

University and
College Research
policy briefing

pp. 15-25

Hill lights
a family affair

p. 14

How to get
young people
to the polls?

p. 13

Tim
Powers

p. 9

Party
Central

p. 28



THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR, NO. 2063

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2023 \$5.00

NEWS

Speaker Rota resigns after parliamentary ovation for Nazi veteran leaves international 'black eye' on Canada, say observers

BY NEIL MOSS

After a former member of a Nazi Waffen-SS unit was recognized and received a standing ovation from Parliamentarians in the House Chamber, which has now led to the resignation of the House Speaker, observers say it leaves a "black eye" on Canada's international standing, with Poland embarking on a path of potential extradition.

House Speaker Anthony Rota (Nipissing-Timiskaming, Ont.) saluted constituent Yaroslav Hunka following a speech given in the House of Commons by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sept. 22. Hunka, 98, is a former member of the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS (1st Galician), a unit composed of ethnic

Continued on page 27



Anthony Rota announced his resignation as the 37th Speaker of the House on Sept. 26, following widespread backlash for his recognition of a constituent who fought with a Nazi unit during the Second World War after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's Sept. 22 address to Parliament. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

NEWS

Sikh Community seeks justice, protection amid India-Canada tensions over killing of B.C. Sikh leader

Liberal MP Sukh Dhaliwal, who represents the riding where Hardeep Singh Nijjar was killed, says Canada 'cannot sacrifice our sovereignty' or allow another country to dictate what Canadians can say on Canadian soil.

BY STUART BENSON

Following last week's bombshell allegations that Canada has credible intelligence implicating the Indian government in the death of Canadian Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, there are growing calls among Sikh MPs and diaspora groups for Canada to push back on anti-Sikh disinformation and re-evaluate its relationship with India, alongside calls for the recently announced public inquiry into foreign interference to also look at the South Asian nation.

Shortly after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (Papineau, Que.) Sept. 18

announcement in the House, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) said he grew up hearing stories of repression and violence targeting Sikhs by the government of India, but to hear Trudeau "corroborate a potential link" was something he could have never imagined. Singh also wrote a letter to Marie-Josée Hogue, the newly appointed commissioner of the public inquiry into foreign interference, asking her to include a specific examination of India during her work.

On Sept. 18, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) called on the House of Commons to "put aside our differences to stand up for the rule of law," however, less than 24 hours later, he demanded that Trudeau "come clean" about what evidence Canada had in its possession about the Indian government's alleged involvement.

Liberal MP Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey-Newton, B.C.), who represents the riding where Nijjar was killed on June 18, told *The Hill Times* that Trudeau's statement in the House of Commons showed he's taking the "credible allegations very seriously" and demonstrated the leadership he expects from a prime minister.

"[Trudeau] made it very clear that Canada is a rule-of-law country, and the protection of our citizens and sovereignty

Continued on page 26

COMMENT

Standing with Ukraine requires sound training, not scrapyard leftovers

BY SCOTT TAYLOR

OTTAWA—On Sept. 22, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy paid his first official visit to Ottawa since Russia invaded his homeland in

February 2022. As expected, the charismatic Zelenskyy used the occasion to plead for continued financial and military support from Canada.

To date, Canada has furnished more than \$8-billion in aid to

Ukraine since the war began, with roughly \$1.8-billion of that being in the form of weapons, equipment, and munitions.

In its most recent budget, the Liberal government set aside \$500-million from the Defence

Department for future support to the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

This will not be an easy task to fulfil as the Canadian military arsenal has already been heavily drained in support of Ukraine's war effort.

To date, Canada has donated eight Leopard 2A4 tanks, 39 new Armoured Combat Support Vehicles (ACSV), and 208 Roshel Senator armoured trucks.

Continued on page 9



Mike Lapointe

Heard On The Hill

‘Hard not to recognize’ former NDP MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau as inspiration for new TV show



Former NDP MP and party House leader Ruth Ellen Brosseau was the ‘spark’ behind a new Tou.tv television series, says the writer behind *The Candidate*. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In *Le Devoir*’s recent article on the the new Tou.tv series *The Candidate*, it’s noted that “it’s hard not to recognize [former NDP MP] **Ruth Ellen Brosseau**” as the inspiration for the show’s protagonist, a young single mother who agrees to be a “political candidate in a riding she has never lived in, for a party whose program she does not know.”

Actress **Catherine Chabot** plays the character of **Alix Mongeau**, a single mother who lives in Longueuil, a Quebec city that sits on the Saint Lawrence River directly across from Montreal.

Over 10 episodes, Mongeau enters Quebec politics with no experience as a candidate for the Progress and Democracy Party of Quebec.

“Against all expectations,” according to *La Presse*, Mongeau is elected to the National Assembly while celebrating her 30th birthday with her best friend in New York.

Brosseau was first elected to Parliament in the 2011 federal election in Berthier-Maskinongé, Que., and would remain in the House until Bloc Québécois candidate **Yves Perron** beat her by slightly more than 1,500 votes in the 2019 election, and again in another close race in 2021. She was among the NDP’s “Orange Wave” in 2011, and initially came to prominence as an unknown candidate who celebrated her birthday in Las Vegas during the campaign. The anglophone single mother had never been to her francophone riding prior to the 2011 election. But Brosseau’s hard work paid off, and she swiftly rose up the ranks.

She would serve in a number of roles in Parliament, including as the NDP’s House leader, agriculture critic, and deputy caucus chair.

Though the story is not based on Brosseau, show writer **Isabelle**

Langlois has previously said her 2011 election was the “spark plug” for the series, according to *Le Devoir*.

Canada’s special representative on combatting Islamophobia Amira Elghawaby to deliver remarks at Carleton University

Amira Elghawaby, Canada’s first-ever special representative on combatting Islamophobia, is scheduled to deliver remarks on Sept. 27 on how to address “an ongoing threat to building the society we deserve” in an event hosted by Carleton University.

A journalist and human rights advocate who graduated from Carleton’s School of Journalism and Communication in 2001 with a



Canada’s special representative on combatting Islamophobia Amira Elghawaby will deliver remarks on Sept. 27 on how to address ‘an ongoing threat to building the society we deserve’ in an event hosted by Carleton University. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

bachelor’s degree in journalism and law, Elghawaby was also a founding member of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network and past board member at the Silk Road Institute.

Elghawaby was appointed to the role in January 2023.

Soon thereafter, however, a 2019 opinion piece that ran in the *Montreal Gazette* co-authored by Elghawaby and **Bernie Farber**, former head of the Canadian Jewish Congress, criticizing what they described as Quebec’s “curtailments of religious freedoms in on the nation’s largest provinces,” sparked controversy.

The re-surfaced piece prompted calls from Quebec politicians for an apology, and Elghawaby issued an apology on Feb. 1.

Canadian Community Newspaper Award winners announced

The Hill Times has received a number of nods from the folks overseeing the Canadian Community Newspaper Awards. The honours feature 27 categories that honour editorial, photography, multimedia and overall excellence in community newspaper publishing.

The Hill Times won first place in the Best Editorial Page category, and took top prize for Best News Story (circulation 10,000 and over), awarded to reporter **Neil Moss** (along with managing editor **Charelle Evelyn**) for the Dec. 7, 2022, story “Feds had concerns over upholding diplomatic protection obligations as convoy ensnared dozens of embassies.”

The CCNAs also recognized *The Hill Times* with the top Best Feature Series award for the three-part series



The Hill Times reporter Neil Moss, left, interim digital editor Chelsea Nash, reporter Mike Lapointe, and photographer Andrew Meade have won Canadian Community Newspaper Awards. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade, photograph courtesy of X (Twitter)

“The Hate that MPs get,” penned by interim digital editor **Chelsea Nash** and reporter **Mike Lapointe**, edited by editor-in-chief **Kate Malloy**. Headlines included “Spitting, stalkers, and death threats: a ‘routine’ part of being a politician, say MPs,” “Despite boosted security measures in recent years, MPs say ‘weaknesses’ in systems of support remain,” and “Social media regulation, better police co-ordination key to resolving increasingly toxic, hateful political environment, say experts.”

According to the judges’ comments, “*The Hill Times* captured first place in this category with a hard-hitting series on the toxic environment in which federal Members of Parliament operate on a daily basis. Extensive reporting, quality writing and strong play combine to make this look at the hate regularly encountered by at least some elected officials informative and disturbing.”

“Readers were well-served by this look at the reality of this aspect of politics.”

The Hill Times photographer **Andrew Meade**’s coverage of the “Freedom Convoy” that descended upon downtown Ottawa in January and February 2022 won second place for Best Spot News Photo Coverage, circulation 10,000 and over. First and third prize in that category went to photographer **Graham Paine**, for work published in Milton, Ont.’s *Canadian Champion* and the *Oakville Beaver*.

The *Lake Cowichan Gazette* in British Columbia won in the category of Best All-Round Newspaper with a circulation up to 1,499; the *Eastern Graphic* in Montague, P.E.I., won with a circulation from 1,500 to 6,499; the *Pique News* magazine based in Whistler and Pemberton, B.C., won with a circulation of 6,500 to 17,499; and the Montreal-based *The Suburban* won the category for media organizations with a circulation of 17,500 and over.

Mark Ramzy joins *The Star*’s Ottawa bureau

Mark Ramzy joins the *Toronto Star* as an Ottawa-based reporter covering the feds and national news.

Ramzy’s journalistic experience includes four months as an editorial intern at *Broadview Magazine*, four months as a freelance

journalist at *The Globe and Mail*, two months as a parliamentary reporter at the *National Post*, and just under two years at Carleton



Mark Ramzy is joining the *Toronto Star*’s Ottawa bureau. Photograph courtesy of X (Twitter)

University’s student paper *The Charlatan*.

The journalist was born and raised in Cairo, Egypt, according to his website, and immigrated to Canada in 2013.

“My experience growing up in a Coptic household—underrepresented in society at home and again in Canada—has shaped my worldview and given me the desire to make a necessary change in the media landscape,” according to Ramzy.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee acclaimed for ‘unprecedented’ third term

In a “historic and unprecedented election,” Regional Chief **Terry Teegee** was acclaimed for a third term during the B.C. Assembly of First Nations’ 20th annual general meeting on Sept. 22.

According to a release, the chiefs in assembly debated and passed 25 resolutions relating to equitable funding for First Nations language revitalization, child welfare reform, support of gender-affirming health care, and support of a draft tripartite agreement on nature conservation, among other issues.

B.C. Premier **David Eby**, former federal NDP MP and current B.C. Minister of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship **Nathan Cullen**, federal parliamentary secretary to the minister of the environment **Julie Dabrusin**, Emergency Preparedness Minister **Harjit Sajjan**, Indigenous Services Minister **Patty Hajdu**, and Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister **Gary Anandasangaree** were all welcomed to address the chiefs in the assembly.

mlapointe@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Disastrous Canada-India relations are of Trudeau's making

The prime minister has chosen marginal diaspora politics over foreign policy, and as long as he remains in office, the bilateral relationship cannot be salvaged.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



KAMOURASKA, QUE.—My late son, who travelled to dozens of countries and went around the world in 2005, had a saying: “No matter where you go, everyone is the same.” He would then pause and say, “Except the Indians.”

Having been posted in India a few years later, I have to agree with him. India, which most Canadians see as a subcontinent with a billion Brown people, is incredibly diverse. It has more than 20 official languages, dozens of religions, hundreds of cultures, a complex history, and a dynamic economy. Canada has failed to get a trade agreement with India because, as a regional power, India insists on dictating the terms. Canada, with little foreign investment there, is seen as an economic also-ran. Combine that with the emergence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, and understanding India becomes more difficult. Despite leading the world's largest democracy, Modi has not hesitated to use strongman tactics against minorities. It is part of his history: in 2002, as chief minister of Gujarat, he was accused of condoning violence that killed close to 2,000 people, mostly Muslims. So, it is not surprising that Indian “agents” were accused of the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Surrey, B.C., in June. The Indians had repeatedly asked Canada to extradite Nijjar, accusing him of terrorism and direct involvement in the killings of prominent Indian citizens. Though Nijjar

ultimately became a Canadian citizen, we know his initial applications for asylum and citizenship in Canada were twice rejected. While it is an overwhelming repudiation of another country's sovereignty to engage in extraterritorial murder, it is not unknown. Then-Israeli prime minister Golda Meir undertook the “Wrath of God” killings in the 1970s in retaliation for the terrorist attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, and then-United States president Barack Obama ordered hundreds of drone assassinations in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. This is not to justify India's alleged involvement in the Nijjar killing. But news reports describing him as a “Khalistani activist” completely miss the mark. Terry Glavin, one of a few Canadian journalists with a grasp of India, has revealed Nijjar's sinister past. This past June, Sikhs in Brampton, Ont., had a float in a parade depicting former Indian PM Indira Gandhi's assassination. This is disgraceful. But Canadian politicians have made excuses for attending similar parades where there were depictions of terrorists as “martyrs.” We only have to be reminded of the 1985 Air India bombing that killed 329 people, many Canadians, which was carried out by Sikh extremists. While more than half of Canada's Indian diaspora is Sikh, they amount to less than two per cent of India's population. The Khalistan movement is no longer a force within India: only in diaspora communities like Canada does it gain slight traction. As a country with its own issues with separatism, it is hypocritical for our government to be sheltering supporters of Khalistan. This is where the Trudeau government has failed miserably. As a recent *Globe and Mail* opinion piece revealed, the Liberals

made foreign policy calculations based on the voting propensities of Sikhs. According to the author, former Trudeau adviser Omer Aziz, “Canada's ethnic domestic battles were distorting our long-term foreign policy priorities, and politicians were ... playing up ethnic grievances to win votes.” And then there was Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's statement about the alleged Indian government connection to Nijjar's killing. He offered speculative intelligence that had little basis, and should never have been uttered publicly. As the head of government of a “Five Eyes” member, the prime minister should be the last person revealing secrets, especially those of a dubious foundation. Within a geopolitical context, we are now missing the boat, as the West sees India as a counterweight to China. I imagine there are Sinocentric advisers at Global Affairs Canada and the Prime Minister's Office who still think China is wonderful; when I praised India, the China types would sneer. Now, as China's population shrinks, and its totalitarian government interferes directly in our politics, India matters. And despite his strongman approach, so does Modi. And that's what counts in a world of *real-politik*. But instead of reaching out to India, Trudeau has chosen marginal diaspora politics over foreign policy, portrayed a cartoonish understanding of India in his 2018 trip, and now has accused India of assassination. This is not a mature relationship, and as long as he remains in office, it cannot be salvaged. *Andrew Caddell is retired from Global Affairs Canada, where he was a senior policy adviser. He previously worked as an adviser to Liberal governments. He is a town councillor in Kamouraska, Que. He can be reached at pipson52@hotmail.com.*

The Hill Times

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Ottawa celebrated the Kingdom's 93rd National Day in the National Arts Centre

The country is celebrating its unification under one flag by King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud in 1932. Since the launch of Vision 2030, the country has laid a solid foundation for success by implementing unprecedented reforms in the public sector, the economy, and society as a whole. And with the introduction of the e-visa in 2019, millions of visitors have been drawn to the Kingdom.



King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture



For more information about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia you can visit the website

<https://www.visitsaudi.com>

News

Documents reveal feds evaluating ethics of Canada's booming international student sector

The federal government's current international education strategy is set to expire next March, and Global Affairs Canada's trade commissioner service is leading the work on a new plan.

BY KEVIN PHILIPUPILLAI

As multiple media reports document the degree to which international students are vulnerable to fraud, exploitation, and abuse, discussion papers released by Global Affairs Canada show that the federal government is looking to address these concerns in its new international education strategy.

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) spokesperson Jean-Pierre J. Godbout said in a Sept. 25 email to *The Hill Times* that the international education division within GAC's trade commissioner service is leading the development of the new strategy in collaboration with officials from the departments of employment and immigration. Consultations with the provinces, territories, and other stakeholders took place between February and July.

Independent Senator Ratna Omidvar (Ontario) told reporters on Parliament Hill on Sept. 20 that Canada's international student program has become "a victim of its own success," and that "the incentive to recruit, recruit, recruit" has overtaken the incentive to provide these students with "a quality education experience and decent living."

Omidvar and fellow Independent Senators Yuen Pau Woo (British Columbia) and Hassan Yussuff (Ontario) released a report last week that urged federal, provincial, and territorial governments to better manage Canada's international student program. Former senator Sabi Marwah contributed to the study before his retirement from the Red Chamber earlier this month.

The Senators conclude in their report that Canadian universities and colleges have turned to international students as a revenue stream to offset the stagnation in government funding, pointing out that 100 per cent of net new funding for post-secondary education in the last 10 years has come from international students.



Independent Senator Ratna Omidvar says Canada's international student program has become 'a victim of its own success,' and that 'the incentive to recruit, recruit, recruit' is overshadowing concerns about students' well-being. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Omidvar, Woo, and Yussuff discussed the report at a press conference on Parliament Hill on Sept. 20.

"Successive governments across Canada have cut grants to institutions to the extent that their only choice now rests with international foreign students as an essential part of their business plan," Omidvar told reporters. Woo added that "all of the burden of meeting the expenses of our post-secondary institutions has fallen on international students."

The three Senators said their report was in part a response to recent speculation that international students are to blame for the shortage of affordable housing.

Omidvar said blaming international students for "long-standing structural problems" in housing—such as the federal government's 30-year withdrawal from the building of subsidized affordable housing—is like "the tail wagging the dog."

Regardless of the jurisdictional complications, said Yussuff, the federal government has a role to play in protecting Canada's reputation abroad because stories about abuse and fraud against international students will not be tied simply to individual programs or provinces.

"Students who come to participate in a program don't come to a province, they come to a place called Canada," said Yussuff.

International education sector contributes \$22-billion annually to Canadian economy

Federal and provincial governments started to promote international education as a driver of economic growth between 2010 and 2015, and many public and private institutions now rely

heavily on foreign students as a key revenue source.

Omidvar said there are currently close to 870,000 international students in Canada, and that the sector contributes approximately \$22-billion to the Canadian economy annually, along with 218,000 jobs.

Education is a provincial responsibility in Canada, and colleges and universities are funded and regulated at the provincial level. But the federal government also has a role to play because the process of bringing international students to Canada has bearing on Ottawa's immigration, labour, and trade strategies.

The federal government launched its first International Education Strategy in 2014. Three departments—GAC, as well as Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, and Employment and Social Development Canada—share responsibility for the strategy. But, in



Independent Senator Hassan Yussuff says the federal government has a role to play in protecting international students from fraud and abuse because Canada's reputation as a desirable destination for students and immigrants is stake. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

an indication of how significant colleges and universities have become to Canada's ambitions on international trade, it is the trade commissioner service within GAC that leads the strategy. GAC told *The Hill Times* in January that the department's EduCanada team is responsible for promoting Canadian schools and programs to international students.

The current strategy runs from 2019-2024, and is set to expire on March 31, 2024. GAC is leading the work on a new strategy that will address concerns about fraud and abuse in the system, along with plans for recruiting students from more parts of the world. Government officials began gathering feedback from stakeholders this summer, and the rollout of the new strategy is scheduled for early 2024.

Omidvar said she met with prospective international students and their families on a visit to Canada's consular office in Chandigarh, India—the consular office that she said receives the largest number of visa applications from international students.

She described meeting poor families who had sold their farms, land, and other property to make it possible for their oldest child to go to school in Canada, obtain permanent residency, and ultimately sponsor the rest of the family. It is "heart-breaking," said Omidvar, "when the students come to Canada and realize they have been sold a basket of goods that doesn't quite meet what they were told overseas."

Educational experts and advocates for international students have warned that many cases of misrepresentation or abuse are connected with the smaller private colleges that have emerged in recent years to take advantage of Canada's rise as a destination

for international students who are ultimately looking for a pathway to permanent residency.

Omidvar told reporters on Sept. 20 that, while she did not want to generalize about private colleges, they face far less oversight than public institutions. She added that "anecdotal evidence" suggests that many private colleges are "fly-by-night" operations that enrol far more foreign students than they have the capacity to serve adequately.

Documents reveal feds' concerns about how to regulate the conduct of education consultants

Government documents acknowledge the growing dependence of Canadian schools on education agents or consultants, who may charge fees or commissions to match students with schools, and who may engage in unethical practices.

"Further complicating this issue," says one discussion paper, "has been the emergence of education agent aggregators ... that act as intermediaries between a multitude of institutions and an army of subcontracted in-market agents, further obscuring the institution-agent relationship and overall transparency. With the aggregators acting as middle-men, there is no longer a contractual relationship between agents and institutions."

The document goes on to ask stakeholders for their feedback on how these consultants should be regulated, and whether Canadian schools should be held accountable for their conduct—to the point of possibly losing their coveted status as institutions whose students are eligible for pathways to permanent residency.

Government reports say 2015 marked a turning point after which Canadian colleges began to recruit much more heavily from India. From 2015 to 2019, 67 per cent of international students intending to study at Canadian colleges came from India.

Another discussion paper prepared by the Trade Commissioner Service within GAC warned earlier this year that Canadians colleges' over-reliance on students from India brings the risk of "significant revenue fluctuations" due to "external or geopolitical factors."

These warnings have now come to fruition after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's (Painéau, Que.) announcement that Canadian authorities are investigating the Indian government's possible involvement in the murder of a Sikh-Canadian community leader in British Columbia.

Canada's university sector drew international students from a more diversified base. Government reports say India and China each provided approximately one-fifth of foreign students coming to Canada from 2015 to 2019, followed by France at 10 per cent.

kphilipupillai@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

International Business University is the next-generation business university you can trust!

International Business University (IBU) invests in creating a pipeline of highly skilled professionals with the knowledge, adaptability, and innovative thinking that organizations require. IBU graduates will have a deep understanding of the latest industry trends, cutting-edge technologies, and global business practices.

In our quest to create job-ready graduates, we collaborate with influential academics, employers, business leaders and advisors who shape our curriculum, ensuring that our graduates are well-prepared for the Ontario, Canadian and global workforce. Our graduates will possess the skills, talent and knowledge required to thrive in today's rapidly changing business landscape, supported by advisors who guide their personal, learning and networking success.

Our ironclad commitment to deliver quality academic programs is anchored with a blend of theory and practice. Our academic rigor has been independently reviewed by industry experts, academics from Canada's public universities, and a government panel assembled to assure the public that IBU delivers world-class, university-level education with industry relevance.

Our senior leadership team has deep roots in Canadian and global higher education. Chancellor Dr. Feridun Hamdullahpur (former



IBU President Joanne Shoveller delivering a speech to IBU MBA students.

President of the University of Waterloo), President Joanne Shoveller, (former VP, University of Waterloo, and leader at INSEAD Business School, France; University of Guelph & Ivey Business School, Western University) and Dean Dr. Artie Ng (former executive Hong Kong Poly U and HK Management Association) live and breathe innovation in student-centred learn-

ing, and are on a quest to innovate in delivering quality programming and a robust ecosystem for student success.

International Business University has developed a strong foundation of quality and trust to deliver exceptional talent for Canadian business success and innovation.

International Business University has been granted consent by the Minister of Colleges and Universities to offer this degree for a program for a seven year term starting December 4, 2020. Prospective students are responsible for satisfying themselves that the program and the degree will be appropriate to their needs (e.g. acceptable to potential employers, professional licensing bodies or other educational institutions).

IBU

International
Business
University



EduCanada
A world of possibilities
Un monde de possibilités



ibu.ca

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS:
9TH FLOOR, 80 BLOOR W
TORONTO ON M5S 2V1
CANADA

TORONTO CAMPUS:
SUITE 498,
700 LAWRENCE AVE W

NORTH YORK ON M6A
+1 (416) 923-1111
Toll Free: +1 (866) 923-3111

News

Dismissal of CRA audit Charter challenge ‘delays justice,’ says Muslim charity

While Ontario Superior Court Justice Markus Koehnen says he agrees with many of the Muslim Association of Canada’s arguments, he dismissed the case due to the CRA audit’s ‘prematurity.’

BY STUART BENSON

The Muslim Association of Canada says it is disappointed by an Ontario Superior Court judge’s decision to dismiss the charity’s bid to halt a Canada Revenue Agency audit, arguing that his ruling “delays justice” by “prioritizing bureaucratic processes over the Charter rights of Canadians.”

In his ruling on Sept. 14, Justice Markus Koehnen wrote that he sympathizes with “many, but not all” of the applicant’s arguments that the “audit and the recommendation to suspend its charitable status are based on discriminatory information, beliefs and conclusions that violate the applicant’s rights to freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom from discrimination under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.”

Throughout his decision and during the court proceedings, Koehnen questioned whether a similar Christian or Jewish-led charity would receive the same level of scrutiny or recommendation of having their status revoked for holiday festivities for Thanksgiving or Seder, as the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) did with the Muslim Association of Canada’s (MAC) Eid events, or whether a charity like the United Way would have its status revoked over former directors participating in a Canadian election campaign, as the CRA had recommended for MAC’s two former directors participating in the Egyptian election of then-president Mohamed Morsi.

However, even in those instances where Koehnen is sympathetic, he said that the CRA had raised other issues that provided a more solid basis for corrective action. Combined with the lack of a final decision on the audit from the CRA and lack of benchmarks to measure MAC’s conduct, he declined to decide the case.

MAC had sought to have the Ontario Superior Court put a stop to an audit of its finances by the CRA’s Review and Analysis Division (RAD), a part of the agency’s charities directorate responsible

for delivering its mandate under the Anti-Terrorism Act to prevent terrorist financing and money laundering in the charitable sector. MAC says the audit is rooted in “systemic bias” and Islamophobia, and as a result, is “fundamentally and fatally flawed.”

MAC had argued that the RAD audits, which began in 2015, discriminated against Muslims and violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms’ guarantees of equality and freedom of religion, expression, and association.

Nabil Sultan, director of communications for MAC, told *The Hill Times* that while the acknowledgement of bias by the CRA in the judge’s ruling was significant and demonstrated the legitimacy of the Charter challenge, MAC is “disappointed that the court gave the agency leeway to complete the process,” despite the concerns with the process itself.

“We feel that approach really delays justice for MAC, and prioritizes bureaucratic processes over the Charter rights of Canadians,” Sultan continued, adding that MAC is concerned the ruling will set a “dangerous precedent” that “no matter how flawed the processes of these government bureaucracies are and no matter how much bias discrimination may be demonstrated, the court is essentially saying they have the right to see those processes to completion.”

Sultan said MAC believes the judge’s decision fails to account for the fact that its Charter challenge was never about the CRA’s final decision, but about the flawed process itself and the “credible evidence of Islamophobia and discrimination.”

“It just seems odd that the judge would recognize and acknowledge that bias exists, but say that essentially his hands are tied because the CRA hasn’t completed the process,” Sultan said. “We expected that if you recognize that there is bias and discrimination—that Muslim charities are not being treated the same as non-Muslim charities—then that would be sufficient cause for the court to step in and say that this needs to be remedied now.”

Additionally, Sultan said the decision seems to ignore how the CRA’s audit appeal process functions once a decision has been delivered, arguing that the federal tax court where those appeals are adjudicated generally rules in favour of the agency so long as it can demonstrate that its processes were followed appropriately.

“It appears that, according to this ruling, [MAC will] have to go through this entire process from beginning to end before it can state that harm has been done,” Sultan said, noting that those appeals can take years to complete, on top of the eight years and counting the CRA has been auditing the organization.

“The Muslim community has been facing systemic discrimination

and Islamophobia for many years; we’ve appealed to political actors, including the prime minister, and different governments to act, and we have not seen any solution, and we’ve now appealed to the court and have not seen any remedy,” Sultan said. He said while the decision leaves the community facing the same injustices with no solutions available, it would “continue fighting until justice is served and Muslim charities are treated the same as any other charity in this country.”

“We’re not asking for anything more than that, and we’re not asking for anything less,” Sultan continued. “And until that day comes, we will continue fighting.”

Geoff Hall, one of the lawyers with McCarthy Tétrault LLP representing MAC, told *The Hill Times* that it was disappointing that the judge decided not to address the Charter issue while still expressing concern over the inappropriateness of the CRA and RAD’s conduct during the audit.

Hall said he doesn’t think the decision is legally correct.

“It can’t be the case, in my view, that a Charter challenge to activity which has already occurred has to await the determination of another administrative proceeding,” Hall explained. “[The judge] has just postponed the real question which was put before him, which was whether what the CRA has done and what he has found troubling violates the Charter.”

In response to MAC’s court challenge, government lawyers with the attorney general’s office had asked the court to dismiss the case, arguing that it did not have standing to make a Section 15 Charter claim, as the charity is not an “individual,” nor did the CRA’s selection for audit infringe its rights or interfere with its ability “to act in accordance with its religious beliefs in a manner that is more than trivial or insubstantial,” according to the government’s responding factum.

The government argued the preliminary audit findings had identified several non-compliance issues with MAC’s obligations. Those issues include advancing non-charitable purposes “by [promoting] the Muslim Brotherhood organization ... [accumulating] real property, [providing] support to an organization listed as a terrorist entity, and [issuing] improper donation receipts.”

In response to a request for comment from *The Hill Times*, the CRA said that it was pleased with the outcome, and that the decision provides “certainty and clarity that the courts should not be relied upon to interfere in ongoing administrative processes” and that the “usual recourse process” is the appropriate method of resolving such disputes.

“In Canada, systemic racism and discrimination are real and important issues that the CRA takes very seriously,” wrote Sylvie Branch, CRA media relations officer. “The CRA is firmly dedi-

cated to diversity, inclusion and anti-racism, in alignment with its values of professionalism, integrity, respect and collaboration.”

Branch added that “under no circumstances” are the CRA’s selection of charities for audit or considerations “informed by a particular religious denomination being advanced by a registered charity,” and that it applies its policy positions “consistently and fairly to all registered charities, regardless of the types of programs they carry on, or of any religious affiliations they may have.”

Branch also confirmed MAC is currently a registered charity and that due to the confidentiality of the Income Tax Act, the CRA’s actions with respect to its audit would only be made public should MAC’s status be revoked, annulled, suspended, or the organization penalized.

Ruling holds Muslim and minority charities at ‘the mercy of an unjust system,’ says natsec expert

Huda Mukbil, a national security expert and a former intelligence officer with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, said she finds it “perplexing” that the judge recognized the bias in RAD’s process and analysis while still ruling to dismiss the Charter challenge so as not to undermine the existing appeal process of the audit initiated by that analysis. She noted that in paragraph 29 of the decision, the judge agreed the RAD referral letter contains “highly questionable sources including those of individuals whose public comments are racist and Islamophobic and cites purveyors of false conspiracy theories.”

As part of the Charter challenge, MAC was able to access previously unreleased internal documents from the CRA.

MAC’s lawyers argued that the CRA relied on “clearly Islamophobic, racist, or otherwise discredited [and] unreliable sources,” pointing to the inclusion of “unverified” blog posts from sites including Point de Bascule, Alternative Angle, and Blazing-CatFur; retracted articles by *Toronto Sun* journalist Brian Daly; and commentary from sources including Jonathan Halevi, a retired lieutenant-colonel and intelligence officer with the Israel Defense Forces; Lorenzo Vidino, a researcher who MAC describes as a “known Islamophobic writer”; and Tom Quiggin, a discredited former military intelligence officer most recently known as one of the leaders of the so-called Freedom Convoy in 2022.

“Our efforts to combat terrorist financing and ensure national security must rely on objective risk assessments, and the use of dubious sources, even for initial investigations, is problematic,” Mukbil said, adding that Canada’s

national security organizations have themselves acknowledged systemic racism within their institutions as a problem, and that they have disproportionately targeted the Muslim community due to stereotypes and bias since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

“Counterterrorism measures must consistently adhere to justice, human rights, and non-discrimination principles, and this is not always the case,” Mukbil continued, noting that the ongoing National Security Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA) review of the RAD program and its decision-making processes still holds promise that the noted biases within the system that the ruling highlighted will be addressed.

On March 8, NSIRA notified the CRA it had started a review focusing on RAD’s “national security activities and decision-making relating to registered Canadian charities to assess their reasonableness, necessity, and compliance with the law.”

In response to a request for comment from *The Hill Times*, NSIRA said that its review of the CRA is ongoing, but as it remains in its “initial phase,” it is unable to provide an estimate for its conclusion.

Mukbil added that Koehnen’s ruling would further solidify the trust issues between national security organizations and the Canadian Muslim community, and that it would continue to place “MAC and other minority charities at the mercy of an unjust system,” which has recognized its own systemic and structural issues of bias.

“[The judge] wants the process to continue, despite the fact that that he acknowledges there is bias, and that’s problematic,” Mukbil explained. “He’s not looking at this systematically; he’s just looking at what’s specifically in front of him.”

Additionally, Mukbil said she takes issue with the judge’s deference to the “prematurity” of the challenge.

“You cannot look at prematurity when the whole process itself is flawed,” Mukbil continued. “It’s really concerning that he’s not considering the imbalance of power and wants MAC to be at the mercy of an institution that clearly operates with a bias toward Muslim organizations.”

That imbalance of power also extends to the level of resources MAC has access to, relying primarily on community funding against the government-funded CRA.

“[The judge] sets the bar low, and I think that’s dangerous,” Mukbil said. “This ruling gives [the CRA] a lot of power, and it will have a chilling effect on all other charitable organizations in terms of whether they should raise Charter issues again.”

sbenson@thehilltimes.com
The Hill Times

PARLIAMENT **Now**

All things federal, all in one place.

Cut through the red tape with **Parliament Now**. You'll keep organized and aware of all that happens on the Hill on a daily basis including customizable committee meeting notifications, Question Period summaries, and events.

All sent right to your inbox daily.



Visit parliamentnow.ca/about
call 613-263-3013 or email lkrish@hilltimes.com
for more information

Editorial

Editor: Kate Malloy
Managing Editor: Charelle Evelyn
Digital Editor: Samantha Wright Allen
Executive Editor: Peter Mazereeuw
Interim Digital Editor: Chelsea Nash
Deputy Editors: Stephen Jeffery, Laura Ryckewaert
Deputy Digital Editor: Ian Campbell
Assistant Deputy Editor: Abbas Rana
Publishers: Anne Marie Creskey,
Jim Creskey, Leslie Dickson, Ross Dickson
General Manager, CFO: Andrew Morrow

Editorial

Rota’s resignation should be first step in reform

It may seem unbelievable, but the House of Commons has only been back from its summer break since Sept. 18. In the less than two weeks that MPs have been back in their seats on Parliament Hill, there’s been enough news to fill at least a volume or two of an encyclopedia set (Google it, generation Z).

In the latest episode of “what a month this week has been,” Liberal MP Anthony Rota, the 37th Speaker of the House of Commons, was the target of (righteous) fury for his ill-advised—or rather, not at all advised—decision to invite a constituent to sit in the House gallery during the Sept. 22 address by visiting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

After Zelenskyy’s remarks had concluded, Rota used his purview as master of the domain to recognize Yaroslav Hunka, telling the assembled Parliamentarians and dignitaries that Hunka was “a Ukrainian Canadian war veteran from the Second World War who fought for Ukrainian independence against the Russians and continues to support the troops today even at his age of 98.”

By the next night, it was made clear that Hunka had served in the Waffen-SS Galicia Division under the command of the Nazis.

Rota apologized to the House on Sept. 25, claiming sole responsibility for the invite and recognition, and calls for his resignation swiftly followed. He has now done so, effective as of the end of

the sitting day on Sept. 27. This was the right decision. (And striking the episode from the record and pretending it didn’t happen is the wrong path.)

The House is the Speaker’s domain, just as the Upper Chamber is under the auspices of the Senate Speaker. The House Speaker chairs the Board of Internal Economy, which makes administrative and financial decisions, much like a municipal mayor. The Parliamentary Protective Service reports to the respective Speakers.

There is a great deal of power, responsibility, and trust that comes along with the position of Speaker. And though whoever holds the job is also a member of a political party, there is an element of neutrality and objectivity that necessitates holding Parliament as supreme to the government of the day. This incident shouldn’t change that.

Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre and the Conservatives have been torquing things for political benefit, but amid all the other noise, they raise a legitimate question: when high-profile dignitaries are invited to the Commons, should there not be an extra level of scrutiny?

When it comes to major events in which the government is leading the charge, there should be some more co-ordination and co-operation between the Speaker’s office and the executive. Hopefully, lessons are learned from this.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

Federal budget cuts won’t leave the military unaffected: former defence minister director

Re: “Tug of war: defence budget caught between feds’ plans for cuts and calls for increased military spending,” (*The Hill Times*, Aug. 30, p. 4).

The Aug. 30 piece by Neil Moss contained the following quote:

“Summa Strategies senior adviser Elliot Hughes, a former policy director to then-Liberal defence minister Harjit Sajjan, said given the scope of the (overall) cuts, he expects the impact on DND to be ‘negligible.’ ‘Nothing is going to be put into place that’s going to have any operational impact, or that is going to diminish the safety of women and men in uniform,’ he said.”

This is a very odd talking point delivered by a former policy director to a minister of national defence. Anyone who has ever closely examined the defence budget would realize just how inelastic departmental finances can be when considering in-year cuts. Long-term, multi-year programmatic dollars are protected. People—military and civilian—are largely protected. The only places that can really be touched will have a direct operational impact on those in uniform.

In the two years I spent as a director of policy in the office of a defence minister, I saw two exercises—one being the failed Defence Renewal exercise, and the second, a bureaucracy-led effort to ensure the department stayed within approved authorities—result directly in negative

long-term operational impacts on people and materiel.

Items such as the ordering of ordnance, spare parts, downgrading the operational readiness fleets (Navy, Army, and Air Force), cancelling or reducing the size of large-to-medium scale exercises, cancelling “low-value” contracts, and even pushing back maintenance will be some of the only things on the table for the defence minister to cut. Reductions in any of these areas will have a direct operational impact, and potentially diminish the safety of Canadian Armed Forces members. History has proven that the low dollar values cut now could have an amplified effect five to 10 years down the road.

Any options presented to Defence Minister Bill Blair need to come with warning labels containing potential operational impacts. Better yet, perhaps it is best not to touch the military at all. It would be antithetical to the government’s national security ambitions, and international and bilateral obligations.

Instead, we should be leveraging, promoting, and investing in Canada’s expanding defence industrial base to support our allies—which may just result in the revenue the president of the Treasury Board and the finance minister are looking for.

Andrew Bernardo
Former director of policy
to a minister of national defence
Ottawa, Ont.

Tories shouldn’t attack gender-affirming care, says Ottawa letter writer

Earlier this month, the Conservative Party passed two motions at its convention attacking the rights of the queer and trans community. The first motion would prevent trans youth from accessing gender-affirming care, and the second would prevent trans women from accessing key public services. All these motions would accomplish, if passed into law, would be to make life less safe for queer and trans people.

Providing gender-affirming care to trans and gender-diverse youth is linked to better mental health outcomes and overall well-being. Gender-affirming care literally saves lives.

We do not want to keep going down this dangerous, hateful path.

Eve Honeywell
Ottawa, Ont.



EDITORIAL
NEWS REPORTERS: Stuart Benson, Jesse Cnockaert, Mike Lapointe, Neil Moss, and Kevin Philipupillai
COPY EDITOR: Christina Leadlay
PHOTOGRAPHERS: Sam Garcia, Andrew Meade, and Cynthia Münster
EDITORIAL CARTOONIST: Michael De Adder
COLUMNISTS: Andrew Caddell, John Chenier, Sheila Copps, David Crane, Jim Creskey, Gwynne Dyer, Michael Harris, Erica Ifill, Joe Jordan, Rose LeMay, Alex Marland, Arthur Milnes, Tim Powers, Susan Riley, Ken Rubin, Evan Sotiropoulos, Scott Taylor, Nelson Wiseman, and Les Whittington.



ADVERTISING
VICE PRESIDENT MARKETING AND MULTIMEDIA SALES: Steve MacDonald
DIRECTORS OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Craig Caldbick, Erveina Gosalc, Martin Reaume, Ulle Baum
DIGITAL AND DESIGN
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER: David Little
DIGITAL AND PRODUCTION MANAGER: Joey Sabourin
GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Neena Singhal

SUBSCRIPTIONS
MARKETING DIRECTOR: Chris Rivoire
LOYALTY AND SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER: Melanie Grant
OFFICE AND CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jessica Miner
SUBSCRIPTIONS SALES EXECUTIVES: Kareen Koul, Haiqa Hammad
ADMINISTRATION
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER: Tracey Wale
DELIVERY INQUIRIES
circulation@hilltimes.com
613-688-8821

THE HILL TIMES
Published every Monday and Wednesday by Hill Times Publishing Inc.
246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4
(613) 232-5952
Fax (613) 232-9055
Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
www.hilltimes.com

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

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO: CIRCULATION DEPT.
246 Queen Street Suite 200, Ottawa, ON K1P 5E4

Rota resignation the patently right thing to do

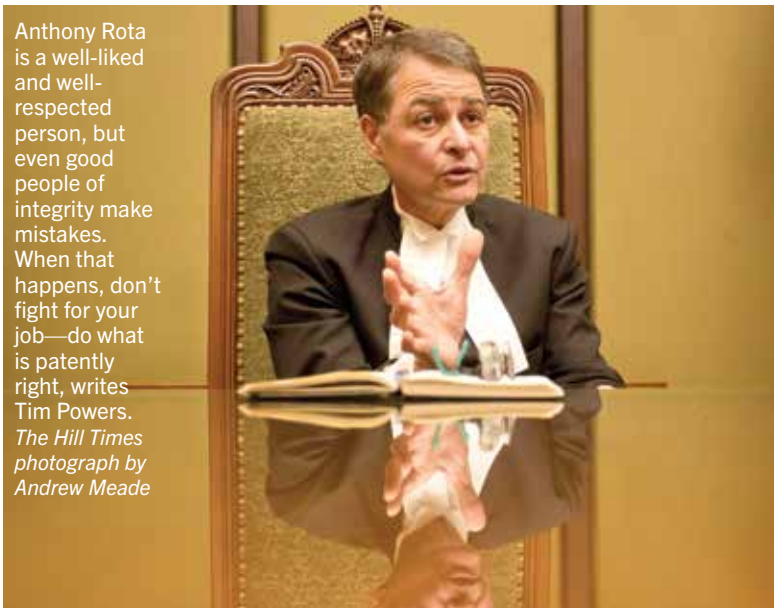
A resignation is often framed by strategists as a loss to be avoided at all costs. The thinking on this needs to change and be more human.

Tim Powers

Plain Speak



Anthony Rota is a well-liked and well-respected person, but even good people of integrity make mistakes. When that happens, don't fight for your job—do what is patently right, writes Tim Powers. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



OTTAWA—As I write this column, Anthony Rota is still the Speaker of the House of Commons. My hope is—and it is out of no personal malice towards Rota—that by the time you are reading, Rota will have stepped down as the Speaker.

During last week's state visit of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Rota used his legitimate powers to have Parliament formally recognize a 98-year-old man who, as it happens, fought with the Nazis during the Second

World War. Rota claimed he was not aware of the man's history, and has on at least two occasions apologized for what happened. He says he alone is to blame for this happening and—to this point—is praying his apologies are enough. They are not.

Since the recognition happened during Zelenskyy's Sept. 22 visit and Zelenskyy himself was in the House Chamber speak-

ing about the need to fight Russian oppression in his country, the incident has captured global attention. Russian propagandists have run with it. Regardless, this is an embarrassment for Canada for which saying "I am sorry" is not enough.

It is unfortunate that Rota made the mistake. He is a well-liked and well-respected person. He's someone who is also polite,

decent, and fair-minded. He held the House of Commons together through the global pandemic, and has done an admirable job managing decorum in the House, which is never easy. However, even good people of integrity make mistakes. Given the gravity of this mistake—the formal recognition of a Nazi in Parliament at time when the world is dealing with another dangerous aggressor in Europe—Rota must step down.

It is surprising that though this happened days ago, as of the morning of Sept. 26, Rota has not yet stepped aside. He is a smart person and knows both the practical and symbolic importance of the Speaker in the Canadian parliamentary system. The role is bigger than the person. It is not unfair to suggest the legitimacy of the institution—in a time when institutions are facing legitimacy challenges—is now being questioned. That doesn't help Canadians or the people who represent them in Parliament.

I don't pretend to know why Rota is hanging on. Perhaps, like others who have made mistakes or exercised bad judgement in recent times, he is hoping the news cycle will pass, public opinion will move on, and he can keep

his job. Recently, Ontario's now-former housing minister Steve Clark tried that as it related to his government's Greenbelt decision. Like Rota, he said the right words about being sorry and promised to make amends, but the spotlight did not shrink, and his resignation came.

Clark, like Rota, is roundly regarded as a decent sort. While in opposition in the Ontario legislature, he certainly opined forcefully about politicians taking responsibility for their decisions and making tough choices about stepping aside when it was obvious that was the course of action required. Clark got to the right place, but it took a few days. It is hard to imagine Rota won't, too.

Nevertheless, it is still astounding that when a mistake is so glaring and obvious that the action isn't immediate. Immediate action is often seen as genuine and significant. In the case of Rota, it would likely help with future political redemption, if he wanted.

Yet political resignations seem to be like the wins and losses of any major sports competition. A resignation is often framed by a team's strategist as a loss to be avoided at all costs. The thinking on this needs to change and be more human. When you make a mistake, and it is a grave one, don't fight for your job—do what is patently right. People will respect you for that.

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

The Hill Times

Standing with Ukraine requires sound training, not scrapyard leftovers

Surely, we have learned something from our failed effort in Afghanistan to build a competent security force on the cheap and the quick?

Scott Taylor

Inside Defence



from their Toronto-based manufacturer to Ukraine.

In terms of ammunition, Canada has been placing orders with a United States defence firm and paying to have 155mm artillery shells sent directly to Ukraine.

In the scramble to find any additional hardware to ship to Ukraine's frontlines, it came to light that the Canadian Army are about to ship 67 Tracked Light Armoured Vehicles (TLAV) to the scrapyard.

Canada currently has a fleet of 140 TLAVs, which, despite the new acronym, are simply modified M-113 Armoured Personnel Carriers.

According to DND, the 67 TLAVs currently awaiting disposal are already out of commission and have been cannibalised to keep the remaining 73 TLAVs roadworthy.

Nevertheless, James Bezan, the Conservative Party defence critic, suggests that we refurbish these scrapyard-bound TLAVs in order to ship them to Ukraine.

On the surface, this might sound like a win-win solution if we were not talking about the old M-113. These battlefield taxis first entered service in 1960, and first saw combat in the Vietnam war.

During my own military service with Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, in the 1980s, we were acutely aware of the fact that our M-113s were older than most of the soldiers driving them.

Sure, we could rebuild the engines and slap on some additional armour, but these worn-out old warhorses are no longer fit for a modern battlefield. Giving Ukraine scrapyard relics will not help them win the fight.

The next step would be for us to get an inventory list from the Canadian War Museum to see which of their armoured vehicles are still in running order.

Zelenskyy's Ottawa visit came just five days after Defence Minister Bill Blair paid a visit to

Canadian combat instructors in the United Kingdom.

As part of Operation Unifier, Canada has deployed 170 infantry soldiers to the U.K. to train Ukrainian recruits.

The impetus for Blair's visit was to observe the graduation of the latest batch of Ukrainian soldiers.

To mark the occasion, the Canadian instructors lined the road of the base as four buses full of Ukraine's newest soldiers slowly rolled past en route back to the frontlines.

The Canadians were paying a final salute to their recruits.

While this tribute was moving, what I found most disturbing about a TV news report on Global National was the revelation that these Ukrainian soldiers had only received five weeks of instruction.

According to the reporter, just 35 days earlier, these Ukrainians had been civilians. To drive home this point, it was revealed that a former furniture maker—and father of two—had never touched

a weapon before arriving at this British army facility.

Contrary to Blair's quip to the reporter that this Canadian "training saves lives," the truth is that you cannot train a combat soldier in just five weeks.

In Canada, the basic military qualification course is 10 weeks long, and an infantry trade qualification is another 16 weeks on top of that. Five weeks of training produces cannon fodder, not capable soldiers.

If we are serious in our commitment to "stand with Ukraine," then we need to forget about sending them scrapyard junk and providing them with insufficient training.

Surely, we have learned something from our failed effort in Afghanistan to build a competent security force on the cheap and the quick?

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

The Hill Times

Continued from page 1

Of those vehicles only the Leopard tanks were in service with the Canadian Army. The 39 ACSVs were originally to be delivered to the Canadian Army and the Roshel Senators went straight

Comment

The colonial project called Canada is outdoing itself



Canada's anti-Jewish love affair with Eastern European Nazis did not begin and end with a standing ovation from every MP in attendance on Sept. 22, writes Erica Ifill. Screenshot courtesy of ParIVu

In the opening week of Parliament, we started with anti-Blackness on Sept. 18 and ended the week with unvarnished antisemitism on the eve of a holy Jewish observance on Sept. 22.

Erica Ifill

Bad+Bitchy



OTTAWA—Did the prime minister just gaslight the entire country by claiming the Second World War history we all learned, and were tested on in school, is Russian propaganda? We need a ctrl-alt-delete restart on this colonial project we call Canada.

Speaker Anthony Rota has apologized and subsequently resigned for inviting Yaroslav Hunka, who fought with the First Ukrainian Division in the Second World War, as a special guest to hear Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's Sept. 22 speech to Parliament. The First Ukrainian Division was also known as the

14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS, and the 1st Galician Division. Let me repeat: the Speaker of the House of Commons in multicultural and "tolerant" Canada, invited a former Nazi soldier and alleged war criminal to attend a speech given by Ukraine's president about pursuing Ukrainians' freedom ahead of Yom Kippur. Let that sink in.

Look at Canada go! In the opening week of Parliament, we started with anti-Blackness in the form of hate speech on Sept. 18, and ended on Sept. 22 with unvarnished antisemitism on the eve of a holy Jewish observance. We are the foot soldiers of white supremacy. Although Rota apologized, the feces continues to hit the fan with the Polish government now considering applying to Canada for Hunka's extradition. The Liberals have inadvertently removed an attack strategy from their arsenal in the next federal election: they can't criticize Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's record of supporting bigotry while inviting a whole living breathing Nazi to Parliament during a Jewish holiday. The Liberals continue to be their own ops.

Can't say I didn't warn you. Last week, I was the only journalist in this entire nation who acknowledged—and wrote about—Poilievre mistakenly saying the N-word in Parliament, and who argued that it was the job of the Speaker of the House to follow procedure and cite Poilievre for unparliamentary language. "Unlike other instances of unparliamentary language in the House of

Commons, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's Sept. 18 mis-speak was ignored by his parliamentary colleagues and members of the press gallery, which sends a message," as written in the Sept. 20 issue of this paper. And indeed, it did send a message. Had I been joined in the outrage of Poilievre's use of the N-word, perhaps that would've made the Speaker more circumspect as to the rising levels of hate, both inside and outside of the House. Perhaps that circumspection would've led to better vetting. But because no one dared to acknowledge anti-Blackness, antisemitism came speeding around the corner and crashed itself into an international incident.

Antisemitism and anti-Blackness are inextricably linked in a white supremacist construct. When one comes, the other is not far behind. And that train always runs on time. As author Tudor Parfitt notes in his book about the two, "anti-Black racism and antisemitism are not merely similar but have been in constant communication, overlap and exchange with each other for centuries."

I have questions: why was the Parliamentary Black Caucus mute? Why did the cat catch the tongue of Black reporters? Where was the Canadian Association of Black Journalists? In contrast, Jewish organizations got into formation and made it known that this "mistake" was unacceptable.

Canada's anti-Jewish love affair with Eastern European Nazis did not begin and end with a standing ovation from every

MP in attendance on Sept. 22. With a corresponding nod from the British (is there an injustice that doesn't have their name written on it?), Canada imported 2,000 former soldiers from the Ukrainian Waffen-SS division in 1950, as documented by the Simon Wiesenthal Center. According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "about 1,000 SS men and Nazi collaborators, mainly from the Baltic states, immigrated to Canada about the same time." So now we're up to 3,000 war criminals brought to Canada around 1950. The story continues: "the 14th Volunteer Waffen-SS Grenadier Division, also known as the Galicia Division, was made up mainly of Ukrainians who had served with Nazi police battalions and death squads. The surviving 9,000 members of the division surrendered to the British army at the end of the war, and eventually were brought to England. In 1950, Britain appealed to Commonwealth countries to admit them. Canada agreed to take 2,000, after receiving assurances from London that their backgrounds had been investigated and that they had been cleared of any complicity in war crimes." Well, if London says so, because as you know the word of the British is sacrosanct. "But according to recently released British documents and interviews with officials who conducted the investigations at the time, the Ukrainians were not screened, partly because none of the interrogators could speak their language." And there you

go. On the word of the British, about 3,000 war criminals entered Canada and lived more peaceful lives than they would have at the Hague. Don't forget these men drew pensions and used health care, so we paid for this. (The next time anyone wants to complain about Black and brown refugees from the Global South, I will hit them with "we imported Nazi war criminals." Instant mic drop.) It was Sol Littman, then-Canadian representative of the Weisenthal Center, who also found that 1,882 additional German war criminals settled in Canada and received "victim pensions" from the German government.

The Deschênes Commission, set up to investigate claims that Josef "Angel of Death" Mengele had immigrated to Canada, exonerated the Galicia Division of any wrongdoing. If you don't want anyone to know you imported war criminals, it's highly convenient to exonerate them of the original war crimes.

Canada has always been a safe haven for Nazi terrorists and their collaborators, while refusing entry to Jews fleeing the massacre of the Holocaust. There is a foreign policy reason for this: fighting communism. In following the United States on its deadly and imperialistic quest to root out communism, the Canadian government needed to recruit anti-Communists. Late Canadian historian Irving Abella told the World Socialist Website, "One way of getting into postwar Canada ... was by showing the SS tattoo. This proved that you were an anti-Communist."

We have also, as taxpayers, paid for monuments to these Nazis. *The National Post* reported: "There are monuments to the unit at cemeteries in both Alberta and Oakville, Ont., both of which avoid any mention of its SS origins, instead referring to it as the 1st Ukrainian Division of the Ukrainian National Army." The not-yet-finished Stephen Harper make-work project, the Victims of Communism memorial, includes names of Nazi war collaborators and criminals including, at one point, Roman Shukhevych, who "was the leader of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), the armed wing of the Stepan Bandera faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN)," according to *Jacobin*, when "through the winter of 1943–44 Shukhevych's UPA forces lured Ukrainian Jews from their refuges in the forests of Western Ukraine to be murdered." That name has since been removed.

Fun fact: Bandera's grandson, Stephen Bandera worked for CTV News, covering Ukraine.

Canadian Parliament should get back on that diversity horse they beat to death, considering the coming National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Sept. 30. Hopefully we won't see Parliamentarians do the Tomahawk Chop to commemorate the observance.

Erica Ifill is a co-host of the Bad+Bitchy podcast.

The Hill Times

Doug Ford tries to save the furniture



The furor over the questionable Greenbelt land deal is only likely to get louder, despite Ontario Premier Doug Ford trying to change the channel, writes Les Whittington. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Ford's Sept. 21 reversal of the Greenbelt decision was clearly a rear-guard action in the face of the fast-growing shambles overtaking his government regarding land dealings.

Les Whittington

Need to Know



OTTAWA—As the Ontario legislature met for the first time since the Greenbelt scandal peaked last week, one of the first questions for Ontario Premier Doug Ford was whether he has spoken to the RCMP about the land swap debacle engulfing his government.

Ford ignored the question from opposition leader Marit Stiles as he sought to dampen the uproar over the Greenbelt by repeatedly stressing how committed the Progressive Conservative government is to building more highways, hospitals, and homes.

Stiles' question was, in any case, speculative, as the RCMP was still considering whether to open a criminal investigation into the Greenbelt land carve-up. But, with questions mounting by the day about how well-connected developers got preferential treatment by Ford's team in land transactions that put billions of dollars in quick profits in play, the premier decided last week to clear the deck in advance of more possible scrutiny.

In a stunning Sept. 21 about-face, Ford said: "I made a promise to you that I wouldn't touch the Greenbelt. I broke that promise. And for that, I'm very, very sorry." He said it was a mistake to open the Greenbelt in a hurry-up process. It left "too much room for some people to benefit over others," Ford acknowledged.

It was clearly a rear-guard action in the face of the fast-growing shambles overtaking his government regarding land dealings. His Greenbelt flip-flop emerged a day after a second cabinet minister was forced to resign in this affair. MPP Kaleed Rasheed, Ontario's minister of public and business service delivery, quit cabinet and the PC caucus after it was revealed that he might have misled Ontario Integrity Commissioner David Wake during the commissioner's probe of Greenbelt decision-making.

The matter concerned the involvement of Rasheed, Amin Massoudi (principal secretary to Ford at the time), and Jae Truesdell (at the time in the private sector but he was most recently Ford's director of housing policy) with developer Shakir Rehmatullah during a trip to Las Vegas. Rehmatullah's company owns land that was among the parcels removed from the Greenbelt in November. Rasheed has said he accidentally gave Wake incorrect information about the Las Vegas trip and that he would work to clear his name.

Rasheed's resignation from cabinet followed the Sept. 4 resignation of Steve Clark from his job as Ontario's housing minister after Wake's report saying Clark broke ethics rules in his role overseeing decisions on Greenbelt land removals, a process spearheaded by Clark's former chief of staff Ryan Amato (who has also quit).

Notwithstanding the high-level resignations and Ford's decision to scrap the Greenbelt carve-up, the furor over the questionable land deal is only likely to get louder. The government will be confronting ongoing demands from the opposition for more disclosures. "Who tipped them off," NDP leader Stiles demanded to know in the legislature on Sept. 25. She was referring to the fact that, several months before the government revealed it was divvying-up Greenbelt plots for development, several property developers began privately providing information to Amato and others in the government concerning which land they would like to see removed from the Greenbelt. (The Ontario auditor general said in a separate report that, of the 7,400 acres of land removed from the Greenbelt by the province, 92 per cent

could be tied to three developers with direct access to the housing ministry.)

Ontario Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner called on Sept. 25 for Wake to

exercise his power to trigger a public inquiry into this affair.

"It's clear that this trail of Greenbelt destruction leads to the premier and his cabinet," Schreiner said. "It doesn't matter how many times Ford half-heartedly apologizes. The people of this province put their trust in him, and he chose deals for Ford-connected developers over everyday Ontarians."

Ford and everyone involved in his government claim they did not tip off anyone in advance of the Greenbelt decisions. But it's obvious from watchdog reports that developers at the very least knew something was going on. Amato, for instance, told Wake he had let developers know on various occasions that altering the Greenbelt boundaries was under consideration.

Then there are the related questions about the Ford government's expanded use of Minister's Zoning Orders to allow developers to bypass the usual regulatory processes, and the role of consultants, such as the well-connected PC supporter Wake called "Mr. X," in helping secure approvals from the top at Queen's Park.

The threshold for a criminal investigation is much higher than for an ethics violation, but RCMP investigators must at the very least be curious about the close relations with key Ford staffers enjoyed by developers and their representatives who wound up with parcels of previously protected property in the land carve-up. Wake spent the bulk of his 165-page report trying to find out what was going on in this very tangled web in the months leading up to the Greenbelt decision.

Les Whittington is a regular columnist for The Hill Times.

The Hill Times

APPOINTMENT NOTICE

Ian Hamilton Assumes Leadership as ACPA's Chair

The Association of Canadian Port Authorities (ACPA) is delighted to announce that Ian Hamilton, President and CEO of the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority, has been elected as its new Chair. With over 25 years in the maritime industry, he's well-prepared to guide Canada's supply chains through key challenges, including the National Supply Chain Strategy, Transportation Supply Chain Office, and legislative changes.



Ian Hamilton
ACPA Chair

Ian Hamilton became President & CEO of HOPA Ports in 2017, following a successful term as Vice President of Business Development. His achievements include expanding working waterfronts in Southern Ontario and attracting investments.

Ian holds an MBA from Aston University (UK) and a BSc in business administration and economics from the College of Charleston, South Carolina.



Association of
Canadian Port
Authorities

Association des
administrations
portuaires canadiennes

Opinion

Highlighting champions of change key to unlocking the true potential of social finance

By empowering local initiatives and grassroots efforts, we tap into the collective wisdom and resources of communities, catalyzing change from the ground up.

Chelsey MacNeil

Opinion



In the realm of social finance, it's easy to be captivated by the tools—the capital markets, investors, and innovative financial instruments—that promise to catalyze transformative change in our communities, our country, our world.

It's essential to recognize that social finance is but a means to an end.

To truly unlock its potential and generate the impact we so desperately need, we must shift our primary focus to those individuals and entities on the demand side—the champions of change. In doing so, we embark on a journey of doing finance differently—one that democratizes capital, shifts power dynamics, promotes inclusion and equity, and mobilizes local and regional communities.

Imagine Canada's 2020 study, *Are Charities Ready for Social Finance?*, along with Common Good Solutions' own 2023 report, *Social Impact in Atlantic Canada: Investing in Our Evolution*, provide a strong baseline for the extent to which social purpose organizations (SPOs) are aware of and able to participate in social investment. Imagine Canada found that two-thirds of charities in Canada are not aware, or have low levels of awareness of social finance. Likewise, fewer organizations say they would avail of social finance, and fewer yet actually do.

A lot of funding, and thus impact, is being left on the table.

We need to work with our SPOs and our communities on what social finance can do for Canada, for Canadians, and for the communities in which we live and work.

To address this shortfall, cross-sector initiatives to increase SPO social finance investment



Doing social finance differently recognizes that solutions to complex challenges often emerge from the very communities grappling with those issues, writes Chelsey MacNeil. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

readiness are critically needed for the ongoing growth and success of the sector. This includes efforts to increase sector co-ordination, build organizational capacity and risk tolerance, provide access to investment opportunities, and grow knowledge and awareness of social finance. All of this alongside baseline education for those who may be new to the concept of social finance—many who may be so close to doing it themselves—but just not aware of the synergies and alignment they have with the social finance movement.

At its core, social finance represents the fusion of financial resources and social purpose—a mechanism for channeling funds toward ventures and projects aimed at addressing society's most pressing issues.

Our country has never needed this more: we need to build a safe, climate-friendly housing supply now and for generations to come. We need to build houses Canadians can afford in a time of inflation and rising uncertainty.

Our local communities need us, too: to solve problems in our food supply, our digital divide on tech literacy, and the vast inequalities which exist for persons who are Black, Indigenous or people of colour, persons with disabilities, older Canadians, women, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

The best solutions start locally with shared knowledge to maximize the benefit Canada-wide.

At the heart of the demand side are the champions of change: social entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, community

leaders, and visionaries. These individuals and entities are not merely beneficiaries of social finance; they are the architects of innovative solutions. They are the ones who dare to dream beyond convention, thinking outside the box to develop solutions that have the potential to reshape entire communities.

Investing in the demand side is akin to fuelling the engines of progress. By empowering these change agents with the necessary resources, skills, and knowledge, we enable them to steer the course toward genuine

impact. We unlock their potential to dream big, think innovatively, and implement solutions that can create waves of positive change.

Democratizing capital is a fundamental shift in how we approach finance. It means recognizing that financial resources should not be confined to the privileged few, but should be accessible to those who are best positioned to address societal challenges. This democratization embodies the idea that solutions can emerge from anywhere, and with the right support, they can change the world.

Moreover, doing finance differently shifts power dynamics. Traditionally, capital has been concentrated in the hands of a select few, granting them significant influence over societal decisions. By investing in the demand side, we redistribute this power, ensuring that it rests with those who understand the nuances and intricacies of the challenges they aim to solve.

Inclusion and equity underpin this transformation. Building the demand side ensures that a diverse range of social entrepreneurs from different backgrounds and communities have access to the resources they need. This promotes inclusive and equitable growth, fostering a society in which opportunities are not bound by privilege but are open to all.

Doing social finance differently involves local and regional mobilization at the most intricate and strongest scale. It recognizes that solutions to complex challenges often emerge from the very communities grappling with those issues. By empowering local initiatives and grassroots efforts, we tap into the collective wisdom and resources of communities, catalyzing change from the ground up.

Social finance is here to be built by the people who know what is needed—now and for the road ahead—and not a capital-deployment mechanism that is top down or without the lack of engagement, ownership, and hands-on consultation that created many of the challenges of today.

We know that social finance is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end—a tool that can be harnessed to drive transformative social change. Its true potential is realized when we prioritize those on the demand side—the change-makers who are driving innovation, inclusion, and equity.

Chelsey MacNeil is the president of Common Good Solutions, and leads the development of social impact initiatives at home and around the world as part of our critical collective community infrastructure.

The Hill Times

At its core, social finance represents the fusion of financial resources and social purpose—a mechanism for channeling funds toward ventures and projects aimed at addressing society's most pressing issues, like housing, writes Chelsey MacNeil. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Listen to young people to get them to the polls



Whether we get a 2024 snap election or go as scheduled in October 2025, youth are going to make up the largest potential voting bloc, writes Amanda Munday. *Unsplash photograph by Elliott Reyna*

Taylor recently told *The Globe and Mail*. Democracy depends on participation, and participation relies on willingness and agency. Mobilizing youth to the polls is the kingpin.

This is a rallying cry for measurable outcomes that reduce polarization—not deepen it—in an imminent moment where young people have the greatest role in determining what happens next. Increasing youth voter turnout with investment today towards percentage points growth is one way to prove what young Canadians’ truly care about. Reduce the volume about how a minority of politically engaged fellows answer online polls and anticipate young people taking back the mic. Politicians should take note. Youth have significant power and we’re ready to use it. Are you speaking to us yet?

Amanda Munday is the executive director of New Majority, a non-partisan, non-profit organization leading youth get-out-the-vote initiatives across the country.

The Hill Times

Democracy depends on participation, and participation relies on willingness and agency. Mobilizing youth to the polls is the kingpin.

Amanda Munday

Opinion



The chorus of “are young people okay?” is getting loud. August’s headline-making polls are suggesting traditionally progressive kids are skewing more conservative than ever, while debt, anxieties, and hopelessness have grown from whispers to screams. Those polls have Conservatives trending up, in some cases narrowly and others well ahead of the left, sparking questions over whether the values of young people have changed.

In short, we’re not OK. That doesn’t mean we know what will happen next. Ask any young person you know if they’ve ever received a text or phone poll, even one time. Youth are under-pollled and under-predicted. Gone are the days of young people carrying political parties as their personal or even household identity. The majority of the tens of thousands of youth we talk to everyday aren’t walking to their part-time jobs wearing big C, loud L, or bright orange T-shirts. Who can possibly resonate with any party when the polarization is cratering hope? Instead, we identify with the issues and people we care about, and those are in crisis.

Focusing on decided or habitual voters means ignoring the young potential voters who are too worn from catastrophic disaster after global pandemic after economic collapse to build a political identity and

wear it publicly. We’re too busy trying to afford rent.

In the next federal election, the Canadian political landscape is facing the most significant shift in electoral politics in decades. Whether we get a 2024 snap election or go as scheduled in October 2025, youth are going to make up the largest potential voting bloc. Gen Z and millennials aged 16-44 right now, all of whom will be eligible to vote by the next federal election, will make up a greater proportion of the electorate than any other generation. That’s the seismic shift that politicians, whether they’re aware of it or not, are acknowledging with grand proclamations about what youth will do next.

The pandemic and a pause of on-campus voting delivered a major blow to youth voting turnout during the last election. Turnout for ages 18-24 saw the largest decline—more than seven percentage points from 2019 to 2021—of any age group. To increase youth participation by five percentage points—to a near 60 per cent turnout (so don’t tell me youth don’t vote)—represents more than 744,000 new, likely first-time voters, including young students in their habit-forming stage of life. Ridings are often decided by less than 2,000 votes, representing a meaningful democratic contribution when youth show up at scale.

How do you get young people to the polls? Listen to us, first. Then light the way. Forty-one per cent of the more than 208,000 young people we spoke with face-to-face across the country listed mental health as their primary concern. After this summer of devastating wildfires, and the potentiality of two more consecutive “unprecedented seasons” before we head to the polls, it’s hard to believe climate action wouldn’t continue to rank amongst the top three most critical factors affecting young people’s motivation to vote, if not topping the list. What’s missing from the polls is how anxious young people are after a smoke-saturated summer.

To reduce anxiety, foster agency. Mental health, climate action, and housing affordability are the top three issues Canadians under the age of 44 tell us they are most concerned about, and they are looking for a way to turn anxiety into action. “Having

a sense of control is important. If people feel that they’re in an uncontrollable world, they tend to get very anxious,” Dr. Steven



Parliamentary Centre
parlementaire

Canada's Global Leader for Democracy
Leader canadien pour le soutien à la démocratie



British High Commission
Ottawa

The Parliamentary Centre, in partnership with the British High Commission, celebrates **Do it For Democracy 2023** to confirm our shared commitment to supporting and advancing democracy worldwide.



Congratulations to the Rt Hon. Joe Clark, PC, CC, AOE, on receiving the 2023 “Because Democracy Matters” award. Thank you to our tremendous sponsors who have made this possible:

Presenting



Insurance



Platinum



Gold





Media Partner



News

Lighting up Centre Block is a Nelson family tradition

‘It’s a legacy project for me. I would want to do it no matter what,’ says Chris Nelson, co-owner of Etobicoke, Ont.’s Lighting Nelson & Garrett.

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Some 500 individual light fixtures hung in Centre Block before its closure for renovations at the end of 2018, and Chris Nelson and his team have catalogued them all—from the 1.5 tonne bronze and cast-iron chandeliers that adorned the Senate Chamber, to the more mundane fixtures that lit parliamentarians’ offices.

For Nelson, being part of the 100-year-old building’s renovation means carrying on something of a family tradition, as he’s likely the third generation of Nelsons to craft light fixtures for Parliament Hill, and for Centre Block in particular.

Nelson is co-owner of Lighting Nelson & Garrett Inc., an Etobicoke, Ont.-based company that’s been subcontracted by PCL/ElisDon—the joint venture serving as construction managers for the multi-billion-dollar project—to be the material specialists for lighting in Centre Block. The firm was previously tasked with manufacturing lighting fixtures for the West Block building during its seven-year, \$863-million renovation, and has made fixtures for Centre Block in the past.

The Centre Block Rehabilitation Project, which includes construction of the new underground Parliament Welcome Centre, is estimated to cost \$4.5-billion to \$5-billion, and be completed by 2031.

Lighting Nelson & Garrett is responsible for restoring and potentially recreating light fixtures throughout Centre Block as part of the project—be they high heritage (roughly 170 fixtures fit that bill) or more run-of-the-mill pieces—working closely with Centrus, the joint venture overseeing



The Senate Chamber’s massive chandeliers, each weighing 1.5 tonnes, are among the pieces that will be restored by the team at Lighting Nelson & Garrett. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

architectural and engineering services on the project.

Nelson’s work began in 2020 with cataloguing. Lots and lots of cataloguing—almost two years’ worth—to evaluate the heritage value and condition of every light fixture throughout the six-storey building, categorized in groups by type, and create a master list along with maps marking “the location of every light fixture on every floor,” explained Nelson, whose small team also wrote condition reports on each and every piece.

Through that work, Nelson came across renderings of light fixtures labelled as having been crafted by Metal Industries—the name of the custom lighting company started by his grandfather, Samuel Nelson, in 1918.

The find didn’t come as a shock to Nelson, who’d already been “strongly suspicious that there were Metal Industries fixtures” in the building, as he has old patterns for castings that match fixtures in Centre Block in his shop. Speaking with *The Hill Times*, Nelson stressed that he didn’t want to “overstate” the connection as he isn’t sure in which year the fixtures labelled as coming from Metal Industries were produced. When his grandfather wound up the business in the mid-1940s, his former partner sold the company’s name and charter to John Mills, who carried it on as Mills Metal Industries.

Metal Industries’ old equipment, however, was purchased

by Nelson’s father, Herbert, who started his own company, Colonial Lighting, in 1948 after earning a business degree upon his return from service during the Second World War. (Herbert Nelson had been stationed as an Air Force radar mechanic in Newfoundland during the war, which, his son noted, was “over-seas” at the time. Newfoundland and Labrador didn’t join Canada until 1949.) Nelson said his grandfather, Samuel, continued making lighting pieces from his own small studio after winding down Metal Industries, and later worked at his son’s business until he “was quite elderly.”

Chris Nelson grew up working in his father’s shop, and so he was part of the “first major job on the Hill for the Nelson family”: reproducing heritage lighting fixtures for the East Block during its renovation in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

“They’re still hanging there and looking good, I might add,” said Nelson.

Colonial Lighting had already produced “a few fixtures here and there” for buildings on Parliament Hill, and after the East Block contract, it went on to produce more, including “several reproduction heritage fixtures” for Centre Block, said Nelson, noting the “interesting” nature of the building as a project.

After the original building was destroyed by fire in 1916, Centre Block was rebuilt in haste in the midst of the First World War, and it wasn’t fully complete by the time it reopened for use in 1920.

“So many of the fixtures that make up the fabric of the Centre Block were not made and installed for the opening in 1920,” explained Nelson. “As a result of that, Colonial Lighting and my firm, Lighting Nelson & Garrett, have made heritage reproductions or heritage-type fixtures for the Centre Block over the last 40 years.”

Nelson co-founded his own company alongside John Garrett

in 1991, today employing 16 people. Other notable past projects for the company include restoring fixtures at Queen’s Park, home of Ontario’s provincial legislature, and Toronto’s Union Station.

Nelson said he and one other employee, Stuart Samuel, a heritage lighting and metalworking specialist, are “very heavily involved” in the company’s work on Centre Block, with “several” others involved as required.

Centre Block shut its doors at the end of 2018, but the first year was spent decommissioning its mechanical and electrical systems, and conducting the more extensive investigation work needed to determine exactly what work would be required to fix up the aging building. Heritage assets were still being carefully moved out of Centre Block by the time demolition and hazardous material abatement work (Centre Block was full of asbestos, among other things) got underway at the end of 2019.

Along with cataloguing, Nelson and his team oversaw the removal of all of Centre Block’s light fixtures, including the large, bronze and cast-iron chandeliers that hung in the Senate Chamber—in his opinion, “the two most magnificent fixtures,” not only on the Hill, but in all of Canada. Each weighing roughly 1.5 tonnes, figuring out how to safely disassemble and remove them was a bit of a “complicated jigsaw puzzle,” recalled Nelson, with only a two-dimensional drawing from the original designers to work from. “We didn’t know how it went together, so we had to somehow figure out how to take it apart,” he said.

Nelson said he was commuting from Etobicoke to Ottawa five times a week during the height of cataloging and removal efforts. With most Centre Block’s heritage assets (save for those that are being protected in place) now in storage, he’s in the capital less often, instead spending most of his time in the workshop.

About a year ago—with demolition and abatement work in full swing inside the building—Nelson got the go-ahead to start restoring Centre Block’s light fixtures. Along with condition reports, each fixture type requires a restoration plan that has to be approved by project managers. While he said it’s still unclear exactly how many fixtures will have to be recreated, “everything needs restoration.”

“There’s a very complicated architectural design process going on,” said Nelson. “I don’t think it’s at all clear yet how many things will have to be recreated. Just from my basic knowledge of the building, how many rooms there are, there’s going to be a lot of new, high-quality, decorative heritage fixtures required,” he continued, noting, for example, that many of the office suites in Centre Block had their original lighting fixtures removed and replaced by square, fluorescent ceiling fixtures during past efforts to update the building.

Among the pieces Nelson and his team have worked on so far are the chandeliers that hung in the Senate Speaker’s suites, as well as the original, “gorgeous” cast bronze globe lights that hung around Centre Block’s Rotunda, also known as Confederation Hall.

Each piece has its own restoration needs, and in some cases, Nelson and his team have put their expertise to use to undo damage done by past work, as in the case of cast-bronze spear pendant lights that also hung in the Rotunda. To make access easier for maintenance, “ugly inappropriate hinges” had been added to the pendants, explained Nelson. “We were tasked with getting rid of that hinge, making it look like it did when it was new. ... We’ve come up with a very clever way of opening the fixture to access it for service in the future—relamping, etc.—that is sensitive to the heritage history of what the fixture looked like originally.”

Even though the 1916 fire that burnt down the original building is believed to have been started by careless smoking, the practice was still allowed in Centre Block until the 1990s, when indoor smoking was banned across Ontario. In turn, lighting fixtures throughout the building bear smoke stains, which are on the list of things Nelson and his team will be tackling in the years to come.

Despite the fact that he’s of retirement age, Nelson said he has “no interest” in doing so “while this is going on.”

“It’s a legacy project for me. I would want to do it no matter what,” he said.

“Growing up with my father doing the East Block of Parliament Hill, and then having the opportunity for my company to do all the important heritage fixtures for the West Block of Parliament Hill, and now to be able to do the Centre Block is a singular honour for me, personally. But I think all of our people feel that way here.”

lryckewaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Chris Nelson, left, and Stuart Samuel in Lighting Nelson & Garrett’s workshop in Etobicoke, Ont. Photograph courtesy of Chris Nelson

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE RESEARCH

**Feds need to fund
'blue skies' research**
p. 19

**Universities are a
critical piece of
the climate-
change puzzle**
p. 22

**Lessons from
COVID-19: we
need long-term
investment in
research**
p. 20

**Closing Canada's
skills gaps starts
at the post-
secondary level**
p. 23

**Time to fix the
inequity in
Canadian research
council grants**
p. 21

**Curbing
international
students not the
answer to Canada's
housing crisis**
p. 24

Cost of living crisis is increasing need for university research supports, says NDP science critic

Canada's investment in research and development in 2020 amounted to about 1.8 per cent of its GDP—less than the 2.7 per cent average for OECD countries.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Canada's affordability crisis is making it more difficult for graduates and post-doctoral scholars in the country to keep a roof over their heads, exacerbating the years-long problem of stagnating investments in research, say science policy advocates, and the NDP's science and research critic.

"The obvious place where Canada falls down ... is for supports for the people that do the research," NDP MP Richard Cannings (South Okanagan-West Kootenay, B.C.) told *The Hill Times*. "These people are basically forced to live in poverty, and

On Aug. 29, Employment Minister Randy Boissonault announced investments of more than \$960-million through grants, scholarships, and programs, towards more than 4,700 researchers and research projects across Canada. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



they're our country's future—the future innovators of Canada. Innovation is what drives the economies around the world these days, and Canada is risking falling farther behind in that regard."

Canada's investment in research and development in 2020 amounted to about 1.8 per cent of its GDP—less than the

2.7 per cent average for member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), according to OECD data. Some of the top investor countries include Israel, which invested 5.4 per cent of its GDP in research and development in 2020, and the United States, which invested 3.45 per cent of its GDP that year.

Cannings said he considers greater investments in research to be "very low-hanging fruit" for the federal government to tackle, but the 2023 budget did not include any new support in research funding for universities. Cannings argued that without greater investments in scholarships and grants, researchers and students will be tempted to do their studies abroad.

"In the last year with inflation [and] with the housing crisis, that has really altered things. The other thing that's changed over the last 20 years, I would say, is the increase in tuition," said Cannings. "We want our young researchers to live in dignity and be able to afford to find a place to live and feed themselves, but also just to make sure that

they aren't pulled away to other countries."

To support Canada's research ecosystem, Employment Minister Randy Boissonault (Edmonton Centre, Alta.), on behalf of Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice-Champlain, Que.), announced on Aug. 29 investments of more

than \$960-million through grants, scholarships, and programs towards more than 4,700 researchers and research projects across Canada. This includes \$514-million to support more than 3,500 recipients through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Discovery Research Program.

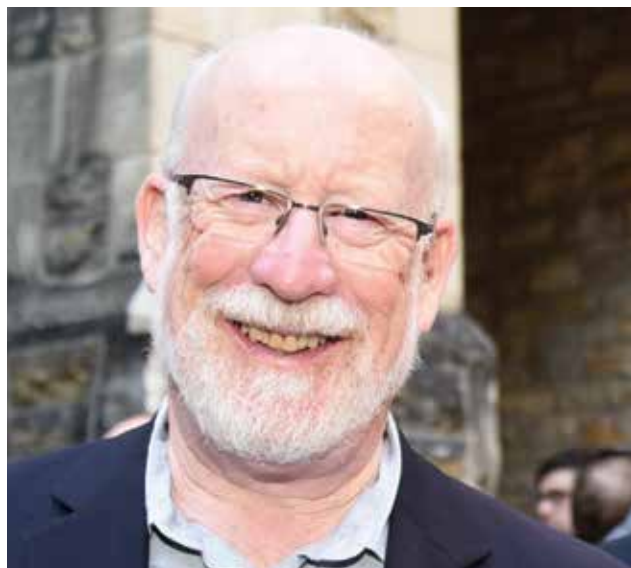
"Our government is funding the top-tier researchers and scientists whose work makes Canada a world leader in research and innovation. These projects—from reimagining teacher education with Indigenous wisdom traditions to creating equity in mental health care to researching the impacts of space radiation and weather on Earth's climate—will help transform today's ideas into tomorrow's solutions," said Boissonault in a departmental press release.

Bob Lemieux, a professor of chemistry and former dean of science at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, argued that federal government investments in research, such as the August announcement, represent "a fair bit of money," but when considering the percentage of Canada's GDP that is invested in research, "we're not doing that well."

As an example, he pointed to the changes in research and development investment between Canada and South Korea over the last 20 years. In 2000, South Korea invested 2.1 per cent of its GDP into research and development, compared to Canada, which was close behind at about 1.9 per cent, according to OECD data. However, that gap has since widened, with South Korea investing 4.8 per cent of its GDP in research and development in 2020, while Canada's percentage of investment has stayed nearly the same.

"There's been an incredible increase in investment in some of our competitor countries. The challenge here is that our economy is transitioning from being primarily a resource economy to being more and more an innovation economy," said Lemieux. "The problem is that in order to have an innovation economy you need to have a very robust research and development infrastructure

Continued on page 18



NDP MP Richard Cannings says 'we want our young researchers to live in dignity and be able to afford to find a place to live and feed themselves, but also just to make sure that they aren't pulled away to other countries.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Cynthia Münster



University of Waterloo professor Bob Lemieux says 'in order to have an innovation economy, you need to have a very robust research and development infrastructure and ecosystem, and the funding for [research and development] in Canada has just not kept up with this transition.' Photograph courtesy of Bob Lemieux



175 years of aiming higher



The University of Ottawa is building on its proud history and bilingual nature to scale new heights. Fuelled by our commitment to transformative research, we continue to elevate and mobilize knowledge, and rise to the challenge of creating a better, more inclusive world for all.



Découvrez nos
activités de recherche
et d'innovation



Discover our
research and
innovation

University and College Research Policy Briefing

Cost of living crisis is increasing need for university research supports, says NDP science critic

Continued from page 16

and ecosystem, and the funding for [research and development] in Canada has just not kept up with this transition.”

Lemieux told *The Hill Times* that the erosion in funding for research in Canada has reached a breaking point, citing increased living and housing costs as problems for graduate students and post-doctoral researchers.

“The stipends that grad students and postdocs are paid comes, in part, from research grants. If there is a stagnation in the amount of money that researchers are given, then it’s becoming increasingly difficult to adjust these stipends to account for the increase in cost of living, and the housing cost is particularly problematic,” said Lemieux. “It’s both the grants and scholarships that are underfunded, and that are limiting us from hiring graduate students and postdocs. I think the real problem here is that we’re going to be losing a lot of these students to countries like the U.S., like Germany, like [South] Korea ... who are investing increasingly large amounts of money into their [research and development] systems.”

Support Our Science, an organization that advocates for increased pay for graduate students and post-doctoral

scholars, argued that “Canada’s federal graduate scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships are not competitive,” in a Sept. 22 post on X (formerly known as Twitter). As an example, the post-doctoral fellowship from the National Science Foundation in the U.S. is valued at \$106,000, compared to fellowships offered by NSERC, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)—collectively known as the Tri-Agencies—valued at \$45,000, as noted in the post.

ISG Senator Stan Kutcher (Nova Scotia) shared the Support Our Science post on his own X account on Sept. 23, adding: “We can’t treat our young scientists who will discover the cures of tomorrow and drive the knowledge based economy of the future as if they were not worthy of our support. We can and must do better.”

Support Our Science held an advocacy week Sept. 25-29, during which supporters across Canada were encouraged to engage in actions including holding demonstrations at universities, marches to MP offices, and sending letters to political leaders. The goal was to apply pressure on Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) to include an increase in funding to graduate students and

post-doctoral scholars through federal scholarships, fellowships, and grants in the upcoming fall economic statement, or in the 2024 federal budget, according to the organization’s website.

In October 2022, the Liberal government launched an advisory panel on the federal research support system, with the goal of providing advice on how to modernize the federal funding ecosystem. The panel released a report this past March, which argued that funding for research and talent should be a top priority, citing “staggering investments” in other countries compared to stagnating investment levels in Canada.

The report, among other things, recommended an increase of at least 10 per cent annually for five years to the total base budgets of NSERC, CIHR, and SSHRC for their core grant programming.

To support innovation and scientific discoveries in Canada, Champagne announced a \$1.4-billion investment through the Canada First Research Excellence Fund on April 28 to support 11 research initiatives at universities across the country. This includes \$199-million for the University of Toronto to support work on “self-driving labs” that combine artificial intelligence, robotics, and computing to discover new materials and molecules, and \$165-million to Quebec’s McGill University for research related to genomic-based RNA therapeutics.

Chad Gaffield, CEO of the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities, told *The Hill Times* that, more than ever, Canada needs to cultivate and develop highly-qualified talent because of the new “knowledge economy” of the 21st century.

“Canada’s falling behind globally, and we can’t just think about moving the furniture around or changing the structures a bit, we really have to think about the kinds of major reinvestments. That’s key,” said Gaffield. “All the leading countries in the world are really embracing science and research as the way in which they are going to build a sustainable, resilient ... [and] prosperous society going forward. And in Canada, in the last couple of years, we have lost focus on that.”

Gaffield argued that Canada is already facing a brain drain of students leaving for countries with better scholarships and grant supports.

“Certainly, this is not to say there are no investments on our campuses. Of course not. I think we have the legacy of a quarter century of serious investments. But, just like with a garden, you can’t say, ‘Oh, well, we worked on it, previously, [and] it was really beautiful, so now we don’t have to worry about it anymore,’” he said. “We’re asking the rising generation to basically stay in Canada with a far less viable financial situation, and that’s not reasonable.”

Charmaine Dean, vice-president for research at the University of Waterloo, told *The Hill Times* in a Sept. 24 emailed statement that increasing funding for research and development at the federal level, and better leveraging industry partnerships, are important for boosting productivity and innovation in Canada. Tools such as the Canada Innovation Corporation (CIC), a national agency intended to support businesses across all sectors in innovating and commercializing intellectual property, could be useful in closing the productivity and innovation gap, but only if they are well-funded, said Dean.

Earlier this year, on Feb. 16, Freeland and Champagne released a blueprint intended to guide the CIC’s operations. The organization, which has an initial budget of \$2.6-billion over four years, is expected to begin its operations in 2023.

“We need much higher industry partnership levels. Universities like the University of Waterloo are working closely with industry in very many ways, and always searching out ways to amplify this activity or reshape to suit the needs of the various communities we serve,” said Dean in the emailed statement. “Having greater leadership on the partnership file nationally to substantially activate activity would be a key driver.”

In the emailed statement, Dean said the underfunding of graduate students and post-doctoral scholars “remains a serious impediment” to the preservation of Canada’s reputation for research excellence.

Stagnant funding for graduate students and post-doctoral scholarships in Canada has been happening for too long, and stagnant funding is effectively the same as cutting funding in an environment of high inflation and high interest rates, according to Dean.

“Students in Canada are also facing considerable headwinds for basic living costs, including food and housing, further eroding our competitive edge. We need to increase funding for graduate scholarships, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships by 50 per cent and double of the number of graduate scholarships, indexed to inflation. Simply put, without greater investments in scholarships and grants Canada will struggle to attract and retain precisely the people needed to build and support the economy

that the government envisions,” said Dean in the email. “Talent is just so critical for our industries and organizations to succeed. Talent is the key spark that will keep Canada at the forefront of innovation.”

jcnockaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Canada’s investments in research and development

- Canada’s gross domestic expenditures on research and development (R&D) rose 3.1 per cent from 2019 to \$41.9-billion (\$37.9-billion in 2012 constant prices) in 2020. This marks the fifth consecutive year that research and development spending in Canada has increased.
- Early estimates show that R&D expenditures in 2021 increased to \$42.6-billion, led by increased spending by the business enterprise sector. Spending intentions for 2022 indicate a slight increase to \$43.2-billion.
- R&D expenditures are categorized into two fields of science: natural sciences and engineering, and social sciences, humanities, and the arts. Compared with the previous year, spending on natural sciences and engineering increased \$1.1-billion to \$37.5-billion in 2020, mainly as a result of increased funding by the federal government (+\$1.1-billion to \$7.1-billion) and business enterprise sectors (+\$338-million to \$18.1-billion). Over the same period, spending on social sciences, humanities, and the arts rose \$124-million to \$4.3-billion, led by federal government funding (+\$138 million to \$1.1-billion) and higher education funding (+\$76 million to \$2.6-billion).
- On an international scale, Canada’s R&D intensity ratio of 1.8 remained below the OECD average of 2.7 — although Canada’s position rose by two spots to 17th in 2020. Similarly, within the Group of Seven countries, Canada was below the 2.6 average and remained fifth overall out of the six countries for which data are available.

Source: Gross domestic expenditures on research and development, 2020 (final), 2021 (preliminary) and 2022 (intentions), Statistics Canada, released Jan. 27, 2023.

OECD research and development statistics

- R&D expenditure among OECD member countries grew in 2021 by 4.7 per cent in inflation-adjusted terms, marking a return to pre-COVID trends after it had slowed down to two per cent growth in 2020.
- Since the 2009 global financial crisis and up until the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses have seen their share of total expenditure on R&D performance in the OECD area increase to well over three quarters, and have been leading R&D growth among member countries. After trailing other sectors in terms of R&D expenditure growth in 2020, R&D expenditures in the business sector grew by 6.3 per cent while R&D in the higher education and government sector barely increased at 0.4 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively.
- Pervasive growth in inflation-adjusted R&D expenditure in the OECD area in 2021 was led by intensified R&D growth in the United States at 5.6 per cent and Korea at 7.1 per cent, supported by a noteworthy recovery in countries like France, Germany and Japan, where R&D expenditures grew by close to three per cent after negative growth in 2020.

Source: OECD Main Science and Technology Indicators, released on March 31, 2023



U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities CEO Chad Gaffield says Canada is falling behind globally when it comes to investments in research and development, and ‘we can’t just think about moving the furniture around or changing the structures a bit.’
Photograph courtesy of U15 Group

Feds need to fund 'blue skies' research

Major scientific discoveries most often emerge from what scientists believe are important questions to explore no matter how trivial or irrelevant they may seem, rather than from the goals and directives set by other outside interests.

David
Robinson

Opinion



In 1869, the famed Irish physicist John Tyndall posed a basic, but surprisingly elusive, scientific question: why is the sky blue?

In searching for an explanation, Tyndall discovered that light is scattered in the atmosphere by dust and large air molecules in a way that causes the eye to see the colour blue. His discovery of these properties of light eventually led to the later development of several important—but wholly unanticipated—innovations, including lasers and fibre optics.

Today, “blue-sky research” is a term often used to describe basic scientific inquiry. It reflects the critical lesson learned from Tyndall. Major scientific discoveries most often emerge from what scientists believe are important questions to explore no matter how trivial or irrelevant they may seem, rather than from the goals and directives set by governments, industry, or other outside interests. Basic scientific research routinely challenges accepted thinking, leading to fundamental paradigm shifts and unexpected innovations of great importance. From the discovery of X-rays and nylon to superconductivity, medical imaging, computers, and mRNA vaccines, major scientific progress is driven by basic research without specific commercial outcomes or applications in mind.

That’s why public funding of basic research is critical, and why the federal government needs to take a stronger lead. After years of stagnant support for blue-sky research under Stephen Harper’s Conservative government, the Liberals provided significant boosts to the core operating grants of the three federal research councils. While the amount fell short of what was recommended by the government’s own expert panel, it nevertheless represented a major increase to basic discovery-driven research at Canada’s universities and colleges.

Today, that funding is winding down and what is left is being eroded by high inflation. A recent advisory panel estab-

lished by the government to review the research support system reported earlier this year that there is a pressing need for a significant increase to the base budgets of the granting councils. The so-called Bouchard report found that while Canada’s researchers have been highly successful,

Continued on page 20



The Canadian government needs to support today’s brightest minds by boosting its support for fundamental research to encourage real scientific progress that will produce long-term benefits, writes David Robinson. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



DECHINTA
Centre for Research and Learning

Dechinta.ca

@dechintacentre

Education by and for Northerners

We are dedicated to advancing Indigenous knowledge and cultural connections across the North. Our university-accredited programs offer a unique land-based learning experience rooted in community priorities and strengths.



Dechinta stands for Canada’s Northern environment and peoples. Through education and research, we empower local communities at the forefront of climate defence. Together, we must preserve Northern ecosystems and homelands.

Leading the Way in Climate Resiliency

LET’S MEET ON THE HILL

Contact us at admin@dechinta.ca to schedule a meeting in Ottawa from October 16-20. *Together, we can make a difference!*

Empowering Futures Through Research

Our commitment to Northern-led research leads to meaningful change. Dechinta’s award-winning research provides insights into Northern issues from climate change to sovereignty. Support a brighter future with research that matters.

We co-create rich educational experiences that respect Northern expertise, culture, families and community needs. Support programs and research that strengthen Northern communities and revitalize Indigenous ways of knowing and being for a better future.

Strengthening Northern Communities

University and College Research Policy Briefing

Lessons from COVID-19: we need long-term investment in research

Our universities build Canada's capacity and develop the skilled workforce needed for emergency response.

Vivek Goel

Opinion



As we head into this fall season, for most people, lockdowns and gathering restrictions seem a distant memory. We're more at ease with the knowledge of how to manage COVID-19 and the availability of vaccines specific to circulating variants. However, we cannot take for granted our current sense of ease—and we must not be quick to forget the lessons we learned from the pandemic.

One vital lesson is that our capacity to deal with emergencies includes having a strong, well-funded research infrastructure. COVID-19 showed us what long-term investment in research does for us, and how much we depend on university researchers to future-proof our country.

The role of fundamental science contributing to the development of mRNA vaccines has been well described. Research in many diverse areas over many decades was necessary. For example, in the 1980s, Dr. Pieter Cullis and colleagues at the University of British Columbia were conducting work to understand the nature of lipids. Subsequently, lipid nanoparticles were developed and became the basis for

Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland speaks to reporters in the West Block on Sept. 19. We have seen several successive federal budgets without any significant investments in science and research capacity, writes Vivek Goel. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



protecting RNA for delivery into our bodies. No one could have foreseen such a distant application of the fundamental research being conducted 40 years ago.

The many other ways our science and academic activity contributed to the pandemic response on a daily basis are less well described.

Governments across the country activated existing and new advisory groups, task forces, and committees to advise on the response, from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, to the Vaccine Task Force. Moreover, most of the individuals mobilized came from universities, research hospitals, and research institutes, and many other graduate students and post-doctoral fellows also pivoted their research

activity in order to support the pandemic emergency response.

In fact, a great many of our graduate students delayed their graduation or paused their studies to focus on supporting pandemic working groups, committees, or new research programs.

A good example of the role of academic institutions in the direct response is the case of wastewater testing. For years, the potential of wastewater testing for public health surveillance was primarily restricted to research projects. As COVID-19 spread, researchers were able to demonstrate the utility of such testing to detect changes in community activity as fast as or faster than other indicators. Researchers and labs in many different areas—such as infectious disease, genomics,

and sanitation—came together to provide this public service.

It's not just the obvious areas of science that need funding to give us the resilience we need as a nation. We need investment across all disciplines.

Humanities scholars and social scientists are also a critical part of future-proofing the country. Historians who had studied responses to the Spanish flu in 1918 helped to understand societal reactions to COVID. Psychologists and communications experts helped us understand the spread of misinformation and disinformation about vaccines. Sociologists and anthropologists helped to identify why some communities might be hesitant to accept vaccines or treatments.

The lesson here is that nobody can predict what knowledge will become critical to helping us navigate our next challenges. Nor can they claim to know exactly in which disciplines we should invest our tax dollars to guarantee a return on our investment.

To tackle these unknowns, we need sustained, long-term investment across the board in research, and particularly greater investment in our graduate students.

In the pandemic, we got used to seeing the role of public health officers, health-care workers, statisticians, epidemiologists, and many others on a regular basis. Virtually all of these individuals were educated and prepared for their roles in university-based programs. If our educational programs are not adequately funded, where will our first responders come from in the next emergency? Who will be our innovators?

And this isn't a situation where we can just maintain the status quo. According to a recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report, Canada is falling behind our peers in graduate student enrolments. Governments and the private sector need to step up and invest in research and innovation, and create opportunities for graduate students to succeed.

In Canada, we have seen several successive federal budgets without any significant investments in science and research capacity. As a public health physician, I am seeing the same patterns with science investment that we have seen with public health. Every few years, such as after SARS, there is an investment in public health, which quickly wanes as the event is forgotten. The need for science investment seems to now be permanently forgotten.

We don't know what emergency is coming next. It could be another pandemic, or a cybersecurity threat, not to mention our ongoing challenges such as climate adaptation and the current housing crisis. We need broad investment in our science capacity to ensure we are prepared for the next major emergency—whatever it may be.

Dr. Vivek Goel is president and vice-chancellor of the University of Waterloo.

The Hill Times

Feds need to fund 'blue skies' research

Continued from page 19
research-funding levels have not kept pace with demand and evolving needs. Failing to address this gap, the report warns, will reverse the progress that has been made.

Admittedly, funding blue-sky research can be tough to sell to governments. Like Tyndall's investigation into the colour of the sky, the benefits of these research projects are not neces-

sarily clear at the outset. They also often involve long time horizons that stretch beyond an election cycle. That's why governments are often tempted to target research funding to specific projects that, at first glance, might hold the promise of fostering short-term commercial innovations.

But this thinking distorts the focus of scientific research, and impedes the development of new knowledge and solutions to

pressing social problems. In the area of medical research, for instance, the obsession with commercial outcomes can encourage an emphasis on minor modifications to existing drugs and devices, rather than fundamental explorations of the causes of illness and methods of prevention. As John Polanyi, Canada's most prominent Nobel laureate, has put it, when governments try to direct scientific inquiry or pick research "winners" rather than

allowing the scientific community to do so through its rigorous peer-review system, our scientific horizons shrink.

The Canadian government needs to support today's Tyndalls by boosting its support for fundamental research to encourage real scientific progress that will produce long-term benefits. The Bouchard report recommends that, as an initial step, the government should commit to an increase

of at least 10 per cent annually for five years to the federal research councils' total base budgets for their core grant programming. It's a significant commitment, but a necessary one. As the report rightly notes, societies that invest in their research enterprise thrive while those that do not falter.

David Robinson is the executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

The Hill Times

Time to fix the inequity in Canadian research council grants

The federal government should overhaul Canada's granting agencies with an equity lens for a healthier and more robust research ecosystem that would benefit everyone.

Janet Mantler, Ivy Lynn Bourgeault & Nicole Power

Opinion



Researchers can tell you that grant proposals take a long time to develop. Primary investigators are advised to allocate at least 120 hours to prepare an application, but it often takes much longer. Other researchers on the proposal will also work many days, and community partners write letters of support. Many universities offer significant support staff to review and vet proposals.

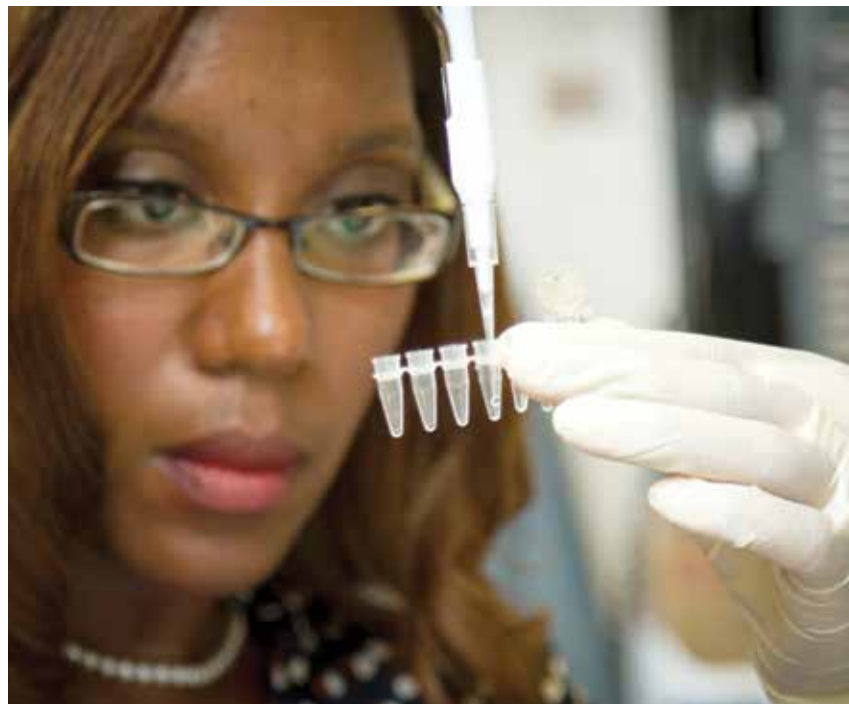
Imagine working for months on an outstanding proposal for an 80 per cent chance of failure (the current rejection rate for Canadian Institutes of Health Research grants, for example).

That's the reality in Canada today. We have no shortage of research talent, but we squander it in this vicious cycle of preparing grants year after year, resulting in months of foregoing research progress. It's not only the lack of overall research funding that's the problem, but also the systemic barriers and biases built into the funding process itself.

The federal government has a role to play in revamping how our federal research agencies allocate research funding.

Researchers with long-established programs of research tend to have higher success rates with the Canadian granting councils. At issue, scholars—many of whom are women, Indigenous, and people of colour—with new and innovative research or research at the boundaries are often overlooked. Early-career grant disparity can impede early-career research, negatively affecting their entire career, hampering the potential for groundbreaking research.

The Canadian government's three research council agencies—the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council—fund Canadian researchers to enable them to produce high-quality research. In 2019, researchers from the University of British Columbia found that women had systematically received fewer grants from NSERC, and, for those who did receive a grant, they received lower award amounts, particularly for those early in their career.



Scholars—many of whom are women, Indigenous, and people of colour—with new and innovative research or research at the boundaries are often overlooked, write Janet Mantler, Ivy Bourgeault, and Nicole Power. Photograph courtesy of Unsplash

In addition to the quality and feasibility of a research project, grant proposals are heavily weighted by the researcher's publication record in scholarly journals, the academic impact of those publications, and major prizes and awards. Service tends to be acknowledged when it is service to the discipline, such as sitting on editorial boards, rather than service within a university or in non-academic organizations, supervising students, or teaching courses.

Women and racialized researchers tend to have more university service requests

and more student supervisions, colloquially known as a "culture tax," as they are expected to represent their group.

Such academic service work takes a lot of time away from research and seldom receives credit or acknowledgement, and does not contribute to grant successes, yet is essential as we create a more diverse research stream in Canada.

It doesn't have to be this way. The federal government should overhaul Canada's granting agencies with an equity lens. Proactive equity policies stemming from

the federal government will fast track this process. The result would be a healthier and more robust research ecosystem that would benefit everyone.

Over the past few years, Canadian universities have successfully hired more diverse scholars. Now we need to ensure these scholars are supported in a way they can be successful, particularly in producing novel and useful research.

Since 2019, NSERC has made a concerted effort to mitigate bias in their system, and the success rates for men and women are more closely aligned. Such efforts need to be taken at all three research councils for women and for all equity-seeking groups.

There are ways of reducing bias that can make the current funding go further.

- The Tri-Agency granting bodies already ask applicants for their equity information; more can be done using these data to make inequities more transparent. This information could be used to develop new ways of awarding and developing scholars;

- Reviewers of grant proposals need to value scholarship that is untraditional or unconventional and to value teaching and academic service work by including these categories in the adjudication process;

- Set funding allocations specifically for all equity-seeking groups. Affirmative action policies work; and

- Granting agencies could develop a novel system of non-competitive grant allocations whereby researchers submit proposals, but instead of the complex and costly adjudication process, all high-quality applications are equally funded. Researchers would need to be accountable for the funds they receive and demonstrate they are undertaking their proposed work. The grants may be smaller but the stable and predictable funding would enable more innovative research.

Canada is looking for research innovation. We should start first with how we give out research grants. We could unleash enormous new research potential if we'd simply give equity-seeking groups a chance at the funding.

Janet Mantler is an associate professor in the psychology of work at Carleton University. Ivy Bourgeault is a University of Ottawa Research Chair in Gender, Diversity, and the Professions. Nicole Power is a full professor in the department of sociology at Memorial University.

The Hill Times

Free Subscriptions

University Affairs is Canada's most authoritative source of information about and for Canada's university community. Stay informed with breaking news, provocative commentary, and in-depth articles about university issues and trends. For over 60 years, *University Affairs* continues to be the go-to-reference for university administrators, faculty members and community stakeholders.

Abonnements gratuits

Le magazine *Affaires universitaires* est la source la plus fiable d'information destinée au milieu universitaire canadien. Demeurez au courant grâce à des nouvelles de dernière heure, des commentaires controversés et des articles de fond sur les enjeux et les tendances universitaires. Depuis plus de 60 ans, *Affaires universitaires* est une référence incontournable pour les membres de l'administration universitaire et du corps professoral, de même que pour les partenaires communautaires.



universityaffairs.ca
affairesuniversitaires.ca



University and College Research Policy Briefing

Universities are a critical piece of the climate-change puzzle

Researchers are tracking climate change impacts on our systems and infrastructure, and developing projections to help communities prepare for increases in temperature and extreme weather events.

Meric Gertler

Opinion



From forest fires to heat waves, flooding to extreme storms,

the impacts of climate change were all too real for Canadians this summer. While the fight to prevent and mitigate the effects of our warming climate may seem unwinnable, Canada's universities are playing a critical role in helping the country address the climate crisis and find solutions.

Canada's universities include more than 70 research centres and institutes, and thousands of researchers and graduate students exploring ways to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. At centres across the country, researchers are tracking climate change impacts on our systems and infrastructure, and developing projections to help communities prepare for increases in temperature and extreme weather events.

The University of Toronto, for example, hosts the Climate Positive Energy Initiative, a centre for interdisciplinary clean energy research. There, experts in science, social science, engineering, economics, and policy put their heads together to transform our energy systems. Some of the proj-

ects underway involve leveraging artificial intelligence to optimize energy efficiency in buildings, analyzing impacts of policies such as the carbon tax, and exploring how bacteria can help consume or recycle waste.

Such research centres exist across Canada, from the University of Victoria's Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium in the West to the University of Prince Edward Island's Canadian Centre for Climate Change and Adaptation in the East.

Universities are also key partners in supporting resiliency and adaptation efforts in their local communities. Many are working closely with municipal governments, local industry, community organizations, and with each other to handle climate-related emergencies and help mitigate the impacts of future crises.

The Concordia University-led UNIVER/CITY 2030 initiative, for instance, brings together the City of Montreal and Montreal-based universities to map climate research capacity, develop a common research and develop-

ment agenda, develop a climate data centre, create a local school for hands-on learning related to climate action, and foster other forms of municipal-level systems change.

Schools, such as the University of Calgary and the University of Saskatchewan, are making an impact on climate by transforming their campuses into living labs. This type of research, conducted in practical, everyday conditions, accelerates the response to climate change by bringing together industry, scientists, students, and other stakeholders to co-develop, test, and assess sustainable technologies and practises.

For example, at Queen's University, academic experts are working with industry partners to reduce emissions from concrete production, one of the highest carbon dioxide-producing industries. The team is developing a low-environmental-impact structure to be used in future classrooms as a living lab to educate students.

Such living-lab projects provide the next generation of

students and researchers with the skills to succeed in a greener, low carbon economy. And they complement universities' important initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of their own operations. For example, U of T's Project LEAP will reduce greenhouse gas emissions on our St. George campus by 60 per cent before the end of this decade.

Universities are playing a critical role in addressing and preparing for the impacts of climate change, but it is clear more needs to be done. To support this work, Universities Canada, the national association representing 97 universities across the country, recently launched its new initiative, Canada's Universities: Action for Net Zero. This brings a co-ordinated, national approach to universities' climate work.

Canada's universities are doing critical work to address the climate crisis. But to move the needle further, the federal government must make significant investments in university climate research and action, and ensure that universities are eligible for funding programs that help them accelerate their own emissions reductions. Canada's universities are deploying their research talent and expertise to meet the climate crisis head-on.

Meric Gertler is the chair of Universities Canada's board of directors.

The Hill Times

More than a sleepy bureaucratic town, Ottawa is shaping up to be a vibrant life sciences research hub

Ottawa's post-secondary institutions and hospital-affiliated research institutes employ more than 6,500 researchers and clinicians, attracting more than \$380-million in research funding each year.

Sylvain Charbonneau

Opinion



On Sept. 28, the University of Ottawa will mark the official opening of its new life sciences

complex, a home for the faculty of health sciences. The \$130-million smart facility, with its cutting-edge laboratories and experiential simulation centres, will support life-changing discovery and smarter, more collaborative care.

The inauguration also marks the next milestone in uOttawa's new era as a health research powerhouse—one that will reap benefits for Canada and the world.

Ottawa has a reputation for being a sleepy bureaucratic town, but our National Capital Region is actually home to a thriving life sciences ecosystem, and the University of Ottawa is determined to build on it.

Our city's health sciences ecosystem, which is too often overlooked, represents more than 6,000 people employed in more than 140 companies in the life and health sciences, including the biotech-pharma, digital health, and medtech sectors. Ottawa's post-secondary institutions and hospital-affiliated research institutes employ more than 6,500 researchers and clinicians,

attracting more than \$380-million in research funding each year. Altogether, the economic impact of the health sector is more than \$2-billion annually.

As anyone who has visited an emergency room knows—and as the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians recently made clear to the deputy ministers of health—Canada needs more “innovative, integrated and effective approaches to health-care delivery.”

The University of Ottawa's life sciences research community is ready to meet that challenge.

Already, the university is among the top five research-intensive schools in the country. Our faculty of medicine ranks among the top three nationally for research intensity, and Ottawa is the fourth-largest hub for clinical trials in Canada.

Now, with the new cutting-edge facilities at Health Sciences Pavilion that promote an environment for interdisciplinary research, students and researchers will have everything they need to break down the silos

that permeate today's health-care culture.

Last spring, the federal government recognized uOttawa's commitment to biomedical research by investing \$109-million in the Brain-Heart Interconnectome. This initiative explores the intimate connections between the heart and the brain, helping researchers discover how conditions like heart failure and memory loss are intertwined, but treatable. That's one more way we're breaking down those silos.

In the coming months, the university will break ground on the Advanced Medical Research Centre (AMRC), which will anchor the Brain-Heart Interconnectome and the Canadian Pandemic Preparedness Hub, two major pan-Canadian research initiatives.

It will also house the Ottawa Health Innovation Hub, which will facilitate access to venture capital, incubate entrepreneurs and accelerate commercialization to better patient care.

The AMRC—considered the largest single investment in the

university's history—will attract and retain the best and brightest leaders in biomedical research, and support their spinoff companies. It will also support uOttawa's expansion of clinical trials and vaccine manufacturing capacity, a hole in our healthcare system that the global pandemic viscerally underscored.

With the research and development carried out by the Centre for Infection, Immunity and Inflammation, and the Coronavirus Variants Rapid Response Network—also led from the new centre—Canada will be better prepared to respond to future pandemics.

It's not hard to imagine the incalculable gains for individuals and families from these investments if our researchers are successful in developing vaccines that prevent death and chronic illness from new variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus or if they reverse the memory loss of a parent who suffered a heart attack.

These major investments demonstrate uOttawa's fierce commitment to advancing research and innovation in the life sciences. As we build momentum for this new era of life sciences research in Ottawa, we invite private and public partners to join us in our commitment to research excellence that saves lives.

Sylvain Charbonneau is the vice-president of research and innovation at the University of Ottawa.

The Hill Times

Policy Briefing **University and College Research**

International mobility experiences ensure students learn global skills before they enter the workforce. Yet Canadian students are statistically less likely than their G7 peers to participate, writes Denise Amyot. Photograph courtesy of Unsplash

Closing Canada's skills gaps starts at the post-secondary level

As the nature of work changes, learning experiences outside the classroom—and outside the country—are now more relevant than ever.

Denise Amyot

Opinion



Planning for and responding to skills needs across an economy as diverse and broad as Canada's is a difficult task. As much as we need qualified tradespeople and health-care workers, we also need early childhood educators, software developers, and entrepreneurs to help our economy grow in the face of change. To add to the challenge, the global nature of the world makes our national skills map increasingly complex. Canadian employers now need workers with the right mix of job-related and global skills more than ever.

Colleges and institutes have always focused on employer-driven skills training. In fact, they offer more than 10,000 programs, each developed with direct input from industry to ensure that learning objectives align with employer expectations.

Study- and work-abroad experiences complete the other half of the equation. When we talk about global skills, we mean skills that are common across professionals, like the ability to communicate well, collaborate with others, and adapt to changing circumstances. International-mobility experiences ensure students learn these skills before they enter the workforce. Yet Canadian students are statistically less likely than their G7 peers to participate. In a global world, that puts them at a disadvantage. Programs like Global Skills Opportunity (GSO) can fill the gap.

Funded by Employment and Social Development Canada and administered jointly by Colleges and Institutes Canada and Universities Canada, GSO makes international-learning experiences more accessible to Canadian post-secondary students. Through the program, colleges, institutes, and universities organize and implement study- and work-abroad opportunities that ensure their students acquire the global skills

employers want and the Canadian economy needs.

For example, International Mobility Supporting Indigenous Entrepreneurs, a GSO-funded project from Sault College in Ontario, gives Indigenous students the opportunity to enhance technical and analytical skills, and apply their knowledge in a practical ecosystem with Indigenous students and entrepreneurs in the Yucatan region of Mexico. The skills potential of such an opportunity is incalculable—especially for groups that are traditionally underrepresented in the Canadian workforce and in postsecondary education.

GSO leverages the strength of a network of more than 250 post-secondary institutions to ensure that up to 11,000 Canadian students over four years—especially those for whom such experiences have traditionally been less accessible—aren't left behind in a global competitive workforce.

So far, more than 5,000 students—75 per cent of whom identify as a member of a traditionally underrepresented group—have completed a GSO-funded international study or work experience in one of more than 100 countries. Of that group, 64 per cent identify as a low-income student, 18 per cent as a student with a disability, and 13 per cent as an Indigenous student.

Addressing labour market challenges starts with post-secondary institutions. It always has. But as the nature of work changes, education must change with it. Learning experiences outside the classroom—and outside the country—are now more relevant than ever.

Study- and work-abroad experiences, like those made possible with funding from Global Skills Opportunity, expose students to new environments, challenges, and ways of thinking, helping them learn the skills, confidence, and an appreciation for diversity. They are also a key component of the Government of Canada's International Education Strategy.

In fact, when asked to assess the skills they gained during GSO-funded experiences, students identified adaptability, collaboration, networking, problem-solving, language capacity, and communication among the top—all of which align with the federal government's Skills for Success, a framework that identifies nine skills needed to participate and thrive in learning, work, and life.

Canada needs a permanent stream of globally competitive talent. That means permanent funding for programs like GSO that not only benefit students and employers, but also help learning institutions increase their capacity to deliver safe, enriching, and accessible international study- and work-abroad opportunities now and in the future.

With funding to ensure sustainability and growth, GSO can continue its success and equip more workers for success and deepen person-to-person global ties. The more Canadians engage around the world, the more they bring new skills home. The vitality of our workforce depends on it.

Denise Amyot has served as president and CEO of Colleges and Institutes Canada since 2013. She currently sits on two international boards (Qatar Foundation and World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics), and on three national boards. She also previously served on the Government of Canada's Future of Skills Council.

The Hill Times

AI is not intelligent and needs regulation now

The iterative nature of artificial intelligence means that without meaningful regulation, it will become easier for the average person to have the power to cause very serious public harm, should they so wish.

Rhonda McEwen

Opinion



The word "intelligence" has no place in what we now ubiquitously refer to as "artificial intelligence."

The term was coined in the 1950s, at a time when we were only beginning to explore whether one could distinguish between human interaction with another human or with a computer. This describes the basic tenants of Alan Turing's test, and it became both an idea and a challenge for scientists. The use of the word "intelligence" was a provocation or a simplification; however, it has had a lasting effect on the field. Today, when presented with information from an AI-generated tool, it is often noted that machines are doing what humans can do. True, yet at the moment, it is less about intelligence and more about fast pattern recognition: computation using predictions of what best follows the pattern based on millions of examples. It does correctly indicate that humans are mostly predictable. Mostly.

And this is where the benign ends. These tools are reaching a sophistication that can make what we see and hear online hard to perceive. If you have seen the deepfakes of former American secretary of state Hillary Clinton, a Democrat, endorsing Republican Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, or the one of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy surrendering, you will appreciate that while low-level pattern recognition is not intelligence, it can be damaging. With the increase in claims of foreign interference and election manipulation, there

Continued on page 25

University and College Research Policy Briefing



While the issues around housing are complex, it's clear that any resolution will need to include creating more housing, and McMaster is already contributing significantly, write Steve Hranilovic, Bonny Ibhawoh, and Sean Van Koughnett. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Curbing international students not the answer to Canada's housing crisis

It would be harmful to address the housing shortage by curtailing the number of international scholars studying at our universities, especially when they contribute so much to our society.

Steve Hranilovic,
Bonny Ibhawoh &
Sean Van Koughnett

Opinion



Some believe that welcoming international students to study at Canadian universities is contributing significantly to Canada's housing crisis.

It is not.

The shortage of affordable housing—while certainly a serious concern—is a complex societal problem, and it certainly

isn't limited to communities with universities.

It's critical for everyone to understand it would be harmful to address this problem by curtailing the number of international scholars studying at our universities, especially when they contribute so much to our society, and when institutions such as McMaster University are busy doing their part by creating more living spaces for domestic and international students.

The international educational landscape and global quest for top talent is increasingly competitive, and it is vital for Canada and our future prosperity that we continue to make it clear that our country is a welcoming destination for highly qualified international students.

Both domestic and international students are vital to McMaster and other universities. Students who come from other countries make our communities and campuses richer, and what they learn here in Canada helps them make positive contributions both here and abroad.

International students bring diverse perspectives that enrich the classroom experiences of all students, and they strengthen our world-class research.

More concretely, they contribute meaningfully to Canada's

innovation output, boosting our economies and industries, which helps all of us.

International students also contribute directly to our communities through placements in hospitals and other health-care settings, and in public institutions and private companies, developing next-generation technologies and conducting community-based research that improves life for everyone here.

It's also critical to differentiate between public universities, such as McMaster, and other types of institutions, whose mandates and priorities are different.

Canadian universities are global institutions that both contribute to and benefit from international scholarship and research. Finding solutions to global challenges such as the climate crisis and pandemics requires international collaboration.

Just as McMaster and other Canadian universities welcome students from abroad, we also help to place students in countries all over the world through our exchange programs, which allows them to learn and do research internationally. If we want other countries to continue welcoming Canadian students, Canada also needs to welcome international students.

International students who come here are highly motivated to do well and to contribute to our communities. What they learn at our universities benefits not only Canada, but for those who return to their home countries, it also helps the communities where they live and work after graduating.

While the issues around housing are complex, it's clear that any resolution will need to include creating more housing, and McMaster is already contributing significantly.

In a time of unprecedented demand for high-quality education, our university has been busy developing new housing to make it easier for both our domestic and international students to find the accommodation they need, and for McMaster to be able to guarantee residence spaces for all first-year students who want them.

Our university already guarantees housing for all first-year international students.

At the same time, we're also responding to the demand for spaces for graduate students. Earlier this month, McMaster opened a family-friendly graduate residence that will feature space for 644 people in total, including international graduate students.

On campus, we are eager to begin construction on our largest

residence project to date: Lincoln Alexander Hall, where nearly 1,400 more students will live starting in 2026.

With 500 new beds for undergrads in the Peter George Centre for Living and Learning, which opened on campus in 2019, in the space of seven years, McMaster will have created 2,500 new residence spaces—all of them open to international and domestic students alike.

This makes McMaster a leader among Canadian universities in creating new housing for students, and we will continue to make new housing a priority as we move into the future.

Though these initiatives are significant, it's important to remember that the total number of international students studying at McMaster is still relatively small, especially when considered as part of Hamilton, Ont.'s overall population of about 600,000.

McMaster's 6,400 international students are part of a total student body of 37,000.

Our international students have had an opportunity to choose anywhere in the world to study, and we are proud they have chosen McMaster, just as other universities are proud to welcome international students to their campuses.

We hope all Canadians continue to welcome them to our great country.

Steve Hranilovic is vice-provost and dean of graduate studies at McMaster University, where he is also a professor of electrical and computer engineering. Bonny Ibhawoh is vice-provost, international affairs, at McMaster University, where he is also a professor of history and global human rights. Sean Van Koughnett is associate vice-president (students and learning) and dean of students at McMaster University.

The Hill Times

Are Canadians suffering a crisis of trust?

A new scholarly network will explore how engineers, scientists, and researchers can find ways of embedding trust into the technologies they are currently building.

Mary Wells

Opinion



The rising trend of “fake news” came to prominence over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as people turned to social media channels to read and distribute information that often fell far short of offering reliable information or verifiable data. The unchecked spread of misinformation led to serious harm for many individuals, especially those who decided to forgo scientifically proven treatments to combat the novel coronavirus.

It’s time we find ways to combat the growing tide of disinformation. We need governments, the research community, private industry, and citizens to come together and create innovative policies and practices to ensure that existing and new technologies don’t come with unintended harms.

I doubt the engineers who first built those social media platforms were aware of how their products could one day be weaponized in campaigns of damaging—and deadly—misinformation. We need to find a way to bridge the gap between the people who design and build new technologies, and the public who are the users of those technologies.

At the University of Waterloo, we looked at several surveys that measured how Canadians’ trust in science, academia, health, technology, and government has changed over the years. While there have been relatively few surveys measuring trust in science, the most consistent trend we’ve found is that trust in most individuals and institutions—especially the government—rose during the beginning of the pandemic, but has since waned back to near pre-pandemic levels.

A report published in January by the Council of Canadian Academies, an Ottawa-based indepen-

dent research organization, found that misinformation related to the spread of COVID-19 resulted in the loss of at least 2,800 lives, and led to \$300-million in hospital expenses over nine months of the pandemic.

Are Canadians suffering a crisis of trust across institutions? The data is troubling enough to spur me and some of my colleagues into action.

We cannot afford to sit on the sidelines and let the trust that Canadians have in science and academic institutions continue to erode. That’s why we created the Trust in Research Undertaken in Science and Technology Scholarly Network (TRuST), alongside my Waterloo colleagues, Nobel laureate Donna Strickland and Canada Research Chair Ashley Mehlenbacher.

TRuST is the first multidisciplinary research network of its kind in Canada, and aims to combat the growing trend of disinformation to better understand why some people deny, doubt, or resist scientific findings and explanations.

TRuST will explore how engineers, scientists, and researchers can find ways of embedding trust into the technologies they are currently building. We hope this can lead to further considerations of the intended, as well as the un-



We need to come together and create innovative policies and practices to ensure that existing and new technologies don’t come with unintended harms, writes Mary Wells. *Unsplash photograph by Arif Riyanto*

intended, consequences of what those technologies can do.

It won’t be easy, but researchers and governments need to work together and think about how policy can help shape how we consider future technologies and online tools to prevent the spread of damaging misinformation.

New pharmaceuticals have to undergo rigorous study and clinical trials before they are brought to market. This is a measured approach that could be adopted when considering introducing new technologies into the wild. Before a company launches a new technological product into the marketplace, it could undergo a series of trials with a small group of people to identify whether any unintended issues come to light that could be addressed before allowing it to be expanded to more people.

Another approach could be for governments—in partnership with industry, non-profits, and academia—to introduce a series of ethical standards to which all technology companies would have to adhere if they want to

make their products available to the public. This method builds upon the work that Waterloo professor and founding director of the Critical Media Lab, Marcel O’Gorman, has done, alongside the innovation hub Communitech and the Rideau Hall Foundation, to create a set of guiding principles that advises governments, businesses, and organizations to use technology for the good of humanity.

While these suggestions may appear to go against the grain of conventional thinking, we need to begin—and continue—this conversation of how to regain trust across science and technology.

We have already seen how the risks of avoiding this direct approach have created an environment of distrust toward researchers, scientists, and policymakers in this post-pandemic period. Tackling this challenge now is critical to ensure that future ideas and technological advances won’t suffer a similar fate.

Mary Wells is the dean of engineering at the University of Waterloo.

The Hill Times

AI is not intelligent and needs regulation now

Continued from page 23

are dangerous implications for our world as these technologies mature. AI is destabilizing the foundation of the trust we rely on to secure societies built on democratic values and human rights.

Researchers and scientists are saying that the time has come and is indeed overdue to legislatively regulate AI to halt the further erosion of foundational principles in our world. Many will bristle and suggest that legislation will limit the creative potential of the technology or limit free speech; however, the Canadian

Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is an example of how impactful regulation can protect against public harm from what can often feel like the Wild West. My warnings join a chorus of voices, many of whom, like me, work in Canadian universities focused on harnessing this technology for benevolent purposes.

Like AI, human intelligence is iterative, and is built on data inputs: information. However, the human brain processes the data in a way that also reflects understandings of context, subtext, and perspective—features that

AI lacks. The absence of context, and therefore moral frameworks, in AI make it a very efficient tool in the hands of those who want to cause harm, curb human rights and democracies, and commit crimes. While in the early 1990s the drive for internet innovation led to a choice to forego regulation and tread lightly on policy—the opposite of how we managed radio, television, journalism, and film media—even the more reticent among us are saying that it is time to revisit this choice.

Canadian political and bureaucratic leaders can rely on

our leading academics focused in this area to help create a regulatory framework that not only serves as a beacon globally, but also as a catalyst for meaningful change. It may seem daunting in a world where global leaders regularly use AI to suppress and abuse their own citizens, but this is an area in which Canadians are well equipped to make a difference through well-established and highly respected diplomatic channels.

The risk of not acting now is, as leading academics have already noted, taking us on a very precarious path across the broad spectrum of human life. The iterative nature of AI means that without meaningful regulation, it will become easier for the average person to have the power to cause very serious public harm, should they so wish.

In keeping with early global leadership in the development of AI and machine learning,

Canadian universities are advancing the application of AI in areas such as health care, basic science, computational analytics, manufacturing, and financial services that will have a transformational impact, driving innovation and economic growth. However, regulation in these promising areas will ensure that that the hoped-for outcomes are fulfilled. History has shown us that some of the most promising discoveries and innovations can cause harm in the absence of regulation.

Dr. Rhonda N. McEwen is the president of Victoria University in the University of Toronto, and Canada Research Chair in Tactile Interfaces, Communication, and Cognition. McEwen is an expert on emerging technologies, and is co-editor and contributing author of the recently published SAGE Handbook of Human-Machine Communication.

The Hill Times

News

Sikh Community seeks justice, protection amid India-Canada tensions over killing of B.C. Sikh leader

Liberal MP Sukh Dhaliwal, who represents the riding where Hardeep Singh Nijjar was killed, says Canada 'cannot sacrifice our sovereignty' or allow another country to dictate what Canadians can say on Canadian soil.



Liberal MP Randeep Sarai, left, Conservative MP Tim Uppal, and Liberal MP Sukh Dhaliwal have said they're looking for answers after hearing of the Indian government's alleged involvement in the death of a Canadian Sikh leader this past June. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and screenshot courtesy of ParIVu

Continued from page 1
is fundamental," Dhaliwal said in a Sept. 22 interview.

Additionally, Dhaliwal said the Sikh community in his riding and across Canada is grateful Trudeau confirmed their fears over transnational repression by the Indian government.

On June 22, Dhaliwal was among seven members of his party's Sikh caucus who met with then-public safety minister Marco Mendicino (Eglinton-Lawrence, Ont.) to alert the minister that the leaders of Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara, where Nijjar served as president and in whose parking lot the fatal shooting occurred, believed the government of India was involved in the killing, and that members did not feel safe following the murder.

According to witness accounts and a video recording reviewed by *The Washington Post*, at least six men and two vehicles were involved in Nijjar's killing.

At the beginning of July, gurdwara secretary Gurmeet Singh Toor filed a federal e-petition, sponsored by Dhaliwal, asking the government to launch an investigation and "unveil the real motive and hands behind this gruesome murder."

Dhaliwal estimated that while he was in his riding over the summer, nearly every second Sikh constituent he spoke to raised suspicions India was involved in Nijjar's killing.

Along with demonstrating to Canada's Sikh community that the government is committed to keeping them safe, Dhaliwal also commended the prime minister

for making the announcement despite the fact that Canada's allies wouldn't want to pick a fight with a rising superpower like India.

"The prime minister has taken that key role and said, clearly, the involvement of the government [of India] in the killing of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty," Dhaliwal said. "We cannot sacrifice our sovereignty or allow another nation to tell us how to do things internally; the government of India tried to bully, but you cannot bully Canada."

Liberal MP Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, B.C.) told *The Hill Times* that when he heard Trudeau make the allegations, he was "shocked and optimistic at the same time."

"The shocking part was that another country would do an extrajudicial hit on a Canadian on Canadian soil; that was very disturbing," Sarai said. "The relieved part was that the RCMP and the law enforcement agencies were working very seriously on this and gathering credible evidence towards resolving it."

Sarai said that, as a "Surrey-ite" and an MP for a riding adjacent to where the murder took place, he and many of his constituents had been concerned that no one would ever be caught, or that law enforcement would never "get to the bottom of this."

"The fact that the RCMP and the law enforcement agencies were working so well and that

they had found credible evidence gave them this little sense of relief that they're being taken seriously, particularly the Sikh community who was very, very, very concerned," Sarai explained. "They were very relieved that the prime minister called it out, and also demanded co-operation from the Indians."

Sarai explained that from "Day 1" following Nijjar's death, the Sikh community had suspected the Indian government's involvement, and said it was very meaningful for the government to announce it had found credible evidence to support those suspicions.

"It was very relieving to them to hear that their suspicions were true, and that they have a government strong enough to call it out," Sarai explained, adding that the community has also long suspected that Canadian and western governments have avoided doing so due to India's strategic and economic importance.

While the recent allegations may have reassured the Sikh community that Canada's intelligence agencies have at least been monitoring the situation in recent years, Sarai said that, in hindsight, "it feels like there should have been a stronger response against this" prior to last week.

"This is an unprecedented act of foreign interference of the highest type," Sarai said, noting that even with the extensive and repressive actions of the govern-

ment of China, he was unaware of either that government or any other having ever been accused of assassinating a Canadian on Canadian soil.

That's why Sarai said he believes that India should be "put on top of the list" of governments that should be examined alongside China in the upcoming public inquiry into foreign interference.

"This is extremely alarming and a very heightened level of interference which has not been done by anyone else," Sarai explained. "So I think this should be on the very top of any inquiry, and the top of any investigation and prevention with respect to foreign interference in the future."

Speaking in the House of Commons on Sept. 25, Conservative deputy leader Tim Uppal (Edmonton-Mill Woods, Alta.) offered his condolences to Nijjar's family, noting that he had done so in person to Nijjar's son shortly after the "assassination of a Canadian on Canadian soil."

Uppal called on the RCMP to conduct a full investigation, and for the Indian government to "act with utmost transparency" as the allegations represent "an outrageous affront to Canada's sovereignty."

"Canadians must be kept safe from extrajudicial killings of all kinds, most of all from foreign governments," Uppal told the House of Commons, adding that if the Conservatives' Bill S-237 calling for the creation of a foreign

agency registry had been adopted by the government when it was proposed in 2021, "foreign agents working to intimidate influence and even assassinated Canadian citizen could have been stopped."

Uppal's office did not respond to *The Hill Times*' request for comment.

'Khalistan is not a bad word': World Sikh organization calls on feds to push back on India's 'disinformation campaign'

Balpreet Singh, legal counsel and spokesperson for the World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO), told *The Hill Times* that Trudeau's statement linking the Indian government to the killing had been a validation of the Canadian Sikh community's long-held suspicions of the Indian government interfering in Canada and targeting Sikh dissidents.

"That's huge for us," Singh said in an interview on Sept. 25. "But what we're seeing coming from India is very disappointing."

Singh explained that it appears as if India's government has taken an adversarial turn against Canada, while simultaneously kicking its anti-Sikh disinformation campaign into "high gear," a reaction he said was disappointing from a country that prides itself as "the biggest democracy in the world."

That reputation as the world's largest democracy has, for decades, made other democracies like Canada reluctant to challenge India on allegations of interference, said Singh, adding that while Trudeau's announcement may have come as a shock to many Canadians, "this isn't a new story for [Sikhs]."

While the allegations may be surprising to non-Sikh Canadians, Singh said he encourages those Canadians to take a look at what he described as the Indian government's "authoritarian trajectory" over the course of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure.

"You have a far-right Hindutva government in power, which is imposing a Hindu identity on all Indians and has made no qualms about attacking minority communities," Singh explained, noting that Modi served as chief minister of Gujarat during the deadly 2002 riots, which left nearly 1,000 people dead—most of them Muslim.

In January, Modi's government blocked the airing of a BBC documentary about those riots, which revealed a United Kingdom government report indicating the events had "all the hallmarks of an ethnic cleansing." In 2005, Modi was denied United States visa privileges because of the American government's "very serious doubts that remain and that hang over Modi relative to his role in the horrific events of 2002 in Gujarat."

Singh added that, in terms of press freedom, India has also slid further and further towards authoritarianism, noting that the *Reporters Without Borders*' World

Continued on page 31

Speaker Rota resigns after parliamentary ovation for Nazi veteran leaves international 'black eye' on Canada, say observers

A new Speaker of the House will be elected after Sept. 27, in the wake of Anthony Rota's resignation amid the fallout from his invitation and recognition of a former member of an SS division in the House Chamber on Sept. 22.

Continued from page 1

Ukrainians from a region in present-day western Ukraine and southeastern Poland. Rota said Hunka was a "Ukrainian hero, a Canadian hero, and we thank him for his service," and added that he "fought for independence against the Russians."

The Waffen-SS was denoted as a criminal organization during the Nuremberg trials, and the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division victimized Jews and Poles, including participating in the Huta Pieniacka massacre during which an estimated 500-1,500 Poles were killed. High-ranking Nazi and Holocaust architect Heinrich Himmler gave a speech to the division in 1944, as reported by *The Forward*.

Rota announced his resignation from the role as the 37th Speaker of the House on Sept. 26, effective at the end of the sitting day on Sept. 27. "This House is above any of us," Rota told the House, apologizing again for Hunka's recognition.

Following the ovation for Hunka, Polish Ambassador to Canada Witold Dzielski posted on X (formerly Twitter) calling for an apology. Rota apologized and took full responsibility for the incident in a Sept. 24 statement and in the House on Sept. 25, remarking: "I particularly want to extend my deepest apologies to Jewish communities in Canada and around the world."

The episode made headlines across the world, including in the BBC, *The New York Times*, and Fox News. The Russian government has also used the incident to



On Sept. 22, MPs and Senators give a standing ovation to Yaroslav Hunka, a former member of Nazi Germany's 14th Waffen-SS Grenadier Division. Screenshot courtesy of CBC

continue its long-standing propagandist claim linking Nazism and the Ukrainian government.

"It is a disastrous moment for Canada and a huge black eye, not just for us domestically, but in the eyes of the world as well," said Garry Keller, a former chief of staff to then-Conservative foreign affairs minister John Baird.

Keller, now vice-president of StrategyCorp, said the incident has thrown "complete chaos" into Zelenskyy's attempt to shore-up support in Canada and the United States, remarking that the Russians have "clearly seized" on it through "propaganda and disinformation," as have other opponents of the war effort.

Government House Leader Karina Gould (Burlington, Ont.) said on Sept. 25 that the incident was "deeply embarrassing for Canada." NDP House Leader Peter Julian (New Westminster-Burnaby, B.C.) added that it put the House of Commons in "disrepute."

University of Ottawa professor Roland Paris, a former foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), posted on X that while he was glad Rota gave an apology, the incident was "so egregious" and "so injurious" to Canada, Parliament, Ukraine, and Jews around the world that the House Speaker had to resign.

Former senior diplomat Artur Wilczynski posted on X that Rota is "responsible for the brutal error in judgment," but noted that there

was a "was a systemic failure in screening during a key state visit."

"Fixing these failures rests with PCO [Privy Council Office], GAC [Global Affairs Canada], and security agencies. The consequences are significant & affect domestic and diplomatic interests," he said.

The NDP and Bloc Québécois called for Rota to resign on Sept. 25. The Liberals, Conservatives, and Green Party joined the call the next day.

That call for Rota's resignation was echoed by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, a Holocaust education advocacy group. While calling for Rota to step down, the Conservative Party has also alleged that the Liberal government failed to properly vet Hunka.

Dzielski told *The Hill Times* in a phone interview on Sept. 26 that he wanted to see Rota's Sept. 25 commentary with the apology to be "corrected" to highlight the role Poles had as victims of the Waffen-SS unit, alongside Jews.

"Including the Jewish communities [in the apology] is appropriate, but it does not present the full picture," he said. "It is important to say that [victims] were ethnic Poles and ethnic Jews in German-occupied Polish territory and both of these ethnic groups were Polish citizens."

In his Sept. 26 resignation announcement, Rota highlighted "that public recognition [of Hunka] has caused pain to

individuals and communities including the Jewish community in Canada and around the world, in addition to survivors of Nazi atrocities in Poland, among other nations."

Liberal MP Irek Kusmierczyk (Windsor-Tecumseh, Ont.) told the Chamber on Sept. 25 that the presence of Hunka in the gallery was "deeply hurtful to Polish Canadians and to Poles."

Dzielski said that it is not necessary that an apology come from the Canadian government, as the recognition of Hunka was from Rota, and he has already apologized.

He played down any effect the episode would have on the Canada-Poland relationship, remarking that Canadian authorities reacted afterwards in a "responsible way" and there was an apology given. He said with the inclusion of Poles and the Polish community in the commentary that followed the apology, the incident from his perspective would be over.

Dzielski, who was not in the House Chamber during Zelenskyy's speech, told *The Hill Times* that he was scheduled to meet with GAC on Sept. 26 regarding the incident.

He said he was planning to provide GAC with information on the topic, so both sides are "all on the same page."

"This is something that requires clarification, just to make sure that we are on the same page," he said.

At the same time, Polish Education Minister Przemysław Czarnek said in a post on X that he has "taken steps towards the possible extradition" of Hunka to Poland.

Dzielski noted that extradition proceedings will come only after an investigation from the National Institute of Remembrance.

"If this moves forward it would need to be a lengthy process one way or the other," he said. "[It's] very complicated because history is not easy."

He said the timeline could be quickened if a file has previously been started regarding Hunka's case.

He said an extradition would depend on "multiple factors" from the internal investigation, to a decision from Polish historians if extradition should be requested, and a political decision. He added that isn't a topic he would raise with GAC officials during his meeting, but remarked the Canadian side might raise it.

Macdonald-Laurier Institute senior fellow Marcia Kolga, who specializes in Russia and Eastern European politics, said the "real problem" is that Hunka's appearance in the House Chamber hands Russian propagandists a "huge victory."

He said there is a need to remain vigilant that the narrative being amplified by Russia and those opposed to supporting Ukraine are being rejected.

"All politicians of all stripes should be rejecting this narrative to ensure that Ukrainians and Canadians of Ukrainian heritage aren't being impacted but it, but also to ensure that this history

isn't manipulated by Russian propagandists."

"What this situation has basically served is to distract a lot of Canadians from the real problems that President Zelenskyy did try to bring up in his excellent speech on Friday, which is the genocidal war that Russia is engaged in Ukraine."

Kolga said the Canadian government needs to review its vetting process regarding who is able to attend when a world leader speaks in Parliament, and who is being recognized.

"I hope that over the next few days we can get some answers from the government as to how a member of the Waffen SS unit was able to be recognized in the House of Commons, but then we can refocus on the task at hand to help defend Ukraine against this genocidal war," he said.

Keller said parliamentary protocol doesn't have the capabilities and access to security services to be able to vet every single name that may attend a speech.

"They need to rely on the government to provide those services and work closely with them," he said. "In a situation like this, parliamentary protocol doesn't operate in a vacuum. They have to work with the RCMP. They have to work with Ottawa Police. They have to work with the Parliamentary Protective Service."

"The government has a lot of questions to ask about the role it has played, if any, in vetting any names," he said. "At the same time, there's always a bit of deference shown to the Speaker."

Former diplomat Anne Leahy, who previously has served as an ambassador to Russia and Poland, said the incident has caused "embarrassment and pain."

"However, I think it should not be overblown because one has to remember there is a war going on, and we don't want to compound the mistake by adding fuel to Russia's propaganda," she said. "This is obviously a mistake. If there are lessons for us, one of them is let's learn our history."

Carleton University professor Fen Osler Hampson, an expert on Canadian foreign policy, said he sees the episode as a "blip" opposed to a "major hit" on Canada's international reputation.

"It generated headlines around the world, but in terms of our relations with Ukraine, it's not going to change the delta on that," he said. "It may in some way reinforce the image that some countries and some leaders have of us as being lightweight when it comes to security, but I think the consequences are greater domestically than they are internationally."

"This reflects badly on Canada," he said, remarking that people looking at Canada from around the world aren't drawing a distinction between the House Speaker and the government. "It does require some adroit diplomacy and, in this case, you can't apologize enough because there's no question it was a major screw up."

nmoos@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Stuart Benson

Party Central

Plenty of pints and pitches at the Carleton Young Liberals' OLP all-candidates' event

All five of the Ontario Liberal leadership hopefuls joined a pack of plucky young politicians to pitch their vision for the party's future.

Dozens of Carleton University students, young Liberals, and campaign staffers came out for an all-candidates' event for Ontario Liberal Party leadership hopefuls on Sept. 22 at the 3 Brewers on Sparks Street to hear the five candidates' pitches for the future of their party, and make their case to unseat Ontario Premier Doug Ford in the next election.

Wrapping up a whirlwind week of political shindigs—capped off with a parliamentary address by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy—the less-than-a-year-old Carleton University Young Liberals (CUYL) seem to have quite the pull already in Ontario provincial politics, managing to snag all five of the would-be leaders, including Mississauga Mayor **Bonnie Crombie**, federal Liberal MPs **Nathaniel Erskine-Smith** and **Yasir Naqvi**, and provincial MPPs **Ted Hsu** and **Adil Shamji**.

As **Party Central** arrived at the brew pub and climbed the stairs to the second floor just after 7 p.m., CUYL-members-turned-campaign staffers were still buzzing around each other, setting up seven-foot-tall collapsible candidate posters or carefully arranging campaign buttons and stickers in front of the glass brewery room.

As the night's attendees and the leadership candidates began to mingle, **Party Central** made his way through the crowd, spotting CUYL party planner extraordinaire **Justin Kho**; alongside CUYL president **Ahmed Absiye**; **Dishaly Ilamaran**, CUYL's federal vice-president and communications chair; **Abdelrahman Amin**, provincial vice-president and organizational chair; membership chair **Mujtaba Hussain**; policy chair **Rudrakshi Chawla**; finance chair **Ben Flossman**; as well as **Huzaif Qaisar**, Ontario Young Liberals president, and communications adviser to International Trade Minister **Mary Ng**.

Just before 8 p.m., having given **Party Central** time to treat himself to the platters of fried pickles, pizza flatbreads, and spicy sausage, and a well-deserved end-of-week

pint while the young politicians sized-up the candidates hoping to curry their vote, the CUYL technicians were able to get the mobile speaker and microphone working without filling the bar with ear-splitting feedback squeals.

While regular readers of this column will recall the **Party Central** recommendation for potential party planners to consider waiting until after the speeches are done before opening up the bar, it is also advisable not to position the podium underneath a wide-screen television playing that night's Toronto Blue Jays game.

As the Jays began to mount their comeback from a two-run deficit, Erskine-Smith was handed the microphone and spoke about the need to "rebuild" the party, highlighting his roots in the provincial party before moving on to federal politics. Naqvi was next up on the mic and similarly spoke about his origins with the federal party and the sense of belonging Young Liberal organizations provided to him as a young immigrant to Canada.

Following the two federal hopefuls, provincial Liberal MPP Hsu took the opportunity to flex his bilingualism, speaking in a cadence and accent free of the clunky anglo-pronunciations that make convenience store owners in Hull switch to English when **Party Central** greets them with a "Bon-joor."

The penultimate speaker of the night was MPP Shamji, whose message was the most specifically tailored to the young university students in the crowd, focusing primarily on their concerns around the cost of living and rising tuition.

While the final speaker of the night was also the only woman candidate in the race, it did allow Crombie the opportunity to one-up her opponents' Liberal bonafides by being the only candidate to remember to begin with a land acknowledgment, followed shortly afterwards with a shout of "Go Ravens" to wish the university's football team good luck in the upcoming Panda Game against the University of Ottawa Gee-Gees.

While the night wrapped up shortly after the speeches were done, with many of the young Liberals heading to the unofficial hospitality suit afterparty at the Hilton Garden Inn hosted by Crombie, **Party Central** called an early night to try and make it home before the end of the Jays game.

sbenson@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Liberal MPs Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, left, and Yasir Naqvi, Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie, and Ontario Liberal MPPs Adil Shamji and Ted Hsu, pose in CUYL-branded Ray-Bans at the Young Liberals' OLP all-candidates' reception on Sept. 22



Naqvi, left, Roholla Safg, and Lauren Wilkinson.



Allan Burri, left, and Hsu.



Naqvi, left, and Evan Brick.



Erskine-Smith, centre, makes his pitch to a group of Carleton University students



Luke Ferry, left, Ben Ebadi, Justin Kho, Mujtaba Hussain, Ben Bourne Flossman, Ahmed Absiye, Rudrakshi Chawla, Dishaly Ilamaran, and Maya Humphries.



Shamji, left, Jacob Kenney, and Cody Printess.



Humphries, Ilamaran, Precious Elaiho-Omogaifo, and Erskine-Smith.



Crombie, left, Lucas Da Costa, Allan Buri, Brooke Muzzatti, Aiden Rohacek.



Hsu, left, Ilamaran, Humphries, Abdel Amin.



Between Tampa Bay Rays' pitches, Erskine Smith makes his pitch to become leader of the Ontario Liberal Party.

The Hill Times photographs by Stuart Benson



Naqvi, left, speaks to the gathering of Young Liberals on Sept. 22 in Ottawa.



Crombie delivers her stump speech which took direct aim at current 'corrupt' Ontario Premier Doug Ford.



Laura Ryckewaert
Hill Climbers

Ministers Marc Miller, Ya'ara Saks get their new teams in shape

So far, Hill Climbers has confirmed 16 staffers in Immigration Minister Marc Miller's office, and seven on Mental Health and Addictions Minister Ya'ara Saks' team.

Now minister for immigration, refugees, and citizenship, **Marc Miller** has so far confirmed 16 staffers in his new office, including **Youmy Han**, who's landed the role of deputy chief of staff.



Youmy Han is deputy chief of staff to Minister Miller. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

As previously reported, **Mike Burton** has followed Miller to his new portfolio as chief of staff.

Han has spent the last almost two-and-a-half years as a regional affairs adviser for British Columbia in Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**'s office. A former field organizer for the federal Liberal Party in B.C., Han became a constituency assistant to Liberal MP **Joyce Murray** in 2018. She started in 2020 in her first ministerial role: as a special assistant for West and North regional affairs to International Trade Minister **Mary Ng**, later adding on the title of press secretary. Han joined the PMO in June 2021.

Julia Carbone is director of policy and legal affairs. She's been working for Miller since 2017, starting as an assistant in his constituency office as the MP for Ville-Marie-Le Sud-Ouest-Île-des-Sœurs, Que.

Carbone joined Miller's office as then-Indigenous services minister as a policy adviser over the summer of 2020, and followed him to his most recent post—Crown-Indigenous relations—after the 2021 election, becoming a senior legal adviser. She was promoted to director of policy there earlier this year. Carbone's other past roles include working as a legal



Julia Carbone is director of policy and legal affairs to the immigration minister. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

counsel at Futurion Inc., a course lecturer on intellectual and industrial property at McGill University, and a law clerk with the Federal Court of Appeal.

Working under Carbone are **Cid Cabillan**, senior policy and issues adviser; **Matthieu Saint-Wrill**, policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser; and **Isabelle Buchanan**, policy assistant.

Cabillan was previously an issues manager in the office under Miller's portfolio predecessor, now-Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities Minister **Sean Fraser**, having been there since May 2022. A former assistant to now-Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister **Gary Anandasangaree** as the Liberal MP for Scarborough-Rouge Park, Ont., from 2016-2017, Cabillan has since been a researcher in the Liberal research bureau (LRB) on the Hill, a co-ordinator for the Liberal Party, and a parliamentary affairs adviser to Murray during her time as both then-digital government minister and then-fisheries and oceans minister.

Saint-Wrill has been working on the Hill since the summer of 2019, starting as an assistant to Montreal Liberal MP **Rachel Bendayan**. He joined the immigration min-



Matthieu Saint-Wrill is a policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

ister's office as a Quebec regional adviser under Fraser in March 2022, and became a policy adviser earlier this year. Prior to working for Bendayan, he was an operations project manager with MMTUM inc., a distribution and branding agency.

Buchanan has followed Miller from the Crown-Indigenous relations office where she'd been a communications assistant since August 2022—her first gig on the Hill. She started shortly after graduating from the University of Toronto with a bachelor's degree in economics and peace, conflict, and justice.

Bryan Rourke has also made the move with Miller to continue as the minister's director of operations. Rourke first took on the title in Miller's Crown-Indigenous relations office after the 2021 election. Like Carbone, he started out as a constituency assistant in Miller's MP office and subsequently joined Miller's office as then-Indigenous services minister, in his case as a Quebec regional adviser and executive assistant.

Arash Rahmani is a senior operations and outreach adviser to the immigration minister. Rahmani was a relatively recent addition to Miller's old team at Crown-Indigenous relations, having been hired as a regional adviser for British Columbia there this past March. Before then, he was an assistant to B.C. Liberal MP **Ron McKinnon**.

Juan Sarmiento continues as an Ontario regional adviser to the immigration minister, having first joined the office under Fraser in 2022. He's a former constituency assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Judy Sgro**.

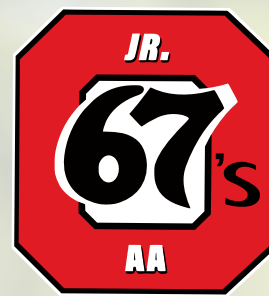
Also assigned to the Ontario desk in Miller's office is **Lisa Stewart**, who's focused on casework. Stewart was hired to the immigration office under Fraser at the beginning of this year.

Tyler Foley is in charge of Atlantic regional affairs. He was previously a legislative assistant and assistant to the parliamentary secretary in Miller's Crown-Indigenous relations office, which he joined this past April. A former project co-ordinator with the Aga Khan Foundation and ex-JEDI research specialist (that would be the Joint Economic Development Initiative in New Brunswick), Foley's first job in politics was as a constituency assistant to then-Green MP **Jenica Atwin**—who represents Fredericton, N.B., and crossed the floor to the Liberals in June 2021—starting in 2020. He's also a former assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Marcus Powlowski**.

Lisa Cheskes remains director of case management to the immigration minister, a post she's filled since early 2016, starting under then-minister **John McCallum** and continuing through **Ahmed Hussen**, **Marco Mendicino**, and Fraser's turns leading the portfolio. Cheskes was previously a constituency assistant to McCallum as the then-Liberal MP for Markham-Thornhill, Ont.

Griffin Kelly is director of parliamentary affairs and issues management. She's been working for Miller since his turn as Indigenous services minister, starting in October 2020 as an assistant to the parliamentary secretary. Kelly followed Miller to

Continued on page 30



**Ottawa 67's Women's
Hockey Golf Classic
Tournament**

**September 29, 2023
1 pm at the Canadian Golf Club**

Go to
<https://canadiangolfclub.com/collections/ottawa-67s>
to register or to sponsor the event

All funds raised will benefit the Ottawa 67's
girl's hockey development program and
The Interval House (women's shelter)



**CANADIAN
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB**

Hill Climbers

Ministers Marc Miller, Ya'ara Saks get their new teams in shape

Continued from page 29

the Crown-Indigenous relations portfolio after the 2021 election, becoming a legislative and policy assistant. She was promoted to director there in April 2022.

Aïssa Diop has followed Miller to his new office, getting promoted from press secretary and communications adviser to director of communications in the process. Diop began working for Miller over the summer of 2021, starting as a communications assistant in his office as Indigenous services minister.

Bahoz Dara Aziz is senior communications adviser and press secretary to Miller. She was previously press secretary in the immigration office under Fraser. Prior to being hired by Fraser in October 2022, she was an issues manager to Indigenous Services Minister **Patty Hajdu**. She's also a former co-ordinator with National Public Relations, an ex-constituency assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Ryan Turnbull**, and an ex-intern in the LRB and for Crestview Strategy.



Bahoz Dara Aziz is senior communications adviser and press secretary to the immigration minister. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Capping off Miller's team so far is issues manager and communications adviser **Aiman Akmal**, who comes from the minister's old Crown-Indigenous relations team where she'd been an issues manager since the end of 2022. Akmal is also a past constituency assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Yvan Baker** and communications adviser in the LRB.

Skipping over to Mental Health and Addictions Minister **Ya'ara Saks'** burgeoning team, **Hill Climbers** has confirmed seven staffers so far.

As previously reported, **Sarah Welch** is Saks' chief of staff.

Jeremy Proulx has been promoted to director of parliamentary affairs to the new minister. Proulx first landed in the office alongside former minister **Carolyn Bennett**, having followed Bennett from the Crown-Indigenous relations portfolio—where he'd been an issues manager since September 2020—when she was shuffled after the 2021 federal election. He's a former assistant to Quebec Liberal MP **Élisabeth Brière**, was a 2019 intern in then-international development minister **Maryam Monsef's** office, and has experience as a political staffer at Quebec's national assembly.

Working under Proulx is parliamentary affairs adviser **Yuval Daniel**, who was previously a special assistant for issues and parliamentary affairs to then-families minister **Karina Gould**. Daniel is also an ex-aide to B.C. Liberal MPs **Taleeb Noor-mohamed** and **McKinnon**.

Hillary Morgan is director of operations to Saks. Morgan was a senior policy ad-

viser in the mental health minister's office under Bennett, having joined the team at the start of 2022.

A former assistant to then-Ontario Liberal MPs **Adam Vaughan** and **Celina Caesar-Chavannes**, Morgan landed her first ministerial role in March 2019—the same month Caesar-Chavannes announced she would not be seeking re-election and that she would be leaving the Liberal caucus—becoming a special assistant for operations and communications to then-infrastructure minister **François-Philippe Champagne**. Morgan worked for Northern Affairs Minister **Dan Vandal** through the 43rd Parliament, starting as a legislative assistant and assistant to the parliamentary secretary, and ending as a policy and operations adviser.

Julia Duncan continues as a senior policy adviser in the office, a role she's filled since February 2022. Before then, she was a senior regional adviser for B.C. to then-infrastructure and intergovernmental affairs minister **Dominic LeBlanc**, whose office she joined as a special assistant for operations in early 2020. Duncan has also previously been: a special assistant for Western and Atlantic regional affairs to then-seniors minister **Filomena Tassi**, a parliamentary and Atlantic regional adviser to then-sport minister **Carla Qualtrough**, and an assistant to Qualtrough as the MP for Delta, B.C.

Zachary Caldwell remains director of communications to the minister for mental health and addictions. He first took over the role under Bennett at the end of 2021 after almost two years working for then-defence minister **Harjit Sajjan**, starting as a senior parliamentary affairs adviser and ending as director of parliamentary affairs.



Zachary Caldwell is director of communications to Minister Saks. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Caldwell's got a long list of experience in politics under his belt, both at Queen's Park—where his past roles include time as a special assistant for operations in then-Ontario premier **Kathleen Wynne's** office—and on the Hill. At the federal ministerial level, he's also been a special assistant to then-science minister **Kirsty Duncan**, a parliamentary affairs and issues adviser to Duncan as then-science and sport minister, and a parliamentary affairs adviser to Bennett as then-Crown-Indigenous relations minister.

Alexander Fernandes is press secretary and senior communications adviser to Saks. He's a former communications adviser to Qualtrough as then-employment minister, and an ex-assistant to Bennett as the Liberal MP for Toronto—St. Paul's, Ont.

lryckewaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Feature

Uruguay marks national day

The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia



Colombian Ambassador Carlos Arturo Morales López, left, greets Uruguayan Ambassador Gustavo Álvarez Goyoaga at Uruguay's national day party at the Château Laurier on Aug. 25.



El Salvadorian Ambassador Ricardo Alfonso Cisneros Rodríguez, left, and Costa Rican Ambassador Adriana Solano Lacé.



Álvarez Goyoaga, right, greets Paraguayan Ambassador Raúl Antonio Montiel Gastó.



Carlos Garica, deputy head of mission at the Peruvian Embassy, left; Ecuadorian Ambassador Carlos Alberto Patricio Játiva Naranjo, and Peruvian Ambassador Manuel Talavera.

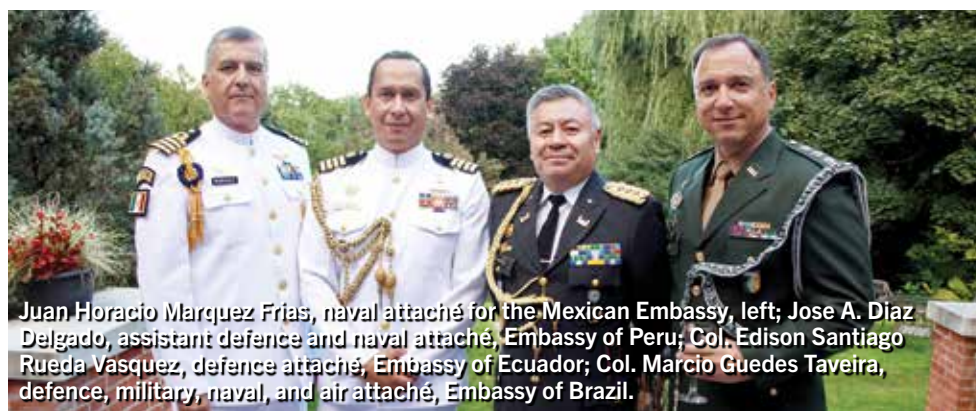
Turkey celebrates armed forces



Wing Commander Adrian Mellors, naval and air adviser at the British High Commission, left; and Col. Ilan Or, defence attaché at the Embassy of Israel, attend Turkey's Victory Day reception on Aug. 30 at the Turkish ambassador's residence.



Yusuf Turan Çetiner, chargé d'affaires at the Turkish Embassy, left; Lt. Gen. Frances Allen, Canada's vice-chief of defence staff; Susan Zaporzan; Lawrence Zaporzan; and Col. Bülent Çankaya, military attaché at the Turkish Embassy.



Juan Horacio Marquez Frias, naval attaché for the Mexican Embassy, left; Jose A. Diaz Delgado, assistant defence and naval attaché, Embassy of Peru; Col. Edison Santiago Rueda Vasquez, defence attaché, Embassy of Ecuador; Col. Marcio Guedes Taveira, defence, military, naval, and air attaché, Embassy of Brazil.



Lt. Col. Stefan Dörrichter, defence attaché for the German Embassy, left; Col. Oleksandr Blashkovskyi, defence, naval, and air attaché, Ukrainian Embassy; Col. Igors Klavins, defence, naval, and air attaché, Latvian Embassy; Colonel Laurentiu Virgil Rusan, defence, military, naval and air attaché, Romanian Embassy.

Sikh Community seeks justice, protection amid India-Canada tensions over killing of B.C. Sikh leader

Continued from page 26

Press Freedom Index ranked India 161 out of 180, nine spots below Afghanistan.

“The quality of news coming out of India is very poor, and it’s largely disinformation and state narratives that are pushed out uncritically,” Singh said, adding that the media is also known to publish bald-faced falsehoods.

Until now, Singh said that Modi’s government has been able to define the terms of the discussion surrounding the Sikh community in ways that “set the game against them” by defining political speech as extremism and terrorism.

“When India talks about extremism and terrorism [now],

what they’re talking about is not actual violence; what they’re talking about is political speech that they find offensive or threatens the unity of their country,” Singh explained, adding that since the 1985 Air India Bombings, which killed all 329 passengers on board—most of whom were Canadian—neither the Indian nor Canadian government has presented any evidence that the Khalistan movement or Sikhs in Canada have engaged in any violence or terrorism since.

“Khalistan is not a bad word,” Singh continued. “Khalistan simply refers to a sovereign Sikh state, and there’s absolutely nothing wrong with advocating for sovereignty and freedom.”

Singh added that the narrative of Khalistan independence not being an issue of interest among Sikhs in India is partially fuelled by that community’s fears of repression by the government of India.

“If you talk to Sikhs in India about Khalistan, they are quite frankly terrified to speak about it because the consequences of talking about Khalistan are dire,” Singh said, noting that the memories of the 1984 anti-Sikh pogroms, when thousands of Indian Sikhs were attacked and massacred following the assassination of then-prime minister Indira Gandhi, “are never far from anyone’s memory.”

Finally, Singh noted that as recently as last March, there

was a widespread crackdown on Khalistan supporters in the Punjab region, which included a five-day ban on the internet under a law that allows the connection to be cut to “prevent any incitement to violence and any disturbance of peace and public order.” Police in the region justified the shutdown as a way to maintain law and order as well as stop the spread of “fake news.”

In light of the allegations against Modi’s government, the WSO has called for those responsible for Nijjar’s targeted killing to be brought to justice, and for the Canadian government to release all of the information it can once the investigation is complete. The WSO is also calling for immediate protection for any members of the Sikh community facing an active threat from India, and for any foreign diplomats in Canada found involved to be “shown the door.” The organization wants an immediate stop to all intelligence sharing with India, and Canada’s withdrawal from the 2018 framework for co-operation on countering terrorism and violent extremism.

“Finally, given that there’s going to be a public inquiry into foreign interference here in Canada, India should be featured as one of the key players,” Singh



Balpreet Singh, spokesperson for the World Sikh Organization of Canada, says allegations of foreign interference and targeting of Canadian Sikhs by the Indian government may be a surprise to many Canadians, but it’s a well-known part of India’s ‘authoritarian trajectory’ going back several decades. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

said. “The inquiry should look very thoroughly at India’s role here in Canada.”

sbenson@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Parliamentary Calendar

Special representative Elghawaby to speak on fighting Islamophobia on Sept. 27

MONDAY, SEPT. 25—WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 27

Atlantic Social Impact Exchange Summit—Common Good Solutions hosts the Atlantic Social Impact Exchange Summit from Sept. 25-27 in St. John’s, N.L. Three days of the nation’s best speakers and conversations are open to delegates from across the country who work in social impact and social finance from all sectors. Details: commongoodsolutions.ca, or register via Eventbrite.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 26—FRIDAY, SEPT. 29

G78 Policy Conference—The Group of 78 hosts its 2023 Annual Policy Conference from Sept. 26-29 in Ottawa and online. Speakers and panellists will explore peace practices that can effectively prevent or curtail conflict, and inform policies and strategies of intergovernmental bodies, governments and civil society to mitigate violence. Tuesday, Sept. 26 to Friday, Sept. 29. Details: group78.org.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 27

Webinar: ‘International Roundtable on NDA Policy & Legislation’—Parliamentarians and staff are invited to an international roundtable of lawmakers and society leaders, co-hosted by MP Darren Fisher and Senator Marilou McPhedran. Presenters include Canadian, American, and U.K. legislators, legal experts, and advocates to discuss recent policy and legislative developments regulating the misuse of non-disclosure agreements in the public and private sectors. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at

11 a.m. ET, happening online. Contact NDA_RT@outlook.com and Marilou. mcphedran@sen.parl.gc.ca.

Minister Guilbeault to Deliver Remarks—Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault will deliver remarks on “Finding a Common Path Forward on Climate Policy in the Age of Misinformation,” hosted by the Canadian Club of Ottawa. Wednesday, Sept. 27, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Details online: canadianclubottawa.ca.

Open Doors at Justice—Justice Canada hosts its fourth annual Open Doors at Justice, a hybrid event focused on sharing insights and lessons learned from past and current consultation and engagement. Feedback received helps inform responsive, forward-looking and innovative laws, policies, and programs that directly address the challenges Canadians face. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at 3 p.m. ET at the Department of Justice, 284 Wellington St. Details online. Register via Eventbrite.

Panel: ‘Evolving U.S. Media Perceptions of Canada’—McGill University hosts a panel discussion: “Evolving U.S. Media Perceptions of Canada in a Changing World: How our neighbours to the south see their neighbours to the north.” Canadian journalists working for major American media news outlets will discuss their work and changing U.S. perceptions of Canada within and beyond the mass media. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at 3:30 p.m. ET at the Centre Mont Royal, 2200 Mansfield St., Montreal. Details online: mcgill.ca.

Book Launch: ‘Statesmen, Strategists, and Diplomats’—The Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History hosts a virtual

book launch for *Statesmen, Strategists and Diplomats: Canada’s Prime Ministers and the Making of Foreign Policy* edited by Patrice Dutil, who will join Stephen Azzi (Carleton University), Damien-Claude Belanger (University of Ottawa), Susan Colbourn (Duke University) to discuss the central role of the Canadian prime minister in crafting and executing this country’s foreign policy. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at 4 p.m. ET online: billgrahamcentre.utoronto.ca.

Shaw Festival Reception—The Shaw Festival is hosting a reception, sponsored by Liberal MP Chris Bittle. The event will feature unique performances by Shaw Festival artists and refreshments. The Shaw Festival is the second-largest theatre in North America and one of Canada’s two largest theatrical charities. Wednesday, Sept. 27, 5-7 p.m., Room 310, Wellington Building.

National Seniors Day on the Hill—Connected Canadians, the country’s largest provider of free digital skills training for seniors, will host a special reception for National Seniors Day and its five-year anniversary on Wednesday, Sept. 27, 5:30-7 p.m. in Room 268, Valour Building.

ALPA Hosts Parliamentary Reception—The Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) Canada is hosting a Parliamentary Reception to network and talk about the challenges facing Canada’s airline pilots and the aviation industry as a whole. Open to all Parliamentarians and staff. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at 5:30-8 p.m. ET at the Fairmont Château Laurier. RSVP: Matthew@SandstoneGroup.ca.

Bones of Crows Screening—CBC/Radio-Canada and APTN co-host a special screening of the first episode

of *Bones of Crows*, the five-part limited series from Marie Clements Media, Screen Siren Pictures and Grana Productions. A reception and discussion will follow with writer, director and producer Marie Clements and star Grace Dove. Special thanks to our partners: the Canadian Media Producers Association, the Indigenous Screen Office, Telefilm Canada, Canada Media Fund, the Rogers Fund and the Shaw Rocket Fund. Wednesday, Sept. 27 at 6:30 p.m. ET at the National Gallery of Canada. Register via Eventbrite.

Amira Elghawaby to Deliver Remarks—Amira Elghawaby, Canada’s special representative on combatting Islamophobia, will deliver remarks on “Combatting Islamophobia: addressing an ongoing threat to building the society we deserve,” hosted by Carleton University. Wednesday, Sept. 27, at 7 p.m. the Atrium and Conference Rooms, Richcraft Building, 1125 Colonel By Dr. Details online: events.carleton.ca.

CPAC ‘Watch for Democracy’—CPAC hosts its annual parliamentary reception, “Watch for democracy,” celebrating the network’s new season and its role in empowering citizens to bear witness to raw, unfiltered democracy. By invitation only. Wednesday, Sept. 20 at 5:30 p.m. ET in Room 100, Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St.

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

THE HILL TIMES CLASSIFIEDS

Information and advertisement placement:
613-232-5952 ext. 263
classifieds@hilltimes.com

CONDO FOR SALE



A very rare opportunity to own a studio condo WITH UNDERGROUND PARKING!! Unique property with all furnishings included! Modern Architectural style and energy saving features, such as Ottawa’s first Leed-Certified Neighbourhood. Bright unit with upgraded floor to ceiling windows, hardwood and tile flooring, stainless steel appliances, in unit laundry, custom motorized blinds and balcony access with fantastic views of Pindigen Park, LeBreton Flats and the War Museum. Freshly painted. Incredible location only steps away from LRT. Just minutes to the Ottawa River, Parliament Hill, and 10 minutes to Ottawa University. Enjoy kayaking? The PumpHouse White Water Course and park are right next to the building with the Trans Canada Trail. Condo fees include heat and sewer/water. Bike storage, party room, and roof top terrace. Executive style gym with large windows and sauna. \$359,900. Contact Bernadette Stead, Sales Representative, Ottawa Property Shop Realty Ltd. at 613-808-6756

LEGAL NOTICE

I, Charu, D/O Munesh Kumar, R/O 92 Hinton Avenue North, Apartment-407, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y4L1, CANADA and having permanent address in India as RZ-D-74 Street No. 9 Dabri Extension East, New Delhi -110045 have changed my name to Charu Rajput for all future purposes.

POLICY BRIEFING

INFRASTRUCTURE

Publication date: October 4, 2023

Advertising deadline: September 29, 2023

How is adaptation to climate change driving infrastructure changes and developments across Canada? Is the federal government doing enough to keep up?

A June report on the first five-year review of The Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) identified three conditions to support its future success: a clear and stable policy and operating framework; a deeper focus on developing the CIB's advisory, research, and data functions; and enhanced governance and results measurement. What have been the effects of the CIB on Canada's infrastructure needs? How could it be improved further?

This year included one of the worst wildfire seasons on record in Canada, leading to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau saying the federal government needs to re-examine the way it funds infrastructure projects. How can the federal government help support disaster-resilient infrastructure?

Former immigration minister Sean Fraser released Canada's 2023-2025 Immigration Levels Plan on Nov. 1, 2022, which set targets of attracting 465,000 permanent residents in 2023, and a goal of bringing in 500,000 people in 2025. What infrastructure is needed to accommodate this influx? Are Canada's universities and colleges prepared for the wave of young students?

What are Canada's infrastructure needs in terms of building a more resilient supply chain? What support is needed to develop and improve Canada's roads, rail lines, ports and other transportation infrastructure?

Reach the political decision-makers who will receive this report by reserving ad space with us today!

Call 613-688-8841 or email sales@hilltimes.com to reserve your advertising space in The Hill Times' Infrastructure policy briefing.

 **THE HILL TIMES**

