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# THE HILL TIMES

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FEATURE

## Poilievre voted best public speaker, most quotable, hardest-working, and biggest self-promoter in *The Hill Times*' Politically Savvy Survey



NEWS

**'It's all out war now': Liberal MPs, senior Grits predict a 'volatile' summer with 'lots of political games' and 'machinations' at the 'rockiest' time of Trudeau's leadership**

BY ABBAS RANA

If Prime Minister Justin Trudeau wants to shuffle his cabinet or make any changes to his team of senior political aides, he should do so as soon as possible to calm caucus members' jittery nerves as unfolding events are creating an atmosphere of unpredictability for the governing party, say Liberal MPs.

"It's better to have it now. People expect there's going to be some change, and that we need to see that change happen soon so that people can move on with their lives," said one Liberal MP who spoke on a not-for-attribution basis to share their candid views. "Whether it's leadership [change] in the PMO, in the party—definitely cabinet—[or a] change in orientation in moving to the centre."

Following the Liberal loss in the June 24 byelection in Toronto-St. Paul's, Ont.—a party stronghold for 30 years—nervous MPs are worried about their collective political future. Now, the Liberals are going to be in a tough three-way contest in the upcoming byelection in LaSalle-Émard, Que., another Liberal stronghold which some MPs and insiders think they could lose.

"It's a very volatile time right now with many unpredictable variables, and there's more politics than actual substance,"

Continued on page 20





Mike Lapointe  
Heard On The Hill

# Tanya Talaga to release new book, *The Knowing*



Globe and Mail columnist and award-winning author Tanya Talaga has written a new book, *The Knowing*, published by HarperCollinsCanada. It will be released on Aug. 27. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Award-winning author and *Globe and Mail* columnist **Tanya Talaga** will release a new book next month: *The Knowing*. Published by HarperCollinsCanada, Talaga described the book as “a sweeping narrative telling the story of one woman, **Annie Carpenter**, her family and descendants from the birth of the Indian Act to present day,” which will be out on Aug. 27. Talaga is also the author of national bestseller and award-winning, *Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City*, and *All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward*. Talaga’s documentary *Spirit to Soar* won the Audience Award at the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival in 2021.

## House says ‘technical error’ after delisting MPs’ office numbers

The House removed all MPs’ Hill phone numbers from its website last month, but the House Speaker’s Office told *Politics This Morning’s* **Peter Mazereeuw** that the phone numbers were missing as a result of a “technical error” that would be fixed. The Ottawa phone numbers were available for every MP until recently—at least until June 21, according to the Internet Archive. But they disappeared, with only mailing and email addresses left behind. The phone number

for constituency offices are still publicly available on July 9.

## Come fly with me: Stephenson explains what it’s like for media to fly with the PM

Global News Ottawa bureau chief **Mercedes Stephenson**, who covered the NATO Summit in Washington, D.C., last week, tweeted about what it’s like for the media to travel with the prime minister: “Lots of folks curious about how it works for us flying on an Air Force plane to cover the PM. This may answer some questions: The RCAF owns the plane, not the prime minister (used for troop transport when he’s not on it). We pay commercial fares to fly on board. Allows us to cover the PM more closely—like U.S. White

House pool (although we still don’t get the kind of nearly round the clock access they do). Yes they feed us, which we also pay for as part of our fare. Breakfast this morning was a tray with a small cut of fruit, four pieces of cheese, four pieces of deli meat, a yogurt, and a mini muffin with an orange juice. And when I new plane, it’s new to us. The planes were purchased used.”

## Ford offers ‘handy new map’ for thirsty Ontarians looking for beer, wines, spirits, but critics slam move

If he ever decides to leave his day job or gets the boot, Ontario Premier **Doug Ford** could go into the wine and spirits business. The LCBO’s 9,000 employees have been on strike since July 5, but Ford is publicizing where people in Ontario can find “plenty” of wine, beer, coolers, ciders, and “even spirits” while the strike is on. The union that represents LCBO workers, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, says the premier’s plan to expand where alcohol will be sold with threaten the LCBO’s existence. “Our new interactive map shows thousands of convenient options where you can still buy beer, wine, spirits and other drinks across the province. Check out a local brewery or winery for some



Ontario Premier Doug Ford, pictured in this video, posted on social media on July 8. Screenshots courtesy of Doug Ford/Twitter/X



fantastic Ontario-made products near you and check back for more options at convenience stores, grocery store and big-box stores starting later this summer,” Ford said in a video he posted on Twitter/X on July 8 while flipping hamburgers on a barbecue stocked with craft beers and coolers. LCBO convenience outlets are also still open. “Let’s make it an Ontario-made summer!”

But Ford’s video was slammed by some critics on social media who said Ford’s government “left it to volunteers to create a system to locate life-saving vaccines. less than 3 days into the #LCBO strike, his gov’t has made and launched an interactive map to locate alcohol anywhere in Ontario.”

The LCBO, a Crown corporation, made a \$7.41-billion in revenue in 2023, and transferred \$2.58-billion in dividends to the Ontario government to support critical services, including health care, education, and infrastructure, according to its 2022-23 annual report.

## Graham Richardson to join Edelman

**Graham Richardson**, the former CTV Ottawa news anchor who left his post on July 5, an-

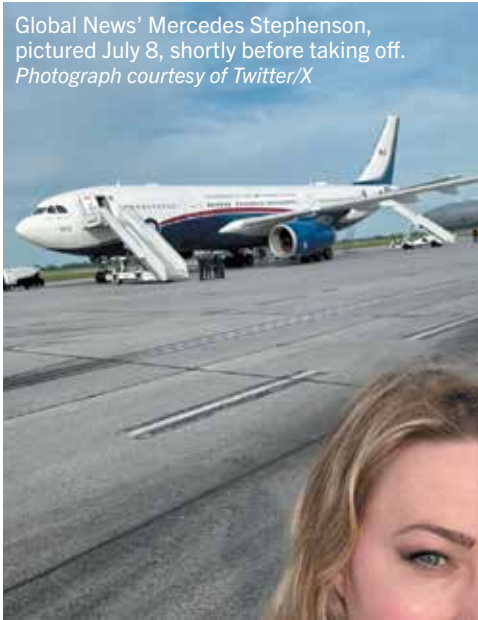
nounced last week that he will be joining Edelman PR and Edelman Global Advisory on Aug. 1 as managing director of media and communications. Richardson, who was a CTV Hill reporter for many years, left the Hill to anchor the local news in 2010. Meanwhile, **Patricia Boal** started as the lead anchor of CTV Ottawa’s News at Six last week. Staff and friends held a farewell party for Richardson July 5 night at Social on Sussex Drive in Ottawa, and it was a full house.

## Reiner tweets: ‘It’s time to stop f\*\*king around,’ Biden has to step down

Hollywood filmmaker, actor, and a major Democrat donor **Rob Reiner** tweeted on July 7: “It’s time to stop fucking around. If the Convicted Felon wins, we lose our Democracy. **Joe Biden** has effectively served [the] U.S. with donor, decency, and dignity. It’s time for Joe Biden to step down.”

Reiner’s tweet had 5.1 million views, and was covered as a news story by *Deadline Hollywood*, which covers the entertainment industry. “Perhaps more than previous big donors or even high ranking elected Democrats seeking the poll sagging Biden’s departure from the race, Reiner is a whale of a game changer. A steadfast supporter of not just Joe Biden, but Democratic candidates up and down the ballots over the decades, to lose Reiner is close to losing the grandmothers at Stalingrad for the president,” *Deadline* reported.

American author **Stephen King** also publicly urged Biden, age 81, to step down after his disastrous performance against **Donald Trump** in the June 27 televised debate on CNN, and ahead of the Nov. 5 U.S. presidential election. “Joe Biden has been a fine president, but it’s time for him—in the interests of the America he so clearly loves—to announce he will not run for re-election,” King tweeted on X/Twitter on July 8. “The French right wing is going down to defeat in spite of polls. May it happen to Trump and his head-in-the-sand cronies.” But Biden called into MSNBC’s *Morning Joe* on July 8 and told the hosts **Joe Scarborough** and **Mika Brzezinski**, “I’m not going anywhere,” *Deadline* reported. [mlapointe@hilltimes.com](mailto:mlapointe@hilltimes.com)  
*The Hill Times*



Global News’ Mercedes Stephenson, pictured July 8, shortly before taking off. Photograph courtesy of Twitter/X



## Rob Reiner, Stephen King Join Major Donors Calling For Joe Biden To Step Down: “Time To Stop F\*\*king Around”

Joe Biden is barnstorming Pennsylvania today in an effort to get his reelection campaign back in the saddle, but here in Hollywood...

By Dominic Patten  
Jul 7, 2024 2:10 pm



# ‘People want change’: U.K. election results continue global push against incumbent governments, say politicians

Voters in the recent U.K. election overwhelmingly sought change, but the type of change desired remained fluid through the campaign, said former Canadian PMO staffer Tyler Meredith.

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

U.K. Labour’s rout of the Conservatives in the July 4 general election in the United Kingdom was a continued rejection of incumbency playing out around the world as fatigue from years of the pandemic and of economic hardship leads voters to seek alternatives, according to some former senior Canadian election campaign staffers.

“This was a vote against the Tories, not a vote for Labour,” said Tyler Meredith, a former senior economic adviser to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) and lead author of the Liberal Party’s 2019 and 2021 election platforms.

The U.K. Labour Party, led by Keir Starmer, returned to government after 14 years in opposition on July 4. The party won 412 of 650 seats in that country’s House of Commons, up 211 from the 2019 election, while the incumbent Conservatives were reduced to 121 seats.

Despite its massive majority, Labour received 33.7 per cent of the total votes, up just 1.6 per cent from the previous election. The party fielded candidates in 613 seats, and in every constituent country of the United Kingdom except Northern Ireland. Poll aggregates during the campaign showed Labour with between 39 per cent and 45 per cent support.

In comparison, Canadian parties that have won majority governments in the last 40 years have hovered around the 40 per cent mark in the popular vote.

Dan Arnold, who led the Liberals’ research programs at the last three federal elections, and who previously served as the Prime Minister’s Office’s research, advertising and correspondence



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer won that country’s general election on July 4, ushering in a Labour government for the first time in 14 years. Wikimedia Commons photograph by Simon Harris/No 10 Downing Street

director, said the result seems to be more a repudiation of the Conservatives than an endorsement of Labour.

“That’s consistent with what we’re seeing in other parts of the Western world right now where there’s a lot of frustration that is being taken out on incumbent governments, and a lot of people looking for any alternative,” he said. “They don’t really care if it’s right, or left, or—in the case of the U.S.—not criminally culpable, but they’re looking for pretty much any alternative, because people want change.”

Meredith noted that the U.K. election was one in which voters overwhelmingly sought change, but the type of change desired remained fluid through the campaign. He noted two differences between the July 4 vote and historical change results: a relatively low plurality for the winner, and low voter turnout.

Turnout for the election was approximately 60 per cent, the lowest since 2001 and second-lowest since 1885. Starmer, while handily winning re-election in his riding of Holborn and St. Pancras, also suffered a 17.4 per cent swing in favour of Independent, Green, and Reform candidates.

“A certain element of the people who were originally parked with Labour before the campaign shifted in a bunch of directions,” Meredith said. “Not all of them

went to the Conservatives, but the Conservatives did a very good job over the course of that campaign in seeding doubt and pulling down Labour’s vote... it would suggest that there’s a certain element of people who are just parking themselves in that space, and may not be fully confirmed as a change voter.”

As previously reported in *The Hill Times*, Labour ran on a small series of priorities in areas such as housing, health care, and energy. The party has also sought a more centrist image following its disastrous showing in the 2019 election under then-leader Jeremy Corbyn when it won its fewest share of seats since 1935.

“Labour ran, to some extent, your classic frontrunner campaign where you play it safe and, when your opponent is stepping on rakes all over the place, you let them do that,” said Arnold. “They let the Conservatives effectively become the story and presented themselves as a largely safe, comfortable alternative, and avoided any dramatic, polarizing issues that could have dragged them down.”

But for any progressives in Canada seeking lessons from the election, Meredith warned against over-analyzing Labour’s win, pointing again to their relatively low vote and turnout. According to polling aggregate 338Canada, the governing Liberals under Trudeau currently have 24 per cent support. That figure is close

to the 23.7 per cent the U.K. Conservatives received at the election.

“If anything, what it demonstrates, I think, is that simply offering a kind of incrementalist, pragmatic, ‘centrist’ proposal may not be the kind of antidote to change—or even the propeller for change, depending on who you are—that you would want,” he said. “What we see in this result is that there continues to be a need to put an offering to voters that is inspiring, that is authentic, that is ambitious, because that reflects the current moment that we’re in globally.”

Unlike Labour, Canada’s Conservatives have not pursued a similar incrementalist pitch to voters. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) has pitched himself as a “true blue Conservative,” and has not shied away from “taking positions that might be a little bit more extreme,” Arnold said.

“But I think in terms of an issue set, the types of things Labour was talking about, and the issues they focused on are not actually that dramatically different from the types of issues that Poilievre is playing to Canada,” he said.

On the conservative side of politics, more lessons could be coming from Ottawa to Westminster than vice versa. In the lead-up to the recent election, British newspapers such as *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, and *The Evening Standard* evoked

the prospects of an incumbent defeat on the scale of Canada’s 1993 federal election, when the Progressive Conservatives were reduced to two seats.

Right-wing party Reform U.K., which ran on a platform that included a freeze on “non-essential” immigration, the scrapping of net-zero rules, leaving the World Health Organization, and introducing a “patriotic” curriculum in schools, had a 14.3 point gain compared to the 2019 election when it ran under the Brexit Party banner.

Reform UK leader Nigel Farage told CBC News in June that he had been thinking “very much of our Canadian cousins” who ran the party of the same name between 1988 and 1997. He added that he holds Canada’s former Reform leader Preston Manning in high regard.

Arnold said that, while the U.K. Conservatives had avoided a 1993-level wipeout, the rise of Reform in that country would be a lingering question for the party, and risked future continued Labour wins on the back of a splintered right.

“Reform hasn’t taken over yet. They see the armada in the distance, but it hasn’t come on shore and taken over, but I think there are certainly those concerns if you’re a conservative in the U.K. to see that splintering of the right vote,” he said. “I imagine over the next decade or so in the U.K. that the real political question is how they deal with the fracture, which is something that Canada dealt with in the ‘90s.”

The rise of Reform provides lessons for parties at all ends of the political spectrum, Meredith said, particularly as economic anxieties are central to voters’ choices.

“It’s easier to attract people when you have a very clear, ambitious offering. With Reform, you may not agree with what they stand for, but it’s very clear what they stand for,” he said. “What is less clear is when you’re talking about Labour, where the offering is, ‘We’ll give you [however many] thousand more appointments in the National Health Service.’ How do I actually measure that in my own personal experience? That sounds great, but a four or five per cent increase in capacity in the National Health Service, is that really going to meaningfully change my experience in health-care? Probably not.”

“It’s hard for those ideas to compete in a space where bold and sometimes destructive policies have a much more attractive offering.”

On the diplomatic front, Trudeau congratulated Starmer in a July 5 statement. “Our countries enjoy robust economic ties, and I look forward to further strengthening them with Prime Minister Starmer,” Trudeau said. “We will advance our relationship through progressive action on shared priorities such as clean technology, human rights, gender equality, and building economies that are fairer for every generation.”

The two leaders met at the NATO summit in Washington, D.C., last week.

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The Hill Times



## News

# Trudeau, Singh no-shows at Calgary Stampede where Poilievre rails against their ‘woke’ agenda

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau likely opted out to avoid ‘awkward’ questions in Calgary, home to one of the MPs pressing for a caucus meeting on the Liberal party’s future, says political scientist Lori Williams.

BY CHRISTOPHER GULY

As the only federal leader attending this year’s Calgary Stampede, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre enjoyed his own political rodeo by showcasing an election-style speech in which he took shots at his two main rivals—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh—both of whom missed the 2024 “Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth,” and Poilievre’s rant targeting them.

“Soon you can imagine a caucus meeting of the NDP-Liberals in a phone booth with just Jag and Justin,” said Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.), referring to his oft-used yet false narrative that the Liberals and New Democrats are in a formal coalition.

He didn’t mention Green Leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.), who—in the 10 Stampedes she’s attended since she was first elected party leader in 2006—has preferred to flip pancakes rather than focus on politics at the event.

May, too, missed this year’s installment after fears about Calgary’s since-resolved water shortage prompted a schedule reorganization. May said she was saddened to miss Alberta’s annual summer extravaganza where, in 2009, she was chosen best-dressed leader wearing a Stetson, belt with big buckle, and cowboy boots—a year after she was named worst-dressed when she showed up dressed in a second-hand denim outfit.

Beyond the western fashion, Calgary’s Stampede is “a tremendously significant community and cultural event,” May told *The Hill Times*. “Literally thousands of volunteers work very, very hard—and there are very few communities in Canada that host anything that is on the same level as Stampede where the city of Calgary basically shuts down and everyone is doing Stampede.”



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, right, participated in the Stampede’s parade on horseback, riding along with his wife, Ana. Photograph courtesy of Instagram



Small Business Minister Rechie Valdez, Canada’s first Filipino-Canadian MP and federal cabinet minister, marched with the Filipino community the first day of the Stampede. Photograph courtesy of X



Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland flipped pancakes on July 7 at the Calgary Stampede. Photograph courtesy of X

“I can’t think of anything that is a close parallel—Canada Day on Parliament, sure,” but, she added, opposition party leaders tend to be in their own ridings for July 1 festivities.

“It’s an interesting cultural phenomenon—and it’s so much fun,” added May, who has taken a pass attending any of the animal events, such as chuckwagon races and calf roping, due to her party’s viewing such activities as forms of animal cruelty.

In the first four days of competition at the Stampede, three animals died after being injured during chuckwagon races and the rodeo. The event is also facing public backlash following a \$9.5-million class action settlement granted to 300 complainants who said the Calgary Stampede permitted an employee to sexually abuse young boys. The former staffer was sentenced in 2018 to 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to charges including luring and sexual assault between 1992 and 2014. A judge

approved the settlement on June 28, just days before the July 5-14 event.

May has flipped her share of flapjacks at Stampede free breakfasts where, given the “schmooze factor” in play, she got to know other politicians “across a grill,” such as Alberta Premier Danielle Smith and some of the province’s other past first ministers, such as Jason Kenney, Rachel Notley, and Alison Redford.

“It’s a place that can be a non-partisan gathering,” offered May. “You’ve got every politician of every stripe at the federal and provincial levels. You’ve got Conservatives, you’ve got Liberals. You’ve got New Democrats, you’ve got Greens. And everybody’s in a good mood.”

Lori Turnbull, a political scientist and a professor at Dalhousie University, said the Stampede is “a big event” that provides federal politicians with “an opportunity to connect with a part of the world that’s not Ottawa, that’s not Ontario, that’s not Quebec.”

“It’s important for federal leaders to show that they are not totally central-Canada-centric and are actually interested in this cultural event and can meet lots of people,” she said. “To me, it would be a no-brainer that a federal leader should go to that.”

But the political headlines leading up this year’s event, which traces its roots back to 1886, focused more on the leaders who wouldn’t be attending.

With Calgary as Poilievre’s childhood hometown, and his parents and brother still living there, it was a given the Conservative leader would show up.

“It was almost like old-home week for him,” said Turnbull. “He was in a very politically friendly crowd, and wouldn’t miss it.”

Poilievre participated in the 112th parade on horseback, riding alongside his wife, Ana, captured in the party-produced “great to be home” video. They also served pancakes. The couple addressed Conservatives at the party’s annual barbecue in a joint

“common sense” speech in which Poilievre—wearing a white Stetson and matching T-shirt—decried “the woke ideology” he claimed Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) instituted when the prime minister “and the NDP took office.”

“He’s not here at the Stampede, is he? Is anybody missing him?” Poilievre asked the crowd, who responded on cue with a resounding “No.”

“But don’t feel offended, Calgary, that Justin Trudeau is hiding from you,” the Conservative leader continued. “He’s actually hiding from his own caucus, terrified to meet with the people who are supposed to be his greatest supporters.”

Following a devastating byelection loss in a safe Toronto Liberal riding last month, Trudeau has faced repeated calls to convene a caucus meeting to address concerns and next steps to shore up support as the party struggles in the polls. Liberal MPs, including several cabinet ministers, touched down in Calgary during the opening weekend.

Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) flipped flapjacks and attended a breakfast hosted by the Filipino community. Small Business Minister Rechie Valdez (Mississauga-Streetsville, Ont.), Canada’s first Filipino-Canadian Member of Parliament and federal cabinet minister, joined her community in the Stampede Parade.

Also in attendance were the Liberals’ two Alberta MPs: Employment Minister Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Alta.) and George Chahal (Calgary Skyview, Alta.), who hosted his third annual Stampede pancake breakfast.

Diversity Minister Kamal Khara (Brampton West, Ont.) helped out Chahal flipping pancakes.

Other cabinet members at the Stampede were Treasury Board President Anita Anand (Oakville, Ont.) and Mental Health and Addictions Minister Ya’ara Saks (York Centre, Ont.).

Freeland was unavailable for an interview, but spokesperson Katherine Cuplinskas highlighted in a statement that the government has supported the event with nearly \$200-million.

“The Calgary Stampede is an economic driver that showcases the very best Alberta has to offer: hard-working farmers and ranchers, strong businesses and vibrant industries,” Cuplinskas said. “Federal representation matters, and we will always be there for Alberta and Albertans.”

The prime minister’s office did not respond to a request for comment as to why Trudeau would not be there in Calgary for the Stampede, which he has attended regularly in the past since becoming Liberal Party leader in 2013.

Lori Williams, a political scientist at Mount Royal University in Calgary, has some theories for the no-show despite the event being a “huge political opportunity.”

She said the prime minister has to “figure out what’s going on with his caucus, and bring people

Continued on page 21



# ‘Sea change’ could be coming after next election, but policy knowledge still more important than personal connections, say lobbyists

Lobbyists with backgrounds that include Conservative connections could help them to hit the ground running if Pierre Poilievre were elected, say some in the industry.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Lobbyists anticipating a possible shift to a new government for the first time in almost a decade after the next federal election say that having Conservative connections may help when building relationships during advocacy, but a firm understanding of policy will remain paramount.

“I think that the first thing that’s always important when you’re looking at building a team is competency and knowledge of machinery of government. It’s all well and good to have someone who knows lots of people, but if they don’t necessarily know how to leverage those relationships or identify how that could help a client ... then that conversation that they might be able to have with someone they know within that party is kind of moot,” said one lobbyist who agreed to speak with *The Hill Times* on a not-for-attribution basis.

“But with that said, obviously, in the current Liberal government, it’s quite often the case that a Liberal consultant is going to have better relationships with people who are in this government, and if [Conservative Leader] Pierre Poilievre is elected prime minister, then having people who know the people on the inside of that government is helpful.”

The next federal election is expected to take place either on or before Oct. 25, 2025. If an election were held today, about 41 per cent of committed voters say they would vote Conservative, with the Liberals at 25 per cent, the NDP at 18 per cent, and the Greens at four per cent, according to a national survey of 2,415 adults conducted by Abacus Data and released on May 24, 2024.

In a post on Twitter/X on May 23, David Coletto, CEO of Abacus Data, posted the survey results and linked to an opinion piece in *The Toronto Star* with the



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre applies ‘equally his view on good policies and causes to support, regardless of where they come from,’ according to a lobbyist interviewed by *The Hill Times*. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

headline, “Liberals like to portray Pierre Poilievre as scary, but a lot of Canadians simply aren’t frightened.”

*The Hill Times* reached out to lobbyists to discuss the possible transition to a Conservative government, and allowed the option of speaking without attribution to encourage candour when discussing their jobs and public office holders.

Lobbyists interviewed by *The Hill Times* agree the possible transition to a Conservative government—which would lead to hundreds of new political and departmental staff stepping in—would represent a sea change on Parliament Hill. Having backgrounds that include Conservative connections, such as prior work in an MP’s office or on campaigns, could help lobbyists to hit the ground running if Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) were elected, according to one lobbyist.

“Obviously, a lot of people would look at, ‘Oh, is this person Con-

servative?’ And ‘Are they going to be able to phone person A or B in the minister’s office or the Prime Minister’s Office?’ Sure, that’s one thing. Access and relationships are obviously a very important thing,” said the lobbyist. “But ... if those people who have access and relationships don’t understand the file, and don’t know how that works, then it’s not as effective.”

In anticipation of a possible change in government, anyone involved in government advocacy should be paying close attention to MPs who could make up a Poilievre cabinet, said the lobbyist.

“If you just look at the existing caucus, you could pick out, likely,

who the people are who are going to be in cabinet. I would think, as a simple example, [Conservative House Leader] Andrew Scheer will have some role in a Pierre Poilievre cabinet. Perhaps knowing what his positions are on a laundry list of things would be helpful when trying to explain to a client why you might be the right firm or individual for them to retain,” said the lobbyist.

*The Hill Times* spoke with another lobbyist on a not-for-attribution basis, and asked if lobbying firms may be inclined to hire people who have Conservative backgrounds as the election draws near. They said that could

be the case, but only “if you need that connectivity in your office.”

“It may not matter if you’ve already got key people ... in your firm who have that connectivity, and you need people to just do the work and pick up the phone and make meeting requests and that sort of thing. But if you don’t have that bench strength, then,

yeah, you do make decisions based on that,” said the second lobbyist.

The second lobbyist told *The Hill Times* that any government-relations firm “worth their weight” should be reading Poilievre closely in terms of policy announcements.

“I think if you’re going to advocate strongly for keeping the consumer-facing carbon tax, you’re probably not going to be very successful at doing that. You have to read the tea leaves. That’s just a very blatant example,” they said. “You can’t be advocating for things that they have explicitly said that are going to be eliminated.”

Poilievre has taken aim at lobbyists in recent months with public statements including an opinion piece in *The National Post* on May 3, 2024, in which he called corporate lobbyists “useless and overpaid.”

“You can’t go in and lead with advocacy that is based on approaching the Conservatives as if you would approach the Liberals. And I think that is the core of what [Poilievre] is saying there,” said the second lobbyist. “Amongst other things, he is saying that you can’t just expect the same outcomes, [and] you’re going to actually have to work for results and ‘don’t just expect me to carry out what you are advocating for without you doing a little bit of legwork and extra elbow grease, to demonstrate to me that Canadians actually want you to do X or Y.’”

A third lobbyist who spoke with *The Hill Times* and who asked not to be identified said that their firm is speaking with a lot of clients to prepare them for a possible change to a Conservative government, particularly if those clients are interested in obtaining government funding.

“There’s always going to be nuances depending on who you’re talking to, but we’re also, of course, really utilizing data and public opinion research to try and make the case for policy change, not just a series of meetings in Ottawa,” said the third lobbyist. “I think orienting much more to grassroots-style advocacy with a focus on really making sure there’s a clear economic message or a reduced regulatory burden message [is] what we’re putting forward for clients to Conservatives.”

When asked about the realities of approaching a possible Poilievre government, the lobbyist said they didn’t think there would be any favourable treatment by public office holders for lobbyists with Conservative backgrounds.

“[Poilievre is] applying equally his view on good policies and causes to support, regardless of where they come from,” they said. “I don’t think that that’s a situation where a certain relationship is going to save you. It’s more about whether or not the policy makes sense, [and] fits in with the Conservative thinking. And importantly, do Canadian voters actually care about what it is you’re putting forward?”

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*The Hill Times*



David Coletto, CEO of Abacus Data, posted survey results on May 23 which showed about 41 per cent of committed voters would vote Conservative in a federal election. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



## News

# Is populism popular in Canada? Researchers say yes

Populist, far-right politicians have not only made gains in France, but are becoming a stronger threat across Europe and in the United States. In Canada, ‘There’s a bit of collective denial,’ says pollster Frank Graves.

BY CHELSEA NASH

A global pandemic, economic distress, and misinformation are some of the factors driving the newfound success of right-wing populist-style politics in typically progressive nations, and some researchers say far-right



Founder and president of EKOS Research Frank Graves has been arguing that populism is present in Canada since before the pandemic. *Photograph courtesy of Frank Graves*

populism is making headway in Canada, too.

The party of far-right French populist Marine Le Pen was ultimately defeated in the second round of France’s legislative elections on July 7, but the National Rally still came as close as it’s ever been to achieving power. Populist, far-right politicians have not only made gains in France, but also are becoming a stronger threat across Europe and in the United States, where former president Donald Trump has a strong chance of winning the November election.

“The trend tells us that this is absolutely the direction that we’re going,” said Timothy Caulfield, a University of Alberta professor studying health and science policy who has dedicated much of his career to researching misinformation—something he credits as a major factor driving right-wing populism today.

In Germany, centre-left Chancellor Olaf Scholz is also facing growing challenges from far-right parties, as is Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer—a conservative. Far-right parties in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Italy have all won governing influence, either as a majority government or by joining forces with the centre-right to form coalition governments. Meanwhile in the European Parliament, the third-largest block is a new far-right coalition called “Patriots for Europe,” led by Le Pen.

“Most Canadians would go, ‘I don’t think this is happening here’—yeah, it is,” said Frank Graves, the founder and president of EKOS Research.

Graves co-authored a 2019 research paper which found that “populism in Canada is a signif-

icant political force, replacing the traditional left-right political spectrum.”

The findings of that paper were contested at the time, notably by columnist Andrew Coyne, who wrote that evidence of populism in Canada was “slim” because Canada does not share the contextual factors driving the kind of populism that carried Trump to his first term in office, or enabled Britain to Brexit from the European Union—anti-immigration sentiment being a big one.

But in 2022, during the Conservative leadership race, Coyne penned another column, this one titled: “Pierre Poilievre’s taps into textbook populism: conjuring unseen enemies in the place of real solutions.”

Still, not everyone is convinced. Mount Royal University professor and political scientist Duane Bratt is adamant that Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) is not a populist, and does not employ populist tactics.

“I mean, this is the Conservative Party of Canada. It’s not the party of Brian Mulroney and Joe Clark and Robert Stanfield, but that’s a comparison within the Canadian context. If you want to talk about comparing Canada internationally, you’re going to have to do a lot of shoehorning to try to put those people [Le Pen, the Netherlands’ Geert Wilders, or Hungary’s Viktor Orbán] in the same sentence [as Poilievre],” he said.

Graves and Caulfield said part of Canada’s national identity is being moderate. Talking about right-wing populism contradicts that, they said. “There’s a bit of collective denial,” Graves said. Plus, Caulfield acknowledged that



Pierre Poilievre, left, who has dismissed suggestions that he is embracing populism, often frames his party as ‘common sense Conservatives,’ in contrast to the ‘ivory tower elites’ who support Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberals. *The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade*



the right-wing populism that’s occurring here is more subtle than in places like the U.S. or some European countries.

Bratt acknowledged “there are elements” of populism within Poilievre’s politics, referencing Poilievre’s decision to visit the Freedom Convoy, or talk about the housing issue in terms of “gatekeepers.”

But he said most of what Poilievre espouses is just partisan attacks or debatable policy.

“You might as well say that Stephen Harper was a populist,” he said in response to a question about how Poilievre positions himself as a “common sense Conservative” fighting “Liberal elites.” (In fact, Harper himself has claimed he actually was a populist, and before it became trendy.)

Bratt kept coming back to Canada’s attitude towards immigration—a “moderating force” as he put it—as a main reason why he thinks populism is not at play in Canadian federal politics.

“It’s tough to get an anti-immigrant sentiment when anywhere from 15 to 20 per cent of the population are immigrants themselves,” he said. In 2021, 8.3 million people—or 23 per cent of the population—either were or had once been a landed immigrant or permanent resident, according to that year’s Census. Brett does, however, see populism as a driving force in provincial politics in Alberta and Saskatchewan—though he attributes that largely to anti-science, anti-vaccine sentiments after the COVID-19 pandemic.

But Caulfield and Graves posit that Canada is becoming—if not nearly on the same level as other countries—more hostile to

immigration. Graves said Canadian public opinion on immigration has shifted significantly in the last four years, calling the change “unprecedented.”

Less than four years ago, 14 per cent of Canadians thought the rate of immigration was too high, Graves said. In the last two years in particular, that number has shot up to 60 per cent.

“I’ve never seen that kind of movement on the core indicator in that short of time,” Graves said.

The Liberal government’s decision to restrict the number of

France’s National Rally Leader Marine Le Pen, pictured in 2016, is also leading the third-largest block in the European Parliament. *Photograph courtesy of the European Parliament*





international students coming to Canada—associating the flow of those students with the housing crisis—was a significant policy shift on the issue of immigration. Graves’ polling firm tracked that decision, and he said the public’s awareness and approval of the decision was high, particularly in Ontario.

Anti-immigrant sentiment is far from the only factor driving what Caulfield and Graves see as the emergence of populism in Canadian politics, and in the Western world more broadly.

What is populism, actually?

Populism itself is not inherently partisan, Graves said, and it’s not an inherently negative thing to be. It’s more of a vessel for an ideology than an ideology itself.

“Populism gets kind of confused, but populism isn’t anything more than a strategy for attaining power,” he said, and one that’s been used by politicians of all political stripes.

But right now, in the American, European, and Canadian contexts, it’s the right and far-right who are using it. “We’re just seeing it so much more from the right wing at this cultural moment,” Caulfield said.

Graves’ definition of populism has two main characteristics.

“One is that there’s a belief that there is a corrupt elite, and the second component is that there is a need to restore power to the people, which, often, ‘the people’ are ‘my people,’ not ‘your people,’” Graves said.

Graves, Caulfield, and other experts agree that one of the major factors driving populism is dis- and misinformation.

Disinformation—the deliberate spread of false information—is where Graves put the blame in particular.

“Some of it’s coming as a tool of statecraft from other countries. Some of it is operating within our own societies, but it is definitely having an incredibly powerful impact on what you believe to be true, and how you see your society, and what your political choices are,” he said.

Graves said one of the most powerful predictors of how someone will vote is “the degree to which you believe things to be true which are false.”

“Asking questions, for example: ‘do you think governments are intentionally concealing the real numbers of deaths from vaccines?’ Which is risibly impossible, and would require collusion across thousands

of officials at multiple... levels of government. They couldn’t do it. But you’ve got 30 per cent of Canadians—a growing number—going, ‘oh, that’s true,’” he said.

Again, Caulfield pointed out that misinformation “happens across the ideological spectrum.”

“In my space of health, it wasn’t that long ago where you saw a lot of the misinformation emanating from the left,” Caulfield said, referring to the perpetuation of myths around genetically modified organisms or nuclear energy.

“But in this cultural moment—and there’s a very large body of evidence on this—most of the misinformation in the context of political rhetoric is emanating from the right, and especially the far right, from the extreme. But from the right, no doubt,” he said.

At the same time, it’s not just misinformation—it’s a coalescence of social, political, and economic factors combined with easily spread misinformation that is birthing populist movements.

Rhetoric around the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccinations, and lockdowns became a breeding ground for misinformation and conspiracy theories, Caulfield said, including those about the World Economic Forum and “the role of the global elite.”

While politicians may not directly engage or endorse such conspiracy theories, “you see this profound hesitancy to call it out,” he said.

“That’s a very loud dog whistle to the far right in Canada, and in my own province [of Alberta],” Caulfield said. “You see a similar kind of conspiracy-tinged rhetoric around vaccines, about LGBTQ policy, and it’s really a dog whistle to what’s becoming, now, a conservative base, [which] is not unlike the MAGA base in the United States.”

Graves said he thinks the traditional left-right order of politics has broken down, and instead sees current populism as a “normative backlash” to a changing world that is leaving the white middle class behind.

“It’s more driven by things like, ‘let’s turn back the clock, pull up the drawbridge, make things great again,’” Graves said. “It’s a form of populism that many locate on the right side of the spectrum, but I prefer to think of it as a dispute about more of an ordered future versus an open future.”

Is Poilievre a populist?

In a now-viral clip, Poilievre challenged reporter Don Urquhart of the *Times Chronicle* in British Columbia over his assertion that the Conservative leader was taking a “populist pathway.”

The pair were in an apple orchard, and Poilievre nonchalantly munched away on an apple while dismissing the premise of Urquhart’s questions.

But a lot of his rhetoric does line up with the characteristics of populism, said Graves and Caulfield.

Even Bratt, who said he did not think Poilievre was a populist, defined populism as “contrasting the common people with a corrupt elite, while creating an ‘us versus them’ narrative.”

One of Poilievre’s oft-repeated lines is referring to his party as “common sense Conservatives,” which he frames against Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) “ivory tower elites” and “so-called experts.”

Another key trait of current populist rhetoric is references to the past, Graves and Caulfield said.

“The mythical past is a very common theme among authoritarian and right-wing voters,” Caulfield said. In the U.S., for example, Republicans believe that crime rates are ever-increasing, he said, and some of them attribute the rise in crime to immigration.

“The reality is crime rates are going down, and drastically going down,” he said. “And in fact they are much lower than in the past.”

“Stop the crime,” is another of Poilievre’s refrains. And he also references wanting to bring Canada “back” to another time.

In a video posted to X on Canada Day, Poilievre is seen beside a hand-painted sign on the side of the road that reads “axe the tax” on one side and “bring it home” on the other—two more of his three-word catchphrases.

“Bring home the production and business back to our country. Bring homes people can afford. Most of all, though, bring home the country that we knew—and still love—Canada, our home and native land,” Poilievre said to the camera.

Caulfield said one of the most consequential effects of mis- and disinformation is fostering distrust in institutions, something he sees Poilievre actively engaged in, like when he threatened to fire Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem over inflation, or when he references conspiracy theories about the World Economic Forum in his speeches.

Positioning one’s opponent as more radical than they actually are is another characteristic of populist rhetoric that Caulfield said he sees Poilievre using against Trudeau.

“That’s another popular strategy, right, to polarize and try to normalize their position as the middle [using] very folksy language. ‘Canadian folks want this,’ you know, that kind of thing. And ‘we all have these shared values.’”

“Unfortunately, I think it’s very effective,” Caulfield said.

Freedom Convoy ‘most vivid, tangible example’ of Canadian populism in action

Graves said the Freedom Convoy was “the most vivid, tangible example of how this coalesced in Canada.”

However, he said the Freedom Convoy was also dismissed as “a fringe of people with extreme views,” which is a mistake.

“I say about a quarter of Canadians are solidly sympathetic and support the Freedom Convoy,” he said.

“But look at that by political preference. If you’re a Liberal, the support is two per cent. If you’re a Conservative, it’s 56 per cent. So it’s not a little bit higher, it’s not twice as high... it’s like 20 times higher.”

This is where polarization fostered by populism is “creeping in,” he said.

“It’s not just driven by, ‘I don’t agree with you on that policy issue,’” he said. “It’s ‘I don’t like you. I don’t want you to live on my street.’”

Graves and Caulfield both said critiques of populist behaviour are too often reduced to not wanting the Conservatives to win power.

“In fact, the supporters of the Conservatives today, a sizable group of them don’t exhibit these orientations,” Graves said. “They’re well-informed. They don’t think climate change is a hoax. They don’t have zero trust in government,” he said. “They have high levels of regime fatigue. They’re sick of Mr. Trudeau.”

But there is tension now, in the conservative movement, between the group that is “angry, disinformed,” and exhibiting “populist outlooks,” and the latter, Graves said.

“We’ll see how that plays out.”  
cnash@hilltimes.com  
The Hill Times



When farmers need a policy solution, they approach Agriculture Canada. Artists looking for support turn to Heritage Canada. Small businesses know ISED has their back.

BUT WHERE CAN CHARITIES AND NONPROFITS TURN? THE NONPROFIT SECTOR NEEDS A HOME IN GOVERNMENT.

IMAGINE CANADA



# Editorial

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## Editorial

# Trudeau should go big or go home

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s most memorable moments always seem to come from those rare times when some form of authenticity shines through.

Think back to his responses to questions during the Emergencies Act Inquiry, the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, or even that 21-second pause when asked about then-U.S. president Donald Trump’s call for military action against Black Lives Matter protesters.

It’s those moments that stand out, where the less polished, clearly practised lines fade away, and that people tune in. If Trudeau insists on going the distance to the next election and beyond, that will probably need to happen more often.

The fact is his current approach isn’t working. Voters appear ready to cast the Liberal Party and its leader aside, and have felt that way for a while. Whatever message the government is trying to send clearly isn’t breaking through, and the overwhelming appetite is for change.

But what if Trudeau decides to offer that change? A bold new vision, swapping out his more staid advisers for a fresh batch—even a cabinet shuffle?

If he is to have any hope of quelling voter backlash—if he even makes it that far with an increasingly worried caucus—the prime minister needs to show that business as usual isn’t working.

That could be as simple as three to four lines on why he wants to run again, and what he would do as our country’s leader for another term. The reasons would need to be compelling, and would need to come from listening to the concerns of voters, not talking over them.

Fresh faces in both the Prime Minister’s Office and the cabinet could help. New perspectives—especially from those feeling the pressure in their own ridings—could be the reset the government needs.

Most importantly, Trudeau needs to start speaking with more authenticity instead of the rote lines we have come to expect. The rise of Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre shows that plain-speaking works, though it is a lot easier to manage from opposition than from government.

Instead, the approach seems to be the same as ever. The prime minister won’t meet with his caucus until the fall, he’s promised to listen more, but nothing appears to have changed. What reason has Trudeau given to continue in his current role apart from that the other guy would be worse?

That’s not enough anymore. Short of a miraculous turn around, the Liberals are facing a future in a much-reduced opposition. What do they have to lose by being bold?

The Hill Times

## Letters to the Editor

# Israel’s priority must remain defeat of Hamas and hostages’ release: Alan Williams

Re: “Why we must ‘contextualize’ hate,” (*The Hill Times*, June 12). Phil Ryan argues that it is important that we understand and contextualize the “acts of hatred” perpetuated by Hamas in order to prevent greater suffering and evil. The context is quite clear.

The Arab countries could have accepted the United Nations partition plan in 1947, as Israel did. Instead, they waged war. From 1948 to 1967, they could have established a state in the West Bank and in Gaza without any constraints. They chose not to. After all, during that period, Jordan controlled the West Bank, and Egypt controlled Gaza.

In 2000, then-U.S. president Bill Clinton attempted to broker a peace deal between then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and then-Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat at Camp David. An offer was made to the Palestinians for a state on 96 per cent of the existing territory occupied by the Palestinians with four per cent of Israel to be given to reach 100 per cent of the amount of territory that was hoped for. Arafat rejected the offer, leading to the Second Intifada lasting until 2005.

In 2005, Israel uprooted 9,000 of its citizens from 25 settlements in Gaza leaving it totally in the hands of the people in Gaza. When the Jews were forcefully removed from Gaza by the Israeli gov-

ernment, they left behind flourishing businesses. The people of Gaza looted the greenhouses, and walked off with irrigation hoses, water pumps, and plastic sheeting. Instead of developing these businesses and creating viable jobs and economic growth in Gaza, the business structures were demolished, and the pipes used to water the plants and flowers were converted to weaponry.

Today, Hamas is bent on the complete annihilation of the Jewish state and all of the Jews in it. Its barbaric acts on Oct. 7, 2023, were not aimed at promoting freedom, but to destroy the spirit and the will of the Jewish people. Fortunately, it had the exact opposite effect.

Time after time, the people in Gaza and in the West Bank were offered virtually all that they desired. Each time their leadership said no. Until they acknowledge their accountability for their circumstance it is hard to envision an improved quality of life for them, or a peaceful co-existence with Israel.

As for Israel, faced with this existential threat, it cannot be concerned about support from other countries or the potential impact of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement. Its priority must remain on the defeat of Hamas, and the release of the hostages.

Alan Williams  
Ottawa, Ont.

# Nuclear a dirty, dangerous distraction: Gordon Edwards

All energy systems make use of toxic materials, including wind and solar. But renewable energy systems do not create these poisons. Nor do they disseminate them into the environment.

By contrast, nuclear power plants create hundreds of varieties of radioactive elements that were never found in nature before the discovery of nuclear fission 85 years ago. Some of these poisons (especially newly created radioactive hydrogen and carbon) are routinely emitted into the environment.

Canadians will pay tens of billions of dollars to try to sequester these human-made radioactive wastes for the next few million years. Wind and solar create no such toxic legacy, nor any long-term

liability. All the materials used by wind and solar can be recycled, unlike the radioactively activated steel and concrete from the core of a nuclear reactor that has become unusable radioactive garbage.

What Alice-in-Wonderland definition of the word “clean” does the Canadian Nuclear Society suggest we use? Is a clean technology one that routinely mass-produces indestructible toxic materials that did not previously exist? Or is the word “clean” simply a convenient dodge used to justify taking government money from genuinely clean options, investing it instead in a dirty, dangerous distraction such as nuclear?

Gordon Edwards  
Hampstead, Que.



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# Why politicians have a hard time retiring

Justin Trudeau needs to weigh his legacy against the risk of losing it all. Quite a balancing act.

Sheila  
Copps

Copps' Corner



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is under pressure to step down before the next election. *The Hill Times* photograph Andrew Meade

Politics is a disease for which there is no vaccination.

How else to explain the reason why politicians have such a hard time retiring?

Most people count down the days until they can stop working. But U.S. President Joe Biden is 81 years old, and still refuses to entertain the idea of getting out.

Ditto for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Trudeau has accomplished extraordinary things during his decade in power, which have even his enemies damning him with faint praise.

support reconciliation than any prime minister in history.

He also introduced nationally accessible child care, dental care and pharmacare, permanently hiked seniors' pensions, and launched a national school lunch program initiative during the quickest economic recovery in the G8.

Quite a record for a decade which included two years of focussed attention on a worldwide once-in-a-century pandemic.

So why don't either of these accomplished men want to exit with their heads held high?

To paraphrase former Ontario premier Ernie Eves, the worst day in politics is better than the best day on Bay Street.

Outsiders may think it is hubris that keeps politicians going. But they would be wrong.

The capacity for societal change lands squarely in the lap of politicians, and they know how much their work can actually be the agent for change.

Trudeau understands that his vision will not likely be shared by any successor, whether it be from his own party or the Conservatives.

Biden has devoted his life to fighting for the workers, and he wants to continue that work.

It is up to those closest to these leaders to guide them in the right direction.

In Trudeau's case, following his separation from Sophie Grégoire last summer, he won't be getting any pillow-talk counsel. He may be hearing from his children, but their youthful wisdom may not parallel advice from close adults.

Biden is obviously getting an earful from his partner Jill Biden, and his adult children. They are pushing him to stay even though his public performances and aging issues have become the dominant theme on the eve of his presidential re-election fight.

Donald Trump is chomping at the bit, hoping to bait Biden into another encounter since the first debate was so damaging to the Democrats.

Senior Democrats are working on the Biden family to convince them that keeping Joe in the job will end up destroying his legacy, not enhancing it.

Senior Liberals are not able to work on family members who can exercise a considerable amount of influence. Instead, they are reaching out to the inner circle of Trudeau's key advisers.

That group seems to believe that the prime minister's campaign prowess will carry him through the current travails.

His chief of staff has been working the back rooms of leadership since she was at Queen's Park with then-Premier Kathleen Wynne. Katie Telford was there in the 2014 election when Wynne was supposed to lose. Instead,

she turned it around and Liberals served one more term in provincial government.

Telford's job also depends on Trudeau staying, so it may be understandable that she sees possible redemption on the campaign trail.

But Wynne's second try in 2018 was a disaster with the leader announcing her own retirement days before the campaign ended. The party ended up losing status with few seats, and the worst defeat in Ontario political history.

Telford was not responsible for that debacle, as the campaign was run by David Herle, former adviser to prime minister Paul Martin who led Martin back to the wilderness in 2006.

But Telford understands political history.

Every leader cares about the direction in which they take their country. But at some point, even consequential leadership loses its lustre.

The power of political change is inevitable especially in the post-information age.

In Biden's case, he has admirably served his country for 52 years. He can leave with his head held high.

In comparison, Trudeau's tenure is brief, but he needs to weigh his legacy against the risk of losing it all.

Quite a balancing act.

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

*The Hill Times*

# The NDP's timing problem

Ironically, Jagmeet Singh's trendiness and hipness probably would have worked better had he been made NDP leader in the happier days of 2012 and Mulcair's earnest, businesslike demeanour would probably make him more popular today. It just goes to show that, like in Machiavelli's age, timing in politics matters.

Gerry  
Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit



OAKVILLE, ONT.—Niccolo Machiavelli, a 16th-century Italian diplomat, once wrote, "A man who is used to acting in one way never changes; he must come to ruin when the times, in changing, no longer are in harmony with his ways."

I'm bringing up this quote because it helps explain why the federal NDP has failed to achieve electoral success over the past decade.

Simply put, I'd argue New Democrats have picked leaders who aren't in harmony with their times and who cannot change their ways.

Consider, for instance, Thomas Mulcair who became NDP leader in 2012, a time when New Democrats were not only the official opposition, but also seemingly poised to supplant the Liberals as the main alternative to the Conservatives.

Mulcair, with his strong political connections in Quebec, his experience as a provincial cabinet minister, his reputation as a moderate—along with his strong parliamentary skills—made him seem like the right leader for a party ready to take the next step.

Indeed, the Mulcair-led New Democrats entered the 2015 federal election riding high in the polls.

But as the election got underway, it soon became clear that Canadians—especially younger Canadians—weren't looking for a leader who possessed Mulcair's impressive resumé.

Rather, voters at the time gravitated to Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, a politician who offered a fresh voice and a new way of doing things, who exuded energy and charisma, and who represented the future, not the past.

In short, Mulcair was offering steak; the times demanded sizzle.

Learning this lesson, the NDP quickly dumped Mulcair and replaced him with Jagmeet Singh, a politician who seemingly possessed all the traits that were in fashion: good looks, charisma, likability and youthful appeal.

To cement Singh's "coolness" in the public mind, the NDP even branded him as the only party leader who could effectively communicate to young voters through trendy social media channels such as TikTok.

Yet, it didn't work.

In two successive federal elections, Singh and his NDP failed to achieve any significant electoral breakthroughs.

So, what happened? Why didn't Singh's trendiness translate into votes?

Well, in my view, the NDP was once again at odds with the times.

In fact, after Singh became NDP leader, the world began to experience dramatic change.

The sudden emergence of right-wing populism, the COVID pandemic, and the rise of economic anxiety all combined to create a much more somber public mindset.

Now the times demanded leaders who were tough enough to deal with the country's pressing problems.

However, during the 2021 federal election, the NDP was still boasting about Singh's high-profile presence on TikTok.

That didn't exactly impress anxious voters.

As a post-election internal NDP campaign review noted, "There was a suggestion that Jagmeet's notoriety on TikTok makes him appear 'less serious.'"

It's also possible Singh's trendy persona in these difficult times is alienating the NDP's traditional working-class base.

After all, a middle-aged guy working at a Ford plant in Windsor, Ont., doesn't care if Singh has the cleverest memes on Twitter, or if he's awesome at playing online video games; what matters to him is how the NDP will protect his job.



NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, pictured on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The problem for the NDP, of course, is that Singh can't change who he is, just as Mulcair couldn't change who he was.

A leopard, as they say, can't change its spots.

Ironically, Singh's trendiness and hipness probably would have worked better had he been made NDP leader in the happier days of 2012, and Mulcair's earnest, businesslike demeanor would probably make him more popular today.

It just goes to show that, like in Machiavelli's age, timing in politics matters.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

*The Hill Times*



## Comment



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal Party are dealing with the public's 'Trudeau fatigue.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade/illustration by Neena Singhal

# Trudeau must be watching the political train-wreck playing out south of the border

Justin Trudeau is not Joe Biden, but there is no pretending that the Liberals don't have a major leadership issue to resolve. Unlike the Democrats, they have a little bit more time, but do they have the will?

Michael  
Harris

Harris



**H**ALIFAX—If the Liberal Party and the Prime Minister's Office aren't watching the political train-wreck playing out south of the border, they should be.

In both countries, the progressive parties are in a crisis of leadership. For very different reasons, the parties themselves are deeply conflicted about their incumbents: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau here, and President Joe Biden in the United States.

The polling and approval ratings for both leaders are abys-

mal. They are so bad, in fact, that even though they are incumbent leaders of governments, they have each been invited by members of their own party to step down.

After nine years in power, the Liberals are dealing with the public's "Trudeau fatigue." The Democrats in the United States are saddled with a wobbly president deemed to be too old for a second term by two-thirds of Americans.

Another similarity? Both beleaguered leaders have not only refused to resign, but insist they will carry the party banner into the next election.

Grit or denialism?

The problem for the Democrats exploded in the wake of Biden's disastrous performance in the first televised presidential debate last last month.

It wasn't just that he looked like a star of the silent screen who stumbled into the talkies, as was once said about John Turner when he tried a political comeback.

It was that the man seeking the most powerful office in the world collapsed into incoherence and dysfunction in front of an audience of 50 million viewers.

For what seemed an eternity, Biden was slack-jawed with a blank look in his eyes.

When his rival, Donald Trump, was asked to respond to the president's aimless rambling, he gave the response that everyone was feeling: "I don't know what he just said." Neither did Joe.

Since that disastrous moment, the story has been covered in a

superficially binary way: would Biden hold on, or would the party force him out? Does loyalty trump infirmity, or should the truth dictate what happens next?

Those who support the president—including the panicked staff in the White House, the chair of the Democratic National Committee, and much of the Democratic leadership—talk about colds, jet-lag, and all the wonderful things that Biden has done over his long career. They are on the loyalty train, possibly of the misguided variety.

Then there are those who "love" the president, but think he is too old and diminished for the job, include a growing chorus of elected representatives, pundits, and celebrities. Actor and Democratic fundraiser George Clooney made that case in a guest essay in *The New York Times* on July 10.

After singing Biden's praises for winning a lot of important battles in U.S. politics, Clooney delivered a crushing blow. It was made all the more credible because of his deep friendship with Biden over the years.

"But the one battle he cannot win is the fight against time. None of us can. It's devastating to say it, but the Joe Biden I was with three weeks ago at the fundraiser was not the Joe 'big F-ing deal' Biden of 2010. He wasn't even the Joe Biden of 2020. He was the same man we all witnessed at the debate."

That is no longer the point. The bottom line of what is

now being covered as a political soap opera is that the Democrats have delivered a master class in how to destroy themselves. And it all began with a fundamental and almost always fatal flaw in politics: getting the big shapes wrong while there was still time to fix things.

Clooney has it right, but his words come a year too late. The time to have the conversation about Biden's fitness for office was July 2023, not July 2024 with a presidential election a mere four months away.

This isn't any longer a question of changing horses mid-stream, but changing them on the riverbank with the bad guys closing in.

In political terms, Clooney's argument comes down to saving American democracy by dumping Biden at one minute to midnight. That is not a very inspirational message to the troops girding for a major battle with Trump World.

But there is an even more daunting implication of dumping Biden. If the Democrats were to choose anyone other than the vice-president as his replacement, the party's nominee would not have automatic access to the huge amounts of money raised by the two politicians currently at the top of the ticket.

Remember, Biden has already won his party's nomination. Will the party brass overrule the votes of the millions of people who endorsed him? And if they do, will Biden supporters even bother to vote?

And if Kamala Harris were to be bypassed, as the first person entitled to the job should Biden quit or be forced out, what kind of message would that send to a vitally important part of the party's base?

It is said that Black women are the backbone of the Democratic Party. They would not be happy see Harris passed over, particularly when she has carried the ball for the Biden administration on abortion rights.

But keeping Biden at the top of the ticket poses momentous issues of its own. As Clooney wrote

in *The New York Times*, every Congress member and governor he has spoken with has told him that, with Biden as the nominee, the Democrats would lose enough down-ballot races to cost them the House, the Senate and the White House. If a person really wanted to become a dictator, it doesn't get more accommodating than that.

It is hard to imagine what the remaining four months of the campaign would look like if the Democrats stand by their man. At every appearance, every campaign stop, and every interview, the media world will be watching for confirmation of what everyone saw on the debate stage.

And then there is the financial issue. Will the millions of dollars in donations keep pouring in for a party led by someone who is falling further behind Trump in all the battleground states that will decide who gets to be president, a candidate who might crash and burn at any public moment the way he did in the debate?

The Democrats have put themselves into a no-win situation either with or without Biden. It is a demonstration of what happens when you don't do something about a problem until you have to. It usually doesn't work out.

Trudeau is not Biden. He is mentally sharp, still youthful, and formidable on the campaign trail. But there is no pretending that the Liberal Party in Canada does not have a major leadership issue to resolve.

Based on how the Democrats have fractured their party by ignoring Biden's age and competency issues until that became impossible; based on the fact that this has happened just months away from what might be the most consequential election in U.S. history; the Liberals should resolve their leadership issues now.

Unlike the Democrats, they have the time to do it. The question is: do they have the will?

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

*The Hill Times*



# Goodbye, Joe, you gotta go. Justin, could we see you in the office?

What does any leader do when the public mood is ‘out with the old, in with the unthinkable’? And ‘old’ isn’t always a matter of years.

Susan Riley

*Impolitic*



CHELSEA, QUE.—Many facile comparisons have been made between Justin Trudeau and Joe Biden based on the notion that both have overstayed their welcomes, and it would be better for everyone—and for democracy—if they just collected their things quietly and left the building.

But there is a major difference in the two situations. Notwithstanding dismal polls and deep-seated dislike for the prime minister—particularly among men—Trudeau still has a chance, and time to turn things around. It is a slender chance, admittedly, and depends as much on Pierre Poilievre wearing out his welcome rather than some later-breaking surge of affection for Trudeau.

But it could happen.

Biden, on the other hand, is only getting older. There is no parlour trick, no political sleight-of-hand, to remedy that condition. More important, Biden is an old 81, who—despite official denials—appears increasingly frail and mumbly. By comparison, Senator Bernie Sanders, age 82, is a ball of fire. Indeed, the verbose Vermont veteran has announced he will run again, and no one seems terribly fussed.

Not that Bernie should step in for a faltering Joe; no one is suggesting that. But it is hard to imagine the current president’s career surviving until the November election, much less another four-year term. Some 80 per cent of American voters polled already think Biden is too old to continue, and have thought so for months. So far, the president appears too stubborn and too proud to do the sensible, selfless thing. But the choice could be taken out of his hands if there are any repeats—or even reminders—of his excru-



U.S. President Joe Biden, left, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at a bilateral meeting in Ottawa on March 24, 2023. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

ciating debate performance last month.

Trudeau, by contrast, shows no lack of physical vigour. But he offers no novelty, either—not in the sense of new hair stylings, but in his public presence. At any lectern, before any microphone, he remains predictably banal, somewhat pious—tightly scripted, yet evasive and windy. His press conferences are increasingly unlistenable.

After 10 years, it is getting old. Not him, but his performance. And he doesn’t look capable of changing after a lifetime in the public eye. He has learned to protect himself by never being

spontaneous, never lifting the veil on what he really thinks and feels. It makes him sound inauthentic at worst, boring at best. Whether fair or not, it will be his downfall.

And his insularity won’t help, either—that apparent resistance to consulting anyone outside his own tight circle.

According to recent books and articles based on interviews with anonymous insiders, the prime minister shuns potentially challenging one-on-one conversations with colleagues, preferring to surround himself with adoring crowds, or the small group of old friends who run his office.

As former cabinet ministers have testified, he doesn’t make much time for most of them, either. Recently, Trudeau has resisted calls to meet with his caucus to discuss the party’s seismic byelection loss last month in Toronto-St. Paul’s. That loss sounded like an alarm bell to a minority of caucus members, but not, apparently, to the prime minister who is content to delay the post-mortem until September.

This is entirely consistent with past reports of Trudeau’s management style. He avoids unpleasant scenes—like when he expelled Liberal Senators from his caucus in 2014 without consultation, or even prior notice. And, according to media reports, much of his response to the byelection setback has been contracted out, with staff or cabinet ministers reaching out to nervous MPs on his behalf.

But it is those very Liberal MPs who will deal first-hand with public disillusionment over the summer back in their ridings; their jobs are on the line. Unlike Stephen Harper who kept his caucus in line through intimidation, or Brian Mulroney who used charm and blandishments, Trudeau appears to regard his MPs as distant bystanders. One anonymous MP recently told the CBC News: “Any good general makes sure his soldiers are appreciated. And caucus members who are soldiers in all this are not feeling that.”

For all that, he may be right that a full caucus meeting would only amplify the voices of the most disgruntled, and silence those with lesser concerns, or those who still believe Trudeau can recover before the next election. They exist. Meanwhile, to the larger public, the prime minister’s low-key response to months of dismal polling can look like apathy or arrogance—especially in the absence of any new, co-ordinated campaign to win the next election.

Instead, Trudeau exhorts his team to “keep working hard every day for Canadians” and launches into his check list of deliverables: the child care benefit that lifted thousands of children out of poverty (true); \$10-a-day child care; basic dental coverage for uninsured seniors, youth and the disabled; free insulin and contraceptives; a school lunch program and billions of dollars to promote the construction of affordable housing in cities across the country.

But why aren’t these noble initiatives—some have measurably improved the lives of low-income earners—already boosting Liberal fortunes? Because, in some cases—dental care, for instance—there is less benefit than meets the eye. The plan partially covers basic care with patients sometimes required to pay the balance, only 40 per cent of dentists are participating, and income limits means most middle-class families don’t qualify.

It’s not nothing—arguably it is a good first step—but it isn’t as ground-breaking as advertised. The same goes for “pharmacare” which only covers insulin for the uninsured, and contraceptives—useful as far as it goes, but this hardly counts as a comprehensive drug care program. The \$10-a-day child-care pledge has already helped some lucky parents, but it, too, depends on provincial government co-operation, adequate child care spaces, and trained staff—and, in many communities, especially those outside of cities, these don’t yet exist.

As for affordable housing, a late start means that by the time current federal plans bear fruit another government will likely take the credit.

The housing crisis was a long time in the making, and Trudeau was slow to react, but he certainly doesn’t bear sole responsibility, despite opposition claims. On the other hand, the cost and calamity of climate change has only accelerated under Trudeau’s watch, and the failure to significantly contain emissions can be laid squarely at his feet. His climate policies have been contradictory—too weak, too late—and this fatal delay will prove far more wrenching and costly than current affordability issues.

Meanwhile, Conservatives are busy fighting the innocuous carbon tax and promoting expanded oil and gas production, while the NDP has exerted no pressure on their political bedmates to stop indulging the carbon capture fantasy and impose a long-promised emissions cap on the oilsands.

There is clearly no easy road back for the Liberals. There is no money for new baubles, existing programs are missing the mark with many voters, and the government hasn’t put enough energy or discipline into promoting its achievements. That is why we are approaching the “we need a new saviour” stage in dealing with the Liberal Party’s impending demise.

There are capable Liberals within Trudeau’s own cabinet who could do the job, and, if the party wants another parachute candidate, there is Mark Carney. But will anyone step forward—here, or in the United States—when the prospects look so uncertain, when incumbency has become an albatross? (See Rishi Sunak, Emmanuel Macron.)

What does any leader do when the public mood is “out with the old, in with the unthinkable”? And “old,” as we have seen, isn’t always a matter of years.

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

*The Hill Times*



## Comment

# Canada needs a fresh approach on innovation

Innovation is about bringing new ideas to market. This, built on technological progress and investment in intangibles, is the key source of productivity-boosting economic growth.

David  
Crane

Canada &  
the 21st Century



TORONTO—Despite a flurry of announcements at the NATO Summit last week in Washington, D.C., Canada—for good reason—was the target of much criticism from its allies for failing to keep our repeated promise to raise defence spending to two per cent of GDP. It's about 1.4 per cent now. When you make a promise to allies you are supposed to keep it.

But the big problem is that we don't really have the money—an extra \$14-billion to \$18-billion a year—to implement the promise without breaking our fiscal ceiling on deficits and debt, imposing harsh spending cuts elsewhere or by raising taxes. That's the problem: our economy—with its weak productivity and lack of innovation-led growth—is not generating the wealth we need, not just for defence, but also for health care, infrastructure, research, education, the energy transition, and huge costs moving to net-zero emissions. Without a strong economy that generates the necessary wealth, we are bound to fall short.

This is why there is such an urgent need for a sweeping review of why we fall short—why our economy is unable to deliver the productivity and wealth that is so essential—but also to identify what we must do to improve our

prospects, achieve our potential, and keep our promises.

We do know one key reason for Canada's underperformance is that we are failing to build a future economy that is world-competitive. As a country, we spend a lot of money on businesses—but policy spends much of it supporting small start-up firms or billions of dollars more to attract multinationals to locate here making us a branch-plant economy in which the big decisions are made in head offices elsewhere.

We too often neglect the critical middle, the companies that have graduated from start-up to become going concerns, but are still in urgent need of capital and other support to become big firms, competitive in export trade, active in R&D, and rich in intellectual property. These middle companies should be targeting annual sales in the \$100-million to

\$300-million range, but in today's world need to get to \$500-million-plus in annual revenues to achieve the scale and scope for ongoing success. At this level they can make a serious commitment to R&D, pursue new markets, and become a meaningful market for Canadian suppliers, whilst creating good jobs.

What's urgently needed for a more innovative economy—a team of American economists concluded a few years ago—is to nurture what they called high-impact firms. Most economic development money is spent either attracting new plants, while entrepreneurship policy is focused on new firm start-ups. But very little money is spent on “expanding or retaining existing firms, or what the literature today calls ‘economic gardening’.” One reason, they argued, is that little is known about second-stage

companies that are on their way to rapid growth. We see the consequences in Canada where, with the lack of support, many potential high-impact firms are sold to foreign investors with a loss of opportunity for Canada.

“High-impact firms are relatively old, rare and contribute the majority of overall economic growth,” Zoltan Acs, William Parsons, and Spencer Tracy wrote in a 2008 report for the U.S. Small Business Administration. “On average, they are 25 years old, they represent about two-to-three per cent of all firms, and they account for almost all of the private-sector employment and revenue growth in the economy,” they say in their report, *High-Impact Firms: Gazelles Revisited*. Moreover, high-impact firms can exist in all industries—they are not just high-tech. (Building a company takes time. For example, Black-

Berry was founded in 1984, but it wasn't until 2001 that its revenues exceeded \$100-million).

This focus on the missing middle has a long history. In 1982, for example, the Science Council of Canada published *Threshold Firms: Backing Canada's Winners*, by Guy Steed, an expert on economic geography. Steed defined threshold firms as “Canadian-owned, medium-sized and operating in one or more of our five most technology-intensive industries.” These firms, he argued, “will be the main source of Canada's new core companies.” The attraction of threshold firms was that they had survived the start-up phase, and were developing the management skills, organizational strengths, R&D capacity, marketing skills and the other essentials of a going concern. But they needed help if they were to scale to international success.

Canada had an urgent need to build these new core companies, domestically-owned and controlled, to replace those that would disappear or decline as technology and competition from new players impacted, Steed warned. These businesses, he contended, would be essential for our country's economic future. While foreign multinationals had a role to play, Canadian firms investing in innovation and competitive export were vital. This may be even more urgent today.

“Probably the best investment Canadians can make in their industrial future is to nurture new threshold firms and to back existing ones,” Steed concluded. In his report he set out some 14 recommendations, including those dealing with taxation and incentives, financial markets and access to capital, government procurement, R&D support, and an export focus. And in a message still relevant today as Ottawa hands out tens of billions of dollars to foreign multinationals to build electric vehicles and batteries here, he warned, “the more resources required as inducements to foreign subsidiaries, the less resources are likely to be available to strengthen indigenous enterprises.”

Innovation is about generating new ideas and bringing them to market. This, built on technological progress and investment in intangibles, is the fundamental source of productivity-boosting economic growth. But innovation happens in companies—they are the vehicles that take new ideas and turn them into useful goods and services. But while policy-makers are fixated on small firms and tech-based start-ups, or on spending billions of dollars to subsidize foreign multinationals to come here, we are neglecting the vital missing middle.

We need a fresh approach, one that recognizes the potential and excellence that exists in our hidden champions. They offer the best opportunity for a stronger and more prosperous country, the kind of country we want, one that offers real hope to young Canadians, in particular.

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The Hill Times



Federal Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne pictured recently in a Hill scrum. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade





During the June 27 presidential debate, Joe Biden, pictured in March 2023, gave a halting delivery and had moments of confusion, setting doubts in motion about his mental fitness, writes Gwynne Dyer. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

# Joe Biden is now a lost cause

Donald Trump often loses the thread of his argument, too, but that's irrelevant. Politics is about perceptions, and right now the focus is on Joe Biden's apparent decline.

Gwynne Dyer

Global Affairs



LONDON, U.K.—It really doesn't matter whether Joe Biden is in peak condition intellectually during a second term as the American president. He did some useful things in his first

term, but his main job now is to stop Donald Trump from coming back. If he succeeds in doing that and then goes gaga immediately afterwards, the ship of state would carry on regardless.

However, in the view of half the American population and of almost everybody else in the world—except the Russians and their friends—a Trump victory in November would hole that ship below the waterline. Vengeful, anti-democratic, and now endowed with full immunity from the law by a loyal Supreme Court, Trump would wreak havoc both at home and abroad.

Trump often loses the thread of his argument, too, but that's irrelevant. Politics is all about perceptions, and the only perception that matters at the moment is that of Biden's apparent decline because he's the one who had the 'elder moment.'

We all lose some cognitive function if we live long enough, but when and how much is a lottery. Most of us know people who are already losing it in their

mid-70s, and others who are still lucid and fully functional in their mid-90s. What we do know, however, is that it rarely goes from bad to better.

It is people's automatic, almost unconscious assumption that if you had one bad day—like Biden's nationally televised bad day on June 27—then you will have more of them in the future, and more frequently as time goes on. There are many exceptions to this assumption, but it's what usually happens.

So Biden's halting delivery, his moments of confusion, his simply blanking out on several occasions on that one day set the doubts in motion about his mental fitness. Everything he says and does from now on will be closely examined for evidence that his functioning is impaired.

If they are looking for it, they will find it. If your behaviour or mine were under that kind of scrutiny, they would note the momentary hesitation while we look for a word, and the time when we start a sentence that doesn't quite

reach its intended destination. They will take it at best as further cause for concern, at worst as evidence that we are losing our marbles.

The drip-feed is the killer. Each gaffe on its own is minor, but without an autocue, Biden now often serves up a word salad. Take the 48 hours of July 4 and 5.

Speaking to WURD radio in Philadelphia, Biden said: "By the way, I'm proud to be, as I said, the first vice-president—first Black woman—to serve with a Black president, proud to have been involved with the first Black woman on the Supreme Court."

Then George Stephanopoulos of ABC News, interviewing Biden in Madison, Wisconsin, on July 5, asked Biden how he would feel if he remained the Democratic presidential candidate and lost the election to Trump. That's a question with no good answer, like 'Have you stopped beating your wife?' but here's how Biden replied:

"I'll feel that as long as I gave it my all and I did the goodest job as I know I can do, that's what this is about."

No! That's not "what this is about." Never mind the child-like use of 'goodest' for 'best.' The candidate's job is to stop Trump. If Biden is not up to that task, the fact that he gave it his all and feels good about it will be no consolation whatsoever.

And then Stephanopoulos asked Biden if he had actually seen the video of the debate. After a pause Biden said "I don't think

I did." That may be true because one can imagine his family and close advisers are shielding it from him to spare him the humiliation. If that's the case, they are not doing him a favour because everybody else has.

The bad news for Biden is that there is no off-switch for this process. He is now damaged goods electorally, although nobody can calculate exactly what discount is being applied to his electoral value by various groups of voters.

It is, therefore, entirely reasonable for the Democratic Party to consider changing its presidential candidate while there's still time. None of the plausible alternative candidates is currently riding much higher in the polls than Biden himself, but none of them will face the unstoppable erosion of confidence that now accompanies Biden's campaign.

The change may well come by quiet intra-party negotiations in the next 10 days. If not, one or more rival candidates will certainly make a last-ditch attempt to sideline Biden at the Democratic National Convention late next month. Miss both of those exits, and it will probably be Trump's Second Coming.

Pity has no place in politics. The stakes are too high.

Gwynne Dyer's new book is *Intervention Earth: Life-Saving Ideas from the World's Climate Engineers*. Last year's book, *The Shortest History of War*, is also still available.

*The Hill Times*



## Opinion

# Liberals want Justin Trudeau to hang 'em up, but why should he start listening now?

If Justin Trudeau thinks he can pull the rope-a-dope on Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre—like Muhammad Ali did to George Foreman in 1974—he's got another thing coming.

George Soule

Opinion



“Winners want the ball.” “Leaders play to the final whistle.” “Quitters never win, and winners never quit.” There’s a long list of sports metaphors and idioms—combined with the nerdy political ones like “polls go up and polls go down”—to justify a political leader’s refusal to call it quits long after they should.



While it may have seemed like Prime Minister Justin Trudeau saved the Liberal Party when he became leader, the truth is he just kept the franchise name and built new party of his own, writes George Soule. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The temptation to use them is even stronger when talking about Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

After all, he used a literal boxing match as a springboard for his takeover of the Liberal Party, and his ultimate transition from leader of the third party to prime minister. The uncomfortable colonial undertones of that boxing match aside, its dramatic beginning offers a hint as to why Trudeau is now refusing to walk away from the political ring.

Boxing is a one-on-one sport where underdogs can fight their way to glory. To the extent there’s a team, it only exists to support the individual. And so it is with our PM. While it may have

seemed like he saved the Liberal Party, the truth is he just kept the franchise name, but built a new party of his own. Even though he kicked Liberal Senators out of weekly caucus meetings, former Senator Roméo Dallaire is not alone in reporting that fealty to the prime minister continues to be expected.

So, it’s awkward now to watch some of Trudeau’s caucus members try to call for a caucus meeting. Do they really think they will suddenly have a say?

As for those in and out of caucus who are preparing their case to take over the Liberal Party of Canada, none of them will ever be right to lead Trudeau’s party.

Because, like the thousands of new WNBA Indiana Fever fans, Liberal Party supporters showed up to watch the star. And unlike Caitlin Clark, Trudeau has never been known for his passing game, or sharing the spotlight.

Trudeau and his inner team are flipping through their playbook for something they haven’t tried yet. Prorogation’s been done, and so has an early election call. Recruiting the support of the NDP worked for a while, but as Trudeau hints at playing games with pharmacare, he’s getting close to giving NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh the excuse many on his team have been looking for to walk away. More than that, by staying on the ice long after his shift should have been over, Trudeau is coughing up the puck to Singh and the NDP.

The NDP’s two best electoral results came in years when the Liberal Party had serious leadership problems. In 1988, Ed Broadbent benefited from a Liberal Party that openly considered replacing its leader mid-campaign. In 2011, as much as Jack Layton had done a lot to earn the trust of people in Quebec and across the rest of the country, there’s no question that Michael Ignatieff’s

failures as Liberal leader added to the strength of the Orange Wave.

Add to that the fact that every day, even while many wealthy and well-insured pundits scoff at dental care, more and more Canadians are getting access to a dentist for the first time, and they know Singh’s NDP made that happen. Workers know why anti-scab legislation finally got support in the House of Commons, people don’t believe the Liberals would have given them tax credits to help pay for their groceries on their own, and they know only the NDP is fighting to make extremely rich CEOs stop gouging the rest of us, and start paying their fair share.

If Trudeau thinks he can pull the rope-a-dope on Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre—like Muhammad Ali did to George Foreman in 1974—he’s forgetting there’s another fighter who has been holding his punches to get the government to focus on his main priority: delivering for people. Once that ends, Singh will be ready to take on a punch-drunk Trudeau or a new leader who—thanks to the PM—won’t have had enough time to warm up.

*George Soule is a principal at Syntax, and a former NDP director of communications.*

*The Hill Times*

## Making tenants’ voices central to housing and climate crisis

Decarbonization needs to be linked to housing justice. All levels of government should ensure that funding for retrofits include affordability and anti-eviction pacts; energy efficiency and mechanical cooling measures; and cover all rental types.

Dorian Santoir

Opinion



The climate crisis is advancing, and the associated impacts are arriving with increasing ferocity. Climate change means more severe weather events, extreme heat and cold, poor air quality, and more. While the change is being felt by everyone, low- and moderate-income tenants are bearing the brunt of the dual crises: the housing crisis with ever increasing rent prices, and the climate crisis which tenants are least able to mitigate.

Most low-income tenants live in apartment buildings that were built between the 1960s and ‘70s. While these buildings are relatively affordable, they are the least maintained and energy efficient. Buildings are a key contributor of greenhouse gas emissions. As recognized by the federal government and various municipal governments, retrofitting Canada’s apartment buildings is a crucial step towards achieving our carbon reduction goals. Retrofits are a win-win for the environment and for tenants who benefit from

increased comfort, lower energy bills, and better health outcomes.

However, as governments move forward to achieving net-zero emissions, the initiatives can have adverse impacts without adequate tenant protections. A recent survey conducted by ACORN in Alberta showed that tenants got massive rent increases at the same time as their landlord got low-cost financing from the Canada Infrastructure Bank to undertake deep retrofits. In Ontario, landlords are allowed to pass the cost of retrofits onto tenants through above guideline rent increases. Moreover, lack of full rent control, vacancy decontrol, and inadequate protections in case of renovations and demovictions act as incentives for landlords to evict long-term tenants.

While tenants have been organizing for years to centre-stage housing issues, tenants’ voices—especially those from low-income communities—are largely missing from the policy debate on climate justice. ACORN undertook a city-

wide survey in Ottawa which collected 295 responses from tenants. The survey shows important insights into the issues tenants are grappling with that have significant implications for housing and climate justice.

Most tenants live in buildings built prior to 1990. Drafty windows, a lack of ventilation, and being too hot in the summer were the common issues they reported. An equivalent percentage of tenants—40 per cent—do not have air conditioning, and experience a lack of heat in the winter. Of these tenants who experience lack of heat, 46 per cent used space heaters to keep warm, and 20 per cent of them have purchased multiples of them. Only 22 per cent of tenants have great or brand-new appliances. Roughly 30 per cent had problems with hot water.

Only 11 per cent of tenants said that their buildings had received any repairs to improve energy efficiency within the past five years. Nearly 60 per cent of tenants said they don’t trust their

landlord to put the interests of tenants first.

Decarbonization needs to go hand in hand with housing justice. ACORN Canada—an independent national organization and union of low- and moderate-income people with 177,000 members organized into 30 neighbourhood chapters in 10 regions across six provinces—is calling on all levels of government to ensure that funding for retrofits must include affordability and anti-eviction covenants; energy efficiency and mechanical cooling measures; cover all rental types (townhomes to high-rises); allow other improvements (eg. mould remediation) if needed to upgrade a unit before energy retrofits can take place; formal tenant participation; upfront funding; and financing agreements shared publicly.

Provinces and cities can play an important role by passing maximum heat bylaws to keep tenants cool, landlord licensing to ensure that buildings are kept to code, that tenants have access to healthy homes, and provide energy efficient heating and cooling—ideally heat pumps—to tenants.

Tenants’ concerns need to be central to tackling barriers to climate change and housing affordability.

*Dorian Santoir is an ACORN eco-tenant leader in ACORN’s South Ottawa.*

*The Hill Times*



# Pedneault's abrupt resignation leaves open question about possible successors to Elizabeth May, say strategists

Former federal Liberal adviser Andrew Steele says the Green Party's co-leadership model is tricky due to 'diluted accountability,' and that Elizabeth May seems the only one capable of holding the party together.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

The surprise resignation last week of the Green Party's deputy leader has some political strategists questioning the effectiveness of the "co-leadership" model, arguing Elizabeth May has a strong association with the party's brand that could make it difficult for another leader to step forward and continue over the long-term.

Green Party deputy leader Jonathan Pedneault announced his resignation on July 9 at a press conference on the Hill, and said serving in the role has been "the honour of a lifetime." He cited personal reasons for his decision to step down, and declined to elaborate further.

May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.), who joined Pedneault at the press conference, told reporters she was "heartbroken" by Pedneault's departure, although she remains committed to the concept of co-leadership, and intends to find another co-leader for the party.

Pedneault and May won the Green party's top job in the fall of 2022 on a co-leadership ticket. A change to the party's constitution to make the co-leadership model official has yet to be implemented amid internal debates and delays.

"We will see what happens at the special general meeting. We'll see what model co-leadership gets accepted, or gets rejected. It's a process, and our Green Party system is night and day from the top-down structures that exist in other parties," said May. "They specifically asked me not to leave, and to continue and work as leader going into the next election."

Andrew Balfour, a managing partner at Rubicon Strategy, told *The Hill Times* that May is "clearly



Jonathan Pedneault hugs Green Party Leader Elizabeth May at a July 9 press event in Ottawa where Pedneault announced his resignation as the party's co-leader. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

the foundation of their party," and that any new leaders won't have the same name recognition that she does.

"I can't imagine that she wishes to be the leader forever, but it doesn't seem like there's anyone coming up in the ranks who's going to do anything close to what she's capable of doing. She's a known commodity to most Canadians, and the longest-standing leader of any political party in Canada," said Balfour. "And if that [new leader] goes out and does a press conference and wants to talk about something, [journalists] probably aren't going to pay attention to them because who is this person?"

*The Toronto Star* reported on May 9, 2024 that Pedneault had been frustrated by delays in the process to make him an official co-leader of the party and blamed internal roadblocks, according to private party communications obtained by the newspaper.

Pedneault told reporters on July 9 that his decision to step down was "in the process for many weeks," although *The Toronto Star* reported on July 12 that two anonymous sources said his decision was not final until the night of July 8 when the party's federal council held an emergency meeting to discuss leadership. Party sources are speculating that Pedneault's resignation may have been motivated by that meeting and frustrations with the co-leadership process, as reported by *The Toronto Star*.

During the press conference, Pedneault was asked about the "internal debate about co-lead-

ership" within the party, but he reiterated that his decision to leave was personal.

"There's a lot that can be said about our internal workings. We're a grassroots party," said Pedneault. "Politics is bringing people with sometimes diverging opinions together in the room and having those discussions, and I think that's one of the things that sets the Greens apart. We try as much as possible to work by consensus."

Kathleen Monk, president of Monk + Associates who is also an election campaign strategist and former top political NDP staffer, told *The Hill Times* that Pedneault's departure means that "everything old is new again" when it comes to the Green Party.

"May stepped down in 2019, basically, so the Greens could refresh themselves and show that they're more than just a one-issue, one-leader, one-person party, but five years later, with all that internal party turmoil, it seems the Greens are back where they started: that they only have one person who defines the party, defined by one leader, one issue, and that person is Elizabeth May," she said. "Beyond the party needing to grow and mature, really, at the end of the day, it's less about whether the Green Party is a stable political force, and whether they're a relevant political force going forward."

Andrew Steele, a vice-president at StrategyCorp and a former Ontario and federal Liberal adviser, told *The Hill Times* that co-leadership is a difficult model because of "diluted accountabil-

ity," and that May seems like the only one capable of holding together all the "diverse and controversial and contradictory positions" within the party.

"Co-leadership is used in the Green Party in a few different countries. It's not something they just made up in the Canadian branch of the Green Party. But it's difficult to do," said Steele. "Ultimately, one person has to hold the decision-making responsibility because they have to also hold the accountability, and when you dilute the responsibility, you dilute the accountability."

According to Steele, May has been "remarkable in her ability to hold this very heterogeneous party together." He said he is not sure what would happen to the party without her there.

"I wouldn't take it as 'She won't let go of the reins.' I would say there's nobody else who could control the horse. The problem is not with Elizabeth May. If there's a problem, it's with the Green Party," said Steele. "There are so many different strains to the Green Party in Canada who really have relatively little in common except they don't like the mainstream political party. Elizabeth May has been able to sit as almost like a Christmas wrapping that keeps the whole package from falling apart."

John Delacourt, senior vice-president of Counsel Public Affairs in Ottawa and a former Liberal Hill staffer, told *The Hill Times* that Pedneault's resignation indicates the need for a candidate with "institutional memory" in order to ensure an effective transition in the party's leadership.

"Elizabeth May has been notably effective in that she has a profound understanding of how Ottawa works, the legislative process, the regulatory processes and any legislation focused on the environment, specifically, but also she's got an overarching—I would say—institutional memory that is very hard to replicate or replace if you don't have a significant presence here ... in Ottawa," he said.

Delacourt argued that many Canadians tend to view election campaigns in a way that focus on the party leadership similar to how voters in the U.S. regard presidential elections.

"I think that [May] has made every effort to affect best leadership succession and transition for her party," said Delacourt. "I think any kind of succession for the Green Party has to address the fact that you've really got to

have ... that institutional memory in order to build or to effect a transition effectively."

As he announced his departure, Pedneault said that Green Party members throughout Canada "continue to exemplify what politics should be about: collaboration, hard work, and—most importantly—a commitment to this country and its citizens."

As he announced his departure, Pedneault said that Green Party members throughout Canada "continue to exemplify what politics should be about: collaboration, hard work, and—most importantly—a commitment to this country and its citizens."

"I think Elizabeth and I took over a party that was in a difficult spot—whether it's in terms of fundraising, in terms of public image—and we've worked very hard with our membership to stabilize the party," said Pedneault. "Elizabeth and I have been touring the country meeting with Greens, rebuilding one step at a time, or as Elizabeth likes to say, one hug at a time. It's hard work, and it's work that I'm very proud to have accomplished over the past year and a half alongside Elizabeth."

Alex Tyrrell, who has served as the leader of the Green Party of Quebec since 2013, said that May should "step down and make way for the next generation of Green leaders," in a post on X on July 10.

"With the resignation of Jonathan Pedneault, Elizabeth May appears to have achieved her objective of returning to regular leadership of the Green Party of Canada without having to share the stage," said Tyrrell in a statement on July 9 posted on X.

"From the outset of her campaign to return to leadership in 2022, Ms. May hid behind the vague idea of co-leadership to soften criticisms of her controversial return to power during a lightning fast and highly sanitized leadership race with minimal debate."

Tyrrell had previously planned a bid to run for the Green Party's federal leadership in 2022 but was expelled as a party member in July of that year in part as a response to controversial statements about Russia's war in Ukraine. In a social media post, Tyrrell said that demands by Russia at that time "for a neutral and non-nuclear status for Ukraine, its demilitarization, its denazification, as well as the recognition of Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk" were "reasonable," and "should be accepted by the Western countries and the Ukrainian government."

The federal council for the Greens "concluded that these actions did impinge on the reputation of the Green Party of Canada and brought discredit to the reputation of the GPC," as reported by the *Toronto Star* on July 18, 2022.

In the 2021 federal election, the Greens won 2.33 per cent of the national vote and two seats in the House of Commons. In the 2019 federal election, the party won 6.55 per cent of the vote, and three seats in the Commons.

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## News

# Unions, advocacy groups cautiously optimistic about Anand's call for extension of '25-and-out' pensions

Treasury Board President Anita Anand said the cost of expanding early retirement eligibility is estimated to include a one-time cost of approximately \$175-million and ongoing annual costs of approximately \$21-million.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Public service union leaders are waiting with "bated breath" following Treasury Board President Anita Anand's announcement last month that the government will table legislation in the fall to expand the "25-and-out" pension plan to more than 8,000 federal public service workers, an issue that labour unions say they have been flagging for decades.

Firefighters, paramedics, correctional service employees, frontline border services officers, parliamentary protection officers, and search and rescue technicians are among those for whom the government is looking to extend the pension plan, allowing those workers to retire after 25 years on the job.

Corrections officers, RCMP members, and other police members are able to retire after 25 years.

In a June 12 media appearance, Anand (Oakville, Ont.) told reporters the government will introduce legislative changes to expand the eligibility for early pensions in the fall.

The Union of National Defence Employees has been working on the issue since 2003, according to national president June Winger, who has been trying to get an equitable pension for their firefighters throughout those years, she said.

"Being able to hear that there's intention to table this legislation—I'm cautiously optimistic," said Winger, noting that the 500 firefighters under National Defence work a 42-hour work week,



Treasury Board President Anita Anand announced on June 12 that the government will introduce legislative changes to expand the eligibility for early pensions this fall. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

with most public servants working 37.5 hours across the country.

"When you take in those hour differences, they work about four years longer than the average public servant," said Winger.

She said her union's members are hopeful that workers are allowed to have "25-and-out," and a 2.33 per cent accrual rate, said Winger, noting that pensions are currently accrued at two per cent.

"It's one thing to be able to get out after 25 years without a penalty, but you still won't have a full pension unless if you can get this 2.33 accrual," said Winger. "So we are waiting with bated breath to see what the legislation is."

Patrick Imbeau, advocacy and policy officer with the National Association of Federal Retirees, also said early retirement for certain public service workers has been an issue that his organization has been working on for years. The association, a national advocacy group, represents active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP, and retired federally appointed judges, their partners and survivors.

"These are people who are working often dangerous jobs, and who often have to retire early for different medical reasons,"

said Imbeau, adding that many bank a lot of sick days towards the end of their careers.

Referring to pension reform, Imbeau said his organization is "really happy that it's being done," and that it often feels like these adjustments "move very, very slowly."

"This is something that affects people's lives," said Imbeau.

Anand said the cost of expanding early retirement eligibility is estimated to include a one-time cost of approximately \$175-million, and ongoing annual costs of approximately \$21-million.

"By law, we are required to ensure that pensions are not part of the collective bargaining process," said Anand, "and that's exactly what we made sure we do."

"As you can see, the number of people who are covered by this announcement extend far beyond the border workers," said Anand, following a question if there was an expectation that benefits to other public servants would be expanded.

In the House of Commons on May 27, NDP MP Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, Ont.), during the Questions Passed as Orders for Returns session, queried how many public sector staff, retirees, and former employees there were

in Groups 1 and 2 of the Public Service Pension Plan.

According to the government's response, there were 174,411 public sector employees in Group 1 of the Public Service Pension Plan, 288,930 retirees, and 24,839 former employees.

In Group 2, the corresponding numbers are 226,740 employees, 3,092 retirees, and 21,610 former staff. *The Hill Times* reached out for comment from the Treasury Board, but the response was not received before press deadline.

According to the government's website, as part of the Jobs and Growth Act passed in 2012, the PSSA was amended to divide plan members into two groups: those who joined the plan before Jan. 1 2013—Group 1—and those who joined on or after that date: Group 2.

## 'A long journey,' says PSAC national president Sharon DeSousa

National president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Sharon DeSousa told *The Hill Times* that her members have been lobbying on the plan for more than 20 years.

"The devil is in the details," said DeSousa, noting that with

any legislation that comes down, her group is looking for assuring an accrual rate of 2.33 per cent "which means that enables them to retire with dignity."

Customs and Immigration Union (CIU) national president Mark Weber told *The Hill Times* he thought the government's announcement was welcome and long overdue, calling it "a big win for us."

"It's something we've been working toward for a decade, lobbying, talking to every MP and MPP, parliamentary committee appearances, direct mobilization efforts with our members with letter-writing campaigns," said Weber. "It's been a long haul, but it was really welcome when we did finally hear that, for sure."

There are over 9,000 workers at the CBSA. The jobs now covered by this plan are demanding—specifically for those within the CIU, said Weber—as officers working for the CBSA have physical requirements, and need to re-certify their firearms, defensive tactics, training, and their physical jobs. "It takes a toll wearing all of that equipment every day. They have to crawl under cars, and sometimes have violent interactions with the public," said Weber.

Weber said that although not every one of CIU's members may avail themselves of the new pension parameters, "it's really about just giving people that ability."

"I think it's huge for us to finally have it," said Weber, who called it a "sticking point" through many different rounds of negotiations over the years.

"It's not something that can be bargained; we get it," said Weber. "It requires legislative change. But it's always kind of in the background amongst our membership: why does everyone get it but us?"

Imbeau said that his group has spoken to some Parliamentary Protective Service workers "who are just overwhelmed because they've had it particularly difficult for the last couple of years."

*The Hill Times* reached out the Parliamentary Protective Service (PPS) for reaction to Anand's statement. For security reasons, the PPS declined an invitation for an interview, but said the announcement "was well-received news for Parliamentary Protective Service."

## 'Most of us know someone who works in these areas,' says Kevin Page

Kevin Page, founding president and CEO of the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy at the University of Ottawa and a former parliamentary budget officer, said "there are different dimensions to the discussion of the provision of early retirement eligibility for federal public servants including appropriate worker compensation, and the financial position of pension funds," in an email to *The Hill Times*.

"I think Canadians and Parliament are comfortable with current early retirement provisions

Continued on page 21



# Conservative Party's path to government could be paved without major inroads into Quebec, say pollsters

Pierre Poilievre is already in majority territory without a big breakthrough in Quebec, says pollster Nik Nanos, alluding to how Stephen Harper had won many elections with just a few Quebec ridings.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

With the Conservative Party well ahead of the governing Liberals in pre-election polling, pollsters say that the path to victory for a Pierre Poilievre-led government does not necessarily need to pass through Quebec where the party has traditionally had difficulty breaking into Liberal and Bloc Québécois-held ridings.

"Quebec is not like the rest of the country," said pollster Greg Lyle. "It truly is distinct. There's a fundamental dynamic in Quebec, among francophones, involving an ongoing pressure to ensure their cultural survival."

Lyle said that the dynamic is pretty clear going into the future election campaign in that the Liberals will be seen as losing seats and the Bloc as gaining them. Polling aggregate 338Canada shows the Bloc with 33 per cent support, the Conservatives at 25 per cent, and the Liberals at 24 per cent.

In the 2021 election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) won a third term with a minority government. In Quebec, the Conservatives won 10 seats, the Liberals 35 seats, and the Bloc 32 seats. The Conservatives won 18.6 per cent of the vote in that province in the 2021 election, the Liberals 33.6 per cent, the NDP 9.8 per cent, and the Bloc 32.1 per cent of the vote.

There are currently nine Conservative MPs in Quebec: Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, Que.), Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, Que.), Bernard Gagné (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, Que.), Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, Que.), Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, Que.), Richard Lehoux



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre recently said his party has 'a chance for a breakthrough' in Quebec. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

(Beauce, Que.), Richard Martel (Chicoutimi-Le Fjord, Que.), Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles, Que.), and Dominique Vien (Bellechasse-Les Etchemins-Lévis, Que.).

Berthold won his seat solidly in 2021, winning with over 26,000 votes over Bloc Québécois candidate Éric Labonté, who pulled in over 9,300 votes. Deltell won his seat with just over 33,000 votes over his next closest opponent, Bloc Québécois candidate Thierry Bilodeau, who pulled in just over 13,600 votes. Godin won his seat handily as well, with over 33,650 votes over Bloc candidate Christian Hébert, who won 15,525 votes in the 2021 election.

Alain Rayes was elected to represent the riding of Richmond-Arthabaska, Que., in 2015, and was re-elected in the 2019 and 2021 elections. Rayes has since left the Conservative caucus and now sits as an Independent MP.

The Conservatives came in second place in the province in 2021 in 12 ridings: Beauport-Côté-de-Beaupré-Île d'Orléans-Charlevoix (32 per cent); Beauport-Limoilou (29 per cent); Jonquière (29 per cent); Lac-Saint-Jean (26 per cent); Lac-Saint-Louis (19 per cent); Manicouagan (22 per cent); Mount Royal (24 per cent); Pierrefonds-Dollard (21 per cent); Pontiac (21 per cent); Saint-Laurent (18 per cent); Saint-Léonard-Saint-Michel (10 per cent); and Trois-Rivières (29 per cent).

"By the end of the campaign," said Lyle, referring to what's ahead in 2025, "there's a plausible

but not certain possibility that the Tories will be able to gain more seats than one would expect at the start."

"That's very powerful. But this is not that election. Quebec will feel like B.C. feels on most election nights, that our votes don't matter," said Lyle.

Pollster Darrell Bricker, co-author of the book *The Big Shift: The Seismic Change in Canadian Politics*, said for most of Canadian history, but particularly since the end of the Second World War, there was really one way to win a majority government: strong performances in both Quebec and Ontario, also known as the "Laurentian consensus" strategy.

Bricker said the strategy worked for both Liberals and Progressive Conservatives, citing former prime ministers Lester Pearson, Pierre Trudeau, Brian Mulroney and Jean Chrétien.

But in 2011, the Conservatives won a national government with almost no seats gained in Quebec, leading the party to change tactics.

"Now, it's basically the Harper Conservative strategy, which is where you win mostly in the West and then you win in the large suburbs of car-commuting cities, particularly the City of Toronto," said Bricker.

**Voters want to 'send a message to Ottawa' this time, says pollster Nik Nanos**

Poilievre is already in majority territory without a "major

breakthrough" in Quebec, said pollster Nik Nanos, also alluding to former prime minister Stephen Harper's "franchise," in that he won a number of elections by just holding on to a handful of Quebec ridings.

"This is an election where many voters want to send a message to Ottawa," said Nanos. "And in most parts of the country, it's the Conservatives that are the vehicle to send that message of disenchantment and disappointment."

But Quebecers have another option in this sense, said Nanos: the Bloc Québécois.

"By voting for the Bloc you get to send a message to Ottawa, but, then again, you get to elect a party that you don't have to worry about forming government," said Nanos. "Their only job is to advocate for more to the province of Quebec. So it's the easiest protest vote in Canada to vote for the Bloc Québécois. Why? Because you don't have to worry about reading their platform, and there's not an issue of the Bloc forming a government and/or even likely co-operating."

With the Conservatives poised to pick up seats in Ontario, British Columbia, and, to a lesser extent, Atlantic Canada, Nanos noted that Quebec is the one region where the Liberals are doing better than in other parts of the country.

As Nanos wrote in *The Globe and Mail* last month, "the surface numbers on both ballot tracking and whom Canadians would prefer as prime minister markedly

favour the Conservatives and Mr. Poilievre."

"In the Nanos tracking they lead in every region west of Quebec, and even in Quebec the party has support at levels in the 20s. The Conservatives lead among men and in every age demographic except for Canadians over 60 [years old]," wrote Nanos.

When it comes to question of preferred prime minister, the responses generally track with the ballot numbers, with Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) maintaining a persistent double-digit advantage over Trudeau.

The numbers look extremely promising for the Conservatives, and show an electorate bent on change.

"That said, could Pierre Poilievre yet pick up seats in Quebec? Yes. But in my experience, I would expect that if he does pick up seats in Quebec, and maybe later on during a campaign, it would be kind of like a [former NDP leader] Jack Layton effect," said Nanos.

In the 2011 federal election, the NDP won 59 seats in Quebec, and the party became the official opposition in Ottawa, a prospect that appeared unlikely at the start of the campaign.

"Jack Layton's numbers in Quebec were nowhere until he went on *Tout le monde en parle* [on Radio-Canada]," said Nanos. "But Pierre Poilievre is still in majority territory without a major breakthrough in Quebec. The big question is: how will Quebecers react to him during an election campaign?"

**Harper's path to Ottawa didn't have to lean heavily on Quebec, says Leger's Andrew Enns**

Andrew Enns, Leger's executive vice-president for central Canada, told *The Hill Times* that in 2006 and 2008 Harper showed that there was a path to government for the Conservative Party that didn't necessarily have to lean too heavily on Quebec.

In the 2006 federal election, the Conservatives won 10 seats in Quebec, with the Liberals winning 13 and the Bloc Québécois winning 51. In 2008, the Conservatives again won 10 seats, with the Liberals winning 14 and the Bloc Québécois winning 49.

Poilievre recently predicted a Conservative "breakthrough" in Quebec in the next election, as reported by the *Montreal Gazette* on June 20.

"I don't want to be presumptuous, but my view is that if Quebecers have to choose between the costly coalition of [Prime Minister Justin] Trudeau and the NDP to tax their food, punish their work, double housing costs, and unleash crime and chaos in their communities, or a common sense Conservative government who will axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget, and stop the crime, we have a chance for a breakthrough," Poilievre said on June 20.

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29<sup>th</sup> Annual Politically Savvy Survey

# Poilievre voted best public speaker, most quotable, hardest-working, and biggest self-promoter in *The Hill Times*' 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Politically Savvy Survey

And Housing Minister Sean Fraser, who was already picked as the Most Valuable Politician in 2023 in *The Hill Times*' All Politics Poll in December, was voted best cabinet minister in 2024 in this survey.

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

While Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre courts voters across the country this summer to rail against decisions made in the capital, denizens of the Ottawa bubble have given him top marks across a range of categories in *The Hill Times*' 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Politically Savvy Survey.

A fan of three-word slogans—axe the tax, build the homes, and so on—Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) would doubtless be chuffed to know he's seen as the “best public speaker,” “most quotable MP,” and the “hardest-working MP,” though might be less pleased as the “biggest self-promoter.”

Poilievre also topped the list of “best fundraisers,” with the Conservative Party's war chest since his 2022 election as leader providing empirical evidence for the assertion. He's also seen as the most effective Question Period MP for his party, surprising no one who has tuned in on afternoons when the House sits.

“His name does come up more than is warranted by the fact that



**This just in:** Survey respondents noted Pierre Poilievre, rear left, Kristina Michaud, Sean Fraser, Chrystia Freeland, Anita Anand, Dominic LeBlanc, Marc Miller, Yves-François Blanchet, second row, left, François-Philippe Champagne, Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe, Justin Trudeau, Peter Fragiskatos, Heather McPherson, Michael Barrett, front row, left, Melissa Lantsman, Lori Idlout, Michael Chong and Charlie Angus. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and Sam Garcia

he's the leader of the Tories,” said Lorne Bozinoff, president and CEO of Forum Research, which conducted this year's survey between June 10 and July 5 on behalf of *The Hill Times*. “He is a good speaker, a good public speaker. Even if he wasn't leader, he'd be showing up in some of these things.”

On his speaking ability, one respondent said Poilievre “has good timing, and always keeps a calm composure.” Another said his “ability to speak off the cuff without notes and tell a story is unmatched by any other member.” The survey was also probably home to the highest use of the word “zinger” outside KFC.

For those fearing this survey was a Tory love-in, rest assured

that those self-identified as Conservatives made up only 16.7 per cent of the 126 respondents, behind 33.3 per cent who affiliated with the Liberals, 6.3 per cent NDP, four per cent Green, and 1.6 per cent Bloc Québécois. It's possible that some quiet Tories found themselves in the 38.1 per cent who did not list an affiliation.

For all his attacks on the “Laurentian elite,” the official opposition leader—who marked two decades representing an Ottawa-area riding late last month—has been a fixture in the survey of political insiders since long before he took the top Conservative job. Long-time readers may recall his impressive showing in 2021, for example.

Looking back at those previous survey results, Bozinoff said the votes helped to “tell you who the leaders of the future are.”

“There's people there because of their longevity, because of their positions in the party” he said. “Then there's the people who, I think, are the up and comers, they're the next generation.”

If that's the case, politicians had best watch Conservative MPs Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, Ont.) and Michael Barrett (Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Ont.).

First-term Lantsman, who was named one of Poilievre's two deputies in 2022, outshone her

leader as the best opposition MP in scrums, and was seen as the Conservatives' second-best performer in Question Period.

“Everytime she scrums she makes the government hurt. She has a unique reach as an MP so her message is always heard,” said one respondent. Another said she was “quick on her feet, [has] strong political sense and knows how to spin.”

Barrett, his party's ethics critic, has had plenty on his plate amid numerous government scandals. He appears to have put that role to good use in the eyes of insiders, receiving a string of third-place finishes in the categories of best public speaker, most effective Conservative Question

Period MP, and best opposition MP in scrums.

Beyond the realm of political theatre, Barrett also rated highly among his staff, named as the best MP to work for, and also the third-hardest working MP. “The man does not stop,” one person said.

But enough about the Conservatives. After 600 words, it's about time to note members of the other four parties in Parliament.

Turning to the cabinet, Housing Minister Sean Fraser (Central Nova, N.S.) returned from a strong 2023 showing to be named the government's best weapon in Question Period, ahead of Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice-Champlain, Que.) and Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.).

“The best education you can get in Question Period performance is found at Tim Hortons in a small town in my community rather than in an office on Parliament Hill,” Fraser told *The Hill Times* when asked about his approach to Question Period.

“It's important that you're able to talk to people in the House of Commons as though you're talking to them in real life. People don't want to listen to politicians read off the lines that come in from a department devoid of context of the question,” he said. “They want to hear real answers to real questions, and they want to know that the people who represent their communities think like they do and talk like they do.”

Fraser was also perceived to be the second-best public speaker, and the second-best MP to work for, the latter position being shared with Citizens' Services Minister Terry Beech (Burnaby North-Seymour, B.C.) and—yes, we're finally mentioning him—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.).

Fraser said he had been “blessed with the most extraordinary team in politics,” led by chief of staff Savannah DeWolfe. “My sense is people are hungry for that opportunity to make a difference and serve Canada, and if you can find a group of people who have that dedication to country, but at the same time are genuine and kind people who enjoy working alongside one another, you're going to develop an office culture that is second to none.”

As for interactions with the fourth estate, Fraser was pipped

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## Best Public Speaker

Pierre Poilievre 16.7%  
Housing Minister Sean Fraser 12.7%  
nd Conservative MP Michael Barrett 4.8%  
*The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade



## Best Cabinet Member in Question Period

Housing Minister Sean Fraser 30.2%  
Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne 16.7%  
Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc 9.5%  
*The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade



# 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Politically Savvy Survey

Continued from page 18

at the post, coming third behind LeBlanc and Immigration Minister Marc Miller (Ville-Marie–Le Sud-Ouest–Île-des-Soeurs, Que.) as the best member of cabinet in scrums.

“He speaks like regular people do, he’s extremely intelligent, and he’s competent,” one respondent said of Miller. “He doesn’t need to hide behind the Centre’s message.”

Others noted Miller’s earnestness, “no B.S.” and “Tim Hortons language” approach. Another person said his “off the cuff” approach was similar to Poilievre’s, something that was probably intended as a compliment, but may not be read as such by the minister.

After all, there is no love lost between the two figures. In a memorable exchange earlier this year, when asked by reporters whether Poilievre’s removal from the House was an attempt to “silence” him, Miller quipped: “That guy’s never shut his mouth in his life. Who silences him? He keeps saying dumb things. I think it would be good if he shut up once in a while.”

Sadly, for Miller, that remark was not enough to put him ahead of Poilievre in the “best sense of humour” category. Both, however, were left in the dust of LeBlanc, who was described as “always cracking jokes—and many that are just on the line of being politically incorrect.”

For those not privy to the minister’s “definitely not PG, not even really PG-13” humour, many respondents took the opportunity at this question to try their own material for the survey. One wag, nominating Trudeau, offered the reason of “look at his front bench.”

Speaking of the prime minister, he did manage one win in the



## Most Effective Government Question Period Backbencher

Liberal MPs Peter Fragiskatos 5.6%  
Anthony Housefather 4.8%  
Kody Blois 4%

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade

survey. While he’s struggling to control rumblings within the Liberal Party, he is having no such trouble on the social front as the first-placeholder in the “throwing the best parties” category.

“What other MP would stand out in 30-plus degree weather to take over 1,000 pictures with parliamentary staff to give them an opportunity to have a great experience with the nation’s leader?” offered one person.

Elsewhere within the Liberal fold, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland (University–Rosedale, Ont.) was seen as the most influential cabinet minister, followed by LeBlanc and Treasury Board President Anita Anand (Oakville, Ont.).

Liberal MPs Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Ont.), Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Que.), and Kody Blois (King–Hants, N.S.) were all nominated as among the most effective government backbenchers during the thankless slog of Question Period.

Fragiskatos, who is Fraser’s parliamentary secretary, was praised for responding “directly

with confidence and accuracy,” knowing the housing and infrastructure file well, and being able to “answer questions without reading, and by calling out inconsistencies in the questioner.”

Housefather and Blois, meanwhile, were nominated primarily for something a government does not normally seek from its backbenchers: a willingness to speak their mind.

Blois, who was one of three Liberals to vote for Conservative private member’s bill C-234, which would exempt some on-farm activities from the carbon tax, was praised for speaking up for his riding, and winning “concessions from government specific to Atlantic Canada.”

Housefather, meanwhile, has been steadfast in his support for Israel and even publicly considered leaving the party after being one of three Liberals to vote against an NDP motion regarding Palestinian statehood that criticized Israel’s conduct in the war against Hamas. One person who disagreed with Housefather’s stance admired his “constant success in getting headlines and shifting the focus of debates.”

Staying with Quebec MPs, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil–Chambly, Que.) remained his party’s most effective MP in Question Period.

He was followed by public safety and climate change critic Kristina Michaud (Avignon–La Mitis–Matane–Matapédia, Que.), who was described as direct, charming, and passionate. “She will be leader one day,” offered two respondents.

The NDP, meanwhile, will need to brace for a massive hole in their Question Period arsenal when long-time MP Charlie Angus (Timmins–James Bay, Ont.) departs the House at the end of this session.

“Tells it like it is,” was one of many such comments about the northern Ontario MP, while another suggested that “he knows why he’s in Ottawa and what he’s there to do.”

The NDP need not fret too much, however, with two-term MP Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, Alta.) not far behind as the party’s second-most effective performer in Question Period.

“The Liberals shake when she starts asking questions.

They know she will come with something embarrassing, and they have no defence,” said one respondent of the party’s foreign affairs critic.

The aforementioned motion that Housefather voted against belonged to McPherson, and according to one comment, it “was more effective than anything [NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh] has led in the House this year. She’s very good at setting a contrasting message on her critic files.”

If you’ve read this far, you’re probably giddy with anticipation about the answer to the most important question in the entire survey. That is, of course, which MP is the most hip?

The definition of “hip” is a fluid one, though this author might

suggest it immediately exempts anyone who uses the word “hip.” Nearly a quarter of respondents provided no name, presumably overwhelmed by the challenge of finding but one winner in the capital of cool.

In the end, though, it was Liberal MP Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Ont.) who edged out the competition. The Olympic gold medalist’s supporters praised his “style, swagger, confidence,” relaxed vibe, while another simply asked: “Have you seen his outfits?”

For those aspiring to take the hip crown next year, one person offered some advice: van Koeverden “showed up to the garden party wearing a backpack.” Take note, fashionistas.

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The Hill Times

## Results of The Hill Times’ 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Politically Savvy Survey

A total of 126 people responded to The Hill Times’ Politically Savvy Survey this year, conducted by Forum Research between June 10-July 5.

### Best Public Speaker

1. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 16.7%
2. Housing Minister Sean Fraser: 12.7%
3. Conservative MP Michael Barrett: 4.8%

### Best Cabinet Minister

1. Housing Minister Sean Fraser: 30.2%
2. Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne: 16.7%
3. Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc: 9.5%

### Most Effective Government Question Period Backbencher

1. Liberal MP Peter Fragiskatos: 5.6%
2. Liberal MP Anthony Housefather: 4.8%
3. Liberal MP Kody Blois: 4%

### Most Effective Conservative Question Period MP

1. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 26.2%
2. Conservative Deputy Leader Melissa Lantsman: 11.9%
3. Conservative MP Michael Barrett: 8.7%

### Most Effective Bloc Québécois Question Period MP

1. Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet: 26.2%
2. Bloc Québécois MP Kristina Michaud: 14.3%
3. Bloc Québécois MP Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: 7.1%

### Most Effective NDP Question Period MP

1. NDP MP Charlie Angus: 14.3%
2. NDP MP Heather McPherson: 12.7%
3. NDP House Leader Peter Julian: 10.3%

### Most Effective Cabinet Minister in Scrums

1. Immigration Minister Marc Miller: 18.3%
2. Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc: 12.7%
3. Housing Minister Sean Fraser: 9.5%

### Best Opposition MP in Scrums

1. Conservative Deputy Leader Melissa Lantsman: 11.9%
2. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 10.3%
3. Conservative MP Michael Barrett: 8.7%

### Most Quotable MP

1. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 26.2%
2. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 11.1%
3. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland: 8.7%

### Best Constituency MP

1. Citizens’ Services Minister Terry Beech: 6.3%
2. Conservative MP Michael Barrett: 4%
3. NDP MP Lori Idlout: 3.2%

### Most Influential Cabinet Minister

1. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland: 46%
2. Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc: 15.9%
3. Treasury Board President Anita Anand: 4.8%

### MP With Best Sense of Humour

1. Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc: 10.3%
2. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 8.7%
3. Housing Minister Sean Fraser: 6.3%

### Best MP to Work For

1. Conservative MP Michael Barrett: 4%
2. Citizens’ Services Minister Terry Beech, Housing Minister Sean Fraser, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 3.2%
3. NDP MP Laurel Collins, Liberal MP Peter Fragiskatos, Liberal MP Terry Sheehan, Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson: 2.4%

### Most Discreet MP

1. NDP MP Niki Ashton, Conservative MP Michael Chong: 4%
2. Conservative MP Michael Barrett, Conservative MP Michael Cooper: 3.2%
3. Liberal MP Brendan Hanley, Labour Minister Seamus O’Regan: 2.4%

### Hardest-Working MP

1. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 11.9%
2. Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux, Green Leader Elizabeth May: 5.6%
3. Conservative MP Michael Barrett: 4.8%

### Throws the Best Parties

1. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 8.7%
2. Quebec Assistants: 5.6%
3. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 4%

### Best Fundraiser

1. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 22.2%
2. Conservative Party of Canada: 8.7%
3. Conservative MP Michael Barrett, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 3.2%

### Hippest MP

1. Liberal MP Adam van Koeverden: 4.8%
2. NDP MP Charlie Angus, Minister for Women Marci Ien: 4%
3. Conservative MP Michael Barrett, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 3.2%

### Biggest Self-Promoter

1. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre: 32.5%
2. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: 16.7%
3. NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh: 4%



## Most Effective Conservative Question Period MP

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre 26.2%  
Deputy Leader Melissa Lantsman 11.9%  
MP Michael Barrett 8.7%

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade and Sam Garcia



## Most Quotable MP

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre 26.2%  
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau 11.1%  
Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland 8.7%

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade



## News

# ‘It’s all out war now’: Liberal MPs, senior Grits predict a ‘volatile’ summer with ‘lots of political games’ and ‘machinations’ at the ‘rockiest’ time of Trudeau’s leadership

Damaging PMO leaks about Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland is ‘not a great style of leadership,’ says Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research.

Continued from page 1

said a second Liberal MP who also spoke on a not-for-attribution-based interview with *The Hill Times* in order to be candid about the ongoing situation. “I feel a lot of my time is spent on politics than substantive issues. Now, it’s about political machinations. ... This is the beginning of the summer, and a lot of political games will be played until September.”

This MP also said that if Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) is planning to make any change to his cabinet or to his PMO team, it should be done soon.

“Any changes for them to be effective, the earlier they are happening the more effective they will be,” said this MP. “The later they happen, the less effect they will have.”

Liberal MPs are predicting the ongoing “volatility” within the party to continue amidst an unpredictable political environment where the prime minister insists he wants to stay on to lead the party in the next election while others both within and outside the party are calling for his resignation, and the stubborn low national polling numbers for Trudeau are making the whole situation even more complicated. Since last summer, the Liberals have been trailing the Conserva-



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, hugs Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland at a caucus meeting on April 17. Media reports suggest that Trudeau wants to shuffle Freeland out of Finance. Grit MPs say that whatever change Trudeau wants to make, he should do it sooner rather than later. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

tives in the polls, in some cases by as much as a 21 per cent margin.

Following last month’s bye-election loss, nine Liberal MPs signed a letter and sent it to the national caucus chair demanding an in-person caucus meeting to discuss why the party lost in Toronto-St. Paul’s, and what’s the strategy going forward.

Liberal MP Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay-Lacolle, Que.), chair of the national Liberal caucus, turned down this request citing “logistical reasons.” Since then, Trudeau has been reaching out to MPs to discuss the party’s surprising byelection loss. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) also told reporters two weeks ago that some members of the Toronto caucus met in her backyard to discuss why they lost in Toronto-St. Paul’s. Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.), the chair of the Toronto Liberal caucus, chaired the meeting.

The nine Liberal MPs met to get a national in-person caucus meeting, but added to a series of

random events both from inside and outside of the party that’s turning up the tension amongst Liberal MPs, cabinet, and the prime minister.

Recently, *The Canadian Press* reported on a book excerpt from former foreign affairs minister Marc Garneau in which he said that Canada has lost its standing under Trudeau, and it described the prime minister as “an ill-prepared leader who prioritizes politics and makes big pronouncements without any follow-through.”

Last week, *The Globe and Mail* published a front page story in which unnamed senior Prime Minister’s Office officials blamed Freeland for failing to sell the government’s economic message, which is taking its toll on the government’s overall popularity, among other things. Based on this story, it appears Freeland could be shuffled out of Finance. The story also suggested that Trudeau is trying to recruit former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney as his next finance minister.

“Two sources say the view of some senior officials within the PMO—including chief of staff Katie Telford—is that Ms. Freeland has been ineffective in selling the government’s economic policies that have come under assault from Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre,” reported *The Globe*. “Other criticism includes that Ms. Freeland is not doing enough to win over members of the Liberal caucus, the sources say.”

This story prompted a significant reaction from some senior Liberals and MPs who accused the PMO of repeating the same mistake it did with Bill Morneau’s

departure from Finance, and when Jody Wilson-Raybould was shuffled out of the justice portfolio. Morneau’s departure preceded a number of damaging media leaks about his handling of the pandemic and economic management. Similarly, Wilson-Raybould was removed from the justice portfolio, and one explanation offered by anonymous government sources was that she was “hard to get along with,” among other reasons. Later it turned out that one key reason for moving her out of the Justice Department was that she refused to intervene to save SNC-Lavalin from a criminal prosecution.

“The PMO is throwing their own DPM under the bus,” said one former senior Liberal. “Invoking Katie’s [Telford] name in doing it. Freeland has fought more battles for this government than anyone—she does not deserve this treatment.”

In a tweet, author Stephen Maher tweeted a page from his new book *The Prince* that suggested that leaks about Morneau were likely the reason why Carney never joined the Trudeau team.

“Seeing Morneau being treated so shabbily seems to have given Carney pause, and he did not allow himself to be seduced,” wrote Maher. “They spooked him by putting the shiv in Morneau.”

On social media, political insiders and pundits blasted the PMO for making anonymous negative comments, and suggested that Freeland should step down before she’s shuffled out of the portfolio.

“At this point, wouldn’t you resign rather than wait to be shoved aside, while the PMO talks anonymous shit about you to the press,”

tweeted Andrew Coyne, a *Globe and Mail* columnist and a regular panellist on the CBC’s *At Issue*.

Former Liberal strategist and senior PMO staffer Scott Reid said that this story is a consequence of either doing nothing, or delaying taking action after important political events.

“This is what happens when you leave a vacuum for two-and-a-half weeks,” wrote Reid on July 11. “It gets filled. With gossip. Or garbage. Or palace machinations. Or whatever this is. In any event, it’s the inevitable consequence of doing nothing in the aftermath of something.”

And Wilson-Raybould wrote on Twitter/X: “The Liberals being willing to sacrifice anyone, even the most blindly loyal, to try to protect and save a leader, makes it clear it is no longer a healthy or functioning political party. ... not to mention govt,” she said.

Some senior Liberals in interviews with *The Hill Times* described the Freeland story as an “all-out war” that will have serious consequences, intensifying an already toxic internal situation. These senior Liberals said that rather than accepting responsibility, the PMO is blaming everyone around them.

“Internally, it’s now just all-out war,” said one senior Liberal. “Maybe Freeland won’t fight back, but if you are the base you just wonder, ‘How do you have loyalty to people who have no loyalty back to you?’ That’s their biggest problem, and that’s their biggest issue right now ... They’re just panicked, they don’t know what to do.”

This source and others predicted that Freeland’s supporters will put out their side of the story, and may leak things about the PMO.

Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research, said that this is reflective of a “culture of denial” that the Prime Minister’s Office is ignoring the real problems. He said that if the PMO had any plans of shuffling Freeland out of Finance, there are other more respectful ways of doing so.

“More signs that it’s time for a change in leadership,” said Lyle. “It’s not a great team-building style of leadership. Let’s say they go ahead and make a change having already leaked it, it’s not going to help Chrystia’s morale, and everyone else is looking around and saying, ‘Well she’s got a name, she’s got a brand, if they do this to her just imagine what they would do to me.’ In my experience this is not a great style of leadership, but this is this government’s style of leadership.”

Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, said that Trudeau is running against the people’s desire for change, and he should expect turbulence.

“None of this is good,” said Bricker. “For the prime minister, it’s the rockiest time of his entire leadership. He may believe in the mission of stopping the Conservative Party. Okay, well, that’s great. But if you ask Canadians what they would prefer, they would prefer change. And ultimately, that’s what the prime minister is running against.”

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The Hill Times



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says he has been trying for years to get former Bank of Canada and Bank of England governor Mark Carney, pictured, to join federal politics. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia



# Trudeau, Singh no-shows at Calgary Stampede where Poilievre rails against their 'woke' agenda

Continued from page 4

on board and hit the reset button for his party, which is obviously taking a lot of energy."

"The second thing that might be in play is that he may not actually help by coming to Calgary," said Williams, adding it could be "a bit awkward" given Chahal—whose Stampede pancake breakfast Trudeau has staffed for the past two years—is among MPs calling for an immediate, in-person national caucus meeting following the Toronto-St. Paul's, Ont., loss to the Conservatives on June 24.

As CBC News reported, national caucus chair Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay-Lacolle, Que.) shut down that request saying in a caucus email it was "impossible" to organize due to summertime "scheduling logistics."

Williams speculated that with Chahal in Calgary, "perhaps Justin Trudeau doesn't want too close an association with someone who is now publicly associated with the demand for an emergency caucus meeting."

She said the prime minister might prefer the safer photo-ops with fellow world leaders attending NATO's 75th anniversary summit held in Washington, D.C., from July 9-11.

Because of those leadership challenges, "Trudeau is really carefully scripting his appearances," she said.

"I think he's going to play this summer extremely carefully be-



Alberta's two Liberal MPs Randy Boissonnault and George Chahal, front left in black Stetsons, took part in the Calgary Stampede festivities. Photograph courtesy of X

cause I think he's trying to stretch out the time that he meets MPs. The choreography around his public appearances in Canada is going to be very strict and deliberate," she said.

"But he's the prime minister. It's the Stampede."

An NDP spokesperson told *The Hill Times* on background that Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) had been "unavailable" to attend the Stampede, but that he was in Calgary and Edmonton last month, and plans to "connect with

Albertans during his 'Change the rules' tour this summer."

However, Williams said Singh may have wanted to avoid his own awkward moment in Calgary where the city's former mayor and newly elected provincial NDP Leader Naheed Nenshi has indicated his intention to ask his party's membership to part ways with their federal counterparts.

That's because Singh is associated being pro-environment, as well as "anti-oil-and-gas," she said.

"That doesn't fly very well in Alberta, and it could be a real liability showing up," Williams explained.

Gone are the days, said Williams, where federal leaders—such as the late NDP leader Jack Layton—could drop by the Stampede without any direct partisan considerations. Now, the focus is on federal and provincial seats at risk in Alberta.

For Turnbull, it's a troubling trend. "I think it is not a good sign of the political times that we're

in that political leaders do not see enough value to go to places where it's going to be hard for them," she said. "Our politics are so microtargeted. 'Do we have a chance of winning this riding?' No? Okay, well then we're going to go somewhere else. We're going to places where we could score points and we're not going to bother with the places that we're not.' It's so transactional."

The Stampede, meanwhile, is the perfect playground for the Conservatives—who hold 30 of the province's 34 seats in the House of Commons—to connect with their electoral base.

*The Hill Times* reached out to Poilievre's office as well as to several Conservative MPs about the summer festival but did not hear back.

Conservative MP Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, Alta.) posted a photo of four of his colleagues—Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, Alta.), Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, Alta.), Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, Alta.) and Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, Alta.)—on the Stampede Parade bandwagon.

Still, Williams credited Trudeau for visiting Alberta, a province generally considered a "fly-over" by federal leaders, even during election campaigns, and not one where the prime minister or the Liberals have much political support.

"He's just stubbornly refused to let that deter him," she said of Trudeau. "He came here when he had no seats—and has a couple, which is not enough to make a huge difference in the House. It's just a matter of refusing to fly over Alberta the way so many politicians do, and that's been appreciated by Calgarians and Albertans who are not necessarily Liberal supporters or party members."

*The Hill Times*

# Unions, advocacy groups cautiously optimistic about Anand's call for extension of '25-and-out' pensions

Continued from page 16

afforded to our correctional workers, armed forces and national people," said Page, adding that "most of us know someone who works in these areas—including family members or friends."

Page said that as someone who sat behind a desk for 30-plus years as a federal public servant, "I would not compare the mental, emotional, or physical demands on the same level as my brother who worked in the RCMP."

"I did arithmetic, wrote memos, and went to meetings in comfortable surroundings. The demands on frontline workers are

enormous, and we citizens benefit from their service. One way or another, front line workers should be compensated for the demands on their jobs—wages or benefits like earlier retirement," said Page.

Page also made note that Anand, as president of the Treasury Board, has access to an external advisory committee on public service pensions who can assess fairness in policies and independent actuaries who can analyze costs.

"When the government tables legislation to expand early retirement benefits to a select [or] defined group of additional front line workers, Parliament and

Canadians will be well positioned with facts and arguments to provide the appropriate authorities," said Page.

## Michael Wernick: Big 'slice of the federal service aren't office workers'

Former clerk of the Privy Council and top bureaucrat Michael Wernick, who served in the role from 2016 to 2019, wrote that "relative to the size of the total workforce and total wage bill, this isn't a huge thing."

"The inflation adjustments they got after the strike would generate bigger cost numbers," said Wernick in an email to *The Hill Times*, adding that "it is a useful reminder that a significant slice of the federal service aren't office workers, and have jobs that are at elevated risk of physical and psychological injury, and burnout. They have higher rates of going on long term disability or taking medical retirement."

Wernick said that the longer term question is whether the next government—"who won't be dependent on the NDP and its union allies"—will leave the status quo defined benefit pension system

they inherit as is, or try to reform it as some provinces have done.

"It would be possible and arguably a good idea to add elements of a defined contribution algorithm, or add some optionality of coverages, but that would be controversial," said Wernick.

## CBSA workers sign tentative deal

On July 4, more than 9,000 workers at the CBSA voted overwhelmingly in favour of ratification of a tentative agreement with the government, with 91 per cent of ballots cast in favour of the new contract, according to a PSAC and CIU release.

The four-year collective agreement expires on June 20, 2026, and comes months after thousands of border service workers commenced strike votes on April 10 as a group that declared an impasse in bargaining with the government in September 2023.

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Laura Ryckewaert  
**Hill Climbers**

# Fresh faces in the offices of ministers Anandasangaree, Kherra

Plus, Chike Agbasi is back on the job as director of operations to Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario Minister Filomena Tassi.

Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister **Gary Anandasangaree** has a new legislative assistant in his office: **Quinten Beelik**.



Quinten Beelik is now a legislative assistant to Minister Anandasangaree. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Until recently, Beelik had been an assistant to Surrey Centre, B.C., Liberal MP **Randeep Sarai**. A former House of Commons page with the 2018-19 cohort, he also has experience as a junior project support officer with Global Affairs Canada.

In Anandasangaree's office, Beelik replaces **Kyle Leonard** who has been promoted to issues manager and senior communications adviser. Leonard was hired to work for Anandasangaree in August 2023 shortly after that summer's cabinet shuffle which saw the Toronto MP named to cabinet for the first time. Leonard's CV includes past roles as an assistant to Ontario Liberal MP **Sonia Sidhu**, and as a communications officer with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, among other things.

**Paul Harrison** is director of parliamentary affairs to the Crown-Indigenous relations minister, while **Bahoz Dara Aziz** is director of communications. **Shailli Patel** is chief of staff to Anandasangaree.

Taking a hop, skip, and a jump over to Diversity, Inclusion, and Persons with Disabilities Minister **Kamal Kherra's** office, the minister has likewise added to her parliamentary affairs team.

**Veronica Dhindsa** marked her first day as an assistant for parliamentary affairs and assistant to the minister's parliamentary secretary, Liberal MP **Sameer Zuberi**, on May 20. Earlier this month, she was promoted to the added role of Quebec regional affairs advisers as part of a string of changes in the minister's office.



Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Gary Anandasangaree, left, and Diversity and Inclusion Minister Kamal Kherra have both added to their ministerial teams. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

Dhindsa was most recently working for the federal Liberal Party as a fundraising co-ordinator, and she's also a former communications assistant to Orléans, Ont., Liberal MP **Marie-France Lalonde**. Previously from Montreal, she holds a bachelor's degree in criminology and criminal justice from Carleton University.



Veronica Dhindsa with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Dhindsa takes over the Quebec desk from **Juan David Gonzalez Camacho** who previously wore three hats as the regional affairs adviser for both Quebec and the Atlantic, as policy adviser to the minister.

Gonzalez Camacho has dropped his regional duties, and is now solely a policy adviser. He's been working for Kherra since July 2023, starting just before that month's shuffle as a Quebec regional affairs adviser in Kherra's office as then-seniors minister. He is also a past executive assistant in then-sport minister **Pascale St-Onge's** office, a former Senator's assistant, and a former Senate page.

**Callum Haney**, who until recently was an issues manager and assistant to the parliamentary secretary in Kherra's



Callum Haney is now Atlantic regional affairs and outreach adviser to Minister Kherra. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

office, is now Atlantic regional affairs and outreach adviser.

Haney has been working for Kherra since October 2023, and before then spent roughly two years working in the Liberal research bureau (LRB), starting as a special assistant for outreach in late 2021 and ending as a communications adviser with the caucus support office. Prior to joining the LRB, Haney had worked on now-Women and Gender Equality Minister **Marci Ien's** successful 2021 re-election campaign in Toronto Centre, Ont.

Also currently focused on outreach in Kherra's office are outreach manager **Elvira Zukanovic**, and Ontario regional affairs and outreach adviser **Hanna Batool**.

**Helen Gao** is chief of staff to the minister whose full-time team otherwise currently includes: director of operations **Jasmeen Shergill**, director of parliamentary affairs **Danielle Moriarty**, director of policy **Stephanie Muccilli**, director of communications **Alisson Lévesque**, deputy director of communications **Patrick Vaughan**, communications assistant **Alliancé Babunga**, senior policy adviser **Carina Gabriele**, West and North regional and policy adviser **Darren Choi**, senior adviser for disabilities **Kevin Murphy**, executive assistant **Nicholas McCue**, and ministerial driver **Luc Bisson**.

Meanwhile, over in Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario Minister **Filomena Tassi's** office, **Chike Agbasi** has returned to his post as director of operations, in turn marking an end to **Fadi El Masry's** time on the minister's team.



Chike Agbasi is back on the job as operations director to Minister Tassi. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

El Masry had joined Tassi's office in September 2023 to fill in as interim operations head while Agbasi was away on paternity leave.

Agbasi officially returned to the job on June 14. He's been in charge of operations for the FedDev Ontario minister since the end of 2021, starting under then-minister **Helena Jaczek**, and continuing after Tassi took over the portfolio in August 2022.

El Masry, a former director with the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association, and ex-principal with FEM Strategies, has had a soft landing, and is now executive director of Canadian Aviation Pride.

**Jessie Pierre** is currently acting chief of staff to Tassi while **Jennifer Kuss** is on leave of her own, and **Elie Kallab** is filling in for Pierre as acting director of policy. Also currently in the minister's office are: **Edward Hutchinson**, press secretary; **Owen McAdams**, regional adviser for the Greater Toronto Area; **Bita Pejam**, manager of operations and stakeholder relations; **Tanveer Kaur Tur**, southern Ontario regional adviser; **Sara Kasum**, digital communications adviser; **Muntaha Ahmed**, executive assistant to the minister and chief of staff; and ministerial driver **Daniel Rozon**.

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*The Hill Times*



Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario Minister Filomena Tassi recently welcomed back her operations director. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Parliamentary Calendar

Houston to host Council of the Federation July 15-17 in Halifax



Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston, chair of the Council of the Federation, will host the 2024 Summer Meeting of Canada's Premiers from Monday, July 15, to Wednesday, July 17, at the Westin Nova Scotian in Halifax, N.S. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

**MONDAY, JULY 15**

**House Not Sitting**—The House is on its summer break. It resumes sitting on Sept. 16, and will sit for four weeks from Sept. 16-Oct. 11, but will take Monday, Sept. 30, off. It breaks Oct. 14-18, and resumes sitting on Oct. 21. It sits Oct. 21-Nov. 9, and breaks on Nov. 11 for Remembrance Day week until Nov. 15. It resumes again on Nov. 18, and is scheduled to sit from Nov. 18 to Dec. 17.

**MONDAY, JULY 15—WEDNESDAY, JULY 17**

**Council of the Federation's Summer Meeting**—Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston, chair of the Council of the Federation, will host the 2024 Summer Meeting of Canada's Premiers from Monday, July 15, to Wednesday, July 17, at the Westin Nova Scotian in Halifax, N.S.

**TUESDAY, JULY 16 - WEDNESDAY, JULY 17**

**Minister Ng in Italy for G7 Ministerial**—International Trade Minister Mary Ng will participate in the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Trade in Villa San Giovanni

and Reggio Calabria, Italy, from Tuesday, July 16, to Wednesday, July 17.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 17**

**Webinar: 'Can Real Estate Conversion Help Boost Housing Supply?'**—Former Toronto deputy mayor Ana Bailão from Dream and Gensler's Steven Paynter will join StrategyCorp panellists in a live webinar on how building conversion works, what needs to happen for these projects to successfully move forward, and their thoughts on how the three levels of government can help. Wednesday, July 17, at 10 a.m. ET. Register at [tinyurl.com/4773pyp3](https://tinyurl.com/4773pyp3).

**THURSDAY, JULY 18—SATURDAY, JULY 20**

**The Chef's Table with Global Affairs' Executive Chef**—Chef Pascal Ménard, the executive chef for Global Affairs Canada and Rideau Gate, will take part in The Chef's Table, a farm-to-table feast with menus curated by Canadian chefs and musical entertainment, presented by the Ontario Festival of Small Halls, and the National Arts Centre's Resident Chefs Program. Thursday, July 18, to Saturday, July 20, at 1 Elgin Restaurant, National

Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St. Details online: [ontariosmallhalls.com](https://ontariosmallhalls.com).

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 24**

**Bank of Canada to Announce Overnight Rate**—The Bank of Canada will announce its decision on the target for the overnight rate. Wednesday, July 24, at 10a.m. Details online: [bankofcanada.ca](https://bankofcanada.ca).

**FRIDAY, JULY 26—SUNDAY, AUG. 11**

**Summer Olympics**—Cheer for Team Canada as they take part in the XXXIII Olympic Summer Games. Friday, July 26, to Sunday, Aug. 11, in Paris, France. Details: [olympics.com](https://olympics.com).

**WEDNESDAY, AUG. 7**

**Royal St. John's Regatta**—Keep an eye out for federal politicians at the annual Royal St. John's Regatta. Wednesday, Aug. 7, in St. John's, N.L. Details: [stjohnsregatta.ca](https://stjohnsregatta.ca).

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 20**

**Senator Jaffer's Retirement**—Today is British Columbia ISG Senator Mobina

Jaffer's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 4**

**Bank of Canada to Announce Overnight Rate**—The Bank of Canada will announce its decision on the target for the overnight rate. Wednesday, Sept. 4, at 10a.m. Details online: [bankofcanada.ca](https://bankofcanada.ca).

**TUESDAY, SEPT. 10 - TUESDAY, SEPT. 24**

**UN General Assembly**—The 79<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly opens today with a high-level General Debate. Tuesday, Sept. 24, to Tuesday, Sept. 24, in New York City.

**THURSDAY, SEPT. 12**

**Privy Council Clerk Hannaford to Deliver Remarks**—John Hannaford, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, will deliver remarks at a roundtable lunch hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Thursday, Sept. 12 at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details online: [cdhowe.org](https://cdhowe.org).

**MONDAY, SEPT. 16**

**House Resumes Sitting**—The House will resume sitting on Monday, Sept. 16.

**MONDAY, SEPT. 23**

**Space Canada's Annual Parliamentary Reception**—Brian Gallant invites you to Space Canada's third Annual Parliamentary Reception featuring networking with leaders of Canada's emerging space ecosystem, food and drinks, several space-related interactive displays, and a special guest speaker. Monday, Sept. 23, 5-7 p.m. ET at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building. Details and RSVP to: [RSVP@space-canada.ca](mailto:RSVP@space-canada.ca).

**TUESDAY, SEPT. 24**

**Next Frontier in Canada's Digital Divide**—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts a virtual event, "The Next Frontier in Canada's Digital Divide." Participants include Ian Scott, former CRTC chair; Bill Murdoch, executive director of Clear Sky Connections; and Elisha Ram, senior assistant deputy minister at Employment and Social Development Canada's Income Security and Social Development Branch. Tuesday, Sept. 24, at a time to be confirmed. Details online: [irpp.org](https://irpp.org).

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 25**

**CUTA 2024 Policy Forum**—The Canadian Urban Transit Association hosts its 2024 Policy Forum in Ottawa. Some of North America's leading transit and urban mobility experts will discuss the industry's future and the role of federal public transit policy. This year's event will focus on affordability, regional co-ordination and integration, and transit's role in addressing Canada's productivity gap. Wednesday, Sept. 25 at the Hilton Garden Inn Ottawa Downtown, 361 Queen St. Details via Eventbrite.

**MONDAY, SEPT. 30**

**National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**—The fourth annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day, is today, honouring the children who never returned home and Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 4—SATURDAY, OCT. 5**

**The Francophonie Summit**—The Francophonie Summit will take place on Friday, Oct. 4, to Saturday, Oct. 5, in Villers-Cotterêts and Paris, France. Details: [francophonie.org](https://francophonie.org).

**SUNDAY, OCT. 6—FRIDAY, OCT. 11**

**ASEAN Summit**—The ASEAN Summit will take place in Vientiane, Laos, from Sunday, Oct. 6, to Friday, Oct. 11.

**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 9**

**Annual Bill Graham Lecture and Dinner**—Louise Blais will moderate a discussion featuring former Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien and former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo during the second annual Bill Graham Lecture on International Affairs. Wednesday, Oct. 9 at 6 p.m. at Arcadian Court, 400 Bay St., Toronto. Details online: [thecic.org](https://thecic.org).

**THURSDAY, OCT. 10**

**Frank McKenna Awards 2024**—The Public Policy Forum hosts the "Frank McKenna Awards 2024: An evening celebrating outstanding public policy leadership in Atlantic Canada." Honourees to be announced. Thursday, Oct. 10, at 5 p.m. AT at Pier 21, 1055 Marginal Rd., Halifax. Details online: [ppforum.ca](https://ppforum.ca).

**SUNDAY, OCT. 13**

**Senator Bellemare's Retirement**—Today is Quebec PSG Senator Diane Bellemare's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

**MONDAY, OCT. 21- SATURDAY, OCT. 26**

**Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting**—The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting will take place in Apia, Samoa, from Monday, Oct. 21 to Saturday, Oct. 26. Details online: [samoachogm2024.ws](https://samoachogm2024.ws).

**MONDAY, OCT. 21—FRIDAY NOV. 1**

**COP16 Conference on Biodiversity**—The COP16 Conference on Biodiversity will take place from Monday, Oct. 21, to Friday, Nov. 1, in Cali, Colombia. Details online: [cbd.int](https://cbd.int).

**WEDNESDAY, OCT 23**

**Bank of Canada to Announce Overnight Rate**—The Bank of Canada will announce its decision on the target for the overnight rate and publish the *Monetary Policy Report*. Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 10a.m. Details online: [bankofcanada.ca](https://bankofcanada.ca).

**MONDAY, OCT. 21—SATURDAY OCT. 26**

**IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings**—The 2024 annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will take place in Washington, D.C., from Monday, Oct. 21, to Saturday, Oct. 26. Details: [worldbank.org](https://worldbank.org).

**TUESDAY, OCT. 29—THURSDAY, OCT. 31**

**CAEH24: The National Conference on Ending Homelessness**—The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness will host its 11<sup>th</sup> annual Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa from Tuesday, Oct. 29 to Thursday, Oct. 31. Registration is open. Details online: [caeh.ca](https://caeh.ca).

**TUESDAY, NOV. 5**

**Senator Omidvar's Retirement**—Today is Ontario ISG Senator Ratna Omidvar's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

**U.S. Presidential Election**—The U.S. presidential election happens on Tuesday, Nov. 5. U.S. President Joe Biden and Republican candidate Donald Trump, who lost the last election, will likely face off against each other in the election happening Tuesday, Nov. 5. It will be the first rematch in a U.S. presidential election in 70 years.

**TUESDAY, DEC. 31**

**Foreign Interference Commission Reports**—The Foreign Interference Commission's final report will be released on Tuesday, Dec. 31. For more information, check out [foreigninterferencecommission.ca](https://foreigninterferencecommission.ca).

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental details under the subject line 'Parliamentary Calendar' to [news@hilltimes.com](mailto:news@hilltimes.com) by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper.



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