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TWENTY-NINTH YEAR, NO. 1500

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2018 \$5.00

News Conservatives

Seven Conservative MPs face divisive nomination challenges, party denies it's behind the move

- Conservative MP Jim Eglinski told Hill staffer Ryan Oudekirk that he was 'disappointed' and 'not happy' with the nomination challenge.
- Seven incumbent Conservative MPs are facing nomination challenges, including Jim Eglinski, Cheryl Gallant, Mike Lake, Kellie Leitch, Deepak Obhrai, David Tilson, and Brad Trost.



Conservative leader Andrew Scheer, pictured last month on Parliament Hill. The Conservative Party denies it's involved in the open challenges of seven of its incumbent MPs. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

BY ABBAS RANA

Seven Conservative MPs are facing nomination challenges for the 2019 election, but there is widespread speculation the party's leadership is behind at least some of those challenges,

which the party strongly denies. "There were some OLO staffers last fall who were overheard musing about the need to organize challenges against a handful of incumbent MPs, and the four were Brad Trost, Kellie Leitch, Maxime Bernier, and Cheryl Gallant," said

Joseph Ben-Ami, former campaign manager for Conservative MP Brad Trost's (Saskatoon-University, Sask.) unsuccessful leadership campaign. "Three of them, for sure, are facing challenges."

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News Ethics

New ethics czar Dion says he 'has no IOUs,' not looking for another promotion, this is it

BY ABBAS RANA

Canada's new ethics commissioner, who has been criticized by government whistleblowers as a life-long bureaucrat who protects his bosses, says he is best-placed to do the job because he's not interested in pleasing higher-ups and has no IOUs.

Mario Dion, who decided to do media interviews about his new job over the last two weeks, said he's financially secure, not pursuing any future career promotions in the federal government, and that his current position is as high as he will get professionally.

"I'm probably in the best situation because I have acquired financial independence, I'm not pursuing other promotions, I'm 61 years old, I have 37 years of service," said Mr. Dion, who took over his new position on Jan. 9, in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "I do not have IOUs."

Continued on page 30

News Senate

Lobbyists get 'too much time' in Senate committees, says ISG deputy ahead of back-to-Parliament meeting

BY PETER MAZEREUW

Lobbyists have been given "too much time and too much

importance" when it comes to gathering input for the Senate's study of legislation at committee, says the second-highest rank-

ing member of the Independent Senators Group, who is planning to raise the issue during a day-long Independent Senators Group

meeting on the Hill on Feb. 5.

"We should be more aware of the intent of some lobbyists, that is to promote a special cause of spe-

cial industry," said Sen. Raymonde Saint-Germain (De la Vallière, Que.),

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HEARD ON THE HILL

by Shruti Shekar

How Ivison got an exclusive interview with PM at Chelsea Pub



You don't say, John: *National Post* columnist John Ivison interviewed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the Chelsea Pub in Chelsea, Que., but he joked that he really wanted to do it while getting pedicures for the *Post's* new 'Speakeasy' series. Screenshot of *The National Post's* video

Headlined "John Ivison has a pint with the PM: This Liberal's not for turning," *National Post* columnist **John Ivison** interviewed Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** over a glass of beer at a local pub in Chelsea, Que., but Mr. Ivison was pushing for the interview to be done over a spa treatment.

"I have a place in Chelsea, he was heading to Harrington Lake, so the [Chelsea Pub] was

a good meeting point. I had originally suggested the Spa Nordik for us to get our toes done together!" said Mr. Ivison, adding that he had hounded the Prime Minister's Office for a while and that the interview was supposed to have happened before Christmas.

Good thing they didn't do the spa interview because the optics would have been horrible, but Mr. Ivison was kidding, I think.

The interview, which is accompanied by a video, is part of *National Post's* series called "Speakeasy," Mr. Ivison said. Past guests have included NDP MP **Nathan Cullen** and Conservative MP **Pierre Poilievre**, though he said most of the time it's just himself and his colleague, *National Post* reporter **Marie-Danielle Smith** chatting.

Mr. Ivison said he drank on a cider because, as he told his Facebook friends, "my body has decided I drank enough beer for two lifetimes and has rebelled," while Mr. Trudeau drank a beer.

But, despite the casual location, it wasn't as loose as Mr. Ivison had hoped.

"It was a little bit different; he is so polished and disciplined now that it is hard to get him off his talking points," Mr. Ivison said. "I [hoped] that the casual environment and some more philosophical questions about politics and family did that. It was certainly less adversarial than an interview across a desk in his office."

The Jan. 16 piece focused on the federal government denying funding to groups who will not support abortion in an online application form as part of the federal government's summer jobs program.

"One reader wrote to me subsequently asking why I didn't tell him he is destroying Canada and trying to push Islamic values down Canadians' throats. 'If you can't ask proper questions, retire,' he said," Mr. Ivison said, noting that asking a question like that would have been good for TV but ultimately "would have been a very short interview that yielded next to nothing."

Mr. Ivison said Mr. Trudeau offered concessions on the summer jobs program application, committed to reducing the debt-to-GDP ratio, and opened up more about the demands of his job and balancing it with family time.

Mr. Ivison said the interview wasn't "earth-shattering, but not bad." It was one of the top 10 stories on *National News-watch* in the last week and the last month.



She said yes: NDP leader Jagmeet Singh engaged Toronto fashion designer Gurkiran Kaur on Jan. 16. Photograph courtesy of Jagmeet Singh's Twitter

Jagmeet Singh gets engaged, and Twitter goes bonkers

NDP leader **Jagmeet Singh** announced on social media his engagement to Toronto-based entrepreneur and fashion designer **Gurkiran Kaur** on Jan. 16 at a private party in Toronto.

"She said 'Yes,'" Mr. Singh posted on Twitter and Instagram with a picture of his soon-to-be wife.

Shortly after the announcement, *The Canadian Press* reported that members of the media were invited to the proposal which elicited Twitter to blow up and poke fun at Mr. Singh's choice of inviting the media to a private and personal event.

Enviro-nics' **Greg MacEachern** tweeted: "I invited members of the media, including the *Canadian Press*, to watch me unpack a new humidifier this weekend. Did they show? Nooooooo... #RelationshipBias #Cdnpoli."

Warren Kinsella, president of Daisy Consulting and a former federal Liberal staffer and strategist, tweeted that same night: "When I proposed to @lisakinsella in Times Square one New Year's Eve, no media or press handlers were present whatsoever, however, a NYC cop told us to hurry up or we would be arrested."

Mr. Singh's criticism of having the media present at a personal life event came after he and Ms. Kaur made headlines in December when the two were caught on social media at a ceremony that looked like an engagement celebration.

At the time, the couple denied an engagement and said the ceremony was a *Rokha*, a traditional Punjabi ceremony held before a formal engagement takes place. During the event families of both sides meet and agree on a future engagement.

"Firstly, the proposal wasn't a complete surprise. Gurkiran and I have had many conversations about taking our relationship to this level and part of that conversation was about how a public presence would factor in. That's just the reality," Mr. Singh said in a statement to *The Hill Times*. "We're very interested in striking the right balance between events which will be more private and others that will have more of a public factor."

Mr. Singh was elected as NDP leader last fall.

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Opinion Budget 2018-2019

Morneau's new budget can be a wild success: here's how



Finance Minister Bill Morneau, pictured last month on the Hill. In response to staggering levels of wildlife loss, conservation organizations and federal parliamentarians of all political stripes have asked the Government of Canada to make nature a priority in the looming federal budget by allocating at least \$1.4-billion for habitat protections, writes Megan Leslie. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

With only three years remaining to meet our international commitment and a wildlife-loss crisis underway in Canada as it is around the world, it is past time for the federal government to make a significant funding commitment to expand Canada's protected areas network. But to truly conquer the decline of wildlife, we need more than a cash infusion. We need to revolutionize our approach to conservation.



Megan Leslie

Environment

OTTAWA—In response to staggering levels of wildlife loss, conservation organizations and federal parliamentarians of all political stripes have asked the Government of Canada to make nature a priority in the looming federal budget by allocating at least

\$1.4-billion for habitat protections.

While spending on nature is a huge need, how any money is spent is as important as the amount of money in the budget, which Finance Minister Bill Morneau is finalizing now to be unveiled in March.

If spent wisely, adequate new funding has the potential to be wildly successful for the most vulnerable habitats and species in Canada. In addition to helping reverse wildlife declines, a well-executed federal initiative can advance reconciliation by applying traditional knowledge and engaging Indigenous communities to identify important natural areas and manage them.

And Canadian wildlife can't afford for the government to squander this opportunity.

Already, 50 per cent of monitored wildlife species in Canada are in decline, according to the WWF's Living Planet Report Canada released in September. Another recent WWF study shows the world is on track to lose 67 per cent of wildlife populations by 2020 if the global decline isn't turned around.

One of the best ways to reverse wildlife loss is to protect areas that provide species with safe havens from the risks of development. Today, in the face of climate change, there are three key components to any effective protected area. The habitat must be:

Critical for the well-being of wildlife.

Large enough to support the entire ecosystem (rather than only the most critical habitats).

Part of a larger network, providing land, freshwater or marine corridors that enable Canada's native wildlife to shift in response to changing environments.

Recognizing the importance of habitat protection, Canada has committed to safeguarding at least 17 per cent of Canada's land and inland waters and 10 per cent of marine and coastal areas by 2020 under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. We still have a long way to go.

As of 2016, Canada has protected only 10.5 per cent of our terrestrial area. And while that may not sound too bad, there are many reasons to think these existing protections aren't good enough. Most of those are either not big enough or not integrated enough to be effective. What's more, current protected lands are more often chosen for their affordability, and not for the abundance and importance of the wildlife they support.

On the marine protection side, the numbers are murkier. Until last year, less than 1 per cent of Canada's oceans were protected. In 2017, the government showed just how fast it could move when motivated, making commitments to marine protections that, on paper, increased Canada's ocean protection coverage to nearly 8 per cent. But the basic details of some of protections are unclear, such as when they will be in effect, how they will be monitored and what types of development they will preclude. When we see oil and gas exploration and extraction still permitted within proposed protected areas, as with the Laurentian Channel, we need to question whether the government is serious about taking measures that will meaningfully benefit wildlife and the people who depend on them.

For new protected areas to deliver lasting results, quality is as important as quantity. Canada needs a minimum standard for protected areas to ensure the most critical areas are properly guarded against current and future human threats. We can't always choose the low hanging fruit of barren regions with little wildlife and few threats.

With only three years remaining to meet our international commitment and a wildlife-loss crisis underway in Canada as it is around the world, it is past time for the federal government to make a significant funding commitment to expand Canada's protected areas network.

But to truly conquer the decline of wildlife, we need more than a cash infusion. We need to revolutionize our approach to conservation.

Megan Leslie is president and CEO to the World Wildlife Fund Canada and a former NDP MP.

The Hill Times

The Standard: Supporting Workplace Mental Health

Workplaces can play an essential part in maintaining positive mental health. They can give people the opportunity to feel productive and be a strong contributor to employee well-being. Yet it can also be a stressful environment that contributes to the rise of mental health problems and illnesses.

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Town halls do reveal voter issues

Inasmuch as the town halls succeeded in changing the narrative or at least in providing a temporary diversion from the troubles that await the Liberals once the House reopens later this month they have for the most part been decreed to be a strategic success for the government.



Chantal Hébert

Inside Politics

There may come a time when Trudeau falls out of love with the open town halls that are becoming a yearly feature of his tenure as prime minister.

When the mood of the country sours on a government, challengers are not as easily turned into enablers.

It does not take a huge amount of institutional memory to recall that Trudeau's recent predecessors have all known periods where affection from the public or even part of their own party was hard to come by. The list includes the prime minister's father.

Media veterans of the constitutional wars, the free trade debate and the sponsorship scandal, not to mention various GST episodes, have had occasion to measure first-hand how unreceptive a Canadian electorate polarized by a divisive issue can become towards a once-popular government leader.

But this year's prime ministerial opening act—eliciting as it has so far mostly positive reviews—is not such a time.

The format does play to Trudeau's particular set of political skills. As a bonus, the town halls act as a caucus morale booster on the eve of what will undoubtedly be another rocky sitting of Parliament.

As widely noted, Trudeau is rarely as on top of things under fire in question period as he is in a public forum. But performance is only part of the story. The exercise also provides a reality check of sorts on the current mood of the country and the success or lack thereof of the opposition parties.

The politically engaged Canadians who show up at town halls cannot but be aware of the travails of Finance Minister Bill Morneau or of the prime minister's lackadaisical approach to the ethics rules that should have prevented him from accepting a holiday invitation from the Aga Khan. Both have been heavily documented in the media over a significant period of time.

But in the big picture, the rough ride the opposition has given Trudeau over the fall sitting of Parliament has left relatively few skid marks on his public persona.

The town halls have elicited little evidence that the Conservative message that middle-class families are worse off under Trudeau is resonating or that there is a large market beyond the Tory base for the notion the prime minister is insensitive to their concerns by virtue of his personal wealth.

Ditto in the case of NDP assertions that the prime minister is managing the Canada-U.S. relationship on bended knees.

For lack of a solid factual foundation, neither opposition narrative has hit the kind of public opinion nerve that drives disappointed voters to reach for pitchforks to take to the government of the day.

The big battle of the next few months in Parliament is expected to revolve around the legalization of cannabis.

Andrew Scheer's Conservatives have pledged to do all they can to block or at least delay the implementation of Trudeau's signature promise. They may be setting out to try to close the barn door after the horses have bolted.

At this late stage, a parliamentary blockade—presumably in the Senate—would wreak havoc with provincial plans. With varying degrees of enthusiasm, the provinces have set out to meet next summer's deadline to have in place the infrastructure required to market cannabis. Anything that adds a measure of uncertainty to an already complex operation is unlikely to be a welcome initiative.

The Conservatives road-tested their message on cannabis in a series of by-elections last fall only to finish the year two seats short of their initial complement. The change in the legal status of marijuana may be imminent but it did not emerge as a central concern on the town hall radar.

Inasmuch as the town halls succeeded in changing the narrative or at least in providing a temporary diversion from the troubles that await the Liberals once the House reopens later this month they have for the most part been decreed to be a strategic success for the government.

But the exercise has also shown that the connection between the dominant question period narratives of the past year and the actual central preoccupations of many voters is tenuous at best.

It is fair to wonder which of the two is the diversion: the issues that voters raise with the prime minister in the town halls or those that daily consume parliamentary insiders?



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Jan. 10, 2018, at a town hall discussion in Hamilton, Ont. Photograph courtesy of the Prime Minister's Office: Adam Scotti

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer for The Toronto Star. This column was released on Jan. 16.
The Hill Times



Canadian Blood Services announces new chair

Canadian Blood Services is pleased to announce the appointment of **Mel Cappe** as chair of our board of directors.

Mr. Cappe's distinguished career includes serving as High Commissioner for Canada to the U.K, clerk of the Privy Council, secretary to the Cabinet and head of the Public Service. A professor at the University of Toronto's School of Public Policy and Governance, Mr. Cappe brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this role.

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News Sexual Harassment

May wants to see all-party women's caucus tackle issue of sexual harassment, misconduct on the Hill

'As women working together in our all-party women's caucus, I think we can do a lot,' says Green Party Leader Elizabeth May.

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

Amid the #MeToo and Time's Up movements, Green Party Leader Elizabeth May says she'd "love" to see the all-party women's caucus tackle the issue of sexual harassment on Parliament Hill and plans to raise the idea with colleagues when the House returns next week.

"Women in public lives could perhaps give women in other, less high-profile positions more courage to step up and say, 'This is not acceptable, I do not accept this,'" said Ms. May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.), who first became involved in the all-party women's caucus in 2011 and helped push for its re-formation this Parliament.

"I'd love to revisit what we do about sexual harassment on Parliament Hill through the women's caucus," she said. "I'll be talking to my colleagues about it when we get back at the end of January."

Ms. May noted, for example, that in late 2012, the previous all-party women's caucus held a press conference to speak out as a group against an anti-abortion motion from then Conservative MP Stephen Woodworth.

An all-party women's caucus—at times alternatively styled as the all-party parliamentary women's caucus, or the parliamentary women's association—has existed on Parliament Hill since the late 1980s, albeit largely informally and with hiatuses of varying lengths in between.

Re-constituted at the start of this Parliament, the all-party women's caucus is chaired by Lib-

eral MP Anita Vandenberg (Ottawa West-Nepean, Ont.), who's also chair of the Liberal women's caucus, and includes Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia-Lambton, Ont.), a former chair of the House Status of Women Committee; NDP MP Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo-Ladysmith, B.C.), chair of the NDP women's caucus; Ms. May; and Bloc Québécois MP Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, Que.).

Speaking with *The Hill Times* last week, Ms. Vandenberg stressed that the all-party women's caucus is very much an "informal" one.

That means there is no Parliament-allocated budget, and no membership list—outside the five MPs listed above who work together to organize and put on various women-centric events on Parliament Hill, funded, when required, using their individual MPs' office budgets.

"It is really very much just women of Parliament trying to create space where we can meet together and meet with external groups and have a convening kind of space," said Ms. Vandenberg.

"Often, because we're across the aisle, there's really very little space across parties where we can really sit together and talk about whatever it is that comes up. So sometimes it might be issues facing women here ... a lot of it is international, you have women's groups coming from other countries," she said.

The all-party caucus put on its first event this Parliament in June 2016—an Indigenous blanket ceremony on the Hill, for reconciliation, with Indigenous elder Barbara Dumont-Hill and Kairos Canada. So far, Ms. Vandenberg said the caucus has helped organize six or seven events since being reformed.

That includes a "launch" event with former Australian prime minister Julia Gillard in February attended by roughly 40 MPs; a reception put on with Equal Voice for Daughters of the Vote in March; meeting with a South Sudanese women's group; a Hill reception with the Ovarian Can-

cer Society; and a meeting with female MPs from the ParlaAmericas network.

The all-party women's caucus is currently planning its next "big event," a panel discussion and gathering of female ambassadors to Canada, on Feb. 13, said Ms. Vandenberg, with a networking event on the Hill also in the works to follow International Women's Day in March.

The caucus works strictly on a consensus basis, stressed Ms. Vandenberg, communicating largely by email and in quick, in-person huddles when the House is sitting to decide on and organize events. Each member of the caucus executive takes responsibility for communicating events to their respective party caucus colleagues on the Hill. Ms. Vandenberg said they're also currently "working on trying to engage" female Senators to take part.

The Canadian Press recently did an anonymous survey—sent out to 89 female MPs and filled out by 38—about their experiences with sexual harassment or misconduct on Parliament Hill. Ultimately, 58 per cent of respondents said they'd been subject to one or more forms of sexual misconduct while an MP, four of whom said they had experienced sexual harassment and three who said they'd been victims of sexual assault. Of those who answered questions about the perpetrators, 10 said it came from an MP in another political party, while five said it came from an MP within their own caucus.

During its previous iteration in the last Parliament, under then-chair Liberal MP Carolyn Bennett (Toronto-St. Paul's, Ont.), and current minister for Crown-Indigenous Relations, caucus members met with the House Speaker in December 2014 to discuss how the all-party group could help to establish the since-enacted MP code of conduct and harassment policy, as reported by *The Hill Times*.

So far in this Parliament, the all-party women's caucus hasn't held an event focused on the issue of harassment or misconduct on Parliament Hill. However, Ms. May noted that during the all-party women's caucus' event with Ms. Gillard a "terrific conversation" on sexism and women in politics took place with the former PM.

Asked if she would like to see the all-party women's caucus tackle the issue of harassment on the Hill in the coming year, Ms. Vandenberg said the caucus had yet to discuss the possibility and, as it works on a consensus basis, she didn't want to speak for it.

"I'd have to talk to the other members," she said. "One of the good things though about having an all-party women's caucus is that a lot of discussions can happen when you build trust."

"As we meet in these events, as we work together, [we] can build a little bit more trust across party lines. So that probably leads to a lot of unofficial conversations—a better environment to have those conversations—but I have not heard any appetite for that at this point," said Ms. Vandenberg.

Pressed on if she personally would like the all-party caucus to discuss the idea of tackling the issue of harassment on the Hill, Ms. Vandenberg said "not necessarily in this forum," leaving the door open to other possible avenues.

But generally, Ms. Vandenberg noted the issue is one that MPs are talking about amongst themselves.

"We're not isolated as politicians, this is an issue that people—women and men across the country and internally—this is something that's being talked about," she said.

In its earliest iteration, in 1988, then Liberal MP Mary Clancy, then NDP MP Dawn Black, and then Progressive Conservative MP Pierrette Venne got together, with the support of then House of Commons Speaker John Fraser, to found a parliamentary women's association.

That effort lasted until the 1993 federal election, which saw the Reform Party swept into official opposition and put an end to the cross-party women's association, recalled Ms. Clancy in a phone conversation from Halifax with *The Hill Times* last week. But during its existence, the group pushed, and got action, on a number of changes, said Ms. Clancy, for example, more women's washrooms in the Centre Block building.

Ms. Clancy, who served as an MP for Halifax from 1988 to 1997, said incidents of sexual harassment on the Hill are "nothing new," but said she's been surprised at the reluctance of female MPs to "go public" with complaints today, something she said she thinks women she served with, across party lines, would not have feared doing.

"We would have felt it was our duty," she said. "But also, I understand the vulnerability many women feel in this situation, and therefore I'm not faulting them—I am questioning what's changed in the atmosphere that made them feel that vulnerable."

While she said she hopes the current all-party women's caucus tackles the issue of harassment on the Hill, Ms. Clancy said "it doesn't look like it's high on anybody's agenda," and she thinks the highly polarized Hill atmosphere, and a corresponding loss of collegiality, is one cause.

The recent "episode" involving an inappropriate comment made by Conservative MP James Bezan's (Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, Man.) "threesome" comment to Liberal MP Sherry Romanado (Longueuil-Charles-LeMoyne, Que.), which led Mr. Bezan to apologize in the House, highlighted "some weak-

nesses" in the new harassment policy for MPs, and a need for "fine-tuning," said Ms. May.

Coming up with "concrete suggestions" of ways to improve this fledgling process is one way the all-party women's caucus could work to address the issue of harassment, she said, but stressed her "ideas aren't set in stone," though it's definitely something she plans to raise with the caucus for discussion when the House returns.

"I'd be surprised if it wasn't seen to be a very appropriate thing for us to do as a committee, as an all party women's caucus I think it's highly appropriate," said Ms. May.

"Our male colleagues play a role in dealing with this, absolutely, but there's a role for all of us, and I think the role for women MPs is one that is best taken with both hats on. Women in their caucuses can do things, with their partisan hats on, but I think with our non-partisan hats as women working together in our all-party women's caucus, I think we can do a lot," she said.

Speaking with *The Hill Times* last week, Ms. Malcolmson said the question of whether the all-party women's caucus should do something to address the issue of harassment on the Hill for MPs isn't one that's been discussed within her own party's caucus so far this parliament.

"But absolutely, if there was a motion from anybody in the other parties ... to add this as an agenda item [for the all-party caucus], then I would certainly participate in that conversation and certainly support it being added as an agenda item," said Ms. Malcolmson.

Instead, Ms. Malcolmson said she and the NDP caucus are primarily focused on the government's Bill C-65, which seeks to amend the Canada Labour Code to address workplace harassment and violence, including for staff on Parliament Hill.

"Solidarity is always a powerful tool and that's where we're going to get the most impact and focus, but honestly, the stories that have come through the #MeToo movement and the [Time's Up] movement, they don't suggest to me that MP-on-MP harassment is our highest area of priority," she said.

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The Hill Times



Green Party Leader Elizabeth May says she plans to raise the idea of the all-party women's caucus tackling the issue of harassment, misconduct on the Hill when the House of Commons returns. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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Editorial

Abdoul Abdi is Canada's problem

Abdoul Abdi has been convicted of aggravated assault, and served prison time for it. Now that he's been released, the federal government wants to deport him back to his mother's country of birth, war-torn Somalia, where he will no longer be Canada's problem.

The trouble is, he should be. Mr. Abdi, 23, was not a criminal when he arrived in Canada at the age of six. He was raised in Canada, not by his family but by a series of Canadian foster parents and group homes organized by the government of Nova Scotia's Community Services Department. Mr. Abdi's sister has said he was abused in one foster placement for more than two years, and placed in more than 30 foster and group homes altogether.

Not everyone will sympathize with a man convicted of a violent crime, regardless of his personal history. Perhaps they could find sympathy for Somalis, who would be forgiven for wondering why Canada is trying to ship Mr. Abdi into their midst. Mr. Abdi has never lived in the country, having been born in Saudi Arabia and lived for his early years in a refugee camp in Djibouti, according to an opinion piece co-written by Samer Muscat, a University of Toronto law professor advocating on his behalf to the UN Human Rights Committee, and published in *The Globe and Mail*.

Canada has a system of police officers, prosecutors, courts, and correctional facilities to deal with Canadians who break the law. It also has social assistance

programs, however limited, for ex-cons looking to reintegrate into society.

But Mr. Abdi isn't a Canadian, something else for which he has Canada to thank. Nova Scotia's government blocked his sister from applying for his citizenship on his behalf while he was in foster care, and didn't apply for him either. And so, despite being raised in Canada, the federal government is free to try to deport Mr. Abdi.

Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale's office has declined to comment on Mr. Abdi's case. Someone in the government should clarify the principle behind pursuing the deportation of a permanent resident, raised in Canada and blocked from obtaining citizenship, while declaring, "a Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian" in 2016 when it reversed legal changes brought in by the last government that had made it possible to strip the citizenship of dual citizens convicted of terrorism, allowing for their deportation.

"I would also say we do have a criminal justice system. We do have courts. We do have prisons where those who are convicted of crimes are sent, and that is the way in which we deal with this. We do not need to create two classes of citizenship in order to deal with those who are convicted of criminal offenses," then-Liberal immigration minister John McCallum said at the time.

Forget the technicalities: Abdoul Abdi is as Canadian as anyone who came to this country as a young child. He's not Somalia's problem, he's ours.

Letters to the Editor

While they're at it, MPs should also take cultural diversity training, says letter-writer Mukerjee

Re: "House developing in-person training for MPs on sexual harassment, but not all agree it's needed: 'everyone understands what's unacceptable behaviour,'" (*The Hill Times*, Jan. 8, p. 6). According to this story, the House is proposing there be in-person training sessions for MPs, who represent all Canadians, to counteract sexual harassment in the workplace. It is somewhat not surprising the issue of sexual harassment and the remedies come right to the Hill where this matter has gained much attention.

When it comes to the matter of sexual harassment and its proper treatment, I am reminded of the time when I served in Montreal with Multiculturalism Canada and in response to the sudden and vast influx of South East Asian refugees. I was assigned this dossier on account of my personal and joint East Indian and Slovak origin to enhance sensitive intercultural relations in addressing the Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese refugees in Montreal.

One of my actions was to sensitize the police service to key attitudes and behaviours of these culture-specific new-

comers to enhance their fresh settlement and their integration to the mainstream, in a full multicultural spirit. It is here that I learnt to advise the police to recognize that certain actions they take could be misread. For example, when introduced to women in these communities, one did not extend a hand or touch. Rather in folded hands, one bows in greeting and respect.

Again, unlike Québécois of traditional heritage, the warm hug or a kiss with a woman, as a greeting could be misunderstood. I make mention of these minor cultural signals to indicate how intercultural sensitivity in behaviour with women in cultural diversity needs to be considered. In an extreme, no comments should be made to a woman in full Muslim dress, even as a supposed joke. By no means are there fixed answers in addressing sexual harassment in diversity. Before Parliament takes the needed formal training measures to arrange for MP training, the cultural diversity should also be considered in the process. This is the Canadian way.

Roman Mukerjee
 Ottawa, Ont.

Why does new Holocaust Memorial plaque not recognize Ukrainians?

Regarding the new Holocaust plaque in Ottawa that will officially recognize the murder of Jews and "other groups," why does Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly pretend to be inclusive by adding groups like the Jehovah's Witnesses (of whom perhaps 2,000 were killed) to the plaque at the National Holocaust Memorial while apparently excluding by design

any reference to the many millions of Ukrainians murdered or enslaved by the Nazi regime? My mother was a slave in Nazi Germany. And my late friend, Stefan Petelycky, carried Auschwitz tattoo #154922 on his forearm for his entire life in Canada.

Lubomyr Luciuk
 Kingston, Ont.

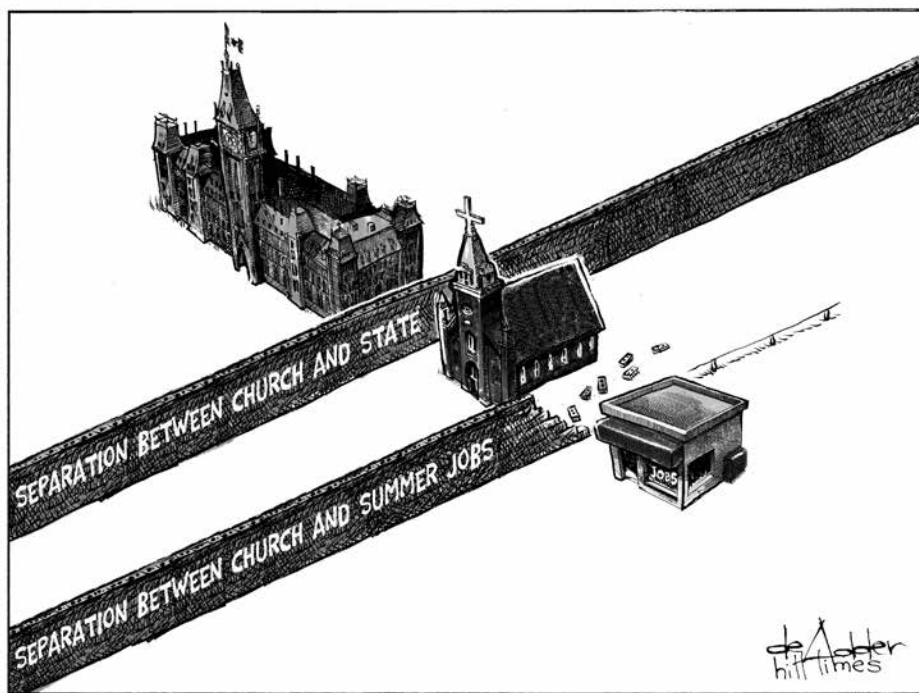
Phoenix just latest case of feds trying to fix what's not broken, says letter-writer Inokai

Re: "It's a nightmare: MPs push for more help for riding offices flooded with dozens of Phoenix calls," (*The Hill Times*, Jan. 17). Phoenix is just the latest case of the feds trying to fix what's not broken. Common sense is a pejorative term when it comes to dealing with IT projects where the software vendor or the outside consultant is the deemed expert.

Here's a question: as complex as income taxes are; how is it possible to

write distribute and update year after year income tax return software used by millions of people and businesses and yet seemingly impossible to implement a payroll system for 250,000 federal government employees? I should think the answer is obvious and I will be happy to reveal it for a substantial consulting fee. No guarantees, however.

Kope Inokai
 Toronto, Ont.



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Liberals take the Goldilocks approach to carbon pricing

Usually, decision documents referred to cabinet include three potential options for approval. One is too hot, one is too cold, and one is just right. The middle ground tends to represent the choice of perfect porridge in the story of Goldilocks. In the draft version of carbon pricing, Liberals obviously opted for the not-too-hot and not-too-cold approach.



Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner

OTTAWA—Elizabeth May is horrified and Brad Wall plans to take the federal government to court.

Liberals must have done something right because they occupied the moderate middle in last week's proposed legislation on carbon pricing.

Co-authored by the ministers of finance and environment, the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act was unveiled to criticism from the left and the right.

The starkest complaints were that the government was going too easy on industrial emitters.

According to the Green Party, the plan weakens regulations for industrial producers. Instead of tying the carbon price to fuel purchase, the legislation averages carbon output across industries, rewarding companies that reduce their emissions more than average and punishing those that don't.

Conservatives, including the premier of Saskatchewan, are claiming the plan is too aggressive and, given the non-compliance approach of U.S. President Donald Trump, our tough new laws will cost jobs.

In actuality, Liberals have adopted the Goldilocks approach to carbon pricing.

Former Liberal interim leader Bob Rae first coined that term in an autobiography chronicling his tenure as Ontario's first New Democratic Party premier.

He described the options that the bureaucracy usually laid before cabinet to shape any legislative package.

The same approach is used in federal circles. Usually, decision docu-

ments referred to cabinet include three potential options for approval.

One is too hot, one is too cold, and one is just right. The middle ground tends to represent the choice of perfect porridge in the story of Goldilocks.

In the draft version of carbon pricing, Liberals obviously opted for the not-too-hot and not-too-cold approach.

Their decision to provide a separate track for industrial polluters reflected concerns about competitiveness in relation to the United States, since it will not face the same federal framework with a climate denier as president.

The fact that only Wall vehemently attacked the plan means that most premiers believe it strikes a good balance.

Wall has become an isolated oil patch cheerleader, increasingly marginalized from any serious discussion about how to tackle climate change.

The four Canadian provinces with the most robust economies have already incorporated some form of carbon pricing into their regulatory frameworks. Saskatchewan is not one of them.

The Canadian framework, which runs more than 200 pages, is extremely complex. That complexity makes it even more difficult for opponents to fight the legislation.

May, a fantastic communicator, was hard pressed to distil her opposition into manageable sound bites.

Most Canadians believe that a competitive economy is equally as important as a healthy environment.

Their first responsibility is putting food on the family table and for that, they need decent-paying jobs.

The positive performance of the Canadian economy helps Catherine McKenna and Bill Morneau soft sell the national carbon framework.

The middle ground they chose on industrial emission measurements will make that job sell easier.

Solutions to global warming are challenging and so is the legislation. That complexity makes it difficult for the public to engage. In turn, the absence of public involvement makes it easier for sectoral interests to seek and achieve changes.

Industrial emitters are going to be a lot more engaged in this legislation than the average voter, and their voices will be heard. The complexity makes it difficult for critics to even explain their opposition.

The New Democrats have been unusually quiet on the proposals. They are strongly supportive of carbon pricing and will likely tweak some of the industrial emission elements.

But, especially with their strong union membership, this is not a hill that New Democrats will be prepared to die on. As for the Tories, they will oppose but they also run the risk of simply being seen as merely oil-centric if they are too vociferous or strident in their criticisms.

This proposed legislation is a game-changer for the acceleration of a green economy. We can also expect the promotion of a whole new raft of jobs related to sustainable development.

All in all, the legislation was not blockbuster. That was why the disappointment expressed by Elizabeth May was so visceral.

But in the balancing act between the environment and the economy, the ministers of environment and finance chose the Goldilocks solution.

In doing so, they can expect their global warming porridge of legislative changes is just right.

The issue of comprehensive legislation has been on the government agenda since the first International Panel on Climate Change met in Montreal back in 1994.

Twenty-four years later, this isn't perfect but the country is finally moving in the right direction.

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

The Hill Times



Environment Minister Catherine McKenna. The issue of comprehensive legislation has been on the government agenda since the first International Panel on Climate Change met in Montreal back in 1994. Twenty-four years later, this isn't perfect but the country is finally moving in the right direction. *The Hill Times* by Andrew Meade

Conservatives have limited strategy options

The Conservatives hope that when voters are fed up with Liberal arrogance, or with Liberal mismanagement or with Liberal scandals, they will turn by default to the Conservatives, an unexciting, yet non-threatening alternative, with a reputation for fiscal competence and for promoting law and order.



Gerry Nicholls

Post-Partisan Pundit

OKAVILLE, ONT.—“They came at us, in the same old style,” is how the Duke of Wellington famously described the French tactics at the Battle of Waterloo.

And that tactic reminds me a bit of Canada's Conservative Party, since, like the French at Waterloo, it keeps attacking the Liberals in the same old style.

What I mean is, for the past 30 years or so, the Conservative electoral strategy has remained remarkably consistent.

Think about it: the party

always has a boring, bland leader—Joe Clark, Jean Charest, Stephen Harper, Andrew Scheer; it rarely offers much in the way of new or exciting ideas; and generally speaking, its main selling point to voters is that it's a safe alternative to the Liberals.

The Conservatives have basically stuck to this same theme, through thick and thin, through victory and defeat, through good times and bad.

So why is this? Why won't the Conservatives ever try something new or shake things up?

Well, the answer is they don't really have much of a choice.

Indeed, when it comes to choosing a political strategy, only three realistic options are on the table.

One of those options is to find a charismatic leader.

That's to say, you choose a leader for your party who is flooded with charisma, a leader voters will instantly like, a leader whose personal appeal transcends partisan loyalty and ideology.

Leaders who fit into this

category include, John Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Pierre Trudeau, and, of course, Justin Trudeau.

And I'm certain the Conservatives would absolutely love to have a leader with a strong and popular personality.

Who wouldn't?

But unfortunately for Conservatives, charismatic leaders don't exactly grow on trees.

In fact, they're pretty darn rare.

The last conservative leader who tried to play the charisma card was the Canadian Alliance's Stockwell Day, who back in the early 2000s cast himself as a young, hip, karate-kicking alternative to stodgy old prime minister Jean Chrétien.

Alas for Day, when he decided to show up at a news conference wearing a Jet Ski wet suit (making him look more clownish than charismatic) it more or less shut down his personality as a political asset.

At any rate, ever since then, conservative leaders have decided it's better to look bland than silly.

The second style of political campaign is to run on issues, i.e. you put forward an ideology-heavy platform.

This is something the Progressive Conservatives actually did in the 1988 federal election, when they ran on the “Free Trade with the U.S.A.” platform, but that was an exception that proved the rule.

For the most part, Conserva-

tives tend to see running on issues as too risky a strategy.

If they talk too much about slashing government spending, or privatizing crown corporations or promoting anything resembling an ideologically conservative agenda, it makes it easier for their political opponents or for the media to brand them as “scary right wing extremists.”

So as a result, Conservatives keep talk about issues to a minimum.

Okay, this brings us to the last remaining style of political campaigning, which is to essentially rely on the strength and reputation of your party's brand.

In other words, you hope people vote for you because of your label.

And this is the strategy the Conservatives (basically out of necessity) always choose.

They hope that when voters are fed up with Liberal arrogance, or with Liberal mismanagement or with Liberal scandals, they will turn by default to the Conservatives, an unexciting, yet non-threatening alternative, with a reputation for fiscal competence and for promoting law and order.

I wonder what the Duke of Wellington would think of all this?

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

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The Hill Times

Opinion

Let's not panic about trade deals

If the deal does unravel—and it will be a long, complicated process—we will revert either to the original Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (although it includes several of the NAFTA provisions that Trump finds objectionable), or, trade between our countries will be regulated under World Trade Organization provisions. Not exactly the Wild West.



SUSAN RILEY

Impolitic

CHELSEA, QUE.—For too long, we have been told that free

trade explains our wealth and success as a nation—and, that anything that threatens our trading relationships will lead to certain disaster. We will end up living in frigid cabins, deprived of coffee, burning cow dung to keep warm.

There is some truth in this claim, of course—Canada has prospered overall (and some corporate interests a great deal) from the sale of furs, timber, wheat, minerals and oil, among other commodities, over decades. We have a small population and an abundance of resources; more than we can use. But that doesn't mean that every trade deal is a good one, that every market must be pursued, or that our country is nothing but a giant, international Home Depot.

Nor does it mean, as ardent free trade ideologues in academia and the media insist, that we must downplay our social values, trash our environment, and close down entire towns in pursuit of the next great deal.

It is more important than ever to maintain perspective as the Trudeau government tries to re-negotiate NAFTA (with “a very stable genius”) and as free trade evangelists push for new deals with China, India, and a host of other Asian and South Asian nations. If we are afraid—and powerful corporate interests want us to be afraid—we won't bargain from a position of strength. Prudence, research and transparency are called for; not pandering or panic.

The Trudeau government's deliberate handling of the NAFTA file is reassuring. While the U.S. is easily Canada's most important trade partner—some 76 per cent of our exports go south—the end of NAFTA doesn't herald the end of life as we know it. First, even if Donald Trump signals an intention to withdraw, he would, arguably, need the support of Congress to tear up the 24-year-old agreement. Given how many American companies, industries



U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland, pictured Dec. 19, 2017, about to hold a joint media availability in the House foyer after bi-lateral talks in Ottawa. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

and states benefit from trade with Canada, congressional assent could prove elusive.

However, if the deal does unravel—and it will be a long, complicated process—we will revert either to the original Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (although it includes several of the NAFTA provisions that Trump finds objectionable), or, trade between our countries will be regulated under World Trade Organization provisions. Not exactly the Wild West.

The change would still be disruptive overall and could be especially damaging to dairy farmers, car parts manufacturers, solar panel makers, and, of course, softwood lumber which has been under hostile fire for decades. But, according to a recent Bank of Montreal forecast, Canada's economy is expected to grow by nine per cent over the next five years. If NAFTA is cancelled, that expected growth shrinks by only one per cent; so, unwelcome, but hardly apocalyptic.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured Jan. 16 on the Hill when he named Olympic figure skaters Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir as the Canadian Flag bearers for the upcoming 2018 Olympic Games in Pyeongchang. Susan Riley says introducing so-called non-trade elements into the NAFTA negotiations—gender equality, environmental protections, labour, and Indigenous rights—is a bold move on Mr. Trudeau's part. He is apparently convinced that traditional trade deals that have catered to corporate interests, at the expense of everyone else, are responsible for Trump's victory and for Brexit; that people are challenging the gospel of free trade for good reason. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



That is because, even in the worst case, cross-border trade will continue, given how integrated the North American economy has become. Consumers here might pay more for U.S. food and clothing as tariffs go up, but that happens every time there is a crop failure in Florida, or a shift in the exchange rate, or a market-driven increase in the cost of gasoline. And even with a free trade agreement in place, U.S. actions recently forced Bombardier to move assembly of its new C-series jets to Georgia, to escape a punitive duty, and many Canadian lumber producers have already purchased mills in the U.S. to avoid ongoing border harassment.

The BMO's forecast also takes into account how dynamic an economy can be; the vacuum left by American customers could be filled by others. Overall, BMO chief economist Doug Porter foresees “manageable risk.” And, if Canada was such a potential basket case, Amazon would not be considering a major investment in Toronto.

Still, the alarmist reading of NAFTA elsewhere has put pressure on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's team to get serious about signing a free trade deal with China. Again “not so fast” is probably the wiser course. While China is soon to become the world's largest market, its dodgy business practices; the poor quality of many of its products; its intimidating size and low wage rates leave many Canadians ambivalent about closer ties. This, and the fact that so many Chinese enterprises are state-owned and controlled, leaves Conservative party leader Andrew Scheer adamantly opposed.

This gives Trudeau room, and time, to manoeuvre. Trudeau is insisting, in a potential China deal, or any other, on including protections for workers, the environment, women, and Indigenous communities. Even if such clauses end up being symbolic, as in the Chile-Canada deal, they are a deal-breaker for China, which resents being lectured on what it considers domestic matters.

Trudeau also walked away from the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for a Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) before Christmas, provoking much bewildered criticism. It was Canada that re-labelled the deal, in an attempt to rebrand the original TPP as somehow “progressive.” But that doesn't mean Canada would be a net winner from an 11-country pact that includes Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. If it is the boon to Canada that its promoters claim, they should offer specific examples.

Introducing so-called non-trade elements—gender equality, environmental protections, labour, and Indigenous rights—into negotiations is a bold move on Trudeau's part. He is apparently convinced that traditional trade deals that have catered to corporate interests, at the expense of everyone else, are responsible for Trump's victory and for Brexit; that people are challenging the gospel of free trade for good reason.

He could be right, but he could also be ahead of his time. So far, his proposals have been met with open scorn, or private eye-rolling, among the political and corporate class that has driven the free trade agenda. Nor has he explained, in detail, how to incorporate these progressive elements into a deal. (He is not entirely alone. Tiny New Zealand considered traditional Maori rights in the original Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement.)

At the least, it's a discussion worth having. Who does free trade really benefit and would sharing those benefits more widely make trade deals unworkable? “Protectionism” has become a dirty word over recent decades. But its original intention was benign: to protect vulnerable communities and workers from job loss and poverty.

Trudeau is right to call for fresh thinking on trade. But not with a gun at our heads.

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

The Hill Times

Some days, I hate Ottawa, the media, and the internet age

Happens a lot, in the new era. A story gets told, people instantly react, someone gets vilified. Sometimes they get destroyed. Except, this time, the mob went after a mother who didn't deserve it.



WARREN KINSELLA

The War Room

TORONTO—In the social media era—in our mad rush to judgment—people get ground up and spat out. Happens all the time.

Happens too often.

Ask Aziz Ansari, the Muslim

comedian and author whose career now lies in rubble, because some nameless, young woman decided to punish him for what, in a saner world, would be properly characterized as a bad date.

Ask the young mother whose newborn was found “abandoned” at a mall near Toronto’s Keele and Lawrence neighbourhood—and we all know who lives there, don’t we?—and who immediately was depicted by some police and some media as a heartless monster. Except the child hadn’t been abandoned, at all. And both were simply in need of medical care.

Ask the Muslims who are now being targeted with hate and invective—simply because they are co-religionists with the 11-year-old girl who falsely claimed to have been attacked by a scissors-wielding man. A Toronto school board, the police, and several politicians promoted the girl’s made-up story, sure—but it is Canadian Muslims who are now being excoriated. Because they are Muslims, too. Naturally.

And ask the young Indigenous mother who was attacked and vilified, simply because she dressed the way she chose to dress, as a proud, beautiful Indigenous woman.

That last tale is less known than the others. So it should be told.

It starts with a boy. The boy is just a boy, 12 years of age, with a handsome face and a smile as big as a summer day. His name is Neebin. In October 2015, the *Ottawa Citizen* did a story about Neebin and his friends.

The story told how the kids from Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary in Gatineau put together a video to promote tolerance. In it, they played instruments and sang in English and French and Cree and Algonquin. They called their song *Important To Us*.

Neebin spoke to the *Citizen* reporter. He said he had been bullied in another school because of his long braid. But he said it was easier in his new school.

A couple years and just two days before Christmas, Neebin took his own life. “He left us for the spirit world, much too soon,” someone wrote on the page set up to help his family with funeral costs. The funds would go to that and “towards a children’s suicide prevention program.”

For most people and for most parents, there can be no greater pain than losing a child. But there was more pain to come.

A few days ago, someone noticed that the federal government had been running an ad. The ad, authorized and paid for by the Department of Indigenous and

Northern Affairs Canada, urged Indigenous people to apply for their new status card.

The accompanying photo showed a smiling child, and a happy old man, all holding status cards; and, between them, a beautiful Indigenous woman, also smiling. Holding a card, wearing traditional dress.

The internet and the media—the CBC, in particular—promptly attacked. One woman said the image was “horrific” because it recalled the Disney film *Pocahontas*, which promoted a “racist stereotype of an outdated portrayal of an Indigenous woman.” Others chimed in, like the historian of Indigenous issues, who said the ad presented “static images of Indigenous peoples that don’t reflect our lives anymore.”

Carolyn Bennett’s department swiftly deleted the ad from its website, and pulled it off of the walls at government offices. The ad, which had been around for years, “will not be used in the future,” one of her departmental underlings promised.

Happens a lot, in the new era. Happens all the time. A story gets told, people instantly react, someone gets vilified. Sometimes they get destroyed.

Except, this time, the mob went after a mother who didn’t deserve it.

Neebin’s mother.

She came out of mourning her little boy to respond to the hate sent her way. This is part of what she posted on Facebook. She gave my wife—who knows her, and worked briefly with her on an Indigenous file—permission to use it.

“I was the model in this photo. The wardrobe and the clothing were completely of my own choice,” she wrote, adding that no one told her to dress that way. “I dressed this way because I was very proud of the way I looked. I believe I did a good job of representing our people.”

She went on: “Real and true journalism seeks facts, and all sides of the story, and this [CBC] story was unfortunately not balanced. Stop blaming [others] ... we are all responsible for ourselves, our families, our communities. That is how we will achieve real change.”

Would it have inconvenienced the CBC to contact Neebin’s mother, before unleashing on her? Would it have been all that difficult to ask her if she had chosen her outfit—when, you know, she had? Would it have been wrong for someone in Bennett’s department to ascertain the true facts, before giving in to the internet mob?

And would it have been so very hard to ask Neebin’s mother how she was doing? Would that have been a problem?

Some days, I hate Ottawa and the media and the internet age.

This is one of those days.

Warren Kinsella is a former Jean Chrétien-era cabinet minister and a former national campaign war roomer.

The Hill Times

The Joshua Boyle saga: an alternative view

Whatever happens to Joshua Boyle under the current charges, he has a lot of explaining to do.



PHIL GURSKI

Terrorism

OTTAWA—If there is one thing we’ve learned about Joshua Boyle it is that he is an odd duck. He apparently made more than 62,000 edits and contributions to Wikipedia over a 13-year span (if my math is correct that makes 15 edits a day)

on subjects ranging from Nazis, to porn, to sex, to Star Wars. You might wonder if he did anything productive over that time period. In addition, he chose to marry Zaynab Khadr, a member of Canada’s No. 1 terrorism family and was at her side when she protested outside a Toronto courtroom over the arrest of the Toronto 18 (recall that some of them planned three truck bombs that would have killed and maimed thousands). He also elected to take his very pregnant wife Caitlin Coleman into Taliban-controlled Afghanistan in late 2012 where they were captured and held by a terrorist group for five years before their release last fall.

Now, of course, he has been arrested and is facing serious charges ranging from sexual assault, to unlawful confinement, to “administering a noxious substance,” to public mischief (he allegedly lied to police about a missing, suicidal person with a view to diverting police attention away from him). None of these charges has been proven in court.

At a minimum, Boyle is an idiot for his decision to expose his wife to harm in Afghanistan (he claims she was raped while in captivity and forced to abort a baby girl—how did his captors know she was carrying a girl?). He sure has not made any friends among Coleman’s family.

He did have his supporters though, including our prime minister who gladly agreed to pose for pictures with the liberated family in December (who in the PMO thought that was a good idea?) and those who are excusing his recent alleged actions as evidence of PTSD. The prime minister agreed to meet with Boyle before the charges were released.

There is a lot we don’t know about Boyle and his ordeal and we can hope to learn more in the future. What I wish to focus on, though, is his story regarding what he was doing in Afghanistan in the first place in 2012. He claims that he and his wife were doing charity work or were on a pilgrimage or both—the story seems to change. I would like to propose an alternative account, purely speculative of course.

First and foremost, it is important to establish that Boyle had tendencies or proclivities towards Islamist extremism. This is born out of his relationship with Khadr: it is next to impossible to think that he married her and did not know, and did not support, that family’s well-known activities in that regard. So, there is a history there.

I suggest that Boyle travelled to Afghanistan with a view to making contact with Islamist



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on Dec. 18, 2017, with Joshua Boyle, Mr. Boyle’s wife Caitlin Coleman, and their children in the Prime Minister’s Office on Parliament Hill. Photograph courtesy of @BoylesVsWorld

extremists (although I am ignorant as to what end) or, at a minimum, believed that his ties to the Khadr, who after all lived in an al-Qaeda camp at one point, would offer him some form of protection. Something went terribly wrong and all his assumptions failed leading to his capture and that of his wife. What actually happened during their time as hostages is also up for grabs: the terrorist group that held them is disputing many of the details Boyle has proffered (not that we should put a lot of stake in the word of Islamist extremists).

Continuing in speculation mode, I think Joshua Boyle was subject to investigation immediately after his return to Canada with a view to determining whether he indeed travelled to Afghanistan to join the Taliban. In the course of that counterterrorism investigation, police discovered the other crimes he was engaged in and decided to act to

protect those whom he was allegedly harming rather than wait to find more on the terrorism links. There is precedent for this: in 2010 Ottawa resident Awso Peshdary was arrested in conjunction with the RCMP’s SAMOSSA counterterrorism investigation, released for lack of evidence, but re-arrested on charges of sexual assault (these were later dropped as well). Based on my experience at CSIS, it is not that rare for one investigation to uncover other offences that have nothing to do with the original intent of the investigative effort.

Then again, maybe I am way off base in my theories. In the end we will see, I hope. Regardless, whatever happens to Boyle under the current charges, he has a lot of explaining to do.

Phil Gurski is president and CEO of *Borealis Threat and Risk Consulting*.

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The Hill Times

'Tight' timeline for Lobbying Act review, all rules on the table: new lobbying czar

Nancy Bélanger says she will draw on recommendations from former commissioner Karen Shepherd, and will consult with lobbyists, and her office to prepare for the next review.

BY SHRUTI SHEKAR

Canada's new lobbying commissioner says the timeframe to begin a five-year review of the Lobbying Act this spring is "tight," but doable, and that everything will be studied including restricting the political activities of lobbyists, making the registry more transparent, and overlapping rules in the Lobbying and Conflict of Interest acts.

"I need to do my own analysis," said Nancy Bélanger, during an interview with *The Hill Times* on Jan. 17 in her office on Albert Street in Ottawa.

Now that five years have passed, Ms. Bélanger said it's time to look at the act with a fresh set of eyes. This will be the second five-year review of the Lobbying Act, which was brought into force in 2008.

Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches-East York, Ont.) asked Ms. Bélanger during her testimony before the House Ethics Committee last month if it would be possible to begin the review by the spring. Ms. Bélanger said she thought there was enough time, but last week told *The Hill Times* that it would take a lot of work to prepare in that time.

Ms. Bélanger told *The Hill Times* the five-year-old recommendations from the last review by former lobby commissioner Karen Shepherd will be used for her preparation but noted that a lot has changed since then so more research will be required.

"Of course, every day, every case, you will learn and so it is a matter of consulting with my team, and consulting with lobbyists. But it's going to be a tight exercise," said Ms. Bélanger, who grew up in New Brunswick, and is married with two children.

The last statutory review was conducted in 2012. The House Ethics Committee issued a report on the review in May 2012, which followed the House tabling a response on Sept. 12, 2012, that supported some recommendations and noted others would continue to be studied.

According to the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying's website, a government's response does not change any rules in the act. The only way changes are enacted is through an approval process by the governor in council.

Amendments recommended in 2012 weren't followed through, which Conservative MP Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.), his party's ethics critic, said was probably because it wasn't a priority for the Conservative government of the time under prime minister Stephen Harper, which was dealing with issues such as coming out of an economic recession.

Bélanger weighs in on what lobbyists say about next review

When Ms. Bélanger was first nominated, former Liberal cabinet minister Don Boudria, now a lobbyist at Hill & Knowlton, said her ethics background meant she could bring with her insight into how to fix overlapping rules between the Lobbying



Nancy Bélanger has had only two weeks of experience in her new role as lobbying commissioner, but says she is ready to take on a Lobbying Act review that could take place in the spring. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Act and the Conflict of Interest Act. The ethics commissioner, who is now Mario Dion, administers the Conflict of Interest Act.

"She's going to be able to look at [her role] and say, 'Wait a minute, there are two sets of rules here. Let's coordinate our approach so that we don't say two different things to the same people,' which has happened so many times in the past," Mr. Boudria said.

Ms. Bélanger brings to the lobbying watchdog role six years of experience as general counsel with the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's Office, between 2007 and 2013.

The term "designated public office holder" in the Lobbying Act has a broader definition than that of the similar "public office holder" term in the Conflict of Interest Act.

Each commissioner's office has also developed its own rules on giving gifts related to receptions and lobby events.

"We've already started communication. I've worked in that office so I know how that works and I know Mr. Dion," Ms. Bélanger said. "We have said we need to get together and look at opportunities to maybe fill in the gaps of understanding [for] the rules that overlap, and possibly looking at education programs [to help lobbyists and others understand the rules]."

Former Liberal MP Joe Jordan, a senior associate with Ottawa's Bluesky Strategy Group, thinks the five-year ban on former designated public office holders from lobbying—the so-called "cooling-off period"—after they leave office should be reduced.

"I think we have to be careful with blanket restrictions that limit employment options," Mr. Jordan said.

Lobbyists in Ottawa also note, for example, if a staffer was working for the Harper Conservatives, they should have the ability to lobby the Trudeau Liberals because the government they worked for is no longer in charge.

In the past, lobbyists have also complained about their inability to perform in political activities and elections campaigns because it could create a sense of obligation to a party. This rule created a hostile relationship between lobbyists and Ms. Shepherd, who strictly limited lobbyists from performing in any extracurricular political activities.

Ms. Bélanger said she had no problem reviewing these rules, though they fall under the purview of the Lobbyists' Code of Conduct, which was established back in 2015 by Ms. Shepherd. The code also has to undergo a review after two years, which has not happened yet.

"I will not hesitate if one needs clarification to clarify, but then again there needs to be a code and I can't make everybody happy," Ms. Bélanger said. "I will look at them, but right now if you ask me what change I should make, I can't say that because I've been here for such a short time."

Ms. Bélanger joined the public service in 1993 as a Federal Court law clerk, and has taken jobs with the Department of Justice and Immigration and Refugee Board, and just before becoming the lobbying commissioner was the deputy commissioner of legal services and public affairs in the information commissioner's office, another officer of Parliament.

New commissioner will look at Shepherd's recommendations

Ms. Shepherd was in her role for seven years and was in charge of managing lobbyists communicating with the federal government, the federal lobbyist's registry, and administering the act and code of conduct.

According to the registry, there are 5,703 active lobbyists that include in-house lobbyists and consultants who are hired by associations or groups.

Ms. Shepherd was also in charge of conducting investigations when she believed lobbyists contravened the law.

High-profile cases of improper lobbying crossed Ms. Shepherd's desk, such as Bruce Carson, the former senior aide to prime minister Stephen Harper, and Jamie Carroll, the former Liberal national party director, both of which were passed on to the RCMP and led to convictions by the courts for violating the federal Lobbying Act.

In 2016, Mr. Carroll was fined \$20,000 for failing to file a return with the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying, becoming the first person convicted after a trial for a Lobbying Act offence. Later that year, Mr. Carson was fined \$50,000 for three counts of lobbying while under the five-year ban for ex-public office holders, though the total was reduced by \$5,000 after he was acquitted of one of the charges on appeal.

During her time, Ms. Shepherd recommended that within the act the commissioner should be allowed to give administrative monetary penalties for actions that are not criminal offences, which is not currently allowed.

Ms. Bélanger said during her testimony in the House that such a penalty could be helpful.

"Right now the powers under the Lobbying Act are quite limited. It's really, at the end of the day, public shame," she said during the Dec. 6 meeting. "I would think that administrative penalties would be possibly a good thing, but maybe not just that. There might be other avenues. There might be a spectrum that could be imposed."

During the next review, Ms. Bélanger said she also plans to look at making the registry more transparent.

Right now, lobbyists do not need to disclose who attended meetings or how the "communication" was conducted, whether it was by email, over the phone, or in person.

"There is a big chance that, who is at

the meeting, likely is something I will recommend," she said. "Anything to increase transparency is never a bad idea."

To prepare for an upcoming review, Ms. Bélanger said her office had already set up meetings with the Government Relations Institute of Canada and the Public Affairs Association of Canada, two groups that support and represent the work of GR and PR professionals.

"I hope they will be able to give me some advice as to how I can go out and meet [lobbyists]," she said.

"There needs to be outreach and outreach to me means building relationships and certainly from now on, it will always be an ongoing objective of mine."

Phil Cartwright, president of GRIC, said in an email that the next review will give the lobbying community a chance to look at the framework to see what needs to be improved.

"GRIC supports measures that ensure the act and related Code of Conduct are as easy to understand and abide by as possible," Mr. Cartwright said, who is also a consultant at Global Public Affairs.

Ms. Bélanger said she wants to build more educational tools for lobbyists; this would also include a more active social media presence.

For example, she said the office could use Twitter to tweet on the 15th of the month to remind lobbyists to file their communication reports.

'I'm not someone who is title-oriented': Why she didn't apply for the job

The job itself took a long time to fill, and in the process, the Liberal government extended Ms. Shepherd's term three times over 2016 and 2017 because there wasn't anyone suitable for the job.

Even after being nominated and appointed, Ms. Bélanger did not receive unanimous support in the House.

NDP MP Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C.) abstained from voting because he was not happy with the appointment process, calling it "entirely broken" when Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) only submitted one name for the role.

"We suggested a different option forward: the Speaker of the House to chair a committee made up of the parties. We'll shortlist, and then we'll put somebody forward," Mr. Cullen said at the time of her nomination.

In the end, the House Ethics Committee recommended that Ms. Bélanger be confirmed in the job in a 7-0 vote.

In fact, she didn't even apply for the job and had been asked if she would be interested in applying for the information and lobbying commissioner roles.

The interview process, which was between June and November, involved phone calls, a psychometric test, and an in-person interview conducted by a four-person committee.

The committee included Janine Sherman, assistant secretary to the cabinet in the Privy Council Office; Yaprak Baltacioglu, secretary of the Treasury Board; Sabina Saini, chief of staff to Treasury Board President Scott Brison; and Hilary Leftick, director of appointments in the Prime Minister's Office.

"I probably should have applied for [the job] right from the get-go, and the reason why I didn't is because I'm not someone who is titled oriented," Ms. Bélanger said. "I want to contribute where I best fit, and I thought at the time because I had been in the access-to-information position, that the most logical step would have been to apply for that one. Had I applied for this one I thought it would look like all I wanted was to be an agent of parliament."

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Liberal MP Mark Eyking, chair of the House International Trade Committee. The disappointing committee's report raises questions about the value of House committees and their independence, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

House International Trade Committee delivers platitudes on NAFTA, misses a golden opportunity

It wasn't for lack of information. The committee held 12 days of hearings and heard from 66 business and other organizations, as well as individuals, along with Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and senior Canadian negotiators. The MPs visited nine different U.S. cities, from Seattle, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Denver to Detroit, Chicago, Columbus, Milwaukee and Washington. They had lots to work with—and could have demanded more. But they didn't.



David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century



Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and NDP MP Tracey, pictured Aug. 14, 2017, at the House International Trade Committee's meeting on the NAFTA renegotiations. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

TORONTO—It was a golden opportunity for the House International Trade Committee to report on the future of NAFTA and to make recommendations on what our negotiators should and shouldn't do. But what we got from the 10 MPs on the committee instead were largely platitudes.

It wasn't for lack of information. The committee held 12 days of hearings and heard from 66 business and other organizations, as well as individuals, along with Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and senior Canadian negotiators. The MPs visited nine different U.S. cities, from Seattle, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Denver to Detroit, Chicago, Columbus, Milwaukee and Washington. They had lots to work with—and could have demanded more.

The disappointing report

raises questions about the value of House committees and their independence, and whether MPs themselves have serious ambition for work of committees on which they serve. As it is, most committee reports are rarely if ever reported in the media, and if the government doesn't like a report, it ignores it.

At the same time, one of the disturbing developments in our parliamentary system is that MPs are beholden to party leaders who have to sign their nomination papers at each election, which is a way of exerting implicit pressure on individual MPs not to display too much independence.

Of the 10 trade committee members, seven are Liberals, two are Conservatives and one is from the NDP. The chair is Liberal MP Mark Eyking (Sydney-Victoria) a

Nova Scotia Liberal first elected in 2000; he has a diploma in agricultural business. One of the two vice chairs is Dean Allison, a small business and private equity investor from the Niagara region. He was first elected, as a Conservative, in 2004. The other vice chair is Tracey Ramsey (Essex), from the Windsor region. First elected in 2015, she has a college diploma in practical nursing and worked for the Ford Motor Co. for 19 years before here election as an NDP MP.

Among the committee's 28 recommendations, the MPs said the Canadian government should "prioritize outcomes that would promote Canadian exports, increase wages, and reduce income and wealth inequalities." It also said the government should "pursue changes that would make the agreement more progressive, including in relation to labour, the environment, gender rights, Indigenous peoples and investor-state dispute settlement." It called on the government to "conduct broad and meaningful consultations with Canadians" during the NAFTA negotiations while also taking actions "designed to increase awareness among American legislators, government officials, workers, businesses and voters, about the value of the Canada-U.S. trade relationship."

This is all quite platitudinous and non-controversial. To be sure, the committee did set down a few markers. It said that the NAFTA negotiations "should remain trilateral," meaning the government should not ditch the Mexicans and do a bilateral deal of its own (as former prime minister Stephen Harper has proposed). It called on the government to defend the supply management system for dairy and poultry products and "not increase the country's access commitments for imports of supply managed products." And it opposed elimination of the cultural exemption.

But these are more or less the existing positions of the government. As is the committee's insistence on retaining the dispute settlement system to address U.S. use of anti-dumping and other protectionist measures—though it is hard to understand why it favours retention of the investor-state dispute system since it is not in Canada's interest.

In other areas, it offers nothing at all definitive—for example, on the digital economy. It could have set down clear conditions requiring Canadian data—

health, education, banking, and other data—to be stored on servers and the cloud in Canada, and not elsewhere. On e-commerce it could have been much clearer on resisting U.S. demands that we permit duty-free entry of up to \$800—for example, proposing a much lower number and more directly address the issue of sales tax collection so that Canadian retailers who have to collect the tax are not at a disadvantage. The government has already made a big mistake by exempting Netflix from collecting HST on its Canadian subscriptions—Canadian cable networks have to collect the tax.

Likewise, it is vague on rules of origin, which impact the auto and other manufacturing industries. It says Canada should "oppose any changes to the rules-of-origin provisions that would increase costs for busses or limit their participation in the North American market." But it does not offer any ideas on improvements in such rules. Rather, it says, "the government should pursue rules of origin that are easy to understand. In communicating with business about rules of origin, the government should use clear language."

This is not to single out the House Trade Committee. Last month, the Commons Finance Committee presented its pre-budget report. It contained a shopping list of 92 recommendations, many of them simply aspirational and others platitudinous, thus losing focus on a handful of serious recommendations.

Ultimately, in our system, it is the MPs, and not the prime minister or the cabinet that can and should have the final voice on policy. But MPs have to earn that voice. Over the years, they have allowed the PMO to effectively take that power away and centralize it in the cabinet and its unelected advisers.

One way to restore the power of MPs would be to structure our parliamentary committees so that their work is more substantive, with MPs willing to be more independent in what they propose or oppose. This would force policymakers to pay more attention to elected MPs rather than to unelected political advisers, which would be more democratic and which might attract more talent to serve in Parliament.

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Conservative MP Dean Allison, is a vice-chair of the House International Trade Committee. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia



NDP MP Tracey Ramsey, is a vice-chair of the House International Trade Committee, pictured in this file photograph. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Opinion

Public accounts, transparency, and the Aga Khan Foundation

The Canadian federal government has given \$235-million over five years to the Aga Khan Foundation. Let's put the money received in the last fiscal year in perspective.



Evan Sotiropoulos

Opinion

TORONTO—Some \$235,553,238 is a lot of money.

It is the amount of money given by the federal government to the Aga Khan Foundation during the last five fiscal years according to transfer payments in the Public Accounts of Canada.

Each year—in October more often than not—the public accounts, which are the audited financial statements of the federal government, are tabled in the House.

Produced in three volumes (summary report and consolidated financial statements; details of expenses and revenues; and, additional information and analyses), there is a great deal of information contained therein. So it should be; the federal government,

after all, had total program expenses (which exclude public debt charges) of more than \$287-billion in the last fiscal year.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Aga Khan, pictured on May 17, 2016, in Ottawa. Photograph courtesy of the Prime Minister's Office: Adam Scotti

Each volume is divided into sections (50 in all) with detailed information. The public accounts are published in PDF and HTML formats; in 2017, the combined documents for the former totalled 1,744 pages.

There are many worthwhile stories hidden in plain sight within these pages. Alas, much time and human resources are required to sort through this information overload—two features in short journalistic supply.

Still, the federal government can make

changes to foster more efficient analysis of how taxpayer money is being spent. In every ministerial mandate letter issued by the prime minister, there is a promise “to set a higher bar for openness and transparency in government.”

One specific action item consistent with this commitment is to make parts (if not all) of the public accounts accessible in Excel spreadsheets. This way, both financial expenditures—and recipient information—can be more easily identified, sorted, compared, and analyzed, including across fiscal years and, perhaps more tellingly, different political parties.

Slightly more than half of federal expenses are for individual benefits (old age security; guaranteed income supplement; spouse's allowance) and major transfers to other levels of government (support for health and other social pro-

grams; fiscal arrangements). Where additional transparency is especially needed, though, is for transfer payments that take the form of grants and contributions made by the federal government “for which no goods or services are received.”

This brings us to the Aga Khan Foundation and the ethics controversy still swirling around the prime minister after he spent time in 2016 on a private island owned by the Aga Khan. Recall, Justin Trudeau characterized the Aga Khan as a long-time friend, despite having “no personal or private interactions with the Aga Khan and his family between 1983 and April 2013, when he became leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, except for his father's funeral in 2000,” according to the report released five days before Christmas by the conflict of interest and ethics commissioner.

The \$235-million over five years and more than \$47-million in 2016-2017 alone is not a meaningless allocation of taxpayer money. Let us put the money received by the Aga Khan Foundation just in the last fiscal year in perspective.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Aga Khan, pictured on May 17, 2016, in Ottawa. Photograph courtesy of the Prime Minister's Office: Adam Scotti

It is more money than the federal government provides to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for its Security Investment Program (\$34-million) and for NATO's Civil Administration (\$25-million); more than the Green Infrastructure Fund (\$45-million); more than the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (\$37-million); more than the Atlantic Innovation Fund (\$31-million); more than the Athlete Assistance Program (\$28-million); more than to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (\$20-million); more than for the Aboriginal Justice Strategy Fund (\$14-million); and the list goes on and on.

Liberal MPs on the House of Commons Ethics Committee recently voted down a motion that would have seen

Trudeau testify, a move that is inconsistent with the spirit of openness this federal government was elected on, as well as the rhetoric on transparency found in its mandate letters. Buried deep in the public accounts, however, are a quarter of a billion reasons why increased transparency will help inform how taxpayer dollars are spent and the relationships that underpin financial allocations.

Evan Sotiropoulos, a Toronto-based writer, has been contributing to *The Hill Times* since 2006. @evan_sotirop
The Hill Times

Government Spending on the Aga Khan Foundation Canada

Total amount spent in 2012-2013

- Global Peace and Security Fund Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$1,497,374
- Contributions for Bilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$25,615,661
- Contributions for Partnership Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$5,536,997
- Total: \$32,650,032**

Total amount spent in 2013-2014

- Contributions for Bilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$31,232,032
- Contributions for Partnership Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$24,014,016
- Global Peace and Security Fund Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$846,856
- Grants for Multilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$2,000,000
- Contributions for Bilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$1,081,139
- Total: \$59,174,043**

Total amount spent in 2014-2015

- Contributions for Bilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$21,596,989
- Contributions for Partnership with Canadians Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$17,233,939
- Grants for Multilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$4,250,000
- Total: \$43,080,928**

Total amount spent in 2015-2016

- Contributions—Religious Freedom Fund Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$224,391
- Contributions for Bilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$24,963,931
- Contributions for Partnership with Canadians Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$25,251,516
- Grants for Multilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$3,000,000
- Total: \$53,439,838**

Total amount spent in 2016-2017

- Contributions for Bilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$27,809,282
- Contributions for Partnership with Canadians Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$18,199,115
- Grants for Multilateral Programming Aga Khan Foundation Canada, Ottawa, Ont.: \$1,200,000
- Total: \$47,208,397**
- Grand total: \$235,553,238**



Trade and human rights: What is Canada's role?

February 8, 2018

7:30 am - 8:45 am

Parliamentary Restaurant, Centre Block
\$25 (\$10 for students) — Free for parliamentarians and media — Breakfast included



Susan Aaronson, Research Professor of International Affairs, George Washington University



Patrick Leblond, Associate Director, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa

What happens when the world's largest economy no longer leads efforts to encourage economic growth through trade? Given significant uncertainty regarding U.S.-Canada trade relations and broader global trends of rising popular concerns about trade and citizens' economic security, Canada is increasingly assuming a role in advancing a progressive trade agenda. Susan Aaronson and Patrick Leblond examine this development, including a critical account of the NAFTA and China options, with an eye to implications for economic growth, human rights and foreign policy. (In English, with simultaneous interpretation into French via cell phone.)



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ABOUT CANNABIS

Cannabis Policy Briefing

A look ahead at cannabis legalization in 2018

Perhaps most pressing for the Liberal government is getting Bill C-45, the Cannabis Act, through an increasingly unpredictable Senate.

BY JOLSON LIM

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau set off the countdown clock when he announced last month that cannabis would be legal in Canada by the summer of 2018, however there are still plenty of issues to sort out before Canadians can legally light up, and some that will linger even after that.

Legislation introduced by the Liberal government legalizing and regulating marijuana use and possession must still pass through the less partisan structured Senate, and provinces, cities, and law enforcement organizations are still rushing to prepare themselves to sell and tax marijuana, and contend with a new set of laws on its use.

Legalization will also pave the way for the rise of an expectedly multi-billion dollar cannabis industry, with Health Canada and provincial and territorial counterparts tasked with developing the rulebook for this new corporate domain. And then there's renewed calls to pardon Canadians previously convicted of petty possession offences, and lingering questions about public education and awareness campaigns warning of the health risks of marijuana use.

Where we are now

Under two separate but connected pieces of legislation introduced last year, the Liberal government set the national blueprint, or baseline, for the legalization of marijuana. In the bills, the Trudeau government set the minimum legal age to purchase marijuana at 18 years old, though the provinces and territories are still allowed to set higher age thresholds, and introduced stiffer penalties for distributing marijuana to underage users and for driving while stoned, among other regulatory measures.

Also, a new agreement stipulates that Ottawa will receive 25 per cent of tax revenue from legal marijuana, with the provinces and territories keeping the rest. Total revenue for the federal government is capped at \$100 million annually, based on projections of \$400 million of pot revenue generated across Canada each year. A gram of pot will be priced around \$10 to ensure competitiveness, according to the agreement between the feds and provinces.

The burgeoning cannabis industry will be governed by new regulations and safe and responsible production that will be enforced by Health Canada inspectors. As of Jan. 12, there are 85 licensed producers, more than doubling the total from May, calming fears that legalization would result in a supply crunch because of the lack of licensed producers.

The Senate

The Cannabis Act, or Bill C-45, was tabled in the House of Commons in April 2017, and would change part of the Criminal Code to legalize marijuana and allow the federal government's proposed



The Senate, pictured, is the site of the final legislative debate over marijuana legalization. *The Hill Times file photograph*

rules to come into effect. It passed through the House on Nov. 27, with support from the governing Liberals, the NDP, Green Party Leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.), and Conservative MP Scott Reid (Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, Ont.). It was opposed by the rest of the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois caucus.

In the Senate, the bill is expected to face opposition from the 33-member Conservative caucus, who have largely come out against legalization and have expressed concerns that the Liberal government is moving too fast.

But the biggest concern for Sen. Peter Harder (Ontario), the government's representative in the Senate, will be winning over the largest group in the Upper Chamber, the Independent Senators Group. The ISG holds 39 seats in the 105-member Senate, but does not function as a traditional partisan caucus, with members not given explicit instructions on a piece of legislation. The Senate Liberal caucus, which has no formal ties to the governing Liberals in the House, make up another 15 votes. There are also seven non-affiliated Senators and 11 vacancies, as of Jan. 19.

The Upper Chamber will hold a special 'committee of the whole' meeting on Feb. 6, to bring all senators together to consider the legislation and question the three cabinet ministers responsible for the cannabis file and Liberal MP Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.), the government's point man on pot.

A Conservative attempt to amend the motion to include four more ministers for questioning throughout February was narrowly voted down, hinting that some senators may try to extend debate on the Bill C-45, which ISG Sen. Tony Dean (Ontario) is sponsoring. CBC reported on Jan. 13 that time allocation was being considered for the cannabis bill.

Creating a regulatory framework



Liberal MP Bill Blair and Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor, pictured during an announcement in the House foyer on Nov. 21, are critical players on the cannabis file. *The Hill Times photo by Andrew Meade*

Last May, Health Canada promised to streamline its regulatory approach for marijuana production, which producers had long complained was too slow and complex. Health Canada released its latest proposed regulatory framework on Nov. 20, opening it up to feedback through a 60-day consultation period that ended Jan. 20.

The department's proposals include categorizing licensing between processing,

cultivation, testing, sales and trade—meant to accommodate for "micro-growers" and different business niches—security clearances, supply chain monitoring, and informative packaging and labelling.

From there, Health Canada will publish a summary of feedback received and then decide its final regulations before publishing it at time of legalization.

Health Canada has also hired more inspectors and moved to inspect the use of pesticides by producers, after industry concerns with the quality of the department's regulators.

However, Canadian researchers still need to apply for a special exemption to work with cannabis, and there have been few details from Health Canada on what it will do to expand the country's pot research capacity, as it has already pledged to do.

Provinces and territories

Ontario passed its cannabis law on Dec. 12, the first province in Canada to do so. With Ontario being the most populated province, and plans to sell pot in the same manner as the LCBO, it may very well make the province the world's largest marijuana dealer.

Six provinces and territories plan to sell pot through government-run stores. The rest want either have a mix of private stores and government-operated online sales. Nine provinces, including Ontario, have set the minimum age for purchase at 19. Alberta and Quebec have set it at 18.

Provincial governments are likely to face criticism from cities and First Nations communities and their police forces, who will have to bear the brunt of servicing and enforcement costs. First Nations are not satisfied with the consultation the federal and provincial governments has had with Indigenous communities. Cities are demanding a piece of the revenue pie from provinces to help fund needed service programs.

Doctors and nurses will have to be educated on cannabis, and patients are expected to ask many questions on its therapeutic potential.

After legalization

But once the smoke settles and pot becomes legal, there will still be work to do on the cannabis file for policymakers in Ottawa and across the country.

Thanks to an NDP amendment to Bill C-45, the the Liberal government must introduce legislation on the legality of marijuana edibles and concentrated pot within a year. As well, regulations are likely to be tweaked to reflect unanticipated challenges, and responsible federal, provincial, and territorial departments will likely need to staff up to meet new service needs.

Then there's the state of play in the cannabis industry. What will it look like? Will it be dominated by big corporate entities? Or will there be a vast and competitive corporate landscape? And what role will Ottawa play in structuring the cannabis production industry?

Then, there's the future of the marijuana education and awareness campaigns. What shape will they take once cannabis is legal to purchase? Health Canada received millions in funding last fall to launch a public education campaign, though nothing has sprung up since.

Finally, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale (Regina-Wascana, Sask.) recently confirmed that department officials are examining possible pardons and criminal record suspensions for certain cannabis possession crimes.

What will that look like?

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LET'S HAVE THE RIGHT CONVERSATION ABOUT ADULT-USE CANNABIS



The cannabis industry and government want the same thing: keeping cannabis away from kids and out of the black market

While there are many views on how best to legalize and regulate adult-use cannabis use in Canada, there are two fundamental things the industry and government agree on:

- 1) cannabis needs to stay out of the hands of children**
- 2) we must eradicate the black market**

How successful the industry is in doing both will depend on the ability to differentiate between legal and illegal cannabis products. Adult consumers need to clearly see the value of legal cannabis, including safety, quality and consistency.

How do we make that happen? A critical first step is to ensure regulators allow Licensed Producers of adult-use cannabis to advertise their products, develop identifiable brands and educate consumers about responsible use.

The Coalition for Responsible Cannabis Branding – which represents approximately **90 per cent** of the current legal medical cannabis market, in consultation with Advertising Standards Canada – has developed proposed responsible, common sense cannabis branding and marketing guidelines. If endorsed by government, these guidelines would allow Licensed Producers to explain to adult consumers why their products are better and safer than those offered on the black market.

The industry is committed to working with federal, provincial and territorial governments as long-term partners to protect public health and safety, and combat the illicit market. Allowing Licensed Producers to communicate to adult consumers effectively is a critical component of achieving these shared goals.

To read the Coalition for Responsible Cannabis Branding's proposed branding and marketing guidelines visit: <http://bit.ly/cannabisguidelines>.

The Coalition for Responsible Cannabis Branding (Coalition) is made up of 17 of Canada's authorized Licensed Cannabis Producers, along with the Canadian Medical Cannabis Council and Cannabis Canada Association.

Participating Licensed Producers include:



Cannabis Policy Briefing

How our plan to legalize cannabis will strengthen health, justice, and public safety

Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor,
Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould, and
Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale

Opinion

The current approach of cannabis prohibition has failed to protect our communities and our youth. Canadian youth use cannabis at rates that are amongst the highest in the world. Our latest survey indicates that 21 per cent of teens aged 15-19 and 30 per cent of young adults aged 20-24 reported using cannabis in the past year. The illegal market is thriving, resulting in billions of dollars in profits for criminals and organized crime; it operates without oversight, accountability or regard for the health and well-being of Canadians.

Our government is proposing a solution—legalizing and regulating cannabis for adults—which aims to prevent youth from accessing cannabis, protect public health by establishing strict product quality and safety requirements, and deter criminal activity by imposing serious penalties for those operating outside the legal framework. Our proposal is supported by the best available evidence as well as guidance from the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation.

Since committing to legalization and regulation in 2015, we have been working toward achieving this goal in a thoughtful and measured way. Over the past two years, we have heard from tens of thousands of Canadians, including medical professionals, police services, city officials, and industry

experts, and we continue to seek feedback through public consultation including on the proposed regulatory regime for cannabis.

We are working closely with national Indigenous organizations and Indigenous communities to understand their views and respond to their needs and priorities in areas such as health, economic development, public safety, and public health education. For example, we expanded the scope of existing economic development programs to better support Indigenous entrepreneurs interested in participating in the cannabis industry, and introduced a navigator service designed to guide Indigenous applicants through the licensing process for cannabis production.

Some Canadians are worried that legalizing and regulating cannabis will increase youth access. But let's be clear: Canadian youth already have easy access to cannabis today as demonstrated by high use rates. Bill C-45 contains extensive provisions to keep cannabis out of the hands of young people, including advertising restrictions, packaging and labelling restrictions, and new criminal offences for providing or selling cannabis to youth. Clear labelling will ensure that those of legal age who do choose to use cannabis are alerted to potential health harms and know the contents of what they are using. We are also investing \$46-million over five years in public education, awareness, and surveillance activities to inform Canadians about the health risks of using cannabis.

Other Canadians believe that we should not criminalize youth for possessing very

small amounts of cannabis. We agree and want to make sure that we protect young people from the health harms of cannabis while also avoiding the negative impacts on their future from a criminal record. This is why Bill C-45 proposes to exempt youth from criminal liability for possessing or sharing very small amounts of cannabis. At the same time, we have been encouraging provinces and territories to establish offences to prohibit young people from possessing any amount of cannabis. This approach would provide police with the authority to seize cannabis from youth, while not subjecting them to harsh criminal sanctions. All provinces and territories that have introduced cannabis legislation have established such prohibitions. This plan would put an end to the stigmatization of young people through criminal records for possession of small quantities of cannabis.

We are also mindful of the concerns of those who have existing criminal records. While pardons are already available for simple possession, once Bill C-45 is enacted, we will examine how to make things fairer for Canadians who have been previously convicted for minor possession offences.

In this same vein, our proposed legislation allows for the cultivation of a limited amount of cannabis at home, which not only prevents unnecessary criminalization of otherwise law-abiding adults who grow a limited number of plants in a safe and responsible manner for their personal use, but also supports our objective of displacing the illegal market. Following the advice of the Task Force on Can-

nabis Legalization and Regulation, we have set a very low limit on the number of plants allowed per household as a reasonable way to allow adults to cultivate cannabis for their personal use, while prohibiting larger-scale commercial grow-ops that are of concern to communities today.

We also know that some Canadians are concerned about drug-impaired driving. It is already a major contributor to fatal road crashes and has been increasing year after year. This is a problem right now. According to Health Canada's 2017 Cannabis Survey, 39 per cent of respondents who used cannabis in the past 12 months reported driving within two hours of using cannabis. While 33 per cent of driver fatalities in auto crashes involve alcohol, 40 per cent involve drugs.

To combat this problem, we introduced Bill C-46 to strengthen drug- and alcohol-impaired driving laws. And we're investing \$274-million to support law enforcement and border efforts to detect and deter drug-impaired driving, and to enforce the new cannabis regime.

We have also launched a national public awareness campaign to counter the myths and misconceptions that continue to persist about cannabis-impaired driving. The message is simple: don't drive high. Soon we will launch our public education campaign on the health effects of cannabis.

Our government is confident that we are putting in place strong legislation that will help keep cannabis out of the hands of young people and displace the illegal cannabis market.

The Timeline for Cannabis Legalization is Prudent and Achievable

The argument to legalize cannabis has been clearly articulated over the years, and public opinion polls from coast to coast have consistently shown that Canadians of all age groups and genders support the move.

Niche believes it is not in the best interest of Canada to unnecessarily delay the passage of Bill C-45 and Bill C-46. The current regime is failing our youth, criminalizing thousands of Canadians and allowing gangs to thrive off black market production, distribution and retail.

Legalization is a multifaceted shift, and Senators have a constitutional responsibility to thoughtfully review and debate the legislation. It is very important to get it right. But, it's also important that this work takes place in a timely fashion, without undue delay.

The Cannabis Act will enact new measures to keep cannabis out of the hands of our children and youth, by restricting access and putting in safeguards to prevent people from encouraging young people to buy or use it. Unlike the current framework, there will be serious penalties for those who break these new criminal

offences. **Delaying legalization will postpone these important health and safety enhancements.**

It is Canada's network of criminal gangs that will benefit the most if legalization is put on hold. Our country needs a safe, legal and tightly regulated supply chain to remove the billions of dollars of profits from the hands of criminal organizations.

The federal government, its agencies and public servants have been working on a roadmap for legalization for close to two years. As well, provincial and territorial governments have been busy laying the necessary groundwork, including adopting legislation and regulations, signing legal contracts, preparing education campaigns and training employees.

The private sector is signing leases, hiring staff and ramping up production. To delay the bill would be costly and put all this planning and financial investment in jeopardy.

Governments and businesses across the country are moving forward in a pragmatic and efficient manner, and we believe it is in the best interest of



Canadians that Senators take the same approach.

The time has come to end the criminalization of cannabis users. The time has come for Canada to implement measures to protect our youth and thwart criminal activity. And, the time to act is now.

Niche strongly urges the Senate of Canada to pass Bill C-45 and Bill C-46 with no unnecessary delay.

The National Institute for Cannabis Health and Education (NICHE) is a not-for-profit corporation created to support the safe transition to legalization.

The National Institute for Cannabis Health & Education
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HERE'S TO FUTURE GROWTH.

Cannabis Policy Briefing

Government falling behind on cannabis public education, say critics

Health Canada says its national education advertising campaign is set to launch in the spring, but critics warn it should have been in place months ago to make sure youth are prepared for July 1's cannabis legalization.

BY EMILY HAWS

Health Canada says it will launch a national public education advertising campaign on cannabis in the spring, though critics say it should have already been in place in order to educate the public ahead of the July 1 legalization deadline. The impaired driving campaign run by Public Safety, "Don't Drive High", has been popping up in social media feeds since

November. The education campaign run by Health Canada, will focus on federal laws as well as the health impacts of smoking up.

Officials from Washington and Colorado states—places that legalized marijuana in 2012 officially, with sales starting in 2014—warned the Canadian government to make sure public education is in place well in advance of legalization. Their jurisdictions didn't have public education campaigns until well after legalization, as the funding was coming from marijuana tax revenue.

Tammy Jarbeau, a Health Canada spokesperson, said the department will launch a national advertising campaign on cannabis health facts targeting youth and young adults this spring. Both NDP MP Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, B.C.) and Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia-Lambton, Ont.), their parties' respective health critics, said they haven't heard anything about it. Ms. Gladu said she had heard that a small campaign existed, but has not seen any proof of it. The Conservatives are against the legalization of cannabis, whereas the NDP have said if elected the would immediately decriminalize the drug, and then legalize it.

"We heard clearly from colleagues in U.S. states that have legalized cannabis for non-medical purposes that early public education is critical," said Ms. Jarbeau. "Our approach to public education follows this advice, learning from the experiences of others."

Since the introduction of the proposed legislation, Health Canada has run an ongoing digital campaign including social media, Ms. Jarbeau said, as well as the development of a kit to inform the public of the risks.

"To date, Health Canada has distributed more than 170,000 copies of the Drug Free Kids Canada Cannabis Talk Kit in addition to those [downloaded]," Ms. Jarbeau said in an email, adding that educational initiatives started in the spring of 2017 and will be expanded in 2018.

Despite Health Canada saying a digital campaign exists, when one Googles "public education marijuana campaign Canada" nothing about the campaign pops up. Googling "don't drive high campaign marijuana Canada" brings up the campaign's website, with information and the ads.

Liberal MP Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.)—parliamentary secretary to the justice and health ministers and the government's point-person on pot—was contacted for this story, but was unavailable.

Awareness campaigns are needed because the public assumes a product is safe when legalized. Bill C-45, known as the Cannabis Act, was introduced in the House in April, it received third reading in the House on Nov. 27 and passed second reading in the Senate on Nov. 30. A key part of the Liberal platform, it is meant to prevent young people from accessing cannabis, to protect public health and safety by establishing quality control regimes, and to deter criminal activity by increasing consequences for those operating illegally.

In parallel is Bill C-46, referred to Senate's Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee on Dec. 14, which looks to curb driving while high on cannabis by creating three new offences for having specified levels of a drug in the blood within two hours of driving. The penalties will depend

on how much THC—the main ingredient in cannabis that causes people to become high—is found in the driver's system, and whether it is combined with alcohol.

Young people are a key target of the campaigns as they are the largest demographic of cannabis users, and the scientific consensus is that marijuana can harm developing brains, especially with the higher THC levels today. Cannabis use rates have dropped in the last few years, but Canada still has one of the highest rates in the developed world. The campaign will also target Indigenous peoples, pregnant women, and others.

Mr. Davies said he gives the government a failing grade on public education, adding that it is significantly underfunding public education compared to what Colorado and Washington spent. In October, the Canadian government announced \$36.4-million over the next five years for a cannabis education and awareness campaign, divided as \$22.5-million in planned spending over the first two years, and \$13.9 in the three years following. This new money is in addition to the planned \$9.6-million over five years that was announced in the 2017 budget, which focuses on public education, awareness, and surveillance activities.

That amounts to about \$1.27 spent per Canadian over five years, or about \$0.25 per Canadian annually. According to House Health Committee testimony, Washington spends US\$7.5-million annually on its population of seven million, working out to about \$1.07 person per year. Colorado spends about US\$9-million per year on its population of 5.5 million, working out to \$1.63 per person annually.

"If you put it in terms of people, we're spending basically a dollar for every Canadian over five years, and they're spending a dollar per person, per year," he said.

When brought up at the House Health Committee on Sept. 12, Kristi Weeks, the government relations director of the Washington State Department of Health, recommended the Canadian government have more than the \$9-million in proposed funding at the time.

"One tip I would give to you ... is to make sure you have that educational funding up front," she said. "That you don't rely just on taxation dollars, because doing that is going to put you behind the eight ball."

'You can't start soon enough': Davies

The House Health Committee studied Bill C-45 this fall hearing from 120 witnesses, including officials from Washington, Colorado, as well as Canadian experts.

Witnesses testified that the late timing of the Colorado and Washington campaigns was problematic because youth didn't understand risks or implications. Peter Howlett, of the addiction treatment facility Portage Canada, testified on Sept. 13 that according to one study, by 2013 marijuana use in Colorado was 55 per cent above the national average among teens and young adults, and 86 per cent higher for those 25 and older.

Another study, he said, looked at marijuana usage rates in Colorado from two years before and after legalization for the

Continued on page 20

The best way to find out what Canadian youth think about cannabis ... is to ask them.

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Canadian Centre
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and Addiction



Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu scrums at Health Committee, September 12, 2017. As her party's health critic, she said it is important youth know the unintended risks of marijuana use, such as being barred entry from the United States, where the drug is illegal federally. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia*

Health Canada adding staff, launching new branch, in preparation for legal pot

To deal with its new oversight duties, Health Canada created a cannabis legalization and regulation branch.

BY JOLSON LIM

Health Canada is taking the lead on the marijuana file in Ottawa in advance of the summer deadline for legalization, overseeing product licensing and regulations, quality monitoring, health research, and public education.

In preparation, the department is transforming in ways unseen in decades, according to experts and a former Liberal health minister, adding new inspectors and staff to deal with backlogged licensing applications and increased service demands, and creating the Cannabis Legalization and Regulation Branch to handle its new marijuana-related functions.

“Will there be more human resources, more financial resources to do what they need to do on the regulatory side? Absolutely they will,” said Anne McLellan, who served as Liberal health minister from 2002-03 and headed the federal government’s 2016 task force on cannabis legalization and regulation. “And my guess is, over time, they will need more.”

The Liberal government earmarked \$526-million over five years in last October’s fall economic statement to ready the federal government for legalization, providing \$432-million, or 82 per cent of the new cash, to Health Canada.

The newly-formed cannabis branch is led by assistant deputy minister Jacqueline Bogden. The federal electronic directory shows the new branch includes its own legalization and regulation secretariat, an organization and launch directorate, and the Office of Medical Cannabis.

The secretariat has its own external relations division, a policy legislative and regulatory affairs division, and task force support division. Producers applying for a permit to grow cannabis communicate with the Office of Medical Cannabis.

“Its [creation] implies that this is a significant change in the way as a society we’ve viewed cannabis,” Ms. McLellan told *The Hill Times*, noting that that it now has an obligation to “ensure they have the right people in place with the right focus to protect Canadians’ health and safety.”

“It would be shocking if they hadn’t created it,” she said.

The *Financial Post* reported in October that the funding allocated to Health Canada in the fall update is earmarked for implementing the new regulatory framework, expanding the capacity of licensing and inspection, and compliance and enforcement. It will also support expanded monitoring and research, a national public education and awareness campaign, and tracking systems and program support.

Health Canada didn’t respond to requests before deadline asking exactly how much funding each area of focus would receive and how many people work within the legalization and regulation branch.

The federal civil service also received an additional \$36.4-million in the fall update for a cannabis education and awareness campaign, building on the \$9.6-million handed out in 2017 budget.

Health Canada has also brought in expertise outside the department, such as hiring David Brown as a senior policy advisor. Mr. Brown was director of communications

and editor-in-chief of Lift Cannabis, a part-consulting, part-cannabis news company.

Prohibition, tobacco control program of the 1990s closest comparison to cannabis shake-up

The most recent policy initiative comparable to marijuana legalization in scope and complexity was the tightening of regulations on the tobacco industry undertaken by the Chretien government in the 1990s, according to Ivan Ross Vrána, vice-president of public affairs with Hill+Knowlton Strategies and a former Health Canada official who worked on the medical marijuana file.

But even then, the tobacco regulations, which mostly focused on tightening packaging rules and improved enforcement, fail to match the scale of the legalization mandate, he said, with Health Canada being asked to essentially regulate and oversee an entirely new industry.

“The regulatory responsibility is quite awesome,” Mr. Vrána told *The Hill Times*.

“It means a growth in resources, in people who understand the file, which they’ve been doing for the last couple of years.”

Mr. Vrána described Health Canada’s efforts to ready itself as “incremental,” with much of the preparation and capacity-building work beginning soon after the Liberals took power in 2015 on a campaign platform promising to legalize marijuana.

Ms. McLellan said it’s “too soon” to predict the scope of the changes cannabis legalization will bring to Health Canada, noting that the task force she chaired on the file warned Ottawa to expect surprises and unintended consequences. However, she said the department was no stranger to handling regulations on health and safety, even if the closest precedent in Canada would have to be the repeal of the temporary prohibition on alcohol in 1920.

“They understand what regulatory regimes look like and challenges around enforcement. They’ve been working on the food and drug space for decades,” Ms. McLellan said.

Questions remain with shaping cannabis research landscape

In the push towards legalization, Health Canada released proposed regulations for cannabis producers this past November, asking stakeholders to share their views over the 60-day consultation period that ended on Jan. 20.

The department is also adding more staff to address concerns from industry about the lack of inspectors, after it was discovered that banned pesticides were used by three federally-licensed producers early last year. Since then, Health Canada has moved to regulate the use of pesticides by cannabis producers.

Allan Rewak, acting executive director of the Cannabis Canada Association, which represents licensed marijuana producers, said Health Canada has been hiring more inspectors to address the backlog of applicant cases, though everyone from producers to government will have to learn and adjust on the fly.

“We’ve all had to find our own way, and Health Canada’s regulators are a part of that,” he told *The Hill Times*.

Canada’s research community, though, is still waiting for answers from Health Canada after the department recommended in November that researchers looking to work with cannabis apply first for a license. Currently, any researcher who wants to work with cannabis must apply for a legal exemption from the department.

However, Health Canada’s proposed regulatory framework says the department should streamline and rationalize the process and



Health Canada has been tasked with overseeing cannabis producers under the federal government’s marijuana legalization framework. A marijuana growing facility in Smith Falls, Ont. run by Tweed Inc., now Canopy Growth, is pictured. *The Hill Times* file photograph

requirements for research. Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe, N.B.), though, hasn’t released more information about how this would take place.

“It doesn’t make much sense to me that in a number of months, we’re going to be able to as adults to walk out to basically a corner store and buy cannabis, and yet we will have to go through regulations for cannabis access similar to if we were going to be experimenting on heroin and cocaine,” said M-J Milloy, research scientist with the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use.

Dr. Milloy told *The Hill Times* that cannabis research from the “molecule up to

society” will become increasingly pertinent as legalization approaches, with more Canadians, for example, asking doctors about marijuana’s purported therapeutic benefits.

Mark Ware, a McGill University professor and vice-chair of the legalization and regulation task force, told *The Hill Times* that there needs to be better “harmonization and interconnection between different research groups” on marijuana.

He said better organizing with the help of Health Canada can ensure people aren’t “duplicating efforts and using limited resources” on similar projects.

Some cannabis researchers have already gathered together to meet on the matter, such as one gathering organized by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse last year. Researchers have also proposed an independent research body to organize and prioritize different pot-related research.

Dr. Ware said that there also needs to be better access to materials used to research cannabis and an increased analytical capacity in laboratories that can better study complex molecules and human urine, blood and saliva.

The Canadian Institute for Health Research, a federal research funding organization under Ms. Taylor’s purview, will allocate about \$1-million this year for 10 cannabis research projects. CIHR has approved \$6.8-million in funding for 15 different projects since 2017, the *Globe and Mail* reported.

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The Hill Times

Open letter by the Honourable Christian Paradis, Senior Vice President at GardaWorld and former federal minister from 2008 to 2015 (Public Works and Government Services, Natural Resources, Industry and International Development, and la Francophonie)

LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS: ENSURING CANADIANS SAFETY WITHOUT BURDENING POLICE OFFICERS

The recreational use of cannabis will become legal within months in Canada, and there will inevitably be repercussions. Several questions on security and enforcing laws and regulations related to the legalization of cannabis are raised. GardaWorld mandated the leading firm in Canada, Ipsos Public Affairs, to conduct a scientific survey on the use of security firms to support police forces to ensure the safety of Canadians regarding the legalization of cannabis.

GardaWorld, a Canadian entity, is one of the largest private security companies in the world. It provides security guard services, cash transportation and processing services, and pre-boarding control services in airports. Its 62,000 dedicated and highly-qualified professionals serve a diversified clientele throughout North America, the Middle East, Africa and Europe, across a broad range of sectors, including financial institutions, infrastructures, natural resources and retail, governments and humanitarian organizations.

Strong support

Canadians expect a secure environment regarding the legalization of cannabis and have expressed a significant level of comfort relating to the involvement of serious private security firms in support of police officers for:

Surveillance of areas surrounding cannabis production sites: 70% are comfortable compared to 21% who are not.

Monitoring of warehousing and distribution centres for cannabis products: 69% are comfortable compared to 21% who are not.

Surveillance of cannabis production sites: 69% are comfortable compared to 21% who are not.

Secure transport of cannabis products from production sites to warehousing and distribution centres: 66% comfortable compared to 24% who are not.

For the past few years, GardaWorld and the private security industry have clearly expressed that they are ready to play a greater role in supporting police forces. The industry can fulfill the duties for which its guards have been duly trained and regulated.

Security throughout the value chain

Canadians agree that the private security industry should support police officers by providing security across the entire cannabis value chain: from cannabis production to consumption by product users.

One example that quickly comes to mind is a truck full of cannabis which leaves the production site and has to travel a few hundred kilometres to the storage facility. This truck can be a target for criminals; a much larger target than a truck loaded with food, toys, or alcohol. The industry can offer a secure transportation service, as it already does, with cash transportation.

In support of provinces, municipalities, and private businesses

While elected municipal officials across the country express concern about the costs of implementing cannabis legalization, the industry can provide less expensive solutions that are supported by the public.

Private security companies can help ensure the safety of workers and the public at cannabis storage facilities, production sites, and points of sale.

Furthermore, by enforcing laws and regulations related to the legalization of cannabis, such as monitoring public areas where consumption will be prohibited, transportation, storage and points of sale, the industry is able to provide high quality, sophisticated services all while ensuring the safety of the population. The industry is therefore calling on the various levels of government to apply the necessary legislative changes to make outsourcing possible or easier across Canada.

Putting the right people in the right places

Police forces are responding to increasingly complex crimes and criminals. The majority of Canadians believe police officers should focus their work on tracking down criminals for investigations and patrolling, as opposed to managing traffic or issuing parking tickets. We should all make sure that our police forces are assigned to as many tasks for which they alone are trained to undertake and let the private security industry offer the same quality support services but at a much lower cost.

Hence, the legalization of cannabis should not place an unnecessary burden on our police officers by assigning them additional tasks that are not exclusive to their line of work. As we know, the private security industry is qualified and well-equipped to perform such tasks, and more importantly, Canadians are in favour of this notion.

GARDAWORLD

Cannabis Policy Briefing

Liberals' answer to drug impaired driving? Precious little

The combination of a lack of resources, insufficient time to train law enforcement, as well as flawed and unscientific per se limits, underlies the need for the Liberals to put the brakes on their rushed and arbitrary timeline to legalize marijuana. If they don't, our roads are going to become a lot more dangerous come the summer of 2018.



Conservative MP Michael Cooper
Bill C-46

Impaired driving is the leading criminal cause of death and injury on Canada's roads. Each year 1,200 to 1,500 Canadians are killed at the hands of a driver impaired by alcohol or drugs. That works out to four to five Canadians a day. On average, a staggering 60,000 more are injured. Thanks to the Liberal government's decision to legalize marijuana, expect to see more carnage on Canada's roads. One need only look at other jurisdictions that have legalized marijuana. Take Colorado. According to a U.S. government study, marijuana-related traffic deaths increased on average 48 per cent in the three years after Colorado legalized marijuana.

Statistics like this shouldn't come as a surprise. After all, legalization means that more Canadians are going to use marijuana. And that will mean more people will also get behind the wheel high.

So what have the Liberals done to help law enforcement prepare for what is sure to be a significant spike in drug impaired driving? Precious little.

To begin with, there is a shortage of drug recognition experts (DREs). DREs are the "gold standard" in providing evidence of drug impairment. There are approximately 600 DREs across Canada. Law enforcement says that many more DREs are needed to deal with the anticipated increase in drug impaired driving. Despite the need, the Liberals haven't done enough to help. As a result, by the summer of 2018 there won't be many more DREs than there are now; far short of what law enforcement says is needed to detect and remove drug impaired drivers from our roads.

Then there's the Liberals' rushed and arbitrary timeline to legalize marijuana by the summer of 2018. Law enforcement says they simply can't be ready

by then. Some 65,000 police officers will require training to understand Bill C-46; the Liberals' drug impaired driving legislation. Aside from the costs (which are significant), there simply won't be enough time to take thousands of police officers off the street to undertake training by the summer.

To-date, the Liberals' answer to drug impaired driving has been Bill C-46, a deeply flawed bill. Among other things, Bill C-46 establishes per se limits for drug impaired driving based on THC concentration in the blood. This is consistent with per se limits for alcohol impaired driving. The problem, however, is that unlike alcohol there is no clear correlation between THC blood concentration levels and impairment.

Neither THC nor alcohol, impair the blood; they impair the brain. For alcohol, blood can be used as good surrogate for the brain to detect impairment. Not so with THC. There simply is no level of THC in the blood in which everyone

is impaired. Per se limits inevitably mean that some drivers who are not impaired will be charged for being over the THC limit. More worrisome, some drivers who are impaired will be under the THC limit and get away with drug impaired driving. This is hardly a way to keep our roads safe from drug impaired drivers; never mind the extensive litigation and court challenges that are sure to follow, resulting in further delay to our already overburdened criminal justice system.

The combination of a lack of resources, insufficient time to train law enforcement, as well as flawed and unscientific per se limits, underlie the need for the Liberals to put the brakes on their rushed and arbitrary timeline to legalize marijuana. If they don't, our roads are going to become a lot more dangerous come the summer of 2018.

Conservative MP Michael Cooper, who represents St. Albert-Edmonton, Alta., is his party's deputy justice critic.

The Hill Times



People pictured at the 4/20 event on Parliament Hill on April 20, 2017. Conservative MP Michael Cooper says Bill C-46 is flawed. *The Hill Times* file photograph

Trudeau government should create process to pardon, expunge criminal records of Canadians with cannabis offences

Given that cannabis possession will soon be made legal in Canada, the NDP has been clear from the outset that we should immediately decriminalize the possession of recreational cannabis for personal use pending full legalization.



NDP MP Don Davies
Pardons & Offences

When the Liberals promised Canadians cannabis legalization in the last election, Canadians understood legalization to mean the end of criminalization, the end of stigmatization, and the end of the prohibitionist approach to cannabis.

It is why the NDP, along with millions of other Canadians, were somewhat surprised to read the fine



Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor and Liberal MP Bill Blair, parliamentary secretary to the minister of justice and minister of health, pictured Nov. 21, 2017, on the Hill launching public consultations on the regulatory approach for the Cannabis Act. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

print of Bill C-45 only to discover that it is not legalization, but simply making cannabis less illegal.

From the start, the Liberals have refused to decriminalize simple possession of cannabis, despite calls from stakeholders and the NDP. In the meantime, thousands of Canadians are continuing to get arrested, charged and convicted for something that will soon be legal, even as our justice system remains severely under-resourced.

For far too long, we have wasted billions of dollars in resources in the criminal justice system by criminalizing otherwise law-abiding citizens at an alarming rate for simply processing and consuming cannabis. In fact, we still are.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2016, under the Liberal government after it promised Canadians legalization, there were 55,000 offences related to cannabis reported to police, and police charged 17,733 people with pot possession. Given that cannabis possession

will soon be made legal in Canada, the NDP has been clear from the outset that we should immediately decriminalize the possession of recreational cannabis for personal use pending full legalization.

Now, petty possession is a crime that the prime minister

himself has admitted to committing while serving as an elected official. This admission of past cannabis use belies his repeated assertion that "Until we've changed the law, the current laws exist and apply." I guess that means that they apply to other people and not to him.

It is a shame and hypocrisy of the highest order that the current government continues to prosecute and convict Canadians for simple cannabis possession, which is something the government admits, should be legal. The government knows full well that current cannabis laws are not applied consistently across this country. Indeed, their discriminatory impact has been well documented by Canadian researchers, like Simon Fraser University's Dr. Neil Boyd.

Furthermore, given the extensive body of research on the negative impacts of carrying a criminal record, it is clear that pursuing thousands of convictions for actions that we no longer view as criminal

will needlessly harm vulnerable Canadians, particularly young people, racialized communities, Indigenous people, and other marginalized groups, mainly the poor.

Parliament is well aware of the devastating consequences of carrying criminal convictions, especially for young people, Indigenous and marginalized Canadians. It is illogical and unjust to continue this policy on the eve of legalization.

After the NDP and stakeholders revealed gaping holes in the Liberal government's cannabis legislation, the NDP proposed amendments to C-45 that would provide an expedited pardon process for Canadians carrying convictions for cannabis offences that no longer exist, but they were rejected.

Millions of Canadians use cannabis. They have used it in the past, they will use it today, and they will continue to use it in the years to come. They are not criminals. They are our parents, teachers, friends, colleagues, loved ones, and citizens of this great country who voted for genuine cannabis legalization in the last election.

The NDP will continue to call on the Trudeau government to create a process to pardon and expunge the criminal records of Canadians with cannabis offences. We will also continue to work positively and constructively to develop the smartest, safest, and most effective cannabis legislation and regulations in the world, because it is time we delivered.

NDP MP Don Davies is his party's health critic and MP for Vancouver Kingsway, B.C.

The Hill Times

Policy Briefing Cannabis

Must cannabis be grown in Fort Knox?

For some reason, the government seems bound and determined to confine growing of cannabis to the indoors. This is bizarre. Cannabis grows well outdoors. In fact, it grows like a weed. It is an ideal crop to replace tobacco cultivation in many parts of Canada.



Green Party Leader Elizabeth May

Growing cannabis

As the first federal party in Canada to advocate for an end to the futile and counter-productive prohibition policy towards cannabis, the Green Party of Canada

welcomes this government's commitment to legalization. Unfortunately, these efforts are marred by something of a "reefer-madness" mindset. I attempted to amend the legislation to eliminate the extremely severe penalties for accidentally sharing cannabis with a minor. Those efforts failed. But much can be improved through regulations.

For some reason, the government seems bound and determined to confine growing of cannabis to the indoors. This is bizarre. Cannabis grows well outdoors. In fact, it grows like a weed. It is an ideal crop to replace tobacco cultivation in many parts of Canada.

However, ever since the first governmental medical marijuana facility was built by Allan Rock in the abandoned mine tunnels of Flin Flon, Man., the cultivation of cannabis has been consigned to the dark. When cannabis was a prohibited substance, indoors growing may have been defensible as the crop was a target for theft. But as a legal crop, there is no more need to grow it indoors than there is to grow tobacco indoors.

The problem is that growing cannabis indoors, in addition to being unnecessary, imposes a rather large climate impact. An astonishing amount of water and energy are required to grow cannabis indoors. Statistics from those areas where cannabis has been legalized in the United States should give us pause as we organize a massive energy-intensive indoors cannabis industry. In Colorado, Denver's marijuana facilities consume two per cent of the state's electricity. In California, it is three per cent. Oregon's utility has compared the energy required to grow four plants to that required to run our most energy-hungry appliance—not one refrigerator, but 29 refrigerators.



The problem is that growing cannabis indoors, in addition to being unnecessary, imposes a rather large climate impact. An astonishing amount of water and energy are required to grow cannabis indoors, writes Green Party leader Elizabeth May. *The Hill Times* file photograph

A peer-reviewed study by Evan Mills, a senior scientist and energy expert at University of California Berkeley, estimates that a kilogram of cannabis product will produce 4,600 kilograms of greenhouse gases. ("The carbon footprint of indoor cannabis production," *Energy Policy* 46 (2012) 58-57)

In British Columbia, we have protected agricultural areas for decades within the Agricultural Land Reserve. In my riding on southern Vancouver Island, this precious agricultural land is up for grabs for indoor cannabis operations. Constructed in bunkers, they have no relationship to agriculture. The soil is being covered, food is not being grown, and vast areas are off limits behind barbed wire.

While growing cannabis as a more traditional outdoor crop has some challenges,

the potential to ramp up supply is far more attainable than with the indoor factory approach. Because outdoor cultivation also has environmental impacts in energy use, fertilizer and pesticide run-off, the gold standard of regulations should aim for certified organic production. Our experience with tobacco shows that some of the carcinogenic impacts of cigarettes were related to artificial fertilizers and pesticides, made deadlier through burning and inhalation within smoke. An organic cannabis product will be preferable from health and environmental viewpoints. Our regulations should contemplate our best outcomes and avoid creating another and growing source of greenhouse gas emissions.

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May represents Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C. *The Hill Times*

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Cannabis Policy Briefing

Municipalities key to safe, effective cannabis legalization

With the right tools, local governments will be ready to answer the tough questions and reassure Canadians that they'll be safe and well-served in a world of legal cannabis.



Jenny Gerbasi
Municipalities

WINNIPEG—With cannabis set to become legal for recreational use by next summer,

Canadians are asking tough questions: Will marijuana be sold next to my child's school? How will we keep drug-impaired drivers off the road? How will we dissuade my teenager from smoking pot? These are the kinds of questions that thousands of municipal leaders are working hard to answer.

Legalizing and regulating cannabis across Canada is a major challenge for all orders of government. As president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), I can tell you that local governments are well into this process. After all, our cities and communities are where cannabis will be produced, sold and consumed. And the proposed legislation places them on the front lines of keeping Canadians safe and well-served.

For instance, municipalities are preparing the bulk of Canada's police forces to enforce new cannabis rules. As a top priority, protecting people from impaired drivers means rolling out roadside testing programs, training officers on new equipment and protocols.

But keeping Canadians safe and well-served will involve as many as 17 municipal departments—from business licensing to transit to human resources.

Municipalities will be amending, administering and enforcing zoning and density bylaws, along with rules around smoking restrictions, public nuisance, and safety concerns related to building codes. We may share responsibility with other governments for rules around minimum age of purchase, possession limits, public consumption, retail location, and home cultivation. We will play varying roles in promoting public health through education and prevention.

To help municipalities get ready, FCM published a Cannabis Legalization Primer last August, and we're in the final stages of developing a comprehensive guide. Implementing this federal commitment is a mammoth undertaking, and local governments are capable partners in getting it done. And we've always said that getting it done right requires two things: co-ordination

among orders of government, and financial tools that work.

Co-ordination matters because local implementation hinges on the regulatory frameworks that federal and provincial governments develop. To move forward locally, municipalities need to know what's coming—and we have frontline expertise to share. And while co-ordination has been uneven, we see it improving, and we need that to continue.

Financial tools matter because implementing this federal government commitment will impose major new costs on municipalities. To keep Canadians protected—at launch and for the long term—those costs need to be sustainable. So FCM has been working on the math, based on evolving information from provinces and consultations with our members nationwide.

Our best projections pin those local costs at \$3-million to \$4.75-million annually per 500,000 residents. This is money municipalities don't have and cannot raise on their own. That's why FCM has proposed flowing one-third of cannabis excise tax revenues to local governments. Based on the Parliamentary Budget Office's cannabis revenue projections, one-third will go a long way toward making those local enforcement and operational costs sustainable.

Initially, the federal government had proposed a 50/50 revenue split with provinces. So we were encouraged to see Ottawa respond to FCM by sharing 25 more points

with provinces—for a 75-25 split—specifically to support municipalities. This has launched an important conversation among orders of government toward achieving that fair municipal share.

The federal commitment to legalize cannabis has always carried a federal responsibility to ensure all orders of government have the tools they need to follow through. So if cannabis revenues start lower than hoped, or if local costs exceed FCM's projections, Ottawa will need to find other ways to ensure those costs are covered. But the great advantage of revenue-sharing is the planning stability it offers all orders of government.

We all know that cannabis legalization requires a strong federal-provincial-territorial municipal partnership. Over the last couple of years, we have seen that partnership grow stronger on infrastructure and affordable housing. From FCM's perspective, what we have now is an opportunity to get this partnership right by building in the right financial tools from Day 1.

With the right tools, local governments will be ready to answer the tough questions and reassure Canadians that they'll be safe and well-served in a world of legal cannabis.

Jenny Gerbasi is deputy mayor of Winnipeg and president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the national voice of municipal government, with nearly 2,000 members representing 90 per cent of Canadians.

The Hill Times

Cannabis legalization in Canada: the case for pardons and preferential licensing

The Opium Act of 1908, and many that followed, had a considerable negative impact on the very groups that their proponents so often purported to help. At a time when Canada once again stands at the forefront of international drug law, we should set an example to the world by providing redress for the harms we now know we have inflicted.



Akwasi Owusu-Bempah
Pardons & Licensing

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's proposed date for legalizing the recreational use of cannabis is fast approaching and the Senate is debating Bill C-45, the Cannabis Act. Given the social harms associated with drug prohibition, legalization cannot come soon enough. We also need to go further and right past wrongs by pardoning those convicted of minor cannabis offences and by giving preference to those most targeted by Canada's war on drugs when we issue cultivation and distribution licences.

Although unrecognized by many, the policing of cannabis and other drugs has been a priority for Canadian law enforcement agencies. According to Statistics Canada, Canadian police agencies recorded approximately 109,000 offences under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) in 2013, the most recent year for which comprehensive data are readily available. Of these, about 73,000 were cannabis-related cases and 59,000 were for possession. While many of these cases were cleared through police discretion (i.e. not taken to court), the number of people tried for simple possession was significant. Between 2008 and 2009 and 2011 and 2012, cannabis possession accounted for approximately 59,000 adult and 14,000 youth cases completed in our courts. Of these, 25,000 adults

and almost 6,000 youth were found guilty. So, in less than half the time our prime minister has held office, more than 30,000 Canadians were branded with the marker of a criminal record for a "crime" committed by a significant proportion of the Canadian public, including Justin Trudeau when he sat as MP.

Unfortunately, these 30,000 people joined a lengthy list of Canadians who, like them, face difficulties travelling overseas, volunteering at their local schools and finding meaningful employment due to minor cannabis offences. We are legalizing the drug in part for this very reason; we acknowledge the harms caused by its current illegality. As we move towards legalization we should not forget those who have already been affected. Former Toronto police chief and current Liberal drug czar, Bill Blair, has himself pointed out these people are more likely to be drawn from the young, impoverished, and otherwise marginalized—the very people that we should be trying to better incorporate into our society, not working to exclude from it.

So how can we rectify this? By pardoning the convicted and providing opportunities for those personally affected by the war on drugs, as well as members of their communities, to benefit from a burgeoning industry.

In the case of pardons, we should follow the example provided in Bill C-66, where the government erased the records of LGBTQ Canadians convicted of activities that are no longer illegal. These pardons should be automatically granted by the federal government and should extend to any subsequent charges stemming from an original cannabis related charge (failure to comply with the conditions of a probation order, for example). The latter are important as they serve to unnecessarily drag individuals further into the criminal justice system.

The federal government also recently announced a plan to spur a "diverse and competitive" industry by establishing different tiers of licences required for participation in the legal market.



The federal government also recently announced a plan to spur a 'diverse and competitive' industry by establishing different tiers of licences required for participation in the legal market, writes Akwasi Owusu-Bempah. *The Hill Times* file photograph

This marks a departure from the current medical model, which has been dominated by well-funded, large-scale producers. Diversity in this market would be bolstered by creating a special class of licence for people previously convicted of cannabis crimes and those from neighbourhoods targeted by our war on drugs. Los Angeles took this approach as a way to introduce equity into California's new recreational market.

Canadians need to remember that our country stood at the vanguard of international drug law with its adoption of the Opium Act of 1908. This law, and many that followed, had a considerable negative impact on the very groups that their proponents so often purported to help. At a time when Canada once again stands at the forefront of international drug law, we should set an example to the world by providing redress for the harms we now know we have inflicted.

Akwasi Owusu-Bempah is an assistant sociology professor at the University of Toronto.

The Hill Times

MJ-101: time for 'higher' knowledge about cannabis

What is ideal an age for cannabis literacy to start and when should it stop, if ever? Start young and don't stop. Many youth may face challenges with employment screening, insurance and professional regulatory bodies e.g. Armed Forces, police, public transport drivers, health and construction, to mention a few. What does a positive cannabis test mean, without a criminal record?



Oyedeji Ayonrinde
Cannabis Literacy

KINGSTON, ONT.—While many psychoactive substances like caffeine, cocaine, tobacco and heroin have plant origins, none has proven a contemporary social phenomenon as marijuana—a plant with both medicinal and recreational potential. Very few companies or indeed countries can boast the iconic brand recognition of the cannabis leaf; certainly, none of the aforementioned plants. Science, industry, agriculture, legislation, education and policy have now converged as the 'green rush' collides with grey cells.

Over generations, marijuana vocabulary and cultural icons have metamorphosed from the ganja-smoking Bob Marley reggae tunes and Peter Tosh singing "legalize it." Snoop Dogg now iconizes marijuana through music, smoke-imagery and a large social media presence with 120 million views of his song *Smoke Weed Every Day* (SWED), a new phrase in urban youth lexicon. Marijuana is now at home on Instagram and fed with Bitcoins as times change.

Today, Canadian youth rank top of the global cannabis-use league, while the 2017 *Maclean's* University Marijuana Ranking highlights the influence of weed in academic institutions. The Canadian cannabis survey (2017) observed 55 per cent found positive effects of cannabis on mental health (mood, anxiety, sleep and creativity). However, motivation, memory and decision-making were also problematic (60 per cent). Twice as many 16-24 year olds (41-45 per cent) reported cannabis use in the past year than 25-year-olds and above (18 per cent). Of importance, 16 per cent said they used weed before or during school. In Ontario, about two per cent of Grade 7 students report cannabis use in the last year with rapid acceleration to about 37 per cent by Grade 12.

Does this actually matter? The simple answer is yes. There is robust evidence that frequent or daily use of high potency cannabis-products from a young age significantly increases the risk of developing psychosis and schizophrenia. The developing brain (including that of the unborn child) is particularly vulnerable

to the effects of THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) a dopamine triggering chemical in cannabis. Consider the developing brain being a fresh egg and the mature brain boiled. You may find yourself thinking, "Hey we smoked pot and turned out just fine," however, the difference lies in the THC content which has increased from about three per cent a few decades ago to nearly 30 per cent in some contemporary hybrids. Evidence also suggests a drop in IQ with heavy use. Higher grade, but lower IQ.

Health Canada and other agencies are committed to raising awareness, however, there remains a considerable knowledge gap regarding current scientific evidence about risks and benefits of cannabis use.

The challenge faced by policy-makers, health professionals, and health educators is how to bridge this knowledge chasm. While the frequency and pattern of use has been established, we know less about cannabis literacy in youth. I have heard young people suggest cannabis helps grow brain cells and can enhance productivity in school. Some also felt it improved focusing while driving. When asked their sources, friends, the internet, and social media were cited.

In developing high cannabis literacy in young people, what messages should they receive and through what media? Who is best suited to credibly communicate this?

Many clinicians are probably not aware of the most current cannabis evidence and may also have their individual biases. The advent of medical marijuana and imminent legalization poses a challenge to health professionals as they confront a new ethos

of "lower-risk cannabis use." As youth describe differences between sativa and indica plants, with formulaic description of their THC to CBD (cannabidiol) ratios while claiming they modulate their cognitive states with high THC and wind down with CBD; clinicians may be struck by their own knowledge void.

Every health professional, teacher, first responder, parent, and child should have evidence-based cannabis literacy delivered through a medium they understand and engage with. The 'green-rush' has invested millions of dollars in sophisticated marketing and development of new cannabis professions with credible-looking and persuasive knowledge positioning.

What is ideal an age for cannabis literacy to start and when should it stop, if ever? I propose start young and don't stop. Many youth may face challenges with employment screening, insurance and professional regulatory bodies e.g. Armed Forces, police, public transport drivers, health and construction, to mention a few. What does a positive cannabis test mean, without a criminal record?

Higher knowledge before getting high.

MJ: 101—frequent or daily use of cannabis from a young age is strongly discouraged below 21 years, particularly if there is a history of psychosis if the THC content is greater than your age, you're taking greater risk with your mental health.

Dr. Oyedeji (Deji) Ayonrinde is an associate professor in the department of psychiatry at Queen's University.
The Hill Times

Government falling behind on cannabis public education, say critics

Continued from page 20

age groups 12 to 17, 18 to 25, and over 26.

"The increases were 17 per cent to 63 per cent higher, while national averages for the same group remained the same or



Cannabis enthusiasts take part in 4/20 in Parliament Hill, an annual day in celebration of the plant. The government plans to legalize cannabis on July 1, 2018, but critics are concerned the spring 2018 implementation date for the national marijuana public education advertising campaign will not be enough time to educate the public of the risks. *The Hill Times* file photograph

lower," he said at the committee.

Mr. Davies said he couldn't recall if the American experts had give a timeline for when the campaigns should be released to the public, but both he and Ms. Gladu said they would expect it soon because of the deadline.

"You can't start soon enough," he said. "It ... should have happened in the fall of last year, but certainly I should be seeing it by now."

Youth were not consulted during the House Health Committee's study of the bill, said Mr. Davies, which he found concerning because of the focus on usage rates in the age group. He would have liked to ask them about what they thought of legalization, or how to best reach them during an educational campaign, he said. Mr. Davies moved a motion to have two days of hearings to include youth, but it was voted down.

"What I think about cannabis use and what a 16-year-old thinks about cannabis use are probably quite different," he said.

Don't come off as preachy: MADD

Andrew Murie, CEO of Mothers Against Drunk Driving Cana-

da (MADD), said the key to reaching youth is not being preachy. The organization has educated youth about the effects of drinking and driving for a number of years, but more recently turned to the effects of driving and drug impairment.

Youth are very sensitive to hypocrisy and exaggerated claims, said Mr. Davies, so having accurate information is important.

"It needs to be focused on usage, helping people understand brain development, helping people understand what the impacts of what cannabis use are, and what they're not," he said.

Ms. Gladu said the campaign should also be implemented in schools, tailored to meet provincial and municipal laws. Schools could also talk about the unintended consequences of marijuana use, she said, such as potentially being barred from the U.S., where marijuana is illegal federally.

"They're not legalizing it at the federal level, we've just seen the [U.S. Justice Department] take a reverse opinion from the Obama administration on whether or not they're going to look the other way for state legalization," she said. "Those are the kinds of things I think young people need to know."

Health Canada is collaborating with the provinces and territories to identify the best way to get the information into schools, said Ms. Jarbeau. She said the groups have been meeting monthly to discuss public education efforts.

Current Public Safety ads running until March 2018

Jean-Philippe Levert, a spokesperson for Public Safety, said the current campaign will run from November 2017 until March 2018, but the initiative will continue for five years. The primary target for this year's advertising are those aged 16-24.

"Young people are the least experienced when it comes to driving and drug use, and they continue to be the largest group of drivers who die in crashes and later test positive for alcohol or drugs," he said in an emailed statement.

He also noted Public Safety is partnering with MADD and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, among others, for the impaired driving campaigns.

While Mr. Davies supports the impaired driving campaign, he said it was the easier one to



NDP MP and health critic Don Davies said tone, as well as accurate information, are important when it comes to the cannabis public education campaign. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

implement and the easier one for the public to understand.

"There's nothing unique about [it], you can't drive high now, never mind legalization," he said. "That's not where the bulk of the educational campaign needs to be focused on."

ehaws@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Feature Events



The sixth round of renegotiations of NAFTA takes place this week in Montreal. Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland, pictured, is scheduled to meet U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Mexico's Secretary of Economy Ildefonso Guajardo on Jan. 29 in Montreal as part of the negotiations. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

NAFTA negotiations resume in Montreal; NDP national caucus meets in Saguenay

Parliamentary Calendar



MONDAY, JAN. 22

The House Is Not Sitting—The House of Commons is not sitting this week after adjourning for the traditional holiday break on Dec. 13. The House is scheduled to resume sitting Jan. 29.

Detailed Route Hearings begin in B.C. Lower Mainland for Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project—The National Energy Board is holding detailed route hearings in Burnaby, B.C. to hear from landowners in the B.C. Lower Mainland area who have raised concerns with the detailed route of the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion project. Jan. 22-31. Delta Burnaby, 4331 Dominion Street. Details of these hearings, a daily schedule of appearances, and transcripts are available on the NEB website.

Freedom of Expression: A Discussion with Sweden's Ambassador to Canada—The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS) at Concordia University is welcoming Sweden's ambassador to Canada H.E. Per Sjögren for a talk about Sweden's foreign policy in upholding freedom of expression as a fundamental human right across the globe. 12-1 p.m. MIGS, Concordia University, 1250 Rue Guy, FB 804 (8th floor), Montreal. Free to attend, but registration is mandatory. Register at eventbrite.ca/e/freedom-of-expression-a-discussion-with-swedens-ambassador-to-canada-tickets-41967725597.

TUESDAY, JAN. 23

NAFTA Negotiations—The sixth round of negotiations is set to be held from Jan. 23 to 28, in Montreal, Que.

Immigration Policy in the Era of Politics Polarization: The Riddell Forum on Political Management—Leading experts will discuss immigration policy-making in an era of political polarization at this event hosted by the Clayton H. Riddell Graduate Program in Political Management at Carleton University. The panellists are Jennifer Ditchburn (moderator), editor-in-chief of Policy Options

magazine, Rachel Curran, senior associate with Harper & Associates, *Toronto Star* immigration reporter Nicholas Keung, Jamil Jivani, visiting professor with the Osgoode Hall Law School, and Andrew Griffith, fellow with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute and the Environics Institute. Event starts at 5 p.m. with a cocktail reception (cash bar). Discussion begins at 6 p.m. National Arts Centre, Ottawa. The event is free to attend. Register at <http://bit.ly/2miAXJU>.

NDP Caucus Meets in Saguenay—The NDP national caucus will hold a strategy session from Jan. 23-25 in Saguenay, Que.

The Trump Presidency: Understanding It—A panel session in Ottawa offering a chance to hear Trump's side of the story from ardent supporters. The panelists are Rita Smith, a communications specialist, conservative organizer, and social media activist with the Trump campaign, and Georganne Burke, conservative strategist in the U.S. and Canada, canvasser in the Trump campaign, and senior vice president with PathwayGroup. Earncliffe Strategy Group Principal and former senior advisor in the Mulroney PMO Geoff Norquay is the moderator. Following a panel discussion there will be a Q&A session. 8-9:15 a.m. By invitation only because of space limitations. For more info, contact info@thepearsoncentre.ca

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24

Conservative National Caucus Meets in Victoria—The national Conservative caucus is meeting in Victoria, B.C., from Jan. 24-25, in advance of the start of the winter session of Parliament on Jan. 29. Conservative leader Andrew Scheer will deliver opening remarks at 9:30 a.m. on Jan. 24. His speech will be open to the media. The caucus will break for the day at 5 p.m. Mr. Scheer will hold a media availability at the end of the caucus meeting on Jan. 25. The Fairmont Empress, 721 Government St., Victoria, B.C.

CIGI Global Policy Forum—The Centre for International Governance Innovation presents its first Global Policy Forum event in 2018. Its featured speaker is University of Waterloo Prof. Bessma Momani, a CIGI senior fellow. She will speak on "Flashpoints of the Middle East." 5:30 p.m. Rideau Club, lounge, 99 Bank St., 15th floor. Registration required. <https://momani-gpf-lecture.eventbrite.ca>.

Canadian Mayors to attend Workshop on Countering Violent Extremism and United States Conference of Mayors Meeting—The U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, in partnership with the Strong Cities

Network, have invited seven mayors and other representatives from Canadian cities to Washington, D.C., for a workshop with American and international mayors on countering violent extremism. The participants will also attend the United States Conference of Mayors' 86th winter meeting from Jan. 25-26. The mayors of the following cities will be attending: Ottawa, Gatineau, Quebec City, London, Windsor, Saskatoon, and Edmonton. Representatives from the cities of Montreal and Surrey will also be in attendance.

THURSDAY, JAN. 25

Trumpocracy: The Corruption of the American Republic, with David Frum—*Maclean's* writer Paul Wells hosts this Ottawa Writers Festival event featuring author, former White House speechwriter, and *The Atlantic* columnist and media commentator David Frum, who explains how he says U.S. President Donald Trump has undermined America's most important institutions in ways even the most critical media have missed. He'll speak to his new book, *Trumpocracy*. Southminster United Church, 15 Aylmer Ave., Ottawa. 7 p.m. Prices vary, up to \$20. writersfestival.org.

Community Liaison Officers' Group Ottawa—The CLO Group is hosting a 2017/2018 series of information sessions for foreign diplomatic missions' personnel responsible for welcoming new embassy staff members and their families. The group involves networking and sharing information essential for a smooth transition and settlement of new families to Ottawa/the National Capital Region. Monthly meetings feature guest speakers. January's topic is taxes and banking. 2:30 p.m. To join the group or participate in the meeting, please contact andjelka.vidovic@embassyservices.org.

In Search of the Next Gig: A Snapshot of Precarious Work in Canada Today—What does precarious work look like in Canada today, and what is driving it? How should decision-makers address the loss of employment stability? With the help of a panel of experts, this breakfast discussion hosted by Policy Options magazine will broach this key public policy issue. 8-10 a.m. National Arts Centre, Ottawa. Registration is \$25. Register at irpp.org/irpp-event/in-search-of-the-next-gig-a-snapshot-of-precarious-work-in-canada-today.

Minister Philpott to Convene two-day Emergency Meeting on First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation Child and Family Services—Indigenous Services Minister Jane Philpott will convene an emergency meeting on Indigenous child and family services at the Shaw Centre in

Ottawa from Jan. 25-26. This meeting will include Indigenous leaders, provincial and territorial ministers, community technicians, youth representatives, experts, and advocates. The meeting looks to identify shared priorities and a path forward in reforming Indigenous child and family services.

SATURDAY, JAN. 27

Saskatchewan Party Elects New Leader—The next premier of Saskatchewan, taking over from Brad Wall who announced his resignation in the summer, will be elected today by party membership at a convention in Saskatoon. saskparty.com.

MONDAY, JAN. 29

The House Resumes Sitting—The House of Commons begins the winter and spring session today after returning from the traditional holiday break. The House is sitting every weekday until Feb. 16. It will then take a one-week break from Feb. 19-23 before returning Feb. 26. The House will break again on March 2, and take a two-week break from March 5-16. After returning March 19 and sitting every weekday for the next nearly two weeks, the House will again break from March 30 to April 13. It will resume sitting April 16 and sit every weekday until leaving for a one-week break from May 14-21. After returning on May 22, the House is scheduled to sit every weekday until adjourning for the summer break in late June. The Senate will largely follow the same schedule, though the Senate traditionally only sits Tuesday to Thursday, and is scheduled to break a week later in the spring, on June 29.

Ministers to Meet in Montreal for Round Six of NAFTA Renegotiations—Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland, United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, and Mexico's Secretary of Economy Ildefonso Guajardo will meet in Montreal as part of the NAFTA renegotiations.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31

Arctic Inspiration Prize Awards Ceremony—This is an event honouring the 2017 laureates of the \$3-million Arctic Inspiration Prize, which encourages, enables, and celebrates the inspiring achievements of northerners. Hosted by CBC Igloolik's Madeleine Allakariak, the event will feature a performance by the cast of *Kiviuq Returns*, produced by 2015 Arctic Inspiration Prize Laureate Gaggiavuuut, and a special announcement by Natan Obed, president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. 8 p.m. Shaw Centre, Ottawa. No charge, advance registration required. For more information, visit arcticinspirationprize.ca or aip@national.ca.

Prime Time in Ottawa 2018—The Canadian Media Producers Association is hosting the 2018 edition of its annual conference for the Canadian media industry from Jan. 31 to Feb. 2 at the Westin Ottawa. Prime Time is the national networking event for business leaders from Canada's television, interactive media, feature film, broadcasting, and telecommunications industries. Actor, director, writer, and producer Jay Baruchel is the closing keynote speaker. His recent credits include acting roles in *Goon: Last of the Enforcers*, *Man Seeking Woman*, *This Is the End*, *Tropic Thunder*, and *How to Train Your Dragon* franchise. For more, visit primetimeinottawa.ca.

Canadian Catastrophe Conference—CatiQ is hosting the third annual Canadian Catastrophe Conference from Jan. 31-Feb. 2 in Gatineau, Que., at the Hilton Lac-Leamy. The goal of the conference is to bring government, the insurance industry, and academia together to discuss Canadian disasters and how to better prepare and respond to them. It is also hosting a national disaster mitigation workshop in collaboration with Public Safety Canada on Jan. 31. For more information, www.catiq.com.

SATURDAY, FEB. 3

British Columbia Liberal Party Elects New Leader—Voting will take place online, with a telephone option, on Thursday, Feb. 1, Friday, Feb. 2, and Saturday, Feb. 3. The party will hold a leadership convention for the announcement of the new leader on Feb. 3. For more info: bcliberals.com/leadership.

TUESDAY, FEB. 6

Promoting Democracy Abroad: What Role for Canadian Legislators?—Organized by the Carleton University Initiative for Parliamentary and Diplomatic Engagement, Parliamentarians and senior government officials are invited to this panel discussion and introduction to the new All-Party Democracy Caucus. Panelists: Fen Hampson, Carleton University/Centre for International

Governance Innovation; Jacqueline O'Neill, Inclusive Security; and Kevin Deveaux, former Nova Scotia MLA. Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St., Ottawa, 4:30 p.m., registration; 4:45 p.m., panel; 6:15 p.m., reception. Please register at carletonrsvp@gmail.com by Jan. 31.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7

The Home Depot Canada Foundation's Parliamentary Reception—Assistant Deputy Speaker Carol Hughes and The Home Depot Canada Foundation are hosting a cocktail reception raising awareness of the Orange Door Project and Canadians' active role reversing the cycle of youth homelessness in their communities. 5:30 p.m. (or after votes) to 8 p.m. Speaker's Salon, 216-N Centre Block.

Prime Minister Trudeau to Travel to the United States—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is visiting the U.S. from Feb. 7-10. His visit will include stops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago. In Chicago, the prime minister will meet with key officials and deliver a speech at the University of Chicago's Institute of Politics. In the Los Angeles area, Mr. Trudeau will deliver remarks at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute in Simi Valley, while in San Francisco, the prime minister will meet with local business leaders and entrepreneurs to explore opportunities for increased collaboration.

THURSDAY, FEB. 8

Manning Centre Networking Conference—This annual conference for conservatives and libertarians will take place in Ottawa, Feb. 8-11. Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr. manningcentre.ca/manning-networking-conference.

Big Thinking Lecture on the Hill—Speaking to the topic "Trade and human rights: What is Canada's role?" at this breakfast event will be Susan Aaronson, senior fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation, and research professor, George Washington University; as well as Patrick Leblond, senior fellow, Centre for International Governance Innovation, associate director, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa. 7:30-8:45 a.m. Parliamentary Restaurant, Centre Block, Parliament Hill. \$25 (\$10 for students), pre-registration required. Details to come. Free for Parliamentarians and the media. Breakfast included. ideas-ideas.ca/events/big-thinking.

TUESDAY, FEB. 13

Macdonald-Laurier Institute Canada-U.S. Dinner—The Macdonald-Laurier Institute is hosting its annual dinner, 5:30 p.m. at the Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Pl. Buy tickets via macdonaldlaurier.ca.

THURSDAY, FEB. 15

The Gift of Jazz: From Africa to New Orleans to The True North Strong and Free—Deborah Davis and Segue to Jazz will be joined by Stefan Keyes, weekend Ottawa anchor of CTV News; jazz great Michael C. Hanna; Jamaal Jackson Rogers, Ottawa English poet laureate; and former world tap-dancing champion Darin Kyle, for their annual tribute to Black History Month. General audience tickets are \$40; \$25 for seniors and students. 6 p.m. National Gallery of Canada Theatre, 380 Sussex Dr., Ottawa. For more, visit odysseyshowcase.org. This event is presented by Odyssey Showcase in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada and sponsored by TD Bank.

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. We can't guarantee inclusion of every event, but we will definitely do our best. Events can be updated daily online too.

The Hill Times



Seven Conservative MPs face divisive nomination challenges, party denies it's behind it

Conservative MP Jim Eglinski told Hill staffer Ryan Oudekirk that he was 'disappointed' and 'not happy' with the nomination challenge.

Continued from page 1

Mr. Trost, who finished fourth in last May's leadership race, is promising to launch a lengthy legal court battle against his own party after it fined him \$50,000 for leaking the Conservative Party's membership list to the National Firearms Association. Last week, he told CBC News that he was willing to take his legal fight "all the way," against a "deliberate smear," and said his supporters have raised tens of thousands of dollars to help pay for his legal fees.

A Conservative source, meanwhile, told *The Hill Times* that Conservative MP Larry Miller (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Ont.) had overheard the conversation about incumbent challenges among OLO staffers last fall, and then talked to some of the MPs who were mentioned in the conversation. In an interview, Mr. Miller did not directly confirm or deny if he had overheard the conversation, but said he heard rumours the party leadership wanted some incumbents challenged. Mr. Miller said he checked on his own internally if that would be the case, but did not get any solid proof to substantiate the rumours.

The seven Conservative MPs facing challenges are: Mr. Trost, Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, Ont.), Kellie Leitch (Simcoe-Grey, Ont.), David Tilson

(Dufferin-Caledon, Ont.), Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, Alta.), Deepak Obhrai (Calgary Forest Lawn, Alta.), and Mike Lake (Edmonton-Wetaskiwin, Alta.).

"All that I can tell you is I heard rumours that some of our colleagues, including some of the names you've mentioned were going to be challenged," said Mr. Miller, a five-term Conservative MP, in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "I've absolutely no reason to believe that the party's behind it." But, he also warned that if someone from the federal party was involved, it would be a problem.

"My message would be if the party is involved, and I want to make it very clear that I don't think they are, but if they are, I think that they are walking on very thin ice, because I have no time for anybody getting involved, anybody from outside of the riding getting involved in a nomination race," said Mr. Miller.

He said if he had found any proof, he would have publicly spoken up about it.

Cory Hann, director of communications for the Conservative Party, denied any suggestions that the party's leadership is in any way involved in encouraging any challenger to run against incumbent MPs.

"We're running our nominations in the exact manner we've run all our nominations including our leadership—in a very fair and open manner," said Mr. Hann, last week.

The Conservative Party opened nominations on Nov. 1 in the 92 held ridings where there has not been a byelection held since the 2015 election. Seven Conservative MPs who have been elected in by-elections since the last election are not facing nomination challenges for the 2019 election cycle. Conservatives won 99 of the 338 ridings in 2015. The deadline to challenge incumbent MPs was Dec. 15, and



Conservative challenges: Seven incumbent Conservative MPs are facing nomination challenges, including from top Jim Eglinski, left, Cheryl Gallant, Mike Lake, Kellie Leitch, Deepak Obhrai, above left, David Tilson, and Brad Trost. Since facing the nomination challenge, Mr. Eglinski has announced he won't seek re-election in 2019. Photographs courtesy of www.parl.gc.ca

the challengers were required to get 50 signatures from existing riding association members. In addition, the challengers will be interviewed by the local candidate nomination committee and either a representative of the executive party director or the executive director. The 85 other incumbent MPs who weren't challenged were acclaimed. Those nominations have since been closed.

Mr. Miller said he is supporting all his colleagues facing challenges. He said outsiders should not be involved in the nominations and only those candidates who have strong connections with the ridings should run.

"I'll tell you, if somebody comes into my riding and starts interfering with my EDA's nomination, they're going to have a war on their hands," said Mr. Miller.

Meanwhile, Mr. Trost, a five-term MP, is facing challenge from two Conservatives, including local businessman Brad Redekopp, and Saskatchewan MLA, and former speaker of the provincial legislature Corey Tochor. Mr. Ben-Ami, in the interview, expressed surprise that Mr. Tochor would step down from the speaker's position to run against Mr. Trost without "having discussions" with the party officials.

"Serious politicians like Cory in the case of Brad's nomination don't wake up one morning and say, 'Hmm, I'm going to challenge a long-time, sitting incumbent, a former leadership contestant without first doing their homework,'" said Mr. Ben-Ami. "It just defies credulity, if you will. So, is the party behind this, can't say, I don't know definitively. But, there's zero chance, in my view, that he wasn't encouraged to proceed."

Mr. Tochor did not respond to an interview request from *The Hill Times*.

Mr. Eglinski, who after facing the nomination challenge from an Ottawa Hill staffer Ryan Oudekirk, has decided not to seek re-election in 2019, said he was "surprised" and "not happy" with the challenge. He said that Mr. Oudekirk, parliamentary assistant to Conservative MP David Yurdiga (Fort Murray-Cold Lake, Alta.), is originally from Ontario, but has now come to Alberta to challenge him. Mr. Eglinski said he asked Mr. Oudekirk in a meeting that of the 99 held ridings, and 239 unheld ridings, why he chose

Yellowhead, Alta. riding, but couldn't get a straight answer.

"I asked the question, there are 239 ridings in Canada, why he didn't run in those ridings, and he couldn't answer to me other than he put a little grin on his face," Mr. Eglinski said. "I think we're seeing a society of 'me's out there,' what's best for me, and I'll try to get in there and may be something will happen and the incumbent might be overthrown or something like that."

Like most other Alberta ridings, Yellowhead is a safe Conservative riding which Mr. Eglinski won by a margin of 58 per cent of the votes in 2015 or with 72.3 per cent of the vote. A former RCMP officer, Mr. Eglinski, 69, was first elected to the House in a byelection in 2014 after Rob Merrifield stepped down from the seat. MPs need six years of parliamentary service to be eligible for a pension, which means Mr. Eglinski will not be eligible.

Mr. Eglinski questioned why someone who is originally from Ontario would be interested specifically in his Alberta seat.

"Ridings are best represented by people who have lived in that riding for a number of years, or understand that riding, or have grown up in the riding or are from that province," said Mr. Eglinski, adding that a number of his constituents have questioned why someone from outside of the riding has come to the riding to be an MP. He said that he told Mr. Oudekirk directly in a meeting he was "disappointed" and "not happy" with his challenge.

"I told him I was disappointed. I talked to him personally about it, and I told him I wasn't happy about it," said Mr. Eglinski. "I hear very often how come some guy coming from Ottawa is going to run and represent me. I'm hearing that constantly, people ask me what's going on. It's not a good scenario, it doesn't look good."

During the Conservative Party leadership, Mr. Eglinski first endorsed Andrew Scheer (Regina-Qu'Appelle, Sask.), but later switched his support to Conservative MP Erin O'Toole (Durham, Ont.), who won third place in the leadership contest. But Mr. Eglinski said he does not believe he's been challenged for this reason, or that the party leadership is behind it.

After the nomination challenge,

Mr. Eglinski said he had a conversation with his family and decided that was time for him to retire and spend time with his family.

Mr. Oudekirk did not respond to interview requests from *The Hill Times*.

Mr. Obhrai, who finished last in the Conservative Party's leadership contest and won the last election with 48 per cent of the vote, told *The Hill Times* that he was surprised by former Alberta MLA Moe Amery's challenge, especially since he considered Mr. Amery a friend who he has helped out in provincial elections by going door knocking with him. Mr. Obhrai, a seven-term MP, said he's preparing for the nomination contest and is optimistic that he will win.

"I'm getting ready for the challenge," said Mr. Obhrai, but declined to further discuss the details.

Mr. Amery, however, told *The Hill Times* that he is the one who helped out Mr. Obhrai to successfully enter the federal political arena the first time. Recalling a meeting with Mr. Obhrai in 1997, Mr. Amery said the now seven-term MP came to his MLA office and said he was in the "political wilderness." At the time, Mr. Amery said that Mr. Obhrai had tried to run unsuccessfully provincially twice and for the city councillor's position once. So Mr. Amery said he suggested to Mr. Obhrai to run for the Reform Party federally, and supported him to win the nomination and the 1997 federal election, and every subsequent election after that. He said he also hosted Mr. Obhrai's victory party at his brother's restaurant. Since that time, Mr. Amery said, he has helped Mr. Obhrai "a million times" more in federal election campaigns compared to the help the MP provided to him in his provincial campaigns.

"I brought Deepak into politics, I supported him all along, I door knocked for him, I supported him in nominations when he faced challenges," said Mr. Amery, adding that he decided to run for the nomination because some of Mr. Obhrai's constituents approached him and told him the incumbent MP was "out of touch" with the base.

Conservative MP Mike Lake (Edmonton-Wetaskiwin, Alta.), who won the last election with 65.8 per cent of the vote, told *The Hill Times* that he has been challenged by Gordon Francis, an IT professional. He said he was taking the challenge seriously and putting in 14-hour days every day, in addition to constituency work, to work on his nomination campaign.

"You never take these things for granted. We will work as hard as we can at it," said Mr. Lake. "I do feel that the feedback we're getting is very, very positive. But, until the votes are counted, you never know for sure."

Mr. Lake denied that the party has encouraged his opponent to challenge in the nomination.

"I don't believe that at all."

Ms. Leitch, Ms. Gallant, who is being challenged by veteran Conservative political insider Michael Coates, and Mr. Tilson did not respond to interview requests from *The Hill Times*, by deadline last week.

Ms. Leitch, who won the last election with 46.6 per cent of the vote, ran for the Conservative Party leadership and came in fifth place.

The Hill Times

News Senate

Lobbyists get 'too much time' in Senate committees, says ISG deputy ahead of back-to-Parliament meeting

The biggest group in the Senate will meet to talk lobbying, Senate rule changes, and key bills early next month.

Continued from page 1

the deputy facilitator of the ISG. "It is not exactly the type of contribution that we always want."

Sen. Saint-Germain spoke to *The Hill Times* about the ISG's upcoming "retreat" meeting, set to take place in Centre Block in two weeks. She said she plans to raise the subject of how and when lobbyists are chosen as witnesses for committee studies during that meeting, which will also cover key pieces of legislation, areas of common interest among ISG Senators, and more.

"We want independent experts and we want people who bring added value," said Sen. Saint-Germain, adding it was her own opinion, and not that of the group as a whole.

"Whereas each committee has limited time to complete their studies, the quality of expert witnesses is of the utmost importance. Lobbyists and corporate representatives can testify honestly and legally without a doubt, but I have a preference for independent, impartial and neutral information.

"In general, I would say that the information provided by scholars, scientists and fellow citizens involved is likely to be more reliable and valuable for Canadians."

Lobbyists contacted Senators at an unprecedented rate last year, reporting 1,250 communications altogether. That's up from 687 in 2016, which was well above the previous high of 472 in 2014. The federal Lobbying Act came into force in 2008.

Those numbers likely do not include many of the committee appearances by lobbyists, who are not required to report communications if they are initiated by the government, or in this case, a Senate committee.

The creation and growth of the Independent Senators Group has sparked a great deal of interest in the Senate among lobbyists, thanks in part to the fact that many ISG members have shown themselves willing to propose amendments to government legislation.

Sen. Saint-Germain said many of her colleagues in the ISG were concerned with finding the best way to deal with a barrage of requests from lobbyists, wanting to make their case on a particular issue.

Sen. Saint-Germain said many of her colleagues in the ISG were concerned with finding the best way to deal with a barrage of requests from lobbyists, wanting to make their case on a particular issue.



Senate committees often hear from lobby groups representing the private sector during studies of bills or other issues. Senators are also being contacted directly by lobbyists far more than at any time in the last decade. *The Hill Times* file photograph

Reported communications between lobbyists and Senators in 2017

*Does not necessarily include lobby groups that testify before a committee.

Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
26	175	78	105	124	172	8	9	64	187	215	28

"It's very, very time consuming," she said.

The ISG is now the largest group in the Senate. It now holds 39 of the 105 seats in the Senate Chamber, with the Conservatives holding the second-most, at 33, the Senate Liberals 15, and non-affiliated Senators holding seven. Eleven seats in the Senate are currently empty, and it is likely that all or most will become part of the ISG once they are filled.

As an example, Sen. Saint-Germain pointed to the Senate Transport and Communications Committee's study last year on autonomous vehicles, during which the committee members were approached by lobbyists who she said represented private sector interests that were not immediately obvious. She declined to name them. During that study, the Transport Committee heard from lobbyists representing the trucking and insurance industries, BlackBerry, General Motors of Canada, Transdev, New Flyer Industries Canada, and other witnesses from the private sector, as well as academia and government.

"It's important that we hear [lobby groups], but sometimes they are very numerous, and we give them, from my standpoint, too much time and too much importance."

Lobbyists would "absolutely" be concerned to hear Sen. Saint-Germain's comment that they are given too much time and importance in the Senate, said Phil Cartwright, the president of the Government Relations Institute of Canada—an organization representing lobbyists.

Lobbyists make recommendations on studies or bills that could impact large portions of Canada's

economy or society, he said.

"Advocacy is a very important part of a democratic system."

Mr. Cartwright said he did not believe Sen. Saint-Germain's views on lobbyists were widely shared among Parliamentarians.

The office of Conservative Senate leader Larry Smith (Saurel, Que.) responded to Sen. Saint-Germain's comments by saying the Senate Conservatives would "continue to be faithful to our role as official opposition in the Senate Chamber, in particular, when it comes to ensuring that all voices are heard at committee."

Senate rule changes on the ISG agenda

The ISG holds summit meetings like the one planned for Feb. 5 at the end of each summer and winter break. Key pieces of legislation, such as the government's marijuana legalization Bill C-45, and the Senate's "modernization" are also on the agenda, said Sen. Saint-Germain.

The latter will likely include talk of changing the way the Senate schedules debate over pieces of legislation, a haphazard process through which debates can be stretched out over long periods of time, and any item on the Senate's agenda can theoretically be debated on any given day.

Sen. Saint-Germain said the group would probably discuss whether the Senate can sit for longer hours—perhaps starting earlier in the day—or devote more time in the Chamber to debate on legislation, and less to Senators' declarations.

The government's representative in the Senate, Senator Peter Harder (Ottawa, Ont.), has also proposed a change to the way the Senate sched-

ules debates, a point he pressed again in an opinion piece published on his Senate website Jan. 16, in which he called the current system of debate "a disjointed practice that makes it difficult for the public to follow how laws are evaluated and reviewed."

Sen. Saint-Germain also confirmed that the ISG will continue to press for permanent changes to the Rules of the Senate to give the ISG leaders the same rights and privileges in the Chamber as their counterparts who represent the official opposition and government.

Any such changes must be made through the Senate Rules,



ISG facilitator Sen. Raymonde Saint-Germain will meet her fellow ISG Senators on the Hill Feb. 5 to share information and plan strategy for issues of common interest in the spring. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Procedures and the Rights of Parliament Committee. Sen. Saint-Germain does not sit on that committee, but the ISG facilitator, Sen. Yuen Pau Woo (B.C.) does.

The Senate Liberals, Conservatives, and ISG struck a deal in November that re-allocated seats on Senate committees and gave, temporarily, some new rights and privileges to the ISG leaders, in light of the group's growing size.

Sen. Saint-Germain said the ISG would press to make those gains permanent through changes made via the Rules Committee, and would also seek some new rights and privileges it had not gained in the last set of negotiations, such as the ability for the group's leaders to refer a bill for study at committee.

"It's a series of issues like that, that as a consequence, the ISG facilitator does not have the same capability to influence the orders of the day or the way the chamber works," she said, adding bills were at times not referred to a committee promptly for "partisan reasons."

"We are now the most numerous group, as you know, and it is important to adapt the rules consequently."

The ISG is not a political caucus, and does not whip votes among its members. ISG Senators have a record of voting overwhelmingly in favour of government legislation, but have at times pushed hard for amendments to bills, against the will of the government.

ISG liaison eschews disciplinarian role

ISG Senator Marc Gold (Stadacona, Que.) said he hoped to set aside time during the ISG's summit meeting to discuss his new role as the group's liaison, a re-styled role that replaces the whip of a political caucus.

The ISG does not whip votes, but uses its liaison to keep track of who is in the Chamber or available for a vote, and occasionally uses the cloud-based online survey tool SurveyMonkey to get a voluntary, anonymous count of ISG Senators' voting intentions on important pieces of legislation.

Caucus whips also traditionally take on other roles, such as disciplining members who don't follow the party line, and approving requests from caucus members to travel at the Senate's expense. Recent changes to the Senate Administrative Rules have also given the leadership of Senate groups power to allocate office space for Senators within their group, something that would fall to the whips as well.

"I don't see putting discipline in one person's hands—it certainly wouldn't be a role that I would be comfortable in," he said.

Sen. Gold said he hoped the group could develop a set of rules to determine when travel for ISG members would or would not be approved, instead of having those decisions falling solely under his discretion.

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'No money' to bring in missing-in-action military justice reforms, four years after being made law

The government still hasn't brought into force several big changes to the way the Canadian Forces disciplines its members, and says doing so will be complicated and expensive.

BY PETER MAZEREUW

The office of Canada's defence minister says bringing languishing reforms to the military justice system into effect would require a "substantial commitment of time and resources," and says the federal cabinet is working on the file, which is part of legislation passed more than four years ago.

The office of Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan (Vancouver South, B.C.) would not confirm whether the changes would be made before the 2019 federal election, however, only calling them a "priority."

NDP MP Randall Garrison (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke, B.C.), his party's defence critic, said the government told him the same thing back in April, with no sign of progress since.

"There's just no money" for the department to go through with the changes, said Mr. Garrison.

The previous Conservative government passed Bill C-15, the Strengthening Military Justice in the Defence of Canada Act, into law on June 19, 2013. Then-defence minister Peter MacKay touted the bill in the House that year by highlighting its changes to sentencing options and introduction of victim impact testimony to the military justice system. Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.), then his party's defence critic, responded in the House that he agreed with much of the bill, but

argued that some military trials do not provide soldiers on trial with all the legal rights provided for in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and took issue with the ability of the vice chief of defence staff to intervene in police investigations under the bill.

Parts of C-15 were brought into force in 2014, but the remainder have not been implemented by either the previous Conservative or current Liberal governments. Those include clauses that would create new sentencing principles for the military justice system; allow an absolute discharge of an accused instead of a conviction in some cases; introduce victim impact statements; require some offenders to pay restitution to their victims; and allow some offenders to serve intermittent sentences.

The clauses implemented in 2014 "were relatively simple, requiring few regulatory amendments," wrote Byrne Furlong, the press secretary for Mr. Sajjan, in an emailed statement.

"The sections that are not in force are much more complicated, requiring extensive regulatory amendment, which requires a substantial commitment of time and resources. These updates to the military justice system are important, and our government is committed to seeing them implemented as soon as possible," the statement said.

Those resources aren't there, said Mr. Garrison. The non-operational portions of the National Defence Department don't have



Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan's office says bringing in changes to the military justice system passed into law in 2013 will be complicated, and require a 'substantial commitment of time and resources.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

enough people to take on tasks that are not top priorities, he said.

The budget of the National Defence Department has stayed relatively flat in recent years, with spending ranging from \$18.7- to \$18.9-billion since 2013-2014, when the previous Conservative government cut its budget down from more than \$20-billion.

The text of Bill C-15 specified that it would only come into force once ordered by the Governor in Council. That is one of several ways that bills can be brought into force: they can also come into effect immediately upon receiving royal assent, or on a fixed future date.

Allowing the Governor in Council to decide when bills to come into force "may afford more time to await consensus or agreement on the legislation before its coming into force" or "give the government an opportunity to achieve the policy goal underlying the act using other ways to achieve the same purposes," according to the Library of Parliament.

However, any bills or clauses that have not come into force nine years or more after they were passed into law are repealed each year via the Statutes Repeal Act, unless Parliament moves to save them. That means the remaining reforms in Bill C-15 will be wiped out if they are ignored until 2022.

"There is a cabinet process and work is ongoing," wrote Ms. Furlong. "These updates to the military justice system are a priority and we remain committed to implementing them as soon as possible."



NDP MP Randall Garrison, his party's defence critic, said the government hasn't given the National Defence Department enough money to go through with the changes first laid out in the Strengthening Military Justice in the Defence of Canada Act. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Bureaucrats resisting change: advocate

Members of Canada's military are accountable to a separate justice system from the rest of the population, and the military justice system operates differently. Less serious cases are dealt with either through a summary trial, run by the defendant's superior officer, while more serious offences are dealt with in a court martial, presided over by military judges.

As it stands, Canada's military justice system is "arcane," "antiquated," and perpetuates a "hyper-macho culture of harassment and abuse against females, LGBTQ, and ethnic minorities," said Sean Bruyee, a retired captain in the Canadian forces and a soldiers' and veterans' rights advocate, in a statement emailed to *The Hill Times*.

Canada's defence bureaucracy has "persistently and aggressively resisted long-needed improvement" to the military justice system, he wrote.

Members of the military have criticized the military justice system as well. A leaked draft of an interim report from last year on a review of the military justice system—led by the judge advocate general, who oversees that system—included feedback from military members who said sentences under the military justice system were too harsh or too lenient, that the process was too slow, confusing, and not sufficiently supportive of the accused, among other complaints.

A pair of Ottawa-based military defence lawyers blasted the current government as an "absentee landlord" when it came to military justice reform, and said Bill C-15 had been "left to collect dust," in an opinion piece published in *The Hill Times* Jan. 15.

Joshua Juneau and Michel Drapeau, who authored the piece, are administrative lawyers focused on military and veterans law, and acted as co-counsel for the Fynes family—whose son Cpl. Stuart Langridge killed himself on a Canadian Forces base in 2008—during the Military Police Complaints Commission public inquiry process in 2013. Mr. Drapeau was also consulted as part of the judge advocate general's review of the military justice system.

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Status of Government Bills

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second reading:

- S-5, An Act to amend the Tobacco Act and the Non-smokers' Health Act
- C-5, An Act to Repeal Division 20 of Part 3 of the Economic Action Plan 2015 Act, No. 1
- C-12, An Act to amend the Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act
- C-27, An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985
- C-28, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (victim surcharge)
- C-32, An Act related to the repeal of section 159 of the Criminal Code
- C-33, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act
- C-34, An Act to amend the Public Service Labour Relations Act
- C-38, An Act to amend an Act to amend the Criminal Code (exploitation and trafficking in persons)
- C-39, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (unconstitutional provisions)
- C-42, Veterans Well-being Act
- C-43, An Act respecting a payment to be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to support a pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy
- C-52, Supporting Vested Rights Under Access to Information Act
- C-56, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and the Abolition of Early Parole Act
- C-62, An Act to amend the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act and other Acts
- C-65, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (harassment and violence)

Committee:

- C-47, An Act to amend the Export and Import Permits Act and the Criminal Code (amendments permitting the accession to the Arms Trade Treaty)
- C-48, Oil Tanker Moratorium Act
- C-59, An Act respecting national security matters
- C-64, Wrecked, Abandoned, or Hazardous Vessels Act

Report stage:

- S-2, Strengthening Motor Vehicle Safety for Canadians Act
- C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act
- C-50, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (political financing)
- C-55, An Act to amend the Oceans Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act
- C-57, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act

SENATE

Second reading:

- C-24, An Act to amend the Salaries Act and the Financial Administration Act
- C-45, Cannabis Act
- C-51, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Department of Justice Act
- C-58, An Act to amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act
- C-66, Expungement of Historically Unjust Convictions Act

Committee:

- C-46, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (offences relating to conveyances)
- C-49, Transportation Modernization Act

Consideration of Committee Report:

- C-25, An Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, Canada Cooperatives Act, Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and Competition Act

Feature Ethic commissioner

New ethics czar Dion says he 'has no IOUs,' not looking for another promotion, this is it

Mario Dion, who's been doing media interviews about his new job recently, says he does not fear what will happen if he performs his duties independently.

Continued from page 1

Mr. Dion, who was appointed to the position of conflict of interest and ethics commissioner last month for seven years, is an independent officer of the House of Commons, and will advise appointed and elected government officials on how to avoid conflicts of interest between their official duties and personal affairs. He will also investigate any complaints of conflicts of interest that arise from time to time about top appointed and elected officials. Mr. Dion has succeeded outgoing commissioner Mary Dawson, who held the position for about a decade. Prior to his current position, he served as chairperson of Immigration and Refugee Board; and before that, was the Public Service Integrity Commissioner, a position intended to protect whistleblowers that expose wrongdoing in the government.

When he was integrity commissioner, he received sharp rebukes for his performance from whistleblower groups and Auditor General Michael Ferguson.

In a report about the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's Office released in 2014, Mr. Ferguson said that his staff found "gross mismanagement" in two separate case files of whistleblowers that they reviewed. At the time, some whistleblower groups in media interviews blasted Mr. Dion and asked for his removal, one saying he was no better than his predecessor Christiane Ouimet. "Dion has failed, in my opinion, at least as badly as Christiane Ouimet," said Allan Cutler, who heads Canadians for Accountability, in an interview with *The Toronto Star*.

"Now you're putting these people in a position where their job is to expose wrongdoing which will embarrass their deputy minister and departments, if it's done properly," David Hutton, executive director of the Federal Accountability Initiative for Reform, or FAIR, told *The Canadian Press* in April 2014.

"So you're asking them to do something that is completely against their instincts."

After Mr. Dion's appointment to the current position in December, Mr. Hutton predicted in a recent interview with *The Hill Times* that the commissioner will side with the government in his decisions on conflict of interest complaints.

"He'll do exactly what the government would like him to do," Mr. Hutton said, adding that he was making this prediction based on Mr. Dion's past performance as the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner. "He's a completely reliable ethics commissioner from their [the government's] point of view."

Mr. Dion told *The Hill Times* that his record will speak for itself, and he will perform his duties fearlessly.

"I do not fear what will happen and I'm not trying to get a higher promotion," said Mr. Dion. "It's about as high as I will get in any event."

Mr. Dion said, last week, he applied for the job online in August out of his own volition, and no one had asked him to do so. He said that to the best of his knowledge,



New Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion says his new job as ethics commissioner is 'about as high as I will get,' freeing him to perform his duties fearlessly. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

the Prime Minister's Office had completely stayed out of the selection process, and did not know how many candidates had applied for this position.

In May, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) announced that he would recuse himself from appointing the new ethics commissioner. The reason was that Ms. Dawson was investigating Mr. Trudeau for his Christmas vacation in 2016 at the Aga Khan's private island in the Bahamas. In his place, Mr. Trudeau asked Government House Leader Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Ont.) to oversee the process.

In November, the Prime Minister's Office announced that Mr. Trudeau, and four senior officials—chief of staff Katie Telford, principal secretary Gerald Butts, senior adviser and lawyer Mathieu Bouchard, and director of issues management Ryan Dunn—had recused themselves from the ethics commissioner's recruitment process. The senior staffers recused themselves because they were helping Mr. Trudeau deal with the investigation.

Last month, Ms. Dawson released her report, after a year-long investigation, finding Mr. Trudeau in contravention of the Conflict of Interest Act when he vacationed

at the Aga Khan's home on Bell Island.

Mr. Dion told *The Hill Times* that for his new job, he was interviewed by two senior PCO officials, the comptroller general of Canada, the chief of staff to the president of the Treasury Board, and the chief of staff to the government House leader. He said there was only one interview, which lasted for about an hour. As part of the selection process, he underwent a psychometric test, and an English proficiency test, as he had misplaced the document that proved he had been granted an exemption from the language proficiency test in 1985.

On Dec. 12, Mr. Dion appeared before the House Access to Information, Privacy, and Ethics Committee to answer questions from the committee members. Following the committee appearance, his appointment was approved by a vote in the House before the Parliament adjourned for the Christmas break.

As ethics commissioner, Mr. Dion will investigate any complaints that the most powerful government officials have potentially breached federal conflict of interest rules. One of the most high-profile cases that he has inherited from Mary Dawson is an examination of whether Finance Minis-

ter Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.) was in a conflict of interest when he introduced Bill C-27, the pension bill, in Nov. 2016, while he still owned shares in his family-owned human resources and pension management company, Morneau Shepell. Prior to the 2015 election, Mr. Morneau had worked as the company's CEO.

Before leaving her job, Ms. Dawson cleared Mr. Morneau of another investigation in which the finance minister was accused of getting a financial benefit based on the insider information, when he sold shares in Morneau Shepell after becoming a cabinet minister in 2015. The Conservatives had requested Ms. Dawson to look into the timing of the transaction of sale of shares, and whether Mr. Morneau and his father had benefited financially.

Mr. Dion told *The Hill Times* last week that in his first week in the new job, he received briefings from his officials about Mr. Morneau's case and had given the green light to continue the investigation. He said the investigation would start exactly where Ms. Dawson had left off. Mr. Dion said that he's hoping to file his report by the end of spring. The House is supposed to rise for the summer recess on June 22, and the last day of spring is June 21. If all parties agree, the House could rise sooner than June 22. Mr. Dion said in the interview that he was aware of the House schedule, but that was not a factor in when the report will be issued.

"I'm quite confident that by the end of this spring this should be completed," said Mr. Dion, adding that the timing of the release of the final report depended on a number of factors, including availability of people involved for interviews, and whether Mr. Morneau was guilty of a conflict of interest or not.

Mr. Dion told *The Hill Times* that in his first two weeks in office, he had done about 10 media interviews with English and French newspapers, radio and TV networks, as he thinks media is an important player in any democratic system. He said that it was mainly his idea to do all those interviews, and his communications staff didn't "oppose this idea." Mr. Dion said that he follows news closely, and will make himself and his office available for information whenever journalists have questions.

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The report about Finance Morneau's potential conflict of interest regarding Bill C-27 is expected to come out by the end of the spring. *The Hill Times* file photograph



Canada's new Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion, left, and Lobbying Commissioner Nancy Bélanger, right, were appointed last month after a lengthy selection process that spanned months. Democracy Watch last week launched a lawsuit in Federal Court challenging the appointment on the grounds that opposition parties were not adequately consulted during the nomination process. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

Watchdog petitions Federal Court to kill new appointments for lobbying, ethics commissioners

Democracy Watch has filed lawsuits in Federal Court challenging the appointments of Mario Dion as ethics commissioner and Nancy Bélanger as lobbying commissioner, on the grounds that the Trudeau government did not meet the standards for proper consultations with opposition parties stipulated in federal legislation.

BY MARCO VIGLIOTTI

An ethics watchdog is suing the Trudeau government for the way it handled appointments

for the lobbying and ethics commissioners, saying the Liberals failed to honour legislative requirements mandating consultations with all parties recognized in the House of Commons.

Democracy Watch announced on Jan. 18 that it had filed lawsuits in Federal Court challenging the appointments of Mario Dion as ethics commissioner and Nancy Bélanger as lobbying commissioner on the grounds that opposition parties were not adequately consulted during the nomination process.

It also claimed that the entire federal cabinet was in a conflict of interest in making the appointments because both of the commissioner offices were actively investigating a number of cases involving the prime minister or other cabinet ministers.

"The Trudeau cabinet failed to consult with opposition party leaders, as required by law, before appointing the new ethics commissioner and lobbying

commissioner, and both commissioners were investigating situations involving Trudeau or other ministers so the cabinet had a clear conflict of interest when making the appointments of these key democracy watchdogs," Duff Conacher, Democracy Watch co-founder and adjunct professor of law and political science at the University of Ottawa, said in a statement.

"Given it is essential that ethics and lobbying watchdogs are independent and impartial, Democracy Watch hopes the court will overturn both appointments and establish high standards to prevent conflicts of interest, and also require meaningful consultation with opposition parties, for all future watchdog appointments."

Mr. Conacher applied for the lobbying commissioner's job.

The federal cabinet has the authority to appoint the lobbying and ethics commissioners. However, the Parliament of Canada Act requires cabinet to consult with the leader of each recognized party in the House of Commons on the appointment of the ethics commissioner, while the Lobbying Act requires the same for the lobbying commissioner appointment.

The appointment of the ethics commissioner must still be approved by a resolution of the House, while the appointment of the lobbying commissioner has to be approved by the House and Senate.

The Liberal government publicly introduced the new ethics and lobbying commissioners in mid-December after what it claimed was an open and transparent appointment process that included consultation with the major opposition parties.

The Conservatives and NDP, though, disputed claims that they were adequately consulted, saying the Liberals only put forward a single nominee for each

post, and simply offered a brief seven-minute interview with the prospective appointees.

NDP MP and party ethics critic Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C.) described consultations on the new commissioners as a "sham," and accused the prime minister of failing to respect legislation mandating co-operation with opposition parties.

"It was an insult to the idea of consultation," he told *The Hill Times*.

"They said this is the one person we're looking at, we're going to hire them, we're not going to tell you who else we looked at, and that's it."

However, Mr. Cullen said he did not support removing the commissioners from their posts, and was now turning his attention to how he could work best with the new watchdogs.

He said it was "unfair" for Ms. Bélanger and Mr. Dion to have their legitimacy questioned through no fault of their own, though argued that issues with the appointment process must be aired.

The selections of the new ethics and lobbying watchdogs ended months of speculation about the future of the roles, with the Trudeau government drawing criticism for repeatedly extending the terms of Ms. Dawson and former lobbying commissioner Karen Shepherd over 2016 and 2017, on account of the lack of replacements.

The controversy over appointing new commissioners was intensified by politically sensitive investigations launched by the offices involving the prime minister and other cabinet members. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) even recused himself from the process of appointing the new ethics commissioner because of the office's investigation of his vacation to the Aga Khan's private island in 2016, handing off the

responsibility to Government House Leader Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Ont.).

Democracy Watch claims that at the time of Mr. Dion's appointment on Dec. 14, the ethics commissioner's office was investigating, at the very least, the following four cases involving Mr. Trudeau and Finance Minister Bill Morneau (Toronto Centre, Ont.):

- Mr. Trudeau's vacation to the Aga Khan's private island in the Bahamas in 2016

- Mr. Morneau's sale of shares in his family firm Morneau Shepell in Nov. 2015

- Mr. Morneau's involvement in legislation impacting pensions, Bill C-27, while still holding shares in Morneau Shepell, a human resources services and technology company that manages pensions

- And finally, Mr. Morneau's failure to disclose publicly when he had recused himself from decision-making processes because of conflicts of interest.

Then-ethics commissioner Mary Dawson ruled late last month that Mr. Trudeau breached conflict of interest rules by vacationing on the Aga Khan's private island, rejecting the prime minister's argument that the "gift" was acceptable because the religious leader fell under the close friends exemption.

Earlier this month, Ms. Dawson cleared Mr. Morneau of any wrongdoing related to the share sale, concluding that the introduction of a high-income tax hike that could be seen as negatively impacting the share price was announced publicly weeks before the sale.

The ethics commissioner's office is still investigating Mr. Morneau's involvement in introducing the pension legislation.

Democracy Watch also claims that the lobbying commissioner's office was investigating the following four separate cases involving Mr. Trudeau and members of cabinet, when Ms. Bélanger was appointed commissioner, also on Dec. 14.

- A fundraising event attended by Justin Trudeau and hosted by late Apotex chairman Barry Sherman. Apotex has registered to lobby the Prime Minister's Office

- A fundraiser in Aug. 2014 attended by Mr. Trudeau hosted by a Clearwater Seafoods co-founder and board member. Clearwater is also registered to lobby the PMO

- Mr. Sherman's assistance in selling tickets for a fundraising event that Mr. Morneau attended. Apotex was also registered to lobby Finance Canada

- Council of Canadian Innovators staff lobbying senior officials at Global Affairs Canada after working on Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland's (University Rosedale, Ont.) 2015 election campaign.


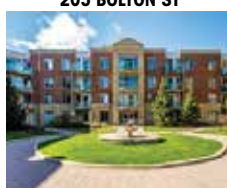









The lobbying commissioner's office, though, has no authority to investigate MPs or cabinet ministers. It's responsible for regulating those lobbying the federal government and designated public office holders. As such, the investigations would be centred on those lobbying government, not the public office holders being targeted.

The Prime Minister's Office was unable to respond by deadline.

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HILL CLIMBERS

by Laura Ryckewaert

Issues director exits Government House Leader Chagger's Office



Government House Leader Bardish Chagger, pictured in Centre Block. She recently bade farewell to Chad Mariage, who left her office earlier this month to return to work in the federal public service. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Government House Leader **Bardish Chagger**, who is also the minister responsible for Small Business and Tourism, is down one political aide, following director of issues management **Chad Mariage's** recent exit.

After a little more than a year, Mr. Mariage left the minister's office on Jan. 12, according to filings on the conflict of interest and ethics commissioner's online public registry.

He'd been in the House Leader's Office since November 2016, and before that was working for the department of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development as a manager of parliamentary affairs.

As director of issues management, he was tasked with helping the government to track, anticipate, and work to mitigate potential issues and hurdles around House business and the progress of government legislation. Along with keeping up good relations with opposition House leaders and their teams, that means liaising with the Prime Minister's Office, various cabinet offices, and with the Senate, which is becoming increasingly independent.

Mr. Mariage has now returned to work in the public service, this time as director of cabinet and parliamentary affairs at the Treasury Board Secretariat. He also continues to serve as a school board trustee for the French-language Catholic school network, Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-est, in Ottawa, which he has done since 2012.

He previously spent almost a decade as a House of Commons clerk, including with the House Proceedings Directorate's Table Research Branch and as a committee clerk. He has also previously worked an MP's assistant on the Hill and as an assistant to an Ottawa city councillor. He studied political science and English at the University of Ottawa, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Mr. Mariage's role has not yet been filled in Ms. Chagger's Government House Leader's Office, which is run by chief of staff **Rheal Lewis**.

Also, currently working on the House leader's team are: **Hugo Dompierre**, director of parliamentary affairs; **Mark Kennedy**, director of communications; **Sabrina Atwal**, press secretary; **Stephanie Choerung**, parliamentary affairs adviser;



Chad Mariage is now working for the Treasury Board Secretariat. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Kornelia Mankowski, policy adviser; **Jérôme Miousse**, policy adviser; **Gurjiven Sandhu**, general assistant; and **Daniele Medlej**, special assistant.

In more belated staffing news from across the aisle, Conservative leader **Andrew Scheer** bade farewell to Question Period adviser **Jayden Robertson** this past fall.

Mr. Robertson joined the Conservative Opposition Leader's Office (OLO) in November 2016 under then interim party leader **Rona Ambrose**.

Before that, he'd been working as an administrative assistant in the Conservative House Leader's Office under current House Leader **Candice Bergen**. Mr. Robertson first joined the Conservative House Leader's Office as a special assistant for parliamentary affairs under then House leader **Peter Van Loan**, who continues to serve as the Conservative MP for York-Simcoe, Ont., in 2013. He's also a former House of Commons page.

No longer in Mr. Scheer's office, Mr. Robertson is now a spokesperson for the Canadian Border Services Agency, working out of its national headquarters office in Ottawa.

Bryan Rogers is Question Period director to Mr. Scheer, while **Phil Bolduc** was hired to serve as manager of parliamentary affairs and a Question Period adviser to the leader in November.

David McArthur is chief of staff to the leader, aided by deputy chief of staff **Marc-André Leclerc**. Also at the senior-most OLO staff level is **Kenzie Potter**, principal secretary to Mr. Scheer, and **Nancy Bishay**, senior adviser to the deputy chief of staff. **Daniel Schow** is executive assistant and English press secretary to the leader.

Minister Philpott promotes new director from within

Indigenous Services Minister **Jane Philpott** recently promoted her press secretary, **Andrew MacKendrick**, to instead serve as a director for issues management and media relations in her ministerial office.

Mr. MacKendrick has been fielding media queries as press secretary to Ms. Philpott since the beginning, starting in December 2015 shortly after she was sworn into her first cabinet role as minister of health. He started in his new role at the beginning of the new year.

Ms. Philpott was shuffled into the brand new Indigenous Services portfolio as part of then-revealed efforts to split up the old Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada structure, along with a slate of other cabinet changes, announced on Aug. 28. Liberal MP **Ginette Petitpas Taylor** replaced Ms. Philpott as the federal health minister. Along with naming a new minister of Indigenous Services, the old Indigenous and Northern Affairs portfolio was restyled as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, led by Liberal MP **Carolyn Bennett** as minister.

Amid the shuffle, Mr. MacKendrick stuck with his boss and continued staffing Ms. Philpott during her transition, becoming the first confirmed political staffer in the new office.



Andrew MacKendrick is now director of issues management and media relations to the Indigenous Services Minister. *Photograph courtesy of Facebook*

Before coming to Ottawa to work for Ms. Philpott in the new Liberal government, Mr. MacKendrick had been working as a coordinator for community engagement and digital media for the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation, located in Markham, Ont., since 2011. He's also a former communications manager for the Markham Stouffville Federal Liberal Association, as indicated by his LinkedIn account.

Mr. MacKendrick studied an undergraduate degree in geography and geographic information systems at the University of Guelph, according to his online profile, and while at the school, represented his college (social and applied human sciences) at the school's central students association.

Micol Zarb is communications director to Ms. Philpott, as previously reported by *Hill Climbers*, and officially started working full-time in the role the week before last. A former consultant with Colbeck Strategic Advisers and former communications director for Médecins Sans Frontières Canada (Doctors Without Borders), she had begun transitioning into her role in the minister's office at the end of November.

While Mr. MacKendrick continues to tackle the responsibilities of a press secretary in his new role as director for issues management and media relations, staffer **Bismah Haq** has in turn taken on more communications responsibilities in the office. She's now a legislative and communications assistant to the minister, having previously just been styled as a legislative assistant to Ms. Philpott.

Ms. Haq has been working in the office since October. Before that, she was an assistant to Liberal MP **Raj Grewal**, who represents Brampton East, Ont., on the Hill.

John Brodhead is chief of staff to Ms. Philpott.

Also currently working in the minister's office are: **Brian Kaufmann**, director of parliamentary affairs; **Maya Borgenicht**, senior policy adviser; **Kyle McKenzie**, senior policy adviser; **Jessica Hayden**, senior policy adviser; **Kathy Kettler**, special adviser; **Sherry Anne Smith**, senior special assistant for Western Canada; **Jeffrey Copenace**, special adviser; **Ana Fularczuk**, special assistant for Ontario regional affairs; **Steven Caron**, special assistant for Quebec regional affairs; and **Cindy Dawson**, executive and scheduling assistant.

Meanwhile, Canadian Heritage Minister **Mélanie Joly** recently bade farewell to special adviser **Julie Bélanger**, who's now working off the Hill.

Ms. Bélanger first joined Ms. Joly's office around May 2016, and as a special adviser to the minister, she was focused on all things related to Canada 150, the country's celebration of 150 years since Confederation throughout 2017.

She's already embarked on a new gig, becoming a senior adviser on public affairs and philanthropy for Lune Rouge, a company founded by Cirque du Soleil co-founder **Guy Laliberté**, as of Jan. 8.

Lune Rouge "operates and invests principally in the technology, entertainment, arts, and real estate sectors," as described on its website, and works to rally entrepreneurs and "stimulate entrepreneurial innovation." In her new role, Ms. Bélanger will be working on Lune Rouge's 'Creative Hub' project, which is currently being developed but will be aimed at bringing "together talented individuals and companies working in the fields of content creation and creative technology in the entertainment industry" with a view to developing projects and start-ups, as described online. The 'Creative Hub' is set to be officially "unveiled" in early 2019, at the Maison Alcan complex in downtown Montreal.

Before joining Ms. Joly's office, Ms. Bélanger was a public affairs manager for the Just For Laughs comedy festival in Montreal. She's also previously been head of media relations for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, amongst other past experience.

Leslie Church is chief of staff to Ms. Joly. lryckewaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

HEARD ON THE HILL

by Shruti Shekar

Is that a ball, or is it just Karina Gould's pregnant belly?



Two more months: Democratic Institutions Minister Karina Gould proudly shows off her growing belly at a Raptors game last week. Photograph courtesy of Karina Gould's Twitter

Continued from page 2

Democratic Institutions Minister **Karina Gould** was growing and glowing when she attended a Raptors basketball game last week in Toronto.

"So I may or may not have borrowed the ball...#WeTheNorth #GoRaptorsGo #33weeks," Ms. Gould tweeted on Jan. 13 with a picture of herself standing up in a packed Air Canada Centre where the Toronto Raptors were competing against California's Golden State Warriors.

The gripping game resulted in the Raptors losing to the reigning NBA champions to a score of 125 to 127.

Ms. Gould told *The Globe and Mail* on Jan. 5 that she hoped by becoming the first federal minister to give birth while in office she will help set better rules for parental leave on Parliament Hill.

Ms. Gould, who is expecting her baby in

March, said she plans to be with the baby for about two months.

Equal Voice's **Nancy Peckford** said in *The Hill Times* last week that addressing changes would "signal to an emerging generation of young women leaders that Parliament isn't just for women whose kids are well on their way to being raised or out of the door already."

Currently, the House rules say MPs are allowed to take a 21-day absence from parliamentary sittings, after which their pay will be docked with exceptions relating to illness.

"I want to be ambitious and have a successful career, but I also want to have a family," Ms. Gould said in *The Globe and Mail* article. "I don't see those things as being mutually exclusive." The article indicated that Ms. Gould has received the option of working from home, appearing through video conferences for committee meetings, and attending votes when needed.

Don Guy now heads up research firm Pollara as Mike Marzolini retires

Don Guy, the former chief of staff from 2003 to 2006 to Ontario premier **Dalton McGuinty**, is now the owner and chief strategist of strategic research firm Pollara.

Mr. Guy made the announcement in a letter posted on Pollara's website on Jan. 10. He takes the reins from Pollara founder and former Liberal Party pollster **Michael Marzolini**.

"I owe Michael a tremendous debt of gratitude, as a mentor and supporter of my career. There simply couldn't have been a better place to learn and grow than the Pollara he led for so many years," said Mr. Guy, who was Pollara's president and CEO back from 2007 to 2009 after leaving Mr. McGuinty's office.

Mr. Guy had been the campaign



Long-time CBC reporter Alison Crawford is leaving the CBC to join the Royal Canadian Mint. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

director for the Ontario Liberal Party for 13 years and was the senior adviser of strategic communications for the B.C. Liberals' election campaign in 2013.

Mr. Guy is a founding partner of KTG Public Affairs and is the vice-president of Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research.

Alison Crawford leaves CBC, joins Canadian Mint



Long-time CBC reporter Alison Crawford is leaving the CBC to join the Royal Canadian Mint. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

@CanadianMint as senior manager, public affairs. 2018 is already off to a roaring start!"

Ms. Crawford was the senior reporter for the parliamentary bureau for a little more than 11 years. Before that, she was still with CBC, but was an investigative reporter in Winnipeg from 2003 to 2006, a radio reporter in Calgary from 2000 to 2003 and was the city hall and legislative reporter in Fredericton, N.B., from 1997 to 2000.

Rachel Gilmore joins iPolitics reporting team full time

The *iPolitics* team has added **Rachel Gilmore** as a full-time reporter as of Jan. 2.

Ms. Gilmore has been writing for *iPolitics-INTEL* for about a year and provided parliamentary monitoring services. She also was also an occasional freelancer for *iPolitics*.

Prior to joining *iPolitics*, Ms. Gilmore had a short stint with CPAC for six months from May to October 2016 and also interned there shortly before she was hired.

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Rachel Gilmore used to work for *iPoliticsINTEL*, but now will be working for *iPolitics* full time as a reporter. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



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By Laura Ryckewaert **The Spin Doctors**

“What’s your take on U.S. President Donald Trump’s recent comment when, in a meeting with lawmakers about protecting immigrants, he reportedly called Haiti, El Salvador, and African nations ‘shithole countries?’”



CAMERON AHMAD

Liberal strategist

“After a productive cabinet retreat in London last week, the prime minister addressed this during his closing press conference in response to a question from a journalist.

“He began by taking the opportunity—both as prime minister and as the proud Member of Parliament for the diverse riding of Papineau, Que., which boasts a strong and vibrant Haitian community—to mark the recent anniversary of the earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010. The massive earthquake caused devastation and tragedy not only on the island, but across the diaspora in North America and beyond. The prime minister highlighted the resilience and strength of the Haitian community in Canada and the support Canadians to our Haitian friends, whose response was truly heartening.

“Canada is a country that is proud of its diversity, and our continued openness towards people who strengthen and enrich our society from all walks of life and from all around the world.”



CORY HANN

Conservative strategist

“Ladies and gentlemen, pull up a seat, watch as I try to write this column without repeating the ascribed comment from above (not because I was told not to, but because my mother reads this sometimes).

“Call me an old-fashioned communicator, but my general advice to elected officials has been to avoid referring to other countries as gaps in the earth used for defecating in. I’ve also advised against referring to your political opponents as pieces of excrement—advice in which our current prime minister probably should have taken not so long ago.

“People leaving their countries for new homes elsewhere aren’t always leaving because they feel their homelands are metaphorical hollowed areas for human waste. They’re pursuing new opportunities, they’re seeking reunification with family and friends, they’re looking to change their own lives for the better.

“Unfortunately, we’re all now distracted from the real issue at play. It wasn’t a salty word that was used but rather what action is being taken on a concern for many Americans.”



SARAH ANDREWS

NDP strategist

“Unfortunately, ever since U.S. President Donald Trump was elected, he has taken a number of controversial positions, often directing insulting comments at groups and individuals, from immigration to trade deals and Canada’s supply management system.

“Mr. Trump has made no secret about his position on migrants to the U.S. As soon as he was inaugurated, the new president chose to implement a travel ban that meant a number of refugees fled to Canada. Unfortunately, because of the government’s refusal to suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement, these refugees resorted to irregular border crossings into Canada, in many cases, putting their lives at risk. This situation was made worse by mixed messaging from the prime minister, who on the one hand made a very public statement welcoming everyone to Canada; and on the other hand, slamming the door shut. It took a crisis last summer for the government to make more resources available to deal with the influx.

“It is clear that Trump’s divisive comments, and policies, are here to stay. This means that now, more than ever, Canada needs to stand up and be a strong voice against Trump’s rhetoric.”



MATHIEU R. ST-AMAND

Bloc Québécois strategist

“Just when we think the president of the United States can no longer surprise us with his remarks, which are unworthy of a head of state, he goes and does so again. Donald Trump’s remarks are irresponsible and dangerous. Americans are more divided than ever, and the president is deepening divisions with his false, inflammatory, and fundamentally racist remarks.

“Donald Trump is playing a very dangerous game that could change the geopolitical map for many years to come. The U.S. president is pushing his traditional allies into the arms of his political and economic rivals like Russia and China and Canada’s finally getting tough with its neighbour. By launching a complaint with the World Trade Organization against the U.S. and the Trump administration’s protectionist measures, Canada is taking a stance against the U.S.’s cavalier attitude.

“As a neighbour and major economic partner, Canada has to walk a fine line while defending Quebec’s and Canada’s interests. The NAFTA negotiations are crucial for Quebec’s economy. Canada must not give an inch to the U.S. when it comes to protecting supply management and a free softwood lumber market.”



DEBRA EINDIGUER

Green strategist

“It’s hardly a revelation that the U.S. president is overtly racist, but this comment is nonetheless egregious. Donald Trump’s racism first made contemporary news when he led the ‘Birther’ movement: a hodgepodge of conspiracy theorists and Klu Klux Klan sympathizers that claimed Barack Obama had been born in Kenya, not Hawaii. When Trump announced his intent to run for president, concerns were repeatedly raised about his mental stability, temperament, arrogance, and yes, longstanding record of racism. These concerns remain, yet there he sits in the Oval Office.

“As far back as the 1970s, the Trump family has been investigated and publicly shamed for decades-long discrimination against black tenants in their myriad New York apartment buildings. Fast forward to this month’s unfiltered slur against poor, visible minority nations, and Trump is only trotting down the well-worn familial path of open discrimination.

“Over time, Trump’s racist language is emboldening race politics, with dangerous and disruptive cultural repercussions for the multicultural United States.

“The man is deeply flawed, and presidency only magnifies his shortcomings.”



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