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NEWS

House Trade Committee needs to be 'respectful' of Carney's approach to Trump talks, says Liberal chair



Prime Minister Mark Carney, second right, and U.S. President Donald Trump, right, were full of praise for each other at a Oct. 7 meeting in the Oval Office, but no trade agreement materialized. Photograph courtesy of X/Mélanie Joly

The government has released few details about the state of negotiations with the U.S., seemingly at odds with its acknowledgement that Canadians have concerns over a lack of transparency in trade talks.

BY NEIL MOSS

The Liberal chair of the House International Trade Committee says MPs have to be careful what they say as not to risk impeding Ottawa's negotiating efforts with the White House.

The government has offered few details about the state of negotiations with the United States as some Canadian voices have called for increased transparency.

"Clearly, we don't want to say something that in any way could damage those ongoing discussions," Liberal MP and committee chair Judy Sgro (Humber River-Black Creek, Ont.) told *The Hill Times*.

Asked if the government has been adequately transparent with the committee, Sgro said that there can't be public discussions in the midst of the ongoing trade talks with the U.S.

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NEWS

Civil liberties groups urge Liberals to withdraw 'vague' anti-hate bill that opposition MPs say is 'trying to lower the bar' for prosecution

BY STUART BENSON

Dozens of civil society groups, legal advocates and religious organizations are calling on the Liberals to withdraw their recently tabled anti-hate legislation due to its overly "vague and broad" definition of intimidation, which they say risks "serious infringements of fundamental freedoms" and criminalization of peaceful protest.

On Oct. 6, a letter was sent to Justice Minister and Attorney General of Canada Sean Fraser (Central Nova, N.S.), calling on him to withdraw Bill C-9, the Combating Hate Act, which proposes new hate crime offences for intimidation and obstruction outside places of worship, community centres, seniors' residences, and other facilities used by identifiable groups, as defined under the Criminal Code.

The legislation, tabled on Sept. 29, also creates a new offence for the willful promotion of hatred through the display of hate symbols like the Nazi swastika or those symbols "principally used by [or] associated with" listed terrorist entities.

The 37 signatories of the letter include the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), the International Civil Liberties



Justice Minister Sean Fraser. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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Heard on the Hill



By Christina Leadlay

Senator Richards leaves the Red Chamber with only a few regrets

Conservative Senator David Adams Richards, who's also an award-winning novelist from New Brunswick, will retire from the Senate on Oct. 17. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Conservative Senator **David Adams Richards** has a couple of regrets from his eight years in the Red Chamber.

"I never stood on a point of order, for I wasn't really sure what a point of order was," he said in the Senate Chamber on Oct. 7.

"Nor did I ever introduce a bill. I would have liked to, but I really couldn't think of one," he admitted, adding: "Make no mistake; the Senate is essential to Canada. Without it, no government could function."

Richards' remarks followed tributes from his colleagues a week ahead of his mandatory retirement on Oct. 17—his 75th birthday.

The New Brunswick Senator is prolific novelist who "has been the recipient of nearly every major Canadian literary prize," said non-affiliated Senator **Patti LaBoucane-Benson** in her tribute on behalf of the Government Representative's Office.

"Since his appointment to the Senate, Senator Richards has pas-

sionately represented these same people [he's written about in his novels], once again bringing their voices and stories to the national stage."

CSG Senator **Scott Tanas** said Richards "brought a strict tell-it-like-it-is approach to legislating and policy-making," while Conservative Senator **Denise Batters** called him "a true independent spirit" who "did not compromise the values of his region for the sake of political expediency."

In fact, Conservative Senator **Leo Housakos** noted it was a double retirement, as Richards' director of parliamentary affairs, **Diane Lacombe**, was also bidding farewell to her career assisting Senators. Lacombe first worked for Housakos—whom she knew from Montreal municipal politics—before joining Richards' office. Richards thanked Lacombe, calling her a "true blessing to me as I made my way on this journey."

Hundreds take in first screening of REEL Politics film festival



Carleton University's Jennifer Robson, left, with former Hill journalist Jennifer Ditchburn, centre, and *The Economist's* Rob Russo at the REEL Politics film festival on Oct. 9. Photograph by James Park

The REEL Politics Film Festival launched at the ByTowne Cinema on Oct. 9.

Heard on the Hill was in attendance, unable to resist a chance to watch the 1976 mystery thriller *All the President's Men* starring **Robert Redford** and **Dustin Hoffman** on the big screen.

Event co-organizer **Bruce Anderson** told **HOH** nearly 400 tickets had been sold for that night's screening, the first in a series of eight political films to be shown over the fall and winter as part of a fundraiser for Carleton University's **Jaimie Anderson** parliamentary internship and scholarship fund.

Guests enjoyed free popcorn, and sipped a bespoke film-fest beer from local brewery Dominion City: a blonde ale cleverly named Hops of Commons.

Following welcome remarks by Anderson and his daughter **Mollie Anderson**, guests watched a short video of former CBC chief correspondent **Peter Mansbridge**

chatting with **Bob Woodward**, one half of the "Woodstein" duo of Woodward and **Carl Bernstein**, the *Washington Post* reporters who broke the now-infamous Watergate scandal in 1972 that brought down then-United States president **Richard Nixon**, upon which *All the President's Men* is based.

After that video—and with a shout-out to former CBC *Politics* host **Don Newman** in attendance, who was in the U.S. capital the day Nixon resigned in 1974—*The Economist's* **Rob Russo** (and regular guest on Mansbridge's podcast) joined Institute for Research on Public Policy's chief **Jennifer Ditchburn**, a former Hill reporter, for a 10-minute discussion on the state of news media today, moderated by Carleton University's **Jennifer Robson**. The film began promptly at 6:30 p.m., and wrapped up just shy of 9 p.m. when the cinema's staff shooed guests out ahead of the evening's late show.

Senator Anderson joins Tory caucus

Senator **Dawn Anderson** has joined the Conservative caucus.

"Anderson's decision to join our caucus ensures that the voices of northern Canadians are heard loud and clear," said Senate Conservative Leader **Leo Housakos** in a Oct. 8 statement.

The Senator for Northwest Territories was appointed to the Red Chamber in December 2018 by then-prime minister **Justin Trudeau**, and was with the Independent Senators Group from February 2019 until March 2021 when she joined the Progressive Senate Group. As *The Hill Times*

has previously reported, the Senate Conservative ranks have been growing since Housakos took over the helm this past May.

Anderson's addition brings the Conservative caucus to 14 members. That brings the current standings in the Senate to the ISG remaining the largest group with 43 members, followed by the Canadian Senators Group at 19, the Progressive Senate Group at 16, the Conservatives at 14, five members of the Government Representative's Office, three non-affiliated Senators, and five vacancies (one in Manitoba and four in Quebec).

Former deputy chief of protocol becomes envoy to Greece

Foreign Minister **Anita Anand** announced that **Sonya Thissen** will be Canada's new ambassador to Greece, replacing **Anna-Karine Asselin**.

"I can't wait to get started. Athens, here I come!" Thissen posted on LinkedIn on Oct. 8.

Thissen first joined Global Affairs

Canada in 1995. Following a temporary assignment as executive director of the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation, she served as deputy chief of protocol responsible for high-level visits from 2009 to 2013. Thissen was then posted to the embassy in Paris from

2013 to 2016, and then directly to the high commission in London until 2021. Most recently, she served as director general, Pan-geographic Policy Bureau.

Asselin began her new role as Canada's permanent representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization on Aug. 25.

Yves Giroux joins C.D. Howe Institute



Former parliamentary budget officer Yves Giroux. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

One month since **Yves Giroux's** term as parliamentary budget officer ended, the C.D. Howe Institute announced Giroux has joined its team as fellow-in-residence for 2026.

"I'm delighted to join the Institute at such a pivotal moment in our country's history," Giroux said in an Oct. 8 social media post.

In early November, Giroux will be taking part in two federal budget-related events. On Nov. 3—budget day eve—he will take part in a webinar, "Deficits, Debt and Defence: The Outlook for Budget 2025," hosted by the Toronto Association for Business and Economics. Then on Nov. 5, *The Hill Times* is hosting a subscriber-only virtual event featuring Giroux and former British Columbia premier **Christy Clark** unpacking the budget hosted by the *Politics This Morning* team of **Peter Mazereeuw** and **Riddhi Kachhela**.

Ottawa Famous 5 Awards laureates named

Jocelyn Formsma, **Fae Johnstone**, **Diana Beresford-Kroeger**, **Dr. Indu Gambhir**, and **Sarah Awada** are the 2025 Today's Ottawa Famous 5 Awards laureates.

Organized by The Famous 5 Foundation Ottawa Group, these awards celebrate "five remarkable persons who embody the spirit, courage and leadership of the original Famous Five"—**Emily Murphy**, **Nellie McClung**, **Henrietta Muir Edwards**, **Louise McKinney**, and **Irene Parlbay**—who fought for women to be recognized as persons under the law.

CEO of the National Association of Friendship Centres, Formsma is a lifelong advocate for Indigenous youth. Johnstone is an organizer for gender justice and 2SLGBTQIA+ equality, and is executive director of Queer Momentum. Beresford-Kroeger is a renowned botanist, medical biochemist, and author of 2024's *Our Green Heart: The Soul and Science of Forests*. Gambhir is an advocate for women's health, equity, and holistic care. And Awada represents the next generation of compassionate leadership, having founded uoPILATES at the University of Ottawa.

The five honourees will be celebrated at a cocktail reception on Oct. 21 at Carleton University.

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‘Culture is not on the table’ in trade talks amid film tariff threats and domestic digital policy uncertainty, says Guilbeault

The Canadian Media Producers Association is urging Prime Minister Mark Carney to ‘rethink’ any potential of using the Online Streaming Act as a ‘bargaining chip’ in his negotiations with U.S. President Donald Trump.

BY STUART BENSON

The heritage minister is defending the Online Streaming Act amid an ongoing court challenge by international streaming companies and his government’s apparent openness to either repeal or replace other measures intended to protect Canada’s film and television industry as it seeks a deal with the United States.

While Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.) has already cancelled his predecessor’s digital services tax and recently indicated his openness to “all avenues” of adjusting the Online News Act, Canadian Identity and Culture Minister Steven Guilbeault (Laurier–Sainte-Marie, Que.) told a recent gathering of Canadian producers and media executives that culture isn’t on the chopping block.

“Let me be crystal clear: as Canada works out its new trade relationship with the U.S., culture is not and will not be on the table,” Guilbeault said at the Canadian Media Producers Association’s Hill Day reception on Oct. 7. “Our government’s priority is to get the best deal for Canadians and for our industries.”

Reception attendees who spoke with *The Hill Times* said they were concerned about the fate of Bill C-11, the Online Streaming Act, given the ongoing court challenge by international streaming companies, and the government’s seeming openness to use the digital policies implemented by the previous Liberal government as “bargaining chips” in the current trade negotiations with U.S. President Donald Trump.

The legislation, which received royal assent in April 2023, amended the Canadian Broadcasting Act to regulate online streaming services like Netflix, YouTube, and Spotify. It requires those platforms to showcase and



Canadian Identity and Culture Minister Steven Guilbeault told a gathering of media producers that streaming services have a role to play in investing in the success and sustainability of the country’s cultural sectors. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

contribute to the production of “Canadian stories and music” in both official languages and Indigenous languages.

Last December, large streaming companies like Netflix, Disney, Apple, and Spotify launched a court challenge against the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission’s (CRTC) June 2024 order that foreign streamers must contribute five per cent of their annual Canadian revenues to a fund devoted to producing domestic content, including local TV and radio news.

On Dec. 23, 2024, a Federal Court of Appeal judge ruled that those payments—which the CRTC estimated would generate up to \$200-million in annual funding per streamer—would be paused until the court process concluded. The parties agreed to an expedited schedule to hold proceedings last June before the majority of the payments came due the following month.

Alongside the court challenge, the industry has also been recently unnerved by Trump’s

renewed threat of 100-per-cent tariffs on “any and all movies” made outside of the U.S.

“Our movie-making business has been stolen from the [U.S.] by other countries,” Trump wrote in a Sept. 29 Truth Social post, reviving similar threats he made this past May when he directed his Department of Commerce and the U.S. Trade Representative to “immediately begin the process” of imposing the tariff. However, Trump has yet to sign an executive order to do so.

In August, the U.S. State Department also criticized the Online News Act in a human rights report examining press freedom in Canada. This followed a letter from 18 Republicans in the U.S. Congress to Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent calling the legislation “discriminatory” against American companies.

Earlier in August, Carney suggested his government was open to replacing or repealing C-18 to improve the reach of local media

on social platforms like Facebook, which Guilbeault’s office told *Politico* in September is not on the table. This followed the Liberals’ rescinding the digital services tax this past June “in anticipation of a mutually beneficial comprehensive trade arrangement” with Trump, days after the U.S. president demanded it be repealed and briefly cut off negotiations.

During his CMPA reception speech last week, Guilbeault attempted to assuage the crowd’s “concern about what’s happening south of the border,” and how these changes could affect the media sectors.

Guilbeault also specifically defended the Online Streaming Act and his government’s belief that the “big players in [Canada’s] audio-visual and cultural sectors ... have a role to play in investing in [those sectors’] success and sustainability.”

“By working together, we can strengthen domestic production, support Canadian talented creators, and make sure that our stories get told,” Guilbeault said, adding that this “is what the Online Streaming Act is for.”

“That’s why we’re updating federal support for the audiovisual sector, taking on productivity challenges, making sure Canadian content reaches Canadian audiences, modernizing our institutions, and reforming the tax credit system,” Guilbeault said.

However, in response to follow-up questions from *The Hill Times* about whether the minister had been given any assurances that the act would not be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations with Trump, Guilbeault’s office said it would not “comment publicly on detailed aspects of these discussions.”

“Canada’s new government remains focused on getting the right deal for Canada in our negotiations with the United States,” wrote press secretary Hermine Landry.

Kyle Irving, a co-owner and producer with Eagle Vision and newly named CMPA chair, told *The Hill Times* it was “heartening” to hear Guilbeault’s commitment that “Canadian culture won’t be on the table,” and that he and the CMPA are “confident he meant what he said.”

Irving noted that Guilbeault’s language mirrored that found in recent CMPA-commissioned survey results from Pollara, which found that 78 per cent of Canadians feel that culture should be “off the table” as a possible concession in trade negotiations. The survey, released on Oct. 6, also found that 87 per cent of respondents supported the Act, with at least 83

per cent support in all regions of the country.

By party, 96 per cent of Liberals and 97 per cent of Bloc Québécois supporters said they were in favour of the Act, with 74 per cent of Conservatives also indicating support. In the context of trade negotiations with the U.S., 68 per cent said Canada should defend the legislation, while only 13 per cent said it should be used as a bargaining chip.

Irving said that while Guilbeault has been a “long-time great supporter of Canadian stories and culture,” the “overwhelming” support from Canadians—particularly for the Online Streaming Act—gave Irving added confidence that the minister “meant what he said.”

“If the prime minister is considering using the [Act], or anything related to culture and heritage, as a bargaining chip ... he should rethink that,” Irving said, advising Carney to look at the same polling data.

“Canadians want to see themselves reflected through their media; they want to see their stories told, and they want to feel a sense of pride about that,” Irving said. “If I were a politician, I wouldn’t mess with that.”

However, while Guilbeault was firm with the CMPA that Canada would not back down to Trump, his office was unwilling to provide the same assurances regarding the court challenge and what it called the recent “speculation” raised by comments from CRTC chair and CEO Vicky Eatrises at the Oct. 1 House Canadian Heritage Committee where she briefed MPs on the ongoing implementation of the Act.

In response to a question from Bloc Québécois MP Martin Champoux (Drummond, Que.) about whether the ongoing court challenge by online streamers could affect implementation, Eatrises said that “it depends on the decision.”

Scott Shortliffe, the CRTC’s vice-president of broadcasting, told the committee that the commission’s implementation proceedings have continued as the court case advances. Additionally, he said some streamers have still made contributions—with the money held in trust—that have already been distributed to recipients at their request.

“They are not legally required to do that. They have chosen to do so,” Shortliffe said, adding that the CRTC does not administer the funding, and did not have a full accounting of the total amount distributed.

Irving said he won’t attempt to predict the outcome of the court challenge, but that “the underlying principles of the legislation stand,” regardless of the final ruling.

“Those who benefit and derive significant revenues from access to Canadian audiences in our system should be required to pay to contribute to Canadian stories,” Irving said. “The specifics of how that might happen can be adjusted. But the principle stands: if you benefit from the system, you should contribute to it.”

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NEWS

Complementary, but limited: how Carney's use of 'personal' envoys can boost the foreign service

Although the government hasn't yet reached that point, too many political appointments 'is never ideal because it undermines morale in the diplomatic service,' says professor Adam Chapnick.

BY NEIL MOSS

With Prime Minister Mark Carney adding his first personal touch on Canada's foreign service, former diplomats say his use of special envoys can help boost Canada's links abroad, but that their numbers should remain lean.

Carney tapped Liberal MP Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) to serve as Canada's special representative for the reconstruction of Ukraine. Carney followed that up by appointing erstwhile Privy Council clerk John Hannaford as his personal representative to the European Union.

Freeland brings Ukrainian links to the posting—including speaking the language—but it remains to be seen how fulsome the role will be with House duties still in play during a minority Parliament.

The order-in-council for the appointment set out that she would be a parliamentary secretary to Carney, holding the position "stylized" as special representative for reconstruction of Ukraine until Sept. 14, 2026.

The government of then-prime minister Justin Trudeau did the same thing this past February when then-Liberal MP Omar Alghabra was named special envoy to Syria—also appointed as a parliamentary secretary to the prime minister, as well as the foreign affairs minister. That posting ended just over a month later when Carney called a snap election.

Asked multiple times about the staffing for Freeland's new role, a spokesperson for the Privy Council Office (PCO) didn't respond before publication deadline.

Hannaford was tapped as Carney's "special representative" to the EU at a time when the prime minister is seeking to boost transatlantic links and end Canada's reliance on the United States. The former top civil servant has a wealth of international experience as the PCO's foreign and



Prime Minister Mark Carney looks on as then-Privy Council clerk John Hannaford, right, swears in then-transport minister Chrystia Freeland, left, on May 13. Carney has recently given Freeland and Hannaford each their own diplomatic assignment. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garica

defence policy adviser to Trudeau, as well as a past deputy minister for international trade, and a former ambassador to Norway.

Former diplomats told *The Hill Times* that thematic special envoys have long been used by the Canadian government, but regional ones are a new phenomenon.

The Trudeau government created special envoys in the Indo-Pacific; Africa; the Arctic; for Europe; and Armenia; as well as for women, peace, and security; among others.

Former diplomat Colin Robertson, now a senior adviser at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, applauded the appointments of both Hannaford and Freeland, remarking that it is a sign of Carney's focus on the foreign file.

"These complement what the government is trying to do," he said. "Is it orthodox? No. But has it happened before? Yes."

He said that the success of the role depends on the personality of the prime minister.

"This is a prime minister that does care a lot about international affairs—that's what his instinct is," Robertson said. "But also he sees that as the way that we are able to diversify relationships over time from the United States."

In the case of Hannaford's appointment, Robertson said he foresees the former clerk travelling around the continent far more than the ambassador who is mostly tied up in Brussels.

Former Canadian ambassador to the EU David Plunkett told *The Hill Times* that he started a tradition of travelling to member states that were soon to inherit the rotating six-month presidency in Belgium's capital.

The use of special envoys is complicated by the fissure they create in the mandate of heads of missions. As part of Global Affairs Canada's foreign service reforms, the department committed to strengthening the role of heads of mission, including giving

them more discretion over the allocation of resources. Special envoys inevitably infringe on their jurisdiction.

"They'll have to be very clear about the responsibilities," said former ambassador David McKinnon, who led Canada's embassy in Sri Lanka from 2017 to 2022.

Many of Canada's special envoys are also ambassadors. Canada's Indo-Pacific special envoy is Ian McKay, ambassador to Japan. The special envoy for Africa is Ben Marc Diendéré, permanent observer to the African Union. Its special envoy to the Sahel is Marcel Lebleu, ambassador to Senegal. Outgoing special envoy to Europe Stéphane Dion is ambassador to France and was previously head of the German mission.

Unlike those postings, Freeland and Hannaford won't have a permanent presence in the region in which they are tasked.

Robertson said there is the added issue of creating competing lines of responsibility between the special envoy and the assistant deputy minister in the Pearson Building who is charged with that specific geographic region.

"If you start to see more of these, it's like creating a foreign service within a foreign service," he said, remarking the appointments should be limited to Carney's priority areas.

McKinnon said there will be the issue of who has responsibility for what that will need clarity, adding that there is an open question of whose view carries more weight if the special envoy and ambassador hold differing opinions.

"What is the message that we're sending about the ambassador we're sending to the EU if we've also got a special envoy? Who do they talk to?" McKinnon asked.

Canada doesn't currently have a full-fledged ambassador in Brussels as Ailish Campbell has left the post in September, and a replacement has yet to be named.

McKinnon said that if these appointments are made routinely

it will detract from the agency of the foreign service.

He said the added benefit is that the special envoy would likely have a direct line to Carney. But McKinnon added that the head of mission should also be able to directly engage with the most senior levels of the Canadian government without having to move up the chain through GAC.

McKinnon said it raises the question of how to ensure communication between heads of mission and those senior levels without adding a new layer of bureaucracy with special envoys.

Carney 'pushing limits' on political appointees

Royal Military College professor Adam Chapnick, an expert on Canadian foreign policy, said there shouldn't be too much difficulty in co-ordinating Hannaford's role with the regular foreign service machinery given he is an experienced diplomat.

On Freeland's appointment, Chapnick said that he is "wary" of political appointments to diplomatic posts, but noted that he is "more comfortable" with the former foreign and finance minister in her new post as she speaks the language and isn't as unqualified for the post as some other past political appointees.

"A proliferation of these types of appointments is never ideal because it undermines morale in the diplomatic service," he said of naming non-career diplomats to key posts. "It confuses the accountability process in the diplomatic service when you have all these people who don't actually report through the deputy minister and through the minister of foreign affairs."

Carney started off embracing the Canadian tradition of filling senior diplomatic roles with political appointees. Trudeau frequently put former cabinet ministers in ambassadorial roles—as did his predecessors.

In addition to Freeland, outgoing principal secretary David Lametti was named Canada's next ambassador to the United Nations. Carney's PMO was in the usual predicament of having two principal secretaries as after Lametti joined the office, the supposed interim secretary Tom Pitfield didn't leave, as reported by *The Hill Times*.

"The prime minister right now is pushing the limits of the number of political diplomatic appointees one can have and justify for legitimate reasons," Chapnick said. "If you significantly increase that soon, then I would be really uncomfortable."

With former Liberal leader Dion soon to leave Paris, the top job in France will be open, and it's been held by political appointees since 2012. Former Liberal cabinet

minister Ralph Goodale will also be leaving the United Kingdom as high commissioner—a job that has been held by a non-career diplomat since 2011. The vacant EU job has exclusively been held by career diplomats in the past.

Although Lametti was given the UN job in New York, Chapnick said his concern over the use of political appointees was minimized since, at the same time, a career diplomat was appointed as Canada's new ambassador to Germany. Vera Alexander was given the posting that had been held by political appointees since 2017.

"[Carney] hasn't made an excessive number [of political appointees] yet, but we're getting closer to that point of discomfort," Chapnick said.

Reports have suggested that past cabinet ministers Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) and Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver-Capilano, B.C.) have been considered for ambassador postings in the U.K., and EU, respectively.

'Complement' but don't 'duplicate' work of ambassadors, says former envoy

Former Canadian diplomat Michael Small, who was Canada's high commissioner to Australia from 2010 to 2014, said if the mandate of special envoys are clear then the role can offer increased value and capacity to what the civil service can accomplish.

"These senior positions can play a role in focusing, mobilizing, and co-ordinating a whole-of-Canadian-government effort towards relations with the country or region in question; they could be very useful in accomplishing a high-priority government objective," he said in an email.

Small said the primary value special envoys bring is with regard to Ottawa decision-making as opposed to representing Canada on the ground, remarking that they should "complement" the work of the ambassador, and not "duplicate" it.

"This is where effective groundwork by PCO machinery of government and clear directives from the PMO about what is and is not expected of the special envoys is essential," he said. "The fact that these two current special envoys are a former clerk and a former foreign minister and deputy prime minister respectively, will mean that both of them are very familiar with how government works at the very highest levels, and the value of clear mandates and respecting ministerial accountability."

Former ambassador John T. Holmes—who served in head-of-mission postings in Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, Turkey, and the Philippines—said the size of the office for the special envoys will be indicative of their work.

"If it is a small office, which relies on support from the department, it can be a cost-effective way to demonstrate that Canada takes the issue seriously," he said. "If the office is large with non-departmental staff, then the risks of turf-fighting and duplications rise."

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COMMENT

Keystone XL is back from the dead, and so are the politics of pipelines

Advancing major projects may be a consequence of Canada-U.S. tensions, but it's unclear how the prime minister can reconcile this approach with caucus members who favour more decisive climate action.

Josie Sabatino

Beyond the Headlines



OTTAWA—The Keystone XL pipeline appears poised for a political resurgence, nearly five

years after its cancellation by then-United States president Joe Biden and more than a decade after initial Canada-U.S. negotiations began.

The project has been steeped in controversy from the outset. Despite consistent support from consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments to see Keystone XL move forward, then-prime minister Justin Trudeau chose not to expend political capital to revive it after the U.S. rejection. On the American side, the project was first rejected by the Obama administration in 2015, reinstated by then-president Donald Trump during his first term, and ultimately shelved in 2021.

Earlier this year, returned President Trump himself remarked that while he would like to see the project built, South Bow, the owner of the pipeline, had “moved on.” The fact that the issue resurfaced Prime Minister Mark Carney’s visit to the White House last week underscores the extent to which he appears to be seeking leverage to secure a bargaining chip

in exchange for relief measures for trade-exposed sectors where the government has hinted some movement may be possible.

Carney has spent much of the past nine months distinguishing himself from his predecessor, with perhaps no greater contrast than on the energy file. One of the prime minister’s seven mandate-letter priorities is to accelerate nation-building projects, including those in the oil and gas sector, which have long felt ignored over the last decade. With the second tranche of projects expected before Parliament rises for the Christmas break, and the Carney government indicating that the tanker ban and emissions cap could be repealed, the new path forward bears little resemblance to the social licence policies of the previous Trudeau government.

If the prime minister succeeds both in reviving the Keystone XL pipeline as a credible bargaining chip and in delivering on its major project mandate, opposition is unlikely to come from the traditional corners of Parliament.

The Conservatives will certainly scrutinize the list of approved projects and highlight how quickly (or slowly) the government is moving. Overall, however, there is clear alignment between the support for the resource sector that Conservatives have advocated for since the Harper era, and Carney’s goal of leveraging conventional oil and gas projects to stimulate the economy.

All eyes should be on the Bloc Québécois, who have long opposed pipelines passing through Quebec. While Keystone XL would not directly affect the province, the Bloc was quick to raise concerns around last week’s discussion points, emphasizing potential environmental impacts and the economic uncertainty surrounding the project. Following their disappointing election result, which saw their seat count decline, the Bloc will be looking to regain disenchanted voters and is incentivized to use resource development as a political wedge.

Carney also faces challenges with his own caucus. The roll-back of the carbon tax, pause on

electric vehicle mandates, and a growing recognition that Canada is unlikely to meet its 2030 climate targets suggest the era of aligning economic goals with environmental progress may be over. While advancing major projects may be a direct consequence of Canada-U.S. trade tensions, it remains unclear how the prime minister can reconcile this approach with members of his caucus who favour more decisive action on the climate file.

The politics of pipelines has long been a thorn in the side of every prime minister. The Harper government drew criticism for sidelining environmental concerns, while Trudeau introduced a sweeping climate agenda that drew the ire of the resource sector. Carney now contends with a volatile trading partner to the south, and a caucus that has so far prioritized a united front on economic matters. How this plays out in the political arena, and whether Carney can keep his caucus singing from the same songbook as the heat turns up on energy discussions, remains to be seen.

Josie Sabatino is a vice-president at Summa Strategies. Prior to joining Summa, Sabatino spent nearly a decade as a Conservative political staffer, providing communications and issues management advice to Members of Parliament and the leader of the official opposition.

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COMMENT

Quebec's new 'constitution' bill is an affront to democracy

The Legault government's document is a fantasy, especially when it comes to Quebec's non-francophone population.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



KAMOURASKA, QUE.—You have to hand it to Quebec Premier François Legault: the man has extraordinary gall. In the midst of a declining economy, a crisis in immigration, declines in health care, and a record \$13.6-billion government deficit, he decided to bring forth new legislation for a Quebec “constitution.”

Last week, Legault's justice minister, the hyper-nationalist Simon Jolin-Barrette, tabled the symbolically named Bill 1, The Quebec Constitution Act, 2025. The bill promises to “define the Quebec nation,” but rather than describe a dynamic, multilingual society within a majority francophone province, it entrenches its three most narrow-minded pieces of legislation: Bill 21 on secularism, Bill 84 on identity, and Bill 96 on language. And their privileged place in this “constitution” protects them from judicial appeal.

This will mean so-called collective rights of the Quebec “nation”—secularism and the French language—are superior to human rights. And it prevents any organization or institution receiving taxpayers' dollars to undertake a court challenge. The English Montreal School Board, which is taking Bill 21 to the Supreme Court, would no longer be able to fight Quebec City.

The legislation is not really a constitution, but a simple bill of the National Assembly, and many of its sections are *ultra vires*, in other words, outside the powers of a province of Canada. This does not stop Quebec from stating: “The Québec people has, in fact and in law, the right to self-determination. It is the holder of the rights universally recognized under the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.” This might come as a surprise to the United Nations, which identifies self-determination as coming into play for states under colonial rule or subject to oppression.

The new “constitution” then declares “The Québec people has the inalienable right to freely decide the political system and legal status of Québec,” which is a blatant rejection of the Supreme Court ruling of 1998 on Quebec having to negotiate the terms of sovereignty.

And then the kicker, contradicting the federal Clarity Act's insistence on a clear question and a clear majority: “When the Québec people is consulted by way of a referendum ... the winning option is ... 50 per cent of the valid votes cast plus one.”

Adding one last shot at Ottawa, the bill rejects the monarchy, changes the title of the lieutenant-governor to make him an “officer” of the state, and demands it name Senators and Supreme Court judges from Quebec. While Jolin-Barrette acknowledges Quebec lacks the power to do all this, he is picking a fight with the Carney government prior to the 2026 provincial election.

While provinces have always had their own constitutions, they were previously considered to be—in the British tradition—the collection of laws enacted since time immemorial, combined with their own statutes and conventions since Confederation. Nothing was codified or specified, with the exception of British Columbia's effort 30 years ago, and Newfoundland and Labrador's Terms of Union in 1949.

In Quebec, scholars and premiers, both *indépendantiste* and federalist, have advocated for a written Quebec constitution to underline its autonomy and difference. However, gauging by the response of the three other parties in the National Assembly, this mess is not the document they contemplated. The Liberals, Parti Québécois, and Québec Solidaire all voted against tabling the bill.

Nonetheless, Legault pressed on, saying, “The government's vision is clear: we want to protect and strengthen Quebec, we want to protect our soul, our values, our identity, our rights.” Jolin-Barrette, no stranger to nationalist hyperbole, said: “the constitution is everywhere in our daily lives. It affects reality.”

On the contrary, the document is a fantasy, especially when it comes to Quebec's non-francophone population. While recognizing Indigenous nations of Quebec, it fails to mention most use English as their common language.

It also mentions the “institutions of the English-speaking community,” but not its 1.25 million citizens, nor the contributions of leaders in politics, business, science, government, and the arts. like Thomas D'Arcy McGee, John Redpath, Dr. Wilder Penfield, Frank Scott, Mavis Gallant, Leonard Cohen, and Hugh MacLennan.

Many observers have already dismissed this legislation as the last gasp of a dying government. I worry it is the start of a season of constitution writing that encourages Quebec's political class to exploit intolerance.

Andrew Caddell is retired from Global Affairs Canada, where he was a senior policy adviser. He previously worked as an adviser to Liberal governments. He can be reached at pipson52@hotmail.com.

The Hill Times

Can Carney connect before goodwill, space, and grace run out?



Prime Minister Mark Carney, right, may have had a good meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump last week, but there is a restiveness forming at home, writes Tim Powers. White House photograph by Daniel Torok

The government needs to realize the armchair play-calling about its aptitude or lack thereof in dealing with the U.S. is going to kick up.

Tim Powers

Plain Speak



OTTAWA—Prime Minister Mark Carney had a second in-person White House meeting with United States President Donald Trump last week. Invited by the Americans, there was some anticipation—fanned in part initially by the government—that perhaps the prime minister would return home with some trinkets and baubles to assuage an anxious public.

Carney came home empty-handed, and a blistering critique ensued from the Conservatives and others who aren't naturally inclined to offer positive words to the government. None of that is surprising, and—to a degree—the Liberals have backed themselves into this spot. However, there is no evidence that another Canadian or global leader has some magic potion that, when applied to Trump, gets the results everyone is seeking.

The immediate political challenge for the Carney Liberals is there was hope among Canadians that, with his credentials and global reach, the prime minister could get something from Trump sooner rather than later. Unfair expectations, no doubt, but they were not dampened by Team Carney during the campaign. Recent polls show a restiveness among the public about the government's ability to address the Trump riddle. Those same polls also suggest cost-of-living concerns dominate people's worries, and, though addressing tariffs is about helping people's wallets, that is not connecting for the Liberals, to date.

For quite a few Canadians, the sight of the prime minister in his second Oval Office meeting pandering to, praising, and puckering up to the president was unseemly. However, that criticism is unfair.

Carney can hardly go into the White House and drop-kick the president, or even be terse or rude with him. What on Earth would that accomplish? Sure, it might give the Canadian public some emotional gratitude, but it won't much improve our lot.

It is funny to see Conservatives chastising Carney for this. With very few exceptions, Canadian Conservatives have offered little to no criticism of federal Leader Pierre Poilivere for fear of some sort of retribution. Nonetheless, when you are in opposition, you do what critics do: point out the government's vulnerabilities, and say that you can do better. That is the game.

The real post-White House worry for the Carney government is from concerned leaders in the Canadian auto sector. When respected allies like Unifor president Lana Payne and Flavio Volpe from the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association muse that Canada might be sacrificing the auto industry to get deals elsewhere, that should strike a nerve. And when Ontario Premier Doug Ford, who is normally also a partner, joins the chorus of the dissatisfied, that should raise a red flag.

The Carney government has done a good job of building a consensus among industry, labour, and the premiers for a unified approach to dealing with the Americans. If that starts to fray—and it isn't performatively deliberate—that adds to the complexity of resolution.

Ultimately, what happens now is less important than some sort of outcome. But the government needs to realize the armchair play-calling about its aptitude or lack thereof is going to kick up. The goodwill, space, and grace previously granted to the prime minister is all but gone.

The government can help itself by finding a way into the cost-of-living conversation. But it is going to take more than the permanent commitment to the school food program the prime minister announced before Thanksgiving. Can Carney make people feel like a chicken is coming to their pot while at the same time restructuring government spending and investing as he has promised? Let us see what the November budget brings.

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

The Hill Times

COMMENT

It's always do or die on budget day

Budgets have always tended to be historical markers that stood as a defining or make-or-break moment for federal governments.

Les Whittington

Need to Know



OTTAWA—By the 2020 era, the federal budget documents handed out to the media under then-Liberal finance minister Chrystia Freeland were verging on 400 pages, packaged with a slick, heavily messaged cover, and accompanied by fact sheets, press releases, charts, and a cheat sheet on just the main items.

But back in 1979, the budget info handed out to reporters in an embargoed reading in advance of then-finance minister John Crosbie's fateful Commons speech was little more than a couple of mimeographed pages. And it was obvious after a very quick perusal of the provided information that prime minister Joe Clark's minority government was in danger of extinction due to its stunning 18-cent-a-gallon hike in gasoline prices.

The budget indeed led to the defeat of Clark's government and the Liberals' return to power under a no-longer-retired Pierre Trudeau.

As with the much-anticipated Nov. 4 fiscal and economic exposition planned by Prime Minister Mark Carney, budgets have always tended to be historical markers that stood as a defining or make-or-break moment for federal governments.

In 1980, for instance, only eight months after the Liberals' re-election, Trudeau himself brought in the National Energy Program in an Oct. 28 budget. The program, a response to the economic impact and inflation sparked by two 1970s oil shocks, was introduced by finance minister Allan MacEachen. "The federal government feels compelled to put Canada's energy house in order," he told MPs. "To fail to solve our energy dilemmas would be to fail to realize our greatest source of opportunity in this decade."

That budget made Trudeau a hated figure in the West, a situation that his son Justin still had to deal with 35 years later.

Michael Wilson, who held the finance portfolio under then-prime minister Brian Mulroney, used budgets over several years to chip away at Canada's social programs. But impact wise, nothing Wilson did compared to the introduction of the GST. In his Feb. 20, 1990, budget, he discussed dropping the existing manufacturers' sales



As finance ministers, the likes of John Crosbie, left, Allan MacEachen, Jim Flaherty, and Chrystia Freeland all had to plant their respective governments' flagpoles. Photographs courtesy of Library and Archives Canada and The Hill Times photographs by Jake Wright and Andrew Meade

tax in favour of a VAT measure—the Goods and Services Tax. "Replacing a hidden tax with a tax which will be visible and comprehensive is difficult. It isn't popular, but it is necessary," Wilson told the Commons.

Three years later, anger over the GST contributed to the historic trouncing of the Progressive Conservatives in the 1993 election.

Two years after that, Liberal finance minister Paul Martin sought to deal with the government's fiscal crisis by delivering a trend-breaking budget that cut social programs, unemployment insurance, and transfers to the provinces for education, health care, and social assistance. "This government came into office because it believes that the nation's priority must be jobs and growth. And it is *because* of that, not in spite of that, that we must act now to restore the nation's finances to health,"

Martin said in his address in the Commons of Feb. 27, 1995.

Within three years, the federal government had balanced the books and notched the first budget surplus in nearly 30 years.

Martin's reputation as a deficit slayer would propel his short-lived rise to Canada's prime minister. But the 1995 package set off a series of moves by governments across the country to download services to lower levels of government, and the pain of that budget for low and modest-income households is still talked about today.

In the fall of 2008, Canada was about to be caught up in the worst recession in 80 years. But then-Conservative finance minister Jim Flaherty's fall economic statement, full of talk about restraint, failed to provide the expected stimulus needed to protect the economy from the onrushing financial calamity. "Our government will respond to the challenges of the upcoming year the same way we are seeing this year to a close, through the values Canadians themselves hold dear: prudence and restraint, combined with hard work and a

focus on the future," Flaherty concluded in his Commons address on Nov. 27, 2008.

The resulting uproar nearly brought down then-prime minister Stephen Harper's minority government only two months after it had won re-election, forcing a constitutional crisis as the Conservatives prorogued Parliament to keep from being ousted by the opposition.

Successive Conservative budgets that focused on austerity rather than support for Canadians in the economically glum aftermath of the global recession opened the way for Justin Trudeau and the

Liberals' surprise majority victory in the 2015 election.

A decade later, finance minister Free-land, a longtime Trudeau loyalist, shocked the country by quitting her cabinet post hours before she was to deliver the government's fall economic statement on Dec. 16, 2024. And the uproar over her decision, which she blamed on the prime minister's choice of "costly political gimmicks," made Trudeau's hasty resignation inevitable.

Les Whittington is a regular columnist for The Hill Times.

The Hill Times



Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne will deliver the Carney government's first budget on Nov. 4. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade



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Editorial

Editorial

The infighting will continue until clarity improves

This was always going to get ugly. From the outset of Prime Minister Mark Carney unveiling his plan to fast-track so-called “nation-building” projects, the threat of schism has been lurking. After all, when you say you’re going to essentially pick the winners and losers from a bevy of pet projects that every province and territory is trying to advance, someone is going to be disappointed. And that recipe for fracture was apparent even before the One Canadian Economy Act was tabled and made such a mess out of the blatant disregard for Indigenous rights and consultation. Whose “nation” is getting built? That’s an underlying question that has yet to be answered. In the past week, things have been kicking off between British Columbia and Alberta as words get exchanged over whose behaviour is “un-Canadian” in the quest to have an oil pipeline built from Alberta to B.C.’s north coast. And after federal Energy Minister Tim Hodgson told Senators that Alberta still has some work to do to convince B.C. of the project’s viability, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith said that a lack of support from Ottawa would be “betrayal of [the] constitutional rights of Alberta’s citizens and calls into question whether Canada is a functional and law-abiding democracy.” (Provinces are very selective about when they want the federal government to exert its jurisdiction. The rest of the time, it’s “stay out of our business, and by the way, please also take the blame for things that are our responsibility.”)

Ultimately, whether the Alberta proposal—which has no private proponent, or route, or firm plan—is fast-tracked through the Major Projects Office or given the greenlight at all over B.C.’s objections is indeed up to the federal government. Past provincial objections to pipelines were soundly defeated in court. And, according to recent polling from the Angus Reid Institute, public opinion is also more on the side of “build, baby, build” than it has been in the past, now at 59 per cent support—including 56-per-cent support in B.C. But the scales also tip in favour of the terminus province (i.e., B.C.) having veto rights unless its conditions are met. The federal government will have some deft stick-handling to do. But the prime minister isn’t making it easy. As the Canadian Press reported, Carney said on Oct. 10 that his government believes in “nation-building projects,” but they must have material economic benefits, be consistent with climate objectives, and provide benefits for Indigenous Peoples. However, he also said the same day that when it comes to dropping emissions caps and repealing the tanker ban: “In order to satisfy all those conditions, it depends on what’s done. What this government is interested in is results, not objectives.” So, is it about results, or is it consistency with the Carney government’s still-unknown climate objectives? The infighting seems to be a symptom of the federal government’s lack of clarity, and that should be resolved before any more decisions are made.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor

Federal support should ensure the right evidence reaches policymakers: McMaster researchers

Re: “Investing in the health of those who defend Canada will pay long-term dividends,” (*The Hill Times*, Sept. 24). In their opinion piece, Senator Baltej Singh Dhillon and Brigadier General Hugh Colin MacKay make a compelling case for continued investment in research organizations supporting Canadian Armed Forces members, veterans, and public safety personnel. However, one priority that regularly falls through the cracks is ensuring existing research evidence reaches decision-makers on the rapid timelines in which policy and program development typically occurs. While many research organizations produce valuable evidence—often in the form of individual studies sent to decision-makers—it is rarely done in response to their specific questions, delivered on needed timelines, or contextualized alongside other research published on the same topic. Faced with this gap, policymakers increasingly turn to new tools like ChatGPT that can quickly generate answers to their questions. Yet these tools fail to deliver the rigour required for evidence-in-

formed policy—missing critical evidence, misinterpreting findings, or fabricating evidence altogether. There are better alternatives. Evidence-support mechanisms—like those we and our partners operate for federal departments including Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and the Department of National Defence (DND)—have always strived to balance speed and rigour. As we safely and responsibly introduce artificial intelligence into our workflows, we will continue to fine-tune this balance. We encourage VAC, DND, and all federal government departments to ensure that future investments address both the research organizations generating new research evidence and the—typically low-cost /high-impact—evidence-support mechanisms that get the right evidence to the right decision-makers at the right time.

John N. Lavis
Director,
McMaster Health Forum
Hamilton, Ont.

Kerry Waddell
Senior scientific lead for
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Protecting international food funding is critical, says B.C. letter writer

Oct. 16 is World Food Day, and it should be a wake-up call for us. While many of us start the day with full plates, millions of families around the world are facing hunger, malnutrition, and preventable disease. These aren’t just numbers. They’re children going to bed hungry, mothers unable to feed their newborns, and communities fighting to survive without the most basic resources. Canada has long stood for compassion and global responsibility. But with Budget 2025 approaching, that legacy is on the line. If we fail to protect funding for life-saving initiatives like the Global Fund and critical nutrition programs, we risk turning our backs on the world’s most vulnerable, at a time when they need us the most. Right now, Canada invests just 34 cents of every \$100 in international assistance. That small amount goes a long way in helping women and children access essential nutrition, and fuelling the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. Prime Minister Mark Carney pledged to maintain this funding. Walking away from that promise now would mean undermining the values Canada represents. Canada has to protect the International Assistance Envelope at \$10.6-billion in the Nov. 4 budget. The world is watching. Let’s prove we keep our word, and that when it counts, we show up.

Bernice Ko
Vancouver, B.C.

COMMENT

Accountability needed after forged documents used to smear journalist and compromise House committee

Now that documents used to allege that David Pugliese is a Russian spy have been debunked as forgeries, the Public Safety and National Security Committee must summon Chris Alexander to ascertain who supplied him with the false information.

Scott Taylor

Inside Defence



OTTAWA—It has been almost one year since damning allegations were made in Parliament in an attempt to smear one of Canada's top defence reporters.

On Oct. 24, 2024, Chris Alexander, a former Conservative cabinet minister, appeared before the House Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. This particular session was intended to address disinformation and Russian interference in Canadian affairs.

Alexander dropped the bombshell accusation that David Pugliese, the award-winning defence reporter at *The Ottawa Citizen* whose career spans nearly four decades, is a former Soviet and current Russian intelligence asset. To support his allegations, Alexander produced photocopies of documents which he claimed originated in the "pre-1991 archives of the Ukrainian KGB."

Alexander also noted to the committee that these documents had been shared with Canadian "national security officials," presumably the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Canadian Armed Forces' elite National Counter-Intelligence Unit.

Alexander didn't stop there. Shortly before concluding his presentation to the committee, he made the astonishing claim that "previous efforts to expose [Pugliese's] long-running covert ties to Moscow have resulted in attempts to intimidate current and former

Canadian parliamentarians, including my former colleague James Bezan, as well as Canadian Army officers."

None of the parliamentarians present challenged Alexander's spy allegations, and none thought to ask why these documents would have been given to Alexander, a long-retired politician. Even though Bezan was in the room, none of the panellists sought clarification on the serious accusation that an elected official had been intimidated either by Pugliese himself, or on his behalf.

In response to Alexander's allegations, Pugliese immediately took to social media to denounce the claim as "entirely false." Pugliese's primary employer, Postmedia, dismissed Alexander's allegations as "baseless and false," and they have continued to publish his investigative news stories without pause.

The Canadian Association of Journalists and a group of 59 fellow journalist wrote open letters of support for Pugliese, while condemning Alexander for his attempted smear of a much-respected journalist.

In the interest of full disclosure, I, too, stood by Pugliese. I have known him as a colleague and a friend since we both began our military journalism careers in the early

1990s. We reported together on non-embedded tours of Afghanistan on a number of occasions, and since 2005 he has been the senior writer at *Esprit de Corps* magazine.

Notably, Alexander delivered his remarks in Parliament where his speech is protected as privileged, and therefore he cannot be sued by Pugliese for defamation. Tellingly, despite repeated attempts by journalists and individual supporters of free speech, Alexander has yet to repeat his claims outside of that parliamentary privilege.

But now it seems that the whole diabolical plot is beginning to unravel. While Canadian media outlets were prepared to simply let this story fade into history, independent Italian researcher Giuseppe Bianchin recognized this incident to be a serious attack on free speech. Bianchin enlisted the aid of several of Europe's leading forensic experts to examine the content of Alexander's photocopied evidence. Their collective conclusion was that the documents offered as proof by Alexander were in fact "crafted with deliberate intent to deceive." The records are, in fact, forgeries.

Using the Bianchin findings as a lynchpin, journalist Taylor Noakes has compiled a thoroughly researched and reveal-

ing feature story on this entire Pugliese-Alexander saga, which appears in the most recent edition of *The Walrus*.

According to Noakes: "Alexander's insistence that these materials were genuine ran into trouble even before the recent revelations about their forgery. Global News discovered that neither of the two main Ukrainian KGB archives in Kyiv had any documentation similar to what Alexander claimed was both authenticated and in the hands of Canadian national security experts."

This is serious stuff. A former cabinet minister, albeit long out to pasture, alleged in the privileged forum of a parliamentary committee hearing that a prominent, well-known defence reporter was a Soviet and then Russian intelligence asset.

Now that those documents submitted to support the allegation have been debunked as deliberately crafted forgeries, it is inherent upon the Public Safety and National Security Committee to summon Alexander in order to ascertain who supplied him with the false documentation.

While they are at it, they should recall Bezan as well to shed light on Alexander's claim that Pugliese was intimidating elected officials. For a parliamentary committee investigating disinformation to have been compromised in such a fashion leaves them no choice but to delve into who exactly was behind this deliberate attempt to smear an award-winning defence journalist and what were the motives of these individuals.

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

The Hill Times

OPINION

Canada must keep its promises to protect animals

The government must introduce new legislation to ban the captivity and entertainment use of elephants, great apes, and non-native big cats.

Ewa Demianowicz

Opinion



As we welcome a new government back in Ottawa, Canadians can take pride in the compassion and progress already achieved—and

look with optimism toward what comes next. Our country has always stood for compassion, fairness, and justice. Now, we have the opportunity to fully extend those values to animals, ensuring that those still suffering in captivity or transport can finally see the promises made on their behalf become a reality.

Across Canada, big cats, elephants, and great apes continue to endure lives of confinement and exploitation. These sentient beings—capable of joy, grief, and deep emotional bonds—are still held in roadside zoos and used for entertainment, despite widespread public opposition and mounting evidence of cruelty. Reports of inadequate housing, neglect, and inhumane treatment are frequent and disturbing.

In 2019, the largest zoo animal seizure in Canadian history took place in St-Édouard-de-Maskinongé, Que. More than 200

wild and exotic animals were rescued from a roadside zoo by Humane World for Animals Canada (formerly Humane Society International/Canada) and the Montreal SPCA. The conditions were appalling. Lions, tigers, and dozens of other species were found in distress, sparking a public outcry and calls for stronger federal oversight. The zoo operator was charged with criminal cruelty and neglect, yet the systemic issues remain.

A few years later, the federal government introduced Bill S-15 to end the captivity and use of elephants and great apes for entertainment. Lawmakers recommended expanding the bill to include non-native big cats. Bill S-15 built upon the vision of the Jane Goodall Act, originally introduced by the then-senator Murray Sinclair in 2020, and reflected the Government of Canada's commitment to protecting captive wild animals. But the bill

died on the Order Paper with the federal election. With a new government now in place, Canadians are urging Parliament to introduce new legislation without delay.

The suffering doesn't end with wild animals in cages. Every year, approximately 2,500 Canadian horses are trucked from barren feedlots, packed into wooden crates, and flown from airports in Winnipeg and Edmonton to Japan. There, they are fattened, slaughtered, and served raw in high-end restaurants. This brutal trade is not only inhumane—it's a betrayal of Canadian values.

In 2021, the Liberal Party committed to ending the live export of horses for slaughter. The previous Liberal government made good on this promise with the introduction of Bill C-355, which passed through the House of Commons, but also died on the order paper with the 2025 election. Tragically, since that promise was made, more than 10,500 horses have been exported for slaughter, most flown out of Edmonton. Between June 2023 and May 2024 alone, 21 horses died during or shortly after transport. Japanese government records detail horrifying causes of

death: dehydration, pneumonia, miscarriages, and physical compression after collapsing in crates.

Back in September, advocates gathered outside the Liberal caucus retreat in Edmonton to rally for horses and demand action. Organized by Animal Justice, Humane World for Animals Canada, and the Canadian Horse Defence Coalition, participants asked that the government stand by their commitment to ending the live export of horses by air for slaughter.

The path forward is clear. The government must introduce new legislation to ban the captivity and entertainment use of elephants, great apes, and non-native big cats. It must also fulfill its promise to end the live export of horses for slaughter. These are not unreasonable demands—they are commitments already made, supported by science, ethics, and the Canadian public. The government has the tools, the mandate, and the moral obligation to act. Let's make Canada a global leader in animal protection—not someday, but today.

Ewa Demianowicz serves as program director at Humane World for Animals Canada.

The Hill Times

OPINION



When the Conservatives, led by Pierre Poilievre, left, critique that the government, led by Prime Minister Mark Carney, is too slow to implement policies they like, the result is a steady rightward drift in politics, writes Zach Battat. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

When speed replaces substance, democracy suffers

Without meaningful alternatives, politics becomes hollow—a contest of personalities and timetables rather than ideas.

Zach Battat

Opinion



In a recent episode of CBC's *Power & Politics*, longtime NDP strategist Brad Lavigne offered an observation about the state of political debate in Canada. Too often, he argued, the question being posed is not whether a policy is right or wrong, or whether it reflects the best interests of Canadians, but whether it is being implemented "fast enough." That framing, while it may sound like a minor quibble about efficiency, hides a much deeper problem. It reflects a political landscape where direction is taken for granted and the only dispute is how quickly we get there.

That might sound harmless in the abstract. After all, who does not want governments to act quickly and decisively? But in practice, when the governing Liberals have already shifted toward implementing policies that align with the Conservative platform, and the Conservatives' main critique is that the government is not moving quickly enough, the result is a steady rightward drift in Canadian politics. The central

debate becomes about pace, not purpose. And that should worry anyone who believes in the value of real political choice.

A consensus without choice

Consider how this plays out in policy debates. On issues ranging from fiscal restraint to policing to foreign affairs, the Liberals have often adopted positions that echo Conservative talking points, sometimes explicitly. We see this weekly in Question Period, where Conservatives attack the Liberals not for substance, but for slowness, whether on housing starts, bail reform, or foreign aid timelines. The government's incentive is not to rethink its approach but to double down.

In effect, what should be a contest of ideas collapses into a contest of timelines. Voters are left with a narrowing spectrum of choice, where both governing and opposition parties are clustered around similar policies, differentiated mainly by style and speed.

This dynamic is not unique to Canada. Across much of the democratic world, centre-left parties have found themselves adopting centre-right economic and security policies in an effort to maintain credibility, while right-wing parties accuse them of dragging their feet. In Canada, the consequences are especially acute. Without a credible leftward alternative shaping the national conversation, the entire debate shifts in one direction.

Why speed is a dangerous substitute

Focusing on speed rather than substance has several dangerous consequences.

First, it undermines accountability. If political leaders are judged primarily by how quickly they act, then the content of their policies receives less scrutiny. A flawed policy executed at lightning speed is still a flawed policy, and it may be even more damaging because its mistakes are harder to unwind.

Second, it fosters cynicism. Citizens who feel that both major parties are pursuing the same course of action, with only minor differences in tempo, may reasonably conclude that voting makes little difference. That kind of disillusionment erodes trust in democratic institutions.

Third, it leaves little space for alternative visions of the future. If the Liberals and Conservatives converge on a rightward agenda, then the political imagination of the country contracts. Issues like climate justice, income inequality, Indigenous reconciliation, or democratic reform risk being sidelined because the dominant question is not what should be done, but how fast.

The vanishing of debate

Healthy democracies thrive on substantive disagreements. Voters benefit when parties put forward competing ideas and defend them in open debate. That contest forces clarity, innovation, and accountability.

But when the main axis of debate is speed, the system begins to resemble a conveyor belt. The policies are already determined, and the only question is how fast they move down the line. In this scenario, oppositional politics becomes performative, less about genuine alternatives and more about

positioning. The Conservatives accuse the Liberals of delay, while the Liberals insist they are working as fast as they can. The actual policies at stake fade into the background.

Reclaiming political choice

What is needed is a re-expansion of the political conversation. Canadians deserve debates about direction, not just velocity. What kind of economy do we want? What role should Canada play in the world? How should our society balance growth with equity, or security with freedom? These are not questions that can be answered by quibbling over who will act faster. They require bold, divergent visions, and parties willing to defend them.

This is not to dismiss the importance of efficiency in government. Canadians are right to be frustrated when programs are announced but delayed, or when bureaucratic bottlenecks undermine trust. But efficiency should never be the sole measure of leadership. It must be balanced by principle, vision, and debate over substance.

A warning sign

Lavigne's observation on *Power & Politics* was not just about tempo. It was about the way our political conversation is structured. When "fast enough" becomes the central question, it signals that the range of acceptable debate has already narrowed. The danger is that Canadians will be left voting not between competing visions of the country, but between competing project managers of the same vision.

If that is the case, then Canadian democracy is in trouble. Without meaningful alternatives, politics becomes hollow—a contest of personalities and timetables rather than ideas. Once politics loses the ability to present true alternatives, it loses the power to inspire citizens, solve problems, and build a better future.

Zach Battat is a historian of modern Middle Eastern politics based in Montreal. He holds a doctorate in Middle Eastern studies, and writes on Canadian and global affairs.

The Hill Times

Indulging in absurd anti-U.S. rhetoric? You're doing a solid for Moscow and Beijing

The U.S. is not the partner that it once was, but in a world at risk of major war, it is doing exactly what we all need it to do.

Raquel Garbers

Opinion



Western leaders need to have frank and mature conversations with their citizens about the difficult choices coming at them in a world at risk of war. That starts with shutting down the absurd anti-United States narratives that have hijacked their public dialogues.

Long in denial, the western world is finally facing up to some hard truths. The U.S. is no longer the world's unrivalled superpower, hostile states have seized the initiative, and China stands as a (near) peer rival to the U.S. in both military and economic terms. If war were to break out in the Indo-Pacific, there is no guarantee that the U.S. would defeat China. And if it were to break out simultaneously in the Indo-Pacific and the Euro-Atlantic, nuclear weapons might well be all that stands between the allies and their aggressors.

Understanding the world as it is, the U.S. is hell-bent on rebuilding its national power and forcing its allies out of their complacency. Its gameplan is well underway.

In April, the U.S. unleashed a tariff storm targeting its allies and adversaries alike. It was the first strike in its strategic reset, a deliberate effort to rebuild American industrial and trade power by upending the broken global

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OPINION

Plastics and PFAS: a public health crisis Canada can no longer ignore

The government must invest in the health of Canada, stop subsidizing polluters, and drive the well-being agenda by eliminating harmful toxics and plastics.

Helen Hsu

Opinion



Canadian artist Benjamin Von Wong's public art installation *The Giant Plastic Trap* in Ottawa on April 23, 2024. If plastic were a country, it would be the world's fifth-largest greenhouse gas emitter, writes Helen Hsu. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Plastics are not just an environmental nuisance. They are also fuelling a public health crisis. Canada must be concerned about the mounting evidence linking plastics and their toxic additives to serious illness. Canada needs urgent federal action to protect people's health. Individual action to reduce plastic consumption can only go so far. We need our government to lead the way in protecting the health of people in Canada.

People's health is already at stake

Plastics create human health and environmental problems at all stages of their life-cycle. Plastics made from petrochemicals contain more than 16,000 chemicals out of which at least 2,400 are of serious concern. The health impact of plastics affects not only the workers

in the industry, but also consumers through exposure to chemicals, and after degradation through the impact of micro and nanoplastics.

Research has shown numerous health complications of working in the plastic industry, from asthma, female infertility (including infertility and miscarriage), to cancer.

Plastics also decompose and break down into microplastics which are tiny, invisible-to-the-human-eye fragments that contaminate our environment. These particles carry toxic chemicals with them and they infiltrate our bodies. In fact, researchers have found microplastics in human blood, brain, lungs, livers, and placentas. Among some of the most worrisome toxic chemicals accompanying plastic products are PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), known as "forever chemicals."

Used in cookware, food packaging, and clothing, PFAS not only persist in the environment (since they are found in surface water, ground water, oceans, tap water, and in the soil), but they also accumulate in our bodies: alarmingly, 98.5 per cent of people in Canada already have detectable PFAS in their blood. The impact of microplastics and forever chemicals has been linked to hormone dysfunction, fertility challenges, slowed development in children, and numerous cancers including childhood leukemia, kidney, ovarian, prostate, testicular and thyroid cancer.

A question of equity

The health burden of plastics is not evenly distributed. Children, Indigenous, and racialized communities, women, and workers are disproportionately exposed. For example, in places

like Sarnia, Ont.'s "Chemical Valley," residents—in particular the Aamjiwnaang First Nation—bear toxic loads that would never be tolerated elsewhere in Canada. Due to extreme benzene spikes, which have created elevated risks of leukemia and other adverse health outcomes, the community established its own air quality standards and oversight in response to regulatory failures and the persistent environmental injustices.

As microplastics have been found in blood, placenta, breast milk, and meconium, we are running a global human experiment with no control group as everyone is exposed to varying degrees. We have seen that prenatal exposure to PFAS is associated with asthma in the child at age 6. We will only learn more health impacts in the coming years, with consequences borne by the next generation.

What Canada must do

Nine in 10 people in Canada want to see federal action towards safer products.

In short, the government must invest in the health of Canada, stop subsidizing polluters, and drive the well-being agenda by eliminating harmful toxics and plastics. It should phase out non-essential PFAS and toxic additives in plastics through faster regulations, and guarantee the Right to a Healthy Environment under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act; ban harmful and unnecessary single-use plastics, and scale up reusable, refillable alternatives that create local jobs; prioritize protections for the communities most harmed; invest in monitoring and research by re-funding the Plastics Initiative and strengthening the Chemicals Management Plan; and hold the petrochemical sectors accountable for their emissions.

Meeting the moment

If plastic were a country, it would be the world's fifth-largest greenhouse gas emitter. The United Nations estimates plastics-related health and pollution costs already reach more than \$800-billion annually. This crisis is here and it is growing.

No one in Canada should be left to shoulder invisible harms that industry profits from. Federal leadership is not optional: it is a matter of public health. At the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, we have made our policy asks clear to the decision-makers in this joint manifesto against plastics and pollution. Plastics and PFAS are harming people now. Without decisive action, the damage will only deepen for our children's health and the health of generations to come.

Dr. Helen Hsu is a CAPE-affiliated family physician specializing in mental health and addictions based in Ottawa.

The Hill Times

Indulging in absurd anti-U.S. rhetoric? You're doing a solid for Moscow and Beijing

Continued from page 10

economic order. Recently, U.S. foreshadowed the next strike in its reset: its forthcoming National Defense Strategy. As War Secretary Pete Hegseth said in his speech to military leaders, "Welcome to the War Department."

The U.S. is laser focused on rebuilding its national power for the same reason that it is compelling its allies to invest more in their militaries—because hostile states are preparing for war. Fierce American resolve is needed to hold them back from trying their luck, and to buy time for the

U.S. and its allies to rebuild and reconfigure.

The world did not just slip into this mess. For decades, authoritarian states—chiefly China—have been leveraging hostile activities to systematically shift the balance of power away from the U.S. Their endgame? To impose their will on other states without the risk of being checked by the Americans. Their intentions were not secret, and for more than a decade, security and defence professionals warned western governments that they were on track to find themselves precisely where they now are:

scrambling to defend themselves, hobbled by the effects of China's quiet war against them (complacent populations, hollowed-out industries, comatose economies, and weak militaries).

To ready their countries, western leaders need to have honest conversations with their citizens. Instead, their public dialogues have been overtaken by the narrative that the U.S. is "just like China," and that it is abandoning its allies. The narrative is absurd.

To argue that the U.S. is on par with China is to claim that it is, like China, attacking western states with military manoeuvres,

hostage diplomacy, cyberattacks, espionage, sabotage, and schemes to corrupt their political leaders. This is ridiculous.

To claim that the U.S. is abandoning its allies is to ignore the facts. Were the U.S. not committed to the team, it would not be insisting that allies invest in their defence, reiterating its commitment to partnerships like NATO and AUKUS, upgrading its defence activities in the Indo-Pacific, helping end conflicts across the globe, and trying—albeit in unorthodox ways—to end the war in Ukraine. To allege that the U.S. has quit the team is dishonest.

And finally, to suggest that the U.S. can't be trusted as an ally because it is "mistreating its friends" is to indulge in the fantastical view that states privilege sentimentality over national interest. And insofar as the defence of the nation stands above all other interests, alliances should be understood for what they are: bargains struck between states to spill blood together because it is

in their interest to do so. To argue that states should be judged on how they manage matters of life and death according to quaint notions of friendship is naive.

To be sure, the U.S. is not the partner that it once was, but nor should it be. In a world at risk of major war, the U.S. is doing exactly what we all need it to do. It is being relentless in its determination to rebuild its power and it is forcing us all to do likewise. Building that kind of power demands we be serious and that, in turn, starts with pushing back against absurd anti-U.S. narratives that serve only to drive a wedge between all of us and the Americans. And that, of course, is the own-goal that Moscow and Beijing are hoping we'll score.

Raquel Garbers is a visiting executive at the Centre for International Governance Innovation, and former director general of strategic policy at the Department of National Defence.

The Hill Times

NEWS

House Trade Committee needs to be ‘respectful’ of Carney’s approach to Trump talks, says Liberal chair

The government has released few details about the state of negotiations with the U.S., seemingly at odds with its acknowledgement that Canadians have concerns over a lack of transparency in trade talks.

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“It’s very important for us to be respectful of the current process because if the wrong thing gets said—and everything pretty much that is said in Canada gets translated back over to the U.S. for sure—and so it’s very important that all of us as MPs, especially those of us on the International Trade Committee, be respectful of the many people that are working on trying to get tariffs lifted and to get some progress,” she said.

The atmosphere before an Oct. 2 committee appearance by Canada-U.S. Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.) was unusually amicable as he—alongside with International Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu (Brampton East, Ont.)—posed for a photo with both Liberal and Conservative committee members.

In general, House committees have the mandate of overseeing their departments’ program and policy objectives, including evaluating the success of those departments in performing their tasks.

Sgro said it is “very challenging” for the committee to balance its work while not impairing Canadian negotiation efforts.

“All of us are very committed to a Team Canada approach in the work that we are doing,” she said, remarking that the committee is functioning “in a very positive way.”

“Every word that we say that gets into print somewhere matters. It’s a very serious time, and MPs have to behave and use our language accordingly to be done in a helpful manner, not in anything that would cause aggravation or some concern to the thousands of people that are out

there worrying about their future and their jobs,” she said.

Sgro said that Canadians who want to hear more from the government about the state of the negotiations will have to be patient.

In past Parliaments, the NDP and the Bloc Québécois have been most vocal in calling for increased transparency in trade negotiations. That included the New Democrats striking a deal with the Liberal government in 2020 to expedite the passage of the renegotiated NAFTA; in return the government promised to table a notice of intent to enter into trade negotiations 90 days prior to talks beginning, and a notice of objectives to be tabled 30 days before they start. Neither was tabled prior to Canada beginning trade negotiations with U.S. President Donald Trump. The New Democrats no longer have recognized party status in the House, and don’t sit on standing committees.

The tabling requirements are for a “comprehensive” trade agreement. Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.) has said that he is working towards an economic and security partnership with the U.S., but it is unclear if that would be a comprehensive trade pact as the government hasn’t provided that specificity. Instead of a comprehensive agreement, some trade experts believe that a series of “napkin deals” is the likely path forward.

Carney’s Oct. 7 Oval Office meeting with Trump was cordial as the two world leaders lavished praise on the other. Trump remarked that Canadians will be “very happy” when asked if Canada would walk away empty handed from the meeting. Carney did indeed walk away empty handed, returning to Ottawa without an agreement as LeBlanc told reporters that the leaders had told officials to “continue the conversation and to quickly land deals.”

Looking towards next year’s mandated review of the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), Bloc Québécois MP Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot-Acton, Que.) said that his party is willing to collaborate with the government, but also remarked that he hoped that the government would collaborate in return.

“Can we expect a certain degree of transparency, and is there some point where we MPs will be able to know where your priorities are in terms of a possi-

ble renegotiation—what you will be promoting [and] what sectors will be on the table?” he asked in French during the Oct. 2 meeting.

LeBlanc responded in French that a multi-partisan approach helps Canada, but offered caution about what can be said publicly.

“We are preparing for the options for the Canadian position with consultation with provinces and territories,” he said. “We are continuing and having more detailed discussions. At some point, I will be able to come back here and—I imagine—to share what we heard and what Canada’s priorities are.”

LeBlanc referenced the committee meeting being in public, and reiterated the government’s frequently repeated line against negotiating in public.

“To have support of parliamentarians and to discuss honestly and frankly about these things, I’m happy to find out what mechanisms would allow us to do this,” he said.

As part of Global Affairs Canada’s inclusive trade agenda, the government has acknowledged that Canadians have expressed a concern over a “perceived” lack of transparency in trade talks, and committed to “improving transparency throughout negotiation processes and related activities.”

But instead of improving transparency in its negotiations with the Trump administration, it has taken a step back.

‘We know very little’: trade lawyer

International trade lawyer Lawrence Herman told the committee on Sept. 22 that he accepts the premise that negotiations shouldn’t be done in public.

“But that being said, we know very little about the state of talks with the United States, which is very unusual. It may be just the fact that we’re dealing with a difficult administration and going public on anything—even the broad outline of the talks—could cause problems, but I’m concerned that we don’t know exactly what is on the agenda,” he remarked.

“I certainly understand the constraints, but I think we could use a little more clarity,” he added.

Herman told *The Hill Times* that in the normal course of trade negotiations, the government would indicate what the scope of the talks were and show what issues they hoped to address.

He acknowledged that due to the volatility of the Trump admin-

istration it is “very difficult” to forecast what is being addressed, remarking it is a “very hard line to define” between releasing information and preventing a Trump backlash.

“My concern is that there has not been very much disclosed—not even the objectives of the talks,” Herman said. “We know it’s addressing issues of security, defence, and trade, but even in the narrower sectors—let’s say trade—we are not well informed about what is being addressed.”

Herman said he wasn’t intending to be critical in his committee comments, remarking that the lack of knowledge of the talks is “unfortunate.”

“I appreciate how difficult it is for the Carney team to go public on any particular issue. You just never know if the Trump administration would take umbrage or feel that somehow confidence has been betrayed,” he said. “It’s unfortunate, but it’s just the way it is.”

He said he hopes that more about the talks will be disclosed by the government over the coming days.

Former trade negotiator Colin Robertson, now a senior adviser at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, said that Canada should be more transparent about what it is trying to achieve in trade talks.

He said that information about the talks is coming out in “drips and drabs,” and it is requiring Canadians to parse information from the series of interviews and press conferences with Carney and LeBlanc to get a sense of what is going on.

“I think the public and the premiers, also, expect more,” he said.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford told reporters on Oct. 7 prior to Carney’s Oval Office meeting that if a deal isn’t on the table then Canada has to “hit back.”

“Maybe Prime Minister Carney knows something that I don’t know. If that’s the case, he should sit down with the premiers and explain that—that’s what he needs to do,” Ford said.

Robertson said that to maintain public confidence, Carney should lay out what he is seeking to accomplish. He said that without an explanation, Carney is opening himself up to the criticism that he is getting from the opposition.

Returning to Ottawa on Oct. 8, Carney faced remarks in Question Period from Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Battle River-Crowfoot, Alta.) and Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil-Chambly, Que.)

over his failure to get a tariff-relief deal and his reversal on his “elbows up” election rhetoric.

‘We need to be united’: Sgro

Sgro said she sees the work of the House Trade Committee as not being tied up with the same rhetoric that has been seen in the Chamber.

“The fact that the Question Period is the time where all kinds of ridiculous things can get thrown out and said ... I don’t think that you will find that kind of behaviour coming from the members from the International Trade [Committee],” she said.

When asked, Sgro said she agreed with the idea that this rhetoric could hurt Canada’s negotiating position.

“It would be much better if everybody was promoting Canada and all the positives and the value that things like our industry do for Canada,” she said. “We need to be united as we can be in promoting all the benefits of Canada in every opportunity that we have.”

“[The U.S.] is very attuned to what is going on in Canada, and what gets thrown around and what gets said,” she said.

She said that MPs on the committee understand the “seriousness” of the current moment.

“We are carrying it out in that way. The way Canadians expect us to behave in a difficult time: to do our job the best that we can do,” Sgro said.

Queen’s University emeritus professor Robert Wolfe, an expert on Canadian trade policy, said increased transparency is complicated with the issue that if the government says something in public then it becomes committed to that outcome.

He said another issue is that Trump will use any public disclosure to his advantage.

“It’s always really difficult to say very much in public, especially in a trade negotiation because you’re dealing with another country, but even more when you’re dealing with Donald Trump,” he said.

He said that publicly outlining Canada’s objectives is also complicated due to the uncertainty of what is achievable when dealing with Trump.

Wolfe said Carney has avoided the worst-case scenario. Some countries have accepted trade deals with the U.S. that include agreed-upon tariff levels. The so-calledentanyl tariffs on Canada are set at 35 per cent, but CUSMA-compliant goods are exempt. But punishing sectorial tariffs remain, particularly for the aluminium, steel, lumber, and auto industries.

“You could say [that Carney has] been ragging the puck. He likes to say that we have the best deal of any country at the moment. That’s not lather from him—that’s objectively the case,” Wolfe said.

Wolfe questioned the idea that if Carney had been transparent about “all the stupid things Trump has asked for that he said no to, how will that improve the eventual outcome of the process?”

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Civil liberties groups urge Liberals to withdraw 'vague' anti-hate bill that opposition MPs say is 'trying to lower the bar' for prosecution

Bloc and Conservative members of the House Justice Committee studying Bill C-9 accused the Liberals of using the legislation to 'dilute' the definition of hate and lowering the bar for frivolous prosecutions.

Continued from page 1

Monitoring Group, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Black Legal Action Centre, the Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, the Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council and the Muslim Lawyers Association, Independent Jewish Voices and the Jewish Faculty Network. They said C-9 "fails to meet the required democratic balance and risks serious infringements on fundamental freedoms protected under both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and international law."

"We urge you to reconsider your approach, while keeping in mind that criminal law is not the solution to every social issue," the letter reads. "Instead of addressing the structural roots of racism and hatred, including antisemitism and Islamophobia, Bill C-9 perpetuates a punitive model that invariably ends up being weaponized against the very communities it claims to protect."

Anaïs Bussi res McNicoll, director of the CCLA's Fundamental Freedoms Program, said Bill C-9 "risks criminalizing peaceful protests near tens of thousands of public locations in Canada," and that many of the communities it seeks to protect were represented among the letter's signatories.

"This is a wide, united front of Black community members, Arab, Muslim, Jewish, LGBTQIA+ groups, and labour unions, telling the government that it should reconsider," Bussi res McNicoll told *The Hill Times*, adding that none of the organizations that signed the letter had been consulted on the legislation before it was introduced.

Among the signatories' primary concerns is the removal of the requirement for consent from a provincial attorney general (AG) for hate crime charges to be laid,



Justice Minister Sean Fraser says Bill C-9 'strikes the right balance' between calls for clarity from law enforcement and Canadians' rights to express themselves. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

which Bussi res McNicoll called a "key safeguard to ensure that any decision to proceed was legally informed, and that's especially important in the context of criminal prohibitions, where expression and conscience are implicated."

"It's incredibly troubling to see how this bill suggests removing a key safeguard against the risk of arbitrary, inconsistent, or selective enforcement," said Bussi res McNicoll, adding that the new intimidation and obstruction offences are "so broadly and vaguely defined" they "could easily be read by the police" to include "offensive," but peaceful protests.

Bussi res McNicoll said "the line is not clear" as to where the limit would be between a loud and intimidating protest, or whether simply the size of a protest could be enough to incite fear. She said this "paves the way to arbitrary enforcement by the police who have a history of disproportionately targeting marginalized communities attempting to challenge the status quo."

"The freedom of peaceful assembly and expression is not absolute, but it includes protecting the rights of people to express their opinions and beliefs, however unpopular or unpleasant," Bussi res McNicoll explained. "An essential piece of that is protecting a certain level of disruption."

She added that many of the institutions the legislation aims to protect—including places of

worship—are also often used for political purposes or events unrelated to religious services, and "in that context, it would be extremely fair for these buildings to be exposed to non-violent, peaceful protest nearby."

When questioned by *The Hill Times* regarding the CCLA's concerns before the Liberals caucus meeting on Oct. 8, Fraser said the government would "certainly entertain ... good faith amendments that may come forward" during the House Justice Committee's study "that don't threaten the spirit of what we're trying to achieve to allow Canadians to live free of hate in their communities."

In response to the specific concerns over the removal of provincial AG consent, Fraser said consultations had determined "the additional layer of political scrutiny on what would normally be an independent decision made by law enforcement or Crown prosecutors" could "jeopardize the independence of [their] analysis."

Bloc, Conservative MPs accuse Fraser of attempting to 'criminalize speech the Liberals don't like'

During his Oct. 9 appearance at the Justice Committee, Fraser defended the legislation from many of the same criticisms raised in the letter, including concerns from Bloc Qu b cois MP

Rheal Fortin (Rivi re-du-Nord, Que.) that it "essentially copy-pasted" existing Criminal Code provisions.

Fraser told the committee that the new laws were more about imposing "tougher penalties" for hate-motivated criminal offences, and compared the provisions on hate symbols to the difference between assault and assault with a weapon.

"We wanted to recognize that sometimes the tool that you use to commit a crime makes it more serious," Fraser said. "It still would have been criminal before you used a weapon, but it recognizes the harm can be greater with the tool that you use."

Fortin, committee vice-chair and his party's justice critic, also questioned whether Fraser believed the existing parameters for what constitutes a hate crime within the Criminal Code were "too broad [or] too narrow," given the newly proposed legislation.

Fraser said he believed the outline proposed in C-9 "strikes the right balance" in response to calls for clarity from law enforcement, as well as the "important distinction" between the right to protest and intimidation and hatred. He said it would "offer a greater degree of protection to Canadians to be themselves without infringing on the protections of the ability to express yourself freely."

Fraser added that the legislation was "designed instead to provide clarity to those who are actually enforcing the law on the ground" based on the existing jurisprudence from the Supreme Court.

However, Conservative MP Roman Baber (York Centre, Ont.) challenged that assertion, noting that the legislation doesn't include the words "intense and extreme nature" in its definition of "hatred" as found in the Supreme Court's 1990 *R. v. Keegstra* decision, which describes it as an emotion "of an intense and extreme nature that is clearly associated with vilification and detestation."

Bill C-9 defines hatred as "the emotion that involves detestation or vilification and that is stronger than disdain or dislike."

Baber asked Fraser why his government was "trying to lower the bar" and "dilute" the definition of hate, suggesting it was to "criminalize speech the Liberals don't like." Baber added that the legislation's proposed definition "is so broad and ill-considered" it was potentially unconstitutional.

Fraser responded that, in his interpretation, "vilification and detestation are extreme manifestations," and that the legislation

intended to codify Keegstra's definition. Still, it would not be a "deal breaker" if the committee determined the legislation "would benefit from a different reflection" to earn multi-partisan support, he said.

In response to several questions from the Bloc and Conservative MPs raising concerns over the potential for frivolous or vexatious private prosecutions due to the removal of the AG consent requirement, Fraser said that a judicial screening process remains in place to prevent such cases as provinces can still implement pre-charge screening at their discretion.

Fraser said he thought "the extensive body of case law" that informs the actions of law enforcement "over decades" has rendered the "safeguard" provided by AG consent "not as necessary as it would have been" when the definition was initially introduced in the early 1990s.

NDP MP Lori Idlout (Nunavut), her party's justice critic whom the committee granted the opportunity to question Fraser, took issue with the minister's confidence in the police to administer hate crimes charges without AG consent, noting that there is a "deep level of distrust" for law enforcement among Indigenous communities. Idlout also raised the NDP's concerns about the legislation front-loading hate crime charges instead of at the end of the judicial process, which would risk stigmatizing those whose charges are later dropped.

Due to procedural time constraints, Fraser was unable to respond to Idlout in person, and elected to provide written answers to the committee.

In an interview with *The Hill Times*, Idlout said she expected to receive those answers sometime this week, but that Fraser's answers to similar committee questions had not assuaged her concerns.

"The responses were not satisfactory to me, and I don't feel confident that law enforcement is the right agent to lay hate charges," she said, adding that even if the charges are later dropped, "the stigma remains with the person."

"For the minister to say that the courts and provincial AGs have the option to do additional work to provide the safeguard is too much confidence in systems that haven't been there, especially for marginalized and racialized communities."

As for whether she believes the bill should be withdrawn or if the concerns raised by her party and civil liberties associations could be addressed through amendments, Idlout was not optimistic that the Liberals would do so, nor did she believe the Conservative members would decline to move it forward.

"The Liberals and Conservatives appear to be working together on this bill, so we have no choice but to focus on making amendments," Idlout said, adding that if her party had recognized status in the House—and, in turn, a seat at committee—"we would definitely focus all our efforts on making sure that the bill couldn't pass."

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FEATURE

Switzerland hosts September soirée
The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia



1. El Salvadorian Ambassador Ricardo Alfonso Cisneros Rodríguez, left, Gratien Girod, and Alix Hector get into the Switzerland spirit at Soirée Suisse at the official residence on Sept. 10. 2. Andréanne Quintal, Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (Quebec) president, left; and Anne-Béatrice Bullinger, Swiss consul general in Montreal. 3. Sébastien Carrière, chief of protocol of Canada, left; Swiss Ambassador Olaf Kjelsen; and his wife Carine Kjelsen. 4. Kjelsen, right, greets Japanese Ambassador Kanji Yamanouchi. 5. Barbara Heinzl, attachée at the Austrian Embassy, left; Vanda Leticia Széll, cultural and public affairs second secretary and the Hungarian Embassy; and Melanie Vogel, cultural curator, Austrian Cultural Forum Ottawa at the Austrian Embassy. 6. Sylvie Bragard, UFE Ottawa-Gatineau president, left; and Serge Belet, senior manager of public affairs and partnerships at the National Gallery of Canada.

Slovakia marks artful national day



1. Slovak Ambassador Viera Grigova, right, delivers remarks as her husband Stanislav Griga, centre, and artist Adriana Korkos look on at a national day reception and art exhibition held at the Slovak Embassy on Sept. 19. 2. Dagmar Timurová, deputy head of mission at the Slovak Embassy, left; Griga; Grigova; and Serbian Ambassador Stefan Tomašević. 3. Guests had patriotic desserts available to sample. 4. Bulgarian Ambassador Plamen Georgiev, left, and Grigova. 5. Griga, left, Grigova, and Mongolian Ambassador Sarantogos Erdenetsogt.

Hill Climbers



By Laura Ryckewaert

Breaking down the offices of secretaries of state Gainey, Long

David Frank-Savoie is now a policy and operations director for Secretary of State Anna Gainey, while Josh Mbandi runs policy for Secretary of State Wayne Long.

Secretary of State for Children and Youth **Anna Gainey** is supported by a team of six staffers, and soon Secretary of State for the Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions **Wayne Long** will be, too.

As noted in these pages back in June, **Alexander Jagric** is in place as chief of staff to Gainey.

David Frank-Savoie, whose past jobs on the Hill have largely had a parliamentary affairs focus to date, is now director of policy and operations to Gainey.

Frank-Savoie has been working for members of the Liberal cabinet since 2019, beginning as assistant to the parliamentary secretary to then-democratic institutions minister **Karina Gould**. He later followed Gould to the international development portfolio, and again to the families, children, and social development portfolio that she was shuffled into after the 2021 federal election, by which point he carried the title of parliamentary affairs adviser. Frank-Savoie was promoted to “senior” status by Gould, and in 2023, under then-families minister **Jenna Sudds**, he was elevated again to director of parliamentary affairs.

Prior to 2019, Frank-Savoie had been an assistant to then-Liberal MP **Celina Caesar-Chavannes**.

Focused on legislative affairs for Gainey is assistant **Madison Lalonde**. Lalonde has been working

for Gainey since shortly after the former Liberal Party president was elected to represent Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount, Que., in the House for the first time in a 2023 byelection.

Lalonde graduated from Concordia University with a bachelor's degree in political science; and community, public affairs, and policy studies last year. She has previously been active with the Young Liberals of Canada's Québec section. Her online CV also includes a summer 2023 internship in then-Crown-Indigenous relations minister **Gary Anandasangaree's** office (after which she was hired by Gainey), part-time work as a digital communications co-ordinator with Canada 2020 (an organization co-founded by Gainey's husband, now-PMO principal secretary **Tom Pitfield**), an internship in then-Quebec Liberal **Brenda Shanahan's** office, and a six-month run as a communications assistant to Quebec MP **Annie Kourakis**.

Gabriela McGuinty Cañete is an operations adviser to Gainey. McGuinty Cañete earned a master of science degree last year through the MESPOM program—an Erasmus Mundus joint master's degree in environment sciences, policy, and management that's operated through four universities, one each in Sweden, the United Kingdom, Austria, and Greece.

Her past experience includes internships with the Institute for Security and Development Policy, and the United Nations' Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health, among other things.

While **Margaret Jaques**, a former communications director to Sudds as families minister (among other

things), was previously helping with communications for Gainey, **Hill Climbers** understands she's no longer with the team.

Elsa Niyongabo is now press

secretary and communications adviser to Gainey, working closely with communications assistant **Aaron Rosenbaum**.

A former special assistant for operations and communications in the office of then-PMO chief of staff **Katie**

Telford, Niyongabo has been off the Hill since 2024. She's since worked part time as a communications director with MASC, a local community arts organization; as a teaching assistant at the University of Ottawa, from which she now holds both a master's and bachelor's degree; and most recently as a francophone immigration events and content strategy co-ordinator for the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada.

Rosenbaum is another ex-aide to Gainey as a Liberal MP, and worked on her successful re-election campaign this past spring,

as well as on Prime Minister **Mark Carney's** leadership campaign at the start of the year. Rosenbaum is also a former fellow with the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, and, according to his LinkedIn profile, is set to graduate from Concordia University with a master's degree in public policy and public administration next spring.

Jumping to Long's team, which is run by chief of staff **Kevin Collins**—as also reported by **Hill Climbers** in June—the secre-



Secretary of State for Children and Youth **Anna Gainey**, left, and Secretary of State for the Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions **Wayne Long** are staffing up their offices. *The Hill Times* photographs by Sam Garcia

tary of state had five staff on board as of filing deadline, but a sixth was expected to be added to the team.

Among those already in place is director of policy **Joshua Mbandi**.

It's Mbandi's first time holding the title of director. A former policy adviser in the housing minister's office, he was caught up in the ministerial turnover in that portfolio that started

in December 2024 when former housing minister

Sean Fraser was dropped from cabinet. (Fraser is,

of course, now back as justice minister.) Liberal MP **Nathaniel Erskine-Smith** subsequently took over the

office—keeping Mbandi on board as a policy aide—but was shuffled out in May when current Housing Minister **Gregor Robertson** was given charge of the file.

A former legislative assistant to then-Toronto MP **Han Dong** and past constituency assistant to Liberal MP **Ahmed Hussen**, Mbandi was first hired as an Ontario regional affairs adviser by Hussen as then-housing, diversity, and inclusion minister. He stayed on after

Fraser was named housing minister in 2023, and the next year was promoted to policy adviser. Mbandi is also a former assistant to then-Toronto city councillor—and now Build Canada Homes CEO—**Ana Bailão**.

Maghnus Ryan has landed the role of manager of operations to Long as secretary of state. He was most recently executive assistant to New Brunswick Premier

Susan Holt, but previously spent almost three-and-a-half years between 2020 and 2023 as a con-

stituency assistant to Long as the MP for the then-named riding of Saint John-Rothesay, N.B. Ryan has also recently been vice-president of communications for the New Brunswick Liberal Party, and previously did communications work for the province's Liberal caucus in the months before the October 2024 election that saw the party form government.

Yasmin Adam has been hired to the dual title of operations adviser and executive

assistant. She's a former field co-ordinator for the federal Liberal Party, and graduated from the Uni-

versity of Ottawa with a bachelor's degree in political science last year.

Finally, **Luca Bonifacio-Proietto** is an adviser for issues management, communications, and parliamentary

affairs to Long, serving as the secretary of state's de facto press secretary.

A former economics and policy consultant with KPMG Canada, Bonifacio-Proietto previously worked for **Dominic LeBlanc**, starting in

the fall of 2024 as a policy adviser in LeBlanc's office as then-public safety, democratic institutions, and intergovernmental affairs minister, and continuing after LeBlanc was made minister of finance and intergovernmental affairs in December 2024.

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The Hill Times



David Frank-Savoie is director of policy and operations to Gainey. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Elsa Niyongabo is press secretary and communications adviser to Gainey. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Josh Mbandi is director of policy to Long. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



Gabriela McGuinty Cañete is an operations adviser to Gainey. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Aaron Rosenbaum is a communications assistant to Gainey. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Madison Lalonde is a legislative assistant to Gainey. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Luca Bonifacio-Proietto is an issues, communications, and parliamentary affairs adviser to Long. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Parliamentary Calendar

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

CSE chief Xavier to deliver keynote on cyber resilience at Vancouver Security Summit on Oct. 17



Communications Security Establishment chief Caroline Xavier will take part in the second annual Vancouver International Security Summit, delivering keynote address on Friday, Oct. 17. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15

House Schedule—The House of Commons will sit 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 only 73 days this 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.

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 Minister 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.

THURSDAY, OCT. 16

Panel: 'Cybersecurity and Opportunities for Advanced Transatlantic Cooperation'—The Conference of Defence Associations Institute and the Embassy of Lithuania to Canada host a panel, "Cybersecurity and Opportunities for Advanced Transatlantic Cooperation," featuring a keynote by Antanas Aleknavičius, director of the National Cyber Security Centre at Lithuania's Ministry of National Defence, who will deliver a keynote address on strengthening cyber resilience. A roundtable discussion with experts will follow. Thursday, Oct. 16, at 10 a.m. ET at KPMG, 150 Elgin St., Suite 1800, Ottawa. Register: events@cdainstitute.ca.

Bank of Canada Governor to Deliver Remarks—Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem will speak on "Canada's economic outlook and global trade" at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. Thursday, Oct. 16, at 1:30 p.m. ET in Washington, D.C. Details: bankofcanada.ca.

Pints and Politics with Liberal MP Wilkinson—Liberal MP Jonathan Wilkinson will take part in a Pints and Politics event hosted by North Shore Liberals. Thursday, Oct. 16, at 7 p.m.

PT, at 1096-22 St., North Vancouver, B.C. Details: event.liberal.ca.

THURSDAY, OCT. 16—FRIDAY, OCT. 17

Vancouver International Security Summit—Communications Security Establishment chief Caroline Xavier will take part in the second annual Vancouver International Security Summit. Other speakers include former CSIS director David Vigneault; Nicole Giles, CSIS's deputy director of policy and partnerships; Richard B. Fadden, former national security adviser to the prime minister (2015-2016); and Liberal MP Will Greaves. Thursday, Oct. 16, to Friday, Oct. 17, at the Coast Coal Harbour Vancouver Hotel, 1180 W Hastings St., Vancouver. Details: rebootcommunications.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 Metropolitan Montreal. Monday, Oct. 20, at 11:30 a.m. ET at Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth, 900 René-Lévesque Blvd. W., Montreal. Details: ccmm.ca.

Lecture: 'Transnational Making of UN Peacekeeping'—Carleton University hosts this year's Shannon Lecture, "The Transnational Making of United Nations Peacekeeping." Brian Drohan, associate professor of history at the U.S. Military Academy—West Point, explores how Canada has shaped the course and conduct of peacekeeping beyond its commitments to individual peacekeeping missions. Monday, Oct. 20, at 7 p.m. ET at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre, 355 Cooper St., Ottawa. Details: events.carleton.ca.

TUESDAY, OCT. 21

Auditor General to Deliver Six Performance Audit Reports—Auditor General Karen Hogan will deliver six performance audit reports to the House of Commons. The reports include: Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System, Canada Revenue Agency Contact Centres, Follow-up on Programs for First Nations, Housing Canadian Armed Forces Members, Recruiting for Canada's Military, and Cyber Security of Government Networks and Systems. Tuesday, Oct. 21, at 10 a.m. ET. A press conference will follow at 12:30 p.m. ET in Room 200, Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: infomedia@oag-bvg.gc.ca.

Chrétien and Harper in The Regent Debate—Former prime ministers Jean Chrétien and Stephen Harper will take part in the seventh Regent Debate hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. The topic of the debate is "Canadian Unity in a Fractured World." Tuesday, Oct. 21, at 5 p.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York, 100 Front St., Toronto. Register: cdhowe.org.

Fireside Chat with Madelaine Drohan—The Canadian International Council's annual general meeting will be followed by a fireside chat with author Madelaine Drohan on her book, *Benjamin Franklin's Failure to Annex Canada*. Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 5 p.m. ET at KPMG, 150 Elgin St., Suite 1800, Ottawa. Details via Eventbrite.

Today's Famous 5 Ottawa Award—Famous 5 Ottawa will recognize five women who are blazing trails, challenging norms, and lifting others up in the Ottawa region. Tuesday, Oct. 21, at 5:30 p.m. ET in the Richcraft Atrium, Carleton University, 1125 Colonel By Dr., Ottawa. Details: famous5ottawa.ca.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 22

We Grow to Build: FPAC's National Policy Conference—The Forest Products Association of Canada hosts its 2025 National Forest Policy Conference. This year's theme is "Canadian Forestry at a Crossroads: Navigating Turbulence, Unlocking Potential and Restoring Resilience." Wednesday, Oct. 22, at 8:30 a.m. ET at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St. Contact rogers@fpac.ca. Register via Eventbrite.

'Reimagining Trade in the Federation'—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts "Barriers and Bridges: Reimagining Trade in the

Federation," a chance to reflect on the future of internal trade in Canada. Participants include former Quebec premier Philippe Couillard; professor Stéphane Paquin; and Maryse Picard, lawyer and former executive director of the Huron-Wendat Nation. Wednesday, Oct. 22, at 5 p.m. ET at the Morrin Centre, 44 Chaussée des Écossais, Quebec City. Details: irpp.org.

Library and Archives Canada Scholar Awards—The Library and Archives Canada Foundation, and Library and Archives Canada host the 2025 Library and Archives Canada Scholar Awards honouring outstanding Canadians who've left an indelible mark on our country's cultural, literary, and historical heritage. This year's recipients are: author Danny Ramadan, historian Margaret MacMillan, poet Rupi Kaur, playwright Tomson Highway, and writer Gabrielle Boulianne-Tremblay. Wednesday, Oct. 22, 5:30 p.m. ET, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. By invitation only.

Psychedelic Medicine Soirée—PsyCan hosts a reception, Psychedelic Medicine Soirée. Join senior leaders, practitioners, and patients for refreshments and to chat about the future of psychedelic medicine in Canada. Wednesday, Oct. 22, at 6:30 p.m. ET at the Rideau Club, 15th floor, 99 Bank St., Ottawa. RSVP: admin@psychedeliccanada.org.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 22—SUNDAY, OCT. 26

Ottawa International Writers' Festival—The Ottawa International Writers' Festival fall edition takes place from Wednesday, Oct. 22, to Sunday, Oct. 26. Details to come: writersfestival.org.

THURSDAY, OCT. 23

Getting Big Things Done 2.0—Canada 2020 hosts the second instalment of "From Ambition to Action: Getting Big Things Done," a one-day summit focused on the realities of delivering transformational projects in Canada. Following up on the June edition, this event will convene top-level doers—developers, policymakers, Indigenous leaders, and industry builders—from across housing, infrastructure, energy, economic development, and trade. Thursday, Oct. 23, at 8:30a.m. ET at The Westin Ottawa, 11 Colonel By Dr. Details: canada2020.ca.

'Mining For a Resilient and Productive Economy'—Pierre Gratton, president and CEO of the Mining Association of Canada, will deliver remarks on "Mining For a Resilient and Productive Economy: Strengthening Canada's Future," hosted by the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. Thursday, Oct. 23, at 11:30 a.m. PT, at Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, 900 W. Georgia St. Details: boardoftrade.com.

Panel: 'Shaping the Future of the Ring of Fire'—Former Liberal MP now mayor of Sudbury, Ont., Paul Lefebvre will take part in a panel discussion, "Ontario's Critical Corridor: Shaping the Future of the Ring of Fire," hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. He will be joined by Priya Tandon, president of the Ontario Mining Association; and Ashley Larose, CEO of Science North. Thursday, Oct. 23, at 12 p.m. ET at the C.D. Howe Institute, 110 Yonge St., Suite 800, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

Douglas Roche to be Awarded—Douglas Roche will receive the Canadian Leadership for Nuclear Disarmament 2025 Distinguished Achievement Award. He will also deliver a lecture, "Creative Dissent: A Politician's Struggle for Peace." A reception will follow. Thursday, Oct. 23, at 4 p.m. at the Centre for International Policy Studies, Room 4007, Faculty of Social Sciences Building, 120 University Pvt., University of Ottawa. Contact: clnd@pugwashgroup.ca.

Ex-CBC Reporter Brian Stewart to Discuss New Book—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*, part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival. Thursday, Oct. 28, at 6:30 p.m. ET at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St. Details: writersfestival.org.

FRIDAY, OCT. 24

Minister McGuinty to Deliver Remarks—Defence Minister David McGuinty will deliver remarks on "The Economics of Action," hosted by the Empire Club of Canada. Friday, Oct. 24, at 11:30 a.m. ET online and in person at Arcadian Court, 401 Bay St., Simpson Tower, 8th floor, Toronto. Details: empireclubofcanada.com.

SUNDAY, OCT. 26

Alex Neve to Discuss 'Human Rights in a Fractured World'—Former Amnesty International Canada secretary-general Alex Neve will sit down with Carleton University's Adrian Harewood to discuss this year's CBC Massey Lectures, titled "Universal: Renewing Human Rights in a Fractured World," part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival. Sunday, Oct. 26, at 8 p.m. ET at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St. Details: writersfestival.org.

MONDAY, OCT. 27

Book Launch for Bob Joseph—Perfect Books and The Other Hill host the launch of Bob Joseph's book, *21 Things You Need to Know About Indigenous Self-Government: A Conversation About Dismantling the Indian Act*. Monday, Oct. 27, at 7 p.m. ET at allsaints, 330 Laurier Ave. E., Ottawa. Details: theotherhill-lautrecoline.ca.

TUESDAY, OCT. 28

Conference: 'Canada's Next Chapter in the Indo-Pacific'—The Canadian Global Affairs Institute hosts a day-long conference on "Canada's Next Chapter in the Indo-Pacific." Among the participants are Malaysian High Commissioner to Canada Dr. Shazlina Z. Abidin; Japan's deputy head of mission Ishii Hideaki; Lisa Baiton, president and CEO, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers; Mark Maki, CEO of Trans Mountain Corp.; and various Canadian government officials. Tuesday, Oct. 28, at 8:30 a.m. ET at 150 Elgin St. suite 1800, Ottawa. Register via Eventbrite.

David Collette to Deliver Remarks—Former Liberal cabinet minister David Collette will deliver virtual remarks on "Navigating the Geopolitical Challenge of Canada's National Security," hosted by the Balsillie School of International Affairs. Tuesday, Oct. 28, at 11 a.m. ET. Happening online: balsillieschool.ca.

