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NEWS

With confidence votes coming, it's important to keep Pitfield in the PMO, say some top Liberals

BY ABBAS RANA

In this minority government and with the budget confidence vote approaching, Tom Pitfield

has chosen to remain in the Prime Minister's Office to steer political strategy, say some top Liberals.

David Lametti

Between July and mid-September, the Prime Minister's Office found itself in the unusual position of having two principal secretaries at the same time. Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.) had brought

> in former justice minister and attorney general David assuming that veteran strategist Pitfieldwho joined Tom Pitfield

the PMO back in March—was only serving temporarily. Believing Pitfield

Continued on page 33

OPINION

Carney went to the UN to advance Canada's foreign policy, Trump went to abuse the UN in a tirade of false accusations, harangue

Mark Carney's four days at the UN showed his belief that Donald Trump's aggressiveness can be fought off by strengthening Canada's trade, energy, and security through diplomacy. When Carney returned home and went to Question Period, the opposition seemed uninterested in grilling him on what he had accomplished at the UN. Read Douglas Roche's column on p. 14.





Prime Minister Mark Carney, left, and U.S. President Donald Trump. For nearly an hour, Trump stood at the green podium in the UN's General Assembly belittling and berating the organization for its immigration and climate policies. Carney dutifully showed up at the Canadian desk to listen to Trump's harangue. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade and courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

NEWS

Coming by elections in at least three safe Liberal ridings will mark first test of Carney government's popularity, say political players

BY ABBAS RANA

With at least three safe Liberal ridings expected to

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NEWS

Trump's silencing of critics a warning for Canada, say prominent Canadians

BY CHRISTOPHER GULY

ike many television viewers Laround the world, former

Continued on page 35

Heard on the Hill



By Christina Leadlay

Giddy-up: more than a dozen **RCMP-bred horses** galloping to an auction near you

Beginning Sept. 29, 16 homebred Hanoverian horses that didn't make the grade for the RCMP Musical Ride are seeking new roles in the private sector.

Hosted on GCSurplus—the federal government's surplus auction site more commonly used for rehousing excess desks, books, computers, radios, or paint—the

RCMP's Online Horse Auction will run from Sept. 29 until Oct 8.

Each horse will be featured with a photograph, video, and detailed description to help horse lovers find their best match.

While these equines won't be dancing to music or carrying a Mountie dressed in red serge, they are nonetheless "highly



sought-after horses" that are "excellent for dressage, show jumping and other equitation disciplines,"the RCMP wrote on its website.

The RCMP has been breeding its own horses for more than 80 years, boasting a stable of "elegant, strong and even-tempered horses' at its Pakenham, Ont., farm, about

an hour west of downtown Ottawa. The horses are trained to join the RCMP's iconic Musical Ride as long as they meet the Mounties standards for size, colour, rideabil-

been promoted as a "sneak peek:" Baffin, a chestnut stallion born earlier this year, described as having "presence and potential;" and Sosi, a five-year-old Registered Hanoverian mare, standing 15.2-and-a-half hands high and "full of elegance and promise,"

Sosi, left, and

auction on **GCSurplus** starting Sept. 29. Bred by the

RCMP, they didn't make the cut for the Musical Ride,

but are still 'highly soughtafter horses, according to

the RCMP. **Photographs** courtesy of RCMP

Baffin are two of 16 Hanoverian horses up for

Raymond B. Blake wins \$40,000 **Shaughnessy Cohen Book Prize**

In front of a crowd of 500 booklovers dressed in their black tie-finest, University of Regina professor Raymond B. Blake won the \$40,000 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing for his book, Canada's Prime Ministers and the Shaping of a National Identity, published by UBC Raymond B. Blake, left, and his

wife Wanda Blake at Politics and The gala event, the Pen 2025. The Hill Times hosted by the photograph by Cynthia Münster Writers'Trust of Canada, took place

at Ottawa's iconic Château Laurier on Sept. 24. The prize was increased this year from \$25,000 to \$40,000.

The other nominees for this year's prize were: Stephen

Maher for The Prince: The Turbulent Reign of Justin Trudeau (Simon & Schus-

ter Canada); Jane Philpott for Health for All: A Doctor's Prescription for a Healthier Canada (Signal); Tanya Talaga for The Knowing (Harper-Collins Publishers);

and Alasdair Roberts for The Adaptable Country: How Canada Can Survive the Twenty-First

Century (McGill-Queen's Univer-

Check out Cynthia Münster's photos of the star-studded event on page 36.

MPs take on Commonwealth diplomats in friendly cricket game

RCMP spokesperson Robin

most of the equines up for auction

Percival was tight-lipped about

this year, but two horses have

ity and temperament.

Several Liberal and Conservative MPs left their political rivalries off the pitch to play cricket as Team Parliamentarians on the grounds of Rideau Hall on Sept. 23.

On the opposing team were diplomats from Commonwealth countries and cricket advocateswho ultimately won the contest.

The friendly tournament was followed by a reception where MPs, Senators, ambassadors, and promoters of the sport wined and dined, and shared a few words to celebrate cricket in Canada.

Liberal MP Iqra Khalid organized both events again this year to help the advocates pitch for more funding support and particularly to build a "home of student cricket"in Canada.

'We may not be from the same party, or the same countries, but we share common values as parliamentarians and officials from the Commonwealth," said fellow Liberal MP Alexandre Mendès,



The group of parliamentarians, diplomats, and cricket advocates who played on the Rideau Hall cricket pitch on Sept. 23. Photograph courtesy of the office of MP Igra Khalid

chair of the Canadian Branch of the Canadian Parliamentary Association, in her remarks at the start of the evening.

Secretary of State for Sports, Adam Van Koeverden, took part in the tournament, but missed the dinner. Spotted at that event were Conservative MP Brad Vis—who also played

the game—his caucus colleague Tamara Jansen, and Bloc Québécois MP Marie-Hélène Gaudreau. Treasury Board President Shafqat Ali was also there, as were Liberal MPs Jaime Battiste. Tatiana Auguste, Jean Yip, Terry Duguid, Natilien Joseph, Gurbux Saini and Parm Bains.

-Riddhi Kachhela

Canada welcomes new envoys from India, Ukraine

India and Ukraine were among six new envoys who presented their credentials to Governor General Mary Simon at a Sept. 24 ceremony at Rideau Hall.

India's new high commissioner to Canada Dinesh Kumar Patnaik succeeds Sanjay Kumar Verma wno, along with five other diplo mats, was recalled in a bilateral spat in October 2024 in which India sent six Canadian officials home. including our high commissioner. After India's President Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Mark Carney agreed this past June to reinstate each other's top diplomats, Canada appointed Christopher Cooter as high commissioner to New Delhi in late August.

Andrii Plakhotniuk takes over from Yulia Kovaliv whose



new high commissioner Dinesh Kumar Patnaik at Rideau Hall on Sept. 24. Rideau Hall photograph by IVIS Anne Marie Brisson, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2025

India's

term ended this past summer. Until recently, Plakhotniuk was Ukraine's envoy to Sweden.

Also newly installed are Haiti's new ambassador to Canada Anthony Dessources, Belgium's Karl Anthony Amadeus Dhaene, Norway's Hanne Ulrichsen, and Serbia's Stefan Tomašević.

There are a few new "knights" in our midst as of last week as both the French Legion of Honour and the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie's Ordre of the Pléiade inducted some new members at separate ceremonies in Ottawa.

Senate Speaker Raymonde Gagné received one of France's highest honours, which was bestowed by France's Ambassador to Canada Michel Miraillet on Sept. 25.

Two days prior, a former Liberal MP, a retired Parliamentary official, a former Quebec politician, and a community activist were inducted as knights into the Ordre de la Pléiade on Sept. 23.

Liberal MP Marie-France Lalonde, who is chair of the Canadian Branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) presented the decorations to her former colleague René Arseneault who was the Liberal MP



Senate Speaker, former MP and ex-Commons clerk all 'knighted'

of Commons André Gagnon in 2017, left, and Senate Speaker Raymonde Gagné in 2023. The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia and by Andrew Meade

for Madawaska-Restigouche, N.B., from 2015 to 2025 when he didn't reoffer in this past election; André Gagnon, whose 31-year career as a House of Commons clerk ended in 2021 with his retirement; former Quebec Liberal MNA Karl

Blackburn, and Agnès Mbome Moume, a cultural and community activist. Musician, composer and writer Édith Butler was promoted to the rank of commander at the

cleadlay@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

CORRECTION: The Hill Times, Sept. 24 issue

Re: "Our immigration system is locking out some top global researchers" (The Hill *Times*, Sept. 24, p. 23). Due to an editing error, this article incorrectly referenced Dr. Robyn Klein as earning her master's degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. This was where she earned her doctor of medicine degree. The Hill Times regrets the error.

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'No ordinary Parliament': Senate leaders prepare for 'new era' of quick legislation, pledging collaboration as fall sitting begins











Senators Brian Francis, left, Leo Housakos, Scott Tannas, Pierre Moreau, and Raymonde Saint-Germain returned to the Upper Chamber on Sept. 23 after their summer recess. The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade and courtesy of Senator Brian

ISG Facilitator Raymonde Saint-Germain says a change in Conservative leadership and Senators' 'realistic analysis' of the political arena means there's now a 'collegial climate' in the Upper Chamber.

BY ELEANOR WAND

slate of new leadership A means the tone in the Senate has shifted with an eye to efficiency, says Senator Scott Tannas, as his colleagues champion collaboration while they gear up to tackle the government's ambitious legislative agenda and hotly-anticipated fall budget.

There's a new tone being struck," said Tannas (Alberta), the leader of the Canadian Senators Group. "There's a new kind of lends itself to us achieving the goals of ... adding value and making sure we're maximizing the usefulness of the institution."

Independent Senate Group (ISG) Facilitator Raymonde Saint-Germain (De la Vallière, Que.) also pointed to a shift in attitude among the 100 appointees to the Red Chamber, which to date has five seats vacant that Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.) can fill.

"Senators are not disconnected from the reality, from the challenges this government is facing," she said. "This is why there is, I would say, a collegial climate—a realistic analysis of our political environment and the need for us to be efficient in order to be credible to Canadians.'

The Senate returned from its summer recess on Sept. 23. That day also marked the first day non-affiliated Senator Pierre Moreau (The Laurentides, Que.) spoke in the Chamber since taking on the role of government representative in the Senate. Moreau was appointed to that position on July 18 after his predecessor, Marc Gold, reached mandatory retirement age this past summer.

"The grandeur of the projects the prime minister envisions signals that the government's agenda is no ordinary agenda," Moreau said in his first speech leading the Government Representative's Office (GRO). "Colleagues, this is no ordinary Parliament."

Before the Senate rose for the summer, the Chamber okayed Bill C-5's swift passage into law. It dealt with internal trade and a portion known as the Building Canada Act gave cabinet the authority to bypass legislation to fast-track projects deemed in the

The speed at which the bill was passed—as well as its contents—have been criticized by Indigenous leadership, environmental advocates, and some Senators who worry it could be used to by the government to force project developments on them.

Moreau emphasized to The Hill Times that not all legislation will be passed like C-5, which took just 20 days to be approved by both chambers, including only two in the Senate following an earlier pre-study of the bill. Still, he said the bill wasn't passed because the body was "whipped to adopt a time frame,"but because Senators voted for it.

He acknowledged, however, that many in the Chamber would prefer more time to study legislation going forward—and that's something he means to stick to.

"I'm very well aware that many Senators wouldn't like the future to be like it was for C-5, but at the same time, I think they realized that it was important for us to go through the Senate with C-5 on a timely manner," he said.

"It is not my intention to ram any legislation through the Senate only on the basis of efficiency," he explained.

Tannas said C-5 was "clearly articulated" and "debated" in the election campaign, and that the legislation passed to the Upper Chamber with support from the opposition, which made it a unique case.

"We're not there now," he stressed. "It's a new fall, a new era—time for us to buckle down and make sure that we are delivering value.'

Moreau will be sparring with a new opposition leader this fall. Longtime Conservative Senator Leo Housakos (Wellington, Que.) over from former senator Don Plett, who retired on May 14.

The Progressive Senate Group also has a fresh face at its helm: Senator Brian Francis (Prince Edward Island) became the group's leader on May 15, taking the reins from former leader Senator Pierre Dalphond (De Lorimier, Que.), who had served in the position since 2024, and who recently re-joined

Housakos told The Hill Times on Sept. 22, before the Senate had resumed, that he was waiting for the government to "set the tone," but that he's hoping for a "collaborative" one.

'That's the benefit of winning an election," he said. "That's who has that privilege of setting the tone in the agenda.'

"We hope to see from the Carney government what we didn't see from the Trudeau government, which is a respect for Parliament, and particularly a respect for the voice of the official opposition," Housakos said.

He added that in the Senate, not being an elected body, "it's very difficult for the institution to maintain its legitimacy and to maintain its representativeness" when an opposition party loses four elections in a row, as the federal Conservatives now have.

We're going to need to work together with the government caucus—and with the government itself—to make sure that the Senate remains legitimate, that the opposition can remain functional and do its job," Housakos said, noting that Conservatives have 42 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons, yet the their caucus in the Senate represents 13 out of the 100 currently sitting Senators.

The group gained thi bers in June, after not adding to its membership for over 10 years. It remains the smallest group in the Senate.

New Conservative leader 'first and foremost' behind tone shift, says Saint-Germain

Saint-Germain told The Hill Times she's expecting "complex" legislation from the government

She pointed to Bill C-3, which proposes changes to the Citizenship Act; Bill C-2, The Strong Borders Act; and the cybersecurity Bill C-8; as pieces of legislation soon to be on the Senate's plate, but emphasized the body will not act as a "rubber stamp." The Senate will also soon have Carney's first fall budget to study, which the Liberals say will be tabled in the House on Nov. 4.

"I'm not aware of any conversation ... [about] time allocation or about rubber stamping," Saint-Germain said. "It's about planning the work for us to be able to make sure that the bills are improved.'

When asked about the Senate's new GRO and how Moreau's leadership could affect the Chamber, Saint-Germain said she was "optimistic." She added that the tone in the Senate leaders' first leadership meeting of the fall session—which will continue weekly while the Senate sits-was "collegial" and "efficient."

Saint-Germain also said the change in attitude in the Chamber, "first and foremost," is linked to Housakos' new role.

Tannas agreed: "We shouldn't dismiss the fact that we have a new opposition leader."

Francis pointed to leadership changes, as well, noting in addition to Moreau and Housakos' appointments, both Tannas' and Saint-Germain's terms will be up before the end of the year, bringing even more leadership

Like Saint-Germain, Francis emphasized his hope for leaders to be collaborative, saying it's a "key pledge" of his.

Tannas told The Hill Times the last four years of then-prime minister Justin Trudeau's minority government, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, meant "a lot of challenges" for the Upper

There were "lots of ups and downs, starts and stops,"he said, "where, we in the Senate, felt constrained in doing our job properly in many instances.

Tannas said legislation took "a long time" to pass to the Senate from the House, and would sometimes come through in an "unrecognizable form" from its introduction. He added that the Senate was often asked to rush legislation through, and not amend it, as doing so would mean having to return it to a "chaotic minority government."

"I'm hopeful that [with] this new government with a kind of calm, confident business approach to the business of legislation that we will be able to get back and really maximize the value that we can provide," he said.

The feeling seems to be shared. Moreau said that in his discussions with Senate leadership so far, there is a consensus on "the way things should be done.'

"I had [a] discussion with Senator Tannas, and he's the one who said, 'we don't want the bill to be run through the Senate." Moreau said, "and I totally agree with that, because it's our constitutional duty."

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Postal union launches nationwide strike after feds announce 'heavyhanded intervention' reforms to transform 'insolvent' Canada Post

'The Liberals are burning bridges with the labour movement faster than an express-post delivery,' says Brock University professor Larry Savage.

BY IREM KOCA

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers launched a nationwide strike on Sept. 25 in response to the federal government's sweeping reforms of Canada Post. The union said it is "outraged and appalled" by the new measures, which it argues will hurt the public and postal workers.

The union called the government's new measures an "attack on our postal service and workers," in a late statement on Sept.

"The changes announced by the government, including converting four million addresses to community mailboxes, a reduction in mail delivery service standards and the abandoning of the rural moratorium, are drastic and will negatively impact the public and postal workers," it read. "If Canada Post had focused

"If Canada Post had focused on negotiating collective agreements and increasing parcel volumes, instead of attacking workers, it would already be on a path to sustainability."

The federal government unveiled new measures to help Canada Post, allowing it to reduce home delivery, lifting the ban on closing rural post offices, and introducing more flexible delivery standards in a bid to rescue the Crown corporation from what it called an "existential crisis."

However, the move could lead to thousands of layoffs and further inflame the ongoing labour dispute, according to a labour studies expert.

Government Transformation, Public Works, and Procurement Minister Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Que.) said the new measures are aimed at helping to fix Canada Post's woes, but that he also instructed the Crown corporation to review its own structure and work to reduce its overhead costs.

"Canada Post is effectively insolvent, and it is facing an existential crisis. However, repeated bailouts from the federal



Government Transformation. Public Works, and Procurement Minister Joël Lightbound announced new reforms for Canada Post on Sept. 25, saying the Crown corporation 'is facing an existential crisis.' The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

government are not the solution," Lightbound said during a Sept. 25 news conference.

Calling the situation "unsustainable," the minister said "transformation is required to ensure the survival of Canada Post, and protect the services Canadians rely on"

Liberals' past work to build relationships with unions is waning, says Larry Savage

"The Liberals are burning bridges with the labour movement faster than an express-post delivery," said Larry Savage, a Brock University professor and chair of the department of labour studies, in an interview with *The Hill Times*.

Savage argued that the government's new measures read as a "heavy-handed intervention" since it was done in the middle of collective bargaining with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), and that it will "no doubt provoke widespread outrage" not just from postal workers, but also the broader labour movement.

Lightbound said the government is accepting all recommendations cited in the May 15 report by the Industrial Inquiry Commission led by William Kaplan on the transformation of Canada Post. Those recommendations informed the new measures, which aim to achieve annual savings of more than \$420-million once implemented, according to the government.

Savage said Kaplan's recommendations undermine the union's bargaining position, and tilts the scales decisively in favour of Canada Post management. He said this "comes across as a

brazen attack on workers' rights," even though the labour movement was anticipating the use of recommendations as a justification for restructuring Canada Post.

"It's not a secret that CUPW did not go into this round of bargaining with a lot of strategic leverage. But when a union is backed into the corner like this ... they're not going to go down without a fight," he said.

Savage said the new reforms are bad news for seniors and people with mobility issues who were receiving home mail delivery, as well as for Canadians living in rural and remote communities who rely on these services.

The question going forward is whether Canadians are as aligned with postal workers as they were with the flight attendants of Air Canada, according to Savage, who said, "I don't think they are."

Savage said the Liberals' past work to build strong relationships with unions is waning between what happened with the flight attendants and postal workers.

"I think the federal government might be trying to play a long game here, feeling the need to intervene so that they can take care of some long-term restructuring. But in the short term, I think you're going to see some real labour movement anger directed towards the Carney government," he said.

Former Conservative MPs 'applaud' government's move

While some say the announcement could inflame the ongoing labour dispute, others say it is a good step forward.

Ian Lee, an associate professor at Carleton University's Sprott School of Business, called the government's move "long overdue," adding he had called for those changes a decade ago, but they were "completely rejected" by the former Liberal government.

"The data of the trends was screaming at everybody, saying this organization is in a death spiral—even in 2015—and radically needs to be restructured," he said. "They squandered 10 years of opportunity to restructure it, unfortunately, and wasted a lot of money. Now Prime Minister [Mark] Carney is reversing those very, very bad decisions."

Lee argued that the new reforms are "the beginning of the beginning of the restructuring of Canada Post," and said the wages make up 75 per cent of the corporation's operating costs, which likely will result in thousands of people being laid off.

Former Conservative leader Erin O'Toole called the reforms "the right move" in an X post. "Acknowledge that times have changed and allow Canada Post to adapt to the reality of the marketplace. It remains an important institution and change is needed for it to survive." he wrote.

Former Conservative transport minister Lisa Raitt wrote on X that she "applauds" the government's announcement. "It is a complete reversal of what the Trudeau Liberal government promised in 2015 and a return to the plan Conservatives put in place in 2013," she said, referencing the Harper government's plans to end home delivery of mail, and convert to community mailboxes. That plan was halted in 2015 by the Liberal government.

What is changing?

The government is instructing Canada Post to have more flexibility in mail-delivery standards, which would allow non-urgent mail to move by ground instead of air, and save the corporation more than \$20-million per year, according to Lightbound.

The government will also allow the Crown corporation to convert four million addresses to community mailboxes, shifting delivery from individual homes, and generating about \$400-million in annual savings.

The government will also lift

The government will also lift a 1994 ban on closing rural post offices, which covers close to 4,000 locations, allowing Canada Post to close or relocate post offices. Lightbound said with the times changing, those areas may now be suburban or urban.

A senior official told reporters in a morning technical briefing that Canada Post has reported cumulative operating losses of more than \$5-billion since 2018. In 2024 alone, the Crown corporation reported nearly \$1.3-billion in operating losses, which required a federal cash injection of more than \$1-billion this year to prevent it from becoming insolvent. In the second quarter of 2025, Canada Post reported a record quarterly loss of \$407-million.

According to the government, Canada Post's financial decline stems from shrinking letter-mail volumes, down 70 per cent since 2006, as well as lost parcel market share, down from 62 per cent in 2019 to 24 per cent in 2024, and an oversized structure that does not match its demand and revenue.

The government's announcement comes as Canada Post is locked in a long-standing labour dispute with its 68,000 workers.

On May 23, CUPW began strike action with a nation-wide overtime ban for carriers who deliver mail in both urban and rural and suburban locations. CUPW members rejected the Crown corporation's "final" contract offer last month.

CUPW president Jan Simpson issued a statement before the announcement saying that Lightbound gave the union "no indication" that changes were coming when they met last week.

"Canada Post is expected to present new global offers to us on Friday, we may soon have an answer to these questions. Canada Post has yet to confirm this with the union," she said. CUPW did not respond to *The Hill Times*' further questions by deadline.

When asked about those comments, Lightbound said he had a "productive conversation" with the union, and that the new measures address some of the issues they raised around reviewing the management structure at the Crown corporation.

A Sept. 25 Canada Post news release said: "Today's announcement will allow us to make the changes needed to restore Canada's postal service for all Canadians by evolving to better meet their needs. We take this responsibility seriously and will work closely with the government and our employees to move with urgency and implement the necessary changes in a thoughtful manner."

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circulation@hilltimes.com 613-688-8821

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Editorial

Editorial

Time for PM Carney to deliver tangible results

Until early this year, Pierre Poilievre's Conservatives were widely expected to win the last federal election in a landslide, with polling projecting more than 200 seats. The cost of living, inflation, and a deepening housing crisis had put the then-Justin Trudeau government on the defensive, and Canadianseither rightly or wrongly—placed much of the blame on him. By mid-2024, Trudeau's caucus was internally telling the leader that he'd become a drag on the party, risking third- or even fourth-party status in the House if he stayed on until the next election. Under public-opinion pressure and tired of internal sniping, Trudeau finally announced his exit plans in early January

That opened the door for the Liberals to rebuild and bounce back. Facing threats from American President Donald Trump over trade tariffs and an expected downturn in the economy, Canadians turned to Mark Carney as the person best equipped to handle these challenges. Carney is the only living person in the world to have led two central banks in G7 countries, with experience at the most senior level in both government and the private sector. The Liberal Party's base rallied around him, and he swept all 338 ridings in the March leadership election. In the subsequent April 28 general election, Canadians handed him a strong mandate: 169

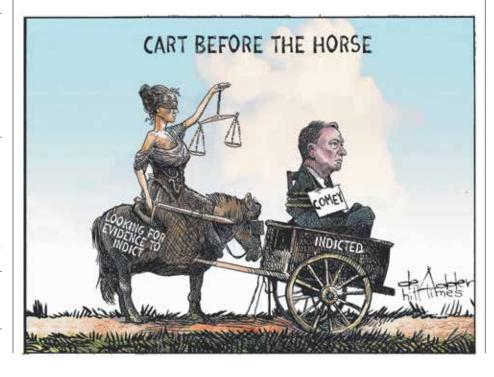
seats—just three short of a majority in the 343-member House of Commons.

Carney officially became prime minister in March, quickly called a general election to capitalize on his popularity, and spent his first weeks in office campaigning. In the recent months, the economy has only worsened. In July, more than 40,000 Canadians lost their jobs; in August, the number rose to over 60,000. With plans to cut the federal public service by up to 15 per cent over three years, thousands more layoffs are expected. Nearly every major economic indicator is trending in the wrong direction. The Nov. 4 budget is expected to show a number of cuts and a high deficit.

Since winning office, Carney has announced major projects aimed at creating jobs and jumpstarting growth. But so far, the results have yet to materialize, and public patience is wearing thin. People appear to be impatient. Public opinion analysts say Canadians are not in a partisan mood—they want Carney to succeed. Yet unlike in ordinary times, when politics fades in between elections, Canadians are paying close attention now because their economic livelihoods are at stake.

For Carney, the time for promises is over. He must begin delivering tangible results—before it's too late.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor



Why is PM Carney recognizing Palestinian state, and not the Algonquin genocide: Lynn Gehl

Why is Prime Minister Mark Carney recognizing Palestine as a state while at the same time continuing to undermine the Algonquin Nation with a Canadian-made genocide? Of course, the genocide in Palestine is horrible, and I feel deeply for the people. It is incredibly sad to watch it unfold. It is equally sad for me to experience and live through the Algonquin genocide.

As an Algonquin Anishinaabe, it is crucial that I point out that Canada and its political parties have unleashed lie after lie, practice after practice, policy after policy, and legislation after legislation on the Algonquin Anishinaabeg whose territory is located at the centre of what has become the nation-state of Canada. The Ottawa River, the very heart of our pre-contact economy and source of our livelihood, was taken over by the fur trade, lumber, and hydroelectric industries; this economy served the creation of what became Canada. While this happened, the Algonquin were denied pushed into poverty and destitution that continues to this day. Many of us continue to lack housing, clean water, and proper nutrition and we have higher rates of disability and illness such as diabetes.

Dr. Veldon Coburn has pointed out that our territory is larger than three of the eastern provinces combined. Millions and millions of dollars are stolen out of our territory through logging, hydro electricity, mineral extraction, and recreational hunting and tourism, yet we are denied our share of the revenues and Canada continues to impose the land claims process on us that the federal government and the provinces have unilaterally created. Surely the Algonquin can manage our own lands and resources and live as self-governing people, yet Canada continues to impose a genocide on us while at the same time looking overseas.

People need to understand that genocide through nationstate practices, policies, and legislations are particularly dangerous because it is a slower, less obvious and thus harder to understand genocide versus a genocide that can be easily seen with the eye. Said another way, a genocide that cannot be directly perceived through the nation's citizens' eyes is more insidious and more dangerous, and this is precisely why the nation state of Canada has been getting away with it since the time of the 1760 Treaty gatchie and the 1764 Treaty of Niagara when the British promised they would recognize and protect Algonquin territory and rights.

Lynn Gehl, PhD

The letter-writer is an Algonquin Anishinaabe-kwe from the Ottawa River Valley, Ont. She is an academic, artist, writer, blogger, and Indigenous human rights

COMMENT

Maybe it's time to take a look at Donald Trump's mental health



Prime Minister Mark Carney, left, and U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House on May 6, 2025. It's possible that Trump's lies, eccentricities, and dubious policies stem from a malignant narcissist's ego. But there's possibility and it was raised by health-care professionals in a letter to *The* New York Times, writes Michael Harris. Photograph courtesy of Daniel Torok, official photographer

The examination should be conducted by a team of mental health experts interested in medical facts, not facetious glad-handing for the president.

Michael Harris

Harris

HALIFAX—Maybe a seal look someone to take a real look ALIFAX—Maybe it's time for at United States President Donald Trump's mental health.

And I don't mean by a White House doctor who says the president is in such great shape that he could live until the age of 200.

The examination should be conducted by a team of mental health experts interested in medical facts, not facetious glad-handing for the president.

Trump should have no problem with submitting to such a review. He has constantly insinuated that former president Joe Biden has lost his "mental acuity" and urged him to submit to such an examination.

Why an independent review of Trump's own mental acuity now, especially since he's had acuity tests in the past? Let's start with the most recent thing: Trump's latest performance at the United

The self-styled leader of the Western World used a meandering, hour-long speech to attack, insuit, and belittle just abou everyone in attendance; calling out the UN itself as a failed initiative.

At the same time, he shamelessly congratulated himself for being the world leader who understood the big issues.

Trump's lecture came down to his claim that while America was the "hottest" country in the world—whatever that might mean—European countries were "going to hell." They were destroying their countries through uncontrolled migration, and falling for the green "hoax" of climate change.

According to Trump, what the world needs is more closed borders; more use of coal, oil and gas; and no windmills. The rest of the planet needs to be more like Trump's America, where the motto is "drill, baby, drill," and keep out the murderers, drug dealers, and rapists.

The bottom line? The speech in which Trump said he was "right about everything" was widely panned. Here is how CNN described it: "Trump litters UN speech with false claims about climate, inflation, and world peace."

Garden-variety political mendacity, or a disconnect from

Consider this. While at the UN, the escalator Trump and his wife were riding came to a stop. When he began his speech, the teleprompter malfunctioned. And as the president spoke, the sound system failed.

Trump's response? He claimed that he was the victim of "triple sabotage" and declared that the people responsible should be 'arrested." The Secret Service

has been tasked to investigate Trump's theory.

The president's dubious judgment has not only been on display at the UN. Trump recently urged his Attorney General Pam Bondi to criminally charge several of his perceived political enemies: Senator Adam Schiff, former FBI director James Comey, and New York Attorney-General Letitia James.

Here is the reality. One of the foundations of U.S. democracy is the firewall between the executive and judicial branches of government. Prosecutions must never be political—at least in real democracies.

By blatantly encouraging Bonai to ao nis vengerui bia ding, Trump is exhibiting either a profound misunderstanding of the need for the separation of politics and justice, or contempt for it. The only other president to have used the power of government against his rivals was Richard Nixon. His "enemies list" paved the road to his impeachment.

Abusing his power to punish his rivals is not the only instance where Trump has demonstrated

traits dangerous for for the country. Free speech is the rock upon which the rest of American democracy rests.

Despite that, Trump recently attempted to have a late-night comic he sees as an enemy removed from the airwaves.

Despite Trump's use of his Federal Communications Commissioner to threaten ABC, Jimmy Kimmel was only briefly taken off

The president failed, partially because his intervention was so outrageous. But no one should forget that during this controversy, Trump declared that it is "really illegal" for journalists to give negative coverage to his administration.

Some of Trump's poor decisions have been life-and-death matters. The president has authorized—and in a way glorified—his decision to simply blow up boats from South America "suspected" of smuggling drugs into the U.S. Colombia President Gustavo Petro has called sending missiles into speedboats an "act of tyranny."

"Why launch a missile when you could simply stop the boat and arrest the crew?" Petro said. "That's what one would call murder."

It is possible that all of Trump's lies, eccentricities, and dubious policies, are simply the result of a malignant narcissist's ego. But there is another possibility and it was raised by healthcare professionals in a letter to The New York Times just before the presidential election.

In that letter, 200 healthcare professionals agreed that Trump was exhibiting symptoms consistent with frontotemporal dementia.

"Overall, he shows a shocking decline in verbal fluency from his previous baseline. He was once highly articulate, with a sophisticated vocabulary. He spoke in polished paragraphs. Now his vocabulary is impoverished, he often has difficulty finishing a thought, sentence, or even a word. Typical of dementia patients, he perseverates and over uses superlatives and filler words."

Trump has also shown signs that the Dementia Care Society associates with advanced dementia.

While it is normal to forget names and dates, it is a different matter to begin confusing people and generations. Trump recently confused Nikki Haley and Nancy Pelosi, thought he was running against Obama, and claimed that his late father was born in Germany. It was his grandfather. Author Michael Wolf has reported that Trump frequently has problems recognizing old friends.

None of this proves that Trump has dementia. But it more than suggests that it would be a good idea to take an impartial look at his mental health.

If there is even a chance that the most powerful man in the world has dementia, that needs to be put to rest as false, or confirmed.

Everything depends on it. Michael Harris is an award-winning author and

COMMENT

Is America becoming a failed democracy?

How can you convince Americans that Tylenol is safe when the president says it isn't? Again, the world is left wondering whether America is ruled by a madman who doesn't believe in science, and would easily shut down all free and fair reporting if he could.

Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner



Brendan Carr to threaten ABC following late-night comments by comedian Jimmy Kimmel was even derided by Senator Ted Cruz.

Cruz is a well-known supporter of U.S. President Donald Trump, but he characterized the Carr threat as a page straight out of a Goodfellas book and called the comments "dangerous as hell."

Even as Kimmel's suspension by ABC's parent company Disney Entertainment was lifted due to public outcry, Trump was moving to muzzle more critics.

In a harsh rebuke to a question from an ABC reporter at the White House, Trump attacked the journalist, ABC, and media in general, bragging that he was now suing The New York Times and would win.

The lawsuits should come as no surprise, since, even during his time in the private sector, Trump delayed paying many creditors by simply dragging out the court process when sued for payment.

But the fact that the FCC, which is supposed to be an impartial licensing body, would threaten retribution because of a late-night comedic attack mirrors life in a dictatorship.

Trump doubled down when the Kimmel suspension was

short-lived. "I think we're going to test ABC out on this one. Last time I went after them, they gave me \$16-million. ... This one sounds even more lucrative.'

Then he and the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services went off on another tangent, claiming that women who take Tylenol during childbirth could be responsible for causing autism in the fetus.

Robert F. Kennedy. Jr. bears a family name known globally, but the vast majority of his own family does not support him.

Only one cousin endorsed him in the last presidential campaign, and 50 other family members, including all his siblings, lined up with then-U.S. president Joe Biden to oppose Kennedy's independent bid for election.

Along with being a wellknown anti-vaxxer, Kennedy has stated that COVID was "ethnically targeted" to spare Jewish and Chinese people. According to a Vanity Fair article, Kennedy has also stated that anti-vaxxers suffered worse persecution than German Holocaust victim Anne Frank. He also believes that an alternate shooter killed his own father, and after interviewing the convicted perpetrator, Sirhan Sirhan in prison, proclaimed Sirhan's innocence.

One of Kennedy's first actions was to pull the U.S. out of the World Health Organization, and deny the current measles epidemic, despite medical evidence showing the greatest hike in outbreaks since the virus was officially declared eliminated in

Now Kennedy's focus, and that of the president, is on Tylenol. Despite zero evidence to back up the pair, both men held the press conference to decry the use of the pain-killing acetaminophen.

To many, the move was simply viewed as another channel changer. To overshadow the Kimmel return to the airwaves, the Tylenol move was designed to get people talking about something else.

It has also thrown Johnson and Johnson, one of America's biggest pharmaceutical companies, into a public-relations frenzy.

How can you convince Americans that Tylenol is safe when the president says it isn't?

Again, the world is left wondering whether America is ruled by a madman who doesn't believe in science, and who would easily shut down all free and fair reporting if he could.

The tongue lashings regularly administered by the president to those who oppose him have been replicated by multiple of his appointees.

U.S. ambassador to Canada Pete Hoekstra recently had the nerve to claim at a Halifax Chamber of Commerce event that he was "disappointed ... that it is very, very difficult to find Canadians who are passionate about the American-Canadian relationship."

What planet has the ambassador been living on? The only person responsible for the meltdown in Canada-U.S. relations is his boss. It was Trump who belittled our former prime minister, constantly referring to Justin Trudeau as "governor," and it is Trump who has repeatedly threatened to annex Canada by using economic levers rather than military ones.

Trump has followed up with the threat via a constantly-moving target of tariffs that is costing both his country and Canada

As ambassador, Hoekstra's job is to try and smooth over differences between the two countries. He should be acting as a quiet go-between working to solve problems. Instead, Hoekstra is burning his Canadian bridges.

Like many Trump appointees, the ambassador has made it very obvious that his job to kiss the president's buttocks.

King Charles discreetly smirked when the president went off-script at the recent royal banquet in London. The world is smirking, too.

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

For Carney, it's all about the economy

Mark Carney realizes that, for the average voter, economics trumps everything else, including the environment. But he has his work cut out for him.

Gerry **Nicholls**



former MP long ago, he told me something that sounded cynical.

What he said was that, while sitting in the opposition benches, he was always secretly happy



Prime Minister Mark Carnev announced the Build Canada Homes project in Nepean, Ont., on Sept. 14, 2025. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

whenever the media reported bad economic news.

Yes, bad economic news wasn't good for the country, he admitted,

but it was certainly good for his party's electoral prospects.

Of course, no opposition politician would ever publicly admit to this, but it's a political reality.

The fact is, a faltering economy-or indeed just the perception of one—is the kryptonite of incumbent governments.

Voters will forgive a lot of things, but they'll rarely forgive economic incompetence.

It could certainly be argued, for instance, that inflation, combined with a general overall economic anxiety, directly led to the United States Democratic Party's loss in last year's American presidential election.

As American consultant James Carville once succinctly put it, "it's the economy, stupid," when he led Bill Clinton's successful presidential election campaign in 1992.

Yet, Carville's truism about voter concerns is often forgotten in the heat of political battle.

Sometimes non-economic issues, pushed by journalists, partisans, activists, and pundits,

will dominate the news headlines and flood social media platforms, leading many to believe that a new game-altering dynamic will swamp all other issues aside, including economic issues.

In fact, we see this happening

right now in the U.S.

Suddenly, things like the Epstein files, or Charlie Kirk's assassination or the Jimmy Kimmel censorship drama are being pushed front and centre as if they were the most important issues of the day.

But are they really?

True, maybe these issues are important to those who dominate the various social and mainstream media ecosystems, yet we must keep in mind that most normal people don't spend much time on Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, or Bluesky; they rarely watch cable news shows; and, at best, they only half pay attention to what's happening in the political world.

In other words, the concerns of those on social media or in the mainstream media don't necessarily reflect the concerns of the wider public.

Again, what the wider public is usually paying close attention to is their personal economic status, i.e., the price of groceries.

My point is all the dramatic non-economic stuff that's currently making news in America is, for the average person, just background noise.

This is why in next year's U.S. midterm election, American voters will judge President Donald Trump on how well they think he's

handling the economy; if they buy the argument that his tariff policy is protecting U.S. jobs, they'll vote Republican; if they don't buy it, they'll vote Democrat.

It's a simple equation; politics is not rocket science.

Here in Canada, Prime Minister Mark Carney seems to understand how all this works.

Indeed, since coming to power, his focus has been to invigorate Canada's economy even if that means sidelining other non-economic priorities, most notably, the ambitious environmental goals of his predecessor.

To put that another way, Carney realizes that, for the average voter, economics trumps everything else, including the environment.

Yet, the prime minister has his work cut out for him.

According to a recent Angus Reid poll, 53 per cent of Canadians rated "inflation and or the cost of living" as the No. 1 issue facing the country, while 57 per cent say they can't keep up with

On top of that, bad economic news, such as a recent report indicating that Canada's economy shed 66,000 jobs in August, pushing our unemployment rate to its highest point since 2016, will only deepen the public's gloom.

I wonder if such news makes Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre secretly happy?

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

OPINION

Build smarter, baby: Canada needs to transform the way we make things

Canada has the talent and the technology to navigate this historic shift.

Jayson Myers



economic health rested on easy access to the American market are over. Whatever trading regimes emerge in its place, one thing is certain: making the same things in the same old ways will not deliver the prosperity and economic sovereignty we need.

The Canadian economy needs a transformation, not more tinkering. The world is racing to

retool its industrial base. Other countries are investing heavily in advanced manufacturing, combining robotics, sensors, machine vision, artificial intelligence, and cyber security to build products faster, cleaner and at lower cost.

Protecting Canadian companies and industries in this new reality means keeping pace with that global transformation. Yes, Canada has world-class researchers and innovative firms. But our industrial base is still built on old production models, with fragmented supply chains, siloed expertise, and slow adoption of new technology.

To change that, we need to change our mindset about how we make and build things. Upending the status quo will not happen by encouraging firms to chase flashy technologies for their own sake. Companies do not buy "technology." They buy solutions to real-world problems like reducing costs, shortening build times, and cutting waste and emissions.

Competing globally means shifting from producing more to producing smarter. That requires combining new and existing technologies into fit-for-purpose systems that deliver results. At NGen, Canada's global innovation cluster for advanced manufacturing, we see every day how bringing technologies together inside production systems accelerates commercialization and strengthens supply chains.

It is this kind of collaborative approach that Canadian businesses must adopt to compete globally, and to build the homegrown supply chains that can secure our economic future. Canada's industrial landscape is full of small and medium-sized firms with great ideas. They need platforms and networks to connect their solutions and scale them up.

Here's an important example. For all our focus on developing domestic AI capabilities, the key challenge remains how to embed those algorithmic models into manufacturing systems alongside other technologies, from sensors that capture the raw data to the cyber security that protects it.

As the Minister of AI and Digital Innovation Evan Solomon, recently said: "AI is a tool that's embedded in all manufacturing. It is not a silo. AI is the DNA of manufacturing."That is how we get economic and social value out of technologies.

This approach applies across sectors, from doubling the pace of homebuilding to strengthening domestic defence and health supply chains, and to turning sustainable practices into drivers of productivity and business growth.

This country has the talent and the technology to navigate this historic shift. We have abundant resources, skilled workers, world-leading research, a vibrant technology sector, and a dynamic manufacturing base that has proven it can compete with its counterparts south of the border.

At this moment of decision. our task is to boldly bring those advantages together. It was encouraging to see the Prime Minister Mark Carney insist that the new Build Canada Homes agency will "prioritize the use of cost-efficient and modern methods of construction, including factory build, modular and mass timber." It is not enough to fall back on endless subsidies to ward off the ill-effects of tariffs. Putting the "advanced" into advanced manufacturing is our path to growing companies that can keep us economically secure at home and compete abroad.

We will meet this moment by building better, cleaner, and more cost-effectively than our rivals. Putting the "advanced" in advanced manufacturing.

Building smarter. Jayson Myers is CEO of Next Generation Manufacturing, Canada (NGen).





COMMENT

Reconciliation is a value, not a policy

When reconciliation is a value as well as a necessity in order to uphold Canada's place in the world, then it doesn't get bumped off the priority list in budgetary discussions. It retains its place, just as **Indigenous Peoples** retain their position as key partners in this country we call Canada.

Rose LeMay

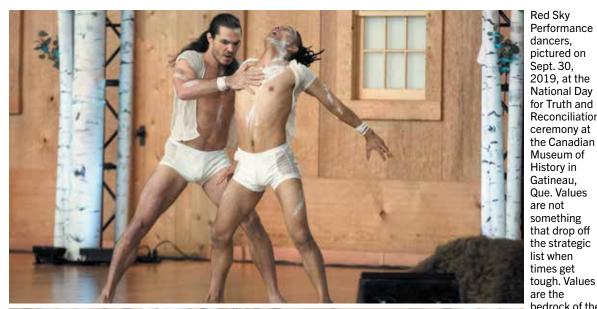


n a time of fiscal restraint, why Lis it that inclusion and reconciliation are so easily dropped? Is it because it costs, and the inclusion of minorities is not worth the

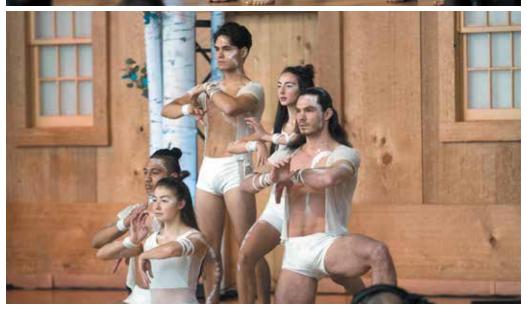
Prime Minister Mark Carney spoke after the recent United Nations meetings, and it was a speech for the history books, one of the best that Canada has done in decades. Measured, strong, clear, and a depth that is needed in a time when confusion seeds through social media. One could hear a bit of Bob Rae in the words that Carney spoke, the clarity and

The prime minister staked the territory that Canada will occupy in the world: standing up for human rights as a fundamental value that we will live, not simply speak of them without action.

Okay, then, let's do human rights and inclusion here at diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) back on the front burner, prove that Canada has its credibility built internally. That's how credibility is built: first we do it with those around us. It's quite difficult to take a public and international stand against genocide when one hasn't cleaned up the mess of one's own backyard. That's what reconciliation is, cleaning up after the mess of the past. This is the







required work of credibility for Canada. There are no shortcuts. but there are all sorts of possibilities for delays and that will risk this country's credibility. And,

pointedly, delay risks Indigenous well-being. After we've made a bit more progress, we might just have some lessons learned about reconciling that could have currency on the international stage. But we're not there vet.

When folks south of the border are retreating dramatically on the value of inclusion

live it loud here. Silence and leaning away is not an option for leaders. Leadership schools and advanced courses all share the concept of bringing in diverse perspectives to strengthen the decision-making of a company, it's not too much of a stretch here to note the fact that diversity of people makes better decisions. This is not the time to shy away from the inclusion of racialized folks or Indigenous neighbours; this is the time leaders are tested to walk the talk. The truth is that the work we put to the value of human rights includes actions on the DEI front as well as for reconciliation. And here's the kicker: reconciliation and diversity are not policies, they are values. Values are not something that drop off the strategic list when times get tough. Values are the bedrock of the way we choose to

Red Sky

dancers,

Sept. 30.

Performance

pictured on

2019, at the

Reconciliation

Gatineau, Que. Values

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in the world,

writes Rose LeMay. The

Andrew Meade

Hill Times photograph by

way we

and diversity, then we had better

be in the world, how we choose to be with each other in this country we call Canada.

WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER STANDS ON THE WORLD STAGE AND **DECLARES THAT** CANADA IS ABOUT VALUES, SO DE WE ALL.

This is a call to action for leaders in every sector—including government—to take the time to learn more about history as that is the incentive to do reconciliation. When the prime minister stands on the world stage and declares that Canada is about values, so do we all

When reconciliation is a value as well as a necessity in order to uphold Canada's place in the world, then it does not get bumped off the priority list in budgetary discussions. It retains its place, just as Indigenous Peoples retain their position as key partners in this country we call Canada.

To put it plainly: Indigenous Peoples and English and French, we are Team Canada. On the ice and off, we are a team. When we play defence, we protect each other. When we play offence, it is for all of us, and all of our children.

 $Rose\ LeMay\ is\ Tlingit\ from\ the$ 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.

OPINION

Mark Carney's nation-building efforts for the under-five set

Nancy Peckford

Opinion



With just a few months under his prime-ministerial belt, Mark Carney is attempting to steer a very large and somewhat unruly ship, having never before been a captain. It's not an easy task by any stretch. We can only hope he doesn't get distracted because politics is funny that way, and he is rather new at this political thing.

Laser focused on the economy, Carney appears singular in his mission to put Canada on a stronger footing. But there is an underlying issue that lurks for the prime minister and his team as they seek to strengthen an economy reeling from billions of dollars on the line with our so-called friends to the south. And that

issue is childcare. A distraction, some might say, from the bigger trade issues at hand. Certainly not worth Carney's time or

Incorrect. With the recent passing of Ken Dryden, one is reminded that Dryden created the foundation for what past Liberal governments had been propos ing for decades: a nationally funded childcare system to create improved access, quality, and affordability for families.

Advocates for the creation of a national system had grown weary of false starts and minimal action. But then Dryden arrived on the scene, and got it done (much like a seasoned goalie delivering his next Stanley cup win). Against the odds, he forged bilateral agreements with all 13 provinces and territories to create a national framework for access to childcare.

Those agreements put major dollars on the line with premiers in exchange for vastly better access for families. The agreements were subsequently dissolved under the Harper government, but were revived and strengthened in the pro-feminist Justin Trudeau era with a propensity for social investments.

The results have been game-changing. Many families who once forfeited any attempt at savings in order to spend thousands a month on childcare were tossed a financial lifeline. Others who were historically priced out of daycare were able to access it for \$10 to \$15 a day, not \$100. Quebec had already proven it worked, but now the country was on board. Parents breathed a sigh

But, predictably, demand has surged off the charts since the program's launch in Ontario in 2022. And with that demand has come waitlists for childcare so long they boggle the mind. In North Grenville, Ont.—a municipality south of Ottawa-some

parents are being told there is little chance of securing a spot before their new baby is eligible for school.

In the wake of a housing boom in smaller communities throughout Canada, families who optimistically moved to towns like North Grenville with its lower housing prices and who are keen to start a family are confronted with the cold, hard facts that—with hundreds of kids on the list for highly limited daycare spots—spaces are at a premium. And most major urban centres are no different.

Carney's announcements since Parliament's return are focused on the rehoming industry, fostering energy independence, and diminishing job losses. They are designed to shape an economy nimble enough to weather very stormy seas.

But for the young and mid-life professionals who do some of that heavy lifting in strengthening this country's economy, childcare cannot be the forgotten barrier that keeps them at home. As mayor of North Grenville, I have spoken with too many highly skilled parents who have made the painful choice to either leave or change their jobs in the absence of a childcare spot, or to not have children at all.

As we speak, the federal Liberal government is re-negotiating agreements with the provinces for the Canada Wide Early Learning Childcare framework. It is imperative that more funds are injected into the system immediately, and that they are deployed to serve growing as well as struggling communities. Supply must keep up with demand, particularly in rapidly growing areas.

Working families are crucial to the economy of today, and tomorrow and they need to be a serious part of the equation moving forward.

While Carney and Dryden had markedly different goalie careers, let's hope on this issue, they are aligned so that Carney can deliver on Dryden's impressive legacy in more ways than one.

Nancy Peckford is a mayor of North Grenville (comprising the town of Kemptville and several rural hamlets), and is mom to a 13-year-old goalie.



OPINION

Carney went to the UN to advance Canada's foreign policy, Trump went to abuse the UN in a tirade of false accusations

Mark Carney's four days at the UN showed his belief that Donald Trump's aggressiveness can be fought off by strengthening Canada's trade, energy, and security through diplomacy. When Carney returned home and went to Question Period, the opposition seemed uninterested in grilling him on what he had accomplished at the UN.

Douglas Roche

Opinion

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m DMONTON-The\ contrast}$ Prime Minister Mark Carney went to the United Nations in New York from Sept. 21-24, and used the organization's convening power to advance Canada's foreign policy interests. United States President Donald Trump and abused the organization in a tirade of false accusations. These two story lines intersected, and Carney emerged as a new leader in the international community.

All this has to be seen in perspective. Of course, the U.S. is the giant whose every twitch grabs the headlines. When the escalator to the General Assembly broke down on Trump and his wife, CNN led with this malfunction as a metaphor about how the UN



U.S. President Donald Trump, left, and Prime Minister Mark Carney, pictured May 6, 2025, in the Oval Office. Photograph courtesy of Daniel Torok, Official White House photographer

can't get anything done. When Carney co-chaired a meeting with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the plight of the Ukrainian children stolen by Russia, this humanitarian action was treated as just a side event.

For nearly an hour, Trump stood at the green podium in the General Assembly belittling and berating the UN for its immigration and climate policies. He mocked the UN for not choosing him as the developer when the headquarters was renovated decades ago, and treated the delegates as merely an extension Carney dutifully showed up at the Canadian desk to listen to Trump's harangue and later, at his own press conference, tried to smooth over Trump's viciousness by saying he supported the president's efforts to bring peace to the world. Carney, who is in the midst of Canada-U.S. trade negotiations, seems very conscious of Trump's warning, "I only do business with the people I like," and later took his wife Diana Fox

Carney to Trump's reception for the delegates.

Carney's principal address affirmed Canada's formal recognition of the State of Palestine, reinforcing this country's support for a two-state solution to build peace between Israel and Palestine. The prime minister called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of the Israeli hostages still held by Hamas, and the rapid scale-up of humanitarian relief in Gaza. Recognizing Palestine was certainly a late action by Canada, since more than 150 countries had already done so, but in the and France in this UN setting, Carney felt comfortable moving ahead, despite Trump's veiled threats he would punish Canada in the trade talks for such action. Only a few days previously, the U.S. had vetoed-again-a Security Council resolution demanding an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

Carney's shining moment at the UN was his co-chairing,

along with Zelenskyy, a meeting of 42 states to build pressure for the return of more than 20,000 Ukrainian children abducted by Russia. Accompanied by his wife, Carney called for more international support for the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children. The meeting laid plans to embed the return of the children within broader efforts for peace, reconciliation and accountability in Ukraine.

Carney then turned his attention to a meeting of specialists on the technicalities of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. wnich has become an agonizing issue for the UN because the money that should be going to development processes in the most vulnerable states is being siphoned off by the escalating arms expenditures. The world now spends \$2.7-trillion annually on arms, an amount which is 750 times greater than what nations devote to the UN. In his capacity as current chair of the G7, Carney tried to shore up the mechanisms to boost human development.

Here, Carney is doing highwire diplomacy. He has acceded to Trump's demand that NATO states devote five per cent of their GDP to defence spending, which, in Canada's case, will mean a quadrupling of defence spending over the next decade.
This will amount to \$150-billion
a year. Even if a good store of this will be in the form of strengthening infrastructure here at home, defence spending will continue to dwarf what is spent on diplomatic efforts to build peace.

Yet it was diplomacy that Carney concentrated on during his four-day New York stay. He seemed moved by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' cry, "We have entered into an age of reckless disruption and relentless human suffering," and leaders must decide now "what kind of world we choose to build together."He met privately with Guterres and, according to Carney's press statement, discussed Canada's commitment to a "strong and effective" UN. Canada currently contributes \$2.2-billion to the UN annually, and is the organization's seventh-largest donor. He announced \$207-million in new international assistance to improve global children's nutrition and to address climate change.

The current UN financial crisis is caused by the U.S. defaulting on \$1-billion in payments, and the Trump administration's plans for a \$1-billion cut in future assessments. This has already caused Guterres to lay off 15 per cent of UN staff. Trump, in his tirade against the UN, said not a word about America cutting back its payments.

China is stepping up its involvement in the UN administration and outreach. It was notable that Carney had a private meeting with the Premier of China, Li Qiang, to discuss canola, seafood and electric vehicles. This meeting laid the groundwork for a possible summit between Carney and China's president Xi Jinping. If such a meeting were to occur, it would confirm Canada's swing to renewed cooperation with the world's second-largest economy, a move clearly designed to offset Canada's economic dependence on the U.S.

Carney also met with the leaders of Namibia, Kenya, Barbados, Jamaica, Haiti and Malaysia in a burst of meetings that strength-ened this country's network of UN relationships. His four days at the UN showed his strong belief that Trump's aggressiveness can be fought off by strengthening Canada's trade, energy, and security through building networks of action with the UN at the core

That is a message that desperately needs to be broadcast across has been heard. When Carney went straight to Question Period in the House of Commons on his arrival back from New York, the opposition seemed not the least interested in grilling the prime minister on what he had accomplished at the UN.

Senator Douglas Roche's latest book is Keep Hope Alive: Essays for a War-free World (Amazon).

The Hill Times Policy Briefing | September 29, 2025 MARK CARNEY AND A CALL FOR **MEANINGFUL** RECONCILIATION TRUE RECONCILIATION Why the Major REMEDIALBERING Projects Office THREATENS REAL RECONCILIATION RECONCILIATION CANADA'S NATIONAL INTEREST SHOULD **FUTURE PROJECTS INCLUDE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS** BROKEN PROMISES, WOMEN AND GIRLS ANDREGONCILIATION WHY BILL C-5 AND MAJOR PROJECTS OFFICE CULTURAL AGILITY IS KEY can be a game-changer for Indigenous communities LEAT RECOMCIFICATION REGALISES Dancer Odeshkun Thusky performs at Safety of Indigenous the Survivors' flag raising ceremony at Parliament Hill WOMENFAND GIRLS on June 21, 2023

The Hill Times

photograph by Andrew Meade

THE BONAVE CONAID ON HERE

OUR COUNTRY'S HISTORY

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION Policy Briefing

'Keep that nation-tonation concept strong,' say Indigenous leaders, as Canada moves on major projects

David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Métis Federation, says 'if you're asking us to trust you, you should have no problem signing legal documents to ensure that the promise you're making is real and will be kept.'

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

s Canada begins prioritizing Athe economy and nation-building projects in the wake of a trade war with the United States, Indigenous advocates and leaders argue that an important aspect of reconciliation includes keeping an open dialogue.

The most important priority is to keep the conversation of reconciliation alive and central in the discussions that are unfolding at the national level and across the country right now," said Ry Moran, associate university librarian for reconciliation at the University of Victoria, and a former director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

"There's a lot of talk about building Canada ... [and] about generational investments, and I think what's so critical right now is that we don't forget that investing substantially and thoroughly and deeply into the work that has been outlined by the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] is the generational change that is actually necessary if we're serious about moving towards respectful ale futures in (

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is Sept. 30. Moran, a member of the Red River Métis, argued that as Canada moves forward with major projects, that this work is seen through the lens of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which he said includes the concepts of free, prior and informed consent.

Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.) launched the new



Ry Moran, associate university librarian for reconciliation at the University of Victoria, says moving quickly doesn't mean jumping over or bypassing' the long-standing principles around how Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples ought to be approaching projects. Photograph courtesy of the University of

Major Projects Office (MPO) on Aug. 29, intended to serve as a single point of contact to get nation-building projects built faster. The office is supported by an Indigenous Advisory Council, with members including Kluane Adamek, a former Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Yukon Regional Chief; and Chief Darcy Bear of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation in Saskatchewan.

'As an observer, it does seem that things are moving at an extremely fast pace, and that's necessary sometimes. However, moving quickly doesn't mean jumping over or bypassing or skirting very hard fought for, and now some pretty long-standing principles that we have established in Canada around how we ought to be approaching these projects together, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples," said Moran.

We have to remember that adopting the principles inside of UNDRIP prevent harms from occurring, which in fact, allow us to go faster in the future, because we're not making the same mistakes over and over again.

The Hill Times reached out to the AFN to ask about reconciliation priorities, but an interview could not be arranged before deadline. National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak said that major project development "cannot happen without us," and that "sustainable development requires respecting First Nations rights and including us as full partners in the determination of projects in the national interest," in an AFN press release on July 22.

David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Métis Federation

(MMF), told The Hill Times that he considers the most important issue pertaining to reconciliation to be "not straying from this government-to-government recognition."

"Keep that nation-to-nation concept strong. Preach it into your departments-that's the new way. That's the way we're going to do business. It's the way we're going to make change, and we're going to allow Indigenous people to choose their own fate," he said.

The MPO was established following royal assent of the One Canadian Economy Act in June 2025. The legislation has drawn criticism from Indigenous chiefs across the country who are concerned the bill could be used to potentially bypass regulations such as the Impact Assessment Act, the Canada Energy Regulation Act, or the Indian Act in order to expedite projects deemed to be of national importance.

Chartrand told The Hill Times that he supports Bill C-5, but added that trust should go both ways

"Canada has asked us to trust them, and that trust is hard. They've breached trust with us so many times," he said.

"Here's the key for me; if u're asking us to trust you, you should have no problem signing legal documents to ensure that the promise you're making is real and will be kept. That should be an easy task for any government, because I think we all will be working together to defend our country."

He described the Red River Métis as an "economically driven people" who still "have the environment in the back of our minds.'

'Right now, we need to support Bill C-5. We just have to



war, and we've got to take it seri-

ously," he said. "I would encourage the Government of Canada ... [if] we know the long-term effect to our villages [and how] communities could be impacted, then you've got to find a way to assure us that you're going to fix that later. Ensuring that. Guarantee it'll be fixed. But more importantly, guarantee us that we will understand fully ... what the damage could be to the next generation, so we could be preparing ourselves."

Chartrand and then-minister of Crown-Indigenous relations Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough-Guildwood-Rouge Park, Ont.) signed a treaty on Nov. 30, 2024, recognizing the MMF as the government of the Red River Métis, with an inherent right to self-government and law-making powers over its approximately 44,000 citizens, including for elections and other operations. The next step is to introduce federal legislation to bring the treaty into effect.

Chartrand said he hopes legislation for the treaty would be introduced in the fall. In regards to current Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Rebecca Alty (Northwest Territories), Chartrand said he doesn't know her very well yet, but said "she's trying. I'll give her that.'

Chartrand said another reconciliation priority is resolving a land claim issues between Canada and the MMF.

As part of the agreement for Manitoba's entry into Confederation, the Manitoba Act of 1870 set aside 1.4 million acres of land to be distributed among the Métis of the Red River Settlement. However, problems with the land distribution included delays, and insufficient land allotments that were often far from traditional Métis communities

In 2013, the Supreme Court Crown had failed to implement the land grant provision, establishing that the claim represents "unfinished business" for Métis people with Canadian sovereignty.

The November 2024 treaty includes paragraphs that commit the MMF and Canada to continue the government-to-government negotiations in regard to that land claim issue, according to an FAQ on the MMF website, adding that the MMF is "actively at the negotiation table with Canada to reach a land claim settlement."

Chartrand said that former prime minister Justin Trudeau never delivered on promises to resolve the Métis land claim, but said he expects Alty and the current Liberal government to follow through.

In regard to whether Alty will follow through, Chartrand said he would "wait and see."

Trust me, I will hold her accountable. I will definitely be pushing our agenda, which a promise is a promise, and I'm a man of my word. If I give you a promise, I will never break that promise. I expect the same from this government. I expect the same from Alty."

The Hill Times reached out to the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) to ask about reconciliation priorities and about Alty, but national president Josie Nepinak was not available before

Beth Dimsdale, NWAC's chief operations officer, sent The Hill Times a statement by email, which criticized slow progress in the implementation of the 94 Calls to Action, the list of priorities released in June 2015 by the TRC intended to further reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous Peoples. Slow implementation of the calls "demonstrates a continued failure to prioritize justice for Indigenous women in all their diversity," according to the NWAC statement.

Beyond 94, a website that monitors progress on the TRC's 94 Calls to Action, reported that 15 of the calls had been implemented by April 23, 2025, while 33 were listed as in progress with projects underway, 29 listed as in progress with projects only proposed, and 17 not yet started.

Call to Action 39 calls upon Ottawa to develop a national plan to collect and publish data on the criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to nomicide and family violence victimization. While Beyond 94 lists Call to Action 39 as completed, the NWAC disagrees.

The NWAC argues that call remains incomplete, despite efforts by Statistics Canada to collect and publish data related to Indigenous victimization.

"NWAC asserts that existing data systems must be significantly expanded to capture the lived realities of Indigenous women. Data on Indigenous vic-

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Crown-Indigenous Relations Rebecca Alty speaks with reporters after the Prime Minister's First Nations summit on Bill C-5 in Gatineau, Que., on July 17, 2025. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

timization must be disaggregated, distinction-based, trauma-informed, and publicly accessible," reads the NWAC statement.

National Chief Brendan Moore, of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP), told The Hill Times that a key reconciliation priority for him is the implementation of the "CAP-Daniels decision."

In 2016, the Supreme Court established in Daniels versus Canada that the federal government has the jurisdiction to legislate about Métis and non-status Indians. The court held that Métis and non-status Indians-ethnically Indigenous people who do not have full Indian status under the Indian Act—are included in the term 'Indian' in Sec. 91 (24) of the Constitution.

The case was initiated by Harry Daniels, who was CAP president at the time.

Moore said that CAP has been excluded from the National Council for Reconciliation, an Indigenous-led independent body intended to advance reconciliation. The council was established through Bill C-29, the National Council for Reconciliation Act, which received royal assent on April 30, 2024. The AFN, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Métis National Council, and NWAC were all invited to nominate individuals for director positions.

CAP was one of the organizations that were left off of the reconciliation Committee, which leaves out the majority of Indigenous peoples whenever it comes to having the capacity to have their advocates' input on reconciliation," said Moore.

"Reconciliation that leaves out off-reserve people isn't reconciliation; it's exclusion and enfranchisement dressed up in new clothes.'

In regard to Alty, Moore said she's the first minister Crown-Indigenous Relations in years to meet with the Congress of Aboriginal people face to face.

"We have hope there. I'm always trying to build bridges, and hope that they're looking to build bridges. We had a meeting last week with her and her team, and they felt very constructive," he said.

CAP has been representing these distinct people for over 50 years, and we need to be respected as the national Indigenous organization that we have been historically. She's met with us, and so we'll see what comes of that, but we have hope."

Hillary Thatcher, managing director of Indigenous and Northern Investments for the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB), told The Hill Times that reconciliation and infrastructure are linked. Reconciliation means that communities get an opportunity to participate in talks about infrastructure, and that participation comes in many forms, she said.

"It can be actually building and owning and operating infrastructure in your community, but it can also be participating in the larger projects that are happening on your territory," she said.

Being able to create tools so that they can actively participate and benefit from those projects, it's really about inclusion in the economic growth of this country ... [and with] the major projects office, certainly, this government is certainly moving in that direction. When you create economic

growth and it's inclusive of those that have been left out, that's reconciliation at its core."

Thatcher said to help address the infrastructure gap facing Indigenous communities in Canada, the CIB created the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Initiative.

The CIB also set a target to invest at least \$1-billion in revenue-generating Indigenous infrastructure projects. The office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer released data on July 10 which found that disbursements for Indigenous projects have already met that \$1-billion target, and are expected to reach \$3.1-billion by 2027-28.

> jcnockaert@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Indigenous Infrastructure **Gap Statistics**



- First Nations lack essential infrastructure housing, clean water, schools, healthcare, and roads—available to most Canadians. The gap is the estimated \$349.2-billion investment needed to close these disparities by 2030. This includes \$135.1-billion for housing, \$5.2-billion for digital connectivity, and \$208.9-billion for
- As of July 25, 2022, there were still 31 long-term and 14 short-term drinking water advisories in effect on 43 on-reserve communities across Canada, down from 105 in November 2015.
- Of an estimated 85,700 existing housing units, 34 per cent require minor

repairs and 31 per cent require major repairs. An additional 108,803 housing units are needed to address overcrowding, replacement, and population growth.

From 2020 to 2030, First Nations' on-reserve population is expected to grow at an average rate of 1.7 per cent per year compared with only 1.0 per cent for the rest of Canada. Most building, utility, transportation, and housing infrastructure cannot accommodate such growth and requires immediate upgrading and long-term planning to ensure the continued functionality of on-reserve community infrastructure for First

Source: Closing the Infrastructure Gap by 2030, released in December 2023 by the Assembly of





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A group of First Nations youth gather outside the Prime Minister's First Nations summit on Bill C-5 in Gatineau, Que. on July 17, 2025, calling on the government to respect treaty rights and oppose Bill C-5. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

National interest should include the rights of Indigenous women

Bill C-5 is a major setback to reconciliation and the path to ending violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Pamela Palmater

Opinion

TORONTO—This year's National Day for Truth and R onciliation is marred by the One Canadian Economy Act, which allows the federal government to fast-track major projects deemed to be in the so-called "national interest," attempting to bypass the constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Despite the federal government's failure to consult with First Nations on Bill C-5, the widespread criticism of the bill by Indigenous lawyers and experts,

and the Assembly of First Nations' request for the Governor General to delay its passage, Liberals and Conservatives banded together to ensure its speedy passage. In so doing, Canada made it clear that reconciliation and the "national interest" do not include the health, safety, or decision-making authority of Indigenous women.

The newly-created Major Projects Office (MPO) has the authority to consolidate and accelerate oversight and approvals across departmental and regulatory regimes. The MPO also established an Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC), whose primary purpose is to foster partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and encourage their economic participation. However, it lacks any legal uthority or decision-maki powers. If the creation of the IAC was a political attempt to deflect Indigenous criticism, the government grossly underestimated the commitment of First Nations to protect their inherent, Aboriginal, treaty, and land rights. Nine First Nations in Ontario have already launched a constitutional challenge to C-5. To make matters worse, the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario have created similar legislation, while

Quebec has signalled its intention to do so this fall.

The prioritization of the interests of transnational corporations involved in the extractive and energy industries over the constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous Peoples is striking. Not only do for-profit companies have no legal rights in First Nations lands and resources, but they are also a known danger to Indigenous women and girls. The National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls-which found that Canada was guilty of both historic and ongoing genocide through its law, policies, and practicesfound "substantial evidence of a serious problem that requires focused attention on the relationprojects and violence against Indigenous women." Camps of men near resource-development sites are implicated in higher rates of violence, exploitation, sex trafficking, and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls, as well as increased law enforcement and surveillance of the Indigenous land defenders and water protectors.

The primary objectives of colonial "Indian policy" have always

been to acquire First Nation lands and resources with little regard for the rights and interests of First Nations, especially women. The National Inquiry's Calls for Justice called on Canada to protect the rights of Indigenous women and girls by implementing international human rights protections like those contained in various United Nations (UN) treaties, conventions and declarations, including the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Countless UN committees and reports have called out Canada for its grave human rights women, including its failure to protect them from the violence of the extractive industry and associated law-enforcement measures.

The approach embedded in Bill C-5 clearly contradicts Canada's stated commitments to reconciliation. The TRC called on Canada to adopt the UNDRIP (which they have) and use it as the framework for reconciliation and respect for Indigenous rights. The whole purpose of this recommendation was to prevent the unilateral decision-making of precisely this kind. Bill C-5 effectively embeds the old colonial mindset of exploiting Indigenous land and resources at any cost. Speed and corporate economic interests trump Indigenous rights and safeguards for Indigenous women. The legislation perpetuates the same systemic disregard that the National Inquiry identified as part of a broader pattern of genocide against Indigenous women and girls. This imbalance undermines reconciliation and places the lives of Indigenous women and girls at continued risk.

Bill C-5 is a major setback to reconciliation and the path to ending violence against Indigenous women and girls. It relegates Indigenous Peoples to mere interest groups with no decision-making powers or actionable rights. If the government were truly serious about reconciliation and an end to the crisis of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, it would ensure decision-making authority of First Nations, including Indigenous women, over their respective territories - the free, prior and informed consent guaranteed in UNDRIP. It would also ensure Indigenous women led any and all gender-based analyses of major projects to decide which, if any, projects proceed and on what conditions.

never be defined to exclude the rights, interests and safety of Indigenous women. Until Canada embeds consent and Indigenous women's authority into its law, reconciliation will remain rhetoric rather than reality.

Pamela Palmater is a Mi'kmaw lawver from Eel River Bar First Nation, and is the chair in Indigenous Governance at Toronto Metropolitan University.

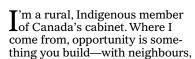
Policy Briefing INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

From reconciliation to results: why Bill C-5 and the Major Projects Office can be game-changers for Indigenous communities

The MPO is the front door that coordinates financing and accelerates regulatory approvals so that top-tier projects can get to 'yes' faster, with Indigenous partnership built-in from the start.

Liberal MP **Buckley** Belanger

Opinion



Elders, and youth rolling up their sleeves together—not something that lands on your doorstep. The journey towards reconciliation begins with recognition, but it can only be completed with results. Bill C-5, the One Canadian Economy: An Act to enact the Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act and the Building Canada Act, and the new Major Projects Office give us practical tools to move from promise to progress.

Bill C-5 became law on June 26. It does two big things: it removes federal barriers to internal trade and worker mobility; and it creates a clearer path to streamline major infrastructure projects, while upholding Indigenous rights and environmental standards-including ports, railways, critical minerals, and energy corridors. The Major Projects Office (MPO) is the front door that coordinates financing and accelerates regulatory approvals so that top-tier projects can get to "yes" faster, with Indigenous partnership built-in from the start. Streamlining removes duplication; it does not weaken rights, safeguards, or community

consent. Faster and fairer must travel together.

Let me be clear: the concerns I've heard from Indigenous communities about major projects are real and valid. They want confidence that "faster" decisions won't compromise the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate. They want to know if "participation" means equity, revenue sharing, jobs and contracts, or just more meetings. And they want processes and decisions they can trust, with benefits that reach families on the ground.

Prime Minister Mark Carney has been clear in public and private that Indigenous partnership is central to the work of the MPO, and to the government's broader mission to build major infrastructure faster. The Indigenous Advisory Council's job is simple: guide the work of the MPO towards projects with equity ownership, call out where engagement is falling short, and help translate commitments into real outcomes for Indigenous people.

Over the course of the past few months, I've had the chance to hear from Indigenous leaders in

my own backyard and across the country, and to get their honest opinions on C-5. I heard both hope and healthy hesitation.

This summer, the prime minister held summits with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis leadership to make sure candid consultation, partnership, engagement, and participation sit at the heart of every project of national interest. We heard support for Bill C-5 as a way to bring clarity to nation-building projects, and we heard concerns that these projects could sideline rights or environmental stewardship. These summits showed clear expectations: respect consent, protect lands and waters, resource participation, report publicly on progress, and ensure benefits reach families on the ground. That guidance now shapes how the MPO operates.

Many Indigenous communities across Canada—many with proven track records in business and resource development—have stepped forward in support of C-5 because they see that it unlocks a chance for real ownership, reliable revenue, long-term

careers, and the chance to plan for prosperity as full partners in the new Canadian economy. They know these projects can be game-changers if Indigenous nations co-design them, consent is respected, and the benefits are hard-wired from day one.

Here's the bottom line: these projects will better connect our economy, diversify our industries, and create high-paying careers, all while protecting this country's rigorous environmental standards and upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples. This isn't optional: this is the bar we intend to meet.

Canada's Indigenous Peoples are on a journey of social and economic justice, but they aren't asking for handouts: they're asking for access to capital, fair chances, real seats at the table, and clear rules that respect their time and their rights. Economic independence is real independence, and economic reconciliation is how we get there. This means using our resources wisely, investing in our people, and ensuring communities have an ownership stake in the wealth created on our lands—real action that improves quality of life. But progress moves at the speed

Together, we will build One Canadian Economy and make sure it truly leaves no one behind.

Liberal MP Buckley Belanger, who represents Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River, Sask., is also the secretary of state for rural development in Prime Minister Mark Carney's cabinet. Before entering federal politics, Belanger served for more than 25 years in the Saskatchewan Legislature, representing the northern riding of Athabasca from 1995 to 2021. The Hill Times

Message to Carney: the safety of Indigenous women and girls is in the national interest

If Canada is serious about building an economy rooted in dignity and human rights, the Liberals must ensure that Indigenous women and girls are given a seat at the table, that our voices are heard. and that our lives are safeguarded.

NDP MP Leah Gazan

Opinion





Minister Mark Carney's top priorities is now implementing Bill C-5, the controversial major projects legislation rushed into law before summer adjournment. Bill C-5

grants cabinet ministers sweeping powers to undermine the Constitution and other key legislation to approve major projects deemed to be of 'national interest'.

Unsurprisingly, the Liberals faced widespread condemnation for passing this legislation without adequate consultations, especially since the Bill stands

to undermine the democratic the National process, Indigenous constitutional Truth and rights, environmental protections, Reconciliation and public and worker safety. Day in Ottawa

Equally troubling is the Liberals' total disregard for the 231 Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)—despite clear evidence that fast-tracked resource projects fuel violence against them. This is unacceptable. We cannot embrace development projects that Carney's Liberals deem to be of national interest if they endanger the lives of Indigenous women and girls.

The National Inquiry found clear evidence linking industrial work camps—like those in projects advanced by Bill C-5—to increased violence, determining these 'man camps'" are implicated in higher rates of violence against Indigenous women at the camps and in the neighbouring communities." In a 2022 study, the House of Commons Status of Women Committee affirmed this finding,

Continued on page 23

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Keisha Paulmartin president of the youth advisory council in Kashechewan First Nation, speaks with a group of First Nations youth gathered outside the Prime Minister's First Nations summit on Bill C-5 in Gatineau, Que., on July 17, 2025, calling on the government to respect treaty rights and oppose Bill C-5. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade of representatives from specific territories means the absence of irreplaceable place-based knowledge systems.

This geographic imbalance undermines the very foundation of Indigenous governance, which is rooted in specific relationships to particular lands rather than pan-Indigenous generalizations. As political science professor Peter Graefe notes, while high-profile appointments suggest potential influence, "A big question will be: do they really get to play a role in shaping decision-making, or is this just a form of whitewashing, trying to gain consent without really doing much to ensure that consent?"

Real reconciliation demands structural change. The success of Indigenous-led programs like the Queen's-Weeneebayko Health Education Partnership demonstrates what's possible when communities shape their own futures.

If Prime Minister Mark Carney's government genuinely seeks reconciliation, it must commit to meaningful consultation with each affected rights and title holder, grant the Indigenous Advisory Council actual veto-power over projects affecting Indigenous lands, prioritize implementing existing TRC Calls to Action before creating new bureaucratic structures, and ensure Indigenous communities have the resources and authority to make decisions about projects affecting their territories.

As we mark another National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Sept. 30, we cannot allow the rhetoric of "partnership" to mask continued colonial practices. Through my doctoral research on environmental repossession, how Indigenous Peoples reclaim healing spaces within colonial institutions, I've learned that transformation requires fundamental shifts in power, not cosmetic changes.

Indigenous Peoples must have meaningful decision-making authority—not advisory roles—when major projects affect territories and treaty rights. Without these changes, the MPO risks becoming another chapter in Canada's long history of broken promises. The difference is clear: symbolic gestures maintain colonial power while appearing progressive; transformative change requires settlers to relinquish control and honour Indigenous governance

As Jewell and Mosby conclude: "With four years of data indicating glacial progress on the Calls to Action and reconciliation generally, it is becoming increasingly clear that transformative change is required." The MPO, as currently structured, is not that change, it's more of the same dressed in new language.

Vanessa Ambtman-Smith (Niizhobinesiik) is an assistant professor in the Indigenous studies program and department of geography and environment at Western University, with a PhD in Indigenous health geographies. A former public servant with over 20 years in Ontario's health-care sector, she brings both academic expertise and frontline experience to health-care transformation.

The Hill Times

Fast-tracking past justice: why the Major Projects Office threatens real reconciliation

The pressure to 'fast track' projects transparently signals workarounds to avoid legal obligations around Indigenous consultation, placing advisers in an untenable position.

Vanessa Ambtman-Smith

Opinion

As we approach the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we must confront an uncomfortable truth: Canada's new Major Projects Office and its Indigenous Advisory Council represent a dangerous regression in our journey toward reconciliation, not progress.

In the words of Canadian academics Eva Jewell and Ian

Mosby: "In the short time we have been annually observing Canada's record on its supposed progress, we've held the tension of the promise of reconciliation with the actual reality, exacerbated by the deep chasm between the two."

My heart sank reading the Sept. 10 announcement. As an Indigenous adoptee who became a health system leader, and now an Indigenous scholar studying healing spaces, I know first-hand how these structures become vehicles for tokenism. Having chaired numerous advisory bodies during two decades in Ontario's health system, I've witnessed how quickly "advisory" becomes "rubber-stamping" when bureaucracy controls the agenda. These councils, stripped of real decision-making power, legitimize colonial agendas that circumvent legal frameworks Indigenous Peoples fought decades to establish.

The 10 appointed advisers face an impossible task: representing the diverse perspectives of all Indigenous Peoples coast to coast to coast to coast on major projects. As Jewell and Mosby's Yellowhead Institute analysis reveals, this represents "symbolic" rather than "transformative" reconciliation: performative measures creating

the appearance of progress while avoiding necessary structural changes. Their research shows that at the current pace (2.25 calls per year), it will take 38 more years before all Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action are complete.

In my role as a "bridge builder" between Indigenous knowledge systems and Western institutions, I recognize the difference between authentic partnership and tokenistic inclusion. The MPO offers none of the TRC's requirements: sustained institutional commitment, dedicated resources, or respectful engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems.

The pressure to "fast track" projects transparently signals workarounds to avoid legal obligations around Indigenous consultation, placing advisers in an untenable position. I know the weight of being expected to be an expert on everything— from land protection to climate change while simultaneously building bridges with the colonial government whose policies continue harming our communities.

As NDP MP Leah Gazan correctly identifies, this structure appears designed to sidestep genuine consultation with rights and title holders. The Building Canada Act allows cabinet to push through projects deemed in the "national interest" while bypassing environmental protections crucial to Indigenous communities' well-being. This isn't reconciliation; it's recolonization through bureaucratic manoeuvering.

The timing is particularly galling. Ten years after the TRC's 94 Calls to Action, only 14 have been fully implemented. Health care for Indigenous Peoples remains in crisis. Educational inequities persist. Yet the government fast-tracks major projects that will likely harm Indigenous communities for generations.

The council's composition reveals critical gaps in placebased representation. Quebec has only two representatives, with no representation from the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation or other Haudenosaunee communities whose traditional territories span proposed project areas. Indigenous health geographies teaches us that meaningful consultation requires representatives who carry specific knowledge of local ecosystems, waterways, and land relationships that vary dramatically across regions. The absence

Policy Briefing INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

Cultural agility is key in advancing reconciliation

Cultural agility means being able to work and build relationships across cultures without leaving one's own behind.

Anne Harding

Opinion



Trecall a conversation a decade **L**ago with a Haudenosaunee colleague and mentor, just before we began delivering yet another "Indigenous Awareness" training course at a major energy company. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report and 94 Calls to Action had recently been released. With equal optimism and skepticism, he observed: "A window has just been opened, and I give it about a decade until it closes again."

He was referring to the window of time when meaningful progress could be made toward the systemic change needed for reconciliation and justice in



The Bentwood Box, which travelled with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission containing survivors' personal items, is placed on stage at the National Truth and Reconciliation day event at LeBreton Flats in Ottawa on Sept. 30, 2022. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Canada. As a non-Indigenous person working in Indigenous relations, I often remind fellow non-Indigenous colleagues that the 94 Calls to Action are not for Indigenous Peoples alone. They are calls to all of us-the 95 per cent of the population whose richness and wealth, as former Assembly of First Nations national chief Ovide Mercredi put it, come from a one-sided interpretation of the treaties.

Over the past decade, working with organizations of all sizes and sectors, I've seen that Canadians want to keep the window open. Whether it's a newcomer recognizing parallels between the oppression their families faced elsewhere and that are faced by Indigenous Peoples here, or a

senior executive exploring ways to support Indigenous economic sovereignty through partnerships, the intention is the same: a desire to do better.

Some Calls to Action offer tangible steps, like No. 57's directive for governments to educate public servants about Indigenous history. Others demand harder, systemic change—rethinking policies in child welfare, health, and justice. The urgency for this deeper kind of change was amplified by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, whose 2019 report declared 231 Calls for

As Canadians start with the easy stuff; that is, to learn more about the harms that have been done to Indigenous people, there is an understandable desire to not do any more harm with potentially ill-informed actions or changes. But then comes hesitation. People worry about causing more harm with a misstep. Many recall a time they tried to say or do the right thing, only to be told they were wrong. Out of fear, they retreat into silence.

They may continue to learn from the safety of their e-reader or podcast feed, but they stop short from taking action that might result in real change. While this response makes sense when we consider the stereotypical Canadian ethos of politeness, the result of such paralysis is that the window for systemic change is starting to close.

And yet, progress has been made. Many Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders have pushed past fear of offending into

complex conversations and structural shifts. Their communities, employees, and constituents see these examples and follow, moving beyond learning into action, with humility.

Developing this "cultural agility" is key to keeping the window open. Cultural agility means being able to work and build relationships across cultures without leaving one's own behind. It is more than reading a land acknowledgement or taking an awareness course. It is grounded in ethical curiosity and developed through taking action. For those who have invested in developing it, the change is profound: blinders fall away, new possibilities for advancing reconciliation appear, and the fear of getting it wrong" gives way to optimism and agency. Many describe feeling "unstuck," more willing to try, learn, and adapt.

As we look back through this past decade's window, the choice before us is clear. Canadians must move past the fear of missteps and lean into the harder work of systemic change. By cultivating cultural agility, we strengthen the relationships that will allow us to navigate complexity together. In doing so, we may keep the window of reconciliation open-perhaps not just for another decade, but for generations to come.

Anne Harding (MA, CP3) is the owner of Forum Community Relations, an Alberta-based company working across Canada to help 'connect the dots' for people and $organizations\ who\ want\ to\ do$ better in Indigenous relations and community engagement.

The Hill Times

Mark Carney and a call for meaningful reconciliation

True reconciliation means advancing the legislative priorities of Indigenous peoples, as well, and recognizing that we are equally sovereign.

Cody Groat

Opinion

ater this week, we will mark Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and this December we will mark 10 years since the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. We need to recognize the long-lasting impacts of the Indian Residential School System, but we also need

to recognize that Indigenous Peoples are sovereign, and that questions of self-governance, economic prosperity, and rights to our traditional territories are central to how we govern ourselves alongside the Canadian nation-state.

Prime Minister Mark Carney has already demonstrated his approach towards Indigenous reconciliation, leaving much to be desired. He is a more strategic parliamentarian than his predecessor, as seen through some of his early legislative accomplishments. In his first month in office, Carney introaucea tne controversial Bill C-5 or the Building Canada Act, and expedited this through Parliament without giving Indigenous Peoples the opportunity to voice their concerns or to propose legislative amendments. After the act received royal assent, the federal government convened a First Nations Major Projects Summit to engage in "meaningful consultation" regarding the new Major Federal Projects Office developed through Bill C-5. Of

course, this summit was largely one-sided. The legislation was already in effect. Reconciliation is more than merely investing in projects and infrastructure that might have trickle-down benefits for Indigenous Peoples. Reconciliation is ensuring that our rights to meaningfully consult are truly respected, which means inviting us to the table prior to passing legislation that directly impacts our nations and our future.

Sovereignty and nationalism have been at the forefront of Carney's early tenure as prime minister, partially stemming from Alberta separatism and threats of American annexation. One result has been the clear and definitive assertion of Canadian sovereignty, which becomes complicated when considering the conflicting interpretations of sovereignty that are maintained by Indigenous Peoples. In response to the national and international rhetoric regarding Canada's place in the world, the Prime Minister's Office issued a formal invitation to King Charles III to deliver the government's Throne Speech in

May. In his address, King Charles recognized that the federal gov ernment would "discharge its duty to protect Canadians and their sovereign rights," while reminding federal parliamentarians that they were meeting on the "unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg people," articulating the need for "truth and reconciliation, in both word and deed.'

I doubt that reconciliation will be a priority for the prime minister during the new legislative session. We have seen a more centrist vision for the Liberal Party that offers some contrasts with the government of Justin Trudeau, despite much of the caucus and cabinet being the same people. Several pieces of legislation that were highly consequential to Indigenous Peoples were being considered prior to the dissolution of the 44th Canadian Parliament this past March, and it will be interesting to see which of these—if any—are reintroduced by the government.

In November 2024, for example, five months prior to Carney's swearing in, then-minister of Crown-Indigenous relations, Gary Anandasangaree, and David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Métis Federation, signed the Red River Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Treaty. This was the first modern treaty signed between Canada

and a Métis nation. This treaty was multi-faceted and included provisions for the advancement of Métis self-governance. Sec. 119, though, states that its ratification is conditional upon the federal government passing legislation to officially implement the terms of the treaty. Bill C-53 from the 44th Parliament would have served as such legislation, but it did not receive royal assent prior to dissolution.

We have seen that Carney is willing and able to rush legislation through the House of Commons and the Senate when it meets his needs. True reconciliation means advancing the legislative priorities of Indigenous Peoples, as well, and recognizing that we are equally

As we mark this National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and as we approach the 10th anniverhe Final Report of th Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, we will watch the prime minister and hope for real change, instead of platitudes or empty words.

Cody Groat is a Kanyen'kehaka citizen and a band member of Six Nations of the Grand River. He is an assistant professor in the Department of History and the Indigenous Studies Program at Western University.

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION Policy Briefing

Broken promises and the need to move towards reconciliation

With each new and re-elected prime minister, Indigenous Peoples hear more promises. It does not take long at all for these promises to be broken.

NDP MP Lori Idlout





∠country, Inuit, First Nations and later Métis thrived on these lands. As Indigenous Peoples, we fell deep into abysmal victimhood with genocidal policies from both the British Crown and churches. These settler policies continued even when Canada became its own country.

For almost 200 years, we continue to be traumatized by policies that keep us oppressed, and with lower health and well-being standards compared to Canadian standards. I interpret this to mean that those genocidal policies are still working.

For deep-rooted reasons, reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is of most importance. Sept. 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Sept. 30 is more important than July 1 for most Indigenous Peoples. On this day, Canadians will see many

orange shirts being worn.
Government after government, with each new and re-elected prime minister, Indigenous Peoples hear more promises. It does not take long at all for these promises to be broken. I have only to mention in this fivemonth-old Carney government the passage of C-5, the so-called Building Canada Act.

This current Liberal government has already proven that it will not move toward reconciliation. I have very little hope this government will respect Indigenous nations as prominent decision-makers in policies that impact Indigenous Peoples' lives. First Nations and Métis demanded that they are afforded the free, prior, and informed consent as legislated in UNDRIP. Rather than upholding Indigenous Peoples' rights, this Liberal government decided to use the threat of United States President Donald Trump to prioritize activities that will further expedite climate change.

By this time, I ask: are there any decisions that Carney can make to get on the track of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples?

While there is not one easy answer, there are some steps this prime minister can take.

First: Increase—not decrease -the funding for Indigenous Services Canada; investments for Indigenous Peoples have never been enough. There are many reports that illustrate the investment gaps are in the billions of dollars. There must be no further cuts. Further, this government must balance investments when addressing Arctic security and sovereignty. This government will put Inuit at risk if it disproportionately funds the military in the Arctic over social programming. If this government focuses as well on addressing the chronic lack of investments in housing, education, health care, and major transportation infrastructures like airports and marine ports, Inuit communities will be able to be as engaged in Arctic security as its military partners.

Second: Introduce legislation that puts on par Indigenous Peoples' rights alongside Canadian human rights. Two such examples that this Liberal government will need to table are Indigenous water legislation, and Indian Act amendments on Indian status. The bills introduced in the 44th Parliament were substandard because both bills would have kept Indigenous Peoples below Canadian standards. Had they passed, First Nations would most likely have ended up in never-ending negotiations with municipalities and provinces, and First Nations women-who were found to be discriminated

against-would have been pre-

This time around, the Liberals

vented from seeking reparations.

would do better by Indigenous Peoples by introducing legislation that enshrines the rights of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, allowing for self-determination.

As I have said publicly—given the current geo-political climate—I fully believe that we need to invest in Arctic security and Arctic sovereignty in Canada. There needs to be balanced spending to ensure northerners, too, can be engaged in Arctic security. New Democrats want to ensure that Inuit and Northerners' knowledge and expertise are used to help keep the Arctic secure. Prioritizing so-called nation-building projects and military spending while neglecting the fundamental needs of Nunavummiut and northerners shows the lack of commitment to reconciliation and investing in Indigenous Peoples. Carney's plan for nation-building should have included sorely needed investments in schools, adequate housing, dependable electricity, transportation infrastructure, including airports and marine infrastructure and better health care for Arctic communities. It is time for Canada to strengthen Arctic security and sovereignty by investing in the peoples of the region.

Lori Idlout is a Canadian politician who has served as an NDP MP for the riding of Nunavut in the House of Commons since 2021. Before her election, Idlout practised law in Iqaluit with her own firm, Qusagaq Law Office.

Reconciliation is the foundation for Canada's future projects

When governments, industry, and Indigenous nations build together, all of Canada moves forward.

Katherine Koostachin



Reconciliation is not optional. It is not a trend or an economic calculation. At its heart, reconciliation reflects Canada's responsibility to walk in partnership with its original peoples, nonouring relationships that pre-date Confederation, and ensuring Indigenous nations are full participants in shaping the country's future. The success of every major project depends on this foundation. Projects built with First Nations thrive; those without strong engagement risk delays and obstacles.

Since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its 94 Calls to Action, Canada has taken meaningful steps forward

by adopting UNDRIP, affirming Indigenous jurisdiction in child welfare, investing in clean drinking water and housing, and resolving long-standing disputes, among other measures. These achievements signal progress, yet persistent service inequities and infrastructure gaps continue to impact Indigenous communities, reminding us that much work remains.

At the same time, political attention has increasingly shifted toward geo-political and economic pressures—to strengthen productivity, protect jobs, and move resources to new markets. Without careful focus, reconciliation risks slipping from view. That would be a missed opportunity. Reconciliation is not only a moral responsibility; it is also the foundation for Canada's economic future. Even when it is not in headlines, its

Bill C-5, the Canada Build Act, is designed to accelerate approvals for projects of national interest. But experience shows that speed without thoughtful engagement can create conflict. From Oka in 1990 to Wet'suwet'en in 2020, the lesson is clear: consultation treated as a formality carries high costs. For industry, investing time early to build relationships and understand Indigenous priorities reduces delays and fosters stronger outcomes.

To support effective project delivery, Canada has established the Major Projects Office, and affirmed that it will respect Indigenous rights; uphold free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC); and provide equity opportunities for nations. It has also created the Indigenous Advisory Council to help advance this work, which is a good step. However, nations continue to seek clarity on the process for project designation under the act and how their rights will be respected. Governments can respond with transparent standards, clear timelines, and mechanisms to ensure commitments are followed.

Canada has referred five projects for potential designation under the act, several made possible by years of engagement between industry and local nations. What remains to be projects will proceed. Success depends on investing time and resources up front and embedding consultation, environmental responsibility and Indigenous decision-making from the start. Even in urgent times, these steps cannot be rushed without affecting trust and stability.

Ensuring nations have the tools to lead is also essential. Projects such as the Wataynikaneyap Power Transmission Line

and the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link show what is possible when Indigenous leadership drives development. Expanding such models requires reliable access to capital. Canada's \$10-billion Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program is a valuable resource, but financial tools complement, not replace, genuine partnership and consent. For industry, this means designing projects to include equity opportunities, technical support, and shared governance with Indigenous partners.

FPIC is central to reconciliation. It ensures communities have complete information, time to deliberate, and the ability to make decisions. FPIC may not be a veto, but it is a path to authentic participation and collaboration. Embedding FPIC in practice strengthens relationships and supports lasting outcomes.

Indigenous priorities from the outset builds confidence among governments, industry, and nations that commitments will be respected. Advisory councils can certainly guide the process, but the Crown retains the duty to consult. Governments can support this by establishing clear requirements and reporting publicly on progress. And industry can contribute through early and consistent engagement, designing projects to

include equity opportunities, and integrating Indigenous priorities. Loan guarantees and ownership tools enhance participation but never replace consent.

When these practices are in place, all parties can work together more effectively. True success comes when governments, industry, and Indigenous nations act as partners from the outset. This includes addressing past harms while developing forward-looking solutions. Governments can provide frameworks and accountability, industry can invest responsibly, and nations can lead in shaping projects that affect their lands and communities

This Reconciliation Day is a reminder: reconciliation is not a barrier to progress. It is the foundation of Canada's future. Reconciliation is ongoing, and every project provides a moment to strengthen relationships, embed Indigenous leadership, and get it right. When governments, industry, and Indigenous nations build together with trust, equity, and consent, all of Canada moves forward. Eh-ko-teh. Meegwetch.

Katherine Koostachin. a Mushkegowuk Cree from Attawapiskat First Nation, has advised the Prime Minister's Office and federal ministers, and continues to guide governments, industry, and Indigenous nations in delivering projects that achieve results while reflecting Indigenous values. She is currently the vice-president of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation with Sussex Strategy Group.

Policy Briefing INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

True reconciliation requires remembering and learning from our country's history

While the Government of Canada has taken important steps since the devastating policies that once removed Indigenous children from their families and communities, much work remains.



s we mark the 10th anniver-Asary of the TRC's final report and the 94 Calls to Action, and the fifth year of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Sept. 30, this year is an important moment for reflection and resolve. It is a time for us, as Canadians, to acknowledge the progress that has already been



made while charting the next steps on our shared path toward reconciliation.

In my own province of Manitoba, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action resonate deeply. Across the province, organizations are responding in meaningful ways, through education, commemoration, and action, always with an eye on both the past and the future. As Prime Minister Mark Carney reminded us on National Indigenous Peoples' Day in June, the TRC's Calls to Action remain essential to advancing reconciliation, and to reaffirming the partnerships between Canada



and the Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this land.

In August, I attended the unveiling of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada's commemorative plaques at the National Indian Residential School Museum in Portage La Prairie, Man., led by Long Plain First Nation. Touring the building and its exhibits, we were confronted with the stark realities of how children lived, ate, and attended classes while separated from their families and forbidden to speak their own languages. The museum draws visitors from around the world, offering Canadians and international guests

commissioner on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a former Progressive Conservative MP, and a residential school survivor, speaks at the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on Parliament Hill on Sept. 30, 2023. The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia

Wilton Littlechild,

a former

the opportunity to learn from this painful history and to imagine—however incompletely—the hardships these children endured. Parks Canada, which oversees the site, works closely with Indigenous partners, communities, and individuals to guide how former residential school sites are commemorated. This collaboration reflects the Government of Canada's commitment to advancing Call to Action No. 79, and ensuring that the stories of survivors and their families are honoured with truth and dignity.

One of the foremost national locations for this ongoing work of reconciliation is also in Manitoba,

at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), which safeguards the archives of survivors, preserving the records on behalf of them and their families. This is the other side of the Commission's legacy: as Canadians, we have a responsibility to remember the truth of what was done to Indigenous Peoples, especially the children who suffered at the hands of those who were meant to protect and care for them

Each year, Truth and Reconciliation Week provides an opportunity to educate Canadians of all ages both in classrooms and in communities, about the history and lasting impacts of residential schools on survivors and their families. As the NCTR notes, no fewer than five different Calls to Action-Calls 65, 71, 72, 77, and 78—speak directly to the centre, and its vital role in record-keeping and education.

True reconciliation requires more than acknowledging; it demands that we remember our country's history, learn from it, and act differently going forward. While the Government of Canada has taken important steps since the devastating policies that once removed Indigenous children from their families and communities, much work remains. At the National Indian Residential School Museum, I saw this commitment in action: the plaques unveiled there tell this painful history in five languages, English, French, Anishinaabemowin, Cree, and Dakota. By integrating Indigenous languages into the narrative of our shared past, we help build a new heritage, one where reconciliation is not a symbolic gesture but a daily act.

Liberal MP Ginette Lavack, who represents Saint-Boniface-Saint-Vital, Man., is the parliamentary secretary for Indigenous Services Canada, and lives on Treaty 1 Territory.

The Hill Times

Message to Carney: the safety of Indigenous women and girls is in the national interest

Continued from page 19

urging the government to requir companies to implement community safety plans and to hold companies accountable when they fail to do so.

Unfortunately, when I questioned the minister of energy and natural resources about this study in relation to Bill C-5 during debate in the House of Commons. he indicated that he had not read the report, suggesting rather that it was an issue for law enforcement. His failure to recognize

the urgent need for community safety plans to protect Indigenous omen and giris is unacceptable The Canadian economy must not be built on a foundation of violence.

According to the national inquiry, resource extraction projects consistently bring into rural and remote areas many transient workers who have no ties to their host communities. These communities frequently report elevated levels of harassment and violence perpetrated by transient young men, particularly against Indig-

enous women and girls. During an industrial project in Fort St. James, B.C., RUMP data showed a 38 per cent increase in local sexual assaults in the first year alone.

The economic dynamics of 'boomtowns' often exacerbate gender-based violence. Indigenous women are frequently excluded from the negotiation of development projects, even on issues that directly impact their safety and economic wellbeing. Promises of employment opportunities made to Indigenous nations rarely translate into benefits

for Indigenous women themselves. Instead, high-paying jobs are disproportionately given to incoming transient, often young, male workers. The resulting economic vulnerability of local residents creates conditions ripe for exploitation, including human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of women and girls.

These realities underscore why the national inquiry called on governments to require gender-based impact assessments for all resource projects. Shockingly, Bill C-5 contains no such review processes, demonstrating a failure of the federal government to include a gender-based analysis. Pushing through projects withinevitably condemn Indigenous women and girls to bear the cost of corporate violence.

Then-prime minister Justin Trudeau admitted that the crisis of MMIWG amounts to an ongoing genocide. Yet the Liberals continue to turn their backs on Indigenous women and girls through Bill C-5. Carney is the latest prime minister who has abandoned the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice, while also violating the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (C-15), by which Canada must "ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.'

Is protecting the lives of Indigenous women and girls not in Canada's national interest? Do we truly want to build an economy in a way that knowingly places Indigenous women and girls at risk? If Canada is serious about building an economy rooted in dignity and human rights, the Liberals must ensure that Indigenous women and girls are given a seat at the table, that lives are safeguarded.

Leah Gazan has been the NDP MP for Winnipeg Centre, Man., since 2019. She is currently her party's critic for families, children, and social development; critic for women and gender equality; and critic for post-secondary education. Gazan is a member of Wood Mountain Lakota Nation. located in Saskatchewan, Treaty locateu ... 4 territory. The Hill Times

COMMENT



Will political expediency yield greater transparency?

Mark Carney may be looking for openings to the rigid firewalls and the accessto-information protective system his predecessors abided by-or he may just follow in their footsteps.

Ken Rubin

Opinion -There may be no Ceasy road ahead towards greater transparency in Ottawa. But parliamentarians in this minority government may systematically start trying to

Access to Information Act. As reported in The Globe and Mail, the Carney government released otherwise-exempt documents to a special summer meeting of the House Transport

get more records than is possi-

ble under the restrictions of the

and Infrastructure Committee. Those records involved ministerial exchanges and exempt-staff communications concerning the controversial Canada Infrastructure Bank's \$1-billion loan for BC Ferries' purchasing new ferries from China.

Back in the fall of 2024, however, then-prime minister Justin Trudeau refused to release excluded records to Parliament on financial and conflict-of-interest irregularities at the former Sustainable Development Technology Canada green technology fund. After that, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, on the grounds of parliamentary privilege, tied up parliamentary business for months. But no more records were released.

Maybe Prime Minister Mark Carney or his PMO advisers believed the release of the ferry documents to Parliament was the better trade-off. Otherwise, the issue of the federal ald not going to buy Canadian-constructed ferries could have interfered with his government's upcoming political agenda.

This is likely not going to be the last time such release of off-limit documents will come Parliament's way if it is judged politically expedient to do so.

The prime minister, ministers. and the PMO can use their discretion-not tied to the rigid exclusion of ministerial and cabinet

records found in access legislation-to release records.

How will our system of upending secrecy barriers work in Canada: will it be by leaks, by bypassing access legislation restrictions, or by reforming access legislation?

There are likely going to more calculated releases, including those brought on by parliamentary wheeling and dealing.

One calculated release was where sources indicated to The Globe and Mail that Carney had intervened in the proposed acquisition of Canadian mining firm Teck Resources Ltd. by asking that Anglo American PLC move its London, U.K.-based headquarters personnel to Canada. That may be a spin putting on a brave face on an upcoming foreign acquisition of a major Canadian mining firm. No documentary evidence of such a sales condition was provided.

50, Carney has choices to make on what his government makes public. He has not shown this in the case of providing data on talks and negotiations with the Trump administration. Some, but not all, of the high-level talks between Carney and Trump, as pointed out in The Hill Times, have been released, but only with scant summary information.

If Carney were up to it, he could consent to his Privy Council Office (PCO) officials not taking

extensions of more than 250 days to produce documents on the process they are to follow to ensure his governing actions do not conflict with his blind-trust assets. Or Carney could consent to PCO releasing records on his office's role in facilitating major projects instead of waiting over 200 days to reply to such a request.

If Carney wants to stick to the current structures, his administration will see more communications and records remaining secret. The Access to Information Act was meant to cut off all unwanted government leaks though allowing for some disclosures.

The information commissioner, in her recent briefing to the Commons Access to Information Committee, expressed frustrations over the current situation where many agencies are not complying with deadlines and are not providing more fulsome responses, relying, for instance on broad policy advice claims to exempt records.

Now, with essentially a two main-party setup, one dynamic may be that Carney could release more operational records on issues of mutual interest with the Conservatives, like on fighting crime or building houses. Mind you, when the NDP had an arrangement with the Liberals in the last Parliament, Trudeau did not share much information with

them on matters like the dental and pharmacare plans.

Meanwhile, if left on their own, government agencies and senior mandarins will continue to put further restrictions on public access to records, and on what their employees can communicate.

One new move is to include more National Defence personnel who are forbidden during their lives from discussing their job work, or their former work.

Further, it is more common now for departments like Justice Canada to forget to process access requests for several years, or to make claims that they hold no records.

Even the newer effort of using artificial intelligence—reputedly to assist speeding up record releases and to improve better administration—can go awry.

For example, a Globe and Mail investigation indicated that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's use of algorithms to assist in food inspection has had its flaws, with failures including not flagging potential food safety violations inside food plant factories.

So, what may distinguish the Carney regime is more flexibility in releasing normally hidden documents and giving out more information to the media though likely only when it is considered expedient.

Carney may be looking for openings to the rigid firewalls and access-to-information protective system his predecessors abided by, or he may just follow in their footsteps.

Ken Rubin writes on transparency issues and is reachable via kenrubin.ca

OPINION

LNG project marks the moment to fulfill Canadian potential

It is still fresh in our memory that G7 leaders gathered in Kanan-

askis, Alta., to hold candid discus-

sions on the state of international

With LNG Canada now exporting liquefied natural gas to Asia-Pacific countries, this is a golden opportunity to make progress on energy security, climate change, and trade diversification.

Kanji Yamanouchi

Opinion



finally begun exporting liquefied natural gas to Asia-Pacific countries, including Japan. This marks the beginning of Canada's enormous potential becoming apparent as it will also become a reliable new supplier for Asia-Pa-

LNG Canada is an international consortium of five companies: Shell, Petronas, Mitsubishi Corporation, PetroChina, and Korea Gas. After detailed and careful preparations, the final investment decision was made in October 2018. This is an ambitious, \$40-billion project with an annual production capacity of 14 million tonnes that will transport natural gas produced in the Montney region of eastern British Columbia via pipeline to Kitimat on the Pacific coast, approximately 700 km away. At the ceremony marking the start of construction, then-prime minister Justin Trudeau proudly announced that the project was the largest private investment project in Canadian history, but it required further consultations with stakeholders. For example, LNG Canada made steady efforts to gain the understanding and support of Indige-

nous communities. Through 12,000 individual meetings, it was illustrated how LNG Canada would contribute to global decarbonization while also leading to local economic development. Furthermore the company faced a series of problems, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, labour shortages, and supply chain disruptions, but it overcame these challenges and got its business on right track.

While Canada is the world's fifth largest natural gas producer, domestic demand accounts for half of that, with the other half exported. However exports were previously limited to the United States. The reason is simple: there was a critical lack of infrastructure. But now, LNG Canada has blazed a new trail. This could be considered a historic event that will lead to Canada being a future energy superpower.

This all comes as attention is focused on Canada's relationship with the U.S. under the second term of President Donald Trump. Given that approximately 80 per cent of Canada's exports go to the U.S., the Carney government has begun to seriously promote trade diversification. The One Canadian Economy Act—which received royal assent shortly after Parliament returned in the spring—is significant. Frankly, while business people highly value Canada's potential, they also would like to see improvement in the following areas to expand business, trade, and investment in Canada:

1) infrastructure development; 2) regulatory reforms and streamlining of processes; 3) clear guidance for consultations with stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities; and 4) robust co-ordination and co-operation between the federal government and provinces, or between provinces. The Act can be seen as determination to address these challenges

Recently, Prime Minister Mark Carney announced five national projects as the first phase of the One Canadian Economy Act. LNG Canada's expansion plans are one of those. This will double the current capacity from 14 million tonnes to 28 million tonnes, making it the second largest LNG terminal in the world when realized. And then, beyond that, Alberta comes into sight. The province produces about 70 per cent of Canada's natural gas and has advantages in new energy sources such as hydrogen and ammonia, attracting attention from both Asian and European countries. This is a golden opportunity to simultaneously achieve energy security, climate change countermeasures, and trade diversification.

Now is the time for Canada to overcome the four challenges mentioned above, and realize its potential. I look forward to this with big anticipation.

Kanji Yamanouchi is the ambassador of Japan to Canada. The Hill Times

Canada's unions and AI: meet the future, don't duck it

As Ottawa embraces AI, public service unions have a chance to shape what's next.

Adam Froman



The federal government announcement that it will roll The federal government's out artificial intelligence in some public service departments has caused understandable concern amongsi governmeni workers and their unions. Instead of seeing this as a job killer, workers should see it as a defining moment.

In fact, the arrival of AI offers opportunities to lead, collaborate, and build a more efficient and innovative government. True, AI will replace some jobs, but it will preserve and enhance others. transforming them and in the long-run, helping the wider Canadian economy.

AI isn't going away. Fighting it is like sitting in a straw hut on the beach when the tsunami is approaching. What matters is how well we weather it-positioning ourselves now to that ensure that instead of causing a storm, AI can lift all boats.

Lead, Don't Resist

For Canadian workers and businesses, AI brings the prospect of productivity gains and greater economic value. A recent report from the Conference Board of Canada projects that AI integration across sectors could boost labour productivity by 17.1 per cent over the next 20 years and generate up to C\$185-billion in economic value.

This positive trend has already started. In 2022-23, there were more than 140,000 actively engaged AI professionals, up nearly 30 per cent increase over the previous year.

This is the opposite of job killing. It's job transformation, and if it's done right, it means mean more services delivered well, less waste, and faster responses for Canadians who access govern-

Some people worry that AI will make the workplace terrible. They seem to be wrong already. A Statistics Canada study estimates that about 31 per cent of employees aged 18-64 are in jobs that might be replaced or heavily altered by AI, but roughly the same amount (29 per cent) are in jobs where AI could enhance their work rather than displace it. As a society, we should embrace a job shift that can mean less repetitive work and more value-added tasks-more high-quality work for Canadians.

Jobs of the Future for **Small and Medium Business**

Large bureaucracies have more resources to experiment with AI, but small and medium enterprises (SMEs) ought to benefit, too. But SMEs don't always have the ability to make early investments.

Government can lead by example. By reimagining public service roles—everything from AI-aided customer service to and policy innovation—Ottawa set standards and build career templates on which SMEs can draw.

If the public sector leads, SMEs can follow more affordably: using frameworks and skill sets already developed, rather than reinvent-

What Unions Should Be Demanding, and What **Government Must Do**

Rather than resisting AI, unions can become key stakeholders in how it is deployed. They can fight to ensure:

• Transparency and ethical frameworks: who decides which tasks are automated? How do we safeguard privacy, fairness, and accountability?

- Reskilling and job transition support: guarantee retraining workers whose tasks change or whose jobs evolve. For some roles, the work will look different; for others, entirely new titles and skills will emerge;
- Collaboration with Canadian AI firms: Use domestic talent and firms. Keep innovation anchored here; help start-ups, scale-ups, and research labs; and
- Monitoring: study what actually happens—not what we hope happens. Ensure that efficiency gains don't come at the cost-

of-service quality or employee well-being.

Imagine a Government of Canada where clerks who now spend hours on data entry or routine approvals work alongside AI tools to get these tasks done faster. This leaves time for people to focus on oversight, interpretation, policy feedback and better-quality interaction with the public.

AI can also lead to new jobs, in managing and auditing AI systems and decisions, training, ethical review and stewardship of

Many workers move between government and SMEs, and AI can bring opportunities to do this seamlessly. SMEs can hire people who gain experience in the public sector. This helps reduce and cost for smaller employers.

If it's handled right, the government's embracing of AI can help Canada become known globally not just for AI research, but for responsible AI use in public service.

AI is here whether we like it or not. Unionized workers and their representatives should not resist it; they should be involved in decisions about what it can do for them and their jobs of the future. They can and help design the future so they will be at the centre of it. Let's all be AI architects, not bystanders.

Award-winning entrepreneur and innovator Adam Froman is the founder and CEO of Delvinia. The Hill Times

Books & Big Ideas

The impossible office: why Canadian prime ministers fail

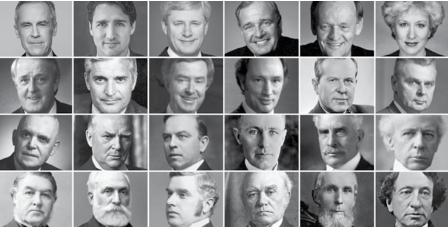
The Canadian prime ministership is an impossible office, demanding that its occupant simultaneously pass three unforgiving tests: political, managerial, and collegial. Fail one and you're limping. Fail two and vou're finished. Justin Trudeau was wobbling on all three. One wonders how Mark Carney will fare.



Tf there is one way a Canadian **↓**prime minister differs from an American president, it's this: nearly all go down to defeat. Only a few have avoided that fate: John A. Macdonald died in office (Sir John Thompson did, too, in 1894, but he never faced the electorate). Lester Pearson decided his future as prime minister was bleak, and retired. Pierre Trudeau's popularity ratings were measured in single digits when he retired in 1984, and sent his party to purgatory for nine years. Brian Mulroney quit just in time—but his politics ultimately killed his party. Jean Chrétien liked to say that power rests with the prime minister, not cabinet or caucus. And he was right—until he wasn't. After three decades of preparation, Chrétien had entered the job with unmatched experience. He left it hounded by his own caucus, undone not by voters but by colleagues who believed Paul Martin was the future.

That arc—absolute dominance llowed by sudden decline—captures the Canadian prime ministership in a nutshell. The office looks omnipotent, but history tells a harsher story: most prime ministers end badly.

We watched it unfold again in real time earlier this year, just before our book—Statecraft: Canadian Prime Ministers and Their Cabinets— went to press. Justin Trudeau, eight years into the job, has already checked the box on dominance. For more than



Prime ministers present and past: Mark Carney, top left, Justin Trudeau, Stephen Harper, Paul Martin, Jean Chrétien, Kim Campbell, Brian Mulroney, John Turner, Joe Clark, Pierre Trudeau, Lester Pearson, John Diefenbaker, Louis St. Laurent, R.B. Bennett, William Lyon Mackenzie King, Arthur Meighen, Robert Borden, Wilfrid Laurier, Charles Tupper, Mackenzie Bowell, John Thompson, John Abbott, Alexander Mackenzie, and John A. Macdonald. Photographs courtesy of Commons Wikimedia, Government of Canada

a year, he had shown signs of the slow but familiar slide: public fatigue, managerial drift, caucus restlessness. None of it was unusual. It's the pattern.

The Canadian prime ministership is an impossible office, demanding that its occupant simultaneously pass three unforgiving tests: political, managerial, and collegial. Fail one and you're limping. Fail two and you're finished.Trudeau was wobbling on all three. One wonders how Mark Carney will fare.

The Political Test: Winning Is Everything

Politics in Ottawa has always been brutal, but never more so than for the person at the top. Every day is a test of whether the leader still looks like a winner. Power flows from that perception; lose it, and the knives come out.

Macdonald understood it, Wilfrid Laurier lived it, William Lyon Mackenzie King perfected it. Mulroney was a master campaigner who eventually became a political liability to his own caucus. Stephen Harper knew how to win—until he didn't.

Justin Trudeau built his leadership on relentless campaigning. In 2015, 2019, and even 2021, he looked like the only Liberal capable of keeping the party in power. But the shine had dulled by 2023. Poll numbers not to a dip, but to a structural collapse in voter onndence. Liberais began asking themselves the Chrétien question: can he still win the next one? If the answer drifts toward "no," his authority evaporates.

What makes the political test especially cruel is that it is future-oriented. Past victories don't count. John Diefenbaker could boast a landslide in 1958, but by 1962 he was already finished. Martin had an aura of inevitability when he toppled Chrétien, but his 2004 losses erased it instantly.

Justin Trudeau faced the same bind. His record—child benefits, carbon pricing, renegotiating NAFTA—may be significant, but what mattered was whether he still looked like a winner. As caucus doubts mounted, the Liberal machine turned inward and anxious. MPs may not have said it aloud, but they all understood what survival required: a leader who could deliver their seats. If they conclude he cannot, loyalty collapses.

The Managerial Test: **Governing Without Drowning**

Winning is only half the battle. Governing is harder. Canada's administrative state is sprawling, interconnected, and increasingly unmanageable. Every PM discovers the same truth: the job is too big.

Louis St. Laurent ran an efficient cabinet until his health faltered; he suddenly did not look capable of leading (though the Liberals won more votes in 1957, they lost in the number of seats). Diefenbaker's indecision paralyzed his government. Pierre Trudeau admitted that the longer he stayed in office, the harder the job became. Mulroney's government became synonymous with mismanagement. Harper's hyper-centralization left a brittle structure that cracked the moment his electoral magic faded.

Justin Trudeau's government owed the same w A housing crisis, affordability concerns, and problematic climate transition policies grated. He struggled to retain key people, losing five ministers in 2024, including his second finance minister. Ottawa looked reactive rather than strategic. Cabinet shuffles-meant to signal renewal—only highlighted the government's fatigue.

The comparison to Mulroney is particularly striking. Mulroney entered office in 1984 with energy

and vision, but by the early 1990s, policy overload and political exhaustion had hol-lowed out his government. Justin Trudeau, likewise, swept in with reformist zeal but always struggled to deliver coherence.

Managerial weakness bleeds into political weakness. Canadians don't read Treasury Board memos, but they sense drift. They punish governments that look tired. Trudeau was unable to restore discipline and co-ordination and joined the long list of leaders who overstayed their managerial capacity.

The Collegial Test: Keep the Knives Sheathed

The third test is the least studied but often the most decisive: collegiality. A prime minister who can't keep caucus and cabinet onside won't last.

Macdonald understood this instinctively. Laurier inspired affection. Mulroney, for all his other flaws, kept a restive coalition together through sheer force of personality.

But Chrétien learned the hard way that caucus loyalty isn't permanent. Martin's camp destabilized Chrétien until the party pushed him out. Harper's caucus never loved him, but it respected and feared him enough to obey.

For Justin Trudeau, the collegial challenge was real. The Wilson-Raybould affair and the departure of Bill Morneau remained visible scars. Discontent over cabinet shuffles, regional underrepresentation, and sagging poll numbers has begun to surface in caucus chatter. The real danger was not open revolt but a quiet withdrawal-MPs quietly disengaging because they no longer believed in their leader's future.

History offers sharp lessons. St. Laurent, by the late 1950s, was seen as aloof, failing to refresh his cabinet or inspire MPs. The result was a government that looked arrogant and disconnected—and voters in Western Canada and Ontario responded accordingly. Chrétien, despite his dominance. couldn't suppress Martin's camp forever. Carney now faces a similar risk: not an organized coup, but a growing sense among Liberals that renewal must come quickly.

Why They Fail

The Canadian Prime Minister's Office is especially cruel because the three tests are in tension. Focus too much on winning, and you neglect governing. Obsess over governing, and you lose your political touch. Cater too much to caucus, and you look weak to voters.

It's a balance few sustain. Macdonald, Laurier, King, St. Laurent: these are rare exceptions. Even they weren't immune to decline. King clung to power too long. Laurier split his party. Robert Borden had so ruined the Conservative Party's reputation that he had to quit. Pearson survived only by carefully grooming successors.

Most others flamed out. St. Laurent stayed too long. Mulroney's coalition collapsed in bitterness. Harper ran out of patience with his own people and stopped recruiting talent to replace departing ministers. Chrétien won three majorities, but lost the loyalty of his caucus.

Carney now enters the same danger zone. His minority government will face all three tests. History says the slide rarely reverses.

The Mystery That Remains

What makes this even more striking is how little study the office has received. Canada lacks the research centres, dedicated journals, and think tanks that Britain or Australia have built around prime ministerial studies. In Ottawa, everyone talks about the PMO, yet we know surprisingly little about how power is exercised or why leaders succeed or fail.

That vacuum means we keep misreading the job. We talk about "imperial prime ministers" as if they are omnipotent, then act shocked when governments collapse into chaos or leaders are tossed aside.

The truth is simpler: the job is impossible. No one masters all three tests for long.

Chrétien was right about the power of the office. But he was also proof of its fragility. In Canadian politics, prime ministers don't just govern—they balance on a knife's edge.

Carney is now the case study. He's powerful until he isn't. The tests—political, managerial, collegial—are closing in. Unless he finds a way to reset, he risks joining the long list of Canadian leaders who ended not in triumph, but in exhaustion and defeat.

And here's the blunt truth for Liberal MPs: you don't have to wait for a ballot box. Caucus holds the quiet power to end a leader's run. All it takes is disengagement, hesitation, the whisper campaign that "he can't win anymore."That's how Martin toppled Chrétien. That's how Justin Trudeau's tenure was asphyxiated. That's how every long-serving leader eventually falls.

The knives aren't coming ey're already being sharpened The only real question is whether Carney can convince his caucus, not just Canadians, that he still has the edge to survive.

That isn't unusual. It's the rule. The impossible office always defeats its occupant in the end.

Stephen Azzi and Patrice Dutil are co-editors of Statecraft: Canadian Prime Ministers and Their Cabinets (University of Toronto Press), 496 pp., \$49.95.

Books & Big Ideas

For democracy, we have to make public life appealing again

Despite our county's many strengths, our politics suffer from some formidable challenges. The national discourse has become more polarized, divisive, and nastier. Unfortunately, we aren't alone. Democracies across the globe face similar, even more ominous predicaments.

Sergio Marchi

Opinion



The following is an excerpt from Pursuing a Public Life, by Sergio Marchi, and published next month by Dundurn Press.

This is first and foremost a call to public service, and it serves as a practical manual for how young Canadians can successfully enter the political arena.

Canada is widely seen as a decent country, envied by many for the freedoms, tolerance, and generosity we enjoy. I'm eternally grateful that my parents emigrated to this admirable nation. Yet, despite our county's many strengths, our politics suffer from some formidable challenges. The national discourse has become more polarized, increasingly divisive, and notably nastier. Unfortunately, we aren't alone. Democracies across the globe face similar, even more ominous predicaments

When the Soviet Union imploded and the Berlin Wall fell in the late 1980s, many of us thought democracy had finally won the day. How wrong we were. In 2022, the Swedish-based V-Dem Institute alarm ingly concluded in its annual report that "advances in global levels of democracy made over the last 35 years have been wiped out, and 72 per cent of the world's population—5.7 billion people—live in autocracies

Moreover, I'm worried that Canadians are increasingly keeping their distance from public life, avoiding a political system they deem broken. A 2022 Angus Reid poll found that almost 60 per cent of Canadians did not trust their government. That figure was up from 47 per cent registered five years earlier. This is a dangerous trend that must be reversed if we're to protect our nation's strength and prosperity.

More concerning are the trends revealing that young people are particularly disheartened by public life. Since leaving

politics, I've taught in a number of universities in Canada and Switzerland. And consistently, most of my students were put off by our politics. Very few expressed a desire to pursue public careers.

Some found public life intimidating and mysterious. Even people intrigued by the notion of public service were often turned off by the debasing of our political culture. The adage that politics isn't for the faint at heart has never been truer.

We urgently must find ways to turn this around. Otherwise, our politics will be weakened and robbed of well-intentioned people who would bring fresh ideas and new energy to the profession.

So, how do we change course? One is to reduce the toxicity of our politics. Politicians of all stripes must be committed to ameliorating the tone and substance of political debate, and recapturing the confidence of Canadians. The second is to attract a new generation of political leaders.

Before leaving politics in the summer of 2023, Erin O'Toole, a former MP and leader of the Conservative Party, appealed to parliamentarians to raise their game. "Instead of leading, instead of debating our national purpose, too many of us are often chasing algorithms down a sinkhole of diversion and division," he told the House. "We are becoming elected officials who judge how many likes we get on social media, but not by how many lives we change in the real world."

My students are keenly aware of what O'Toole described. They represent some of the reasons youths no longer consider public life a worthy endeavour. While I recognize that our democracy is facing increasing threats, I always try to remain hopeful. I implore young people to consider that Canada enjoys a comparably healthy democratic foundation, one built on the rule of law; a strong Charter of Rights and Freedoms; a policy of multiculturalism; the independence of its institutions; reliable elections; stringent caps on political financial contributions: and a free media.

When you compare our lot with other democratic countries we do relatively well. That's always worth remembering. For the longest time, we've been able to avoid deep polarization, the cyclical rehashing of policy issues, and financially corrosive political campaigns, that foster highly toxic political environments. But I worry that era is being eroded, especially as United States President Donald Trump continues to contaminate the political landscape.

In that regard, my students' intuition is accurate. There are unmistakable signs that our democracy is weakening and becoming more fragile. But this is all the more reason, for them to embrace the torch of public service and steer our politics for the better. For Canada's sake.

Sergio Marchi has served as a city councillor, Liberal MP, Jean Chrétien-era cabinet minister, and ambassador.

The Hill Times

2025 G78 ANNUAL POLICY CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 10, 2025

Redefining Development in a Disordered World: Harnessing AI and Innovative Finance to Reach the Sustainable **Development Goals**

That's the theme of this year's Group of 78 policy conference, to be held on October 10, 2025, at the University of Ottawa, featuring keynotes from worldclass development economists Dani Rodrik and José Antonio Ocampo along with expert panelists on the promise and risk of AI, new financing strategies, strengthening the SDGs, and resetting Canadian development policy.

Learn more about our conference program and speakers, and how to register for this hybrid event at: https://group78.org/programs/annual-conference/ annual-policy-conference-2025-redefiningdevelopment-in-the-new-world-disorder/.

The Group of 78 is a Canadian non-profit working for peace and disarmament, climate action and social justice. We are planning an exciting lineup of webinars and lunchtime events for the year ahead on pivotal issues such as assessing Canada's feminist international assistance policy, solutions for peace in Sudan, policies to combat plastic pollution, and lessons for sustainability from Indigenous worldviews.

Join us! Register for the conference and consider becoming a G78 member. Help us reimagine, and bring to life, a progressive Canadian foreign policy that meets this moment.









OPINION







Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree, left, Innovation Minister Mélanie Joly, and Al Minister Evan Solomon. Canada has a unique opportunity to shape how AI can be both a risk and a tool in defending our systems, writes Steve Vintz. The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade

Alarms are blaring: why AI-driven attacks demand a seismic shift toward exposure management

For years, cybersecurity experts warned of a day when digital attacks would move beyond simply stealing data and freezing computer screens to actually disrupting our way of life and upending the foundations of our society. That day has arrived.

Steve Vintz

Opinion

 $F^{\text{or far too long, we've treated}}$ cybersecurity like a fire alarm, but when the target is critical infrastructure, waiting for the fire to appear is a risk we can no longer afford to take.

For years, cybersecurity experts warned of a day when digital attacks would move beyond simply stealing data and freezing computer screens to actually disrupting our way of life and upending the foundations of our society. That day has arrived, and the maturation of artificial intelligence exacerbates increased threats of physical assets and major infrastructure, desperately warranting a shift to more proactive cybersecurity methods.

A Russian hacking group recently breached a Norwegian dam. There was an attempted poisoning of an Oldsmar, Fla., water facility; a ransomware strike on the Colonial Pipeline that crippled fuel supplies in the United States. These are no longer distant cautionary tales—they intended to threaten life as we

Here in Canada, the evidence is clear. A ransomware strike on Newfoundland and Labrador's health-care network in 2021which forced surgery cancellations and triggered an RCMP investigation—was described by experts as the worst health-care cyberattack in Canadian history. Global Affairs Canada later confirmed a sophisticated intrusion into its networks

in 2022, with the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (CCCS) helping lead the response. Last year, a cyberattack on Suncor Energy disrupted Petro-Canada gas stations nationwide, prompting the CCCS to work "closely with Suncor" to contain the damage. And earlier this year, the RCMP itself disclosed that its own internal systems had been breached, with a spokesperson calling the incident "alarming," but underscoring that quick mitigation strategies contained the threat.

The CCCS has sounded the alarm just as global peers have issued guidance that critical infrastructure is already under attack. A recent FBI alert on Russian hackers exploiting common software vulnerabilities is a warning Canadians cannot afford to ignore: our water, our energy, and our food supply are now squarely in the crosshairs. i nis one campaign demonstratec how a single vulnerability in an information technology (IT) system provided the path into an infrastructure environment. If you view IT and infrastructure separately, you miss the attack path.

The threat landscape is becoming more dangerous with the growth of generative AI platforms. Not long ago, the dark web offered Malware- or Ransomware-as-a-Service (MaaS, RaaS) to simplify threat campaigns.

Today, generative AI can build these components faster and for free. This means nation states can more easily weaponize AI to quickly create exploit-driven malware, broadening the ability to launch sophisticated attacks at a faster cadence. It also enables them to find and exploit known vulnerabilities at scale and hope to get lucky with brute force-style attacks. This is the new reality of AI-powered threats.

This escalation proves a critical point: our traditional, reactive security measures are no longer sufficient. Technologies like Endpoint Security are fundamentally focused on detecting threats after an attacker has breached an organization's defences. They are the digital equivalent of responding to a fire alarm. But when the target a water treatment plant electrical grid, you can't afford to wait for the fire to start.

That is why industry, and government alike must make a significant shift toward proactive exposure management. Organizations need to be scanning and detecting all known vulnerabilities and should assume that all vulnerabilities will be exploited in this new AI world.

We are encouraged to see the Canadian government elevating

this issue. Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree has made cybersecurity for critical infrastructure a national priority with continued focus through Bill C-8. Innovation Minister Mélanie Joly has emphasized the role of innovation in resilience. And with the appointment of Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation Evan Solomon, Canada has a unique opportunity to shape how AI can be both a risk and a tool in defending our

As this work continues, it is essential that exposure management become recognized as the standard for implementing minimum security baselines. Instead of chasing endless alerts, preventative security allows organizations to see themselves the way an attacker does. That perspective is crucial if federal, provincial, and local governments are to work together to defend Canada's public and private sectors from future attacks.

What can be done? The Canadian government should ensure that proactive security is a focus in upcoming cybersecurity legislation for critical infrastructure. Also, Canadian organizations shouldn't wait for regulations to begin to adopt exposure management practices. And both government and industry should take steps to understand which AI applications are being used on their systems and how they are being deployed.

The alarms are blaring. This country has already felt the sting of ransomware and espionage on wave of AI-driven attacks will come faster, cheaper, and smarter. The choice before us is clear: continue reacting to fires after they ignite or proactively harden our systems against the sparks. Exposure management offers the path forward—one where Canada leads in reducing risk before the next threat finds its mark.

Steve Vintz is the co-CEO of Tenable.



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COMMENT

Carney's push to expand Canada's exports to other countries won't be easy

Canada has spent much of its history seeking to cement close ties with the U.S. while failing to seek opportunities elsewhere. We've failed to develop the Canadiancontrolled firms with the scale and scope to serve world markets with unique products and services.

David Crane Canada & the 21st Century

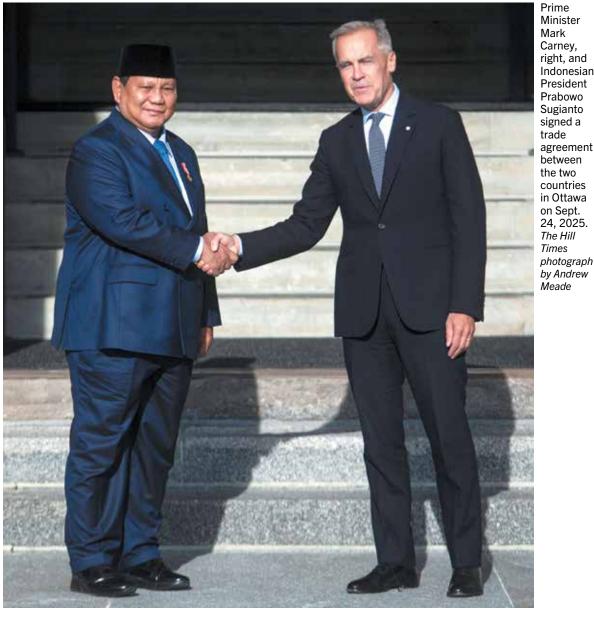


 $T^{\text{ORONTO}-\text{The Carney government is making a big push}}_{\text{to expand our exports to other}}$ countries, making us less dependent on the American market. This is important, but will not be easy. Canada has spent much of its history seeking to cement close ties with the United States while failing to seek opportunities elsewhere. Moreover, we have failed to develop the Canadian-controlled companies with the scale and scope to serve world markets with unique products and services.

But our trade dependency is only part of the story. The reality is that the reach of the U.S. extends into almost every aspect of our daily lives. Either through imports from American multinationals or the output of their Canadian branch plants, we simply cannot avoid U.S. goods

This is not an argument about Rather, it is about enabling the growth of Canadian firms that can also serve our own marketand in some cases become able to supply global markets. These are our lost opportunities to create our own national treasure.

We now face a big new challenge: a choice between becoming a vassal state, serving the interests of U.S. business and U.S. foreign policy, or working to strengthen our own prosperity



and sovereignty. This is the challenge of data sovereignty.

Data sovereignty means owning our own intellectual property and our own data, ensuring that Canadian suppliers of data services—such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing—are provided by Canadian companies wherever possible, and investing in our universities and colleges to develop the talent and commercialize knowledge it also mean finding alternatives to the foreign takeover of promising homegrown firms, and restructuring our financial system so that our financial markets will fulfil their obligation to provide long-term capital Canadian businesses need to scale up.

On procurement, for example, while the federal government has committed to buying wherever possible from domestic companies in meeting its technology

and other needs, Prime Minister Mark Carney needs to challenge our banks, insurance companies, utilities, telcos and other industries, as well as provinces, municipalities and hospitals to do the same.

Today, though, we also face strong U.S. opposition on our efforts to achieve next-generation data sovereignty and the related industries that are the keys to the future. As U.S. President Donaid frump declared in a recent executive order, "the United States must not only lead in developing general-purpose and frontier AI capabilities," it must also ensure, he said, that "American AI technologies, standards, and governance models are adopted worldwide" and "secure our continued technological dominance."

This dominant role of U.S. business in our daily lives came to me while reading a British book, Vassal State: How America

Runs Britain, by British entrepreneur Angus Hanton. "Most of our digital infrastructure and even our principal system of exchange—card payments—are overwhelmingly U.S. owned,"he found. What this means is that, increasingly, "British consumers are paying a royalty to U.S. businesses on most transactions, moving from one-off purchasers to renters and subscribers, who slog away on payment treadmills to the benefit of shareholders on the other side of the Atlantic. The consequences could not be graver: impoverishment, loss of autonomy, and a drain on talent and treasure.

This experience would be similar in Canada.

Start with a trip to the supermarket. Costco, Walmart, and Whole Foods are possible shopping destinations. Most breakfast cereals come from Kellogg's, Post Holdings or General Mills (as well

as Cheerios it also makes Green Giant frozen foods, Pillsbury baking products, Haagen-Dazs ice cream, Betty Crocker items and El Paso products). Monde-lez controls Cadbury and Mars supplies many confectionaries, as well as Uncle Ben's Rice and pet food such as the Pedigree brand. PepsiCo owns Tropicana orange juice and Quaker Oats. Coca-Cola also makes Minute Maid orange juice. Then there's Campbell Soups. Cleaning and washing supplies come from Procter & Gamble (it also makes Pampers diapers) and Colgate-Palmolive. Kimberly-Clark's products include Kleenex and Huggies diapers. Kraft Heinz provides ketchup, Kraft dinners and peanut butter. And that's just a partial list!

Minister

Carney,

right, and

President Prabowo

Sugianto

signed a

between

countries

in Ottawa

24, 2025.

photograph

by Andrew

The Hill

Indonesian

Mark

When you check out you are probably dealing with a National Cash Register machine and using Visa, Mastercard, American Express, PayPal, Google Pay or Apple Pay. If you use an ATM, it is quite likely to be another NCR product. And if you want fast food on the way home you can go to McDonald's, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, Subway, KFC, Taco Bell-or go shopping at Nike, Gap, Apple, or Timberland, Costco, Pet Valu, eBay or Amazon. For delivery by Amazon there's FedEx or UPS.

According to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, in 2023, some 1,491 subsidiaries of major American multinationals (annual global revenues of US\$850 million or more) operating in Canada had revenues of US\$667-billion, pre-tax profits of US\$46.3-billion. and paid taxes of US\$16.9-billion. They had 1.1 million employees in

That's just the tip of the iceberg. In the world of high tech, Microsoft dominates much of the software business. Meta/ Facebook and Alphabet/Google dominate the pipes that enable much of our commerce to take place, and Amazon, Microsoft, Google and Salesforce dominate cloud computing. Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney, HBO, and Spotify are leading providers of stream services in Canada, undermining Canadian culture and identity. Mailchimp, Eventbrite, LinkedIn, Microsoft's Outlook and Google's Gmail dominate our channels of communication, while Ancestry. com collets vast personal data as it traces our roots.

These are all part of the digital sovereignty battleground where the goal is not to bock the use of any American technology, but to ensure there is space and opportunity for Canadian technology and ensure, as well, that U.S. control of the "pipes" does not prevent the exercise of this country's sovereignty and opportunity.

We will always benefit from nport competition that r innovation and expands consumer choice. But we have to ensure as well that the oligopolistic power of foreign multinationals does not prevent Canadians from achieving our own potential, creating our own national treasure, achieving prosperity and protecting our sovereignty. Are we up for it?

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

MPs settle in for spicy sitting as Government Operations and Estimates Committee prepares to turn up the heat on government

The committee has long served as a stage for high-stakes political showdowns, the study of scathing watchdog reports, and long-term probes that test government accountability.

BY IREM KOCA

The House Government Operations and Estimates Committee is back in action, and opposition MPs say they are ready to turn up the heat on the government with scrutiny over every taxpayer dollar spent, while Liberals pledge to deliver on the Carney government's agenda.

The nine-member committee, better known as OGGO, is chaired by Conservative MP Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, Alta.) Liberal MP Iqwinder Gaheer (Mississauga-Malton, Ont.) and Bloc Québécois MP Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides-Labelle, Oue.) serve as vice-chairs. Other members include Conservative MPs Kelly Block (Carlton Trail-Eagle Creek, Sask.), Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale–Langley City, B.C.), and Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current-Grasslands-Kindersley, Sask.); and Liberal MPs Vince Gasparro (Eglinton-Lawrence, Ont.), Pauline Rochefort (Nipissing-Timiskaming, Ont.), and Jenna Sudds (Kanata, Ont.).

The NDP and Greens, which do not have have recognized party status in the House this Parliament, have no seats on OGGO. Only McCauley and Block have returned to the committee from its composition at the dissolution of the previous Parliament.

The committee has long served as a stage for high-stakes political showdowns, the study of scathing watchdog reports, and long-term probes that test government

Jansen told *The Hill Times* that the Conservatives' priority at OGGO will be to "continue to hold the government to account for its wasteful spending and continued failure to follow procurement

"Conservatives are deeply concerned by the continued failure of the Liberal government to demonstrate any level of fiscal restraint," she said, accusing the government of "giving sweetheart deals



Conservative MP Kelly McCauley chairs the House Government Operations and Estimates Committee, which probes into government spending. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

to insiders," repeating a well-worn Conservative attack line against the Liberals.

Conservatives will continue to expose Liberal scandals and demand accountability for the misuse of taxpayers' dollars,' Jansen said.

OGGO's work has made headlines over the past two years, including the unraveling of the highly controversial procurement of the ArriveCAN app, which cost the government at least \$59.5-million. The committee has been studying the issue since October 2022, during which time MPs have held more than 20 meetings, and heard testimonies from 65 witnesses, all of which led to the historic admonishment in the House of the ArriveCan contractor Kristian Firth, and multiple RCMP investigations.

A 2024 investigation by the auditor general stemming from an OGGO motion looked into \$200-million worth of federal contracts awarded to McKinsey and Company, and found "a frequent disregard of federal contracting and procurement policies.

MPs heard from Auditor General Karen Hogan during their second fall meeting on Sept. 23, where Hogan discussed the findings of her June 10 audit reports. range of issues including federal office space, contracts with GC Strategies, and Canada's plan to purchase 88 F-35 fighter jets to replace the aging CF-18 Hornets.

Bloc MP Gaudreau told The Hill Times that the Hogan's reports show that there is a "real lack of accountability" in the government.

"Everyone knows about that, but they used to say it is the pandemic time. [But] the auditor general says we have all the rules Sometimes even she does not even have all the data. So we have to make sure that the government is accountable to Parliament," Gaudreau said.

Hogan repeatedly said the federal procurement does not need any more rules, and in fact warned that the government's woes may be stemming from "too many" overlapping regulations, as well as poor implementation of those rules and urged the government to streamline its processes.

Hogan's June report on GC Strategies, the Ottawa-based firm at the centre of the ArriveCan app controversy, concluded that federal departments "frequently disregarded procurement rules' in professional services contracts awarded between 2015 and 2024. Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) has referred at least nine cases of suspected fraud to the RCMP, and has been pursuing the recovery of illegitimate amounts billed to the government. In three cases disclosed in March 2024, the government acted to get reimbursed for approximately \$4-million, of which \$3-million has already been repaid.

Liberal MP Rochefort told The Hill Times she was surprised to be appointed to OGGO afte expressing strong interest in sitting on the House Finance Committee given her background in business. Now that she's gone through two meetings, she said she is "very delighted" to have the opportunity to quickly dive into understanding the machinery of the government.

'It wasn't quite what I thought, but as I thought of it further, I think it's even a better committee because it ties finances to operations. It ties finances to plans, to vision, to strategy, and to execution," she said.

Rochefort said she'll be ready for OGGO's often-heated environment with MPs' snappy exchanges and revealing witness testimonies, but said she wants to bring her positive attitude into this setting.

When asked about his OGGO priorities, Liberal MP Gasparro said he's "laser focused on the economy."

That means focusing on strengthening the country's domestic supply chains, and implementing the government's "Buy Canada" policy through-out the government and more broadly, he said.

Praising Hogan's work on the F-35 report, Gasparro said he is interested in looking at the finances and logistics of this procurement, as well as its effects on hiring for new pilots and personnel to ensure Canada is ready to accept the new jets.

"Ít's OGGO. Ít's all one, one bundle of joy. I love OGGO," Gasparro said of his committee highlights.

'I think PSPC needs to enforce compliance': AG **Hogan tells OGGO**

When asked about which of the auditor general's findings she was most intrigued by, Gaudreau pointed to the federal lands study. "I did not know we were so far away from the gold after five years," she said.

Hogan told MPs that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Federal Lands Initiative—a \$318.9-million fund to support the transfer or leasing of surplus federal lands and buildings for affordable housing-measures its success by the commitments made, and not the actual results. Her report had outlined that only 49 per cent of the 4,000 committed units are expected to be ready for occupancy by 2027-28.

In 2017, PSPC estimated that half of government office space being used to full ity. The department committed to reducing its footprint by 50 per cent, for which Budget 2024 provided the department with \$1.1-billion over 10 years to do so. However, the department currently projects that office space reductions will only be 33 per cent, according to Hogan's report.

Efforts between 2019 and 2024 resulted in a reduction of less than two per cent of that target mainly due to a lack of funding,

Hogan told MPs. PSPC—which manages an office space portfolio of about 5.9 million square metres—estimated that reducing federal office space will result in savings of approximately \$3.9-billion over the next 10 years.

Hogan told MPs that not every department has the financial incentive to cut rent or reduce office space, or make it a priority to do so. She added that her office has reduced its space by almost 50 per cent.

"I think PSPC needs to enforce compliance. This is a stated government objective to reduce office space by 50 per cent by 2034, and it's up to PSPC to entice and enforce that compliance," she told

PSPC is the federal government's central purchaser, managing approximately \$37-billion every year on behalf of departments and agencies. It has faced increased criticism due to a series of contracting controversies over the past years which has been the centre of OGGO's work which generated multiple auditor-general reports.

Hogan's June report has revealed the price tag for the F-35 program has climbed from \$19-billion in 2022 to \$27.7-billion in 2024. Hogan underlined her findings that at least \$5.5-billion more is required for critical weapons and infrastructure to reach full capability. She highlighted that the total cost is likely to grow given that the construction of two new fighter squadron facilities to support operations—expected to be completed in 2031—is more than three years behind that schedule.

Hogan told MPs that "there is no shortage of places" in which the Department of National Defence (DND) can invest. "Here you need not only trained pilots, but technicians to maintain the planes and individuals to work in these bases," she said.

According to her report, DND planned to fill 47 out of a total of 246 permanent positions for mission planning, logistics, and security. These posts were supposed to be staffed by September 2024, but only 14 had been filled by the time the report was written.

The report also highlighted that as of March 2025, DND had committed \$935-million to the United States to produce the first four jets and the delivery of necessary equipment for the future production for another eight aircraft, of which \$197-million had already been paid. DND had also spent a further \$516-million on the project, including \$270-million for infrastructure design and site

The committee kicked off the fall sitting on Sept. 16 with testimony from interim Parliamentary **Budget Officer Jason Jacques** that the deficit will "absolutely be higher"than previous forecasts, and that his office does not know if the government has committed to any fiscal anchors.

The PBO estimated in June that the government would report a deficit of \$46-billion, amounting to 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product in 2024-25.

ikoca@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Hill Climbers By Laura Ryckewaert



A look at Industry Minister Mélanie Joly's new team



Ian Cameron and David McFarlane have returned to the Hill as senior adviser and strategy director, and director of policy to the industry minister, respectively.

Industry Minister Mélanie Joly, who is also the minister responsible for the Canada Economic **Development for Quebec Regions** agency, currently has a 22-member team in place in her office, including David McFarlane as director of policy.

As first noted back in June, Paul Moen is chief of staff to Joly.

It's a return to the Hill for McFarworked in cabinet offices between 2016 and 2020. First hired as director of policy to then-innovation, science, and economic development minister Navdeep Bains in 2019, McFarlane briefly

worked as Bains' chief of staff. After that year's federal election. McFarlane remained for a few months as a senior adviser before making his exit.

He's since held a number of positions, and most recently spent the last four years as an independent director with PINQ2, a non-profit organization started by the University of Sherbrooke and Quebec's Economy, Innovation, and Energy Ministry that offers hybrid quantum computing services. McFarlane is also a past partner and senior counsel with FGS Longview.

a corporate communications and public affairs firm; and,

among other things, is a former vice-president of global alliances and senior adviser to the CEO of Kinova, which, as described on its website. 'designs innovations manufactured by experts in North America to empower people and businesses." Prior to working for Bains, McFarlane had most recently been investment director in

the London, U.K., office of Investissement Ouébec.

David McFarlane

is director of policy

to Minister Joly.

Photograph

courtesy of LinkedIn

Working under McFarlane are senior policy advisers Tim Logan, Yasmin Atassi, and Manuela

Tomic; and policy advisers Simran Arulraj and Lisa

> Logan previously worked under then-innovation, science, and industry François-Philippe Champagne, hav-

ing been hired as a policy adviser in July 2024 after a roughly two-year career break spent travelling the globe. Before then, Logan had been a

senior policy adviser to then-Treasury Board president Mona Fortier. A former field organizer for the Newfoundland and Labrador Liberals, the federal Liberals, and the U.K. Liberal Democrats across the pond, Logan landed his first gig on the Hi 2020 as a British Columbia regional adviser to Bains as then-innovation minister (and stayed on briefly after Champagne took over the file in 2021). He's since also

Senior policy

adviser Tim Logan.

Photograph

courtesy of LinkedIn

been a policy adviser to then-digital government minister Jovce Murray.

Atassi is new to the industry file, and has spent the last roughly four years working for the federal resources minister. Starting as an intern to then-natural resources minister Seamus O'Regan over the summer of 2021, Atassi was subsequently hired as a special assistant for policy and executive assistant to O'Regan's chief of staff-Moen, at the time. She stayed on after Liberal MP Jonathan Wilkinson took over the portfolio that fall, and was promoted to policy adviser in 2022. Most recently, she was a senior policy and Ontario regional

> adviser to Wilkinson as then-energy and natural resources minister. Until earlier this year, Atassi was also

president of Zero Food Waste Ottawa Tomic comes from Joly's old team as then-foreign affairs minister, which Tomic

Manuela Tomic is

a senior policy

adviser.

Photograph

courtesy of LinkedIn

last joined in late 2024 as a senior adviser for consular affairs, intelligence, and exports fresh from roughly a year working as a parliamentary affairs and issues management adviser in thenprime minister Justin Trudeau's office. Prior to her time in the

PMO, Tomic had spent roughly a year and a half working as an assistant to Joly as foreign affairs minister. Amongst other experience, she's also a past research co-ordinator with the McGill University Health Centre.

Arulraj was pre-

viously an Ontario

Simran Arulraj is a policy adviser. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

and Atlantic senior regional adviser to Champagne as innovation minister, having joined

his team at the start of 2024 after roughly a year as executive assistant

to then-trade minister Mary Ng. Arulraj is also a former intern with Crestview Strategies, constituency assistant to Toronto Liberal MP **Julie** Dzerowicz, and

courtesy of LinkedIn

briefly worked as a research assistant with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs' research and innovation branch.



Continued on page 38

With confidence votes coming, it's important to keep Pitfield in the PMO, say some top Liberals

In a minority government, it is critical to have a senior strategist with regular, direct access to the prime minister, says Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research.

Continued from page 1

would soon depart, Lametti even announced on social media on July 10 that he would officially take over as principal secretary effective July 14.

But the situation became awkward for everyone when Pitfield declined to offer a departure date, creating an unusually long overlap that stretched into mid-September. During this time, it became a source of friction among some top staffers, including Pitfield and Lametti, about who would have which role in the PMO.

For Carney and his chief of staff Marc-André Blanchard, it was no simple matter to ease Pitfield out. A lifelong friend of former prime minister Justin Trudeau, Pitfield is also close to Carney. He has been a top strategist in four straight federal Liberal victories between 2015, and is married to Secretary of State for Children and Youth Anna Gainey (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount, Que). Pitfield also previously owned Data Sciences, the firm behind the Liberal Party's voter-outreach tool, Liberalist.

The son of the late Michael Pitfield, a former PCO clerk and Senator, Pitfield Jr. has been part of the well-connected Liberal political circles for years. His role is not without controversyduring the March leadership election race, Chrystia Freeland's (University Rosedale, Ont.) campaign accused him of helping Carney while simultaneously working as a party contractor.

A senior government official told The Hill Times in late August that, as of July 14, the Prime Minister's Office was in a transition period in which both Pitfield and Lametti were working as principal secretaries. The official, however, added that Pitfield informed the prime minister in late spring that he would not continue to serve in this position "long beyond the summer."The source, however, did not spell out what "long beyond the summer" meant.

Liberal sources told The Hill Times on Sept. 16 that since





David Lametti, left, and Tom Pitfield. Between July and mid-September, the Prime Minister's Office had two principal secretaries at the same time. On Sept. 18, Prime Minister Mark Carney appointed Lametti as Canada's ambassador to the United Nations. Pitfield is staying on in his position as the PMO's principal Secretary. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade and photograph courtesy

Pitfield had no plans to leave his position or was unwilling to provide a definite exit date, Lametti would be leaving the PMO in frustration. The Hill Times contacted the same government official that day to confirm the departure, but the source denied knowledge of it. The Hill Times also reached out to Lametti, who did not respond. A day later, CBC reported that Lametti was leaving to take up the position of Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, replacing Bob Rae. According to the order in council, Lametti will be earning between \$319,600 and \$375,000. Rae was earning between \$260,600 and \$306,500.

When asked by CBC's The House why he was leaving the PMO when he only started his job in July, Lametti said: "Well, the possibility to go to the UN was always on the table. I've always said to the prime minister, I'll serve you where you think I'm best able and most needed, and that's always been the case,"he

said on Sept. 20. we had been talking about the UN as far back as June. We decided to work through the principal secretary role. But the world has changed. And the recognition, for example, of Palestinian statehood, [the] continuing conflict in Ukraine with Russia, and a prime minister who really has the chops, to be honest, for foreign relations, and really is interested in Canada's role."

Lametti and Carney have been friends since their university days at Oxford. The former justice minister, who until recently worked for a high-profile law firm in Montreal, was an important player in Carney's Liberal leadership win and was a member of Trudeau's cabinet from 2019 to 2023, when he was dropped from cabinet in a cabinet shuffle. He resigned his sear in 2024 to join Fasken Martineau DuMoulin

It's unclear why Carney hired Lametti when Pitfield didn't want to leave. A senior Liberal, however, explained to The Hill Times that everyone at the PMO—including Carneybelieved Pitfield was preparing to leave, so Lametti was brought in as his successor. It later turned out Pitfield had no intention of stepping down. The whole episode became easy fodder for ridicule in parliamentary circles. Even at the Sept. 24 high-powered Politics & the Pen event in Ottawa—one of the most popular annual events attended by hundreds of politicos-emcees Justice Minister Sean Fraser (Central Nova, N.S.) and Conservative MP Chris d'Entremont (Acadie-Annapolis, N.S.), poked fun about the confusion. quipping about the uncertainty over who was in and who was out-whether it was Lametti in or Pitfield out, or the other way around-and how senior Liberals were struggling to spin this situation.

In interviews with *The Hill* Times, Liberal Hill staffers said the obvious pull of influence in

the PMO is so strong that few want to leave once they're hired.

'Once you enter this office [PMO], the influence you enjoy, after that you don't want to leave," a senior Liberal told The Hill Times.

This source said the question of who would stay and who would leave was on everyone's mind. But after the Sept. 3-4 cabinet retreat in Toronto, it became clear that Pitfield was staying—he was at the retreat, while Lametti was not. The source added that two other factors worked in Pitfield's favour: chief of staff Blanchard and Lametti are both regarded as policy people, while Pitfield is seen as a political operative who has helped the Liberals under prime ministers Justin Trudeau and Carney win four consecutive elections. That experience weighed heavily in the decision to keep Pitfield on, particularly during a minority government.

The Liberal government will face a major confidence vote after the Nov. 4 federal budget, and with its popularity currently dipping in the midst of an economic downturn, all eyes will be set on how it survives the test. Moreover, there will be a number of such tests in the coming months and throughout the life of this minority government. Last week, Parliamentary Budget Officer Jason Jacques said he expects the annual deficit to be \$68.5-billion this year, up from \$51.7-billion last year.

Currently, the Liberals have 169 seats, the Conservatives 144, Bloc Québécois 22, the NDP seven, and the Greens one seat. In the 343-member House, the government needs 172 votes. It remains to be seen which of the three opposition parties will back the government in the first confidence vote and those that follow.

The last election took place only five months ago, and while it's highly unlikely the government will be defeated, speculation about the vote outcome continues.

A Liberal MP, in a not-for-attribution-based interview with The Hill Times, said that in the last Parliament, although the NDP supported the government on confidence votes for more than two years, it's unclear if the NDP would do the same in the current political scenario. According election were held now, the NDP would likely win more seats, since left-of-centre voters who rallied behind the Liberals because of the threat of United States President Donald Trump no longer see Trump as a decisive factor.

Complicating matters further, the gap between Liberals and Conservatives is narrowing in the national public opinion polls amid an economic downturn, according to Nik Nanos' poll released on

Sept. 23, although Carney is still the preferred prime minister at 50.7 per cent. The upcoming budget is expected to show a significantly higher deficit than the last one, with major cuts to jobs and services anticipated. The MP also pointed out that the NDP, having failed to secure the recognized party status in the last election, has been deprived of millions of dollars in research funding and NDP MPs are not voting members of House committees.

Pundits are also warning that with worsening economic conditions, the opposition may be tempted to vote against the government. Some suggest the Liberals may not survive the budget vote if the situation continues to deteriorate in the months ahead.

"Maybe in hindsight, the government regrets not having brought in a quickie budget last June, rather than this situation, especially since last June, no opposition party, including the Conservatives, would have felt like bringing down the government," said L'actualité columnist Chantal Hébert on CBC's The National At Issue panel.

"But the more the weeks go on and the situation deteriorates, the more that temptation will be there. I'm not predicting an election on that basis, but still, it becomes more complicated. Then the other question the Liberals have to ask themselves is, 'If it's going to get worse, do we want to survive the budget?"

Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research, said that it is crucial for the PMO to have a senior strategist who can map out how to win the next election. That strategist, he added, must have regular face time with the prime minister to discuss political strategy and the electoral impact of different policies. Lyle credited Pitfiled with playing a critical role in the Liberal Party winning four consecutive election victories, adding that neither Lametti nor Blanchard had experience in either campaign mechanics or campaign communications. Of the three, Lyle said, only Pitfield understands this.

"The people who are there [in the PMO] day in, day out, are the people who influence the final decisions," said Lyle. "You have to be there. Possession is nine-tenths of the law, and a big part of this is making sure that you have the face time with the prime minister, which you only have if you're full time. It's a lot harder to make a difference if you're not there full time."

Meanwhile, of the two most influential political staff appointments that Carney has made so far-PMO chief of staff and principal secretary—both have stirred controversy. Shortly after becoming prime minister, Carney appointed former MP and cabinet minister Marco Mendicino as his first chief of staff, but the caucus pushed back strongly against his choice. Caught off guard by the resistance, Carney assured caucus members he would make a change after the election. He replaced Mendicino with Blanchard, who is well liked within both the caucus and the PMO.

arana@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Coming byelections in at least three safe Liberal ridings will mark first test of Carney government's popularity, say political players

The Carney Liberals should use the upcoming by elections to recruit some young talent to strengthen their caucus and front bench, says pollster Darrell Bricker.

Continued from page 1

open soon, any byelections after this fall's "austerity budget" will serve as the earliest measure of Prime Minister Mark Carney's standing with voters, say political

'If we think back to it, where did Justin Trudeau's situation really start [to take a serious threat] when he lost the Toronto-St. Paul's byelection?" said Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, in an interview with The Hill Times.

So, a safe Liberal seat, that goes another way. And the Conservatives have shown an ability to really organize well in byelections. And the NDP typically organized pretty well in by elections, too, although they're in such disarray at the moment, I don't know that they would be a threat."

Former transport and internal trade minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) resigned from cabinet two weeks ago to become Canada's special representative for the reconstruction of Ukraine. She said that she would not seek re-election next time around. While she will remain an MP for now, it's expected that the former cabinet minister may resign her seat in the coming months, according to Liberal insiders.

told The Hill Times that former cabinet ministers Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) and Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver-Capilano, B.C.) will also resign from their House seats and are expected to be appointed to senior diplomatic posts in Europe. Blair could be appointed as Canada's high commissioner in the United Kingdom, replacing Ralph Goodale, and Wilkinson to the European Union in Belgium.



Liberal MP Chrvstia Freeland's move out of cabinet has set the stage for a political shuffle. Liberal sources expect her to give up her seat within months, sparking a nomination fight in a safe party stronghold that has already attracted lots of interest. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Blair, a former Toronto Police chief, was first elected to the House in 2015 and has been re-elected in all three subsequent elections. He won his Scarborough Southwest, Ont., seat by 31-point margin in the last election. Wilkinson, who has also been in Parliament since 2015, carried his North Vancouver-Capilano, B.C., seat in the April 28 election with a 26 per cent margin.

Between 2018 and 2025, Blair served in several senior cabinet positions, including Border Security, Public Safety, King's Privy Council, and National Defence. Similarly, Wilkinson also held senior cabinet portfolios, including Fisheries, Environment, and Natural Resources.

The list of potential vacancies could grow further in the coming months: Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches-East York, Ont.) may try again for the Ontario Liberal leadership after failing in 2023, while Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre. Ont.) has also said publicly that he's considering a run at the provincial Liberal leadership.

University-Rosedale, Scarborough Southwest and North Vancouver-Capilano are considered some of the safest Liberal ridings, but the outcome could shift depending on the political climate when the byelections are called. Local issues, as well as the Middle East conflict such as Gaza, could shape the political agenda in some or all of these ridings.

Bricker said that the Liberals should use these future byelections to bring in young talent and strengthen their benches. However, he cautioned that losing even one of these seats would spark headlines questioning the party's momentum. He said that any surprise in the byelections would likely come from local issues, with voters potentially using them as a way to send a message to the Liberals, knowing that it would not alter the government's standing in a significant way.

'If people don't feel that these are elections of consequence, then the likelihood that voter turnout is really low is strong, particularly if they expect that it's not going to change anything," said Bricker. "And when turnout gets really low as when, as when weird things happen."

Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research, said that one of the biggest risks for the government is that the byelections would take place after the Nov. 4 budget, which is expected to include major cuts and a large deficit. He added that Vancouver North-Capilano is not as safe as i seems, explaining the rid ing's demographics could easily shift to the Conservatives. Lyle pointed out that this is one of about 30 ridings nationally that the Conservatives had once held by 10-to-20-point margin before flipping Liberal in 2015. In the last election, seats like Vancouver North-Capilano trended Conservative until the final month, but ultimately remained Liberal because of the Donald Trump factor.

"So frankly, if you're in the PMO, and you look at that seat and you're trying to manage the external environment, what you'd probably want to do is make sure that you've got some news about Trump in the lead up to the vote, just to make sure that seat stays solid, but it's not a given [the Liberals will automatically win]," said Lyle.

"So I'd be a bit more nervous about that."

Since Freeland stepped down from cabinet earlier this month, and with speculation about at least two other ridings opening up, several potential candidates have emerged to succeed her. Last week, a Liberal source told The Hill Times that Dr. Andrew Boozary —a Toronto-based physician with a master's in science from Harvard University and another in public policy from Princeton University—is seriously considering seeking the Liberal nomination in University-Rosedale. His name is also being floated as a possible contender for the provincial Ontario

In the last election, the federal Liberal platform highlighted Boozary's "Dunn House." a social medicine housing initiative that provides affordable housing and on-site health care. The son of Iranian refugees, Boozary grew up in social housing in St. James Town, "one of 13 economically deprived neighbourhoods within the city" of Toronto.

"Invest in deeply affordable housing, supportive housing, and

shelters in recognition of the link between housing and mental health outcomes. We will do this through \$6-billion invested in the new Build Canada Homes (BCH) which will build and acquire housing," stated the 2025 election platform.

"This investment builds on the Rapid Housing Initiative which supported 15,000 homes for our most vulnerable, including projects like Dunn House in Toronto, Canada's first-ever social medicine supportive housing initiative. We will continue to work with partners to deliver projects that recognize the link between housing and health outcomes." Liberal Hill staffer Arshia Rad-

mard confirmed last week that he will seek the Liberal nomination once it opens. He currently works for first-term Liberal MP Zoe Royer (Port Moody-Coquitlam, B.C.). At 22 years old, Radmard said that he is from the riding and understands its local dynamics. He pointed out that about 38 per cent of the population is under 35, and said his own experience helps him relate to issues like unemployment and housing affordability.

"We don't have enough youth voices in the House of Commons," said Radmard. "We have four, we currently have four fantastic young MPs in the Liberal caucus, but we want more. We want more voices. It's problems that are facing us, and let's have youth be the ones who are standing up, fighting for [these issues].'

Radmard said he has been active as a young Liberal in his riding and at the University of Toronto. He previously volunteered in Freeland's constituency office, and served as the youth chair for Carney's campaign during the recent Liberal leadership race.

In addition to these two, Liberal sources say former Toronto MP Marco Mendicino and investment banker Mark Wiseman, a prominent business executive, could also seek the Liberal nomination in this riding. More prominent Liberals are expected to seek the governing party's nomination once these three or other ridings open up. A lot also depends on whether the party will allow an open nomination process—or bypass it by appointing star candidates.

For Scarborough Southwest, there has been speculation that the Liberals might attempt to recruit provincial NDP MPP and Deputy Leader Doly Begum from the same riding to run federally under the red banner. Others suggested the federal NDP could try to convince her to run as their candidate instead. An NDP spokesperson, however, denied the speculation last week.

the Official Opposition/Ontario NDP and committed to proudly serving the people of Scarborough Southwest at Queen's Park as their MPP,"wrote Mayeesha Chowdhury, a spokesperson for the Ontario NDP, in a text message to The Hill Times.

'There's no truth to the rumours about her seeking a federal seat.

> arana@hill times.comThe Hill Times

Trump's silencing of critics a warning for Canada, say prominent Canadians

Perrin Beatty and David Suzuki sav they are worried the chilling effect on free speech in the United States will cross the border into Canada.

Continued from page 1

federal cabinet minister and past **CBC** president Perrin Beatty watched last week as American late-night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel returned to the airwaves after ABC suspended his talkshow the week before over comments Kimmel made in a monologue in which he said that "the MAGA gang" was "desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them."

U.S. President Donald Trump called Kimmel's suspension "great news for America," and said that he "absolutely love[d]" that CBS announced in July that it was ending Stephen Colbert's "Late Show."

Returning from his recent state visit to the United Kingdom, Trump mused to reporters travelling with him on Air Force One that since the networks give him 'only bad press ... maybe their licence should be taken away."

Such action would not happen in Canada, said Beatty, who, as communications minister in former prime minister Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government in the early 1990s was responsible for the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, which licenses broadcasters.

I'm confident that in Canada, people understand the importance of protecting free speech and ensuring that the broadcasting regulator is free from political interference," said Beatty, who also served as president and CEO of the CBC. "In a free society, the only thing that's worse than the abuse of free speech is censorship."

He said that any government "imposing its will on the media is

"At the end of the day, that's how you define our democracy,' said Beatty, who noted that he was "very concerned" in recent years about "cancel culture on the left, where people were trying to shut down free speech on campus."

"I'm worried now that we're also seeing it on the right," said Beatty, who served as secretary of state for external affairs in former PC prime minister Kim Campbell's government.









Perrin Beatty, left, David Suzuki, U.S. late-night talk show hosts Jimmy Kimmel, and Stephen Colbert. Kimmel's late-night talk show, Jimmy Kimmel Live, was temporarily cancelled by ABC and Stephen Colbert's show, The Late Show, will be cancelled in 2026 by CBS. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade, handout, and courtesy of Commons Wikimedia, X

Celebrated CBC science broadcaster and environmental activist David Suzuki said he believes the chilling effect on free speech in the United States will cross the border into Canada.

He recalled that when he participated in a protest in Toronto on Sept. 20—the goal of which was to press Prime Minister Mark Carney's government to focus on such issues as climate action and Indigenous rights ahead of the Nov. 4 release of the federal budget—"the loudest people were pro-Kirk and they drowned us out.'

The next loudest group were evangelical Christians, said Suzuki, the former longtime host of CBC's The Nature of Things television series and a Companion of the Order of Canada.

He said that free speech comes with "a responsibility to at least tell the truth" and noted that with Trump, *The New York* Times noted he "told public lies or falsehoods every day for his first 40 days"in 2017 during his first administration.

"Free speech for anybody to say anything is chaos," said Suzuki. "Trump says he's for free speech, but as long as it's free speech within the Trump world."

"If he believes in everything he's saying, he belongs in a mental institution. If he knows what he's saying is not true and still says it, then clearly he belongs in jail," said Suzuki.

"Anybody that criticizes him is not met with a conversation; it's You're a nasty person."

Suzuki, a zoologist and former genetics professor at the Univer sity of British Columbia, said that he spent all his life "trying to say: Take science seriously.'

Yet, as he pointed out, Robert F. Kennedy Jr.—secretary of health and human services in Trump's cabinet—wrote a 2021 book titled The Real Anthony Fauci: Bill Gates, Big Pharma, and the Global War on Democracy and Public Health, which accused Fauci, as director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

to "allocate [US] \$6.1-billion in annual taxpayer-provided funding for rigged scientific research, allowing him to dictate the subject, content, and outcome of scientific health research across the globe' and accused Fauci and Gates to of using "their control of media outlets" to disseminate "fearful propaganda about COVID-19 virulence"while muzzle[ing] debate and ruthlessly censor[ing] dissent," according to a synopsis of the book.

As for the president, he told the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 23 that climate change is "the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world."

Hours later, Trump threatened to sue "ABC Fake News" for allowing Kimmel to recommence his show, which featured a performance by Canadian musician Sarah McLachlan. Two days before, she cancelled a performance in Los Angeles to coincide with the U.S. premiere on Disney+ (and distributed by ABC News Studios) of a documentary on the Lilith Fair festival that she helped create to protest "the muzzling of free speech," following Kimmel's suspension.

On Truth Social, the president wrote that the "White House was told by ABC that [Kimmel's] Show was cancelled!'

Trump accused the talk-show host of putting ABC"in jeopardy by playing 99% positive Democrat GARBAGE" and said that Kimmel "is yet another arm of the" Democratic National Committee "and, to the best of my knowledge, that would be a major Illegal Campaign Contribution.'

"I think we're going to test ABC out on this,"the president added. "Let's see how we do. Last time I went after them, they gave me \$16 Million Dollars.'

Trump launched a defamation suit in 2024 against the network and ABC host George Stephanopoulos, which resulted in a US\$15-million settlement from ABC News.

Also last year, when he nominated Brendan Carr to serve as

chair of the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Trump hailed him as a "warrior for free speech."

A year later, in a CNBC interview, Carr-marking an unprecedented intervention by the head of the American broadcast regulator—said that Kimmel "appear[ed] to directly mislead the American public about a significant fact," and had urged ABC affiliates to stop airing his show before the network imposed what became a temporary pause.

Democracy Watch co-founder Duff Conacher said that Carr's remarks about Kimmel and Trump's threat to sue ABC for returning Kimmel's show to the airwaves should serve as a wake-up call for Canadians.

"Our system is wide open to having a person like Trump get into power and abuse their power in every way because the prime minister has more unchecked power than the president of the U.S.," said Conacher, who holds a PhD in law from the University of Ottawa.

'We need to put in the safeguards to ensure that doesn't happen-and one of the best ways to do that is to change the appointments process and make it fully independent, fully non-partisan, fully merit-based for every single watchdog that enforces every key law."

That includes the chairperson and chief executive officer, and all commissioners, of the CRTC, the Canadian equivalent to the FCC, said Conacher.

The Hill Times reached out to the CRTC for comment on the Trump-free speech matter and the implications for Canada from Vicky Eatrides, the commission's current CEO.

While "it would be inappropriate for the CRTC to comment on events occurring in other countries," said CRTC spokesperson Leigh Cameron in an email in which she stated that, "the CRTC is an independent quasi-judicial tribunal that regulates the Canadian communications sector in the public interest."

Conacher said that he is also concerned about Bill C-9, the Combatting Hate Act that is at second reading in the House of Commons and which he said could have a chilling effect on free speech in Canada in terms of the types of complaints received.

"One person's hate speech is another person's satire or critical comment," said Conacher.

According to a Justice Department backgrounder, the definition of "hatred" is focused on "the concepts of detestation or vilification" and not based on "mere dislike or disdain or acts that merely offend or humiliate."

Conacher's remarks on what is considered hate speech echo those of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice John Marshall Harlan II, who wrote "one man's vulgarity is another man's lyric"in the majority opinion of the 1971 case, Cohen v. California, in which the high court held that the First Amendment prevented the conviction of Paul Cohen for the crime of disturbing the peace by wearing a jacket bearing the words, "Fuck the Draft"in the public corridors of a California courthouse.

As the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) recently highlighted, U.S. law does not recognize "hate speech" as a legal category, but the First Amendment "prohibits the government from punishing speech even when it is controversial or offensive."

The ACLU noted that earlier this month, "lawmakers have bullied schools into taking disciplinary action against teachers who have criticized Charlie Kirk's political views" and "journalists and the media companies they work for have also felt a McCarthy-like pressure from the government, with popular latenight hosts losing their jobs after engaging with the ideas of a free speech provocateur [Kirk] whose tagline was 'Prove me wrong.'

U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance, White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller, and Attorney General Pam Bondi "have encouraged the public to call the employers of anyone expressing views disfavoured by the government; vowed to use every resource the Department of Justice and Homeland Security have to identify, disrupt, and destroy groups the administration perceives to be an enemy; and claimed that 'there's free speech and then there's hate speech' while threatening to 'absolutely target you, go after you, if you are targeting anyone with hate speech," said the ACLU.

The FCC's Carr accused Kimmel of "the sickest conduct possible," and told Fox, "We're going to hold these broadcasters accountable to the public interthat simple solution, they can turn their license in to the FCC.

On X, former U.S. President Barack Obama wrote that "after years of complaining about cancel culture, the current administration has taken it to a new and dangerous level by routinely threatening regulatory action against media companies unless they muzzle or fire reporters and commentators it doesn't like."

FEATURE

Politics and the Pen packs the house at the Château Laurier

The Hill Times photographs by Cynthia Münster



Party Central 38

Buttigieg charms the elbows-up crowd

Canada 2020 hosted a presummit dinner and reception at the Westin on Sept. 22, featuring a fireside chat with former U.S. transport secretary Pete Buttigieg.

The second week of the ran party endar kicked off with Canada 2020's pre-summit dinner featuring a packed ballroom at the Westin Hotel on Sept. 22, the highlight of which was a friendly fireside chat with Pete Buttigieg, former U.S. transportation secretary and who's also South Bend, Indiana's most famous mayor.

While Party Central had already spent plenty time on the Hill these past two weeks, between the hustle and bustle of West Block by day, and party-hopping by night, at last Monday's reception and dinner allowed this reporter the chance to sit down.

Party Central would also like to begin by thanking and apologizing to Bluesky Strategy Group for the invitation to join their table and for the unfashionable tardiness-due to Monday's deadline obligations—causing this reporter to miss almost the entirety of the pre-dinner mingling.

Fortunately, Party Central's impeccable timing has yet to fail and the unbroken streak of free dinners since last Monday has remained intact. This was exceptionally fortuitous on Sept. 22 because Canada 2020 is clearly flush with cash, as the usual reception rubber-chicken dinner was replaced with a juicy, medium-rare prime rib, mashed potatoes, carrot purée, and gravy, and even an open bar. Ye mighty lobbyist, look upon Canada 2020's party works—free of \$30 limit on gifts and hospitality—and despair!

While missing the reception made spotting the notable faces a little more difficult, Party Central was able to do a couple of laps around the ballroom for photographs between mouthfuls of beef. However, there are probably more names that were missed than most columns usually can contain

Those Party Central did spot, in no particular order, included New Brunswick Premier Susan Holt and her Finance Minister René Legacy; Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe; Senators Colin Deacon, Clément Gignac, and Peter Harder; Ministers Steve Mackinnon, Evan Solomon, Stephen Fuhr, and Gregor Robertson; Secretary of State Anna Gainey; Liberal MPs Mona Fortier, Taleeb Noormohamed, Terry Duguid, Karim Bardeesy, Vince Gasparro, and Cole Hogan; former Liberal MPs Seamus O'regan, Anne McLellan, and Francesco Sorbara; former Conservative minister Tony Clement: the PMO's Braedan Caeley, and Tom Pittfield; ministerial staffers Paul Moen; former staffers **Brian Clow**, **Elder Marques** and Zita Astravas; former Privy Council clerk Wayne Wouters; Canadian Medical Association's Margot Burnell and Alex Munter: Habitat for Humanity's Alana Lavoie; retired hotelier Steve Georgopolous; David "Herle Burly" Herle; the CBC's Kate McKenna, The Hill Times' Samantha Wright Allen, Riddhi Kachhela, Christina Leadlay, Anne Marie Creskey, and Magdelene Creskey; and Politico's Nick Taylor-Vaisey.

Alongside the meal, and before Buttigieg's appearance on the stage, there were plenty of speeches from Canada

2020's co-founders and Bluesky Strategy's head-honchos Tim Barber and Susan Smith, as well as Fortier and Solomon, the latter of whom sported some rather distinguished spectacles, which on any other man probably would have made him look like a concerning presence near a school zone. From experience, as a recently spectacled gentleman, it can be rather challenging to find a pair that doesn't make one look like a pervert, shop teacher, or both.

Speaking of facial alterations to make oneself look more serious, Buttigieg's beard also looked downright presidential last Monday, and his speech, replete with \$10 McKinsey words like "interpenetrative" and "emergence," along with the regular encouragement to that end from O'Regan, who "moderated" the discussion, only emphasized his potential future run for the White House.

Party Central put that word in quotes as the discussion between O'Regan and Buttigieg veered closer to a catch-up between two old colleagues and compatriots in political trailblazing from Canada's third openly gay cabinet minister to the first to run for U.S. president, or simply just two dudes chatting over drinks.

Fittingly, one of Buttigieg's most interesting points was that the progressives in the room and on both sides of the border need to become much more adept at this type of format—long-form conversations without relying on talking points—or be left in the credibility dust by their political opponents.

Pointing to his lauded appearance on the Andrew Schultz podcast, Buttigieg said that the three-hour episode made it physically impossible to stick to any talking points. While the prospect of speaking like a normal person for extended periods of time may be a terrifyingly alien concept for many politicians, he explained that if only the right is able and willing to do so, how will the public believe the left actually means what it says?

Buttigieg also did his best to present a kinder, more empathetic America, at least the part that didn't vote for President Don**ald Trump**, to the crowd of elbows-up—but off the table, of course—progressives.

The first thing I want to say is, I get it, and most of us get it, and one of the things I think is very important right now...is to puncture this idea that the president...our current government and their outrages. whether it's directed at Canada or whoever else...that that really speaks to the centre of gravity of the American people,' Buttigieg told the crowd, but added that he didn't want to "paper over the simple fact that Trump was re-elected" and understands the response Canada has taken to deal with the current administration.

'What's happening between us is a storm that's being provoked by what one government is doing, rather than something that calls into question the fundamentals of our relationship, which is between people, not only governments," Buttigleg explained

However, as bad as Buttigieg's audience may feel about the current bilateral relationship and the numerous other awful things happening in the world right now—even the few things they don't blame Trump forsomeday it will all be over, and all that will matter is what they did to help.

"The times we are in are so bad that they will be romanticized by future generations," Buttigieg said. "So make sure whatever you're doing right now is worthy of that."

sbenson@hilltimes.com The Hill Times















The Hill Times photographs by Stuart Benson



. The Toronto Star's Rob Ferguson, left, Canada 2020 co-founder and Bluesky Strategy Group's Susan Smith, and Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe. 2. Liberal MP Vince Gasparro, left, AtkinsRéalis' Jason Easton, and Bluesky Strategy Group's Janice Nicholson. 3. David Herle, left, and New Brunswick Premier Susan Holt. 4. O'Regan, right, and his husband Steve Doussis, left, snag a quick photo with Buttigieg post-chat before the latter jetted off, presumably to race 'Secretary of War' Pete Hegseth back across the border. 5. Canada 2020 co-founder and Bluesky Strategy Group's Susan Smith 6. Al Minister Evan Solomon addresses attendees 7. Former Liberal minister Seamus O'Regan, right, hosted a friendly 'fireside chat' with former U.S. transport secretary Pete Buttigieg at Canada 2020's pre-summit dinner and reception. **8.** Liberal MP Kody Blois, left, CBC's Kate McKenna, Bluesky Strategy Group's Jordan Paquet, and Global Public Affairs' Hannah Thibedeau. 9. Susie Heath, left, Max FineDay, Kema Joseph, and Stefany Hanson. 10. Former U.S. transportation secretary "Mayor Pete" Buttigieg, left, chats with Liberal MP Taleeb Noormohamed and Al Minister Evan Solomon. 11. Party Central's table with Rhonda Bradley, left, Alana Lavoie, Jason Easton, Stacey Sauvé, Jordan Paquet, Kate McKenna, and

Louise Mercier.

HILL CLIMBERS

McFarlane returns as Joly's policy director

Continued from page 32

Xie is another ex-Champagne staffer, having been hired to his innovation office as a regional adviser for the West and North in April 2024. Before then, she'd spent about six months working for then-small business minister Rechie Valdez, largely under the triple-barreled title of B.C. regional adviser, operations assistant, and executive assistant to the minister's chief of staff. For the greater half of 2023, Xie worked in the ministers' regional office in Vancouver—one of 16 such offices across Canada which support all of cabinet.

Like McFarlane, Ian Cameron has also relapsed and returned to the Hill, in his case as director of strategy and senior adviser to Joly after roughly two years away. Cameron was last on the Hill as director of communications to Wilkinson as then-natural resources minister, and before then was a press secretary and later senior communications adviser to O'Regan as then-resources minister. Since leaving the Hill in July 2023, Cameron has been director of communications for Power Sustainable in Montreal.

Marianne Goodwin is a recent addition to Joly's team as director of parliamentary affairs. A veteran staffer, Goodwin was most recently a communications adviser with Natural Resources Canada, but her history on the Hill dates back to the 1990s, and includes time spent as press secretary to then-prime minister Jean Chrétien. More recently, she's been director of issues management to then-families minister Jean-Yves Duclos.

Her extensive CV also includes-in more recent years-time spent working for the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Mental Health Commission of

Currently working under Goodwin are Shaina Sharma. parliamentary affairs and issues management adviser, and Chase Knight, who is both a adviser and assistant to the minister's parlia-

mentary secretary, Liberal MP Karim Bardeesy.

Sharma previously did the same for Champagne as then-innovation minister, and is a former assistant to Ontario Liberal MP Igwinder Gaheer. She's also previously volunteered in the MP office of now-Secretary of State for International Development Randeep Sarai, and was

David McFarlane is director of policy to Minister Joly. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



campaign manager for Gaheer's successful re-election campaign in Mississauga–Malton, Ont., this past spring.

Knight is a former assistant to Ontario Liberal MP Valerie Bradford and has worked as a program administrator with Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Veronique Simard is director of operations to the industry minister. She returned to working in the federal political arena this year, starting with Carney's leadership campaign, which morphed into a role as a PMO

speechwriter and French communications lead for the federal Liberal cam-

paign, as noted on Simard's LinkedIn profile. Simard previously worked on

Veronique Simard

is director of

operations.

Photograph

courtesy of LinkedIn

the Hill between 2016 and 2020, starting as an assistant to now-Government House Leader and Transport Minister Steve MacKinnon as the MP for Gatineau, Que. Simard executive assistant to the communications

Shaina Sharma is

a parliamentary

affairs and issues

adviser.

Photograph

courtesy of LinkedIn

director in then-prime minister Justin Trudeau's office, as press secretary to then-employment minister Patty Hajdu, and as senior communications and media relations adviser to Bains as then-innovation minister. Since then Simard has worked in the private sector, including tackling corporate communications for Nespresso Canada, and as director of Quebec corporate affairs for Labatt Breweries.

Cédrick Devedeux Delorme is deputy director of operations. A former assistant in Joly's office as the MP for Ahuntsic-Cartierville.

> Oue., he was most recently director of parliamentary affairs to then-emergency preparedness minister Harjit Sajjan, and has also been assistant to the parliamentary secretary to then-emergency preparedness minister Bill Blair.

Also returned to the Hill to work for Joly is **Damien** O'Brien, who holds

the title of senior adviser and regional adviser for Ontario. O'Brien left the Hill—and his role as director of parliamentary affairs to MacKinnon as then-labour and seniors minister—at the start of this year, and subsequently ran as the Ontario Liberal candidate in the provincial riding of Niagara Centre, ultimately placing third.

A former Ontario Liberal staffer and semor public affairs consultant with Edelman, O'Brien got his start on the Hill in 2017 as director of strategic research in the Liberal research bureau. He went on to work as a senior adviser for stakeholder relations to then-natural resources minister Amarjeet Sohi, and as director of parliamentary affairs to O'Regan as both natural resources minister and labour minister. At Queen's Park, O'Brien worked for a number of provincial Liberal ministers,

including as press secretary to then-agriculture minister **Jeff Leal**, and as senior adviser to then-government and consumer services minister David Orazietti.

Covering Quebec regional affairs for Joly is Cyril Nawar. Nawar is another former assistant in Joly's MP office where he worked between 2022—starting as an intern—and 2024. Most recently, Nawar was a special assistant for parliamentary affairs in Joly's office as foreign affairs minister.

Focused on Atlantic Canada is regional adviser Caroline Belbin, while Soha Samii tackles Western Canada.

Belbin has been on the Hill since 2024, starting with a summer internship in O'Regan's office as then-labour and seniors minister. She was subsequently hired as olicy adviser to the office—by then under MacKinnon's oversight—and staved on

after end-of-year cabinet changes saw MacKinnon become employment, workforce development, and labour minister, and then jobs and families minister in the first cabinet lineup Carney unveiled in March.

Samii has spent the past almost two-and-a-half years as an assistant to B.C. Liberal MP Ron McKinnon, and according to her

LinkedIn profile worked as a field organizer in the province for both Carney's leadership campaign and the federal Liberal campaign earlier this year.

Isabella Orozco-Madison is Joly's director of communications. She worked as one of a number of Ottawa-based spokespeople for the national Liberal campaign this past spring, and subsequently spent time as a press secretary in Carney's PMO. Orozco-Madison first began working for Joly in September 2023 when she was hired as press secretary in Joly's office as then-foreign affairs minister, and was promoted to deputy director of communications at the start of this year. Orozco-Madison is also a former special assistant for operations in Chrystia Freeland's office as then-foreign affairs minister, executive assistant to then-justice minister David Lametti, communications adviser to then-immigration minister Sean Fraser, and communications adviser to Freeland as then-deputy prime minister and finance minister.

Gabrielle Landry is press secretary to Joly. Hired in August, Landry spent the last roughly three years working for National Public Relations in Montreal. She went on leave from the firm earlier this year to work on Charles Milliard's Quebec Liberal leadership campaign-a race ultimately won by former Liberal minister

Pablo Rodriguez. Landry is also a member of the Quebec bar and a former lawyer with Norton Rose Fulbright, having studied law at McGill University, and interned in Lametti's office as then-justice minister in 2018.

Also with Joly's communications team is senior adviser Keely Hargraft. Hargraft first began working for Joly in late 2023 as a parliamentary affairs and issues manage-

ment adviser in Joly's office as then-foreign affairs minister, and previously did the same for

then-Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario minister Filomena Tassi.

Senior special assistants Tiana Thomas and Sara Larcher fill the function of executive assistant to Joly and chief of staff Moen, respectively.

Thomas has previously been executive assistant staff as then-justice minister. Larcher used to be an operations and executive

assistant to the chief of staff in Champagne's innovation office.

Finally, there's **Steve Desjardins** as ministerial driver and senior special assistant. Desjardins' CV includes previously serving as driver to then-transport minister Marc Garneau.

> lryckewaert@hilltimes.com The Hill Times



press secretary to Minister Joly. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Sara Larcher is a

senior special

Photograph

courtesy of LinkedIn



O'Regan to moderate a fireside chat with Enbridge CEO Greg Ebel at The Carlu in Toronto on Oct. 2



MONDAY, SEPT. 29

House Schedule—The House of Commons will sit Oct. 1-3; Oct. 6-10; Oct. 20-24; Oct. 27-31; Nov. 3-7; Nov. 17-21; Nov. 24-28; Dec. 1-5; and Dec. 8-12. In total, the House will have sat on 73 days the year. Last year, it sat 122 days, and in 2023, it sat 121 days. In 2022, it sat 129 days, and in 2021, it sat 95 days.

Welcoming the House Back—The Government Relations Institute of Canada and *Politico* host an exciting evening of networking and trivia, free for GRIC members. Monday, Sept. 29, at 5 p.m. ET at the Métropolitain Brasserie Restaurant, 700 Sussex Dr., Ottawa. Details: gric-irgc.ca.

MONDAY, SEPT. 29-TUESDAY, SEPT. 30

Couchiching 2025—The Canadian International Council and the Aga Khan Museum host the two-day Couchiching annual conference on the theme "Securing Canada's Atlantic Future." This high-level strategic dialogue bringing together policymakers, thought leaders, and experts to provide insights into how to navigate Canada's role in an era of global upheaval. Monday, Sept. 29, to Tuesday, Sept. 30, at the Aga Khan Museum, 77 Wynford Dr., Toronto. Details: thecic.org/ couchiching2025.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 1

Michigan Governor to Deliver Remarks—Governor of Michigan Gretchen ' Nhitmer will deliver ren "The Canada-Michigan Relationship," followed by a fireside chat moderated by journalist Steve Paiken, hosted by the Empire Club of Canada and the American Chamber of Commerce in Canada. Wednesday, Oct. 1, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre 255 Front St. W., Toronto. Details: amchamcanada.ca.

Coffee Association of Canada Reception—The Coffee Association of Canada hosts its annual Parliamentary Reception. This event will mark the official launch of the Parliamentary Coffee Caucus, a new non-partisan forum designed to foster engagement between Members of Parliament and Canada's dynamic coffee sector. Wednesday, Oct. 1 at 6 p.m. ET at Little Victories Coffee, 44

Global Nutrition Parliamentary Reception—The Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health, Action Against Hunger Canada, and Results Canada host a Parliamentary reception on advancing Canada's commitment to global nutrition. Sponsored by Liberal MP Yasir Naqvi. Wednesday, Oct. 1 at 6 p.m. ET in Room 100, Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St., Ottawa. Register: rsvp@ compassrosegroup.org

THURSDAY, OCT. 2

Fireside Chat: 'Energy, Ambition and Canada's Future'—Former Liberal cabinet minister Seamus O'Regan will moderate a fireside chat entitled "Compete or Retreat: Energy, Ambition and Canada's Future," featuring Greg Ebel, president and CEO of Enbridge Inc. Thursday, Oct. 2, at 11:30 a.m. ET, at The Carlu, 444 Yonge St. #7, Toronto, happening in person and online. Details: empireclubofcanada.com.

Empowering Women Through Food Security—Compassion Canada, World Renew and Thrive for Good host "Empowering Women and Girls to **Build Stronger Communities Through** Food Security," an event highlighting how conflict, extreme climate events, and economic shocks interact to deepen vulnerabilities, including unequal access to the livelihood resources required for recovery and growth. Thursday, Oct. 2, at 3 p.m. ET at the Delta Hotel, 101 Lyon St. N, Ottawa. RSVP: adefor@ beaconnorthstrategies.com.

Ex-CBC Reporter Brian Stewart to Discuss New Book—The Balsillie School of International Affairs hosts former CBC foreign correspondent and award-winning reporter Brian Stewart who will discuss his new book On the Ground: My Life as a Foreign Correspondent. Thursday, Oct. 2, at 7 p.m. ET at CIGI Auditorium, 67 Erb St. W., Waterloo, Ont. Details: balsillieschool.ca.

FRIDAY, OCT. 3

Book Event with Catherine Lang-Author Catherine Lang will discuss her 2024 book, Embedded: The Irreconcilable Nature of War, Loss and Consequence, at an event hosted by the Canadian International Council's National Capital chapter, Friday, Oct. 3, at 5:30 p.m. ET at The Bridge Public House, 1 Donald St., Ottawa. Details: thecic.org.

MONDAY, OCT. 6

Ambassador Rae to Deliver Remarks—Bob Rae, Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, will give a lecture on "Where the Light Gets In — Why Canada's Global Engagement Matters" hosted by McGill University. Monday, Oct. 6, at 4 p.m. ET at the Mount Royal Center, 2200 Mansfield St., Montreal. Details: mcgill.ca.

An Evening with David Peterson-The Pearson Centre hosts an evening with David Peterson, celebrating the 40th anniversary of his becoming premier of Ontario in 1985. Monday, Oct. 6, at 6:30 p.m. ET at One King West, Toronto. Details: thepearsoncentre.ca.

TUESDAY, OCT. 7

Panel: 'The Aftermath of October 7'—The Macdonald-Laurier Institute hosts a panel, "The Aftermath of October 7." Leading experts Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, Casey Babb, and Einat Wilf will examine the ongoing conflict in Gaza, Israel's defence gainst escalating Islamist terror and the global forces reshaping the region's future. Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 9 a.m. ET happening online. Register via Eventbrite.

Walrus Talks: 'Growing Canadian Productivity'—The Walrus Talks hosts a webinar, "Growing Canadian Productivity," featuring Tima Bansal, Canada Research Chair in Business Sustainability; Trevor Tombe, economics professor, University of Calgary; Akolisa Ufodike, associate professor, School of Administrative Studies, York University: and Val Walker, CFO, Business + Higher Education Roundtable.

Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 12 p.m. ET happening online: thewalrus.ca.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 8

World Mental Health Day—The Union of Safety and Justice Employees hosts its annual World Mental Health Day reception in support of Canada's frontline federal public safety personnel, and those who suffer from Occupational Stress Injuries. Members of Parliament, Senators, and staff are welcome Wednesday, Oct. 8, at in Room 310. Wellington Building, 180 Wellington St. RSVP reem@kitpublicaffairs.ca.

Bike Day on the Hill - Environment Minister Julie Dabrusin and Senator Marty Deacon host Bike Day on the Hill 2025, spearheaded by national cycling advocacy organization Vélo Canada Bikes. This non-partisan event engages parliamentarians, local and national leaders, and cycling supporters in a celebration of everyday cycling in Canada. There will be a group photo, Parliamentary Slow Bike Challenge on the Parliament Hill lawn, and a reception in the Valour Building, 151 Sparks St. Wednesday, Oct. 8, at 5 p.m. ET. Register online. Contact: ed@ velocanadabikes.org.

THURSDAY, OCT. 9

Bank of Canada Senior Deputy Governor to Deliver Remarks—Carolyn Rogers, senior deputy governor of the Bank of Canada, will discuss productivity, competition and innovation in Canada's financial sector at a breakfast event hosted by the Canadian Club Toronto. Thursday, Oct. 9, at 7:15 a.m. ET at The Hyatt Regency Toronto, 370 King St. W. Register: canadianclub.org.

Climate at a Crossroads—The Walrus magazine hosts "Climate at a Crossroads," a day-long event exploring how climate disinformation is restraining progress, and how to ensure democratic governance in this new and contested climate crisis landscape. Participants include former Liberal environment minister Catherine McKenna, with a keynote featuring Charlotte Scaddan, senior adviser on Information Integrity, United Nations Global Communications. Thursday, Oct. 9, at 9:30 a.m. at 50 Sussex Dr., Ottawa. Details via Eventbrite.

CDANXT: Advancing Canada's Health Economy Conference-Research Canada hosts its national conference, "CDANXT: Advancing Canada's Health Economy Conference," featuring key speakers and stakeholders from the health research and innovation ecosystem to explore how a thriving health economy can transform our economy, productivity, and competitiveness. Thursday, Oct. 9, at the MaRS Discovery District, Toronto. Details: researchcanada.org/ national-conference.

EDC President to Deliver Remarks—Alison Nankivell, president and CEO of Export Development Canada, will deliver remarks in English and French on "Reimagining Canada's Trade for a New Global Era" at the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations Thursday, Oct. 9, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Le Reine-Elizabeth Hotel, 900 Blvd. René-Levesque W. Register: corim.qc.ca.

CPAC's Fall Parliamentary Reception—CPAC celebrates its legacy of connecting Canadians to their democracy with an evening of insightful conversation, refreshments, and entertainment. By invitation only. Thursday, Oct. 9, at 5:30 p.m. ET in

Room 100, Sir John A. MacDonald Building, 144 Wellington St., Ottawa.

REEL Politics Film Series—Tonight is opening of an eight-night fundraiser for the Jaimie Anderson Parliamentary Internships. The REEL Politics Film Series presents thought-provoking films and engaging discussions screening today, with future screening dates on Nov. 6 and Dec. 4, 2025; and Jan. 8, Feb. 5, March 5, and April 2, 2026. The first screening is on Thursday, Oct. 9, at the ByTowne Cinema, 325 Rideau St., Ottawa, Details via Eventbrite,

FRIDAY, OCT. 10

North America's Nuclear Renaissance—Canada 2020 hosts "North America's Nuclear Renaissance," a gathering of nuclear advocates, clean energy financiers, policy architects, and system operators working to bridge ambition and deployment. Speakers include Jigar Shah, former director of the U.S. Department of Energy Loan Programs Office; and James L. Connaughton, former chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Friday, Oct. 10, at 8 a.m. ET, at the Fairmont Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Details: canada2020.ca.

ParlSec Sudds to Talk Mental **Health**—Parliamentary Secretary Jenna Sudds will take part in "Courageous Conversations with Politicians, discussion on mental health. Other participants include former Ontario MPP Lisa MacLeod, former Ottawa City councillors Mathieu Fleury and Keith Elgi, and current City of Brockville councillor Katherine Hobbs. Friday, Oct. 10. at 8:30 a.m. at Ottawa City Hall. 110 Laurier Ave. W. Register via Eventbrite.

Superintendent of Financial Institutions to Deliver Remarks—Superintendent of Financial Institutions Peter Routledge will weigh in on Canada's rapidly evolving economic landscape, and how the financial system is adapting to the pace of change in a morning presentation hosted by the Economic Club of Canada. Friday, Oct. 10, at 8:30 a.m. ET at the Hilton Toronto, 145 Richmond St. W. Details: economicclub.ca.

TUESDAY, OCT. 14

Chief of Defence Staff at the Mayor's Breakfast—Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Jennie Carrignan will be the special guest at the Mayor's Breakfast, hosted by Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and the Ottawa Business Journal. Tuesday, Oct. 14, at 7 a.m. ET at Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Ave. W. Details: business.ottawabot.ca.

Lunch: 'Reimagining Canada's Trade for a New Global Era'—Alison Nankivell, president and CEO of Export Development Canada, will take part in a roundtable luncheon hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Tuesday, Oct. 14, 12 p.m. ET at C.D. Howe Institute, 110 Yonge St., Suite 800, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15 -FRIDAY, OCT. 17

Toronto Global Forum—The International Economic Forum of the Americas hosts the 2025 Toronto Global Forum. Among the speakers are Congo's Ambassador to Canada Appolinaire Aya, Ontario Finance Minster Peter Bethlenfalvy, Canada Infrastructure Bank CEO Ehren Cory, Business Council of Canada CEO Goldy Hyder, National Aboriginal Council Corporation Association CEO Shannin Metatawabin, and former Canadian ambassador to China Dominic Barton, Wednesday, Oct. 15. to Friday, Oct. 17, in Toronto. Details: torontoglobalforum.com.

FRIDAY, OCT. 17

Senator Richards' Retirement— Today is New Brunswick Senator David Adams Richards' 75th birthday, which means his mandatory retirement from the Senate.

MONDAY, OCT. 20

BDC President to Deliver Remarks—Isabelle Hudon, president and CEO of BDC, will deliver remarks in French on "SMEs and the 2025 Economy: Risks, Opportunities, and Growth Drivers," a lunch event hosted by the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitain Montreal. Monday, Oct. 20, at 11:30 a.m. ET at Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth, 900 René-Lévesque Blvd. W., Montreal. Details: ccmm.ca.

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your 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.

Parliamentary

#BUDGET2025

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