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THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR, NO. 2215

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

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NEWS

'We're behind': some senior Conservatives call out central campaign for failing to focus more on Trump's tariffs

BY ABBAS RANA

As the election campaign enters its final stretch and advance voting begins, some Conservatives are voicing concerns that the party's messaging of focusing heavily on the cost of living and not enough on the pressing American trade war reflects a troubling disconnect.

They warn that this misalignment is putting the party at risk in key strongholds, and opening the door to serious Liberal challenges in seven ridings in Alberta, long considered the bedrock of the Conservative base.

"As you can see, we're behind," said a senior Conservative in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "The numbers are very challenging to win government. We need to see a change [in messaging]. There's no way around that, that's pretty straightforward. We've got to appeal to more Canadians who want to vote for us. We're killing it on the ground. It's a very unusual campaign."

According to seat projections by polling aggregator 338Canada.com, if an election were to happen now, the Liberals would win 193 seats, the Conservatives 121, the Bloc Québécois 21, the NDP eight, and the Greens one seat.

A Nanos Research poll released April 17 suggested that if an election were held today, the Liberals would receive 44 per cent of the vote, followed by the Conservatives at 39 per cent, the NDP at nine per cent, and the Bloc Québécois at 6.2 per cent. But Nanos' poll also found a battle brewing for middle-aged voters. Liberals have led among voters over 55 years old, and the Conservatives among voters under 35, but it's now "an absolute dead heat" with the Conservatives at 42 per cent, the Liberals at 42 per cent, and the NDP at seven per cent, Nanos' poll said.

NEWS

Among riding races for political leaders, Carney 'safe' bet to win; Singh likely to 'lose,' says 338Canada

Mark Carney is expected to win Nepean, Pierre Poilievre will likely win Carleton, but Jagmeet Singh is expected to lose his seat, Yves-François Blanchet's riding is 'leaning' to the Bloc, Elizabeth May is in a tight fight, and Jonathan Pedneault is not expected to win in Outremont, Que., according to 338Canada's Philippe Fournier. Veteran pollster Nik Nanos said Singh is 'in the most trouble' among the major party leaders. **See story, by Christopher Guly on p. 24.**



It's going to be a nail-biter of a race on Monday, April 28: Pictured top left and clockwise: Prime Minister Mark Carney, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, Green Party Co-Leaders Jonathan Pedneault and Elizabeth May, and Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

NEWS

'Angry' Conservative base and 'fearful' Liberals expected to boost turnout this election, say political players

BY ABBAS RANA

As the clock ticks down to one of the most consequential elections in recent history, both the Liberal and Conservative support bases are highly energized and driven by contentious issues like the United States trade war and the cost of living, which will likely result in one of the highest voter turnouts in recent memory, say political players.

"The voter turnout will be higher because the support [bases] for both of the two front-runners is highly motivated, and it's close," said Nik Nanos, chief data scientist and founder of Nanos Research, in an interview with *The Hill Times*.

"Even for those former NDP voters who are now voting for the Liberals, they're highly motivated because as much as they might like the New Democrats, and as much as they might like [NDP Leader] Jagmeet Singh, they definitely do not like or want [Conservative Leader] Pierre Poilievre and the Conservatives to win government. There's going to be motivation across the board in this next federal election," said Nanos.

Political insiders interviewed for this article said that voter turnout is typically higher in elections where voters are seeking change. This time, both progressive and right-of-centre voters appear highly motivated, driven by the ongoing trade war with the U.S., President Donald Trump's musings about annexing Canada, and a growing appetite for change.

In past change elections, high turnout has generally benefited the official opposition, as

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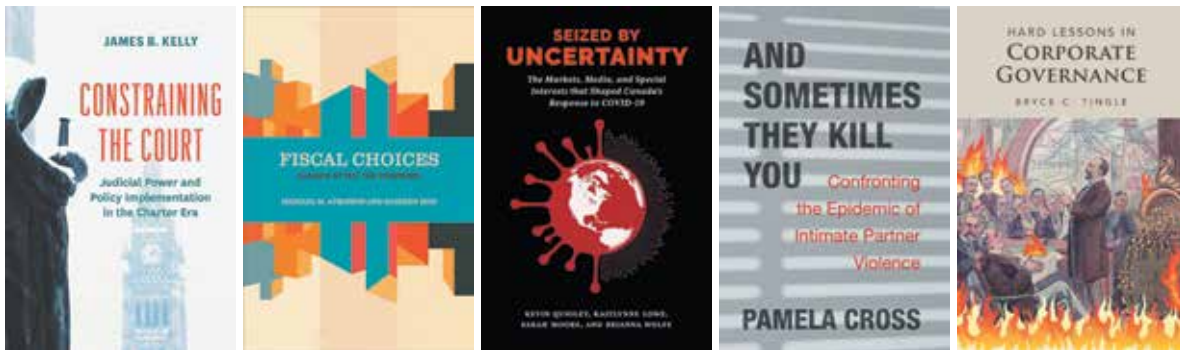
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Heard on the Hill



By Christina Leadlay

‘These books all contribute to the national debate of headline issues’: Donner Prize releases its shortlist for best public policy book



Author, author: The 2024 Donner Prize shortlist includes *Constraining the Court* by James B. Kelly; *Fiscal Choices* by Michael M. Atkinson and Haizhen Mou; *Seized by Uncertainty* by Kevin Quigley, Kaitlynnne Lowe, Sarah Moore, and Brianna Wolfe; *And Sometimes They Kill You* by Pamela Cross; and *Hard Lessons in Corporate Governance* by Bryce C. Tingle. Book covers courtesy of University of Toronto Press, *Between The Lines*, UBC Press, McGill-Queen’s University Press and Cambridge University Press

The Donner Canadian Foundation released its shortlist of books vying for this year’s prestigious Donner Prize for the best public policy book by a Canadian.

In announcing the titles last week, **Gregory Belton**, chair of the Donner Canadian Foundation, said the five books were winnowed down from over 80 titles submitted by 47 publishers in both official languages.

“These books all contribute to the national debate of headline issues,” he said in a April 15 press release, noting that two books examine Canada’s response to the COVID pandemic, another unpacks the relationship between Supreme Court and the government, one looks at best practices for corporate governance,

and one “offers a sobering and profound discussion on intimate partner violence,” said Belton.

The shortlist includes: *Hard Lessons in Corporate Governance*, by **Bryce C. Tingle** (Cambridge University Press); *Fiscal Choices: Canada After the Pandemic*, by **Michael M. Atkinson** and **Haizhen Mou** (University of Toronto Press); *And Sometimes They Kill You: Confronting the Epidemic of Intimate Partner Violence*, by **Pamela Cross** (*Between The Lines*); *Seized by Uncertainty: The Markets, Media and Special Interests that Shaped Canada’s Response to COVID-19*, by **Kevin Quigley**, **Kaitlynnne Lowe**, **Sarah Moore**, and **Brianna Wolfe** (McGill-Queen’s University Press); and *Constraining*

the Court: Judicial Power and Policy Implementation in the Charter Era, by **James B. Kelly** (UBC Press). The winner will be announced on May 15 in Toronto at a gala dinner.

In welcoming his second Donner nomination—he was a finalist in 2005—Kelly wrote he was “Honoured + humbled to be a finalist for the 2024” on X on April 15. “See you at the awards ceremony May 15 in Toronto,” he wrote to his fellow shortlisted authors.

Founded in 1998, the Donner Prize annually rewards excellence and innovation in public policy writing by Canadians. The winning title receives \$60,000, while the four other finalists receive \$7,500.

Ottawa scores A-, Gatineau an F on fiscal transparency: report

Fiscal Transparency Scorecard: 2024	
A+	Richmond
A-	Ottawa, Quebec City, Vancouver
B+	Markham, Saskatoon, Surrey
B	Brampton, Burnaby, Mississauga, Peel Region, York Region
B-	Laval, Vaughan
C+	London, Winnipeg
C	Edmonton, Niagara Region
C-	Calgary, Durham Region, Halton Region, Longueuil, Montreal,
D+	Oakville, Toronto, Waterloo Region
D	Kitchener
D-	Halifax
F	Gatineau, Hamilton, Regina, Windsor

The C.D. Howe Institute graded 32 major Canadian municipalities on their fiscal transparency in a report published April 15. Image courtesy of the C.D. Howe Institute

The C.D. Howe Institute released its annual report card grading 32 of Canada’s major municipalities in terms of basic fiscal transparency, and the results on either side of the Ottawa River couldn’t be more stark.

The City of Ottawa received an A-, while Gatineau, Que., brought home a F.

In their report *Could Do Better: Grading the Fiscal Accountability of Canada’s Municipalities, 2024*, **William B.P. Robson** and **Nicholas Dahir** assess “how clear, timely, and useful city budgets and year-end financial statements are. The results show wide disparities.”

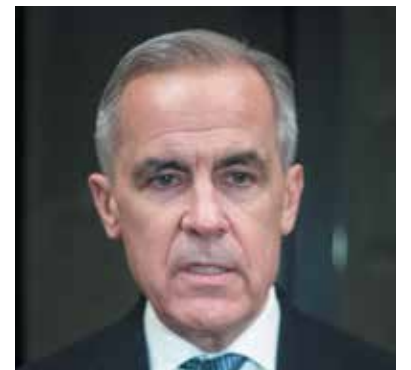
The capital city’s high score is “thanks to timely reporting, consolidated key numbers, and clear reconciliations between their projections and their year-end results,” said Robson, the Institute’s President and CEO, in the April 15 release.

Gatineau’s poor showing is likely down to “common problems” including budgets passed after the fiscal year had already started, missing or hard-to-find numbers, and financial statements that were late or impossible to reconcile with the original budget.

So how to do better? The report calls for fixes including approving budgets before the fiscal year starts, presenting the budget numbers in the same PSAS-consistent format as year-end statements, and providing apples-to-apples comparisons to the original budget in the year-end statements.

“Local governments provide so much—roads, water, emergency services—and those things cost,” said Robson. “Clear budgeting isn’t just a technical issue. It’s a basic requirement of good governance.”

Netanyahu slams Carney on social media



Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and Prime Minister Mark Carney. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade and courtesy of Flickr

Israel’s Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu** called out his Canadian counterpart **Mark Carney** on social media last week for something Carney said during a campaign stop in Calgary.

“Mr. Carney, backtrack your irresponsible statement!” Netanyahu said, quoting a April 9 post on X from *The Toronto Sun*’s **Brian Passifiume**: “Liberal Leader Mark Carney lets slip his stance on his Israel policy when he responded to an anti-Israel heckler asking about the ‘geno-

cide’ in Gaza ‘I’m aware, that’s why we have an arms embargo,’ Carney said, to cheers of ‘Carney! Carney! Carney!’ from the crowd.”

“Canada has always sided with civilization. So should Mr. Carney. But instead of supporting Israel, a democracy that is fighting a just war with just means against the barbarians of Hamas, he attacks the one and only Jewish state,” wrote Netanyahu on April 10.

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Poilievre credits his kids with making him more empathetic

Conservative Leader **Pierre Poilievre** credits parenthood with having made him more empathetic to the hardships facing families, especially those caring for a child with a disability—as his eldest child has special needs.

Poilievre candidly shared some details about his two young children during a 90-minute-long interview with *The Knowledge Project*’s host **Shane Parrish** on April 14.

“Has becoming a parent changed what you think is important for the future of Canada?” Parrish asked Poilievre about seven minutes into their chat.

“Yes, it has,” he replied contemplatively, going on to describe his “two great kids”: three-year-old **Cruz** and six-year-old **Valentina**.

Cruz “is very ambitious, curious, inquisitive, and I know that he is going to do great whatever he does,” said Poilievre.

“Little Valentina, she has some special needs. She is six years old and she’s non-verbal right now,” he explained. “So she has a hard time communicating with us. But we have learned to take her cues, and really celebrate the raw authenticity that she has.”

Poilievre mused that he often thinks about what his daughter’s life will be like as an adult. “How is she going to pay her bills when she is older? What will her life look like when she is 60? ... how do we

build up a nest egg for her so that she can have a good life?” He said it’s these concerns that make him think about other families who “are perhaps not as fortunate as us who have a child with a disability. How do they pay their bills? So I think it’s given me a lot more empathy to the different challenges and hardships that families have to fight through.”



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, left, chats with *The Knowledge Project*’s host Shane Parrish on April 14, 2025. Screenshot courtesy of YouTube

Enhancing Canada's Economic Prosperity through Strategic Business Immigration

Open letter to Political Party Leaders

As the CEO of the Canadian Association of Professional Immigration Consultants (CAPIC), I am writing to emphasize the critical importance of business immigration to Canada's economic future and to present CAPIC's recommendations for redesigning our Business Immigration Programs (BIPs).

Canada is at a pivotal moment, navigating profound global economic transformations, geopolitical shifts, and climate challenges. Amidst these complexities, sustainable immigration remains a cornerstone of our national prosperity. Labour shortages, an aging population, and intensifying global competition for talent and capital necessitate bold, innovative approaches to immigration policy. Business immigration offers a strategic tool to attract entrepreneurs and foreign capital that can drive economic growth, create employment, and enhance community resilience.

THE CURRENT CHALLENGE

Our existing BIPs are fragmented and underperforming, failing to generate the attraction of foreign capital, innovation, and regional economic impact that Canada needs. Rising U.S. trade protectionism, persistent housing shortages, productivity challenges, and regional economic vulnerabilities further underscore the urgency for a comprehensive redesign of these programs.

THE STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY

CAPIC envisions a renewed business immigration ecosystem that mobilizes international individuals interested in contributing to Canada's infrastructure funds, attracts export-driven entrepreneurs, supports clean technology ventures, and fosters regional economic resilience. By transforming business immigration from a narrow pathway to permanent residence into a dynamic driver of sustainable economic development, Canada can position itself as a global magnet for entrepreneurs and foreign capital.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Modern, Sector-Focused Federal BIP Streams:** Introduce federal BIP streams aligned with Canada's long-term economic goals, including critical infrastructure and housing contributors, export-oriented entrepreneurs, and green economy ventures.
- **Refinement of Existing Programs:** Strengthen programs and pathways under the International Mobility Program, establishing clear paths to permanent residence based on successful business experience and provincial nominations.
- **Risk-Based Net Worth Verification:** Implement a tiered risk-based verification model to maintain program integrity while reducing unnecessary barriers for qualified applicants and expediting processing times.

- **Performance Metrics and Monitoring:** Establish clear performance metrics and monitoring systems to track outcomes and ensure transparency.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS IMMIGRANTS

Business immigrants bring not only foreign capital but also entrepreneurial expertise, innovation, and global networks. Their contributions to housing, infrastructure, and green technologies can address Canada's pressing needs, create jobs, and stimulate economic cycles in communities across the country. By attracting and retaining these individuals, Canada can enhance its economic resilience, diversify trade partnerships, and drive sustainable growth.

CALL TO ACTION

As leaders of Canada's political parties, I urge you to take decisive action to implement these recommendations. By doing so, we can ensure that Canada becomes more prosperous in the long term, leveraging the full potential of business immigration to drive economic growth and national resilience.

CONCLUSION

Canada stands at a critical juncture, with the opportunity to transform its Business Immigration Programs into a globally competitive driver of economic prosperity. CAPIC's detailed submission includes a comprehensive slate of recommendations on this topic, providing a practical roadmap to harness global talent and foreign capital, support regional development, drive innovation, and strengthen Canada's position on the world stage.

We look forward to continued collaboration with IRCC and the Government of Canada to realize this shared vision for Canada's future. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Dory Jade, C.Dir.
CEO, Canadian Association
of Professional Immigration
Consultants (CAPIC)



Party tactics, online abuse could be behind fewer candidates running in 2025 compared to past elections

There are 1,959 candidates contesting the 343 ridings across the country this year, the fewest since 2015.

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

Despite the addition of five new ridings to the electoral map, there are fewer candidates in the running to become MPs in this federal election compared to the past two, with strategic targeting of certain ridings and a fear of online harassment among the reasons cited.

"In terms of MPs who are choosing not to run again, a number of them have said explicitly that online harassment has been a factor," said Dr. Beatrice Wayne, director of research and policy at the Samara Centre for Democracy. "So while we see this for people who are choosing not to run again, it's also certainly a factor for people choosing not to run in the first place."

There are 1,959 candidates contesting the 343 ridings across the country this year, the fewest since 2015. The number of candidates has declined since 2019, when 2,146 candidates nominated to contest 338 ridings. In 2021, 2,010 candidates nominated in the 338 districts.

The Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP are all one candidate short of a full slate. A Liberal candidate is absent from the ballot in Ponoka-Didsbury, Alta.; a Conservative will not appear in Québec Centre, Que.; and the NDP will not field a candidate in South Shore-St. Margarets, N.S.

In each of the three ridings, the party that is missing an official candidate came third or lower in 2021, based on transposed results under the new boundaries.

In Ponoka-Didsbury, the Liberals have endorsed Zarnab Zafar, but she will appear on the ballot with no affiliation due to what the party told The Canadian Press was a "clerical error" with Elections Canada.

A similar situation is occurring in South Shore-St. Margarets for the NDP, after party candidate Brendan Mosher dropped out. Instead, Hayden Henderson, who appears on the ballot as an Independent, has been endorsed by the party.

In Québec Centre, a Conservative spokesperson told The



More candidates appeared on ballots in the 2019 and 2021 elections compared to the 2025 poll, despite there having been fewer seats to contest. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Canadian Press that Elections Canada rejected party candidate Chanie Thériault due to an issue with paperwork.

The Bloc Québécois is fielding candidates in all 78 Quebec electoral districts.

Green, PPC nominees down, protest candidates up

Bucking the overall trend is the number of independents running—there are 159 such candidates in 2025, up from 87 in 2021 and 119 in 2019. However, those gains disappear when excluding the 85 protest candidates running in Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's riding of Carleton, Ont.

Those candidates are associated with the "Longest Ballot Committee," which protests the first-past-the-post voting system by registering large numbers of would-be MPs during byelections and in certain seats at general elections. Their presence on the ballot means Carleton voters will have 91 candidates to choose from.

Overall, each riding has an average of 5.7 candidates—or 5.5 if the Longest Ballot Committee candidates are excluded—compared with an average of 5.9 in 2021, and 6.3 in 2019.

The overall decline can be partly attributed to the two largest parties without official status—the Green Party and the People's Party—running far fewer candidates across the country than in previous years.

The People's Party is running in only 247 ridings this year, compared to 312 in 2021, and 315 in 2021. The Green Party, meanwhile, is contesting 232 districts this year, down from 252 in 2021 and the full slate of 338 in 2019.

The Hill Times reached out to the Green Party on April 14 to ask why it had fewer candidates running compared to the past two elections. On April 15, Green Co-Leader Jonathan Pedneault told CBC News that approximately 15 candidates had been withdrawn in seats where Conservatives were likely to win. A Green spokesperson also told the *Globe and Mail* in an article published that day that the decision to withdraw some candidates came from a desire to avoid splitting the progressive vote, and to deny the Conservatives a chance at forming government.

Those statements led the Leaders' Debates Commission to rescind Pedneault's invitation to take part in its debates on April 16, the day of the French-language leaders' debate. In a press release, the commission said that, since the party "intentionally reduced the number of candidates running in the election for strategic reasons," it did not satisfy the criteria to endorse candidates in at least 90 per cent of federal ridings 28 days before an election date.

"Deliberately reducing the number of candidates running for strategic reasons is inconsistent with the commission's interpretation of party viability, which criterion (iii) [on candidate endorsements] was designed to measure," the commission's release stated.

Online abuse a 'terrible condition of work'

Pedneault also told CBC News on April 15 that some Green candidates and volunteers had been "called names" and told by constituents that they shouldn't be running.

The issue of harassment targeting candidates—particularly online—has been the focus of Samara Centre research for years. During the 2025 campaign, the centre is running the "Verified" campaign, which analyzes online federal election conversations to understand where misinformation, bots, and foreign interference are present, and what attracts high levels of engagement and abuse.

The centre ran a similar study during the 2023 Alberta provin-

cial election, during which Wayne said much of the abusive content came from a very small proportion of online accounts. There were signs of these "power users" influencing the 2025 federal discourse online, Wayne said.

"There are a small amount of people who post a lot, and they really are shaping our online political conversation," she said. "I think we need to have bigger conversations about that because I think a lot of what we talk about in terms of Canadian politics is shaped by a small number of people."

"We have a concern that there are not just candidates but elected officials who are going online and basing their understanding of their constituents on what they see."

Wayne said online abuse was raised frequently during the centre's "exit interviews" for retiring MPs at the end of each term. She noted that both elected officials and candidates were aware that online abuse was now a "condition" of work as an MP, which kept many otherwise interested people away.

"This is something that, from the get-go, you have to expect," she said. "It's a terrible condition of work that understandably, a lot of people—particularly Canadians who are part of vulnerable, minoritized groups, who we know get greater levels of abuse online—they're choosing not to run because they know that this is something that they will have to face, and they don't want to put themselves and their families through it."

The vitriol has been exacerbated to an extent, Wayne said, by the loosening of safety and moderation policies on some social media platforms in recent years. In January, Facebook and Instagram owner Meta announced that it would not police content that demeaned people on the basis of their sex, gender, and immigration as heavily as it had done in the past. The moderation and safety teams for X, formerly known as Twitter, were downsized after billionaire Elon Musk bought the platform in 2022, while accounts formerly banned for hate speech were restored.

Wayne said she hopes that whichever party assumes government after the April 28 election considers digital platform regulation that can help mitigate mis- and disinformation online, both so Canadians are subject to more authentic content, and "it's easier for politicians to run without facing a huge amount of abuse online."

As for advice to current candidates, Wayne recommended engaging with constituents beyond social media. "To the extent possible, get offline and really talk and engage with your riding, your constituents, talk to them meaningfully," she said.

"For [Canadian voters]: talk to your neighbours and your friends, and call and interact with your candidates if you can, to let them know how you feel about issues, because that's the most effective way to go about it."

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Party candidate totals: 2019-2025

Party	Candidates (2025)	Candidates (2021)	Candidates (2019)
Liberal	342	338	338
Conservative	342	337	338
NDP	342	338	338
Green	232	252	338
Bloc Québécois	78	78	78
Independent	159	87	119
PPC	247	312	315

Source: Elections Canada

Vote for 'we' instead of 'me' in this election

Canada's sovereignty is explicitly being targeted by the failed state of America. We will need to continue to rip down inter-provincial trade barriers like our country depends on it. We will need to be unified in the fight to maintain Canada as a sovereign democracy.

Rose LeMay

Stories, Myths, and Truths



OTTAWA—Many experts have voiced that this election is one of the most important for this country, and it's hard to disagree.

Canadians seem to be more involved this election, if everyday

chitchat is a measure of their involvement.

As a quick recap: United States President Donald Trump is threatening funding to American universities to force them to stop being so "woke"—or compassionate to people who are different. Attacks on the educated is a plank in the fascism playbook.

According to *The Independent*, America is applying pressure to the United Kingdom to erase its hate speech laws, which protect LGBTQ2S+, in return for a trade deal. Think about that. America is using economic war against a sovereign state to push a MAGA position of hate around the world, and we are not immune to this level of aggressive, jaw-dropping, is-this-a-movie crap.

Let's not forget the daily purges of people to El Salvador mega-prisons, without due process, seemingly targeting people who are not white and/or are using their voice against this administration.

Then there's the old news about the tangerine and his minions yelling about Canada becoming their 51st state. Every once in a while it all gets so loud and overwhelming that the atrocity of it all is lost. But it's all part of the fascism playbook.

Canada's sovereignty is explicitly being targeted by the failed



This may be one of the first elections that Canadians are looking squarely at our own unity in the face of external pressures, writes Rose LeMay. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

state of America. We will need to continue to rip down inter-provincial trade barriers like our country depends on it. We will need to be unified in the fight to maintain Canada as a sovereign democracy, not pitting regions against each other or trying to shoulder a better outcome for one

group over another. That's not really Canadian.

But our country is also threatened because the now-American values of anti-woke, pro-aggression approaches are seeping into our lives. But it's not just anti-woke.

I believe that the stance of anti-woke is on the same slippery slope as all the other planks of authoritarianism because this is how it progressed in Hungary, Russia, Turkey, and the U.S. First, those who are "different" are targeted. It's the fascism playbook, and it's going down in the U.S. The loss of the democratic process, rule of law, inclusion of diverse voices—it all happened so quickly in America. If it happened in the U.S., it can happen here, too.

There have been some Indigenous voices staking out their choice not to vote in Canadian elections. Some say why vote when governments continue to act against Indigenous Peoples and communities, and colonization still is strong? There may be a slew of reasons not to vote, but what about the reasons to vote?

This may be one of the first elections that Canadians are looking squarely at our own unity in the face of external pressures. This may be one of the first elections that we are choosing to vote

for "we" instead of "me." Because it could be worse—we could be in the U.S. and literally getting scooped up by uniforms for the colour of our skin.

Done that, don't want to do it again.

You can vote for something, or you can vote against something—which is the uniquely Canadian way, is it not? Indigenous ancestors fought long to achieve the right to vote, the right for all of us to vote. Don't give up that right now.

We are voting not just to protect Canada against an external aggressor. We're voting about the kind of country we want in the future. Do we want an inclusive nation that values diverse voices from every region? Then vote. Do we want a country which thrives as a sovereign nation? Then vote. Vote for the health of our democracy because we can't take it for granted anymore.

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

The Hill Times

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Liberal's recycled plan to fix 'badly busted' defence procurement can take root in Trump era, say experts

The political imperative to act is stronger today than it's been since the Cold War, says former federal defence minister David Pratt; while outgoing MP John McKay says Carney's idea may be recycled, but defence has become a big priority in the public's eye.

BY IREM KOCA

Amid mounting American trade threats and global instability, Liberal Leader Mark Carney recycled the Liberal promise of overhauling Canada's problem-plagued military procurement system through a new centralized agency. That promise, floated repeatedly over the past two decades, could take root if the next government has the political imperative to follow through, but it won't solve everything, say defence experts.

Carney announced a series of measures on April 14, including establishing a new "Defence Procurement Agency" to centralize expertise within the government, streamline the process for acquiring military equipment, and modernize procurement rules. This builds on the Liberals' 2019 campaign pledge to create a standalone procurement agency, an idea that's been floated repeatedly, but never implemented.

Carney's plan also includes establishing a bureau of research, engineering, and advanced leadership in science to ensure the Canadian Armed Forces and Communications Security Establishment have homegrown solutions in advanced research and technology, as well as support for domestic defence firms looking to expand internationally to grow their sales. He also committed to a "buy Canadian" approach for steel, aluminum, and critical minerals purchases.

All these promises come as part of a broader effort to reinvest in the military and diversify trade in response to tariff and annexation threats from United States President Donald Trump.

The prime minister's plan is doable, but it hinges on political will, according to former federal Liberal defence minister David



Liberal Prime Minister Mark Carney has pledged to overhaul Canada's problem-plagued defence procurement through a new agency that would centralize procurement. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Pratt, who is currently the principal of David Pratt & Associates. He argued conditions are more favourable than ever with rising public support, U.S. pressure, and geopolitical urgency.

"The political imperative that exists to move quickly and efficiently with a sustained effort to improve the procurement process and make greater defence investments is stronger today than it has been since the end of the Cold War," he said.

On whether a new agency would slow things down, Pratt said that if done right, it could even speed things up.

"If it is properly constituted, this new procurement agency will cut a portion of the bureaucracy out of the process, and accelerate the acquisition of new equipment and technologies. The critical factor will be the expertise and experience that the people in this agency bring to the task. There will undoubtedly be mistakes made, but the benefits in the long run will outweigh any teething problems," Pratt said.

The former minister argued Canada can learn from its allies as well as from its own history when military equipment was acquired more quickly and efficiently. "Military procurement, in some respects, really needs to go back to the future," he said.

Outgoing Liberal MP John McKay, erstwhile chair of the House Defence Committee, did not deny that Carney's promise is a recycled one, but told *The Hill Times* in an interview that the combination of Trump-era unpredictability and an increasingly dangerous geopolitical environment has helped defence become a priority in the public's eyes.

"This is the first time in my living memory where defence and security policy has been a central discussion among the political classes, and even among the Canadian electorate," he said.

McKay argued that whether through an agency, secretariat, or a procurement czar, there are

urgent and critical procurements that need to move quickly.

He said that Carney understands that "if you are going to reduce your security vulnerability, you need to have a very robust defence capability."

"I think it's a much larger response than just, 'Oh well, we'll put this in the window and call it a platform plank,'" added McKay.

A 2024 report by the House Defence Committee offers a roadmap for fixing this country's procurement system, and would provide guidance to all party leaders including Carney, McKay said. However, he noted many of the report's recommendations rest on the assumption that the U.S. remains a reliable ally.

"The system is busted. It's badly busted. It's risk-averse, and decisions aren't made in a timely or effective way. And we no longer have the luxury [to continue to operate] in the current system we're operating under," McKay said.

Lack of accountability is why there's 'chaos', says Williams

Alan Williams, a former assistant deputy minister of materiel at the Department of National Defence (DND), was also the one of the first people to pitch the idea of centralizing procurement under one accountable authority almost 20 years ago. He said he has championed it ever since while speaking to MPs at standing committees and with party representatives.

"It's not nuclear science. I worked in PSPC [Public Services and Procurement Canada], and then I worked in DND. It was pretty clear to me there is such inefficiency and such wastage ... it made total sense," Williams said in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "Why does everybody else have one minister accountable, and we don't?"

The Liberals' 2019 federal election campaign promised to

create a centralized agency named Defence Procurement Canada that would streamline the process for major defence projects. Williams said such an overhaul is as easily doable now as it was back then.

It would save money and time in the long term, and it would hold the government to account, Williams said, but he argued lethargy, political risk aversion, and bureaucratic resistance are key reasons why governments have avoided implementing the change.

"Up until now, there hasn't been any imperative, and it's not like the rest of the country cared much about defence," he said. "It's not an issue that will generate votes ... so why change if you don't have to? It's the inertia."

Williams argued that the core problem with Canada's current procurement system is the absence of a clear chain of command or final authority when things go wrong—with responsibility spread across PSPC; DND; and Innovation, Science and Economic Development.

"No matter how you do it, the key is to hold one person accountable at the top and make sure that you have performance measures going. It's an easy thing to do legislatively," said Williams.

"This is the only part of our government where the prime minister cannot go to a minister and say you're accountable for this," he said. "And if you don't have somebody accountable... You can't put performance measures in and it just leads to mediocrity."

Between the turnover of ministers and deputy ministers, and the errors and overlap and duplication of work, "it just slows everything down to the slowest part of the process. That's why you get the kind of chaos you have in the system today," Williams said.

Eugene Lang, former chief of staff to two federal Liberal defence ministers, said it is a "seductive" idea to establish a separate procurement agency, which is why it resurfaces time and time again.

"It's all fragmented and decentralized, accountabilities are diffused now. Get the accountability consolidated in one place, and it's going to be more streamlined, more efficient and accountable. So at its highest level, it's a very seductive idea, until you dig into the complexities of actually executing on it," he said.

Another reason why this keeps coming up, according to Lang, is that no one's publicly come up with a compelling alternative that would meaningfully reform defence procurement.

Yet, Lang said he is "skeptical" about such an agency being implemented successfully, given "big, complicated machinery-of-government changes rarely live up to their expectations,

rarely deliver the desired results." He argued that sometimes they create entirely new problems.

Lang said the term "agency" could refer to anything from a special operating unit within a department, or a full-blown, arm's-length organization like a Crown corporation, all of which would have different levels of ministerial accountability and legal autonomy.

Lang said the implementation of Carney's plan would require changing legislation, creating a new organization, transferring regulatory authorities, and potentially moving thousands of staff across departments.

"The complexity of that is significant. In fact, I can't think of a more complex machinery-of-government change that's been contemplated in the last 30 years," Lang said.

As for Carney's commitment to prioritize Canadian industry and to grow domestic defence manufacturing, Lang said while it is "long overdue," it is refreshing to see a Canadian leader "who believes in building up the domestic defence industry, generally and, in particular, in these times of peril that we're in right now."

Christyn Cianfarani, president and CEO of the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries, said while it's "tempting," it's not clear yet how Carney's recycled pledge could be actualized, and added that a centralized agency "would not, by itself, fix the problems in the procurement system."

"The changes needed to the current machinery of government would be huge, and the growing pains during that transition could slow down procurement at a time when Canada needs to speed it up," she said.

Richard Shimooka, a defence procurement expert and senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, expressed skepticism about Carney's recent pledges, suggesting they may be more rhetorical than substantive.

Shimooka said that the creation of a new agency could be "effective" in streamlining the process, but said, "if it's just moving boxes around on an organizational chart, it's not worth doing."

"It's nice to have these structures, and we can rearrange this, but if the money isn't coming through, then what's the point?" Shimooka said.

Cianfarani said Carney is "saying a lot of the right things" in terms of favouring Canadian firms, building up our defence industrial base, supporting defence exports. "Those are all strategies that the defence industry has called for, and they are certainly doable," she said.

But she added, that "the devil will be in the details. Most importantly, the money will need to align with the ambition and reflect the urgency."

As for whether or not the Canada's defence sector has the capacity to meet the demand that could stem from Carney's "buy Canadian" approach, Cianfarani said, the industry has "plenty to offer, but it needs clear marching orders and an overarching strategy."

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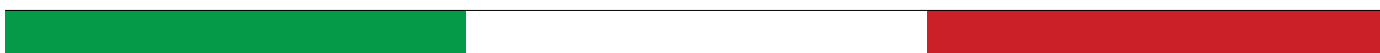
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Editorial

Editorial

Cracks in conservative solidarity could spell trouble for Poilievre

The Conservative Party's message discipline has been one of its greatest electoral strengths—until the start of this campaign, that is.

Since Pierre Poilievre became the party's leader in 2022, he has run a tight ship with a close circle of advisers. Any party member—past or present—who spoke out against his politics was quickly branded an outsider, a small-c conservative only, or—worse still—a “Liberal.”

MPs stayed on message, repeating the Office of the Leader of the Official Opposition's three-word slogans during Question Period, social-media sound bites, and in rare press conferences.

That has continued into this election campaign where messaging is rigidly enforced. Poilievre's team pre-screens journalists' questions, permits only four per day with no follow-ups, and yanks the microphone away once a reporter finishes speaking. At a riding level, many Conservative candidates have refused to show up for locally organized all-candidates' debates lest any organic or unorthodox messaging spill out. A lot of Tory candidates aren't talking to the media.

For years, that approach has worked well. But with the Conservatives now trailing the Liberals in the polls, some outside Poilievre's inner circle have smelt blood in the water and are publicly providing their own takes on the party's future, and of conservatism in Canada.

Take Ontario Premier Doug Ford, for example. He stepped in to defend

his former campaign manager Kory Teneycke's pointed criticism of the federal party's campaign. “Sometimes the truth hurts,” the provincial Progressive Conservative leader said last week of the feud.

Then there's the civil war brewing in Alberta's United Conservative Party, where some members are agitating for separatism in the event that the federal Liberals win re-election, while the party's upper echelons try to maintain order. In a separate issue, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith's lighter touch on responding to the United States' threats against this country are unhelpful for a federal party seeking office during a time of rising nationalism and anger directed southward.

None of these developments bode well for the Conservatives federally. Had the party adopted a more open communications strategy—whether through permitting more than four questions a day, allowing candidates to openly and freely express their views at debates, and provide more spokespeople across the country—these unwelcome intrusions could have been more effectively countered. Instead, they're sucking up oxygen the party needs to promote its own platform before April 28.

Even if Poilievre were to overcome these challenges and win the election, it also shows the hard time he may face against provincial premiers he could normally consider allies. There's still time to change the communications strategy, but the clock is ticking.

The Hill Times



Since Pierre Poilievre became Conservative leader, he has run a tight ship, with a close circle of advisers. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Letters to the Editor



Image courtesy pexels.com

Trump trumpets to be noticed: B.C. letter writer

The other day, I turned on the TV to watch the evening news. That was my first mistake. My second was flipping from one channel to another. I bet you can guess who was on all of them.

The following thoughts came to mind: writers write to be read. Singers sing to be heard. Actors act to be seen. Liars lie to conceal. Bullies bully to dominate. U.S. Presi-

dent Donald Trump trumpets to be noticed.

After thinking numerous other unpleasant thoughts about that loathsome man, I was reminded of what American poet William Mearns wrote: “Yesterday, upon the stair, I met a man who wasn't there. He wasn't there again today, I wish I wish, he'd go away.”

That's exactly how I feel.

Lloyd Atkins
Vernon, B.C.

Everyone needs a safe, decent, affordable place to call home, writes advocate

Everyone needs a safe, decent, affordable place to call home.

But for too long, our housing system has felt like an unfair game rigged against us all. Rents are skyrocketing. Mortgage rates are unpredictable. Buying a home is beyond reach. In our own community, there just isn't enough housing for it to be affordable for all.

I know this from experiences shared with me by my clients, many whom have been homeless and are raising their families in Ottawa's shelter system. Lack of quality, affordable, and accessible housing has resulted in several families living in sub-standard housing conditions with the only option being a hotel-style shelter. Our community deserves better.

And our community isn't alone—Canada has a housing crisis. Now, in the face of U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war, it's more import-

ant than ever that we work together to protect all of us.

I've joined a campaign that I think more people should know about. The Housing Canada Coalition is made up of leading housing organizations from across the housing continuum, and they've figured out that even though they provide different kinds of housing, it's crucial they work together for solutions. So, they've built a 10-point plan to create a housing safety net and build a better system that works for everyone. The solutions are urgent and can really make a difference in this crisis.

I encourage everyone to read about it and become an advocate for housing this election. Together, we can end the unfair housing game, and build a fair, resilient housing system in Canada that works for everyone.

Anne Maranta
Ottawa, Ont.

COMMENT

Remaining calm, cool, and collected key for Carney

If the Liberal leader keeps his cool and doesn't fall into attack mode, he can reinforce the impression that he is calm, thoughtful, and fully prepared to deal with future White House bullies.

Sheila Copps



Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—Only in Canada would a hockey game trump a federal election debate.

The Montreal Canadiens had one last chance to make the playoffs last week, and their game was in conflict with the national leaders' debate in French.

The simple solution was to move the debate forward to an earlier time. The move probably helped the front-runner more than anyone else.

Liberal Leader Mark Carney struggles more in French than the rest, but the move may have meant fewer Quebecers watched the debate in person. Some were likely still *en route* from work, and others were preparing dinner for their families. Six o'clock is probably the worst time for a political debate.

But there's also a school of thought to say that debates really don't change much.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre had better hope that they are wrong because he needs a major boost to have any chance of beating the Liberals on April 28.

In reality, there are very few occasions when a knockout punch decides an election.

Most people remember Brian Mulroney's response when then-prime minister John Turner was asked to defend a series of appointments forced upon him by predecessor Pierre Trudeau.

Turner's response, "I had no option," caused Progressive

Conservative leader Mulroney to jab him with a pointed finger. "You, sir, had an option." That knockout punch led the PCs to a historic victory of 211 seats in the September 1984 election.

Many have compared that debate scenario to this year's campaign. Both campaigns saw unpopular Trudeaus leaving their positions as prime minister.

Both saw a new leader take over who had been outside the previous prime minister's direct orbit. In Turner's case, he left government after a disagreement with the prime minister, and returned when the leadership position opened up anew.

In Carney's case, he is brand new to politics. But his previous work as an adviser to Justin Trudeau meant that he was not completely separated from the previous regime.

He, too, has experienced a post-leadership bump. That would likely have slumped in the rollout of a regular election campaign.

But United States President Donald Trump made sure that this was not an ordinary Canadian election.

He caused a pan-Canadian call to arms with his constant mus-

ings about annexing our country, and referring to our prime minister as "governor."

Carney came out as the leader most likely to defend this country's interests against American protectionism and against a president who seems to enjoy belittling allies and supporting former enemies.

It has been lost on no-one that the president exempted Russia and North Korea in the global tariff attacks that saw him turn his back on Europe, Canada, and other former allies recently.

The debates in French and English last week permitted Poilievre to exercise his acrid humour in a frontal attack on Carney. But he had to use caution because if he were to be seen as too nasty, that would simply reinforce the animus that Canadian women voters have already identified in him.

There is a reason that he is running 20 points behind when it comes to support from women. His nasty, three-word slogans get the anti-vaxxers motivated, but have the opposite effect on women who are concerned with issues like language

and behaviour. They want to provide good examples to their children, and when it gets too nasty, politicians simply lose their support.

I was on the debate preparation team for Trudeau in his first election, and the whole group was encouraging him to hit hard. He refused to do so, saying he wanted to show that politics didn't have to be dirty.

He was right. Running in third place, Trudeau took a nasty hit from then-NDP leader Thomas Mulcair, and in a calm voice, he reminded Mulcair that debate day was the anniversary of his father's death. Mulcair melted and Trudeau vaulted to first place in an election victory that no one had seen coming.

All that to say that debates do count. But for the current Liberal momentum to be blunted, it would mean a direct hit from the Conservatives, the Bloc Québécois and the New Democrats. They are all fighting for their lives, so any onlooker can expect a full-frontal attack on the prime minister.

If he keeps his cool and doesn't fall into attack mode, Carney can reinforce the impression that he is calm, thoughtful, and fully prepared to deal with future White House bullies.

That perception will be important since, if Carney is successful at the end of the month, his anti-bullying days may just be starting.

Sheila Copps is a former Jean Chrétien-era Cabinet minister, and a former deputy prime minister. *The Hill Times*

Poilievre's backseat drivers

It's easy to say things like a campaign should 'pivot,' or change its message or alter its tone, but to do this during an election requires a lot of work, skill, and money.

Gerry Nicholls



Post Partisan Pundit

OKVILLE, ONT.—Bob Dylan once noted in one of his songs, "Backseat drivers don't know the feel of the wheel, but they sure know how to make a fuss."

This certainly rings true in the world of politics where legions of backseat drivers—those who feel compelled to offer unsolicited advice—love to make a fuss about the strategies and tactics used by the various political players in the game.



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, left, and Kory Teneycke, former campaign manager for Ontario Premier Doug Ford. Teneycke recently accused the federal Conservatives of 'campaign malpractice.' *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and Stuart Benson

Of course, backseat driving is especially popular during elections.

Indeed, if you check the media these days, you'll find all sorts of advice currently being directed at Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre who seems to be spinning his wheels in the electoral race right now, unable to close the polling gap that apparently divides him from his Liberal rival, Prime Minister Mark Carney.

Of course, the backseat drivers—pundits, journalists, consultants, and former politicians—all believe they know



how the embattled Poilievre can turn things around, and they're not shy about sharing this information.

As journalist Chris Selley wryly observed, "People have notes for Pierre Poilievre and his Conservative election campaign. So many notes."

For instance, Peter White, former principal secretary to Brian Mulroney, recently wrote, "Poilievre must wrap himself in the mantle of Captain Canada; the leader who will embody and assert our sovereignty and our rise to greatness."

Meanwhile, Conservative strategist Kory Teneycke was even blunter in his assessment, accusing Poilievre's team of "campaign malpractice," and sharply criticizing them for openly questioning the validity of public opinion polls.

Said Teneycke to the media, "I know it's uncomfortable for people to hear that said out loud, but it's in every poll and every poll aggregator, the numbers are the numbers, and saying that you don't believe in polls, if you're managing a campaign, it's delusional."

Talk about a backseat driver making a fuss!

Now let me quickly note that there's nothing wrong with Teneycke, White, and others offering public advice to the Poilievre campaign.

Heck, over the years, in my role as a political commentator, I've been known from time to time to drive from the back seat, and to offer unsolicited advice to campaigns and politicians.

But, whenever I do so, I do it with a sense of caution and with a certain degree of humility.

Certainly, I would never accuse campaigns of "malpractice," or of being "delusional."

That's because I understand that, as an outsider, I don't have a full picture of what's going

on inside a campaign war room where all the strategic decisions are made.

As Dylan might say, I don't have the "feel of the wheel."

For example, I certainly don't have access to a campaign's internal polling data, which is information that drives just about every strategic decision.

So, I might write a column urging a political campaign's strategists to be more aggressive and to go on the attack, but unbeknownst to me, their own polling research is telling them the voting public will only respond to a more positive message.

Then there are organizational issues that also need to be considered.

As the old saying goes, "amateurs talk strategy, professionals talk logistics."

In other words, it's easy to say things like a campaign should "pivot" or change its messaging or alter its tone, but to do this during an election campaign requires a lot of work and skill and money, since it means writing and cutting new ads then quickly getting them into the mix.

That isn't easy.

Anyway, all I'm saying is backseat street drivers should be a little more understanding when doling out advice and criticism.

Oops, I guess I'm guilty of backseat driving backseat drivers!

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant. *The Hill Times*

‘This is a national election inside a local riding,’ says Fanjoy in his bid to oust Poilievre in Carleton

Liberal candidate Bruce Fanjoy is running against Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre who has a national profile as both a party leader and a potential prime minister. Fanjoy’s answer has been old-fashioned hard work, based on the notion that all politics is local.

Michael Harris

Harris



HALIFAX—“When someone tells you that you can’t do something, it’s time to get a new adviser.”

Those words from Bruce Fanjoy describe him as well as any. Think big, don’t be afraid to make bold decisions, and always remember that democracy is not a spectator sport.

That is the philosophy that has sustained Fanjoy since Jan. 27, 2023, when he decided to seek the Liberal nomination in the federal riding of Carleton, Ont.

There was only one problem, and it was a big one. Pierre Poilievre currently holds the seat.

In fact, the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada has won the riding seven straight times. Fanjoy versus Poilievre is David and Goliath come to politics.

To some it was Fanjoy’s folly, to others it was testament to his fortitude. He knew he would need a “long runway” to have any chance of defeating a politician whose name has been a household word for most of the last 20 years. That’s why he got into the race so early. Shoe leather versus slogans.

Poilievre’s name recognition and image received a \$3-million makeover, designed to offset his



Liberal candidate Bruce Fanjoy, pictured, said he has worn out two pairs of sneakers in the process of knocking on 15,000 doors in Carleton, Ont. He’s running against powerhouse Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre who was first elected in the riding in 2004. Photograph courtesy of X/Bruce Fanjoy

reputation as an ambitious attack dog from the Harper era.

Poilievre has a national profile as both Conservative leader and a potential prime minister. Fanjoy’s answer is old-fashioned hard work, based on the notion that all politics is local.

The former businessman has worn out two pairs of sneakers in the process of knocking on 15,000 doors in Carleton.

His campaign, which started with a close-knit group of supporters, now has 500 volunteers working the riding, and staffing the phone banks.

Offers to help from across the country keep rolling in. One woman even drove up from New York to lend a hand. Fanjoy’s conclusion? “This is a national election inside a local riding.”

As heavily as the odds are stacked against him, Fanjoy said

he thinks that Poilievre is vulnerable in a way that has so far not hit the mainstream media.

For one thing, his duties as a national leader have kept Poilievre out of his riding.

“He was here in the riding on the first day briefly, recited some slogans, and left on a bus. He was briefly back in the riding last week, but he’s not campaigning at all.”

Fanjoy points out that Poilievre also skipped a televised debate in the riding, and was a no-show at a recent all candidates event in Manotick, Ont. Why? The Liberal candidate said he believes that Poilievre is taking the safe Conservative seat for granted.

“Part of my thinking was that he doesn’t realize he still has to win Carleton,” Fanjoy noted.

Another factor buoying Fanjoy’s confidence is the remark-

able change in the Liberal Party’s popularity with Justin Trudeau’s departure and Mark Carney’s accession to the top job.

“I was proud to campaign when Justin was PM. But there was no question that the wind was in my face during that time. The mood changed 180 degrees with Justin stepping down and Carney becoming PM.”

And then there is the Donald Trump factor. With the American president’s threat to annex Canada, and his potentially devastating tariff attacks on all and sundry, Fanjoy said standing up to this rogue president is the “top-of-mind issue” in Carleton.

Like most other places in Canada, Carleton depends on the strength of the economy to prosper. And according to Fanjoy, Trump plays into the the battle for Carleton in another way.

“I think Trump and Poilievre are cut from the same cloth. When Poilievre saw how Donald Trump came to power, he shifted even further to the right, and some of his right-wing, populist instincts have become even sharper. This is why he is not the person to stand up for Canada at this time.”

Fanjoy said he thinks that Carney, who has “impeccable credentials and a history of accomplishments,” is a better choice to face down Trump than a career politician who has “accomplished virtually nothing in 20 years.”

A harsh judgment in the pitiless arena of national politics. But the overriding issue is whether or not Fanjoy can defeat Poilievre.

Under normal circumstances, national leaders are usually safe in their own ridings. But this is not a normal election.

Trump has polarized and supercharged Canadian politics. As a result, two other party leaders—the NDP’s Jagmeet Singh, and Elizabeth May of the Green Party—are both facing rocky roads to re-election. Having blown a 25 point advantage in the polls, Poilievre, too, has his problems.

One thing is crystal clear. Fanjoy has come a long way from the early days when he often canvassed by himself, was unknown to the national party, and few thought he had any chance of upsetting a major political leader in a traditionally Conservative riding.

The Liberal Party has realized that something is happening in the riding of Carleton. At a tribute to former PM Joe Clark, then PM-Trudeau congratulated Fanjoy on his dogged campaign, and urged him to keep going. One sign that the national party is deeply engaged in this race was the appearance of Diana Fox Carney at one of Fanjoy’s events. The PM’s wife sends a clear message.

“They’re buzzing about it. There are still some naysayers, and Conservatives who can’t imagine that Poilievre could be in trouble in Carleton. But it’s clear as day something special is happening here.”

So Fanjoy is no longer trudging through the snow by himself, selling his message door-to-door, face-to-face alone. But does he think he can really take down the leader of the Conservative Party? He is optimistically circumspect.

“Nobody expected this to be a race. It is certainly a contest now. I don’t make predictions, I always focus on the campaign. But I ultimately have to put everything in the hands of Carleton voters. But we’re right there.”

That said, running against Poilievre and the political odds has been a transformative experience for Fanjoy.

“It has changed me. If I win, I’ll run again. And if I lose, I’ll run again.”

A riding to watch, as the days wind down to the judgment of April 28.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

The Hill Times

DEI: love it or hate it, it's more profitable

There's ample evidence that points to a correlation between more diverse teams and higher financial returns. Let's not blame DEI for our current financial challenges and fears of future economic insecurity. The data shows otherwise.

Jory Cohen

Opinion



It's a long list that includes companies like Amazon, Meta and Walmart—some of the world's biggest corporate names recently announced plans to cancel or roll back their diversity, equity and inclusion programs. These firms, ostensibly some of the savviest on the planet in generating financial returns, should now be prepared to lose some money because of this decision.

DEI—which stands for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion—has become a politicized term and a lightning rod for criticism. The acronym has been misappropriated to blame underrepresented communities for our current financial hardships and fears of economic insecurity.

Politics aside, at the core of it, DEI encourages a variety of perspectives, experiences, and considerations within business operations and decisions. Historically, that type of corporate strategy has generated stronger financial returns relative to businesses led by more homogenous groups.

Let's take a look at how more diverse leadership teams correlate with profitability levels.

McKinsey, the global management consultant company, released a series of four reports over the past decade exploring the connection between corporate executive team diversity and financial performance. Their findings are clear; firms with higher levels of gender and racial diversity on executive teams tend to produce higher financial returns.

McKinsey's first report was released in 2015, demonstrating that businesses in the top quartile of executive gender diversity have a 15 per cent greater likelihood of financially outperforming companies in the bottom quartile. The most recent report published in 2023 saw that figure rise to 39 per cent.

The 2015 report also displayed a 35 per cent increased likelihood of financial outperformance for companies with top quartile executive racial diversity compared to those in the bottom quartile.

That figure jumped to 39 per cent in the 2023 report. Firms in the bottom quartile of both executive gender and racial diversity were 66 per cent less likely to financially outperform relative to average performance.

Put plainly, the concept of having people of many backgrounds at the table is better for business.

Regardless of politics, viewpoints, or leanings, if financial outperformance is the goal, then treating diversity as a competitive advantage is sensible. Corporate diversity leads to higher probabilities of financial outperformance.

Despite their strong operational track records, Amazon, Meta, Walmart, and so many others are leaving money on the table by scrapping their DEI initiatives. Let's see if they're savvy enough to reverse that decision.

On the investment side, a report published by the *Harvard Business Review* about the venture capital (VC) industry is pretty revealing. The report collected data from 1990 until 2018, and in that 28-year period,

only eight per cent of VCs were women, while just two per cent were racially diverse. Lots of white guys in other words, and those VCs composed of a homogenous group—a.k.a. white guys—suffered around a 30 per cent decrease in the rate of successful exits from their investments. Additionally, VCs that increased their share of women partners by 10 per cent saw a 1.5 per cent bump in overall annualized returns, and 9.7 per cent more successful exits too.

The same rings true for private equity. According to a National Association of Investment Companies report from 2019, American private equity firms owned by diverse partners outperformed benchmarks across various indicators, including financial outperformance in more than three quarters of the years from 2000-2018.

You get the idea. There's a trend here, and it seems a bit foolish to leave money on the table because a three-letter acronym has become so politicized.

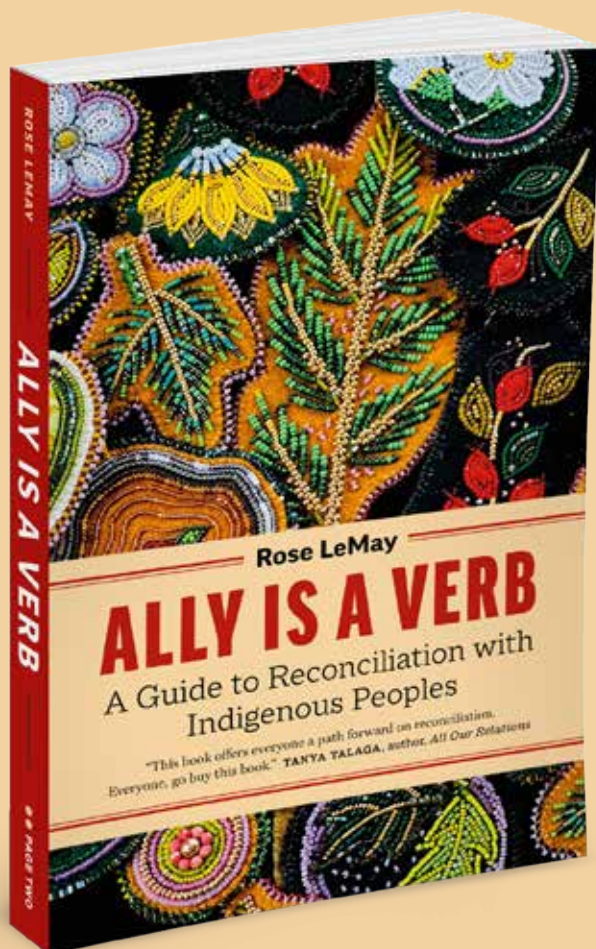
Regardless of your take on DEI, there's ample evidence that points to a correlation between more diverse teams and higher financial returns. Let's not blame DEI for our current financial challenges and fears of future economic insecurity. The data shows otherwise.

Jory Cohen is the director of finance and impact investment at Inspirit Foundation.

The Hill Times

● ● PAGE TWO

Available April 22, 2025



YOUR NEXT STEP ON THE JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION STARTS HERE

This potent, practical book from author Rose LeMay is an essential manual for allies of Indigenous Peoples. It presents a roadmap to creating better relationships, equity, and true reconciliation—offering concrete steps individuals can take, in the organizations they work for and in their personal lives, to become powerful allies.

Rose LeMay is a speaker, trainer, and coach on reconciliation, and an unrelenting champion for the inclusion and well-being of Indigenous peoples. LeMay will speak at the Ottawa Writers Festival on May 4. Join her for an engaging and practical conversation on the next steps for reconciliation.



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, left, and Prime Minister Mark Carney. An Abacus poll released on April 16 showed a tightening, and a slight erosion of Carney's personal approval ratings—though they remained quite robust!—and a notable uptick in the desire for change. Abacus had that at 56 per cent, up five points from the week before. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and illustration by Naomi Wildeboer

What a weird election this has been

Canadians may well be about to elect a government not necessarily in line with what they want when they think about things during rare moments of calm, but how they feel when they're reacting to threats.

Matt Gurney



Opinion

TORONTO—Just a few days ago, someone pointed out to me that Justin Trudeau was prime minister within the last month (that's not true now, but it was when I heard it).

That's not possible, I thought. Wasn't PMJT like a lifetime ago?

Such is life in the age of United States President Donald Trump, or, more specifically, Trump 2.0. I warned about this time-warping effect in a column here back in January—during the first Trump term, insane things happened at such a frantic pace that it was almost impossible to perceive the individual stories and events. You'd be blinking trying to comprehend what the hell just happened when—heads up!—some other insane thing would present itself. That would just happen multiple times a day, every day. And then, in 2020, the dying began.

It was a lot. And Trump 2.0, though thankfully free of literal

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SOMETHING FASCINATING HAS BEEN HAPPENING OVER THE LAST WEEK OR SO. THE POLLS ARE CONSISTENT IN SHOWING A LIBERAL LEAD, BUT SOME SEEM TO BE SHOWING SOMETHING OF A TIGHTENING. NOT ENOUGH TO OFFER MUCH CHEER TO CONSERVATIVES, BUT ENOUGH TO NOTE.

plagues so far, seems even faster and more intense than Trump 1.0.

In any case, something fascinating has been happening over the last week or so. “The polls” are consistent in showing a Liberal lead, and contrary to a question you may have seen on a sweatshirt, I do believe the polls. Some of those polls, though, seem to be showing something of a tightening. Not enough to offer much cheer to Conservatives, but enough to note.

By the time this piece is published, the leaders' debates will be behind us. The polls will be reacting to that. I make no guess as to what they'll show. But I did get curious about why things might have tightened. And also, specifically, something captured in an Abacus poll released on April 16. Along with a tightening, and a slight erosion of Mark Carney's personal approval ratings—though they remained quite robust!—was a notable uptick in the desire for change. Abacus had that at 56 per cent, up five points from the week before.

Change is something that has been discussed very little during this election, which is ... fascinating? Who'd have imagined that would be the case six months ago? But both major parties are aware of it. They're both offering it, in their own way. The Conservatives, of course, are telling the voters that they are the change. A new PM, a new party, a new focus, a new set of priorities. The Liberals, for their part, and especially Carney, are arguing that Carney himself is the change.

Fair enough. I can write the argument either way. I don't think there is a right answer in an objective sense. Voters will have to decide for themselves whether replacing Trudeau the man is enough, or if the whole party

and cabinet needs to go. To the extent my vote matters, I don't think a change at the very tippy top is enough. Parties should cycle through every decade or so. It's healthy. Or, maybe more cynically, the only sure-fire way to blow out accumulated baggage and pathologies that accumulate as governments age.

But that's just my view. You all get your own vote, so do as you will. I just can't help but wonder how much of the return of a desire for change as a campaign issue—to the apparent (if thus far modest) benefit of the Conservatives—is something that is only occurring precisely because the Trump White House has largely stopped talking about Canada.

Maybe it's other things. Maybe the CPC pivot to more directly engage with Trump's bluster was enough to begin turning things around—they may run out of time, but directionally, things have improved for them. Maybe the voters are just gradually souring on Carney, though, again, it may have come too late to do much for Poilievre. Those are both possibilities.

But it might be the Trump factor. That seems to fit the facts, no? And if so, Canadians may well be about to elect a government not necessarily in line with what they want when they think about things during rare moments of calm, but how they feel when they're reacting to threats.

It'll be a legitimate outcome either way. But that would be—to put it politely—a strange way to run a country. Or win an election.

Matt Gurney is a Toronto-based journalist. He is co-editor of *The Line* (ReadTheLine.ca), an online magazine. He can be reached at matt@readtheline.ca. *The Hill Times*



Jointly Reject Unilateral Bullying and Firmly Uphold Multilateralism

Recently, the United States has repeatedly imposed unjustified tariffs on countries, which has brought huge uncertainty and instability to the world and caused chaos in the international community and within the United States itself. Particularly, the tariffs imposed by the United States under the pretext of fentanyl and reciprocity without any factual basis seriously infringe upon countries' legitimate rights and interests, seriously violate the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), seriously damage the rules-based multilateral trading system, and seriously disrupt the stability of the global economic order. Being a typical practice of unilateralism, protectionism and economic bullying, it is going against the trend of the times and people's shared aspiration.

Facing unilateral bullying by the United States, Canada has not backed down and has taken resolute countermeasures to defend its lawful and legitimate rights and interests as well as initiated a dispute complaint regarding the US tariffs at the WTO. Meanwhile, I am deeply impressed by the great patriotism shown by the Canadian people all across the country.

Similarly, China does not provoke, but we are not to be intimidated by provocations. China does not bully, but we will not allow others to bully us. Faced with the unjustified unilateral "reciprocal tariffs" by the United States, China has taken resolute reciprocal countermeasures. If the United States insists on going its own way, China will fight to the end. As an upright major country and a responsible member of the international community, China stands up to say no to the bully not only for the sake of its own legitimate rights and interests, but also to safeguard the common interests of the international community and to prevent mankind from being brought back to a world of law of the jungle where the strong prey on the weak.

Rejecting unilateralism, protectionism and economic bullying is a universal consensus as well as the shared

responsibility of the international community. More and more countries and international organizations have expressed their readiness to jointly uphold the rules-based multilateral trading system, commit themselves to trade liberalization and facilitation, and support multilateralism and global trade development. Director-General of WTO, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala stressed that WTO members should jointly defend an open and rules-based multilateral trading system and properly resolve differences through dialogue and cooperation under the WTO framework. President of the European Commission, Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen pointed out that the EU is committed to maintaining a fair and free multilateral trading system anchored on the WTO, and to maintaining the sound and stable development of global economic and trade relations.

Multilateralism is the only choice for addressing global challenges. Economic globalization is an unstoppable trend of history. All countries should stand united to counter unilateralism, protectionism and bullying with openness, cooperation and multilateralism, firmly uphold WTO rules, and maintain an open, inclusive, transparent and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the WTO, China is ready to take this opportunity to firmly safeguard the international system anchored on the United Nations and the international order based on international law, firmly safeguard the WTO rules, and work with other countries to jointly reject all retrogressive practices in the world, advance economic globalization in the right course, and inject more stability and certainty into the world economy and global trade.

H.E. Chinese Ambassador to Canada Wang Di

For more information please visit: <http://ca.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/>

Upper Left Photo: China and Canada have taken countermeasures on U.S. reciprocal tariffs.

Upper Right Photo: The WTO marked on 10 April its 30th anniversary with an event, Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala noted that the understandable and legitimate concerns about the WTO and the multilateral trading system expressed by several members in recent times should be seen as an opportunity to "change the system for the better."



Canada has to create an alternative to foreign takeovers

If Canada is to succeed we have to recognize not only that we live in a shifting geopolitical order, a technological revolution, an essential green transition to avert the worst impacts of climate change, and the shifting needs of an aging population.

David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century



TORONTO—It's easy to talk of the need for change in response to a Trumpian world, but it's much more difficult to achieve it. Our political, business, and labour leaders need to be upfront on this because change to make us less vulnerable to American coercion and enmity will be highly disruptive, will take time, and will require an acceptance of short-term pain for long-term gain.

Too often, there are easy assumptions that lack follow-through realism. For example, we are told this is a great chance to attract smart scientists and engineers from the United States as Elon Musk fires thousands of government scientists, U.S. President Donald Trump goes about defunding America's great research universities, and America's immigration policy clamps down on foreign talent.

Yet where are the budgets in Canada's universities, businesses, and government to hire a wave of talent from the U.S., and to support their research? As it is, our post-secondary institutions are struggling to sustain themselves financially while federal and provincial support is constrained, businesses lag in investment in research and innovation, and governments have been pulling back on in-house research. Recently, the University of Toronto had to



turn to private philanthropy to attract three American scholars from a prestigious U.S. university.

There were similar expectations of a wave of talent from the U.S. with the first Trump administration, and while some talent did come to Canada—notably Geoffrey Hinton, the Nobel-winning father of AI—the overall numbers fell far short of what had been expected. The money wasn't there to fund them or the labs and other supports they were accustomed to. Without a substantial increase in university and research funding, the expected talent wave is unlikely to materialize.

This is just one example. Trade diversification is another hope. But despite free trade agreements with much of the world, our businesses—to a great

extent—have remained focused on the much-easier-until-now U.S. market, while many of our younger firms lack the scale to devote resources to pursuing and sustaining markets elsewhere.

The need to diversify has been known for some time. A 2016 International Monetary Fund report on Canada, for example, declared, “greater emphasis should be placed on structural reforms to boost productivity and external competitiveness to facilitate the transition to a more diversified economy.” But little attention was paid to such warnings.

Some of the blame for this country's failing productivity growth and weak economic performance can be laid at the feet of government. But business leaders

also need to look in the mirror for they, too, have much responsibility for our lack of innovation and growth. This is true of the financial system, as well, which has failed to deliver innovative ways to better support our talented entrepreneurs, forcing them to sell their companies to foreign multinationals rather than pursue growth as Canadian firms.

The critical need to build a new generation of Canadian businesses with scale and scope to compete in export markets and generate good jobs and wealth at home has not been a priority for any of our political parties—and has been of little interest to either our major business lobbies (many of their members are American and other foreign multinationals, so they are unlikely to take a

strong pro-Canada position), or our financial community.

At the same time, our governments have paid out billions of dollars in subsidies to foreign multinationals to set up branch plants here, while the core high-value activities remain in their home countries and the profits flow to their head offices abroad. The failure to make supporting Canadian companies a priority has meant that when smaller firms either want or need to sell, there is no large-size domestic buyer to make a bid.

As *The Globe and Mail* recently reported, a highly promising Montreal pharmaceutical business, Theratechnologies Inc., is in takeover talks with what is believed to be a U.S. company. Since Canada has no large-scale pharmaceutical or biotech firms, the most likely buyer for a growing Canadian company is a foreign enterprise. These businesses have either large pools of capital of their own, or ready access to capital.

If we want to build a more innovative and productive economy generating good jobs and wealth for a successful future economy, then we have to build a new generation of Canadian companies—by supporting our ambitious entrepreneurs—across a wide range of industries is critical. We have to create an alternative to foreign takeovers.

At the same time, we will need to do a much better job of creating opportunities for home-grown firms and Canadian innovations across public procurement, from defence, food, and public transit, to new energy systems, housing, water and health, all in a greener world.

Our policies for the future must recognize that increased investment means more than just financing for machinery and equipment. It also means, especially, much more investment in intangibles, including research and development, software, intellectual property, and data.

Moreover, if Canada is to succeed, we have to recognize not only that we live in a shifting geopolitical order, but also in a technological revolution, an essential green transition to avert the worst impacts of climate change, and the shifting needs of an aging population.

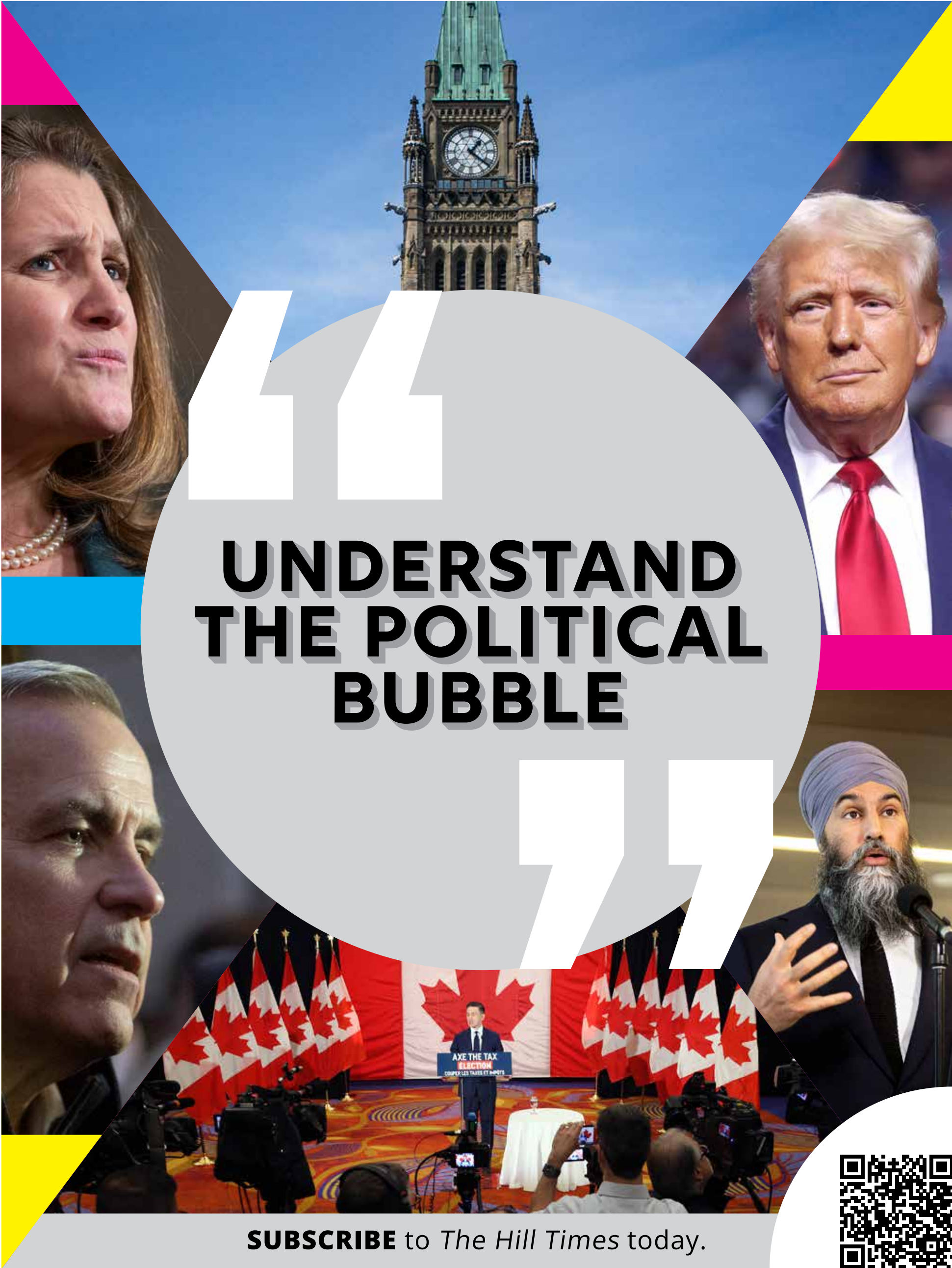
The world will be much more competitive, and nations will be much more focused on their own interests: Britain is pursuing an ambitious new innovation agenda; the new German government is creating a “super-high-tech ministry” for research, technology and aerospace; the European Union will become much more growth and innovation focused; China will continue to accelerate its technological prowess; and India will become a more significant international player.

This is our new world, and in it we will face intense pressures to find out where we best fit. Can we build a Canada much less dependent on the fossil fuel and auto industries? There's a good chance we'll have to. That's the level of change we face. So there's no time to waste.

David Crane can be reached at crane@interlog.com.

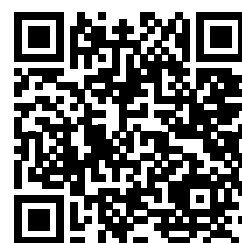
The Hill Times

This is our new world, and in it, we will face intense pressures to find out where we best fit. Can we build a Canada much less dependent on the oil and gas and auto industries? There's a good chance we will have to, and there's no time to waste, writes David Crane. Image courtesy of Pixabay



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**UNDERSTAND
THE POLITICAL
BUBBLE**
”

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The future of Canadian defence will not look like the past



Iroquois-class destroyer HMCS Athabaskan leaves St. John's, N.L., in 2016. Canada should seize the moment to become more self-sufficient, and to diversify our military, diplomatic, and economic partnerships, write Jamie Carroll, Philippe Lagassé, and Tim Page. Canadian Armed Forces photograph by Cpl. Neil Clarkson, 14 Wing Imaging, Greenwood, N.S.

There should be no denying that, for Canada and for our allies, we have a unique opportunity to diversify and expand our economic and security relationships that will be of mutual benefit.

Jamie Carroll, Philippe Lagassé & Tim Page



Opinion

United States President Donald Trump's rhetoric is both alarming and destabilizing. It is shaking the confidence of Canadians that we can continue to rely on the U.S. as our logical, inevitable, go-to, default—call it what you will—security and economic partner.

The geo-political and economic environment Trump has created in a few short months

requires all nations to fundamentally reassess the type of relationship they wish to have with the U.S. in the near and more distant future.

Canada, far from being an exception, has been forced onto the frontline of this process. We have before us an unexpected—and to many unwelcome—opportunity to ask and answer the question, “what needs to change for Canada to play a unique, recognized and consistent role in global security and economic growth with our chosen allies and partners?”

We should not squander that opportunity.

Canada and the U.S. share a continent. Our economy and security will always be intertwined with the Americans as a result. Canada's Armed Forces are heavily invested in American capabilities. Our defence industries are plugged into the American market, too.

We've benefited enormously from this reality. It has allowed us to spend the minimum on defence, while making important contributions to the defence of North American and allied operations overseas. These are our current realities, but they need not and should not define how Canada chooses its path forward as an independent, sovereign nation.

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IT WILL REQUIRE A
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Canada can and should be less reliant on the U.S., and less vulnerable to the whims of whomever occupies the White House. We should seize the moment to become more self-sufficient, and to diversify our military, diplomatic, and economic partnerships.

While the benefits of our relationship with the U.S. have been real, they have also arguably disadvantaged potential suppliers from other allied countries, and have equally disadvantaged Canada's own defence and security industries from expanding their market reach to other countries and partners.

So, we ask:

1. What sovereign capabilities should Canada have to protect and promote our own national interests and contribute to the shared security interests of our allies?

2. How should Canada define its sovereign capabilities?

3. How does our nation assess and address the threats that it sees to its national security and global economic interests, and what are the known capability gaps that must be addressed immediately?

4. How can we leverage our investments in defence and security capabilities to strengthen our position with and our commitment to our allies?

Now is the time for our country's leadership to answer these questions and to make the necessary investments to reposition Canada as a capable, responsible, and reliable partner.

Our homegrown industry must be a part of those discussions because, while governments may set priorities, they do not unto themselves diversify markets or expand trade. So, is the Canadian defence industry ready to accept that the U.S. is sufficiently risky—as a market and as a supplier—to find new markets and new partners?

Some—particularly those which are U.S. subsidiaries or are hard wired into American firms and that country's Department of Defence—may not be able or ready to contemplate an alternative.

For those that are willing to look beyond the U.S., some of the most obvious new relationships could be with NATO-member states and close Pacific allies who will be building up their own capabilities over the coming years. Allies such as Germany, Finland, Sweden, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Japan, South Korea, and Australia come to mind. We should actively explore areas of potential collaboration and co-development with their governments and their industries, particularly when their capability requirements overlap with ours.

Admittedly, we will have some work to do in this context, as many of our allies have written us off as a country that will always buy American, regardless of what our allies have on offer. Those same allies have also questioned Canada's commitment to adequate and sustained investments in defence and security, which has contributed to some of them shying away from investing serious time and effort when we have gone to market for new defence capabilities in the past.

Potential new partners will need to make their own efforts, as well. European allies may be tempted to focus on their continental kin, leaving Canada as an afterthought. Our Asia-Pacific allies may choose to double down on their relationship with America. This would be regrettable.

But there should be no denying that, for Canada and for our allies, we have a unique opportunity to diversify and expand our economic and security relationships that will be of mutual benefit. It will require a concerted, collective and sustained effort from our respective political, military, public service and industrial leaders to capitalize on these opportunities.

The work on both sides of this equation can't start soon enough.

Jamie Carroll is a former national director of the Liberal Party of Canada, and is the founder of Carroll & Co. Consulting Inc. Philippe Lagassé is associate professor and the Barton Chair at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University. Tim Page is the former president of the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries, and founder of Tim Page Public Affairs.

The Hill Times

U.S. President Donald Trump not only blinked first, but he blinked at exactly the right time, writes Gwynne Dyer. Photograph courtesy of Gage Skidmore/Flickr



Trump: a window of opportunity

Donald Trump's minions may not have told him yet, but last week was not just a temporary setback in his crusade for high tariffs. It was the end of that road. Bring those tariffs back in 90 days, and the bond market will shut him down even faster next time.

Gwynne Dyer



Global Affairs

LONDON, U.K.—Not only did American President Donald Trump blink first, but he blinked at exactly the right time.

Ten days of chaos was long enough to convince non-American traders that Trump's America has become a place you cannot trust or make deals with—but brief enough that the bond vigilantes still had time to step in and stop the folly before the Greatest Depression got underway.

Trump was shocked by the bond market sell-off and caved instantly. Indeed, when he announced on April 11 that he would “postpone” his new, higher tariffs (above 10 per cent) for 90 days for everybody except China, his spokesperson was still defending those same higher tariffs about three doors down.

Alas, Trump forgot to exempt Chinese-made smartphones and computers from his new 145 per cent anti-China tariffs. That would have infuriated U.S. consumers, because most high-tech goods coming into the United States would have doubled in price overnight.

He remembered just in time—but that looked like “backing down,” so Trump then declared that he was just moving the high-tech tariffs to a different “bucket” and they would soon be back. Amateur night.

Trump's minions may not have told him yet, but last week was

not just a temporary setback in his crusade for high tariffs. It was the end of that road. Bring those tariffs back in 90 days, and the bond market will shut him down even faster next time.

Trump will not stay quiet for long. He needs a quick victory to wipe away the humiliation of the tariff fiasco—invade Panama, perhaps, or fire Elon Musk. But it opens a window of opportunity for the rest of the world to discuss its options. They are not all that bad.

The time should be used to sketch out financial and military institutions that can replace those created by the U.S. over the past 80 years. That is not really such a huge task because, in most cases, it just involves a cut-and-paste job, duplicating existing structures but without America.

There is still far more wealth and population in China, the European Union countries and Japan, in the middle-sized developed countries like Canada, the United Kingdom and Korea, and in the bigger emerging powers like India, Brazil and Indonesia, than there is in the United States. It is not indispensable.

Almost everywhere else (except Russia) wants to preserve as much as possible of the old

free-trading world, and the building blocks already exist: almost all of the G20 countries, Asia's Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Gulf Cooperation Council, South America's Mercosur, and the Southern African Customs Union.

Bringing China in would be trickier, especially because Beijing will be heavily distracted by the trade war Trump has launched against it, but China also wants a rules-driven trading system. That might be managed through the World Trade Organization, which Trump is threatening to leave. (China is already a member.)

There's no chance of building a similarly broad military security system, but that didn't exist in the old days, either. What to do about Russia is a problem, as usual, but it's not a problem that has to be solved right now.

Russia is still “Upper-Volga-with-Rockets,” as they used to say: it has taken three years to conquer one-fifth of Ukraine, a country with a quarter of its population. Russia now has oil as well as rockets, but a country with the same GDP as Canada is not an existential threat for a unified post-American version of NATO.

A NATO-minus-America alliance to deter the Russians can be

fashioned by just building parallel security structures without the U.S. Indeed, exactly that is under active consideration in Europe right now.

The hardest part may be replacing the U.S. dollar as the international reserve currency since Trump's actions are undermining faith in the current arrangement. The solution is bound to be a basket of other currencies, but it will be decades before it acquires the same aura of infallibility as its predecessor.

The project of building an international trading and security structure that duplicates and preserves the rules-based system Trump is now trying to destroy is daunting, especially since there is no dominant single power in charge this time.

On the other hand, at least this time the world has 80 years of experience with a reasonably functional system of that sort to guide its efforts. It also has a very strong incentive to build something similar but more equitable because the only other alternatives are to become a servant of the Trumpian empire or its victim.

The great benefit of Trump's arrogance is that he makes the choices so clear for all of America's erstwhile customers, partners, and allies: make the trek to Washington and “kiss my ass,” or defy him and be cast into the outer darkness.

Actually, even submission might not save you. He lies a lot.

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

The Hill Times

Nepean a Liberal stronghold that's now less rural and with many public servants, say strategists

Nepean is 'pretty solidly urban right now,' and Liberals tend to do better with urban voters, says Kevin Bosch, a former Liberal staffer who's been knocking on doors in Nepean.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Prime Minister Mark Carney is the favourite to win in the riding of Nepean, Ont., in the federal election, with factors including recent boundary changes that tilted the ratio of urban and rural areas in a way that favours the Liberals, and a high representation of Muslim voters and public servants, according to lobbyists and strategists.

"Nepean lost some of its rural portions and the community of Bells Corners, and I think both, in my experience, were more



Kevin Bosch, a managing partner and co-founder of Sandstone Group, says, 'I think in more recent years, perhaps, the issues that Liberals focus on, [such as] child care, transit ... [are] much more important to urban voters than, say, rural voters.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Matt Triemstra, an associate principal with Navigator, said, 'I think the bureaucrats will be attracted to Carney ... [as] somebody who could enlarge the public service, not shrink it.' *Photograph courtesy of Matt Triemstra*



blue collar in favour of the CPC. It wasn't a huge redistribution, but you did take away a Conservative-friendly community," said Matt Triemstra, an associate principal with Navigator. "Nepean is a Liberal safe seat. Since 2015, the Liberals have won it three times."

The federal riding of Nepean stretches from Barnsdale Road in the south to the Canadian National Railway line in the

north, and east from Highway 416 to the Rideau River, and is bordered by the Ottawa West-Nepean riding to the north and the Carleton riding to the south, where Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre is running for re-election.

The riding encompasses neighbourhoods including Barhaven, Arlington Woods, Craig Henry, and parts of Hunt Club. The 2022 federal redistribution in Ontario resulted in boundary changes to the riding with Nepean gaining a portion of the Ottawa West-Nepean riding to its north, specifically the area between Merivale Road and the Canadian National Railway line, including parts of the Carlington neighbourhood.

As a result of the redistribution, a largely rural area south of Bells Corners, west of the 416 highway, and south of Barnsdale Road were reallocated to the Carleton riding.

Kevin Bosch, a managing partner and co-founder of Sandstone Group and a former Liberal staffer, told *The Hill Times* that Nepean is a "pretty solidly urban riding now," which

makes the riding "strongly Liberal" in this federal election.

"Liberals tend to do better with urban voters. You'll see that whether it's Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver, [or] Winnipeg. That's where the Liberal base is often: urban and suburban voters," he said. "I think in more recent years, perhaps, the issues that Liberals focus on, [such as] child care, transit ... [are] much more important to urban voters than, say, rural voters."

Bosch described himself as a regular door-knocker for the Liberals, and has been going door-to-door during the current campaign in several ridings, including Nepean. He said

Carney is seen as "the man for the times" because of current economic concerns among Canadians, and the recent trade war with the United States.

"I can tell you, as someone who's knocked on doors there, the feeling on the ground is excellent. A lot of support for him, which you want because ... party leaders don't have a lot of time to knock doors in their own riding, so they have to rely on other volunteers," said Bosch.

Triemstra told *The Hill Times* that other factors that could benefit Carney are the number of residents who are federal public servants. He said, anecdotally, that public servants and bureau-

Candidate profiles:

Mark Carney (Liberal):

An economist who previously served as Bank of Canada governor from 2008 to 2013, governor of the Bank of England from 2013 to 2020, Carney was appointed prime minister in March 2025, after winning the Liberal leadership. Carney was born in Fort Smith, N.W.T., and grew up in Edmonton. He has not specified whether he is planning to reside in Nepean, and Elections Canada does not require candidates to live in the ridings they represent.



Shyam Shukla (NDP):

An information technology team lead for the Canadian Coast Guard. Prior to that, Shukla spent 10 years in the retail sector. His time growing up was divided between living in India, the United States, and Canada, and he speaks English, French, Gujarati, Hindi, and Japanese. Shukla describes himself as active in his community, and volunteers with the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program.



Greg Hopkins (Green):

Has lived in the riding for 40 years. He holds degrees in Psychology from Carleton University, and Social Service Work from Algonquin College. For 24 years, Hopkins has worked as a child and youth counsellor in child welfare, currently serves as treasurer on the executive of his local public service union, and as a member of the collective bargaining team.



Barbara Bal (Conservative):

The eldest of 10 children raised on a dairy farm in Southern Ontario, Bal has an extensive background in defence and public safety. She spent 10 years as a field artillery officer in Department of National Defence, and has served in law enforcement since 1997. She is currently a decorated staff sergeant for the Ottawa Police Service, with previous roles including as a patrol supervisor, recruiting officer, and fraud and criminal investigator. She has lived in Ottawa since 2001.



Eric Fleury (People's Party):

Born in the Ottawa-Hull area, and with a career in training and project management. He was among the founding members of the PPC in 2018.



Shyam Shukla (NDP): An information technology team lead for the Canadian Coast



Carney, pictured March 29, 2025, with supporters at his campaign office in Nepean. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Prime Minister Mark Carney, pictured March 29, 2025, visiting staffers and volunteers at his campaign office in Nepean, Ont. The riding is considered a safe Liberal seat. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Carney meets and greets campaign staffers in his Nepean campaign office on March 29, 2025. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Diana Fox Carney hands out doughnuts to campaign staff workers at Carney's campaign office in Nepean on March 29, 2025. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

crats make up about one-quarter of the riding.
 "In general, I find that public servants are mistrustful of Conservatives and worry about Conservative cuts," he said. "While I understand the ideological drive to cut public servants, it's not going to play well in Ottawa where they live, work and play,

right? I think that's a really key piece. I think the bureaucrats will be attracted to Carney ... [as] somebody who could enlarge the public service, not shrink it."
 Triemstra ran as the Conservative candidate in Nepean in the 2021 federal election under then-leader Erin O'Toole, and came in second with about 33.7 per cent

of the vote. Liberal MP Chandra Arya was re-elected for a third term in that election, finishing with 45 per cent of the vote.
 Arya served as the MP for Nepean from 2015 to 2025. He was barred from seeking re-election under the Liberal banner in the current election, with the party deeming him "mani-

festly unfit," but with no further explanation.
 On March 26, *The Globe and Mail* reported that Arya's candidacy was rejected following a controversial visit to India during heightened diplomatic tensions between Ottawa and New Delhi. In August 2024, Arya travelled to India of his own accord and met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which came in the aftermath of accusations by then-prime minister Justin Trudeau that the Indian government was involved in the fatal shooting of a Canadian Sikh leader, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, in Surrey, B.C.
 Triemstra added that Nepean also has a significant Muslim population, which includes the South Nepean Muslim Community. He described the SNMC mosque in the riding as one of the largest in eastern Ontario.
 "In my experience, they are not naturally inclined to vote Conservative, and could be drawn to Carney," said Triemstra. "I think those are two big demographics; the public servants in the riding and the Muslim voters in the riding, both of whom, I would argue, kind of lean Liberal and make it harder for the Conservatives to win."

Pollster Nik Nanos, chief data scientist for Nanos Research, told *The Hill Times* that it is unusual in this election for two candidates vying for the role of prime minister to be in neighbouring ridings. The only previous instance of prime minister candidates running in adjacent ridings occurred in the 2015 federal election, with then-Liberal leader Justin Trudeau representing Papineau in Montreal, and then-NDP leader Thomas Mulcair representing Outremont to the east.
 "The fact that they are beside each other is actually quite unusual; that the two front-runners would actually be technically candidate neighbours," said Nanos. "For both of those teams, you'll be working on making sure that you deliver the vote for your candidate. But then, if you have some extra capacity, you might be thinking about how you can also undermine and wage war in your neighbour's riding in order to make things a little more complicated for your opponent."
 Nanos said that the Liberals are experiencing an upswing in Ontario, with Liberal MPP Tyler

Watt elected in the electoral district of Nepean in the province's general election on Feb. 27, 2025.
 "Carney should be able to win that riding. It's very different from Carlton, which is much more of a mix in terms of having more of a rural component. You have to think of the suburban Liberal voters and then the small-town Conservative voters when we think of those two ridings," said Nanos.
 "Except if his national campaign falls apart, the history of the riding, and the fact that he is from Ottawa, should suggest that he should be comfortable in winning his riding. That said, the thing to watch out for if something happens on the national campaign for the Liberals that kind of unravels the current situation that's favouring Mark Carney."
 Debora Fleming, a resident of the Nepean riding who visited an Elections Canada office on April 15 to cast her vote, told *The Hill Times* that this campaign has been "pretty dirty," adding that the widespread use of artificial intelligence is making it difficult to separate fact from fiction.
 "This morning I got up to my Facebook, and I was aghast with some comments, posts that were made. I don't know if it's bots or what it is, but it's disgraceful," she said. "I feel sorry for people that don't have the ability to sift through information to determine if something is legitimate or not because it's become really difficult to decipher, even for someone like myself who feels like she's pretty informed."
 Fleming went to vote along with her daughter, Rachel, an Indigenous woman and member of the Swampy Cree people. Rachel Fleming said that for her, a key issue in the election is "maintaining a nation-to-nation way of doing business," and making sure that Indigenous voices are heard, and Indigenous rights are respected.
 "At this point, I'm not necessarily voting for who I want to vote for. It's more of a strategic vote— anything to not have a repeated [Stephen] Harper-era, again. As an Indigenous person, I feel like strategically voting is what everyone should be attempting to try to do," she said.
 jcnockaert@hilltimes.com
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Nepean Statistics

- Five most common religions (per cent): Christian (49.5), Muslim (12.5), Hindu (3.4), Buddhist (1.7), Jewish (1.4)
- Population 2021: 122,229
- Land area in square kilometers: 172
- Average age of the population: 38.6
- Percentage of population aged 15 to 64 years: 67.1
- Percentage of population aged 65 years and over: 13.6
- Median total income in 2020: \$50,400
- Average total income in 2020: \$62,200
- Median household income in 2020: \$121,000
- Five most common ethnic or cultural origin groups (per cent): Irish (17.3), English (14.6), Scottish (14.4), Canadian (10.8), French (10.7)



Source: Federal Electoral Districts Redistribution 2022, and 2021 Census of Population by Statistics Canada

Carleton remains a stronghold for Poilievre, but with some uncertainty from changed boundaries, says strategist

A record 91 candidates running for the seat in Carleton is unlikely to change the outcome of the vote, with the Conservative leader likely to win, says Carleton University associate professor Scott Bennett.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre is most likely to win his seat of Carleton, Ont., in this federal election, although the riding's recently expanded boundaries that have added mostly rural areas still leaves some room for uncertainty, according to a party strategist.

"You never really want to consider anything to be a safe riding. You've got to take every local contest very seriously, never taking anything for granted. That said, it's generally thought of as a Conservative-friendly riding, but we'll see. With the redistribution, we'll see how that adds up compared to the last election," said Yaroslav Baran, co-founding partner with Pendulum Group and a former Conservative Hill staffer.

"It's only after going through one election that you really see how the riding gels together," said Baran.

Carleton is a traditional Conservative stronghold, and has been represented by Poilievre since it was re-established in 2015. Before that, he held the former riding of Nepean-Carleton

since 2004. In the last federal election in 2021, Poilievre secured about 52 per cent of the vote, defeating Liberal candidate Gustave Roy who received about 32 per cent of the vote.

The broad riding of more than 1,800 square kilometers includes Eastern Ontario communities such as Richmond, Munster Hamlet, North Gower, Kars, and Manotick.

The riding's boundaries were changed as a result of the 2022 federal electoral redistribution, which included an expansion to include several rural communities north and west of Highway 417, such as Fitzroy Harbour, Dunrobin, and Constance Bay.

Baran told *The Hill Times* that urban areas tend to lean Liberal and rural areas tend to go Conservative, but added that could

also be a superficial way of predicting the outcome of elections.

"What's the demographic of Constance Bay, [or] Fitzroy Harbour now? Are you having urbanites move out to large acreages now, bringing their traditional voting patterns with them? Things like that are always a factor," he said. "How similar is a particular poll, say, in Constance Bay in 2022 compared to four years ago? Has it grown? If it's grown, who were the people who moved in, that sort of thing. A changed riding is never a sure bet."

Carleton is noteworthy in this election as a constituency with a record 91 candidates running for the seat. The vast majority of those candidates are associated with the electoral reform group "The Longest Ballot Committee,"

and all are listed with the same official agent, Tomas Szuchewycz.

The long ballot in Carleton has been orchestrated by the Longest Ballot Committee as a way to protest Canada's first-past-the-post voting system. Mark Moutter, a spokesperson for the group, said that the long ballot's 85 candidates help to start "a conversation with people and makes them realize how inefficient our current system is," as reported by CTV News on April 9. In a statement to CTV News, Elections Canada

The 2025 federal election is Pierre Poilievre's first time running for re-election while holding the leadership of the Conservative Party. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

warned that results from Carleton may be delayed on April 28 due to the "unusual circumstances created by the number of candidates on the ballot in Carleton."

Scott Edward Bennett, an associate professor of public opinion and survey research at Carleton University, told *The Hill Times* by email on April 14 that "basically, the Conservatives will win the Carleton riding," and that the long list of candidates is unlikely to have much effect on the outcome of the vote. How-

Candidate profiles:

Pierre Poilievre (Conservative):

The longtime incumbent has held Carleton since its re-establishment in 2015, and before that held the former riding of Nepean-Carleton since 2004. He won his current party leadership role in 2022. Poilievre was born and raised in Calgary, and earned a bachelor of arts in international relations from the University of Calgary in 2008. He started his career in politics with the Reform Party, which later merged into the Canadian Alliance and then into the Conservative Party. He was first elected to the House of Commons in 2004 at the age of 25, becoming the youngest MP at that time. Under then-Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper, Poilievre held various cabinet positions, including democratic reform, and employment and social development.



Bruce Fanjoy (Liberal):

A resident of Manotick with a background in business and community service. He holds a bachelor of commerce degree from Dalhousie University, and a master of business administration from Saint Mary's University. His business background includes serving as branch manager for Comcheq Services Limited, as senior product manager for Ceridian Canada, and as director of sales and marketing for Deloitte Canada.

Beth Prokaska (NDP):

Retired after 25 years of teaching music and supporting families across the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. She currently mentors new teachers in Ottawa schools, and organizes fundraisers for the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, and groups like Christie Lake Kids.



Mark Watson (Green):

Holds a BA in business and economics, as well as an international MBA in information technology. According to the Green Party website, he has lived and travelled in more than 60 countries—including five years working in Japan and Singapore—before returning to Ottawa where he founded software company ABC e-Learning. In 2005, he launched Earth Innovations, and raised \$500,000 on CBC's *Dragons' Den* for his invention, "Ecotraction," an eco-friendly alternative to road salt. Since 2007, Watson and his family have lived on a Pro-Cert organically certified farm in Dunrobin, Ont., where they produce honey and maple syrup.

Other candidates in the riding include Shawn MacEachern of the Canadian Future Party, and Karen Bourdeau of the United Party of Canada.



Three of the candidates running in the Carleton riding in this year's election answer questions from the public at the Manotick Community Centre on April 15. From left, Mark Watson (Green), Beth Prokaska (NDP), and Bruce Fanjoy (Liberal). *The Hill Times* photograph by Jesse Cnockaert



Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre on a campaign stop at the Tomlinson Environmental Services shop in Nepean, Ont. on April 12, 2025. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Poilievre, his wife, Anaida, and their children Cruz and Valentina on the first day of the election campaign at the Museum of History in Gatineau, Que., on March 23, 2025. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia



ever, he added it is conceivable the long list of names will create obstacles for voters new to the riding, or for voters who are visually impaired.

“The interesting questions are who are these ‘independents,’ and why did they target this riding? Many of them do not appear to have an organic connection to the riding. Some seem to have no public profile while others are part of the ‘letters to the editor’ crowd, or among those who spend their time making submissions to various commissions

and inquiries,” Bennett said in the email. “These are likely the people that attend all-candidate debates, and the only time they all cheer together is when someone makes a positive comment about proportional representation.”

The 2025 federal election includes the rarity of two candidates in neighbouring ridings vying for the role of prime minister. Prime Minister Mark Carney is running in Nepean, Ont., adjacent to the north of Carleton with Poilievre. The only other instance of prime ministerial candidates

running in neighbouring ridings occurred in the 2015 election, with then-Liberal leader Justin Trudeau representing Papineau, Que., in Montreal, and then-NDP leader Thomas Mulcair representing Outremont to the east.

Bennett called this set up in the current election “slightly unusual, but not significant.” “We have two leaders who started their lives in the West and ended up as creatures of Ottawa. One would try to preserve the ‘mandarin’ culture, and yet remove many lower-level civil ser-

vants. The other probably is more critical of civil service culture, but would take a more measured approach to reducing the lower ranks. I am not sure the locals understand this, but we shall see,” Bennett said by email. “I think there will be more surprises in Nepean than expected if the provincial and federal Conservatives can work together.”

Three Carleton candidates—Liberal Bruce Fanjoy, New Democrat Beth Prokaska, and Green Mark Watson—appeared at the Manotick Community Centre in the riding on April 15 to take questions from the public. A representative of the Manotick Village and Community Association explained to the audience that Poilievre was absent so the Conservative leader could prepare for the French-language leaders’ debate on April 16.

Fanjoy told *The Hill Times* the most important issue in the riding is the same one nationally, which is the economy and tariffs imposed by United States President Donald Trump.

“This is a critical moment for Canadian history. We need to stand up to Donald Trump’s

administration. We need to defend our industry. Keep in mind that, even though the other parts of the Canadian economy are outside of Carleton, they impact Carleton, and many people in Carleton—particularly public servants—will be part of defending Canada’s interests in dealing with the U.S.,” said Fanjoy, adding that he favours reciprocal tariffs.

“We need to hit back hard. We need to be precise, and the only way this is going to be fixed is by the U.S. administration realizing that tariffs are not good for America. It’s not good for anybody but we didn’t start this.”

When asked about the overall mood of this election, Fanjoy said that volatility from the Trump administration is “gushing in” to Canada.

“I think that negative politics is something that’s crept into our political discourse over many years,” said Fanjoy. “I think the fact that Conservative politicians are, en masse, not participating in local riding debates ... that’s a bad sign.”

During the meeting in Manotick, the candidates were asked about topics ranging from housing to childcare. An early question was on how they proposed to protect farmers, considering the large amount of agriculture land in the riding.

“[Farmers are] absolutely critical to the sustainability of our nation, especially in these times where our sovereignty is being threatened by the U.S. More than ever, we need self-sufficiency when it comes to our food,” said Watson.

“Every year, Ontario loses about 320 acres of farmland to development. We need to put a stop to that, and we need to define more municipal zoning rules to protect that for the future. We need to do things like promote direct-to-consumer sales and local markets.”

When the candidates were asked about how Canada should address Russia’s war with Ukraine, Prokaska said her party would continue to provide “substantial military and humanitarian support to Ukraine.”

“We will also ensure that no Russian goods are being used to make Canadian products. We will strengthen and enforce sanctions on Russia, and the New Democrats will get tougher on Russian foreign interference in Canada, as well,” said Prokaska.

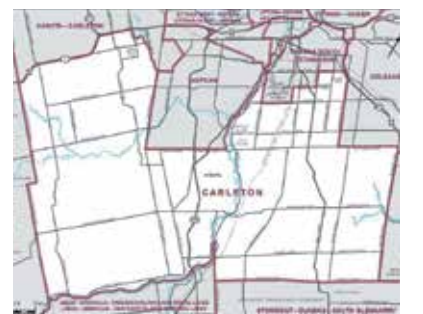
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Carleton Statistics

- Population in 2021 total: 124,416
- Land area in square kilometers: 1,873
- Average age of the population: 38.8
- Percentage of population aged 15 to 64 years: 65.7
- Percentage of population aged 65 years and over: 14
- Median total income in 2020: \$58,400
- Average total income in 2020: \$72,300
- Median household income in 2020: \$136,000

Source: Federal Electoral Districts Redistribution 2022, and 2021 Census of Population by Statistics Canada

- Five most common ethnic or cultural origin groups (per cent): Irish (23.8), Scottish (19.5), English (18.7), Canadian (13.2), French (13.1)
- Five most common religions (per cent): Christians (57.2), Muslim (8.1), Hindu (2.0), Buddhist (1.0), Sikh (0.9)



'We're behind': some Conservatives call out central campaign for failing to focus more on Trump's tariffs



Liberal Leader and Prime Minister Mark Carney, left, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, and Green Party Co-Leader Jonathan Pedneault. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

According to seat projections by polling aggregator 338Canada.com, if an election were to happen now, the Liberals would win 193 seats, the Conservatives 121, the Bloc Québécois 21, the NDP eight, and the Greens one seat.

Continued from page 1

An Angus Reid Institute poll released on April 17 found many supporters of the Liberals continue to be reticent to fully commit, "leaving the party with an impressive ceiling and a precarious floor." The poll found 37 per cent of Grit supporters are less than "very committed" to their vote, while 24 per cent Conservative supporters are less than "very committed" to theirs.

The election is still one week away, and many voters are still undecided. Things could change close to the April 28 election day. However, senior Conservatives, candidates, and campaign managers interviewed for this article said the party's priorities on mes-



It's a mystery why Pierre Poilievre has not placed greater emphasis on U.S. tariffs, especially when the election is increasingly centred on which leader is best equipped to deal with the erratic U.S. President Donald Trump, pictured, says Duane Bratt. *Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

saging have been questionable from the start—persisting with attacks on the carbon tax even after it was known that it will be rescinded, and portraying Prime Minister Mark Carney as "Just like Justin," even though former Liberal leader Justin Trudeau had announced his exit plans.

They said that Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre has not been more forceful in addressing the trade war with the United States and American President Donald Trump's escalating rhetoric about annexing Canada, saying that although the party has recently started to use those "outdated" messages less often, it may be too late.

"There's definitely a couple of big-picture policy issues that people have felt are lacking," said a second veteran Conservative who is actively working in different campaigns. "This is starting to get corrected, they started to make

some of those changes, but that is happening too little too late at least in terms of how it's affecting things on the ground in ridings."

Sources expressed surprise that the leader is prioritizing the cost of living while overlooking the critical issue of Trump's on-again, off-again tariffs—a major concern for millions of Canadians. The trade relationship between Canada and the U.S. accounts for about \$1-trillion in goods and services annually, and supports about a million jobs. They said that this issue has been a driving force behind the Liberals' bounce back—from a 25-point deficit to a lead between one and 13 points, depending on the poll—largely due to the party's strong focus on the trade war and Trump's annexation rhetoric.

"That's a disaster for our messaging," said the senior Conservative. "Everybody wants to talk about Trump and tariffs."

Sources said that it should be a wake-up call for the Conservatives that the Liberals are now competitive in seven ridings in Alberta—the traditional stronghold of the Conservative base. They said that even some safe Conservative-held seats are now "under pressure," attributing this shift to the party's failure to adequately talk about the deteriorating trade Canada-U.S. relationship. As recently as last week, in response to a question from CBCNN, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt stated in an official briefing that the president still believes Canada should join the U.S. as its 51st state.

"The president still maintains his position on Canada: the United States has been subsidizing Canada's national defence, and he believes that Canadians would benefit greatly from becoming the 51st state of the United States of America," Leavitt said in reply to a question from the CBC reporter Katie Simpson on April 15.

Sources pointed to two possible reasons why the Conservative leadership is avoiding the topic: first, it's an area of strength for the Liberals; second, it's a highly sensitive issue for the Conservative Party.

Nevertheless, they pointed out that this is a growing concern among Canadians, and Poilievre needs to address it more directly. Some also believe the Conservative leader's reluctance to speak about Trump stems from the fact that a significant portion of his base supports the U.S. president—raising the risk of alienating core supporters if he takes a stronger position on this issue.

They stressed that the issue is critical, as tariffs could have a significant impact on the Canadian economy—particularly in Ontario, where the automotive sector is vulnerable to Trump's erratic tariff policy announcements, which can be imposed one day and paused the next.

"The battleground is Ontario, you cannot win government without Ontario, and right now we're not winning a freaking thing," said the senior Conservative. "You cannot win government without Ontario, and right now we're under pressure in our home ridings. We're barely holding on, and we have spent a fortune [millions of dollars in attack ads against Trudeau, the carbon tax, and Carney] to achieve nothing."

The senior Conservative said that sometimes it appears their campaign team is not agile enough to adapt to the shifting political landscape, and remains locked into a strategy developed last year. They said that the party led in the polls for more than two years by focusing on cost-of-living issues, and still believes this is the only key to victory.

"The system isn't open to new information," the senior Conservative said. "Clearly, we're facing some serious challenges."

Veteran Conservative strategist Kory Teneycke, who helped secure three back-to-back provincial election victories for the Ontario Progressive Conservatives, has been warning for weeks that the federal party must shift

more attention to trade tariffs. He described the drop from a 25-point lead to now trailing by five-seven points as "campaign malpractice."

A former senior Conservative official told *The Hill Times* that due to weak messaging and Poilievre's polarizing style, some traditional Red Tories are withholding their support in this election.

The Conservatives are currently polling in the 38–39 per cent range—typically enough to secure a majority government. However, this is shaping up to be an unusually polarized election with many progressive voters consolidating behind the Liberals in an effort to block Poilievre from becoming prime minister. They view him as Canada's version of Trump, citing similarities in campaign tactics, style, and rhetoric.

The senior Conservative also said that there is a growing debate within the party about whether it was a wise strategy to target NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh with derogatory labels like "sell-out Singh." They suggested this rhetoric has backfired by alarming left-leaning voters, many of whom have now shifted their support to the Liberals.

"We're having strong discussions on the inside about how stupid it was to beat the shit out of the NDP because we're paying the price for that now," the senior Conservative said. "Look what it has done to us. It has ruined the prospects for us because the NDP voters are scared of us. That's a real problem."

Duane Bratt, a professor of political science at Mount Royal University in Calgary, said that it's a mystery to him why Poilievre has not placed greater emphasis on the Trump tariffs, especially when the election is increasingly centred on which leader is best equipped to deal with the erratic U.S. president. While the Conservatives have addressed the topic, it ranks low on the leader's list of priorities during campaign rallies, where he focuses more on housing, crime, the carbon tax, and attacking Carney. In contrast, the Liberals have made tariffs and Trump's rhetoric about annexing Canada a central pillar of their campaign strategy.

Bratt said that Poilievre's internal polling may suggest that sticking to cost-of-living messaging is the most effective path to victory. However, he warned that if the Conservatives lose, there will likely be serious reflection within the party on why the leader failed to adjust his message even as it became clear that American tariffs were emerging as a defining election issue.

"Conservatives have been asking that, as well," said Bratt. "Some of them have been very vocal about this. They're also vocal about how Poilievre seems to have some of the same mannerisms as Trump, and that's not helping, including bragging about crowd sizes at his rallies and having insulting nicknames. But he doesn't seem to be changing."

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2  **25** **ELECTION**

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ELECTION 2025 NEWSLETTER



Among riding races for political leaders, Carney 'safe' bet to win; Singh likely to 'lose,' says 338Canada's Fournier

Mark Carney is expected to win Nepean, Pierre Poilievre will likely win Carleton, but Jagmeet Singh is expected to lose his seat, Yves-François Blanchet's riding is 'leaning' to the Bloc, Elizabeth May is in a tight fight, and Jonathan Pedneault is not expected to win in Outremont, Que., according to 338Canada's Philippe Fournier. Veteran pollster Nik Nanos said Singh is 'in the most trouble' among the major party leaders.

On Fournier's 338Canada scale, Nepean is marked as a "safe" riding for the Liberals, and gives Carney a 99 per cent chance of winning the riding recently held by Chandra Arya. Arya was first elected the riding's MP in 2015 and was disqualified by the party from seeking the leadership that Carney won, and also from running for re-election reportedly because of an unauthorized trip he made to his native India last August when he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, according to *The Globe and Mail*.

Arya won Nepean in 2021 with 45 per cent of the vote. Carney is expected to increase the percentage to more than 50 per cent of the vote, according to 338Canada. Of note, Fournier told *The Hill Times* his firm will keep its name—338Canada—despite the House expanding to a 343-seat Lower Chamber. "It's like Coke Classic," he offered.

To the south of Ottawa and just next to Nepean, 338Canada has Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre "likely" to be re-elected in the Carleton riding, which he has represented for the past decade, despite facing a unique challenge within a field of 91 candidates, 85 of whom are affiliated with the Longest Ballot Committee, an electoral-reform advocacy group. Poilievre held the riding under its former name of Nepean-Carleton from 2004 to 2015.

Last September, a federal record-breaking 91 candidates ran in a byelection in the Montreal riding of LaSalle-Émard-Verdun, which Louis-Philippe Sauvé won for the Bloc Québécois. However, his short time as an MP will likely come to an end as 338Canada projects a victory for Liberal candidate Claude Guay.

In British Columbia, it's no less a dismal situation for NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh and his quest for re-election in the newly named riding of Burnaby Central.

"Jagmeet, I think, will lose," said Fournier, who projects a "likely" win for Liberal candidate Wade Wei Lin Chang, putting Singh in third place behind the Conservative candidate James Yan.

In 2021, Singh—the longest-serving leader of the major federal parties, having held the job since 2017—handily won the previous riding of Burnaby South with 40 per cent of the vote.

Veteran pollster Nik Nanos said that, this time, Singh is "in the most trouble" among the major party leaders.

"NDP support is down in British Columbia, and half of the caucus is there," said Nanos, the founder and chief data scientist at Nanos Research. "Right now, it's a battle between the Liberals and Conservatives, but because of the distribution of support, it's favouring the Liberals."

"Jagmeet Singh is in a fight for his political life in Burnaby Central with a key challenge from the Liberals," said Nanos.

As of last week, Nanos Research reported that the New Democrats had about nine per cent support nationwide.

The Hill Times reached out to the NDP for comment on Singh's electoral struggle, but did not hear back.

With potentially a seatless leader in the House, the NDP, at best, could keep its official party status with 12 seats in the Commons, said Fournier, who noted that the possibility exists that the left-wing party could be left with just a single seat after the April 28 election.

The last time the NDP lost official party status in Parliament was following the 1993 election when the party, under then-leader Audrey McLaughlin—who was coincidentally the first female leader of a party with House representation—saw their Commons seat count drop from 44 to nine.

Nanos said that federal New Democrats need to follow the example of their Ontario counterparts in that recent provincial election by focusing on seats Singh's party had in the last Parliament. It would be, in Nanos' view, a "save-the-furniture strategy" that the Ontario NDP used to retain its official-opposition status



Prime Minister Mark Carney pictured on the Hill on April 11, 2025, is expected to increase the percentage to more than 50 per cent of the vote in Nepean, Ont., according to 338Canada. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

at Queen's Park following the February provincial election.

"If Singh delivers fewer seats, then his leadership will be on the line," said Nanos.

At dissolution, the NDP had 24 seats in the House with half of them representing ridings in British Columbia.

Fournier explained that the NDP has no certain re-election winners. In Vancouver, where the NDP has been polling in third place, Jenny Kwan—a former provincial NDP cabinet minister who has represented the Vancouver East riding since 2015—is in a vote-projection "toss-up" with Liberal candidate Mark Wiens, with Kwan still having the edge to win, according to 338Canada.

Six other New Democrats have varying odds of holding onto their seats, based on 338Canada's projections.

In Quebec, NDP Deputy Leader Alexandre Boulerice is "likely" to be re-elected in Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie where he was first elected in 2011.

In Alberta, Heather McPherson will also "likely" return to the

BY CHRISTOPHER GULY

With the federal election one week away, only the newest party leader who has never been an MP is almost guaranteed to win a seat in the House, while another party leader is almost sure to lose his race for re-election, according to Philippe Fournier, who runs the online poll aggregator, 338Canada.

He said that Mark Carney, who was sworn in as Canada's 24th prime minister on March 14 after the governing Liberals elected him their leader five days before, is a shoo-in to become the next MP for the federal riding of Nepean, Ont.

Where the Party Leaders Are Running

A look at how the parties would have done in these ridings in 2021 using the 2025 boundaries. Two federal leaders—for the Green and PPC—are running in ridings where their party lost in 2021.

Leader	Party	In Parliament Since	Riding	Province	2021 Vote %	Winning Margin	2021 Runner-up Party
Mark Carney	Liberal	N/A: LPC-held riding	Nepean	Ontario	45.74%	12.37	Conservative
Pierre Poilievre	Conservative	2004	Carleton	Ontario	51.86%	19.99	Liberal
Jagmeet Singh	NDP	2019	Burnaby Central	B.C.	39.78%	8.53	Liberal
Yves-François Blanchet	Bloc Québécois	2019	Beloeil-Chambly	Quebec	53.53%	30.10	Liberal
Elizabeth May	Green	2011	Saanich-Gulf Islands	B.C.	35.77%	13.12	Conservative
Jonathan Pedneault*	Green	N/A: LPC-held riding	Outremont*	Quebec	44.36%	17.06	NDP
Maxime Bernier*	PPC	N/A: CPC-held riding	Beauce*	Quebec	48.29%	30.10	PPC

Source: Elections Canada



House representing Edmonton Strathcona.

In Manitoba, the Winnipeg riding of Elmwood-Transcona is “leaning” toward the NDP’s Leila Dance, who has only represented the riding since 2024, when she won a byelection. Her colleague Leah Gazan is favoured to win re-election in Winnipeg Centre, but is in a “toss-up” with Liberal candidate, Rahul Walia.

To the east in Ontario, three ridings are still “plausible” to remain orange, said Fournier, who teaches physics and astrophysics at Cégep de Saint-Laurent, a post-secondary institution in Montreal.

New Democrat incumbent Brian Masse is in a “toss up” for votes with his Liberal challenger, Richard Pollock, in Windsor West, as are the NDP’s Matthew Green with Liberal candidate Aslam Rana in Hamilton Centre, as well as Lindsay Mathyssen, whose main competitor in London-Fanshawe is the Liberals’ Najam Naqvi. All three New Democrat MPs are still expected to be re-elected, according to 338Canada.

Fournier noted that the NDP could also squeeze out a gain with a familiar face in Quebec.

Ruth Ellen Brosseau, who represented Berthier-Maskinongé from 2011 to 2019 before losing to Bloc Québécois MP Yves Perron, is in a “toss-up” situation with him for votes.

“She definitely has a shot because the Bloc is weak now,” said Fournier.

Even the Quebec party’s leader, Yves-François Blanchet—although leading in his Montreal-area riding of Beloeil-Chambly—is in a race where 338Canada says is “leaning” toward the Bloc, with the Liberal candidate, Nicholas Malouin, a close second behind him.

“The Bloc Québécois lost the popular vote in Quebec to the



Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre, pictured April 12, 2025, campaigning in Nepean, is down as ‘likely’ to win Carleton, Ont., according to 338Canada. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, pictured March 23, 2025, in Ottawa. Veteran pollster Nik Nanos said that, this time, Singh is ‘in the most trouble’ among the major party leaders. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia*



Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, pictured March 10, 2025, on the Hill, is in a race in his own riding Beloeil-Chambly where 338Canada says is ‘leaning’ toward the Bloc, with Liberal candidate Nicholas Malouin, a close second. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



Green Party Co-Leader Elizabeth May, pictured Dec. 3, 2024, is in a tight race in Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C., which she has represented since 2011. May acknowledged that the race to hold onto her seat is ‘tight.’ *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



Green Party Co-Leader Jonathan Pedneault, pictured with Green MP Mike Morrice on the Hill on Sept. 18, 2023. Last week, 338Canada put Pedneault running fourth in a race where Liberal immigration minister Rachel Bendayan is a ‘safe’ bet for re-election. Meanwhile, Morrice is running again in Kitchener Centre, which 338Canada says is ‘leaning’ Green with Liberal candidate Brian Adebaba a close second. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Liberals by two points in the last election,” said Fournier. “Right now, they’re trailing by double digits.”

At the dissolution of Parliament, the Bloc Québécois held

33 seats. Fournier’s aggregator projects the party’s caucus will be reduced by about half compared to the Liberals winning more than 40 ridings in Quebec following the April 28 vote.

Meanwhile, the Green Party could hold onto its two seats in Parliament, said Fournier.

In Ontario, the Kitchener Centre riding, represented by Mike Morrice, is “leaning” Green with Liberal candidate Brian Adebaba a close second, based on 338Canada’s projection.

But Green Party Co-Leader Elizabeth May is in a tighter race in Saanich-Gulf Islands, which she has represented since 2011.

As Fournier pointed out, in 2021, she received 36 per cent of the vote, with 23 per cent going to the Conservatives in second place. This time, May is in a neck-and-neck race with her Tory challenger, Cathie Ounsted, leading to a “toss-up” between the two with May having just a one-point lead, based on 338Canada’s projection last week.

“If Ms. May wins, it’s really her—her hyper-local effect,” explained Fournier. “Her star has faded. In 2019, she had 48 per cent of the vote, and went down to 36 in 2021. She could win. But she’s in a fight.”

In an interview with *The Hill Times* while travelling by train through New Brunswick on the Greens’ national campaign, May said that she “doesn’t take anything for granted,” but noted that she defeated a Conservative cabinet minister, Gary Lunn, in 2011 when she became the first Green MP in Parliament.

May also acknowledged the desire for strategic voting in her riding to prevent a Conservative win.

“People have said to me, ‘I ought to vote for Mark Carney,’ and I have said, ‘it’s too late for you to move to Nepean,’” said May, who was first elected federal Green Party leader in 2006 and later became co-leader with Jonathan Pedneault in 2022. “There’s an astonishing level of disconnect from the reality that we don’t have an election for prime minister.”

David Merner, a retired lawyer who ran for the Liberals in 2015 and then for the Greens in 2019 in the Vancouver Island riding of Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke—and placed second each time behind the NDP’s Randall Garrison, said there is “a very strong anybody-but-Conservative movement” on Vancouver Island, and that he expects the progressive vote to “coalesce around Elizabeth.”

“People like her as a serious constituency MP who really does good work locally, so I think she’s going to win. She’s a safer bet for strategic voters—as the only woman federal leader,” and “incumbency is huge in that riding. But I think she’s in a real race,” said Mercer.

The results of an Oraclepoll Research poll conducted for the Greens released on April 12 put May at 35 per cent support followed by the Tories’ Ounsted at 31 per cent.

May acknowledged that the race to hold onto her seat is “tight.”

“Poilievre’s numbers are dropping, and Carney’s numbers remain solid and growing. There’s a lot of fear, when I knock on doors, of [U.S. President Donald] Trump and Poilievre—but they’re

very grateful for my work,” May said.

The federal Green co-leader said that Canada needs a multiparty system that includes the Greens because “diverse voices bring better decisions than a constant fight for power between two parties,” regarding the Liberals and Conservatives.

“I would prefer a minority Parliament where parties have to work together,” said May. “But it looks at this point that the Liberals are on track to win more seats than the Conservatives—whether or not that results in a majority government.”

May said she hopes the Greens can pick up seats in the Ontario riding of Guelph—which, at the provincial level, Ontario Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner represents at Queen’s Park—and the New Brunswick riding of Fredericton-Oromocto. Former MP Jenica Atwin won the previous riding of Fredericton for the Greens in 2019 and was reelected, as a Liberal, in 2021. She is not seeking re-election.

Fournier’s aggregator 338Canada projects that the Liberals will win both seats that May has set her sights on.

Fournier said that the only other Green hope on Vancouver Island rests with Paul Manly, a former New Democrat who was the Green MP for Nanaimo-Ladysmith from 2019 to 2021 until he was defeated by the NDP’s Lisa Marie Barron. They’re both running again this year, but the riding is in a “toss-up” between Manly and Conservative candidate Tamara Kronis, according to 338Canada.

Last week, in the Montreal riding of Outremont, Green co-leader Pedneault was running fourth in a race where Liberal Rachel Bendayan, the Carney government’s immigration minister, is a “safe” bet for re-election, based on 338Canada’s projection.

Fournier added that he would be “shocked” if People’s Party of Canada Leader Maxime Bernier were elected in the Quebec riding of Beauce, which he represented as a federal Conservative from 2006 to 2018. Tory candidate Jason Groleau’s odds of winning that riding are 99 per cent, according to 338Canada.

Last week, Nanos Research’s polling put the Liberals ahead of the Conservatives at around 45 per cent support compared to 38 per cent.

“All the votes are consolidated into two parties where more than eight out of 10 voters are voting Liberal or Conservative, whereas in the past it was six or seven out of 10,” Nanos explained, noting that NDP and Green voters have thrown their support behind the Grits “to block Pierre Poilievre.”

Fournier said that 338Canada is projecting the Liberals to win a fourth consecutive term in government with “about a 20-seat cushion” above the required 172 seats in the new 343-seat House to form a majority government.

The victory would be sizable, but not as consequential as what occurred under former prime minister Louis St. Laurent. In 1949, his Liberals formed a majority government with 191 seats in a 262-seat Commons.

The Hill Times

'Angry' Conservative base and 'fearful' Liberals expected to boost turnout this election, say political players



Elizabeth May, left, Jagmeet Singh, Mark Carney, Pierre Poilievre, Yves-François Blanchet, and Jonathan Pedneault. In what's shaping up to be one of the most consequential elections in Canadian history—with high stakes and every vote counting—voter turnout on April 28 is expected to be significantly higher, says pollster Nik Nanos. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and illustration by Joey Sabourin

Voters are 'genned up,' or highly motivated, and are poised to make their voices heard in next week's election, says Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs.

Continued from page 1

Canadians tend to vote for a new government. However, it remains to be seen which party will gain the advantage from the anticipated surge in voter participation this time.

The last major change election was in 2015, when Justin Trudeau's Liberals ousted Stephen Harper's Conservatives, with voter turnout reaching 68.3 per cent. In comparison, turnout was 67 per cent in 2019, and 62.6 per cent in 2021.

In 2006, when the Harper Conservatives first came to power, turnout was 64.7 per cent. It declined to 58.8 per cent in 2008, and rose slightly to 61.1 per cent in 2011 when they won a majority.

Before that, the 1993 change election saw Jean Chrétien's Liberals defeat the Progressive Conservatives, with turnout

hitting 69.6 per cent. The 1988 election—often cited as one of the most consequential in Canadian history—recorded a 75.3 per cent turnout, matching the 1984 figure.

"We have two front-runners, where the people that are supporting each of those parties are both highly, highly motivated, and they both hate each other," said Nanos. "They hate the other side, that's a pretty powerful motivator. So, I don't think anyone can really predict whether a high voter turnout would really significantly favour one of the front runners over the other."

Prior to Trudeau's departure in early January, the Conservatives were leading the Liberals by as much as 25 points, driven by a public appetite to replace a fatigued Liberal government. But that momentum shifted following Justin Trudeau's resignation, Mark Carney's election as Liberal leader, and Trump's rhetoric about annexation and his trade war with Canada. Since then, the Liberals have not only recovered the lost political ground in the national polls, but have taken a lead of between one and 13 points, depending on the poll. But the Liberals still have been in power since 2015, although they are now led by a new leader who has helped turned things around the party quickly.

Progressive voters are increasingly coalescing behind

the Liberal Party—motivated by a fear of Poilievre's aggressive leadership style and an overwhelming majority of the electorate's desire to push back against Trump. Meanwhile, Poilievre is facing internal criticism for failing to adequately address the trade tensions with the U.S. and Trump's provocative statements about Canada.

Veteran Conservative strategist Kory Teneycke—who led Ontario Premier Doug Ford's Progressive Conservatives to three consecutive majority wins—has sharply criticized the federal Conservative campaign for squandering a 25-point lead and now trailing the Liberals. He argues that the election has become about Trump's tariffs, and the party's failure to address this issue amounts to what he called "campaign malpractice."

Last week, Ford backed up Teneycke in his assessment of the federal campaign:

"And to be very frank, if Kory was running that campaign, I don't think Mr. Poilievre would be in the position he is in right now," the Progressive Conservative premier told reporters at Queen's Park.

"But there's still a lot of time left. We still have the debates. At the end of the day, people will decide which way they want this country to move forward, but sometimes the truth hurts," said Ford.

Ford later said that he has no interest in seeking the federal Conservative leadership. The premier said he has an election sign for the local federal Conservative candidate on his lawn, and intends to vote Conservative. Ford also said that he will work with whoever wins the April 28 election.

"When I was born, folks, the doctor came along and stamped a 'C' on my forehead," Ford told reporters last week. "I'm a Conservative. I'll always be a Conservative, simple as that. That's why our families voted [Tory] forever before Moses. Moses was a Conservative."

Meanwhile, the Conservative campaign is primarily focused on changing the governing party, capitalizing on widespread frustration over the cost of living—one of the key factors behind Trudeau's declining popularity and the public's appetite for change before the trade war with the U.S. became top of mind. With the Conservatives having been out of power for a decade, their base is especially eager for a new government.

Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, said that voter turnout will be a key dynamic to watch in this election. On one side are Conservative voters eager for change after 10 years of Liberal rule. On the other side are left-of-centre voters who fear a Poilievre government and who are motivated to stop him from becoming prime minister.

"Voters are genned up," or highly motivated, said Bricker.

"There's a sense of fear about what the kind of change Pierre Poilievre will deliver among progressive voters. I mean, it certainly collapsed the NDP vote. The one side is angry, and the other side's fearful," said Bricker.

Duane Bratt, a political science professor in the department of economics, justice, and policy studies at Mount Royal University, said that this is a high-stakes, very competitive election, which is expected to drive voter turnout to high levels. The last time turnout surpassed 70 per cent was during the 1988 federal election, he said.

That election, Bratt said, was also fiercely contested. Today, a similar dynamic is unfolding: the Liberals currently lead in public opinion, while Poilievre's rallies are drawing massive crowds—sometimes in the thousands—from a highly motivated Conservative base who want to make their voices heard.

Unlike most recent elections, which tend to be multi-party contests, this campaign has largely shaped up as a two-party race between the Liberals and Conservatives. It remains to be seen how this dynamic will impact overall voter turnout.

He drew comparisons to the 1988 "free trade" election, in which then-prime minister and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Mulroney and Liberal opposition leader John Turner offered Canadians two starkly different visions on a trade deal with the U.S. Despite the Turner Liberals leading for much of that cam-

paign, it was Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives who ultimately secured victory.

"What's interesting now is the Trump tariffs may be the number-one issue, but there isn't a whole lot of daylight between the positions of the Conservatives and the Liberals on dealing with Trump, where there is the emphasis that they're giving it in their campaign, and where the voters think is best response," said Bratt. "So Poilievre and Carney seem to agree on a lot on dealing with Trump. The question is: do Canadians believe them, and which ones do they think are best suited?"

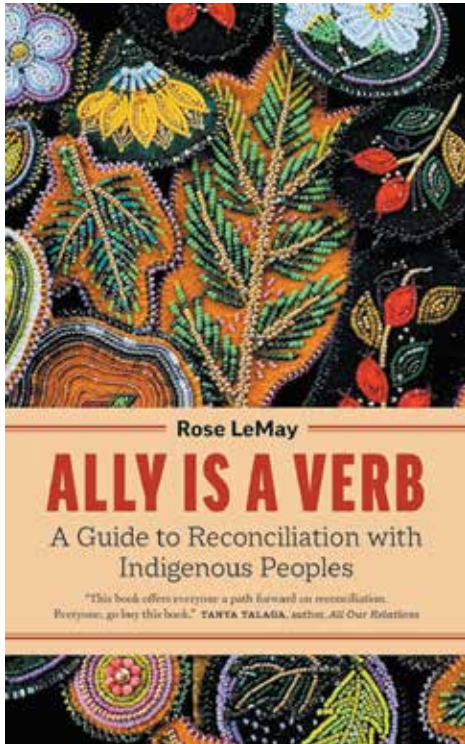
He added that the other difference is that in the 1988 election, then-U.S. president Ronald Reagan was not talking about annexing Canada, and there was no international trade war between America and the rest of the world. arana@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Voter Turnout at Federal Elections

Year	Turnout (%)
1867	73.1%
1872	70.3%
1874	69.6%
1878	69.1%
1882	70.3%
1887	70.1%
1891	64.4%
1896	62.9%
1900	77.4%
1904	71.6%
1908	70.3%
1911	70.2%
1917	75%
1921	67.7%
1925	66.4%
1926	67.7%
1930	73.5%
1935	74.2%
1940	69.9%
1945	75.3%
1949	73.8%
1953	67.5%
1957	74.1%
1958	79.4%
1962	79%
1963	79.2%
1965	74.8%
1968	75.7%
1972	76.7%
1974	71%
1979	75.7%
1980	69.3%
1984	75.3%
1988	75.3%
1993	69.6%
1997	67%
2000	61.2%
2004	60.9%
2006	64.7%
2008	58.8%
2011	61.1%
2015	68.3%
2019	67%
2021	62.6%

Source: Elections Canada

Books & Big Ideas



Rose LeMay is the author of *Ally Is a Verb*. In the interview about her book, LeMay said: 'Things are getting so harsh in America that the lives of LGBTQ2S, people of colour, and Indigenous Peoples are at risk. If we want to protect Canadian democracy, then we need candidates who have accurate knowledge of history, and are practising real inclusion.'

Book cover courtesy of Page Two and handout photograph

Reconciliation starts local, says author of guide book for non-Indigenous allies

Rose LeMay says it's 'up to non-Indigenous people to change these systems so that Indigenous Peoples are not treated worse than others.'

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

Rose LeMay's latest book is an answer to the question she's heard repeatedly from well-meaning would-be allies to Indigenous Peoples: "But what do I do?"

Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is, as LeMay explains in her introduction, "for non-Indigenous allies who already know they want to do something, but are not sure about the next steps."

Over seven chapters, *Ally Is a Verb* details the injustices inflicted on Indigenous Peoples, the ongoing effects of those decisions, and the importance of listening, reflecting, and taking action to ensure that reconciliation can be achieved in Canada.

LeMay warns that the target audience—non-Indigenous settlers—should get comfortable

with being uncomfortable, and use their privilege to take action.

She provides resources along the way—like suggested next steps and additional reading recommendations—and makes clear that this book is not the be-all and end-all of being an ally. Her book is intended to start the conversation and learning journey, not to complete it.

LeMay is Tlingit from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation on the West Coast, and is the CEO of the Ottawa-based Indigenous Reconciliation Group. A columnist at *The Hill Times*, LeMay says she hopes readers will "continue to stand up for Indigenous inclusion and well-being, and for reconciliation."

The following Q&A, conducted over email, has been edited for length and clarity.

Why did you decide to write this book?

"I often hear allies ask what they should do. This book is a change-management approach to reconciliation: do change locally and it influences others while it pushes the country to do better.

"If we do Indigenous inclusion and reconciliation locally in our workplaces and neighbourhoods, then it easily becomes part of national discussions. If we don't do it locally, then it is too easy to ignore at a political or national level.

"Reconciliation is local, and Canadians can make it happen."

“
The necessary step is to risk one's own comfort to challenge those who disagree with reconciliation and the rights of Indigenous people.

—from *Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*

***Ally Is a Verb* is explicitly targeted at non-Indigenous people. Why write a book for this particular audience?**

"The bulk of the work of reconciliation is changing the systems which exclude or treat Indigenous Peoples differently—justice, policing, racism in health care, etc. These systems, for the most part, are led and managed by non-Indigenous Peoples. It's up to non-Indigenous people to change these systems so that Indigenous Peoples are not treated worse than others."

Are there particular groups of non-Indigenous people whom you hope will read this book?

"I'm hopeful that non-Indigenous people who say that reconciliation will take generations will read this book. Indigenous Peoples don't have the luxury of waiting generations for change.

"Like any societal shift, reconciliation needs a sense of urgency to spark us to do something now. Take action like we need to do reconciliation for this generation of Indigenous kids—they need to benefit from reconciliation.

We are in the midst of a federal election campaign. How do you rate the major parties in terms of their commitments to reconciliation?

"I'm concerned that issues of importance to Indigenous Peoples have not received much airtime this election. To date, there's no party doing better than a "C" on making space for reconciliation.

"But the Conservatives are failing spectacularly on reconciliation by keeping a known residential schools denialist as candidate in B.C.—a very chilling message for Indigenous voters in the riding and across the country."

What else should the candidates be talking about?

"It's becoming clear now that fascism is a huge risk in America, and that fascism requires a whitewashing of factual history in order to squash DEI [diversity, equity, and inclusion], and consolidate power in a few.

"Things are getting so harsh in America that the lives of LGBTQ2S, people of colour, and Indigenous Peoples are at risk. If we want to protect Canadian democracy, then we need candidates who have accurate knowledge of history, and are practising real inclusion. How are candidates listening and learning from voters who are LGBTQ2S+, from people of colour, from Indigenous peoples?"

What is the biggest takeaway you would like readers to get from this book?

"I hope that readers take away a sense of commitment to never forget the facts of our history, and a sense of resolve to continue to stand up for Indigenous inclusion and wellbeing, and for reconciliation. I hope that readers take away a sense of hope that we are on the road to reconciliation, that we are stronger as a country because of it.

"Canada is Indigenous strong."
Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, by Rose LeMay, Page Two, 200 pp., \$24.95.

The Hill Times

Books & Big Ideas

Poilievre is a classic political ripper, says author of new bestselling biography

Mark Bourrie says *Ripper: The Making of Pierre Poilievre* is as much about the failings of modern political parties and the Canadian media as it is about Pierre Poilievre.

BY KATE MALLOY

Mark Bourrie says he wanted to write a book about federal Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre because he saw a need for a biography that focused on Poilievre within the modern media environment in Canada. He also wanted to look at the rise of the right in Western democracies, and the undermining of this country's democratic institutions. The result is *Ripper: The Making of Pierre Poilievre*, Bourrie's 430-page, gripping, and exhaustive look at one of the more controversial leading figures in federal politics today. The book is detailed, well-written, and is on *The Globe and Mail's* bestselling books list.

Bourrie, who is a lawyer, author, former Hill journalist, and a historian, has written numerous non-fiction books, including *Bush Runner: The Adventures of Pierre-Esprit Radisson*, which won the prestigious RBC Taylor Prize for non-fiction in 2020. He is also author of *Crosses in the Sky: Jean de Brébeuf and the Destruction of Huronia*; *Big Fear Me*; *The Killing Game: Martyrdom, Murder and the Lure of ISIS*; *Peter Woodcock: Canada's Youngest Serial Killer*; and *Kill the Messengers: Stephen Harper's Assault on Your Right to Know*.

Bourrie argues that Poilievre is "a ripper," a politician "who sees politics as a war that gives their lives meaning," and rippers make

"fantastic opposition leaders," but "awful" prime ministers.

This Q&A, conducted via email, has been edited for length and clarity.

How long did it take you to write this book?

"I worked on it from late May or early June 2024 until late February 2025."

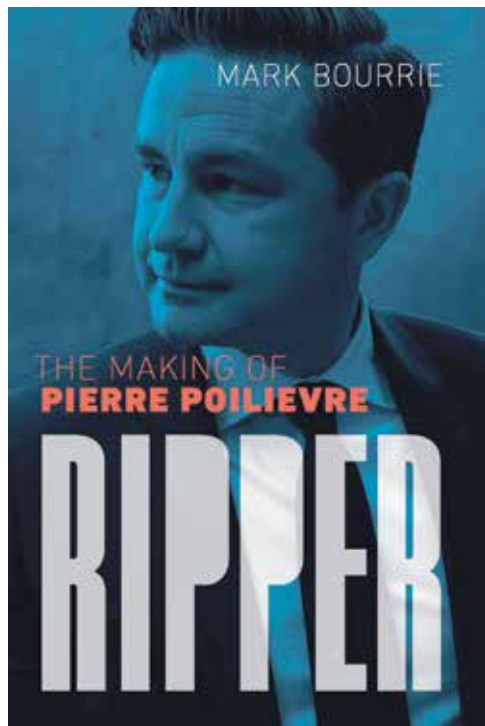
What were your sources of information (documents, books, newspaper stories, reports), and why did you decide not to interview people?

"I'm trained as a historian. I found the written record to be much more useful and accurate than interviews. Poilievre is a polarizing figure in ordinary times. By the time I started the project, he'd been leader of his party for almost two years and we were, supposedly, 18 months away from an election. Finding anyone in Ottawa who was non-partisan and fair was almost impossible.

"People who didn't want him to win really didn't want him to. I would spend hours listening to hours of rumour and come away with nothing usable. On top of that, there was a strong element of fear, especially in the media. I realized few people in Ottawa really know him. All this confirmed my bias against oral history. Poilievre's life is well-documented. He's been in the media spotlight since high school, and an MP for 21 years. I'm very comfortable with the written record. A lot of it was created before people became so polarized."

Why did you want to write this book?

"In 2016, I wanted to follow up on books about Stephen Harper's



Ripper: The Making of Pierre Poilievre, by Mark Bourrie, Biblioasis, 430 pp., \$28.95.

information control and ISIS's use of the internet as recruiting and communication tools. I hoped to start a book about the changing media environment and the creation of alternate media universes, but, at the time, no publisher was interested. Then I pitched a book about foreign use of the internet in asymmetrical warfare against Western democracies. No takers there, either. A proposal for a book on Pierre Radisson from 2004 was still kicking around and was picked up by Biblioasis, a boutique publisher that hadn't handled much non-fiction. So I did that.

"The book sold well and won a prestigious prize. That allowed me to do another project that had been on my mind for years, a biography of *Globe and Mail* founder George McCullagh. It allowed me to delve into modern anti-democratic thinking in Canada. I also did a legal text for journalists for a

law book company, and a biography of the Jesuit mystic Jean de Brébeuf. I'd never intended to be a biographer, but I've realized you can use biography to make important points about politics and society. They're an awful lot of work, though, if you are serious about doing them well."

Why did you want to write a book about Pierre Poilievre, specifically?

"I believed there was a need for a book that centred Poilievre within the modern media environment in Canada and, to a lesser extent, the rise of the right in Western democracies. I've been concerned for a long time about the undermining of democratic institutions in Canada. [Former prime minister] Paul Martin tried to address what he rightly called the 'democratic deficit,' but politicians and the media lost interest when Paul Martin lost to Stephen Harper."

Why is this book important, and who should read it?

"Everyone should read it. What else would I say? The book is as much about the failings of modern political parties and the Canadian media as it is about Poilievre. It's a warning that political parties are no longer democratic organizations where like-minded people can debate policy, develop local followings, and run for office to represent the interests and values of their regions.

"They're election-campaign machines that are run by long-established cliques designed to elect whipped MPs to Parliament while 'The Centre' of unaccountable staffers and 'strategists' who propelled the leader forward takes real control of the country's administration. This has been happening for 40 years, in both major parties, and it is killing democracy. It's even worse here than it was in the United States. Though there, they now have a fascist in power who has no use for democracy and would get rid of it if he could."

Why was it important to publish this book now in the midst of an election campaign?

"It wasn't published in the midst of the campaign. It came out before the campaign started. We had planned for a late April or early May launch, with the late spring and summer to promote the book. By the start of the fixed-date election campaign, the book would have had most of the media coverage that it was going to get, and it would be around like, say, Stephen Maher's book on Trudeau (which I expected to be out in paperback by then).

"In the summer of 2024, I believed Justin Trudeau would be the Liberal leader and we'd go to the polls when we were scheduled to. Launching the book early to get it out before a spring election was not part of a plan, and it was bad for the book. Once the election was called, the CBC—the one media organization that can make a book a success—dropped its invitation for a major interview and the discussion of the book was caught up in the campaign."

As the book's title says, you argue that Pierre Poilievre is "a ripper," a politician "who sees politics as a war that gives their lives meaning." The entire book argues this quite forcefully, but can you explain here why Poilievre is a "ripper," and not a "weaver"?

"Rippers are fantastic opposition leaders. They find real and imagined scandals, force governments to defend policies, raise new issues, and are always challenging the status quo. Poilievre is a classic political ripper. So is Charlie Angus of the NDP. The Liberal Rat Pack were also pretty good rippers back in the day. The media has a few rippers who make important contributions to politics.

"Poilievre takes it farther by personalizing his attacks. Rippers, however, aren't good at developing policy, partly because they don't tend to socialize well,



BOOKS & BIG IDEAS



Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre, pictured April 12, 2025, making an announcement on a campaign stop at the Tomlinson Environmental Services shop in Nepean, Ont. 'If I were advising Poilievre, I'd suggest he give separate substantial interviews on policy to senior journalists from all the country's major media outlets to try to put to rest the idea that he's a policy lightweight,' said Bourrie. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Author Mark Bourrie: 'Rippers are fantastic opposition leaders. They find real and imagined scandals, force governments to defend policies, raise new issues, and are always challenging the status quo.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

and they don't get the rush and quick political results that come from a tough attack. Weavers, on the other hand, get gratification from developing policies and putting together coalitions. I think Justin Trudeau has the empathy of a weaver, but not the organizational skills. Right now—and surprisingly, at least to me—Doug Ford has become the most vocal weaver in Canada, at least on the issue of saving our sovereignty."

New York Times columnist David Brooks was the one to first categorize between "rippers" and "weavers." Why did this column resonate with you, and did this inspire you to write the book?

"It didn't inspire me to write the book. I saw Brooks' model as a way to explain Poilievre in a simple way. I wrote the book because, in the spring of 2024, I believed Trump would be back, [Nigel] Farage would gain ground in the U.K., [Geert] Wilders would continue to be at the centre of power in the Netherlands, [Viktor] Orban would keep his lock on Hungary. A neo-fascist was on the verge of power in Austria, a fascist had the Italian premiership, the AfD was the most dynamic

party in Germany, and the hard-right was making big gains in France.

"I believed then, and I still believe, we are in the early stages of an anti-democratic revolution in the West.

"Democracy in Canada was already in a sad state at least in terms of real public participation and even interest. A Canadian government that made common cause with that movement would be a disaster."

Can "rippers" be good prime ministers, and has there ever been a "ripper" prime minister in Canada?

"No. They're awful. We've had two already: Arthur Meighen and John Diefenbaker. Meighen's nastiness doesn't show up in the history books because he never really got a chance to do much. He finished Robert Borden's term after the First World War and served a few weeks after the King-Byng affair, losing the 1926 election. You have to dig deep into the politics of the time to see how hard he was, and how he scared people.

"For example, in the mid-1930s, the Ontario Liberals and Conservatives came up with an admittedly strange plan to form a coalition provincial government to try to deal with the problems created by the Great Depression and to stop the spread of unions into Ontario factories and mines. Meighen, who was a Senator at the time, crushed the proposal in one meeting.

"Diefenbaker was a great opposition leader. He was a brilliant, compassionate lawyer. But he had no ability to tolerate anyone who disagreed with him or to listen."

How do you think Poilievre's style of politics has affected and changed federal politics today?

"Poilievre has made the never-ending campaign a real thing. I'm not sure that could continue

through four years of a majority government, but I expect it to be normalized when we have minorities. It puts the prime minister at such a disadvantage since the PM's administrative work and security concerns prevent that much travel. This kind of politics requires a huge amount of fundraising and organizing. We could see the House of Commons become even more of a prop and less of a democratic institution where MPs debate about proposed laws and use committees to examine policy and administration.

"The bigger change is in the development of pseudo-media to replace what used to be the mainstream media. Poilievre and his campaign were always miles ahead on creating their own 'news' content on platforms like YouTube, and partnering with partisan organizations that run outlets that produce what can best be called propaganda disguised as news and analysis."

What were some surprises you learned about Poilievre?

"I'm amazed at his drive, his luck, his determination. I was also surprised at his rigidity. He's not a stupid man at all.

"I think he gives very little thought to policy. He just scans the political environment, looking for things that will sell. That could change. To a much lesser extent, and without the anger, Joe Clark was just as obsessed with strategy when he was young, then developed into a more thoughtful politician. But Clark never made politics personal the way Poilievre does."

Why do you think Poilievre distrusts the Hill media so much?

"I distrust the Hill media. They're the last people to realize they must get their act together very quickly. They need to stop seeing themselves as political players, spend some time outside their bubble, and end their

craving for access, which never produces great journalism.

"At the same time, they made Poilievre. He's been a favourite dial-a-quote for decades. I find it odd that he so utterly despises journalists who fawningly covered his campaign against WE Charity in 2020-2021, and turned a fairly uncritical and a very lazy eye to his pro-convo work in 2022. I suppose his disdain is grounded in the right-wing myth of a liberal press. Donald Trump and Stephen Harper believe it, too."

Why do you distrust the Hill media, especially as a former Hill journalist?

"I believe informing the public is not the top priority of many Hill journalists. I see far too much social climbing and status seeking with journalists more concerned about 'access' than bravely telling people what's going on. With some very notable exceptions, press coverage of the Hill is just the repetition of some interest group or politicians' talking points and analysis by people who have a minimal understanding of law, economics, history, and public administration and no research skills to speak of. Too often, public affairs are covered as sports or social events. I suppose that's what media managers in this country think sells, though it doesn't seem all that interesting to the vast majority of people."

What do you think of Poilievre's treatment of the Hill media? Does it work for him?

"If I were advising Poilievre, I'd suggest he give separate substantial interviews on policy to senior journalists from all the country's major media outlets to try to put to rest the idea that he's a policy lightweight, if, indeed, he isn't one. [Liberal Leader Mark] Carney and [NDP Leader Jagmeet] Singh would be smart to do the same thing. All the party leaders seem to me to see all journalists as bad-faith actors, which is understandable, considering some of the recent big media failings.

"Still, I believe the campaign should be covered, and that candidates should have the self-confidence to deal with journalists. The situation has been getting worse over the years, and the public doesn't seem interested in punishing candidates and government leaders who shun the media. Nor do journalists stick together and push back, so I expect it to work.

"If real media want to survive in Canada, journalism needs to professionalize: real qualifications, professional standards, and a mechanism to enforce those standards in a meaningful way, including the discipline and, if necessary, expulsion of bad actors. So much of the media's problems are created by journalists themselves, and the door is wide open to propagandists and political actors claiming to be media. Without rebuilding

credibility, it's impossible to get public support."

What do you think will happen if Poilievre wins the next election? What kind of prime minister would he be?

"I believe Poilievre is an honest man. He will keep his promises. And, after making the same ones over and over again, I can't see how he can get out of them. That means the defunding of the English CBC. It also means the end of support for mainstream print media, which is probably a good thing since most dailies in Canada have minimal readership and do so little coverage.

"He'll cut all climate-change mitigation efforts, and stop or greatly reduce foreign aid. Each one of those things could, and should, have been major election issues, but our relationship with the United States has dominated the campaign so far. It's hard to know if he'd have a decent cabinet, since we can't be sure who's going to be elected, but it probably wouldn't matter much. His campaign already shows how much he depends on a small group around him and that he doesn't listen to anyone else. My biggest concern is that he'll be weak at the knees around Trump and his enablers. They are, in so many ways, on the same wavelength."

What if he loses? What do you see unfolding as a result of that both in the party and across the country?

"If he wins, he's fine. If the election is a minority, he goes back on the road with a good chance of winning next time. In the next election, the Liberals would be seeking their fifth mandate. Canadians have given a party a fifth term just once, in 1953. Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier couldn't win five elections in a row. Neither could Pierre Trudeau or the Liberals under Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin.

"It gets interesting if Mark Carney were to win a majority. The knives might come out for Poilievre. They certainly will for Jenni Byrne and others on the Conservative campaign team. But I don't see him going without a nasty fight. He's actually done a good job on the campaign, so far. If the Liberals win, seats will come from the Bloc Québécois and the NDP, not the Conservatives. That should mean something. As well, Poilievre won the leadership with the support of a large block of people in western Canada and rural-small town Ontario who believe in him and will not turn on him. And there's no obvious successor. That means the Conservative establishment would have to drag him out, and I don't believe they have the political muscle to do that."

Ripper: The Making of Pierre Poilievre, by Mark Bourrie, Biblioasis, 430 pp., \$28.95.

kmalloy@hilltimes.com
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Books & Big Ideas

Fiscal Choices takes a sober look at economic dimensions of pandemic

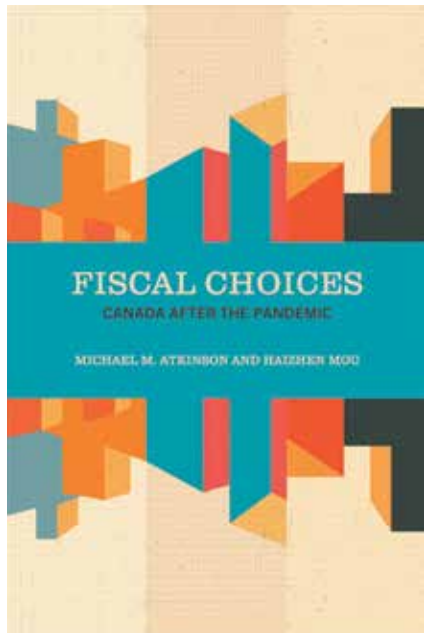
The following is an excerpt from Michael M. Atkinson and Haizen Mou's, *Fiscal Choices: Canada After the Pandemic*, one of the five finalists for the 2024 Donner Prize, the best public policy book of the year.

BY HAIZEN MOU &
MICHAEL M. ATKINSON

For most of us, the COVID-19 pandemic came as a shock, and shock is the word that best describes COVID-19's effect on the Canadian economy. Like most other countries, Canada plunged into recession in early 2020 and thankfully emerged rapidly the following year. In its wake COVID-19 has left a series of encouraging revelations: biomedical research, in the form of new vaccines, can be applied much faster than anyone thought possible, and governments can respond quickly to a fiscal crisis without becoming mired in unproductive debate. But the pandemic also revealed limits both in public health expertise and in the ability of traditional policy instruments to stabilize the economy while controlling inflation.

This book takes a sober look at the economic dimensions of COVID-19, and examines the state of Canada's fiscal policy and fiscal health following the pandemic. Our analysis is a blend of three streams of interpretation: the academic literature on fiscal and monetary policy; the perspectives of elite players in the public sector; and our own opinions about the first two.

We try to be objective. Our own opinions do not show up in great granular detail. In fact, the most important opinion we express might be the topics we have chosen to highlight: the growth of inequalities, the management of sovereign debt, and the institutions of decision-making and accountability—federalism and parliamentary government. This blend of economic and political topics reflects our conviction that fiscal policy can



Authors Haizen Mou, top, and Michael Atkinson on why they wrote this book: 'We wrote *Fiscal Choices* out of a genuine concern for Canada's capacity to cope with both short-term economic shocks and long term-fiscal challenges.' Book cover and photographs courtesy of the University of Toronto Press

be understood only by adopting a political economy approach.

Readers would be forgiven for thinking that political economy is what happens when you put a political scientist and an economist together. Not so, or at least not so simply. A country's political economy, for us, consists of the rules and norms used to solve the collective action problems standing in the way of creating and justly distributing wealth. One can adopt an entirely economic lens and concentrate on the role of markets in this process, or take a political science approach and focus on the exercise of political authority. But only by doing both, simultaneously, can one appreciate the range of policy choices available. And only by listening to decision-makers can one appreciate how choices are made.

Academics have lavished attention, with good reason, on the institutions of policymaking, and we are equally committed to giving institutions and policies their due. But policies are made by people, and institutions require people to manage them. The people who populate the upper reaches of our fiscal policy institutions—politicians and their advisers—are the key players in this story. Clearly, they are human, and so suffer from the theoretical baggage and cognitive limitations familiar to everyone who has tried to understand the machinations of modern capi-

talism. Their task, however, is to do more than understand; they must thread the policy needles described here and change the content and conduct of politics such that a sustainable future within an accountable political system is within reach.

In the midst of the pandemic, we conducted interviews with many individuals who are or have been at the centre of fiscal policy choices. From these rich conversations, we can share verbatim only some of the opinions we heard expressed. But their influence on our own thinking extends far beyond those quotes. Every conversation produced nuanced insights, and several generated reading lists that helped us interpret our topic. We owe all of those with whom we spoke (academic economists, civil servants, and politicians) an enormous debt. We can say with certainty that, without their help, there would be no book.

The table of contents identifies the topics, but what did we learn and what do we want to convey? Here are some basic themes:

- Canada, like other developed countries, faces a series of policy crises: economic growth has slowed down; inflation is hard to control; income and wealth inequality are rising; environmental politics are polarizing; and demographic realities are beginning to bite. For some, this confluence of problems constitutes a "polycrisis": it is, at the very least, a set of compounding

problems with serious economic and political implications.

What makes this combination of problems especially challenging is our rapidly diminishing ability to anticipate the future. Our era is characterized by what some describe as "radical uncertainty." The effects of fiscal and monetary policy interventions are no longer certain, and the impact of technological changes are increasingly hard to predict.

- Economic growth, on which Canada relies for collective well-being, is becoming more difficult to generate, and the transition to a net zero-carbon economy is especially threatening in a country that relies on natural resources to generate middle-class incomes. The idea that we are in the midst of a long-term "secular stagnation" is particularly sobering when we contemplate the difficulties Canada has had in preparing for inevitable economic changes.

- Most conventional indicators of well-being assure us that we live in the best of times, and there is no question that in absolute terms ours is a period of exceptional wealth. It is also a period, by no means the first, of exceptional and growing inequality. Our sense of justice and our expectations of continued growth demand more attention to emerging inequities and the question: "What should we expect from the economy?"

- Public trust in democratic governments and democracy itself is at a low ebb, and our political institutions do nothing to inspire confidence. Our leaders are increasingly reluctant to accept accountability for economic outcomes over which they have limited control or understanding, and our political discourse is dominated by performative posturing and blame avoidance.

- Those who are entrusted with the instruments of power show an understandable reluctance to take risks or abandon well-known, if poorly performing, formulas. Our economic elite is intelligent and well meaning, but fearful and conservative. Courage is in short supply, and the status quo has a strong grip on the imagination.

The set of challenges we are describing predate the pandemic, but the pandemic has had the salutary effect of drawing the details to our attention. It provides the fulcrum for our analysis, but we are well aware that there is an important pre-COVID-19 context and a challenging post-COVID-19 world, both of which need attention. As we look back on three extraordinary pandemic years, we hope that this book will promote awareness of these trends and challenges and encourage long term, anticipatory thinking. We don't expect everyone to agree with our summary assessments, but we do hope that they will stimulate thought and even better ideas.

Excerpt from *Fiscal Choices: Canada After the Pandemic*, by Michael M. Atkinson and Haizen Mou (University of Toronto Press) reprinted with

permission from the University of Toronto Press, 2024. The book is one of the five finalists for this year's Donner Prize. The other four books are: *And Sometimes They Kill You: Confronting the Epidemic of Intimate Partner Violence*, Pamela Cross (Between The Lines); *Constraining the Court: Judicial Power and Policy Implementation in the Charter Era*, by James B. Kelly (UBC Press); *Seized by Uncertainty: The Markets, Media and Special Interests that Shaped Canada's Response to COVID-19*, by Kevin Quigley, Kaitlynn Lowe, Sarah Moore, and Brianna Wolfe (McGill-Queen's University Press); and *Hard Lessons in Corporate Governance*, by Bryce C. Tingle (Cambridge University Press). The 2024 Donner Prize will be presented at a gala dinner in Toronto on May 15, 2025.

The Hill Times

Two questions for the authors

Why did you write this book, and/or who is the perfect reader?

"We wrote *Fiscal Choices* out of a genuine concern for Canada's capacity to cope with both short-term economic shocks and long term-fiscal challenges. The pandemic was a chance to evaluate our policymakers and our institutions as they faced a new set of problems having just come through the 2008 financial crisis. We wanted to focus on how well governments would respond to the pressure these crises bring. We also wanted to profile the economic and political vulnerabilities, as well as strengths, that Canada possesses. These are not topics most Canadians wake up thinking about, but crises like the pandemic, and now the wave of protectionism that is welling up from the United States, show how important it is for Canadians to understand our level of preparedness.

"Our book is entitled *Fiscal Choices*, and we believe that our collective well-being as Canadians depends on our ability to make good ones. But there is no consensus on what those are for the long term. Our decision makers are focussed on short-term horizons—the business cycle, the budget cycle, the electoral cycle. Thinking about our fiscal future—specifically on how we will generate economic growth without depleting our natural capital, assuming unsustainable levels of public debt, or aggravating income and wealth inequalities—is very difficult. But these are issues we cannot afford to neglect.

"These economic challenges come at a time when our political architecture, specifically federalism and parliamentary government, is not engendering much confidence among Canadians. They struggle to understand who is responsible for what and why there can't be more collaboration among governments. Politicians resist taking responsibility for decisions and outcomes over which they often have limited control. And yet, choices are being made and we must insist that they be publicly explained and justified. The people we interviewed, all high ranking politicians and officials, are very well motivated and highly intelligent. They are also very cautious. In our final chapter we are less cautious in predicting the future and recommending changes."



Parliamentary Calendar

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

Obed to talk about 'Charting Canada's Arctic Future' in Toronto on April 23



Natan Obed, pictured, of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, centre, will take part in a panel discussion, 'Charting Canada's Arctic Future,' hosted by the Canadian Club of Toronto. Other participants include Sean Boyd, Heather Exner Poirot, and Jessica Shadian on April 23 in Toronto. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

Mayor's Breakfast—David Coletto, founder, chair, and CEO of Abacus Data, is the special guest at the Mayor's Breakfast, hosted by Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe, *The Ottawa Business Journal*, and the Ottawa Board of Trade. Tuesday, April 22, at 7 a.m. ET Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Ave. W. Details: business.ottawabot.ca.

Rose LeMay's Book Launch—*The Hill Times* columnist Rose LeMay will discuss her new book, *Ally is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*, at a private book launch hosted by Deloitte and Catalyst Canada. Space is limited. Tuesday, April 22, at 4:30 p.m. at Deloitte Greenhouse, Bayview Yards Innovation Centre, Suite E200, 7 Bayview Station Rd., Ottawa. Register via Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

Bruce Heyman to Deliver Remarks—Former U.S. ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, now CEO of Power Sustainable, will deliver remarks on the environment at a lunch event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Wednesday, April 23, at 11:30 a.m. ET at a location to be announced in Montreal. Details: corim.qc.ca.

Panel: 'Charting Canada's Arctic Future'—Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, will take part in a panel discussion, "Charting Canada's Arctic Future," hosted by the Canadian Club of Toronto. Other participants include Sean Boyd (Agnico Eagle), Heather Exner Poirot (Macdonald-Laurier Institute), and Jessica Shadian (Arctic360). Wednesday, April 23, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York, Toronto. Details: canadianclub.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Canada Growth Summit 2025—The Public Policy Forum hosts the Canada Growth Summit 2025 on the theme "Unleashing Canada's potential in turbulent times." Participants include Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Privy Council Clerk John Hannaford, former Conservative cabinet minister Lisa Raitt, former ambassadors Louise Blais and Marc-André Blanchard, and former chief trade negotiator Steve Verheul, among others. Thursday, April 24, at 7:30 a.m. at the Fairmont Royal York, 100 Front St. W., Toronto. Details: ppforum.ca.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

'An Inclusive Parliament?'—The Canadian Study of Parliament Group

hosts "An Inclusive Parliament?" exploring equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in legislative spaces, from the experiences of legislators themselves to public engagement and staff participation behind the scenes. Friday, April 25, at 9 a.m. ET at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details via Eventbrite.

The Walrus Talks: Tariffs—The Walrus Talks@Home presents a webinar on "Tariffs: Discussing What the U.S. Trade War Means for Canada, Both Now and in the Future." Speakers to be announced. Friday, April 25, at 12 p.m. ET happening online: thewalrus.ca.

Superintendent of Financial Institutions to Deliver Remarks—Peter Routledge, head of the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, will speak at a lunch event hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Friday, April 25, at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

Civic Engagement Forum on the 2025 Election—The SVG Association of Ottawa hosts a civic engagement forum bringing together members of Ottawa's African, Caribbean, and Black communities to explore what this election could mean for us, how we stay informed, and why our collective engagement matters more than ever. Friday, April 25, at 7 p.m. ET at the Ottawa Black Business Alliance, 255 Montreal Rd. Register via Eventbrite.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25— SUNDAY, APRIL 27

IMF and World Bank Ministerial Meetings—The 2025 Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund will take place from Friday, April 25, to Sunday, April 27, in Washington, D.C. Details: worldbank.org.

MONDAY, APRIL 28

Federal Election Day—Canadians from coast to coast to coast will head to the polls to vote in the snap election called by Prime Minister Mark Carney on March 23.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Conference: 'Greenland, NATO, and the Future of the North'—ISG Senator Peter Boehm will deliver the keynote speech at "Greenland, NATO, and the Future of the North" hosted by the Canadian International Council and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Tuesday, April 29, 8:30 a.m. ET at the University of Toronto's Munk School

of Global Affairs, 1 Devonshire Place, Toronto. Details: thecic.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

CANIC 2025—The Canadian Military Intelligence Association hosts CANIC 2025, the Canadian Intelligence Conference. Participants include Nathalie Droin, national security and intelligence adviser to the prime minister, and her predecessor Richard Fadden, among others. Wednesday, April 30, at 7:30 a.m. ET, Ottawa Conference and Event Centre, 200 Coventry Rd. Details via Eventbrite.

Panel: 'Rethinking the 'One China' Policy'—Former Liberal MP John McKay will take part in a panel discussion, "Rethinking the 'One China' Policy," hosted by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office. Other participants include former Canadian ambassador to China Guy Saint-Jacques, ex-vice chief of defence staff Mark Norman, and Bonnie Glaser from the German Marshall Fund. Wednesday, April 30, at 8:30 a.m. ET at the Delta Ottawa City Centre. Register via Eventbrite.

THURSDAY, MAY 1

World Press Freedom Day Lunch—World Press Freedom Canada hosts its annual luncheon on the theme "Disinformation and Democracy: Standing on Guard." Former newscaster and current disinformation watchdog Kevin Newman will address the threat that the growing flood of disinformation poses to Canadian unity, security and democracy, and to the country's traditional media. Thursday, May 1, at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St., Ottawa. Details: worldpressfreedom-canada.ca.

Panel: 'Canada vs. Trump'—The Economic Club of Canada hosts a lunch event, "100 Days of Disruption: Canada vs. Trump" featuring Flavio Volpe, president, Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association; Benjamin Tal, deputy chief economist, CIBC Capital Markets; and Jeremy Kronick, C.D. Howe Institute's director of monetary and financial services research. Thursday, May 1, at 11:45 a.m. ET in Toronto. Details: economicclub.ca.

FRIDAY, MAY 2

Corporate Control with Nora Loreto—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, activist, author, and journalist Nora Loreto will discuss *The Social Safety Net*, the second book in her landmark series, *Corporate Control* for a deep dive into systemic

inequality and the corporate web spun around Canada's economy, society, and politics. Friday, May 2, at 8 p.m. at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 3

The Certainty Illusion with Timothy Caulfield—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, University of Alberta professor Timothy Caulfield will discuss his book, *The Certainty Illusion*, lifting the curtain on the forces contributing to our information chaos, and unpacking why it's so difficult—even for experts—to escape the fake. Saturday, May 3, at 11:30 a.m. at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

SUNDAY, MAY 4

From Truth to Reconciliation with Rose LeMay—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, *The Hill Times* columnist Rose LeMay will join Bruce McIvor to discuss their respective new books: *Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*, and *Indigenous Rights in One Minute: What You Need to Know to Talk Reconciliation*. Sunday, May 4, at 4 p.m. ET at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

Canada in the New World Order with Lloyd Axworthy—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, former Liberal cabinet minister Lloyd Axworthy will discuss what is Canada's role in the world and what are our most pressing threats and opportunities. Sunday, May 4, at 5:30 p.m. ET at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

TUESDAY, MAY 6

National Prayer Breakfast—Held under the auspices of the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons, the National Prayer Breakfast includes Canadian and international Christian faith leaders, ambassadors, MPs, Senators, and Canadians tuning in from across our nation and abroad. Tuesday, May 6, at 7:30 a.m. ET at Rogers Centre Ottawa, 55 Colonel By Dr. Details via Eventbrite.

Lisa Raitt to Deliver Bell Lecture—Former Conservative cabinet minister Lisa Raitt will deliver this year's Dick, Ruth and Judy Bell Lecture, hosted by Carleton University. Tuesday, May 6, at 7 p.m. ET at Carleton Dominion-Chalm-

ers Centre, 355 Cooper St., Ottawa. Details: carleton.ca.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

Patrons Circle Dinner with Gerald Butts—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts its Patrons Circle Dinner with Gerald Butts, former principal secretary to then-prime minister Justin Trudeau, now adviser to Prime Minister Mark Carney and vice-chair of the Eurasia Group. Wednesday, May 7, at 5:30 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

MONDAY, MAY 12

Lunch: 'Legal Ethics and the Attorney General'—The University of Ottawa's Public Law Centre hosts a conversation with Andrew Martin on his forthcoming book *Legal Ethics and the Attorney General*, looking at the position of Canada's attorney general, emphasizing the ethical standards they must uphold as lawyers and the importance of professional accountability in maintaining the rule of law. Monday, May 12, at 11:30 a.m. ET at uOttawa, Fauteux Hall, Room 202, 57 Louis-Pasteur Priv. Details via Eventbrite.

TUESDAY, MAY 13

Webinar: 'Lobbying in Post-Election Ottawa'—Lobbying Commissioner Nancy Bélanger will take part in a webinar hosted by the Public Affairs Association of Canada's Saskatchewan Chapter on "New Government, New Reality: Lobbying in Post-Election Ottawa." This session will explore what public affairs professionals need to know to effectively and ethically navigate federal lobbying in the post-election environment. Tuesday, May 13, at 2 p.m. ET happening online: publicaffairs.ca.

TUESDAY, MAY 13— THURSDAY, MAY 1

Sustainable Finance Summit—The Sustainable Finance Summit is scheduled to take place in Montreal from Tuesday, May 13, to Thursday, May 14. This year's theme is "Aligning Finance with Planetary Boundaries." Details: sommel-financedurable.com.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

Senator Plett's Retirement—Today is Manitoba Conservative Senator Donald Plett's 75th birthday, which means his mandatory retirement from the Senate.

Lunch: 'AI Sovereignty in a Shifting Global Order'—The Canadian Club of Ottawa hosts a lunch event, "Canada at a Crossroads: AI Sovereignty in a Shifting Global Order" featuring Erin Kelly, co-founder and CEO of Advanced Symbolics, AskPolly; and Niraj Bhargava, co-founder and CEO of NuEnergy.ai. Wednesday, May 14, at 12 p.m. ET at the Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Details: canadianclubottawa.ca.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

Trade Conference 2025—The Canadian Global Affairs Institute hosts Trade Conference 2025 taking place in Ottawa. Wednesday, May 21. Details to follow: cgai.ca.

THURSDAY, MAY 22

Yves Giroux to Deliver Remarks—Parliamentary Budget Officer Yves Giroux will deliver remarks at a virtual event hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Thursday, May 22, at 12:30 p.m. ET happening online: cdhowe.org.

TUESDAY, MAY 27

Lunch: 'Investing in Canada's Defence Industrial Base'—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts a lunch event, "Security and Prosperity: A Business Case for Investing in Canada's Defence Industrial Base." Participants include Unifor national president Lana Payne, Business Council of Canada president and CEO Goldy Hyder, former Canadian ambassador Louise Blais, OMERS president and CEO Blake Hutcheson, Bombardier Inc.'s president and CEP Eric Martel, and ATCO Ltd.'s president and CEO Nancy Southern. Tuesday, May 27, at 11:30 a.m. ET at a location to be announced. Details: canadianclub.org.

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