaty came into existence. For Trudeau to present himself as all for dialogue on nuclear matters while his officials shut the door on Canada attending, as an observer, the second meeting of the Prohibition Treaty to be held in New York in November is a profound failure in our diplomacy. I think that, if a motion emerged from Parliament calling for Canada to attend the Prohibition Treaty meeting, they would reconsider their opposition. We'll have to see how much Parliament cares about this issue.

However, the news is not all bad. Canada—long a champion of a possible Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, which would ban the production of fissile materials—is now willing to sponsor such negotiations in the UN General Assembly. Hitherto, Canada has always maintained that such negotiations must be held in the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, which operates on the consensus rule, meaning that any one state (in this case Pakistan) can for years block progress. In the General Assembly, whose work is gaining in stature as a result of the stalemated Security Council, the majority vote wins the day; that is how the Prohibition Treaty was produced.

All this is backdrop for the gravest crisis facing nuclear disarmament since the first atomic bombs destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. In the past two years, in addition to Russia's unprecedented threats to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine, nuclear risks have worsened: from the fast development and modernization of nuclear arsenals, renewed dynamics of arms races, and continuing proliferation pressures. North Korea and Iran are vivid examples of what happens—with more to come—if nuclear weapons are not eliminated through a process of negotiations with requisite verification techniques.

The nuclear threat is real and is made all the more urgent by the collapsing international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament infrastructure. A first priority, despite the Ukraine war, is to get the United States and Russia back to negotiations for the resumption and extension of the New START Treaty, which constrains the numbers of their strategic nuclear weapons. Both these powerful states should agree to a No First Use policy and take their advanced weapons off alert status.

In the end, Canadian policy on nuclear disarmament can be summed up in one word: ambiguity. It's not a pretty word, nor is it a pretty sight watching Global Affairs Canada and the Prime Minister's Office trying to get their stories straight.

*Former Senator Douglas Roche's new book, Keep Hope Alive: Essays for a War-free World, will be published in the fall.*  
The Hill Times

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## Opinion



The oil sands, pictured in Fort McMurray, Alta. Climate change has barely been mentioned in the Alberta election campaign between Danielle Smith's United Conservative Party and Rachel Notley's resurgent NDP, writes Susan Riley. *The Hill Times* photograph by Jake Wright

# No matter who forms government, oil and gas has won the Alberta election

Few Canadian political leaders are willing to challenge the still-profitable, immensely powerful oil and gas industry, which is at the heart of our climate challenge.

Susan Riley

*Impolitic*



CHELSEA, QUE.—Whatever the outcome of today's cliff-hanger Alberta election, there's already one clear winner: the oil and gas industry.

With the northern part of the province ablaze and smoke

shrouding the skies in Edmonton, Calgary, and elsewhere last week, climate change was barely mentioned during an intense campaign between Danielle Smith's United Conservative Party (UCP) and Rachel Notley's resurgent New Democratic Party.

The wildfires intruded, only to prompt a temporary show of concern and solidarity between the rival leaders for the 30,000 northern residents who had to leave their homes. There were a few potshots over the UCP's earlier \$30-million cut to firefighting efforts, but no evident awareness of the urgency and seriousness of what those fires portend. None.

While Notley is decidedly more progressive than Smith on many issues, on climate there are only shades of difference. Smith, for example, denounces the federal goal of ending all national emissions from electricity generation by 2035 as ridiculously ambitious, while Notley appears to accept it.

Both, however, envision a continued—even expanded—role for the powerful fossil fuel sector,

and both lean heavily on reducing emissions without curbing production; neither dare suggest at least halting further expansion, which would seem a reasonable, if limited, start.

In the campaign's only leaders' debate, Notley extolled the potential economic benefits of the clean energy sector, but added "it's not about reducing production, it's about reducing emissions." Smith said the same thing, only more fervently, promising to reduce emissions while having "a robust and vibrant oil and natural gas sector for years to come."

Both are notionally supportive of getting to net zero by 2050—everyone is, even the oil industry—but for Smith, the target is "aspirational." For everyone else, it is so far away it permits many more years of baby steps and fruitless "consultations" with industry.

In this, Alberta's political class is closely allied with the federal government, although Albertans love to hate Justin Trudeau. His prominent ministers—especially Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson and his predeces-

sor, Seamus O'Regan—both insist oil isn't the problem; the problem is the emissions produced by burning it.

These advocates—like former prime minister Stephen Harper before them—want it both ways: the tax revenues (30 per cent of Alberta's total currently) and jobs that come from the industry, however cyclically, along with action to fight climate change. But they are content to leave the heavy lifting until later.

They are all, like Harper, counting on technology—some elusive silver bullet—to allow the industry to continue to thrive while emissions are magically reduced. Anything to face what seems obvious: you cannot decouple producing more fossil fuels from increased emissions.

If technology was the answer, shouldn't it have worked by now? Governments and industry have poured billions into carbon capture utilization and storage (CCUS) over decades, to name one supposed remedy. Emissions per barrel have been reduced, but as production has grown in recent years, those gains have been erased and the oil sands still contribute 30 per cent of our national emissions, and that is before all that fuel is burned in car engines and elsewhere by consumers.

Some multinational oil companies have cooled on CCUS, given the huge costs and disappointing results. But Alberta is ploughing on, with federal assistance: a massive \$16.5-billion project, including a 400-kilometre pipeline, is in the planning stages north of Edmonton.

Whether it is ever completed, whether it succeeds in significantly reducing emissions, whether it becomes a white elephant as the world moves away from oil, whether it is another expensive stalling tactic—all fair questions—were hardly mentioned during

the campaign. You'd think they would be. The big CCUS installation, along with 50 other proposed smaller projects across the country, marks a huge expenditure of public money, on a so-far limited remedy, on the brink of another season of devastating fires, floods, heat domes and drought.

In the outside world, the news is almost too depressing to bear (which may be why avoidance is so tempting). According to researchers in Northern Ireland, some 48 per cent of the world's animal species are in decline due to habitat loss and climate change. A UN agency reports that the 1.5 C limit on increases in global temperature, agreed to in the 2015 Paris Accord, will be breached at least once within a couple of years, a sign we're headed in the wrong direction at increasing speed.

Meanwhile, in Ottawa, all political and media oxygen is consumed in character assassination, partisan shouting and what is essentially a process argument: public hearings or public inquiry into attempted Chinese interference in our elections? Compared to the climate crisis, this problem is so fixable—or should be, for the Chinese-Canadians who are directly threatened—and so marginal to everyone else's daily lives that it is a wasteful distraction.

Not that we don't need distraction. The science makes us despair, and despair leads to paralysis. That is why some long-time environmental campaigners—notably Calgary author Chris Turner, who recently won a prestigious award for his book, *How to Be a Climate Optimist*—insist on highlighting good news.

And there is some. Toronto's urban Don River is healthy again, after being pronounced dead in 1969. Canada's auto sector is on the brink of embracing an electric vehicle future with attendant employment and environmental benefits. Quebec is collaborating with Ottawa to protect declining caribou herds.

Further away, New York City has banned natural gas stoves and heating in some new buildings. Sweden's GDP is rising as its emissions are falling. And France has just banned short-haul flights to limit emissions.

But despite federal, provincial and municipal investments in green alternatives and initiatives, few Canadian political leaders (except for the inestimable Elizabeth May) are willing to challenge Canada's still-profitable, immensely powerful oil and gas industry, which is at the heart of our climate challenge. Even suggesting an orderly phase-out of production—which may already be too late—is considered political cyanide.

How many people have to lose their homes, their farms, their livelihoods; how many animals have to die in fiery chaos; how many people with respiratory illnesses have to perish in extreme heat before governments start acting to protect us, not an industry throwing fuel on the fires?

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

*The Hill Times*



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Dawn Bowdish  
Canada Research Chair in Aging & Immunity



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## Opinion



A man cycles along Wellington Street in downtown Ottawa on Aug. 3, 2022. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

# We need a better plan for Wellington Street

The year-long closure of the street after the Freedom Convoy occupation offers us a once-in-a-generation chance to do something imaginative and exciting for this iconic street.

PSG Senator  
Andrew  
Cardozo

Opinion



Ottawa City Council reopened Wellington Street to traffic again in late April, but where is the vision for Canada's capital city?

The year-long closure of the street, following the 2022 occupation of the Freedom Convoy, has

offered us a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do something imaginative and exciting for this iconic street.

Turning Wellington Street into a people's plaza offers many new and exciting opportunities. Much can be done to make the area inviting, linking the area's Indigenous history with the more recent and current reality. Here are a few options that are included in a more detailed proposed plan.

Naming the new pedestrianized area "Constitution Plaza" would recognize a core aspect of who we are and how we are governed. This could be made meaningful with some displays of the Charter of Rights in various languages, for example, using a combination of all-weather boards and flat-screen displays.

In the short term—and in time for Canada Day and the summer—the pedestrianized street could accommodate many new planters (many more than the 30 or so that are usually placed there), benches, Muskoka chairs, and large street art. All this would attract visitors to spend time on Wellington. The street surface could be used for attractions such as a giant chess board, hopscotch,

a painted maze, or a map of Canada with a pathway for visitors to "visit" every part of the country in every province and territory, including some key Indigenous venues.

The section of Wellington Street between O'Connor and Bank Streets could be more of a marketplace with art tents and other booths (using, say, 10 of the City of Ottawa booths that were built for the Winter market at Lansdowne Park in December 2022 and 2023), with a food court area near Bank Street with picnic benches and a changing selection of food trucks. These temporary fixtures could also be coordinated with the Sparks Street Business Improvement Area, and visitors could visit the two, providing a dynamic atmosphere.

Care must be taken to make traffic barriers as attractive as possible, rather than using regular cement barricades. There are many options that would include painted concrete planters in the short term, and for the longer term grassed- and built-up medians with low walls that match the Parliament Hill rock.

In the longer term, over two to three years, the surface of

Wellington Street could be remodelled, removing the asphalt and replacing it with various kinds of interlock brick or rock, or even some grass—keeping in mind the need for space for large numbers of people. There are at least three options here: having interlock brick and using a pattern symbolic inspired by Indigenous basket weaving (as has been done at the Aberdeen Square at Lansdowne Park in Ottawa); having the brickwork create a map of the world with Canada at the centre showing where all the people of Canada originate from, whether Indigenous or immigrant; and using u-porous brick, a new form of brick designed to have less water flow into the drains.

Some trees could be planted along the south side of Wellington Street, in conformity with the trees planned for the courtyard in Block 2 (bounded by Metcalfe, Wellington, O'Connor and Sparks Streets), while not interrupting sight lines of the Parliament Buildings. This could become a space to highlight new and innovative green construction.

The bottom line is that the National Capital Commission should

use its personnel and resources to make the area as attractive and meaningful as possible, while ensuring security of the parliamentary precinct.

And while I am focusing on the national significance, history, and beauty of the area, it is worth keeping in mind that virtually every report on the security of this area in recent years has called for Wellington Street to be closed to traffic.

It is useful to recognize that the parliamentary precinct and its future are complex. This includes jurisdiction, governance, investment, ownership, animation, beautification, policing and security. The Indigenous history of the area, most notably that of the Algonquin Anishinabe peoples, needs special consideration throughout the process of renovation.

Federal Procurement Minister Helena Jaczek has asked Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe to develop an agreement together that will see the federal government purchase Wellington and Sparks streets to become part of the parliamentary precinct.

Ottawa City Council needs to rethink its decision on the future of Wellington Street. Otherwise, Jaczek should expropriate the area, the way the government has been doing gradually since Confederation.

Andrew Cardozo is an Ontario Senator, a member of the Progressive Senate Group, and a long-time Ottawa resident. The paper mentioned is available on his website.

*The Hill Times*



DEFENCE SPENDING

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NATO ALLIES

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RUSSIA & UKRAINE

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SECURITY CONCERNS &  
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NORTHWEST PASSAGE  
AND ARCTIC SECURITY

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CANADIAN  
ARMED FORCES

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CANADA'S INDIGENOUS VETERANS



## Defence Policy Briefing

# Defence threats call for unorthodox ideas from younger Canadians, argues international politics prof

Major threats to Canada's security include melting ice in the Arctic, aggression from Russia and China, and a personnel shortage in the Canadian Armed Forces, according to experts.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Threats to Canada's national security have become so varied in scope that the federal government should consider appealing to the younger generation for more unorthodox solutions to security concerns, according to Erika Simpson, an associate professor of international politics.

"There's so many different types of threats that it is no longer possible to prioritize defence priorities," said Simpson of the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont., in an interview with *The Hill Times* on May 18. "Things have changed totally, and that's why I'm saying maybe this old way of talking about and reviewing defence policy with the same older people needs to be revamped because the kinds of threats that come our way will be unexpected."

When assessing threats to national security, academics and policymakers in Canada's defence establishment tend to hold "realist and liberal internationalist viewpoints" that reflect the country's status quo and established decision-making trajectories, Simpson said in a follow-up email on May 18.

Realists highlight the dangers of escalation from conventional to nuclear warfare, and assume that Canada's membership in military alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) are imperative, she said. As an example, she cited a \$19-billion deal announced in January for Canada to purchase 88 F-35 jet fighters, which Defence Minister Anita Anand (Oakville, Ont.) said would help Canada meet its NORAD and NATO commitments, as reported by Global News.

A changing security environment means that Canada will need to be prepared for all types of warfare, including cyber warfare and low-level threats that fall below article five of the NATO

treaty, according to Simpson. Article five states that every member of the alliance will take necessary action to assist any individual member that is the victim of an armed attack.

"The defence minister is responding to these threats and issues in a very typical fashion—typical of a United States and NATO ally. But what I'm saying is the types of threats that could hit us could come from completely different directions, [such as] chemical, biological warfare," said Simpson.

Anticipating new types of threats will require creativity, which Simpson argues she sees in the hundreds of university students she teaches when discussing security issues, such as contending with drones. She argued that the federal government should do more outreach to gather input from younger Canadians regarding security threats.

"I just think to myself, 'Wow, the next generation, because they've been exposed to so much Hollywood films and stuff, they're thinking about all these threats way more creatively than the older generation is,'" she said. "I would, if I was [Anand], have a kind of town hall, or just Zoom town halls ... then just try to go for the younger people, because they're just amazing."

Canada's current defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE)—launched in 2017—is a 20-year plan to improve the capabilities and equipment of Canada's military.

To build upon the SSE, the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) held public consultations for the Defence Policy Update between March 9 and April 30, 2023. The policy update, originally announced in the 2022 federal budget, is intended to address changes to Canada's security environment that have emerged since the launch of the SSE.

The CAF's approach to the objectives outlined in SSE are in need of revision to account for "accelerating and intensifying threats," such as the rapid pace of climate change, more sophisticated cyber threats, Russia and China's increasing military modernization, and Russia's further invasion of Ukraine, according to National Defence.

The fleet of F-35 jets is intended to enhance Arctic security and national sovereignty, and enable Canada

to meet its NATO and NORAD obligations, according to a Jan. 9 press release from Public Services and Procurement Canada. The first aircraft deliveries are expected to begin in 2026, and full operational capability with Canada's entire fleet is expected between 2032 and 2034.

Anand said that Canada is making landmark investments in Arctic security, in an emailed statement to

*The Hill Times* on May 25.

"As our world grows darker, we are strongly committed to defending Canada's Arctic sovereignty and security—and we are making the necessary investments to keep Canadians safe. The integrated capacities of our competitors, combined with the effects of climate change, mean that Canada cannot rely solely on its geography to protect us. More so today than ever before, we must ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces have the tools that they need to keep Canadians safe," said Anand in the email. "While some of these capabilities will take time to come online, others have already been delivered. For example, Canada is procuring brand-new

Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships for the Royal Canadian Navy. The first Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship, HMCS Harry DeWolf, has successfully circumnavigated the North American continent. In April, I was in Halifax to officially name HMCS William Hall, the fourth Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship underway at the Halifax Shipyard for the Royal Canadian Navy."

ISG Senator Tony Dean (Ontario), who serves as chair of the Senate's National Security Committee, told *The Hill Times* that aging infrastructure in the North, including the need for more modern radar and more ships, are among the most important priorities for Canada's national security.

"Our radar systems are near the end of their useful life and we need to replace those with land-based radar systems and tracking systems with systems that have the capacity to identify early on and track the new classes of hypersonic and hyperkinetic missile technology that we know that Russia and China have," he said. "We need desperately new coast guard ships. Those are being built, [and] they're

being delivered, not only for defense purposes, but because the melting sea ice is causing more traffic and more search and rescue demand.

That's something that we have to keep pace with."

Dean called Anand a superb minister of defence, and argued for how well she handled procurement issues during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Anand served as minister of public services and procurement between Nov. 20, 2019, to Oct. 26, 2021.

"I don't think she's a person who's

going to take her eye off key files for very long. She is equally knowledgeable and acknowledging of the areas where we have some challenges and deficits right now," said Dean. "In terms of Northern defense infrastructure, she understands the issues that I've described in terms of the need to replace our defensive infrastructure at all levels, and she has made it a priority, and it's clear that she's made it a priority, and that's what we would hope."

CSG Senator Jean-Guy Dagenais (Quebec), the vice-chair of the Senate's National Security Committee, also emphasized the importance of Arctic infrastructure in an interview with *The Hill Times* on May 18.

"We have a major portion of the Arctic. We can't assure the security of the Arctic, and it's a real problem, especially now with China and Russia. You have many natural resources in the Arctic, and Russia and China have an interest. We must protect our sovereignty, and we don't have the equipment," he said. "The radar station must be renovated. Our landing strip to the airport will have to be renovated because it cannot accommodate the new F-35."

"For seven years, we have heard the government make promises, but I haven't seen any major deliveries of equipment to our army forces," Dagenais added.

Guy Thibault, chair of the Conference of Defence Associations (CDA) Institute and a retired CAF lieutenant-general, told *The Hill Times* that the international security context has changed dramatically in recent years because of Russia's war with Ukraine and the threat posed by China, and that Canada should double down on its commitments to NATO.

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg called on Canada and other NATO allies to invest a minimum of two per cent of GDP on defence, during a press conference in Belgium on March 16, 2022. Canada spent 1.29 per cent of its GDP on defence in 2022, according to NATO's annual report.

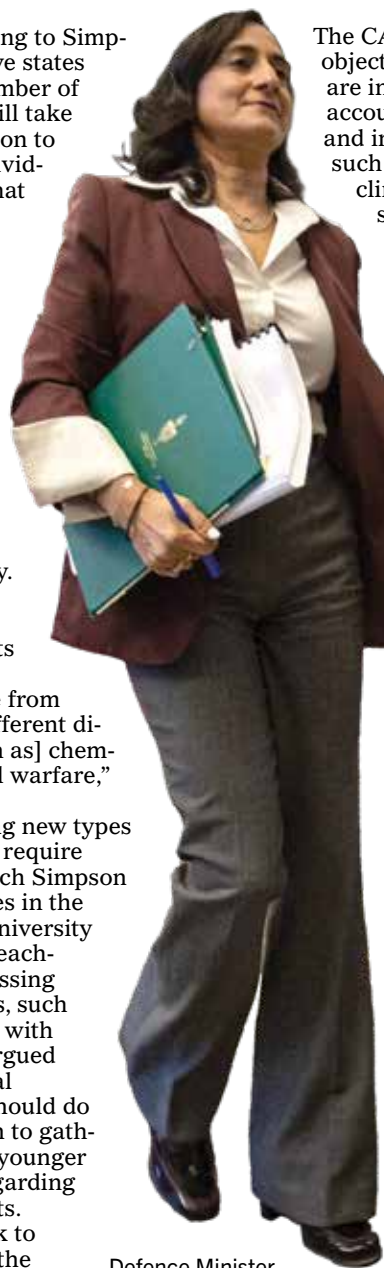
*The Washington Post* reported on April 19 that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) privately told NATO officials Canada will never meet the two per cent target.

Trudeau spoke to reporters on April 19 on his way to Question Period, and said "I continue to say, and will always say, that Canada is a reliable partner to NATO, [a] reliable partner around the world."

A summit of NATO member defence ministers will take place in Brussels on June 15-16, which Thibault said will be an opportunity for Canada to discuss the pathway to two per cent of GDP defence spending.

"I know there's been a lot of a lot of controversy about a target of two per cent of our gross domestic product, [and how] that effectively would see Canada's defense investments rising substantially, and they think that, of course, the government has other

Continued on page 26




Defence Minister Anita Anand. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Canada's Chief of Defence Staff Wayne Eyre. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade







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## Defence Policy Briefing

Many Canadians with centrist views feel the Trudeau Liberals have tilted too far to the left. The solution for the party in the 12 to 24 months prior to an election should be a vigorous thrust to the centre of Canadian politics, writes David Pratt, principal of David Pratt & Associates  
*The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



# Defence spending as a political pivot for the Trudeau government

One area where the Liberal government has seriously under-performed is in foreign affairs and defence.

David  
Pratt

Opinion



Recently, *The Globe and Mail* ran two opinion pieces side by side: one by editorial writer Andrew Coyne, and the other by pollster Nik Nanos. Coyne's article argued that it is time for a new centrist party of the sort being promoted by Centre Ice Canadians. Nanos' piece emphasized that

a majority of Canadians are ready to increase defence spending and forge stronger relationships with allies.

Both pieces intersect on the issue of a renewed focus on defence and foreign policy. As a "blue" or centrist Liberal, I hope that a careful reading of both articles might prompt the government to pivot to a new political strategy which could set it up for success in the next election.

The Liberal government needs to press the reset button whether it recognizes it or not. It is facing the same headwinds many other two- or three-term governments have encountered. The voters are simply tired of the same old, same old. According to a Nanos poll conducted earlier this month, the official opposition is opening up a substantial lead over the government with Conservatives at 34.3 per cent and the Liberals at 26.8 per cent, just a little over three points above the NDP at 23.5 per cent. Nanos tracking also has

Pierre Poilievre as the preferred choice for prime minister at 27.3 per cent of Canadians followed by Justin Trudeau at 25.9 per cent.

A glance at the numbers indicates that neither Poilievre nor Trudeau is seen as an inspiring choice. Still, the current prime minister is not without significant accomplishments. The Liberals should be given full credit for the social agenda the government has pursued since their election in 2015. Indigenous reconciliation has been a hallmark of this government as has the feminist agenda promoted by the prime minister. The government deserves kudos for cushioning the impact of COVID, its health agenda and the extension of dental benefits to lower income families. Some important progress has been made on climate change.

Nonetheless, one area where the government has seriously under-performed is in foreign affairs and defence. Trudeau's declaration when he came to power in

2015 that "Canada is back" rings hollow at this point. And while the defence policy, *Strong, Secured, Engaged*, was a visionary document, its execution has been disappointing.

Many Canadians who hold centrist views feel that the Trudeau Liberals have tilted too far to the left, and the Poilievre Conservatives too far to the right. The Trudeau-Singh agreement to keep the government in power has meant that the Liberal agenda appears to be focused largely on maintaining NDP support.

So how does the government change its political fortunes? The solution for the Trudeau Liberals in the 12 to 24 months prior to an election should be a vigorous thrust to the centre of Canadian politics. Jean Chrétien, Paul Martin, and the ghosts of Liberal leaders past understood that the centre is where the votes are. Canadians love their social programs, but they also like fiscal discipline and debt reduction.

One of the areas Coyne identifies as centrist is "increasing our defence spending in line with our NATO commitments." This is where Coyne and Nanos are literally on the same newspaper page. Nanos polling has shown that the war in Ukraine has had a dramatic impact on Canadian public opinion for both defence spending and our view of NATO. Almost two in three Canadians (64 per cent) according to a Nanos poll are supportive of increases in defence spending to see Canada meet the two per cent of GDP target. Similarly, support for NATO has steadily climbed and those who have a positive or somewhat positive view of the alliance are now well above 80 per cent.

The Trudeau government can't continue on the same course and expect different results. It needs a radical refresh. The first opportunity for a strategic pivot to the centre of the political spectrum comes with the Defence Policy Update as well as announcements associated with the July NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania. A new and robust defence policy supported with the necessary human and financial resources with a commitment to honour our NATO obligations could be an important first step in the process of resuscitating Liberal fortunes in anticipation of the next election.

David Pratt is a former federal minister of national defence under then-prime minister Paul Martin, and is the principal of David Pratt & Associates.

*The Hill Times*



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## Defence Policy Briefing

# Canada can ill afford to ignore the treatment of military families: our national security depends on it



National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa on Feb. 26, 2021. National security depends on ensuring the fair treatment of Canada's military members and their families, writes Gregory Lick, the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces ombudsman. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Government leaders must work together to ensure that Canadian Armed Forces members and their families do not suffer.

Gregory Lick

Opinion



National security depends on ensuring the fair treatment of our military members and their families. We must ensure they get the benefits and service they need

for the safety and security of all Canadians.

My office has been signalling the need for better supports and positive change for many years. And yet, although many initiatives are being worked on, little has changed concretely.

My predecessor, Gary Walbourne, in his submission for the new Defence Review Policy in 2016, wrote that we needed leadership with the will to right the wrongs before the credibility and image of this treasured institution is further eroded.

I could not agree more.

Take for example, linking an injury or illness to the performance of military service (service attribution). Recently, I appeared at the House National Defence Committee, alongside the Veterans Ombudsman Nishka Jardine, a retired colonel. Our appearance

was to aid the committee's study on military health and transition services.

Conservative MP James Bezan, his party's defence critic, raised the topic of service attribution. He questioned why the Canadian Armed Forces' medical decision that a member cannot meet universality of service—and must therefore medically-release—cannot also be used by Veterans Affairs Canada to attribute an injury to service.

I will reiterate what I said during my appearance: my office holds its position that the CAF determination of whether an illness or injury is caused or aggravated by that member's military service should be used to support an application for VAC benefits. The CAF already does this for Primary Reservists. Why not Regular Force?

Some services and benefits are only available to former members who can demonstrate that they have a disability resulting from an illness or injury that is attributable to service.

Having the service attribution decision in place before a CAF member releases will make for a better transition, benefiting the member, their family and Canadian society.

There has been an increasing number of requests from provinces and territories asking for CAF assistance with emergencies such as flooding, forest fires, and filling the gaps where they lack resources and personnel.

It is past time for this issue to be tackled at the highest level. When provincial and territorial leaders pick up the phone to ask the prime minister for assistance, our CAF members show up and

deliver. We need those leaders to now show up for our CAF members and their families to ensure they have the services and benefits they need.

We need these leaders to work together to ensure that members—and their families, who give up so much to support members—do not suffer. Military families need provinces and territories to step up and support them, ensuring continuity of health care, education, and professional accreditation no matter where the CAF member is posted in Canada or abroad.

I reiterated this point at the Seamless Canada Steering Committee last week in New Brunswick. I use my seat at the Seamless Canada Initiative table to ensure all members do what is within their jurisdiction to support all members of the defence community and listen to the voices of members and their families.

Finally, we know that recruitment and retention are challenges for the CAF. Taking care of our members and their families will help. According to the Defence Team Well-Being Survey, only 29 per cent of CAF members feel that the Department of National Defence and the CAF are looking after their families.

If we do not have members available to serve, what will we do come the next hurricane? Will we have enough personnel to combat the next wildfire? Will Canada be protected during the next global conflict?

We know that part of the solution is making the CAF an attractive career for Canadians and permanent residents. And once recruited, we need to ensure that we take care of CAF families while the member is protecting us. CAF families are the backbone of our military and the support from Reservists' employers is essential. While on operations, members need to know that their family has the supports they need. We need members to focus on their important work: protecting Canada and its people. After all, if you are worrying about your child getting medical attention, you are not able to do the job that Canadians want you to do.

Recently, the minister of national defence requested submissions for the new defence policy review. I encourage decision-makers to look at the recommendations my predecessors, myself, and Parliament have made in the past eight years. We have much of this information available on our website [ombuds.ca](http://ombuds.ca).

We don't need to reinvent the wheel.

We need the support of Canadians and all levels of government. Let's get this done now.

We can do better. And we must do better.

*Gregory Lick is the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman. He has held the position since October 2018. Prior to serving as ombudsman, Lick spent 33 years in the Canadian Coast Guard, retiring as the CCG's director general operations. He also spent 17 years as a naval reservist, retiring as a petty officer 2nd class.*

*The Hill Times*



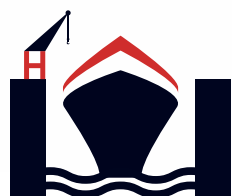


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DEFENCE



## Defence Policy Briefing

# There's a recruitment and retention crisis decades in the making



We cannot fly fighter jets without pilots and we cannot operate submarines without fleets. Our single greatest national defence priority must be rebuilding trust in our defence community, writes NDP MP Lindsay Mathyssen. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

While their mandate has expanded, Canadian Forces cannot maintain personnel levels, as many are leaving their postings and they cannot bring new hires on in the required numbers.

NDP MP  
Lindsay  
Mathyssen

Opinion



On Oct. 6, 2022, Canada's Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Wayne Eyre announced "one of the largest and most significant reconstitution efforts in recent memory." Eyre ordered the Canadian Armed Forces to immediately cease all non-essential activity to focus on the critical personnel shortage.

This emergency reconstitution is happening in the context

of unprecedented demands on our Canadian Forces. They were instrumental in providing emergency relief to COVID outbreaks in long-term care homes, they have increased presence in Europe to support Ukraine against Russia's illegal invasion, and climate change has led to increasing domestic deployments; most recently, 400 are fighting the wildfires raging through Alberta and more than 700 were sent to provide supports for the victims of Hurricane Fiona in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Labrador and Newfoundland last September.

At a moment when their mandate has expanded, Canadian Forces cannot maintain personnel levels, as many are leaving their postings and they cannot bring new hires on in the required numbers.

The recruitment and retention crisis we are facing has been decades in the making. Successive mismanagement by Liberal and Conservative governments have left the Canadian Armed Forces underinvested and overcommitted.

Liberal and Conservative governments have prioritized ballooning super projects—whether it's \$70-billion for F-35 fighter jets, or the talks of a new submarine fleet—while freezing CAF member salaries, delaying repairs

on military housing, and avoiding meaningful culture reforms. We all believe that our Forces need effective, safe and modern equipment to do their jobs, but we cannot sacrifice all other considerations to satiate the American military industrial complex.

The Canadian Armed Forces make our country proud because of the dedication of thousands of service members and veterans. But they cannot do this job solely to feel proud or dedicated. We need to do better for the women and men in uniform, so they, too, can afford to feed their families, have safe, affordable housing, a family doctor or a workplace free from internal violence, discrimination and harassment.

It's just not enough to halt non-essential activity to deal with the recruitment and retention crisis—Ottawa needs to seize this opportunity to take stock and repair our relationship with service members and veterans. Despite a great deal of arguing over this point, I believe the Government of Canada has a social contract with Canadian Armed Service members and part of that agreement is to ensure we keep them as safe as we can, and take care of them and their families during their time in service and after their careers have ended.

First, we need to heed the call by countless survivors of military

sexual trauma to make a real plan for culture change. Some progress has been made since Justice Louise Arbour's Independent External Comprehensive Review of the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces.

However, when I invited Justice Arbour to the House National Defence Committee, she warned us that her report could join "the graveyard of recommendations"—the numerous reports that were never refused, but linger in perpetuity before internal working groups.

In response to the report, the government appointed an external monitor to oversee the implementation of external recommendations. Regrettably, the external monitor's first progress report states "there is no overall framework that sets out how the organization, as a whole, will move from one phase to the next." We cannot accept a piecemeal approach to culture change. We must keep pressure on the Liberals to do what's right for survivors.

Second, we need to make serious investments to fix military housing. The Department of National Defence has the single largest infrastructure portfolio within the federal government, but it also has significantly and

chronically underinvested in the maintenance and construction of military housing. The Canadian Forces Housing Agency has an estimated backlog of 5,200-7,200 housing units. And beyond military housing, the department recently announced a change of policy, one that provided supports to members' housing expenses, in order to cut \$30-million from their budget.

Third, we must finally act on the mental health crisis in the Canadian Armed Forces. Despite the New Democratic Party repeatedly introducing legislation, the Liberal government has refused to remove an archaic section of the National Defence Act that makes self-harm a disciplinary offence, which prevents members from coming forward for support. They have also repeatedly delayed action to enact the Veterans Ombudsman's call for peer support services to be provided for military sexual trauma survivors.

Fourth, we need to finally delete antiquated legislation known as the 'gold-digger clause' or the 'marriage after 60 clause,' which makes spouses who married veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces and the RCMP after the age of 60 ineligible to receive survivor pensions. Let's treat veterans with more respect than that.

Finally, we need to rein in for-profit corporations lining their pockets from outsourcing. The Liberals gave Loblaw's a \$560-million contract to provide veterans with mental health services only to find they're paying more for a worse product. We have seen for-profit health-care provider Calian receive \$1-billion to replace military and public sector health care workers, leading to record profits. There are countless examples of our dedicated public service being outsourced by Liberals and Conservatives, with veterans and military members paying the price.

Canadians know we are in an increasingly dangerous world. And whether it is peacekeeping missions abroad, natural disasters at home, or increased activity in the Arctic, we know the demands on our women and men in uniform will only grow, and they certainly need reliable tools to do the job.

But we cannot fly fighter jets with no pilots. We cannot operate submarines with no fleet. We cannot deploy without cooks or medical officers. Our single greatest national defence priority must be rebuilding trust in our defence community.

The New Democratic Party's vision is a military where Canadian Armed Forces members can work safely, get the support they need when they need it, and count on fair policies to govern their work. With the ongoing reconstitution order, it is time for Parliament to step up and do more for the women and men who serve in the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces.

NDP MP Lindsay Mathyssen, who represents London-Fanshawe, Ont., is her party's critic for national defence.

*The Hill Times*



# Canada needs to be part of the arsenal of democracy

The international security environment has changed with the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Nicolas Todd

Opinion



One thing we learned in the pandemic is “just in time” isn’t good enough. Relying almost exclusively on timely access to offshore suppliers in an emergency proved to be a recipe for failure. Having a degree of built-in domestic industrial capacity is now generally regarded as essential to resiliency, if not national security.

A similar lesson is emerging from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine’s success in this war boils down to two basic ingredients. First, the courage, toughness and will of the Ukrainian people. And second, the degree to which NATO governments and their defence

industries work together to produce and supply Ukraine with the defence technologies they need, when they need them, and in the quantities required. *The Economist* calls this building “the arsenal of democracy.”

The level of demand from the battlefield is unprecedented since the Second World War. The Ukrainian Army is firing over 5,000 155mm artillery shells daily. The United States alone has provided Ukraine with over one million 155mm rounds.

Consequently, the production capacity of the defence industrial bases of NATO states is increasingly seen as decisive in the war. Victory in Ukraine, and ongoing deterrence in Europe and globally thereafter, requires every NATO state, including Canada, to have domestic defence industrial capabilities—comparative advantages—to bring to the collective defence table. Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Wayne Eyre’s comments last year calling for the Canadian defence industry to shift to “a wartime footing” are reflective of that basic security reality.

Ottawa’s neglect of the Canadian defence industrial base must, therefore, end. In democracies like Canada, defence industries don’t mobilize on their own or through exhortation. They must be guided

and shaped through thoughtful government policy and procurement. There must be real partnership and trust between industry and government.

The Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries has long advocated for the establishment of a new, institutionalized relationship between the federal government and the Canadian defence industry. The aim would be to work together to plan, grow and sustain a healthy Canadian defence industrial base that can contribute more to our national defence and collective security obligations. As the government works through its Defence Policy Update—launched last year in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine—we will continue to argue for this relationship.

The recent debate on defence has centred on the higher order issue of whether Canada will ever meet NATO’s two per cent of GDP defence spending target. At about 1.3 per cent now, we are nowhere near that target, have no plan to get there, and the target itself has been rejected by the prime minister. Nevertheless, given the European security situation and an increasingly assertive China, the case for two per cent is stronger today than when it was agreed to in the Wales Declaration nearly a decade ago.

Canada’s failure to meet another key Wales Declaration commitment—spending a minimum of 20 per cent of the defence budget on equipment—is less discussed but no less important. According to the Department of National Defence, in 2021-22, Canada hit 13.7 per cent on this metric. This is not just well below the NATO target. It is the same low level as two decades ago during the tail end of so-called “decade of darkness” for the Canadian Armed Forces. There are many reasons for this perpetual capital spending shortfall, one of which is a sclerotic and overly complex approach to defence acquisitions. Meaningful streamlining and simplifying of the defence equipment acquisition function—informed through a consultative process with the Canadian industry—needs to be a priority in the Defence Policy Update. This, too, will lead to a stronger and more sustainable defence industrial base.

It is both trite and true to say the international security environment has changed with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. One by-product of the war is that the technology and production capabilities of the defence industries of NATO states are seen today—in a way they were not a year ago—as essential to alliance security and deterrence. Canada’s defence policy update needs to reflect that reality.

Nicolas Todd is vice-president of policy, communications, and government relations with the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries. The association represents the interests of more than 700 defence, security, and cyber companies across Canada.

The Hill Times

When treating casualties in a war zone, seconds count.

The last thing a medic should have to do is waste those seconds wondering how to translate what they learned on a pig to the wounded soldier before them.

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## Defence Policy Briefing

In spring 2022, Defence Minister Anita Anand announced Canada's NORAD Modernization Plan, which invests \$38.6-billion to modernize Canadian NORAD capabilities. Canada's current defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, launched in 2017, is intended to provide the Canadian Armed Forces with the capabilities and equipment to protect Canadians. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



# A dramatic change in the threat situation would leave Canada no time to react

If geopolitical conditions change, such as they did in the last 15 months, Canada's preparedness is nowhere near where it should be.

Liberal MP  
John McKay

Opinion



At the Charlevoix G7 Summit in 2018, Canada committed to increasing its defence spending to two per cent of GDP. Admittedly, it was an aspirational goal, drafted so that no nation, including Canada, could be bound to its commitment. Over time, however, failure to meet two per cent has become less and less defensible. Canada has not met that aspirational target, nor is it likely to in the near future.

In 2011, it was 1.19 per cent of GDP which dipped to below one per cent in 2014 and has been in an irregular upward trajectory ever since, settling currently at about 1.4 per cent (according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's June 9, 2022, report) ever since 2021. NATO's average is approximately 2.5 per cent.

Moreover, if geopolitical conditions change, such as they did in the last 15 months, our preparedness is nowhere near where it should be.

The Canadian Armed Forces annually reports its percentage of key fleets to meet training and readiness requirements. For the year 2021, the Navy had a 94.1 per cent score on readiness, land fleets about 62.7 per cent, and aerospace about 55 per cent according to the Feb. 1, 2022, readiness report.

There are a number of explanations, but should there be a dramatic change in our threat situation we will not have the time to react.

Equipment platforms are so complex that even in an efficient procurement environment, we will not be able to build or replace them in a timely manner.

The old saying is that an army marches on its stomach. But while well fed, there just aren't

enough personnel to meet current commitments. By our best estimates, we have a shortfall of between 10,000 to 14,000 personnel. That is a significant shortfall for a relatively small force of approximately 100,000 people. The good news is that according to Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Wayne Erye there has been an uptick in recruitment recently.

Then there are the procurement challenges. Taking a relatively straightforward memorandum of understanding to deployment is a tortuous process.

So, what are we to make of a lacklustre commitment to two per cent of GDP, significant personnel shortfalls, a tortuous procurement process, and equipment that is in many instances beyond its useful life.

My first observation is that there's plenty of blame to go around. Successive governments and ministers have let the military atrophy to its present status. Second, there is no significant political constituency that supports the military, especially military spending. I doubt that I've ever gotten one vote for my support of Canada's military. Third, the military is not top of mind for Canadians, not even the top 10. Canadians have other concerns and base their responsiveness to

candidates based on those concerns. Fourth, if there is a crisis, Canadians want their military to be there front-and-centre for fires, floods, vaccines, peacekeeping, and expeditionary interventions. Unfortunately, they just don't want to pay for it. Fifth, Canadians have little or no apprehension of the threat environment, notwithstanding Ukraine and China's aggression, particularly in Taiwan. There's a complacency in the public because those geopolitical tensions are felt to be remote. Sixth, the U.S. provides a comprehensive security umbrella and expects little of us in return. But that expectation is beginning to change, and beginning to harden. And finally, we are a prosperous nation that enjoys the benefits of our natural abundance, and the complacency that comes with it.

The question then becomes, what will shake us from our complacency and indifference? Certainly a new and more dangerous threat environment may bring about a change in attitude. Ukraine may go horribly wrong, and NATO will be dragged into a European war. If NATO is in, we're all in and Canada will be at war. China may invade Taiwan, destroy freedom of the seas, and drive Western nations onto a more war-like footing.

Both scenarios are within the realm of possibility, whether we like it or not. While we hope these scenarios do not occur, hope is not a strategy. The problem is that while the threat environment may change, we are woefully behind in making a credible response. Understaffed, under-gunned, and under-resourced. Too little, too late.

Underlying the foregoing is the reality of climate change. The engineering challenge of building in the North is monumental. The melting of permafrost makes the building of port, runways, warehouses, hangars, and buildings very expensive.

China and Russia are aggressively announcing their presence in the Arctic. Asserting our sovereignty is paramount. Use it, or lose it. All of the NORAD surveillance proposals are profoundly complex and expensive, yet they are the bedrock of our sovereignty.

Getting equipment in shape is time consuming. Getting personnel trained is time consuming. Getting projects started is time consuming. Getting resources spent is time consuming. Getting decision makers aligned is time consuming. And we have everything but time.

The Canadian public needs to drive this, and the political class needs to respond, educate, and make decisions. Incrementalism, risk aversion, and kicking decisions down the road are the luxuries of another era.

Liberal MP John McKay represents Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont. He previously served as parliamentary secretary to the minister of finance from 2003 to 2006 during the government of Paul Martin, then served as an opposition MP and critic until November 2015 during the government of Stephen Harper.

*The Hill Times*



# The role of cybersecurity in modern warfare

Canada must continue to strengthen its legal system to confront new cyber threats.

Caroline  
Cameron

Opinion



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently drew a comparison between attacks on Canada's physical infrastructure and our nation's assistance to Ukraine. Cyberspace and international borders have been breached by modern warfare in Ukraine, jeopardizing Canadian military systems, infrastructures supporting national security, and businesses. Although there are no active conflicts within Canadian borders, the country's security is based on private infrastructure, which has already seen catastrophic calamities.

## Building on cybersecurity strengths and tackling weak spots

When it comes to cybersecurity, Canada has two important advantages. For one, the National Cybercrime Coordination Unit and the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security were both formed under the 2018 Cyber Security Strategy. Secondly, with revenues of more than \$3.2-billion and 29,000 jobs in 2020, the Canadian cybersecurity sector represents a significant economic driver for our nation.

Yet Canada must continue to strengthen its legal system to confront new cyber threats. Released in 2004, the National Security Strategy of Canada could benefit from an update that would offer the necessary comprehensive and up-to-date national security framework that could both simplify the complex missions of the organizations supporting national security and foster greater public-private cooperation.



Minister of Public Safety Marco Mendicino is the sponsor of Bill C-26, an act respecting cyber security, amending the Telecommunications Act and making consequential amendments to other acts, which completed second reading in the House on March 27. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

## Cross-sector collaboration is key to mitigating current and future risks

To enable the sharing of intelligence and the improved coordination of cyber crises and occurrences, our cyber ecosystem requires strong collaboration and information-sharing agreements with the commercial sector, other countries, and all its jurisdictions (federal, provincial, and local).

As a first step toward achieving this goal, the Security of Canada Information Disclosure Act (SCIDA) was passed in 2019 to increase information sharing across government institutions and agencies with established national security missions (SCIDA excludes sharing of information with federal, state, local, or commercial sector partners).

Another piece of legislation, C-26, which obtained royal approval in December 2022, will further improve incident

response capabilities, and increase cooperation between government agencies and commercial businesses to lessen the effects of cyber disasters and promote efficient recovery. Additionally, C-26 will set the stage to make critical infrastructure cyber defences even stronger.

## Evolving our laws and focusing on design to tackle emerging threats

Despite these gains, legislative and accountability gaps remain, especially given the onset of new participants in fields where governments have historically assumed the lead, including cyber defence. The worldwide internet traffic passing through the servers of data giants like Google, Microsoft, and Amazon Web Services is closely monitored on an ongoing basis, with violators removed at an increasing pace.

Emerging digital technologies are improving our way of life, and Canada's practical approach to cybersecurity need to be updated to reflect the sector's rapid evolution. Notably, whereas digital systems demand security by design, Canada's cybersecurity regulations are still mostly dependent on controls. Establishing trust cannot wait until the system is put together; rather, it must start early in the supply chain. Security by design is a lifecycle approach that goes beyond delivery and is continuous. This calls for new standards and new ways of evaluating how commercial entities apply security.

## Ethically harnessing the power of technology to battle cyber attacks

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), which are digitally native systems, have already enhanced cyber threat identification, automated security procedures, and raised the accuracy and speed of incident response.

The Artificial Intelligence and Data Protection Act, proposed by Canada, will impose privacy protection requirements on AI and ML. However, the development of AI and ML systems that prevent prejudice is a rising source of worry. As a result,

these technologies will need accountability and ethical frameworks. The usage of data by enabling systems like ChatGPT raises concerns about where the information goes and who uses it, as well as the requirement for objectivity when these systems are used in the context of government or national security. Entrusting the sources of data and where the data is being used is a starting point to build trust, building the knowledge to properly query the data will also be needed.

## Driving impactful results by investing in people and skills

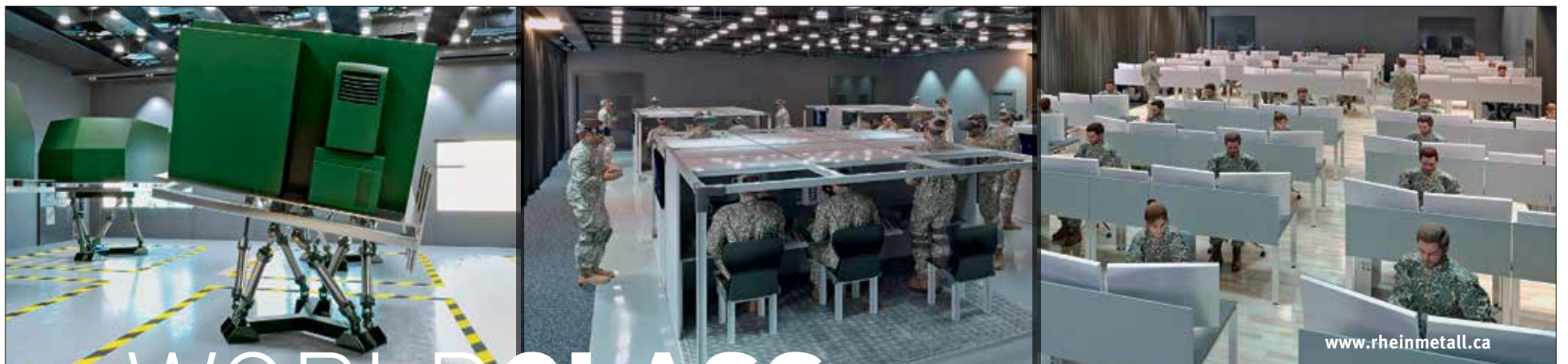
To tackle these emerging and complex challenges, all parties involved in our nation's cybersecurity ecosystem must make significant investments in workforce development, education, and training to nurture a strong pipeline of cyber talent.

All levels of the workforce require cybersecurity education programs as well as specialized instruction, certification, and practical experience. Furthermore, government, higher-learning institutions, and businesses can collaborate to offer students more hands-on learning, apprenticeships, and co-op opportunities. These initiatives can contribute to closing the skills gap and developing a strong workforce to handle the changing cybersecurity issues.

To keep up with emerging threats and to help increase the accuracy and speed of incident responses, cybersecurity tools and technologies will always evolve. With an efficient legislative framework, Canada's national security organizations, combined with its strong domestic commercial capabilities, can establish and maintain efficient systems to recognize and stop cyberthreats, defend against cyberattacks, react quickly to incidents, and train a strong workforce to support it all.

Caroline Cameron is a director at Deloitte Canada. Until recently, she was head of the Joint Defence Cloud Program at the Department of National Defence. She formerly worked at the Communications Security Establishment, where she oversaw the introduction of digital secure communication, the Canadian government's response to cyber incidents, and supply.

*The Hill Times*



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## Defence Policy Briefing

# Defence threats call for unorthodox ideas from younger Canadians, argues international politics prof

Continued from page 16

priorities. But I think that this is a context where we have to put our money where our mouth is," said Thibault. "If we want to be able to rely on our [NATO] partners to work with us in the world, then we have to be able to demonstrate that we're doing our fair share."

On April 16, the CDA Institute released an open letter calling on the federal government to treat national defence as more of a priority.

"Years of restraint, cost cutting, downsizing and deferred investments, have meant that Canada's defence capabilities have atrophied. Our military capabilities are outdated and woefully inadequate to protect our landmass and maritime approaches. We have also fallen short in meaningful contributions to burden sharing for the collective defence and security of our allies and partners," reads the letter. "Now is the time to fully discharge the commitments we have made to our allies and partners in sharing the burden of the collective security, commitments which are essential to safeguard our peace, prosperity and way of life."

Signatories on the letter include five former Liberal and Conservative defence ministers, nine former chiefs of the defence staff, four former ambassadors, and former chief justice of the Supreme Court Beverley McLachlin.

David Perry, president of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, told *The Hill Times* that a major



ISG Senator Tony Dean, right, says radar systems in the Arctic are 'near the end of their useful life' and must be replaced with systems capable of identifying and tracking new classes of missiles that Russia and China have. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

issue facing Canada's military is a recruitment and retention crisis. Brigadier-General Krista Brodie said that Canada's military is facing a shortfall of about 16,000 members, in an interview with CTV News on April 5.

Perry said the personnel shortage is fundamental.

"If you don't have people to do all kinds of different things—policy work, staff work, administrative planning, procurement, training, maintenance—it's hard to do anything else or think about what the future the forces would look like down the road," said Perry.

When asked about how the Defence minister is addressing Canada's military and defence issues, Perry said it is hard to judge.

"[Ministers] they exist within this current structure of govern-

ment, which means that fundamentally, it's the prime minister who makes a lot of these decisions. I think that [Anand] has talked quite thoughtfully, meaningfully, about a lot of these issues and articulated a number of these problems, but ministers of Defense in Canada don't have the ability to sign their own cheques," he said.

Jcnockaert@hilltimes.com  
*The Hill Times*

## Canadian Armed Forces Statistics

- In 2021, a total of 97,625 Canadians were reported in a census profile of Canada's military as serving in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) as members of the Regular Force or Primary Reserve Force.
- In 2021, almost one-fifth of currently serving Canadian military personnel enumerated in the census were women.
- The CAF were younger on average (36.2 years old) than the employed labour force overall (41.9), but currently serving women were older than their male counterparts.
- Ontario (35.4 per cent) and Quebec (20.2 per cent) had the highest share of currently serving military personnel.
- Belleville—Quinte West and Kingston had the largest share of military personnel among Canada's census metropolitan areas, given that they are both in close proximity to military bases.
- In 2021, 461,240 Canadians were counted as veterans in the census.

Source: Statistics Canada



David Perry, president of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, says the recruitment and retention crisis facing the Canadian Armed Forces is fundamental, because without adequate personnel, 'it's hard to do anything else.' Photograph courtesy of the CGAI

## Continental defence modernization: a pressing need

The programs included for continental defence modernization are the right ones. However, in light of recent developments in the threat landscape, these programs should be prioritized and accelerated.

Jordan Miller

Opinion



The events of the past year have generated considerable interest about North American security, space, and Canada's role in supporting global peace and security through its allies. Ukraine's ongoing fight for its existence provides many insights into the challenges of contemporary warfare. This battlefield includes conventional combat, early warning and interception of cruise missile and hypersonic missile attacks, the use of small commercially sourced drones, information and cyber operations, and using space systems to supplement communications networks. For Canada's national security and continental defence, advanced missiles threats and threats to space infrastructure are clear concerns.

In June 2022, National Defence Minister Anita Anand announced plans for Canada to proceed with continental defence modernization. This announcement included commitments to modernize surveillance systems for the Northern approaches to North America, improve surveillance of space and from space, modernize infrastructure, and improve the command and control networks that enable the passage of information to support decision-making. Canadian companies welcomed this news, seeing the opportunity to deliver innovative, leading-edge solutions for Canada's defence and national security. However, these programs should be a greater priority and should be accelerated.

Accelerating and prioritizing continental defence modernization will provide many benefits for Canada. First, by investing in new capabilities, we will be able to provide an enhanced

commitment to NORAD and improve our contribution to the security and safety of North America. Between January and February 2023, as many as four objects—including a balloon and nondescript cylindrical and octagonal shaped objects—entered North American airspace and were intercepted by fighter aircraft. These are not the only threats to Canada's airspace. The minister pointed to the threat of hypersonic and advanced cruise missiles. The threat of hostile aircraft and ships—especially as arctic ice cover melts more each decade—are familiar and could increase. All of these threats to Canada's sovereignty—from known, current threats to emerging and future threats—exist simultaneously. Prioritizing continental defence modernization will improve our defences against these threats.

Second, space is increasingly being used by states and private companies, creating challenges for its future use. It is well-known that space is becoming increasingly "congested, contested and competitive." This has real implications for our nation and our allies. Improving Canada and NORAD's situational awareness of space is vital to understanding the potential threats that exist beyond Earth's atmosphere. Space capabilities are so embedded in our daily lives that they are taken for granted. The banking system, GPS navigation, air traffic control, your cell phone, imagery photos, and much more all depend on space capabilities. The dividing line between military and civilian capabilities in space is becoming increasingly blurry, underlining the need for improved situational awareness in space. The war in Ukraine serves as a highly relevant reminder. Hostile actors have the capability to disrupt satellites and their connections to Earth. Part of the continental defence modernization program includes improving surveillance of space; a much needed capability.

Continental defence modernization plans include a range of important capabilities that will improve Canada's ability to detect threats to the maritime and aerospace approaches to North America. The increasing use of space means an increase in the overall potential threats to North American sovereignty. The programs included for continental defence modernization are the right ones. However, in light of recent developments in the threat landscape, these programs should be prioritized and accelerated.

Jordan Miller is the marketing lead (global defence) for Calian Group. He is also the vice-chair of the Public Policy and Advocacy Committee for Space Canada.

*The Hill Times*



# Government's defence policy review an opportunity to leverage Canada's industrial strengths



The government should work closely with the private sector to ensure that the defence industrial base is prepared to meet the requirements of this once-in-a-generation modernization effort, writes Gaphel Kongtsa, a Policy Advisor at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Photograph by Tyler Brenot, distributed under a CC BY-SA 3.0 licence

We cannot afford to overlook the broad array of challenges facing our defence and security. However, the review also presents a major opportunity to proactively strengthen our defence capabilities.

Gaphel Kongtsa

Opinion



The world today is much less secure and certain than it has been in many years. A confluence of disruptive forces—ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to Russia's war in Ukraine to worsening climate crises—have drastically altered the international security environment. In responding to these new threats, governments around the world have been forced to refocus their attention on their national security and defence.

The 2022 federal budget first shed light on the government's plans for modernizing and updating Canada's approach to national defence. In addition to new defence spending, the budget included plans to launch a review of Canada's 2017 defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, with the goal of updating the strategy to support Canada's broader international priorities and reflect the challenges posed by the altered global environment.

The defence policy review is an important exercise. We cannot afford to overlook the broad array of challenges—new and old—facing our defence and security. However, the review also presents a major opportunity to proactively strengthen our defence capabilities.

The government's defence policy review should aim to leverage Canada's industrial strengths in a strategic and deliberate manner. Given that our unique industrial strengths are very well suited to addressing many of the major security challenges we face, the case for doing so is clear.

Consider, for instance, the case of growing threats to our Arctic security. Russia's war in Ukraine has once again brought the issue of Arctic monitoring and defence to the fore. The government's commitment to modernizing the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD), which will include significant investments in new radar stations, Arctic military infrastructure, and key space-related projects is an important step towards safeguarding continental security and our Arctic sovereignty.

Canada's aerospace and space industries produce world-leading capabilities and components relevant to NORAD mod-

ernization. Notably, Canada is one of the world's largest aerospace markets. Our aerospace sector also ranks first among all Canadian manufacturing industries in terms of research and development, which brings important benefits for the broader domestic economy. The government should work closely with the private sector to ensure that the defence industrial base is prepared to meet the requirements of this once-in-a-generation modernization effort.

Cybersecurity is also an area of increasing national security concern. In recent years, there has been a notable rise in malicious cyber activity, often directed at critical infrastructure networks and technology used to run vital sectors.

Canada possesses significant capabilities in the emerging areas of cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and quantum technologies, and is home to some of the

world's top firms in these sectors. In recognizing the strategic importance of these technologies in safeguarding our national security, it is critical that the government deepen collaboration with industry and foster Canada's competitive advantage in these areas.

Additionally, critical minerals are an important building block for many modern technologies and are uniquely significant to our national defence and national security priorities. Notably, critical minerals play an essential role in the supply chains of most consumer electronics, semiconductors, critical infrastructure, defence, security, and space-based technologies and systems.

Canada is endowed with enormous natural resource wealth spread across many critical-mineral-rich regions and is a leading global producer of nickel, potash, aluminum, and uranium. Canada is also home to nearly half of the world's publicly listed mining and mineral exploration companies. Given their role as vital inputs required to deliver on continental defence modernization objectives and space program investments, as well as their geo-strategic importance, critical minerals should be considered a priority under Canada's overarching defence strategy.

Canada's industrial strengths are a unique competitive advantage that we should leverage to strengthen our national security and defence, as well as that of our allies. The defence policy review should seek to strengthen existing government-industry partnerships in these key areas, and where they don't presently exist, should develop new institutionalized partnerships and information-sharing forums.

In her address at this year's Ottawa Conference on Security and Defence on March 9, Defence Minister Anita Anand rightly described national security as a team endeavour.

In this moment of heightened security concerns and rapid technological advancement, effectively modernizing Canada's defence policy to withstand new threats will require an all-hands-on-deck approach that recognizes both industry and government have important contributions to make.

Gaphel Kongtsa is a policy adviser at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, where his work primarily focuses on international affairs, trade, and multilateral institutions.

The Hill Times

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## Opinion

# COVID-19 may affect patient response to medicines

One of the lesser known yet critical issues arising from the disease is its potential effect on drug response and the risk of adverse drug effects.

Chukwunonso Nwabuo

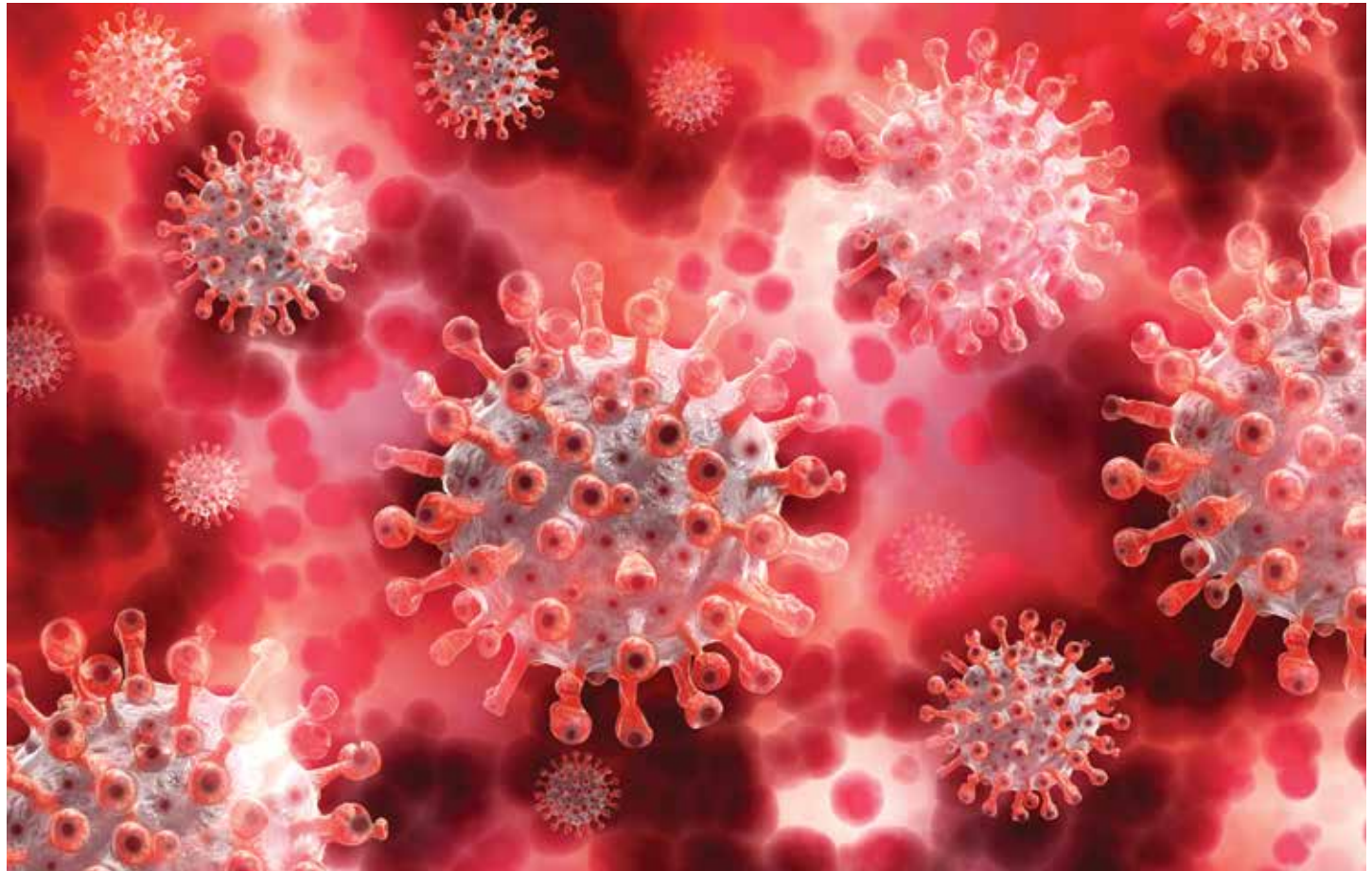
Opinion



**T**ORONTO—The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has upended the world as we know it, and its impact on the health-care system has been particularly profound. One of the lesser-known yet critical issues arising from the disease is its potential effect on drug response and the risk of adverse drug effects.

In May 2020, a clinical study observed that COVID-19 patients receiving the antiretroviral drug lopinavir had higher drug levels in their blood than expected. Another study published in December 2021 found higher than normal blood levels of the immunosuppressive drug tacrolimus in solid-organ transplant recipients infected with SARS-CoV-2—the virus that causes COVID-19. In July 2022, another clinical report was published demonstrating that SARS-CoV-2-associated inflammatory response reduced the metabolism of the sedative drug midazolam in COVID-19 patients. All these clinical studies suggest that COVID-19 can change how the body processes drugs which could impact the drugs' effectiveness and safety for the affected patient population. However, it remains unclear how COVID-19 mediates this effect.

To uncover how COVID-19 affects drug processing by the body, we conducted a study that investigated the effect of SARS-CoV-2 infection in dysregulating the mRNA and protein expression of 25 clinically relevant proteins involved in drug processing including drug metabolizing enzymes and membrane transporters in Vero E6 cells (an African monkey kidney epithelial cell which has been widely used to study SARS-CoV-2 infection) and post-mortem human lung tissues obtained from control and COVID-19 patients, respectively. Our study showed that under SARS-CoV-2-associated inflammatory response in Vero



Health-care providers need to think about how COVID-19 might affect how medications work and how they might cause side effects. They can do this by adjusting medication doses and watching out for any interactions between medications, especially for people who are taking multiple drugs, writes Chukwunonso Nwabuo. Image courtesy of Pixabay

E6 cells, the mRNA expression of the drug metabolizing enzymes—CYP3A4 and UGT1A1—were significantly up-regulated and down-regulated, respectively. This is most interesting because CYP3A4 is involved in the processing of more than 50 per cent of clinically relevant drugs including lopinavir, tacrolimus, and midazolam—drugs whose blood levels have deviated from normal levels following SARS-CoV-2 infection, according to the recent clinical studies mentioned above.

More so, CYP3A4 is involved in the processing of some COVID-19 drugs including Paxlovid and Veklury. Paxlovid is boosted with ritonavir (a CYP3A4 inhibitor) to improve its blood levels and it would be interesting to observe the impact of COVID-19 on its processing by the body. Furthermore, inter-individual genetic differences associated with the drug metabolizing enzyme UGT1A1 impact irinotecan (a prodrug used for small cell lung cancer chemotherapy) metabolite-related toxicity, and lung cancer patients have a higher than seven-fold risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection. As a result, the subset of COVID-19-positive lung cancer patients who are poor UGT1A1 metabolizers and are receiving irinotecan may be at a greater risk of adverse drug effects.

Our study also showed that the membrane transporters—P-gp and MRP1 are down-regulated

and up-regulated, respectively, in COVID-19 human lung tissues compared to controls. P-gp is involved in the processing of the COVID-19 drugs Paxlovid and Veklury. Of interest is the observation of the unique distribution of drug metabolizing enzymes and transporters in human lung tissues. We uncovered for the first time the localization of these drug metabolizing enzymes and membrane transporters in human lung tissues, and observed that inflammatory response was the primary factor driving the differences in their localization between COVID-19 and control lung tissues. In general, we observed that SARS-CoV-2 virus, proteins that regulate the expression of drug metabolizing enzymes and membrane transporters, as well as clinically relevant drug metabolizing enzymes and membrane transporters, are primarily localized in the same lung cell type (alveolar epithelial cells and lymphocytes) affected by SARS-CoV-2 infection. This implies that the processing of drugs in human lung tissue may be specifically impacted by excessive SARS-CoV-2-associated inflammatory response and lung tissue damage. Further highlighting the need to do more research on how COVID-19 affects the way drugs are processed in the lungs. This will help us figure out the right dose of medications for COVID-19 patients, especially those who have severe inflammation and damage in multiple

tissues, to ensure effective drug response.

Health-care providers need to think about how COVID-19 might affect how medications work and how they might cause side effects. They can do this by adjusting medication doses and watching out for any interactions between medications, especially for people who are taking multiple drugs. It's also important to test COVID-19 patients to see how much inflammation they have so providers can decide on the right dosing regimen. Similarly, genetic differences in specific drug processing proteins coupled with the impact of SARS-CoV-2-associated inflammatory response may increase the risk of adverse drug effects and/or inefficacy for some patient populations and health-care providers should put this into consideration when making treatment decisions.

In some cases, health-care providers need to pay special attention to how COVID-19 might affect people who have problems with their immune system, like individuals who had immune system problems (maladaptive immune state) before they were born due to maternal immune activation following environmental perturbations such as infection and psychosocial stress. These individuals may have excessive immune activation and abnormal drug response following a second hit by SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Therefore, personalized medicine should be the standard of practice for the clinical management of COVID-19 patients to ensure optimal clinical outcomes. We have provided strategies for implementing precision medicine in the clinical management of COVID-19 patients, and health-care providers should take this into consideration.


It is essential to recognize that this issue is just one of many that the pandemic has brought to the forefront of health care. The global health-care community must continue to work tirelessly to understand and address the multifaceted challenges arising from this pandemic, from drug response to mental health, to healthcare disparities, and beyond.

In the face of these challenges, we must rely on the expertise and commitment of our health-care providers, researchers, and policymakers to ensure that we continue to make progress in our fight against COVID-19. The stakes are high, and the road ahead is uncertain, but with continued dedication and collaboration, we can navigate this crisis and emerge stronger and more resilient than before.

Chukwunonso Nwabuo, MSc, MBA, PhD student and CIHR scholar, is in clinical pharmacology and therapeutics at the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Toronto.

The Hill Times



A black and white portrait of a woman with long, dark hair, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Terra**

Matriarch, Tlatlasikwala

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## Opinion

Special Rapporteur David Johnston could have succumbed to political pressures and recommended a public inquiry. Instead, he gave his neutral, independent advice, despite the possibility this his good name would be dragged through the political mud, writes Bhagwant Sandhu. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



# David Johnston rises above politics in delivering his foreign interference report

Justin Trudeau and his government can breathe a sigh of relief—for now—but foreign interference is not going away.

Bhagwant Sandhu

Opinion



OTTAWA—Special Rapporteur David Johnston has done his job, completed his interim report, and submitted his recommendations. He does not feel a full-blown public inquiry into foreign interference is warranted. If you're a policy wonk, this is cause for celebration. Less so if you're a politician.

A public inquiry, as Johnston points out, "would have been an easy choice, it would not have been a correct choice." He could have added that it would have

been a reaction to exaggerated hype by the media, sour-grapes posturing by the Conservatives after losing two secure seats in Chinese-Canadian ridings in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections, and sporadic-yet-steady leaks by the security agencies. In an advanced multi-party state like Canada, none of these should be good enough reasons to drive public policy decisions.

It could work in a single-party country like China, where the bureaucratic cadres instinctively couch their policy advice in the government's political agenda. It could also work in a two-party state like the United States, where bureaucrats develop policies with an eye on generating political division and exposing cleavages. We do neither in Canada. Kudos to Johnston for recognizing that. As he notes, given the subject's secret nature, a public inquiry would not achieve much. It would just be a political sideshow.

Johnston also found that neither the prime minister or his cabinet "knowingly or negligently" failed to act on advice on intelligence. While he may be right regarding the specifics of the 2019 and 2021 elections, he

is not entirely correct about the dossier as whole. In fact, the Liberals have been aware of foreign interference for a while, but have procrastinated in addressing it in any meaningful fashion.

Threats of Chinese and Indian attempts to interfere in our internal matters, including influencing Canadian political outcomes, is not news. In a report titled *Countering Hostile State Activity: The Canadian Perspective*, federal bureaucrats outlined the risks as far back as March 2018. Even groups like the World Sikh Organization repeatedly raised red flags after stories emerged about the Indian government spying on Sikh and Kashmiri communities in Germany. Intelligence services also named Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Venezuela as countries being monitored. Yet, five years later, the Liberals did nothing.

By 2019, the Trudeau government had fully joined the budding pro-India/anti-China bandwagon. This created a difficult political conundrum: you can't point the finger at one while ignoring the other. Throw in Saudi Arabia, which in 2020 alone bought over \$1.30-billion of Canadian military hardware to reign terror in

Yemen, and it is not difficult to see how "do nothing" quickly becomes the preferred option. Doing something—anything—could inadvertently turn out to be a hornet's nest.

The opposition parties are not happy with Johnston. In his blog, former Conservative leader Erin O'Toole was quick to call Johnston's investigation "a box-check exercise." Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre didn't even bother to meet with Johnston. Instead, he hurled schoolyard insults and trivialized a legitimate processes used by modern democracies. At least Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh met with Johnston, and put their positions on the historical record. But Poilievre, our presumed prime-minister-in-waiting, couldn't care less.

Johnston, therefore, needs to be commended. He could have succumbed to political pressures and recommended a public inquiry. As a man of moral character, he did not. He gave his neutral, independent advice, despite the possibility this his good name could—and would—be dragged through the political mud. Poilievre has already started that

mud-slinging, calling for Johnston to "get out of the way."

For a country like Canada, where one in four of us is an immigrant, it is not enough to inquire into what China did in 2019 or 2021, but what every country in the world is doing every day. As such, the prime minister should direct Johnston to spend the rest his mandate undertaking a far-reaching probe into everything from American oligarchs funding our lobbyists and think tanks, to agents of friendly foreign countries infiltrating our mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras, and diaspora cultural groups, to foreign countries denying Canadians visas and harassing their families in the country of their birth.

The Trudeau Liberals can breathe a sigh of relief, for now. But foreign interference is not going away. The government's plan to implement the foreign agent registry is just one small step. The Liberals need to consider a developing a fuller menu of robust and sustainable policy measures.

As for the opposition parties, while they gather their bearings, they may want to consider this thought: advocating for strong policy, sound programs, and appropriate legislative instruments sometimes wins more hearts and minds than always playing politics.

*Bhagwant Sandhu is a retired director general from the federal government. Between 2002-21 he held senior roles in several departments, including Fisheries and Ocean Canada, Infrastructure Canada, Treasury Board Secretariat, and Public Works Canada. He has also held executive positions in the governments of Ontario and British Columbia.*

*The Hill Times*





International Trade Minister Mary Ng, right, with Albert Muchanga, African Union commissioner for economic development, trade, tourism, industry and mineral, sign the Global Affairs Canada-African Union Commission Cooperation Framework establishing the trade policy dialogue in Ottawa on May 17, 2023. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

# Why not Africa? That's the question Canada needs to be asking

There is a rare chance for a renewed relationship between Canada and Africa. Forgoing this means we risk a trillion-dollar opportunity to move in lock-step with a continent where growth rates have not only surpassed every other region of the world, but also exceeded all expectations.

Liberal MP  
Arielle  
Kayabaga

Opinion



**W**hy not Africa? It's the question that the world is already asking, and must be the question at the centre of Canada's expansion of trade and investment relationships. There is an unprecedented opportunity for a renewed relationship between Canada and Africa which sheds colonial histories, and is based in mutual interests, reciprocity, and respect. Forgoing this means Canada risks a trillion-dollar opportunity to move in lock-step with a continent where growth rates have not only surpassed every other region of the world, but also exceeded all expectations.

The data is clear; that many major economies are already pursuing intensified and comprehensive trade and foreign policy partnerships should be a strong signal that we risk being left behind. Stepping back from a strong Canada-Africa Strategy may leave us without a real seat at the table while jeopardizing the progress Canada has made bilaterally and regionally with the continent through existing trade frameworks, partnerships in health innovation, and in the pursuit of peace and security. A

piecemeal engagement approach with Africa is not only a disservice to the continent, it's also a disservice to the many Canadian organizations and businesses which have already sought to build their own partnerships with African diaspora communities in Canada and that are working towards joint economic development.

There will be no significant economic or geopolitical progress in the next century that will happen without meaningful partnership with Africa. This year alone, the African Development Bank notes that Africa is set to outperform the rest of the world in economic growth over the next two years, with real gross domestic product (GDP) averaging around four per cent in 2023 and 2024. Sub-saharan Africa will see an 86 per cent increase in its middle class reaching 212 million by 2030, and Africa's working age population is expected to expand to one billion in the same year—expanding the labour market and creating a significant new cohort of consumers. As the ONE Campaign reported in its People's Charter on Jobs in

Africa, "Africa needs about 15 million new decent jobs every year to harness its demographic dividend, reflected by a booming young population. But the potential benefits of Africa's youthful population are unrealised." African leaders are massively investing in their own populations, and human capital is no longer up for export like it once was.

The rigour with which the continent is pursuing trade and investment deals in both the Global North and the Global South is sophisticated, and countries as well as the African Union are hedging their bets that these partnerships will deliver significant rewards. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement will create the largest free trade area in the world, and signals that Africa is open for business. AfCFTA creates a continent-wide market across 54 countries, and the World Bank predicts that by 2035 the elimination of trade barriers and tariffs could raise incomes by seven per cent and decrease extreme poverty by 13 per cent.

Supporting this work in Canada must be met with a sense of

urgency, and the practical implications of this work are already at our fingertips. Globally, the absolute value of growth exports by major economies to Africa between 2001-2018 amounted to US\$250-billion. And although Canada more than tripled its exports to Africa, we only captured less than one per cent of the additional global exports to Africa that the world realized in the same frame. Leveraging Canada's critical minerals strategy for good, sustainable jobs is one path forward. Foreign mining assets now comprise 70 per cent of the of the total value of all Canadian-owned mining operations, yet Africa still only makes up 13 per cent of that total value. If Canada believes that critical minerals are indeed critical for greening the economy and meeting climate commitments, then we need to step up and play ball with the market economies that will get us there by building reciprocal partnerships which considers and respects all parties as equals.

So the question we must ask ourselves is whether Canada wants to develop a comprehensive, ambitious strategy of engagement with Africa that brings together trade, diplomacy and development, or be left without a seat at the table of the youngest, fastest-growing continent in the world.

*Liberal MP Arielle Kayabaga, who represents London-West, Ont., is a former London city councillor, and the first Black woman to have been elected to either of these roles. Kayabaga and her family left Burundi amid a civil war to immigrate to Canada which spurred her life-long commitment to community.*

*The Hill Times*



## Opinion

# Canada's extradition law desperately needs reform



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's recent remarks regarding the case of Hassan Diab, saying that Canada will always stand up for its citizens, yields hope. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The core injustice of the 1999 Extradition Act can be seized in a simple statistic. Canada grants foreign states their extradition requests 90 per cent of the time, deferring to its state partners at the expense of its own nationals.

Michelle Weinroth

Opinion



Canada's extradition law has been described as the backwater of our nation's legal system, scarcely known by most legal professionals and foreign to

the average person. But the notorious Hassan Diab affair has allowed some Canadians to glimpse the law's troubling features and the reasons for which parliamentary hearings took place in February 2023 to start a process of extradition reform.

The impulse for change was signalled in 2011, when legal expert Gary Botting wrote: "Canada's *Extradition Act* (S.C. 1999 c. 18) is perhaps the least fair statute ever to be passed into Canadian law."

Why did Botting denounce the law so unabashedly? A government-based statistic offers the answer in a nutshell. Between 2008-2018, Canada received 798 extradition requests from the United States. Only eight of those requests were refused. The disparity between requests received and those rejected is staggering; it indicates that 99.75 per cent of requests were granted, and roughly one per cent of those who were apprehended (rightly or wrongly) and subjected to an extradition process were discharged. American extradition requests constitute 90 per cent of requests received overall.

This quasi-fated reality can be attributed to changes made

to the extradition law in 1999. In the interest of "efficiency," an accelerated extradition process was promoted to supersede an "antiquated" bureaucracy. But if the 1999 Extradition Act sped up the process, it also made it more authoritarian and unfair, wielding its power to run roughshod over the rights of the person sought.

In 2012, then-minister of justice Rob Nicholson stated: "The guilt or innocence of the person sought is not a relevant consideration in the extradition context." In other words, because extradition procedures are not trials, the integrity of the person sought is deemed inconsequential. But, in fact, the extradition process tacitly presumes their guilt from the start.

The requesting state, in contrast, suffers no such pre-judgment. A foreign state's allegations against the accused are deemed reliable, even if materials are cherry-picked or falsified by omissions of exculpatory evidence. The Hassan Diab case is a textbook example of this flagrant injustice. With the current extradition law, it would appear that the rights of the requesting state trump those of the person

sought between 90 and 99 per cent of the time.

During a recent exchange between Conservative MP Michael Chong and Minister of Global Affairs Mélanie Joly, Chong placed the rights of the individual citizen above Canada's relations with foreign states. Would the honourable MP apply this same claim to the rights of citizens such as Hassan Diab? A Canadian citizen, Diab was wrongfully extradited to France on a flawed handwriting report. On April 21, 2023, he was convicted by a French court of *no record* that relied on unsourced and unsworn foreign intelligence—unfit in a Canadian court—and incoherent accounts, bereft of material proof, save a faded copy of a passport, of which there is no original. Over 15 years, French authorities repeatedly made false claims to ensure his conviction. Would Chong come to Diab's defence at a time when securing diplomatic relations with France threatens the liberty of a fellow Canadian citizen?

The core injustice of the 1999 Extradition Act can be seized in a simple statistic. Canada grants foreign states their extradition

requests 90 per cent of the time, deferring to its state partners at the expense of its own nationals. Will extradition reform redress this grossly unfair law?

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's recent remarks regarding Diab's case, saying that Canada will always stand up for its citizens, yields hope. His words signal the possibility of a much-needed change to the Extradition Act. Such a change would, among other things, guarantee transparency by prohibiting the suppression of exculpatory material and by disqualifying, from the start, extradition requests that submit unsourced and unsworn intelligence as evidence. In rejecting submissions that are tainted with secrecy and denial, a new extradition act would save innocent lives from the torment of wrongful surrender to a foreign state and wrongful conviction in a foreign court. This would mean that Diab's horrific ordeal should never, as Trudeau put it, happen again.

Michelle Weinroth holds a PhD in Cultural Studies. Since 2016, she has studied the role of Canada's extradition law in relation to the Hassan Diab affair.

*The Hill Times*



# Feds should absorb retroactive RCMP staffing costs, say NDP MP Johns and Conservative MP Falk

Alberta Municipalities president Cathy Heron said the collective bargaining agreement 'was done with our money, but without our input.'

Continued from page 1

municipalities, provinces, and territories that have contracts with the RCMP for policing services. The document stated that flexible repayment arrangements will be provided to contract partners facing budget constraints.

The collective agreement between the National Police Federation (NPF), which represents RCMP members, and the Treasury Board Secretariat was signed and came into effect on Aug. 6, 2021. The deal includes retroactive pay increases to April 1, 2017, with a 23.77 per cent salary increase for regular members and reservists.

The federal government supplementary spending estimates (B) for 2021-2022 stated that the agreement would cost approximately \$1.4-billion for that fiscal year—including the retroactive payments—and \$624-million ongoing. The provinces, territories, and municipalities' share was estimated to be between \$729-million and \$752-million in 2021-22, and between \$319-million and \$330-million ongoing.

Cathy Heron, president of Alberta Municipalities, said 47 municipalities in the province have contracts with the RCMP, and owe approximately \$60-million in total for the retroactive costs.

"This negotiation and agreement that was achieved was done with our money, but without our input," Heron told *The Hill Times* in a phone interview. "We knew it was coming, but we were hoping that we would somehow be treated a little bit more fairly and that the federal government would cover all of it, or at least some of the cost."

*The Hill Times* reached out to the office of Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino (Eglinton—Lawrence, Ont.) to ask about the municipalities' request that the federal government absorb the costs, and the process for future negotiations that will affect municipal budgets. The office did not respond by deadline.

A note accompanying the 2021-22 estimates stated that the negotiations "are confidential to ensure that the outcome is fair for both sides," but that contract policing partners had been con-



NDP MP Gord Johns said the retroactive costs will affect other municipal services. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

sulted through the Contract Management Committee (CMC) "that meets regularly to discuss new and emerging issues that could impact the cost, governance, nature and quality of policing services provided by the RCMP."

"CMC was provided as much information as possible within the confines of negotiations confidence, for example, information about the government's initial proposal including the monetary offer," the note said. "CMC was informed the strategy was to leave room to negotiate larger retroactive/economic increases to protect [the] commissioner's authorities and management rights. Contracting jurisdictions were well aware that RCMP [regular members] and reservists had not had a pay increase since 2016 (their salary had been frozen for five years), that is, to expect retroactive increases."

Heron, who is also the mayor of the city of St. Albert, Alta., said her municipality has been given two years to pay \$2.5-million as part of its contract. The city council set some of those funds aside in anticipation of this expenditure, but Heron said the final agreement was higher than expected.

"We were told early on in the negotiations with their RCMP that it might come in at around 2.5 per cent over the five-year contract, but it came in much higher," she said. "A lot of municipalities saved what they thought they would have to pay at 2.5 per cent, but it came in around 3.5 per cent. It would have been nice if the federal government moved to pay that difference."

Heron stressed that the municipalities she represents did not oppose the pay rise for RCMP members. "They were underpaid for many years, and now this new

contract brings them pretty much on par with municipal services," she said.

Johns concurred, stating that neither he, nor the municipal representatives he had spoken to, opposed the pay rise for RCMP members. "We live in rural Canada, we understand the role of the RCMP, the importance of the RCMP, and the diverse role that they play and the risks that they take," he said. "Certainly, as New Democrats, we're glad to see them organizing to ensure that they have fairer representation in their relationships with the government."

The issue lay with which jurisdiction should cover the costs, he said. Johns' Vancouver Island-based riding comprises seven municipalities, all of which contract the RCMP to provide policing services.

Johns raised the issue during a budget debate in the House on April 17, as well as at second reading debate about C-47, Budget Implementation Act 2023, No. 1, on April 21.

"Will the federal government get back to the table with FCM and local governments to make sure they are not eating the costs of a deal they negotiated without consulting local governments?" he asked Terry Beech (Burnaby North—Seymour, B.C.), parliamentary secretary to Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University—Rosedale, Ont.), on April 21.

Beech replied: "Obviously, the policing arrangements that the member opposite is referring to are negotiated by the federal government, and the cost is burdened by municipalities. I have had an opportunity to meet with police officers, both in my riding of Burnaby, as well as the District of North Vancouver. We always take their concerns very seriously."

Conservative MP Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Sask.) also raised the issue in the House on April 25 during a second reading debate of Bill C-47.

"The one-time back-pay costs were negotiated by the Liberal government, and it was their decision to not consult or include the municipalities in those decisions. The negotiated agreement far exceeds what it told municipalities to plan for, and it has left them holding the lion's share of the bill," Falk said.

"The fact is that the government failed to consult with the municipalities, and the Liberal government is the one that should be responsible for that one-time cost. Those costs have serious implications for the municipalities in my riding, and yet there is no relief for them in this budget bill."

*The Hill Times* reached out to Falk's office to request an



Conservative MP Rosemarie Falk told the House that the costs exceeded what the government told municipalities to plan for. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

interview, but did not receive a response by deadline.

The 2023 federal budget proposes an "extended repayment period for jurisdictions that contract policing services to pay their share of costs for retroactive salary increases." That includes the 153 municipalities that contract their services.

"Many federal policing services are provided in rural Canada where municipalities face budget constraints," the document said. "With payment flexibility, contract policing partners can ensure that local investments are not diverted away from essential community programs and that additional tax burdens are not imposed on residents to continue providing effective policing services benefiting Canadians living in rural communities."

Johns, who was a councillor on the Tofino District Council in British Columbia between 2008-2011, told *The Hill Times* the cost was "a shock to the whole ecosystem" that could affect recreation services, infrastructure projects, and some pilots of alternative policing models.

"These are the kinds of things they have put on hold because communities don't have the extra dollars," he said. "The way this was done wasn't right, and the federal government needs to absorb the cost of this, and they need to go back to the municipalities and return the money that they had to pay in this budget, because this is not fair."

Most provinces ban municipalities from running budget deficits. Heron said that some municipalities in Alberta face a choice between a high, one-time tax increase for residents, or not adding to policing services as cities grow.

She said the payment issue is also fuelling discussions in some jurisdictions about the replacement of the RCMP with a provincial police force.

"Alberta's provincial government has been talking about provincial policing, and they're using the fact that we weren't at the negotiations as one of their arguments," she said. "Municipalities want to keep the RCMP, especially in Alberta; there is resounding support for the RCMP and not to move to provincial police services, but the provincial government is using this as a tool to push it forward."

"That's another potential outcome if we don't get better communication with the federal government."

The federal government and NPF have commenced the next round of collective bargaining. Heron expects that the next pay increase will not be as steep, but she called for some form of municipal representation at the bargaining table.

"Maybe it's FCM, maybe it's some sort of appointment from associations across the provinces or provincial government," she said. "But there needs to be some recognition that we're the ones paying the bills, and so we should be part of the negotiations."

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*The Hill Times*



## News

# Johnston report ‘a new world of pain’ for Liberals, creates new ‘risks’ with public, and ups the odds for early election, say political players

Continued from page 1

months, but the findings by the former governor general and his proposed public hearings will keep dogging the government in the coming weeks and months, say veteran political insiders.

“The report doesn’t settle anything, it does not provide any closure, and it’s probably, I would say, the first step in a new world of pain that the Liberals will have to deal with,” said Nik Nanos, chief data scientist for Nanos Research, in an interview with *The Hill Times*. “Because now they’ll be engaging the public and whenever you engage the public, regardless of the importance of engaging the public, there are risks involved.”

Since February, the issue of foreign interference in Canadian elections has been driving the news agenda almost on a daily basis. In March, under pressure from the media and the public, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) appointed Johnston as a special rapporteur to advise to the government whether a national public inquiry to probe the issue is needed. Johnston submitted his first report on May 23, recommending against an independent public inquiry.

Johnston has also been asked to make an assessment about the “extent and impact” of foreign meddling in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections, and what efforts the Trudeau government undertook to stop this from happening. He will look at the work of National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) and the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA), and what steps are needed to address this issue. Johnston will recommend ways in which the public agencies could work together to combat foreign interference in Canadian elections.

Johnston is scheduled to complete all this work by Oct. 31.

In putting together his initial report, released last week, Johnston spoke with dozens of officials in the Prime Minister’s Office, the public service, cabinet ministers and MPs, and went through thousands of confidential and unclassified documents.



All eyes are on NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh and whether his party will continue to support the government if it refuses to call a public inquiry on foreign meddling in Canadian elections. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

In the report, Johnston said that the issue of foreign interference is serious, but recommended against holding an inquiry because much of the work would be done behind the scenes and involve top secret government information. Instead, he called for public hearings “on the serious governance and policy issues identified to date” so that Canadians can hear from senior national security officials, and so that he can listen to members of diaspora communities as well as national security and international relations experts to complete the second phase of his work. Johnston found “serious shortcomings in the way intelligence is communicated and processed from security agencies through to government.”

He did not find evidence that Trudeau or any of his cabinet ministers knew about credible information about foreign in-

terference and ignored it. Johnston also called out some news organizations for misconstruing intelligence information that they reported on and failing to provide a fuller picture due to lack of full context.

Johnston said that the allegation against now-Independent MP Han Dong (Don Valley North, Ont.) that he secretly advised a senior Chinese diplomat to delay the release of Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor is “false.” The Two Michaels spent more than 1,000 days in Chinese detention. After *Global News* reported this story, Dong gave an emotional speech in the House, saying he had not done anything wrong and stepped away from the Liberal caucus as the matter was investigated. Dong has also filed a libel lawsuit against *Global News*. Dong issued a statement last week, stating that he had been vindicated and that his lawsuit will continue as the damage to his and family’s reputation has been done.

As well, Johnston said in his report that he could not find any evidence to confirm that some federal candidates in the last election received any money from the Chinese government, contrary to media reports. After the last federal election, then-Conservative leader Erin O’Toole (Durham, Ont.) claimed that his party lost eight or nine seats in 2021 because of foreign interference.

Johnston has also invited all federal party leaders, NSICOP and the NSIRA to review the evidence he accessed to draw his conclusions in the report.

“With respect to the allegation that I advised the Chinese consulate to extend the detention of Mr. Michael Kovrig and Mr. Michael Spavor, Mr. Johnston found that ‘the allegation is false,’” wrote Dong in his statement on May 23. “With respect to the allegation that the Chinese state filtered funds to candidates in the 2019 election, Mr. Johnston found that ‘there’s no intelligence suggesting any federal candidates received these funds.’”

The Johnston report mostly received negative reaction from opposition politicians, columnists, and political pundits.

Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.), Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil-Chambly, Que.) and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) still want Trudeau to call an independent public inquiry. The Liberals and the NDP have a sup-

ply-and-confidence agreement in place, and Singh said that his party will use all parliamentary tools to push the government to call a public inquiry.

Nanos said that the public hearings that Johnston intends to undertake are going to be a wildcard, as no one knows who will appear and what will they say. There will be regular daily media coverage, like the 2004 Gomery inquiry into the sponsorship scandal, which was widely seen as the beginning of the end of Paul Martin’s Liberal government, Nanos said.

“This is going to be like a political Vietnam, raging land war in Vietnam,” said Nanos. “It’s just going to bog down the Liberals. There’re going to be risks and threats all around them from all sides. And they’re going to wonder why they’re where they’re at.”

Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research Group, said that Singh has boxed himself in by pledging that he would use all parliamentary tools at his disposal to push Trudeau to call a public inquiry.

“Singh has really put himself in a very tight position. He’s right out there saying, ‘This is not enough and we’re going to use all the tools that are at our disposal’ and his ultimate tool is motions of confidence,” said Lyle. “And so now if he continues to support the government, yet there isn’t a public inquiry, he looks like a toothless tiger. So that that becomes very difficult for him.”

If Singh does not deliver on his promise, Lyle said, the other opposition parties can call him out and ask, “Are you a man or a mouse?”

If more damaging information about foreign interference comes out in the coming days or weeks, Lyle said, it would become a serious challenge for the NDP to vote with the government. He said that the government should be worried about Singh’s position on this issue.

“This has really upped the odds of an election sooner rather than later,” said Lyle. “Their leader has taken a position that it’ll be very hard to back away from. I honestly don’t understand why he said that. If Machiavelli was working in the NDP Leader’s Office, he would not have counselled to force an early election. He’d be saying ‘let’s find a way to raise more money and resources.’”

Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, said that this issue would keep Liberals from pushing their agenda. He said that, in the current political environment, the Liberals would want to talk about the cost of living issue and what they’re doing to help Canadians. Instead, the government is on the defensive on this foreign interference issue.

Bricker drew a parallel between the foreign interference issue and the Senate expenses scandal that kept Stephen Harper’s Conservative government off their messaging and agenda in the months before they lost the 2015 federal election to the Trudeau Liberals.

“It’s kind of, in some ways, like the worst of all circumstances,” said Bricker.

“It continues to be the time of their discontent, I mean, their

deepest discontent ... It doesn’t give them the clear space that they need to talk about the issues that Canadians really want them to talk about, which are cost of living, health care, housing, those kinds of things that, you know, a progressive government should be in a good position to talk about.”

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## PUBLIC INQUIRY OR PUBLIC HEARINGS?

### PUBLIC INQUIRY

- An official investigation with the power to subpoena documents and compel witnesses to appear and testify under oath.
- Witnesses appearing before the inquiry can be questioned by the official overseeing the inquiry, as well as lawyers representing groups affected by the issues being investigated.
- David Johnston stated that much of the evidence that could be gathered could not be made public, and would be similar to the information already gathered as part of his investigation.

### PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Would not have the same legal powers as a public inquiry. Witnesses could be called, but not compelled, to appear.
- Intended to provide Canadians with information about federal policy and procedure related to intelligence gathering, rather than an investigation of specific instances of foreign interference. Johnston said it would also provide him with the opportunity to ask diaspora communities affected by foreign interference about their experiences.
- Less costly than a public inquiry, and not as long. Johnston intends to hold the hearings and the use the information gathered in a report to be published by the end of October.

## MAJORITY BACK PUBLIC INQUIRY: ANGUS REID

An Angus Reid Institute poll released on May 26 shows slightly more than half of respondents want the government to hold a public inquiry into foreign interference.

The survey of 1,466 Canadians found that 52 per cent backed the need for a public inquiry, compared to 32 per cent who said such an investigation was not needed, and 16 per cent who were unsure. Support for a public inquiry was strongest among Conservative voters, with 81 per cent in favour, 12 per cent against, and seven per cent unsure. The bulk of Bloc Québécois voters also favoured a public inquiry (60 per cent, compared to 25 per cent against, and 15 per cent unsure).

A majority of Liberal voters and a plurality of NDP voters said a public inquiry was not needed. Only 27 per cent of Liberal voters backed a public inquiry, compared to 57 per cent who said it was not necessary, while 16 per cent were unsure. New Democrats were more evenly divided; 37 per cent wanted an inquiry, 39 per cent said it was unnecessary, and 24 per cent were unsure.

More than four in five respondents (82 per cent) perceived the issue of foreign interference as important or very important, with those who voted for the Conservatives or Bloc in 2021 most likely to describe the issue as one of the most important facing the country right now.

The self-commissioned survey was run online between May 23-25 among a sample of 1,466 Canadians who are members of Angus Reid Forum. The probability sample carries a margin of error of plus or minus two percentage points, 19 times out of 20.



# ‘Great damage to our democratic system’: Senator Woo takes aim at media in wake of foreign election interference report

David Johnston’s report noted that ‘when viewed in full context with all of the relevant intelligence, several leaked materials that raised legitimate questions turn out to have been misconstrued in some media reports.’

Continued from page 1

ing alleged Chinese interference in Canadian elections.

In a highly-anticipated first report released last week, former governor general David Johnston, appointed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) in early March as the special rapporteur assigned to look into allegations of foreign interference in Canadian elections, recommended public hearings instead of a full-blown public inquiry, and called into question the veracity of media reports.

“When viewed in full context with all of the relevant intelligence, several leaked materials that raised legitimate questions turn out to have been misconstrued in some media reports, presumably because of the lack of this context,” reads the report. “The controversy that led to my appointment arose out of media reporting by Global News and *The Globe and Mail* over the past several months, based on classified information,” said Johnston in his report, noting that “much of what was reported was based on limited intelligence.”

In a press conference following the release of the report, Johnston said that “in some cases, the materials I reviewed tell a very different story than what has been reported to date.”

“Foreign interference is not usually embodied in one-off pieces of intelligence,” said Johnston.

“The limited leaked intelligence and subsequent reporting have led to misapprehensions related to incidents that are alleged to have occurred in the 2019 and 2021 elections,” said Johnston.

“Moreover, I have found no examples of ministers, the prime minister, or their offices knowingly or negligently failing to act on intelligence and advice or



Former governor general and special rapporteur assigned to look into alleged foreign interference in Canadian elections David Johnston, left, and Independent Senator Yuen Pau Woo. ‘Even after David Johnston’s clear statement about the falsity of these reports, they have said nothing. They’ve damaged the lives of individuals,’ said Woo. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade



recommendations on the issues I have investigated related to the 2019 and 2021 elections,” he said. “However, I did find there were significant and unacceptable gaps in the machinery of government.”

Woo said that “even after David Johnston’s clear statement about the falsity of these reports, [the media] have said nothing.”

“They’ve damaged the lives of individuals,” alluding to the *Global News* story on now-Independent MP Han Dong (Don Valley North, Ont.), who gave a tearful speech in Parliament upon his departure from the Liberal caucus and is now seeking \$15-million in damages from *Global News* and *Corus Entertainment*. *Global News* reported that Dong “privately advised a senior Chinese diplomat in February 2021 that Beijing should hold off freeing Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, according to two separate national security sources.”

Johnston also said that the attention media has given to foreign interference in Canadian elections shows that “the very substantial danger” is “growing and it needs to be combated.”

According to a *Global News* spokesperson, “in connection with our investigation and preparation of our entire series of recent stories on alleged Chinese interference in Canadian elections, *Global News* spent months reviewing dozens of CSIS, Privy Council and other relevant statements and documents.”

“*Global News* spoke with highly qualified sources on multiple occasions and made painstaking

efforts to verify the information prepared by senior intelligence officials, many of whom have spent decades investigating security threats to Canada,” the spokesperson said.

“Our sources risked their careers and livelihoods to warn Canadians about the extent to which the People’s Republic of China was interfering in Canada’s democratic processes and government institutions. We believe in the integrity of our journalism in all the reporting in this series, and the critical role it plays in seeking accountability and transparency on issues vital to the public interest,” they continued.

David Walmsley, editor-in-chief of *The Globe and Mail*, said “the reporting was based on written intelligence assessments and intelligence briefs.”

“We stand by the stories,” wrote Walmsley in response to questions from *The Hill Times*.

Dong, who left the Liberal caucus back in March, saying at the time that he was looking to clear his name, could rejoin the Liberal caucus if he wants to, said the prime minister as of May 24, according to multiple media reports.

Following the release of Johnston’s report, opposition MPs on the Procedure and House Affairs Committee called for the special rapporteur to testify before them about why he recommended against a public inquiry. During a May 25 committee meeting, Liberal MP and committee chair Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Ont.) confirmed that Johnston had agreed to appear on June 6.

## ‘Maybe they’ve got a silver bullet of evidence they want to show us’

In an interview with *The Hill Times* following the May 24 panel session, Woo said “I’m waiting for the media to come to grips with what David Johnston said about the veracity of the various claims, and for just one minute not talk about whether they like Johnston or whether he’s a buddy of Trudeau, and deal with the substance of his report vis a vis the veracity of media claims.”

“I’d like to see a coming to terms—maybe they’ve got a silver bullet piece of evidence that they want to show us, in which case we deserve to see it too,” said Woo. “The time has come for them to demonstrate transparency and accountability when the former governor general has said point blank that many of these claims are erroneous.”

“They have set this up now for the whole country to believe that really bad things, nefarious things have been going on in this country, and Johnston has said there’s no evidence for it,” he said.

But in his report, Johnston highlighted that in advance of the 2019 and 2021 elections, the government “publicly acknowledged on multiple occasions that Canada is a target for foreign interference,” with warnings coming from multiple agencies and officials, including the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and a December 2020 letter from then-public safety minister Bill Blair (Scarborough South-west, Ont.) to parliamentarians “respecting foreign state-backed interference and intimidation activities in Canada.”

When asked about any fears he had in the lead-up to the next election, Woo said he was “fearful that the media and others will come up with fresh examples that may not be substantiated and use it in a way to disenfranchise candidates and suppress turnout.”

“Voters might feel that if they were to vote in a certain way, they would be labelled as sympathizers of the [Chinese Communist Party], dupes of the Chinese Communist Party, or some other pejorative appellation,” said Woo.

In his maiden speech in the Senate in 2016, Woo said that “what we are witnessing, honourable Senators, is power politics of the highest order at a moment in history when the unipolar dominance of the United States is giving way to a more diffuse global balance of power.”

“China, of course, looms the largest in the so-called power transition that we are witnesses to, and it is in the interest of all states, including Canada, maybe especially Canada, to avoid the Thucydides trap of great power conflict,” said Woo.

More recently, during a March 16 press conference, Woo was asked whether he had “any ties with the Chinese regime,” and also how he wanted to respond to attacks on his character from pundits who have accused him of being a mouthpiece for China’s government.

“I’m not sure I want to dignify that question. It’s deeply insulting,” replied Woo. “It’s actually an example of the dangers of a foreign influence registry that is based on the views that I express rather than on any demonstrable evidence of arrangements with a foreign government.”

“The individuals who use this kind of extreme language should be careful about what they say; not so much for my sake, because I am a privileged and somewhat protected individual,” said Woo.

“I don’t like getting these attacks, but think about all of the other Chinese people who don’t have my privilege, or my protections. Are they going to be accused of being fifth columnists because of the views that they hold? Are we going to have a foreign influence registry that is going to use the views that one holds as the litmus test of being a foreign agent?”

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## In Johnston’s Own Words, His Five Conclusions:

“Based on my review, I have reached five clear conclusions. **First**, foreign governments are undoubtedly attempting to influence candidates and voters in Canada. Foreign interference is a real and growing threat, and more remains to be done promptly to strengthen our capacity to detect, deter, and counter foreign interference in elections. **Second**, when viewed in full context with all of the relevant intelligence, several leaked materials that raised legitimate questions turned out to have been misconstrued in some media reporting, presumably because of the lack of context. **Third**, I have identified serious shortcomings in the way intelligence is communicated and processed from security agencies through to governments. **Fourth**, a further public process is required, but there should not and need not be a separate formal public inquiry. A public inquiry examining the leaked materials could not be undertaken in public, given the sensitivity of the intelligence. However, public hearings on the serious governance and policy issues identified today should and will be held at the earliest possible date as part of the second piece of my mandate. **Finally**, I recognize this report’s conclusions will be met with skepticism by some, especially by those who have worked to raise legitimate questions around these issues. The challenge is this: what is allowing me to determine whether there has, in fact, been interference cannot be disclosed publicly. A public review of classified intelligence simply cannot be done. Therefore, this I recommend: the prime minister invite the two oversight committees on national security to review my conclusions and provide them with all supporting materials, including an annex which contains the classified information. If they disagree with my conclusions, they should say that.”

— David Johnston, at his press conference at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building on May 23, 2023.



## News

# Johnston ‘right’ to resist public inquiry, those calling for one ‘were being naive’: former national security adviser

Special Rapporteur David Johnston called for Parliament to exercise its ‘oversight role,’ and said to be wary of media leaks that lack full context.

BY IAN CAMPBELL

A former national security adviser to two prime ministers said he was surprised that David Johnston “resisted the call for a public inquiry,” but that he was “absolutely right” to do so.

Wesley Wark, a senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation who served on the prime minister’s Advisory Council on National Security from 2005–2009 under then-prime ministers Paul Martin and Stephen Harper told *The Hill Times* that he agreed with Johnston’s assessment that “a public review of classified intelligence simply cannot be done.”

“I think that those who called for a public inquiry were being naive about what that public inquiry could look at,” said Wark, “and the potential dangers involved in overexposing classified intelligence and processes in a public forum.”

Johnston announced his recommendation at a May 23 press conference in Ottawa. He had just under two months to prepare his report after he was appointed to the role of Special Rapporteur on Foreign Interference by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que) on March 15.



Wesley Wark of the Centre for International Governance Innovation said Johnston was ‘absolutely right’ not to call a public inquiry. Photograph courtesy of Wesley Wark

Former governor-general David Johnston held a press conference on May 23, 2023, to present the findings of his first report as special rapporteur on foreign interference. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Based on his review of classified in intelligence materials, Johnston said foreign governments are attempting to interfere in Canada’s elections. However, he was critical of media reports about foreign interference, which he said presented leaked information that lacked full context. He added that there had been a failure in the “machinery of government” regarding intelligence sharing. While he did not recommend a public inquiry, Johnston said a “separate process” to investigate foreign interference was required in addition to the mechanisms currently in place. He recommended this process should be a series of public hearings to be held this summer before he issues his final report in the fall. But he also passed the matter back into the hands of politicians. On multiple occasions in his press conference, he said Parliament has a role to play, particularly through the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP), which he called on to review his work as special rapporteur.

Wark said the “heart of the matter” pointed to by Johnston is what he calls “serious shortcomings” in the flow of intelligence.

“He is saying that the most important problem that Canada faces when it comes to dealing with foreign interference is the question of how well intelligence circulates within the governance system, how it’s provided to senior decision-makers within agencies and departments, how it flows up to the political leadership ... which is really the lifeblood of intelligence,” said Wark. “It’s where intelligence meets pol-

icy decisions, and if you don’t get that right, then the intelligence enterprise is useless.”

Wark said this topic may become one of the focuses of the public hearings Johnston plans to hold this summer.

Following the release of Johnston’s report, Trudeau restated his commitment to follow Johnston’s recommendations.

## Johnston calls on Parliament to play its role

Johnston said these hearings alone would not be the answer. The responsibility, he said, lies not with a “retired judge” or a “professor of law of some years,” such as himself, but with Parliamentarians.

“That’s who we elect to govern us and provide appropriate systems,” said Johnston, calling on the leaders of the three major opposition parties to take top security clearance and participate in the process of reviewing materials at NSICOP, as part of Parliament “functioning as it should be with an oversight role.”

Following Johnston’s announcement, both Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) renewed their calls for a public inquiry. Poilievre also re-stated his position that he will not join NSICOP, because he said being briefed on classified information at the committee would “silence” him from speaking freely on the issue of foreign interference.

Former Liberal Party staffer Carlene Variyan, who is now associate vice-president with Summa Strategies, said NSICOP is one of

the “best tools” for keeping members of all parties involved in the process as a means to “depoliticize the issue.”

“I thought it was wise of [Johnston] to recognize that because certainly one of the things that we’ve seen over the last couple of months is that this issue has taken on a very partisan, heated tone,” she said. “Johnston, I think, rightly reinforced that foreign interference should never be a partisan issue.”

Former Conservative Party staffer Tim Powers, who is now chair of Summa Strategies, said Johnston was right to tell Parliament to “grow up,” but that this may not be realistic in the current political climate.

“I think David Johnston’s mistake was giving arguably a well thought-out policy response to a political problem,” said Powers.

Powers said navigating that tension was the key challenge Johnston faced.

“You have to give him some credit for going against the grain of the mass commentariat” who wanted a public inquiry, said Powers. “But I also think that with that credit comes a bit of naiveté and hopefulness that Parliamentarians will rise above the gutter for all of this, and I don’t see that happening at the moment.”

Powers said addressing the political dimension is important, because some of the key policy concerns may otherwise get lost in the “the broader political quagmire” still calling out for a solution.

“We’re all going to get caught up in public inquiry or no public inquiry, because—credit to the opposition of the government—

that’s where they brought the frame of this to be,” said Powers. “However, the real issues are, what is going on, and are we doing enough to prevent interference? I hope that doesn’t get lost in all of this, because it sounds like Mr. Johnston has done some good work there, and proposes doing more good work there.”

## Public hearings will be political ‘wildcard’

However, pollster Nik Nanos said the public hearings called for by Johnston present a “wildcard” that may keep the issue hot for some time to come.

“It’s not really going to solve anything for the government, because what it creates is a new level of uncertainty because of the recommended process to have public hearings,” Nanos told *The Hill Times*. “It’s just going to be another wildcard because no one knows what will happen at these hearings.”

Nanos said he expects both the Conservatives and the NDP to continue to “double team the Liberals” on the issue, because they both have potential voters to gain from the Liberals by doing so.

While there has been ongoing debate among observers about whether ordinary Canadians are following the issue in a way that will cause them to change their votes, Nanos said voters are tuned-in to the issue.

“Canadians are tuned into anything related to China just because of what’s happened over the last number of years,” he said, pointing to events starting with the detention of the Two Michaels up to the recent expulsion of a Chinese diplomat from Canada. “Right now, China’s the hottest political potato that there exists in Canada, and everyone’s got an opinion on it.”

As the issue continues to play out politically, Variyan said she will be watching to see if the journalism around Chinese interference changes in response to Johnston highlighting the lack of context in media reports.

“The thing that I’m most interested in seeing, in terms of how voters react in the coming weeks and months following this, is how it changes the media landscape with respect to reporting on some of these issues,” she said, noting that Johnston had raised concerns about “the dissemination of those tidbits from classified intelligence reports into the public domain via anonymous leaks to media.”

Variyan emphasized that intelligence is compartmentalized “by design for security purposes,” and that one analyst may not have the full picture when leaking something to the media.

Wark agreed that this was a “striking conclusion” that the report pointed to, and said he will be watching to see how various media outlets respond to it.

“Perhaps [it] will encourage media to think again about how they report on national security issues of this kind of magnitude,” said Wark.

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U.S. President Joe Biden, left, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. The recent G7 summit was based on the false assumption that the West, led by the U.S., can set the rules for the rest of the world, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



# G7 must adjust to the reality of a multipolar world

If, as Canadians, we want to make a serious contribution to a better world, rather than sounding like an echo for U.S. interests, our government could focus much more on working to restore a healthy and forward-looking multilateralism.

David  
Crane

Canada &  
the 21st Century



**T**ORONTO—Wrapping up their summit in Hiroshima, Japan, the leaders of the G7—including our own Prime Minister Justin Trudeau—issued a lengthy communiqué, long enough to be an essay and covering almost every important challenge facing the world.

Yet it was based on the false assumption that the West, led by the United States, can set the rules for the rest of the world.

We do not live in a unipolar world. Rather, we are living through a major change in the distribution of power in what will very much become a multipolar world.

That's one where the Global South—China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa and Turkey, for example—will expect to have a big say in the priorities and policies that govern the world in the years ahead. In fact, none of the world's major challenges will be addressed without the participation of the Global South, which includes writing the rules on how the future world will function.

It is the failure of the West to recognize the changing dynam-

ics of world power that poses a grave threat to hopes for peace, sustainability and prosperity. The current effort of the West to divide the world between democracies and autocracies is in no one's real interest. The world has to get along, despite differences, and co-operate to make the world a safer place.

In 1995, the United States, the European Union, Japan, and Britain accounted for 74 per cent of the world economy; by 2019, their share had fallen to 50 per cent, and will almost certainly decline further. China is the largest trading partner for a growing number of countries.

As a study by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), entitled *Geoeconomic Fragmentation and the Future of Multilateralism*, warned earlier this year the current breakdown in international co-operation poses great risks to the world, with "the deeper the fragmentation, the deeper the costs." Instead of a costly and dangerous division of the world into blocs, the study says "the rules-based multilateral system

must adapt to the changing world. This includes the international trade and monetary systems," since "multilateral co-operation remains the best approach to address global challenges."

In their sweeping communiqué, the G7 leaders had ambitions to: strengthen disarmament efforts and address nuclear proliferation; reform the world-trading system; make the United Nations more effective; accelerate the global transition to clean energy; pursue policies on food security, reform multilateral development banks, strengthen the IMF and World Bank; advance global health and pandemic policies, including vaccine manufacturing capacity; address international migration; develop rules of artificial international governance; deal with the debt problems of poor countries; eliminate unabated fossil fuels by 2050; sharply increase foreign aid; and work towards holding the average global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

But most of these plans are impossible to achieve without the active engagement of the Global South, and without reform of global institutions, which will require participation by the Global South in writing new rules.

The global institutions we have—the UN, the IMF, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the World Health Organization—all need serious reform. But the Global South, including China and India, must have a major say in what these reforms will look like if the reforms are to be effective. This will require concessions on all sides, and global systems will have to reflect the values and interests beyond the West.

This is not a world based on "friend-shoring" or an insistence

that the only values that matter are Western values. In fact, as the IMF has pointed out, friend-shoring could entail significant costs and major disruptions to markets as they become increasingly segmented. The costs include slower social and economic progress for many emerging economies, higher prices for low-income consumers in rich countries such as Canada, lower productivity growth from uncertainty on future investments, curbs on the transfer of technology, and slower world economic growth.

Climate change is the most critical challenge, but catastrophic climate change cannot be avoided unless the Global South plays a critical role. This will be negotiated through the UN's International Panel on Climate Change.

It's also not just climate change at issue. We cannot deal with the changing nature of trade and the place of industrial policy in trade without reforms to the World Trade Organization. We cannot deal with future financial crises without an effective IMF. We cannot deal with the debt problems of poor countries without a more representative Paris Club of creditors. We cannot address nuclear proliferation without negotiations and binding treaties. We cannot deal with future pandemics without a reformed World Health Organization. To address world food issues, we need a well-functioning Food and Agriculture Organization.

The real challenge for the G7 leaders is to come to terms with the changing realities. "The new realities include the changing nature of trade, an increasingly diverse multi-polar world, a widening trust deficit, and the inability of current multilateral mechanisms to prevent negative global spillovers from unilateral actions," the IMF study on geoeconomic fragmentation warned. "These new realities require a fundamental rethinking of how to address global existential threats (such as climate change and pandemics) and avoid runaway fragmentation while upgrading multilateral rules to ensure cooperation on global public goods, fair competition, and adequate protection of the most vulnerable."

If, as Canadians, we want to make a serious contribution to a better world, rather than sounding like an echo for American interests, our government could focus much more on working to restore a healthy and forward-looking multilateralism that helps deliver a safer world. The future must put co-operation between different societies, cultures and values as the essential priority, not the dangerous and counterproductive vision of an increasingly splintered world feeding on the false narrative of competition (and the risk of war) between democracies and autocracies as the overriding challenge for the world.

There's only one Earth and we all have to learn to live together.

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

*The Hill Times*





Laura Ryckewaert  
**Hill Climbers**

# Fresh faces on Lebouthillier's team, O'Regan has new interim policy head

Plus, an update on Veterans Affairs Minister Lawrence MacAulay's team, where Daniel Jennings was recently hired as a special assistant.

National Revenue Minister **Diane Lebouthillier** has a couple of fresh faces on her ministerial team, including **Ty Bradley**, who's been hired as a special assistant for parliamentary affairs and issues management.



Ty Bradley is a special assistant for parliamentary affairs and issues management. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Bradley marked his first day in Lebouthillier's office on April 17, starting there after roughly a year and a half working for Ontario Liberal MPP **Lucille Collard**, who represents Ottawa-Vanier in the provincial legislature. During Ontario's 2022 election, he was an aide on Collard's successful re-election campaign.

Bradley, who holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Ottawa, is also a former House of Commons page and previously interned with the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians. While in university, he was active with the uOttawa Young Liberals association, including serving as its president, as well as with the university's students' union, among other things.

**Andrew Richardson** is director of parliamentary affairs to Lebouthillier.

On May 1, **Evan Sambasivam** started on the job as the national revenue minister's new regional adviser for Ontario, the West and the North.



Evan Sambasivam is a new regional adviser to the revenue minister. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

He replaces **Felipe Alfaro**, who left Lebouthillier's team to join Labour Minister **Seamus O'Regan**'s office as a policy adviser at the beginning of April.

Sambasivam had previously been an assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Gary Anandasangaree** since January. He ran as a candidate for Toronto city council during last year's municipal election, putting his hat in the ring to represent North York's Ward 8, Elginton-Lawrence. Sambasivam ended up coming second in the race, behind incumbent councillor **Mike Colle**. He's also a former change management consultant with Capitalize for Kids, a non-profit in Toronto focused on youth mental health, and has previously interned for Jack.org and with Toronto law firm Green and Spiegel focused on immigration case analysis.



Felipe Alfaro is now a policy adviser to the labour minister. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Though he shares a last name with **Bud Sambasivam**, director of policy to Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister **Chrystia Freeland**, the two are not related.

**Faizel Gulamhussein** is chief of staff to Lebouthillier.

Now in O'Regan's office, Alfaro has been working full time on the Hill since the start of 2020, when he was hired as a legislative assistant to British Columbia Liberal MP **Hedy Fry**. He'd spent the fall 2019 election working on now-Fisheries and Oceans Minister **Joyce Murray**'s successful re-election bid in Vancouver Quadra.

During the 2021 election, Alfaro was part of Fry's successful re-election campaign team in Vancouver Centre. Post-election, he landed a job in Lebouthillier's office—his first ministerial gig.

Alfaro is working under O'Regan's new interim director of policy, **Lhori Webster**, who recently moved over from Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**'s policy shop to run the labour minister's team while **Julia Van Drie** is on maternity leave.



Lhori Webster is now interim policy director to O'Regan. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Webster had been working in the Prime Minister's Office since the start of 2022, joining the top office after roughly two years as a policy adviser to then-health minister **Patty Hajdu**. She's also a former special assistant with the Liberal research bureau, and has experience working as a junior policy analyst at Health Canada.

Webster is founder and ex-chair of Pi-nyos on Parliament, a national youth leadership conference for Filipino-Canadians that launched in 2018. More recently, she helped found Kabangka, which, as described on her LinkedIn profile, "aims to create space for young Filipinx-Canadians and support them to network, grow, learn new skills, and build their abilities to inspire and empower both themselves and their communities." She was active with the Filipino Students Association at the University of Ottawa while working towards a bachelor's degree in social science, political science, and communications at the school, including serving a term as its president.

Webster started on the job in O'Regan's office on May 19.

On April 3, **Mohammad Kamal** joined the labour minister's team as a strategic communications adviser.

Kamal comes from International Trade Minister **Mary Ng**'s office, where he'd been a special assistant for digital communications since November 2022.

**Jane Deeks** is director of communications to O'Regan.

Also new to the minister's office is **Nicholas Mackiewicz**, who's been hired as executive assistant to O'Regan, filling a role previously held by **Kaitlyn Jonescu**, who exited in mid-March.



Nicholas Mackiewicz is O'Regan's new executive assistant. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Mackiewicz is a former constituency assistant to Liberal MP **Kirsty Duncan**, who has represented Etobicoke North, Ont., in the House of Commons since 2008. He officially joined O'Regan's team on May 19.

**Paul Moen** is chief of staff to the labour minister.

## Staff changes for Veterans Minister MacAulay

Veterans Affairs and Associate Defence Minister **Lawrence MacAulay** has a new special assistant for communications and issues management in his office, **Daniel Jennings**.

Jennings started in MacAulay's office earlier this month and was previously an assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Anita Vandenbeld**.

He fills a vacancy left by **Bradley Henstock**, who has been promoted to director of parliamentary affairs to the veterans minister.



Bradley Henstock is director of parliamentary affairs to MacAulay. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Previously, **Matthew Mann** ran MacAulay's parliamentary affairs shop, but as reported in January, he was promoted to chief of staff to the minister at the start of the year.

Henstock made the leap from special assistant to parliamentary affairs director in February after almost three years in the minister's office.

Henstock is a former digital media officer with the New Brunswick Liberals and an ex-communications officer in then-New Brunswick premier **Brian Gallant**'s office. His last role prior to joining MacAulay's team was as a constituency assistant to then-Liberal MP **Matt DeCoursey**, who lost his seat as the MP for Fredericton, N.B., in the 2019 federal election to **Jenica Atwin**, who was then with the Greens. Henstock, who had worked on DeCoursey's 2019 campaign, was part of Atwin's 2021 re-election campaign as a Liberal (she crossed the floor earlier that year).

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# House of Commons returns on Monday for four consecutive sitting weeks



House is back: Liberal MPs Pam Damoff, left, Francesco Sorbara and Salma Zahid arrive for Question Period in the West Block on May 18, 2023. The House is scheduled to sit from May 29-June 23. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

## MONDAY, MAY 29

**House Sitting**—The House will return again on Monday, May 29. It will sit for four consecutive weeks (May 29-June 23). It's scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23. 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. 13-17) and will resume sitting on Monday, Nov. 20, and will sit for four weeks (Nov. 20-Dec. 15). It's scheduled to return on Monday, Jan. 29, 2024.

**Bell Canada CEO to Deliver Remarks**—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts a lunch event featuring Mirko Bibic, BCE and Bell Canada president and CEO, who will deliver remarks on "BCE: Seizing opportunities to grow businesses and communities." Monday, May 29 at 11:45 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Details: canadianclub.org.

## MONDAY, MAY 29—WEDNESDAY, MAY 31

**Canadian Animal Health Institute Convention**—The Canadian Animal Health Institute hosts its 2023 Annual Convention from May 29-31. This year's theme is "The Power of Connection," featuring speakers, panels, and networking opportunities that will bring together Canada's top animal health companies. This event will take place at the Fairmont Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Visit [cahi-icsa.ca/annual-convention](http://cahi-icsa.ca/annual-convention) to register.

## TUESDAY, MAY 30

**National Prayer Breakfast**—The annual National Prayer Breakfast is held under the auspices of the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons. Guests and participants will include Canadian and international Christian faith leaders, ambassadors, Members of Parliament, Senators, and Canadians tuning in from across our nation and abroad. This year's theme is "A Firm Foundation." Tuesday, May 30, 7:30 a.m. ET at the Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr. Register via Eventbrite.

**Project Ramadan**—Project Ramadan will be building food baskets to

feed 750 families facing food insecurity across Ontario. An initiative of Muslim Welfare Canada, Project Ramadan is dedicated to supporting local families in need. This event will take place in the Sir John A. Macdonald building, Tuesday, May 30. Contact [contact@projectramadan.com](mailto:contact@projectramadan.com).

**Official Language Commish to Table Report**—Official Languages Commissioner Raymond Thérberge will table his 2022–2023 annual report to Parliament in Room 200, Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St. Tuesday, May 30 at 10 a.m. ET.

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 31

**IP Data and Research Conference**—The Canadian Intellectual Property Office and the Centre for International Governance Innovation host the sixth Annual IP Data and Research Conference to disseminate intellectual property (IP) research from leading experts to further innovation and inform policy, while considering how to promote equity, diversity and inclusion within the field. This year's conference features five themes: firms and the economics of IP; diversity and inclusion in the IP and innovation ecosystem; IP use and awareness; emerging technologies; and IP challenges and solutions. Wednesday, May 31, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 50 Victoria St., 24th floor, Gatineau, Que. Register at [cigionline.org](http://cigionline.org).

**Panel: 'Accessibility Legislation and Policies Update'**—Carleton University hosts "AccessAbility Day 2023: Developments in Accessibility Legislation and Policies," a virtual Canada-wide discussion on accessibility policy at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels, featuring top institutions and public administration leaders. Wednesday, May 31, at 12 p.m. Details: [events.carleton.ca](http://events.carleton.ca).

**Ottawa Riverkeeper Gala**—The Ottawa Riverkeeper Gala, a fundraiser to help keep the Ottawa River clean, will be held on Wednesday, May 31, at the recently renovated NCC River House on the Ottawa River, 501 Sir-George-Étienne-Cartier Pkwy. The Ottawa Riverkeeper Gala will also feature an auction. If you're interested in donating items to the auction, please reach out to [donations@ottawariverkeeper.ca](mailto:donations@ottawariverkeeper.ca)

**Robotics Centre Reception**—As part of CANSEC 2023, the Robotics

Centre is hosting a reception for friends and colleagues to drinks and hors d'oeuvres on Wednesday, May 31, at 7 p.m. at the Tavern On The Falls, 1 John St., Ottawa. Invitation only.

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 31—THURSDAY, JUNE 1

**National Health Legislation Forum**—The Assembly of First Nations hosts a National Health Legislation Forum, a national gathering for First Nations across the country to support discussion on Indigenous Distinctions-based Health Legislation. Wednesday, May 31, to Thursday, June 1, at the Delta Toronto Downtown, 35 Lower Simcoe St. Details: [afn.ca](http://afn.ca).

**National First Nations Housing Forum**—The Assembly of First Nations hosts the National First Nations Housing and Homelessness Forum. Wednesday, May 31, to Thursday, June 1, at the Chelsea Hotel Toronto, 33 Gerrard St. W. Details: [afn.ca](http://afn.ca).

## THURSDAY, JUNE 1

**Panel: 'Is Canada Ready to Fully Embrace Electric Vehicles?'**—The Economic Club hosts a lunch event, "Is Canada Ready to Fully Embrace Electric Vehicles?" Participants include Andreas Tetzloff, president and CEO of Mercedes-Benz Canada; Andrew McKinnon, director for provincial affairs and outreach, Global Automakers of Canada; Flavio Volpe, president, Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association; Francis

Bradley, president and CEO, Electricity Canada; and Pierre Boutin, president and CEO, Volkswagen Group Canada Inc. Thursday, June 1 at 11:30 a.m. ET at One King West, 1 King St. W., Toronto. Details: [economicclub.ca](http://economicclub.ca).

## FRIDAY, JUNE 2

**International Affairs Conference**—The Canadian Global Affairs Institutes hosts its Annual International Affairs Conference, "A Window on the World." Speakers include national security and intelligence adviser Jody Thomas; U.S. Ambassador David Cohen; Ukrainian Ambassador Yulia Kovaliv; former cabinet ministers John Manley, Peter MacKay, and Anne McLellan. Friday, June 2, at 9 a.m. ET at KMPG, Suite 1800, 150 Elgin St. Details: [cgai.ca](http://cgai.ca).

## MONDAY, JUNE 5

**Lunch: 'Canada-UAE Bilateral Relations'**—Jean Charest and Musabbeh Al Kaabi, co-chairs of the Canada-UAE Business Council, will deliver remarks on "Energy Transition Opportunities: Strengthening Canada-UAE Bilateral Relations," a lunch event hosted by the Canadian Club of Toronto. Monday, June 5 at 11:45 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Details: [canadianclub.org](http://canadianclub.org).

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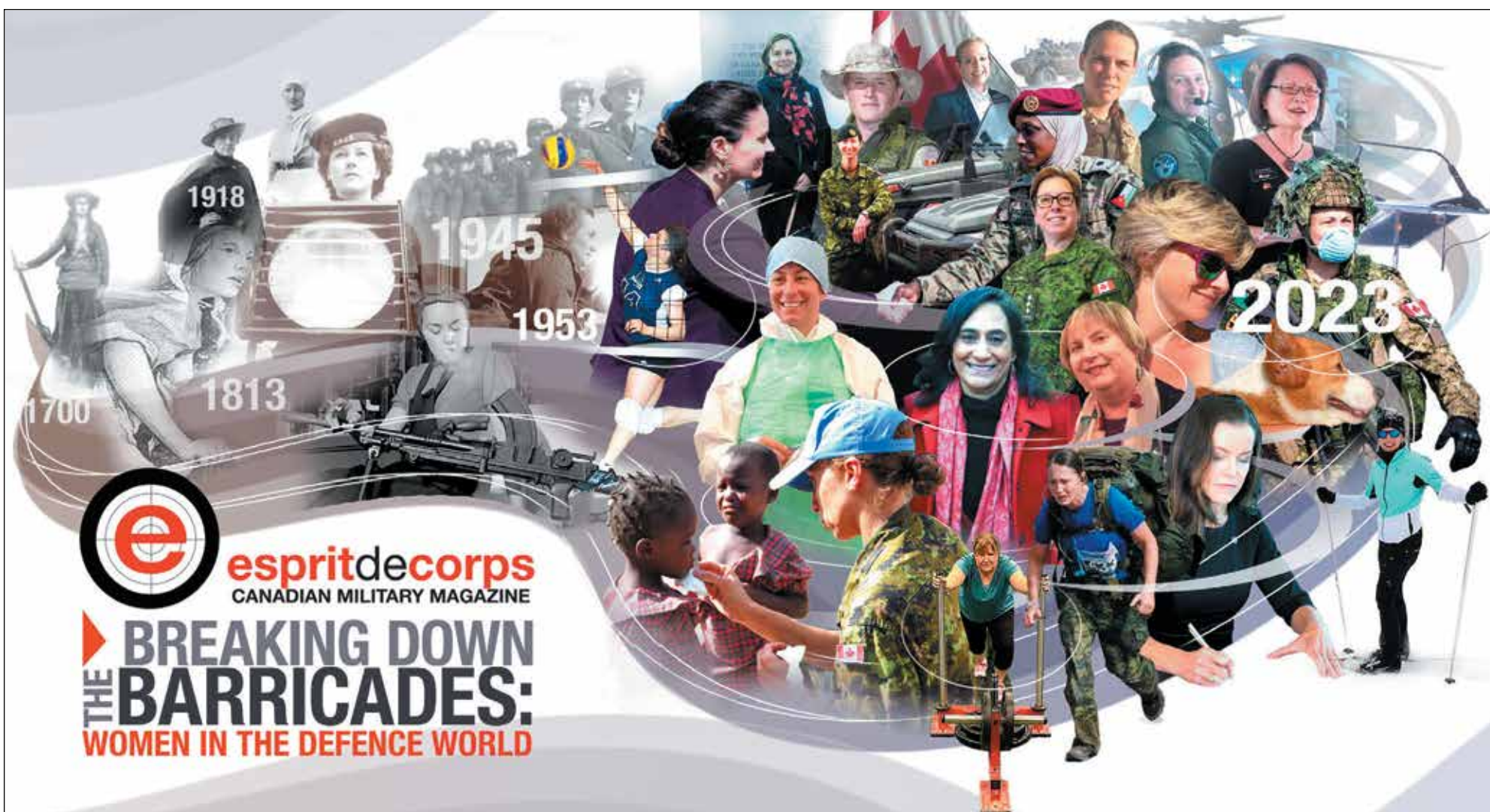
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# Esprit de Corps Canadian Military Magazine Salutes the **TOP WOMEN IN DEFENCE 2023**

## **Sgt Danielle Larocque**

BMQ PI 2IC  
CF Leadership & Recruit School  
St. Jean sur Richelieu, QC

## **Lieutenant (ret'd) Carolyn Hughes**

Director Veterans Services  
The Royal Canadian Legion National  
Headquarters – Ottawa, ON

## **Colonel Colleen Forestier**

Director Health Services Strategic Concepts  
Canadian Forces Health Services  
Headquarters – Ottawa, ON

## **CWO Shelley L. Lamothe.**

Chief Warrant Officer  
Canadian Forces College – Toronto, ON

## **Joanna Davies**

President and Founder  
Broad Reach Group Inc. – Ottawa, ON

## **Beth Woroniuk**

Chair  
Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada  
Ottawa, ON

## **Major Catherine Blais**

OIC Rotary Wing Qualified Test Pilots  
Aerospace Engineering Test Establishment  
Montreal, QC

## **Brig-Gen Krista Dawn Brodie**

Commander  
Military Personnel Generation Group  
Ottawa, ON

## **Lt-Col Sharlene Harding**

A2/Director  
Intelligence, Reconnaissance,  
Surveillance Division – Winnipeg, MB

## **LT Col Rhea MacLean**

Standards Officer  
Joint Command & Staff Programme CFC  
Toronto, ON

## **Jacqueline O'Neill**

Ambassador for Women,  
Peace and Security, Government of Canada  
Ottawa, ON

## **Julia Scouten**

Director, Joint Defence Cloud Program  
Defence CIO Group, DND  
Ottawa ON

## **Dr. Minda Suchan**

Vice President Geointelligence  
MDA Corporation – Richmond, BC

## **Major (ret'd) Linda Lander**

President, Thaler Group Inc  
Ottawa, ON

## **Captain Hélène St-Louis**

JCR Training Officer  
2nd Canadian Rangers Patrol Group  
Quebec, QC

## **Sayward Montague**

Director, Advocacy  
National Association of Federal Retirees  
Ottawa, ON

## **Lisa Campbell**

President, Canadian Space Agency  
Longueuil, QC

## **Colonel (ret'd) Telah Morrison**

Co-Chair  
Minister of Veterans Affairs Advisory  
Committee (Families) – Ottawa, ONt

## **Anand, Anita**

Minister of National Defence  
Government of Canada  
Ottawa, ON

## **MWO Brenda Hawke**

'G' Coy, Company Sergeant Major  
2nd Battalion The Royal Canadian  
Regiment – CFB Gagetown, NB

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