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THE HILL TIMES

THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR, NO. 2074

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

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NEWS

'The party wants this riding very badly': at least 22 candidates consider run for Tory nomination in Liberal-held riding of Pickering-Uxbridge, Ont.

BY ABBAS RANA

The Liberals have won the riding of Pickering-Uxbridge, Ont. with double digit margins in the last three elections, but the Conservatives are bullish in bringing it to the blue column, with 22 potential candidates asking for nomination papers from the central party office.

"It's a very winnable riding, especially if the Conservatives form government," said Anthony Yacub, the Conservative riding association president, who is himself seeking the party's nomination. "Also, Pickering is known to have the highest number of seniors. So, a lot of people curtail their message to housing affordability and seniors. In a federal election, there's a lot of independent minds that are accessible voters."

Yacub said that as of last week, 22 potential candidates have expressed interest in seeking the nomination in this Greater Toronto Area riding, adding that more people could also request nomination papers from the party. After candidates file their papers,

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NEWS

As ceasefire debate rages at home, Canada walks fine line at UN between support for Israel and concern for Palestinians' welfare, say observers

Stronger language about humanitarian obligations show Canada's recognition that Palestinian civilians are 'caught in the middle' of conflict, says Gilles Rivard.

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

Canada's decision to abstain from a United Nations resolution calling for a "humanitarian truce" in the Gaza Strip shows dissatisfaction with the body's failure to condemn Hamas, but the country's language around the conflict appears more nuanced than during previous wars

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Irwin Cotler, left, international chair of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for human rights, and Iddo Moed, right, Israel's ambassador to Canada, at a press scrum on Oct. 30 on the Hill. Moed told reporters that Israel will not consider a ceasefire because 'we have a murderer shooting at us, continuing to shoot at us, and there is no reason why we should stop.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

NEWS

If polling trends don't change for Liberals, expect more and louder voices for change in leadership, say political players

BY ABBAS RANA

After Prince Edward Island Liberal stalwart and Senator Percy Downe started a public conversation last week suggesting that the party may want to elect a new leader going into the next election due to tanking polling numbers, political insiders are predicting that more senior Liberals and pundits will be speaking up about it in the coming weeks and months.

"The current polling is going to make these voices louder," said a former senior Liberal in a not-for-attribution based interview with *The Hill Times*, last week. "Things have to change quickly."

In carefully worded comments, Downe, who served as chief of staff to then-prime minister Jean Chrétien and has been a Senator since 2003, told *The Hill Times* last week that Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) has won three back-to-back elections and has been in power for eight years, but the popularity of the party has taken a nose dive

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Mike Lapointe

Heard On The Hill

Fred DeLorey starts a podcast, Libs release new attack ads, and Conservative MP Reid asks ethics commish about his role with Giant Tiger



Fred DeLorey, left, with John Devine, head of the Scottish Government Office in Canada, and Greg MacEachern. *The Hill Times* photograph by Cynthia Münster

Conservative political strategist **Fred DeLorey**, who writes a column for *iPolitics*, started his own weekly podcast, *On Background: With Fred DeLorey & Friends*, and it's pretty good. On last week's show, he interviewed **Alex Kohut**, a former senior manager of research and advertising for Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**. The two talked about Conservative Leader **Pierre Poilievre** and Trudeau's leadership and about the next election. DeLorey's a hot ticket these days.

Mansbridge joins spark*advocacy

Speaking of hot tickets, **Peter Mansbridge** is one busy man. The former chief correspondent

of CBC News and anchor of *The National* hosts his own popular podcast *The Bridge*, and writes *The Buzz*, a new weekly newsletter from National Newswatch. His fourth book, *How Canada Works*, will be released this month by Simon and Schuster, and he's also a distinguished fellow at the Munk School of Global Affairs in Toronto. And last week he joined Spark Advocacy as a senior counsel.

"We are thrilled to have Peter Mansbridge join our team as senior counsel," said **Perry Tsergas**, president and CEO of spark*advocacy, in a press release. "His unparalleled experience, deep understanding of the media landscape, as well as great storytelling abilities, will help to build upon the current mix of experience and services at spark*advocacy. Clients and colleagues alike

can expect to benefit from Peter's unique insights."

Liberals release new attack ad on Poilievre

The Liberal Party has released some new ads attacking Conservative Party Leader **Pierre Poilievre**, comparing him to former U.S. president **Donald Trump**.

"Why should Canadians trust you with their vote, given—you know—not just the sort of ideological inclination in terms of taking the page out of Donald Trump's book," asked **Don Urquhart**, editor of the *Times Chronicle*, before being cut off by the Conservative leader during an exchange in Oliver, B.C., last month in the now infamous video of Poilievre eating an apple in an orchard while being interviewed by Urquhart. "What are you talking about—what page, what page?" says Poilievre. The video went viral and has been a boost to Poilievre.

The reporter couldn't offer Poilievre a precise page, but the Liberals did a bit of digging and ran that clip along with snippets of Trump and Poilievre using similar phrases over the years. It shows both Trump and Poilievre talking about "fake news," and Trump citing the "left-wing censorship regime" and Poilievre

mentioning "their woke censorship ideology."

The Liberal Party also released a second ad, highlighting "Poilievre's priorities for the economy" that would "hurt Canadians," referring to comments made by the Conservative leader about Bitcoin a number of months ago.

"You protected your family business against inflation with a very clever financial decision you

made that we'll come back to in a moment," said Poilievre, referring to Bitcoin.

Also featured in the ad are two of Poilievre's former leadership opponents: Conservative MP **Leslyn Lewis**, who represents Haldimand-Norfolk, Ont., warns Canadians against financial losses, while former Quebec premier **Jean Charest** calls it "lunacy."

Conservative MP Scott Reid asks ethics czar if he can take part in grocery price debates despite role at Giant Tiger

Conservative MP **Scott Reid**, chair of the board of Giant Tiger stores, a family business that represents five per cent of the country's grocery industry, addressed the House last month as discussions on surging food prices have dominated political debate and dinner-table discussions.

On Oct. 16, the Ontario MP told the House that on Sept. 19 he wrote to seek the ethics commissioner's advice on the matter.

"Although my family business is a small player in the great scheme of things, having a sales volume that is only about five per cent that of Loblaws, it is nevertheless a significant player in the discount side of the grocery industry," said Reid. "Therefore, it seemed advisable to me to ask the commissioner whether, in order to remain compliant with the code, I might have to recuse myself from certain debates in the House and elsewhere."

Reid said he received a letter on Oct. 6 from the ethics commissioner confirming the "existence of such a matter" on privileges of the House.

"I can advise the House that in anticipation of precisely such a response from the commissioner, I have been at pains to avoid being present during any such debates," said Reid. "However, a strict reading of [subsection 12(1) of the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons] would suggest that the reporting obligation is triggered by the mere fact of being present during a Question Period when questions on the subject are raised by any party and that, as well, if I were to participate electronically in any vote on the subject, even if my intention is simply to electronically vote to register a formal abstention, I would trigger subsection 12(1)."

Reid tabled four documents, including a letter written to the

commissioner on Sept. 19 regarding the general nature of his private interest in his family's business, an email thread containing subsequent correspondence with the commissioner and his staff in which Reid was advised that he should not "merely recuse myself from debates in the House of Commons, but also

that I should exclude myself from any discussion, debate or vote on these two bills that might take place during the Conservative caucus meetings," a further letter to comply with the commissioner's further instruction that Reid would need to formally inform the Conservative caucus vice-chair, or the individual who would chair the meeting in their absence, of his private interest regarding Bill C-56 and Bill C-352, as well as a cover letter delivered to the commissioner's office to confirm Reid's compliance with the instruction.

When asked if there had been any further development around the matter following Reid's address to the House on Oct. 16, the MP said "no."

The Hill Times also asked the MP if there had been any further contact between himself

and the commissioner.

Reid said he will be contacting the ethics commissioner to find out what limits the commissioner deems appropriate to place upon his ability to respond to media inquiries with regard to Giant Tiger.

"This is necessary because, in the past, commissioners have taken the position that section nine of the Conflict of Interest Code (which states that an MP may not use 'his or her position to influence a decision to influence a decision of another person') may be violated by the mere mention, by the MP, of his or her position," said Reid.

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Peter Mansbridge, left, with Don Martin, and Chantal Hébert at the Jaimie Anderson Fundraiser at the Blacksheep Inn in Wakefield, Que., in 2014. *The Hill Times* photograph by Jake Wright



Conservative MP Scott Reid arrives at West Block on Sept. 15, 2022. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



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News

‘Our whole sense of national security is changing,’ says former executive manager of CSIS operations after rare Five Eyes public meeting

National security expert Thomas Juneau says five or 10 years ago ‘it would have been inconceivable for the CSIS director to go on national American TV on one of the most popular news shows.’

BY MIKE LAPOINTE & NATHAN FUNG

Following a rare public meeting between the leaders of the Five Eyes intelligence community in California last month, where Canada’s CSIS director David Vigneault said that “threats to innovation are increasing in both scale and complexity,” national security and education experts say more public engagement with the security and intelligence community is important.

Thomas Juneau, an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, said while the leaders of the Five Eyes alliance do meet frequently, the significance of this meeting was its public-facing nature.

“I’m not aware that there has ever been so much public joint activity of the five countries together,” he told *The Hill Times*. “My personal view is that more transparency, more public facing events, more public engagement is really important.”

The gathering of the five intelligence chiefs included a public conference at Stanford University as well as an interview on CBS’s *60 Minutes*.

“They’re known as the Five Eyes, and they have never appeared in an interview together,” said CBS News journalist Scott Pelley in the segment. “They’re doing it now because they’re alarmed by China, which they say is the greatest espionage threat democracy has ever faced.”

“It’s a mini-revolution,” Juneau said of the interview, adding

that five or 10 years ago, “it would have been inconceivable for the CSIS director to go on national American TV on one of the most popular news shows.”

During the interview, FBI director Christopher Wray called the People’s Republic of China “the defining threat of this generation, in this era.”

“I think it’s a good idea to use very strong language because China is a major threat to the Five Eyes, specifically from the perspective of economic espionage and more generally, as we’ve clearly seen in Canada from a foreign interference perspective,” Juneau said of Wray’s language.

“There is, especially in Canada, a tendency to be careful, to be cautious with language, and to be fearful of provoking if we use language that is too blunt,” Juneau added. “That can be a valid concern in some circumstances, but the downside is that you don’t send a clear message to the population that there really is a problem.”

The intelligence chiefs also met privately with 15 Silicon Valley executives. Partnerships with the private sector, especially the biomedical sector, as well as its protection from economic espionage is one of the big challenges the intelligence community faces today, Juneau said.

“There’s been sustained efforts in the last few years to better engage with the private sector, so meeting in Silicon Valley, in that sense, brings them closer, as opposed to meeting in a national



Canadian Security Intelligence Service director David Vigneault, pictured in Ottawa on March 2, took part in a rare Five Eyes public meeting in the United States last month. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

capital,” he said.

In a release, Britain’s MI5 director general Ken McCallum said that “the U.K. is seeing a sharp rise in aggressive attempts by other states to steal competitive advantage” and that “it’s the same across all five of our countries.”

“The stakes are now incredibly high on emerging technologies; states which lead the way in areas like artificial intelligence, quantum

computing and synthetic biology will have the power to shape all our futures,” said McCallum.

‘The Five Eyes alliance is still here and it’s still very strong’

Dan Stanton, a former executive manager of CSIS operations, said that he thinks “a lot of people are surprised that they took it on the road like this” following the meeting.

“Our whole sense of national security is changing. It’s expanding. The conversation we’re having right now is one we wouldn’t have had five years ago,” said Stanton.

“It looks like they’re trying to get some key messaging out, and I suspect the messaging is, first of all, that the Five Eyes alliance is still here, and it’s still very strong,” said Stanton, who made note Vigneault’s analogy about hockey on *60 Minutes*.

“What has made Canada successful, prosperous and secure since World War II has been the growth of international institutions, respect for rules-based

international order, and having an ability to arbitrate conflict without resorting to invasion of a country like we saw with Ukraine—and unfortunately the extremes are going in the wrong direction,” said Vigneault.

“What we have with the Five Eyes—being a Canadian, I’ll use a hockey analogy—we’re five players on the ice, and when the puck goes into the corner, and you have to defend yourself, you know you have your players with you on the ice to defend, and that’s what makes us stand taller in front of the threat,” said the CSIS director in the televised group interview.

Stanton said much of the messaging was directed at Russia and China, presenting the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom as a united front with the same threats to security.

“I don’t think they were in the Silicon Valley for the sunshine. This is where we think of cutting-edge IT and AI developments which China seeks to acquire by hook or by crook—more the latter, of course. All the Five Eyes sensitive research is vulnerable because we’re an open society,” said Stanton.

When asked his thoughts on what tools are available to the federal government to protect national security associated with leading Canadian universities, Stanton said, “historically they’re limited because the elephant in the room is academic freedom.”

“You can’t have the government telling researchers at universities that they can’t collaborate on a project with researchers in another country, and we’re not going to tell you the reason because it’s a big secret,” he said.

“There are attempts by China to acquire IP, and when you get into quantum and research with military applications, such as missile guidance, universities cannot say ‘go away, we have a right to a free exchange of ideas.’ Government has a role to play,” Stanton said. “CSIS cannot legally disclose that an entity is linked to a sensitive military facility if it is classified information, and they must respect academic freedom, but they can dialogue, sensitizing universities to the risk of dual use applications, and get them to ask tough questions, do some vetting

themselves. Universities must raise their game,” said Stanton.

Jeff Stoff, director and president of the Center for Research Security and Integrity, based in Virginia, testified at the House of Commons’ Science and Research Committee in September.

Stoff told *Hill Times* in a follow-up interview that it was fair to say the public meeting was unprecedented, and it demonstrates that the group is sending a message that China is far and away the strategic and national security challenge of the century.

“It involves all developed liberal democracies,” said Stoff. “The bigger the country and the larger the amount of research outputs, the harder it is.”

“But these collaborations, because of the open nature that’s been encouraged, I think it’s fair to say that the majority of these risky collaborations continue to go unchecked across liberal democracies—particularly including the Five Eyes,” said Stoff.

The threat to universities and research institutions was identified by Stoff in his response to committee questions regarding “why a new paradigm is needed to safeguard the security and integrity of research.”

Stoff, who spent 18 years working as a China analyst in the U.S. government, wrote that “China’s increasingly restrictive information environment, including denial of access to some published academic literature, along with its efforts to obfuscate the missions, activities, and associations of some institutions, complicate due diligence and risk assessments, and it is unrealistic to expect individual research institutions can do this entirely themselves.”

“It is both naive and dangerous to presume Canada and other allied nations’ research institutions and governments are sufficiently capable of identifying—much less managing—these risks on their own,” wrote Stoff.

In a statement provided to *The Hill Times*, Phillip Landon, interim president and CEO of Universities Canada, said “international partnerships are essential for Canada to remain competitive on the world stage.”

“The exchange of knowledge works both ways, and Canada benefits greatly from building on the progress being made elsewhere in the world. However, universities also recognize that collaborations can sometimes carry risk or raise national security considerations,” said Landon.

Landon added that universities have been taking proactive steps to their own research security measures by creating research security offices, and working with the government to develop national security guidelines for Canadian research and limiting partnerships that could raise national security concerns.

“It’s also vital that the government steps up to support and expand Canada’s research excellence in the critically important areas that impact our national security and future prosperity,” said Landon.

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Laura Ryckewaert
Hill Climbers

A rundown of Environment Minister Guilbeault's ministerial team

The environment and climate change minister has 26 political staffers in his office.

Environment and Climate Change Minister **Steven Guilbeault** now has a 26-member staff team in place, including deputy chief of staff **Joanna Dafoe**.



Deputy chief of staff **Joanna Dafoe**. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

As recently reported, Guilbeault hired **Jamie Kippen** as his new chief of staff in September, replacing **Dominic Cormier**. Dafoe has been deputy chief of staff to Guilbeault since the end of 2022, and was previously also director of policy for climate and international affairs since starting with the office in early 2021 under then-minister **Jonathan Wilkinson**. Dafoe is a former national director of climate change with the Insurance Bureau of Canada. Between 2017 and 2019, she worked for Environment and Climate Change Canada, starting as a senior policy adviser with the department's G7 Task Team, and ending as a senior policy adviser to the ambassador for climate change. She's also previously worked for the Stockholm Environment Institute and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and has taught international climate law as a sessional instructor with Queen's University's law faculty. While Dafoe has dropped her policy director hat, Guilbeault's other two policy directors remain in place post-shuffle: **Nina Lothian**, who's director of climate and energy policy, and **Michael Brewster**,



Nina Lothian is director of climate and energy policy. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

who's director of policy for nature and biodiversity. Lothian joined the environment office as a senior policy adviser in January 2022—her first gig on the Hill—and was promoted to director this past May. She previously spent roughly seven-and-a-half years working for the Pembina Institute, ending as the institute's Alberta associate regional director and director responsible for fossil fuels. Lothian, who has a bachelor of mining engineering degree from McGill University, also has roughly eight years of cumulative experience working for Syncrude Canada, and previously worked with Engineers Without Borders Canada in Zambia. Brewster has been working for Guilbeault since the 2019 election, which he spent helping Guilbeault get elected to the House for the first time as the MP for



Michael Brewster is director of policy for nature and biodiversity. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Laurier-Sainte-Marie, Que. Post election, Guilbeault was made heritage minister and hired Brewster as his director of parliamentary affairs. Brewster followed the minister to the environment portfolio after the 2021 election, taking on his current title. From early 2016 until late 2019, Brewster worked for then-families minister **Jean-Yves Duclos**, starting as an issues manager, and ending as senior policy adviser. Also currently tackling policy are: **Caroline Lee**, senior policy adviser; policy advisers **Marjory Loveys** and **Joshua Swift**; and **Isabelle Hurley**, policy and Northern regional affairs adviser.



Joshua Swift is a policy adviser. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Caroline Lee is a senior policy adviser. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Canadian Climate Institute since the fall of 2019, ending as mitigation research director. Lee's past experience includes almost two years as a climate change mitigation policy analyst and economist for the government of New Brunswick, and roughly five years as an energy policy analyst with the International Energy Agency's environment and climate change unit. A two-time former Liberal candidate and ex-adviser to then-prime minister **Jean Chrétien**, Loveys first began tackling policy for then-environment minister **Catherine McKenna** in 2017. She stepped away from Hill work in 2019, but returned in the fall of 2020 as a policy adviser to **Wilkinson**, who by then had succeeded McKenna

Continued on page 27

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News

Vehicle armour firm leads economic development advocacy in September

Lobbying related to economic development was also the most popular advocacy subject in July and August.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Economic development took centre stage in federal lobbying in September for the third consecutive month with a vehicle armour company interested in supporting Canada's military efforts in Ukraine emerging with the most communications related to that subject.

Armaterc Survivability, a Dorchester, Ont.-based business that develops technology for military vehicles intended to protect occupants against external threats such as explosions, filed 37 communication reports in September, all of which listed economic development among the subjects discussed, based on a search of the federal lobbyists' registry on Nov. 2.

Economic development was the top subject discussed overall in September advocacy, and was listed in 483 communication reports, ahead of environment with 380 reports, and industry with 327. September continued the trend of economic development emerging as the most popular subject in federal lobbying, also leading in July and August.

David Pratt, a former Liberal defence minister who is listed on the registry as a consultant for the company, told *The Hill Times* that the issues raised by Armaterc in September, in terms of economic development and innovation, were "very important to the company's future," but declined to elaborate further, citing "commercial confidentiality."

"It's very clear that what [Armaterc does] is high-end armour—what's referred to as add-on armour to vehicles—and they've got other capabilities beyond that as well ... in terms of armoured vehicles and support to the Canadian Forces and to allied forces, and, I would add, friendly forces," he said. "Armaterc has a strategic capability within the Canadian defence industrial base, and that is its expertise—in armour and armoured vehicles."

Armaterc's advocacy priorities include pursuing opportunities with the Department of National Defence's support for Ukraine, the registry shows.



In September, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada would provide \$650-million over three years for 50 armoured vehicles to support Ukraine. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

During a visit to Canada by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy this past September, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) announced that Canada has entered into a multi-year commitment to provide "predictable support" to the country in response to Russia's ongoing invasion. The support included \$650-million over three years for 50 armoured vehicles, including medical evacuation vehicles, that are to be built in London, Ont., as reported by CTV News on Sept. 22.

"We will stand with Ukraine with whatever it takes for as long as it takes," Trudeau told reporters on Sept. 22. "Meanwhile, we're continuing to impose costs on Russia, and ensuring that those responsible for this illegal, unjustifiable invasion do not benefit from it."

Armaterc is also represented on the registry by consultant Steven Zuber of David Pratt & Associates, and Paul Fortin of Fortin Consulting. The company's representatives communicated with Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Ont.), who chairs the House National Defence Committee, on four occasions between Sept. 13 and Sept. 29; and communicated with Liberal MP Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Que.), chief government whip, on Sept. 21. The organization's advocacy that month also included nine communications with Oz Jungic, policy adviser in the Prime Minister's Office,

between Sept. 18 and Sept. 29, the registry shows.

Following behind Armaterc Survivability in September economic development advocacy was Imagine Canada, an organization that represents the interests of Canadian charities and non-profits, and conducts advocacy efforts on their behalf. The group filed 41 communication reports in September, of which 35 related to economic development.

Imagine Canada representatives returned to the Hill on Sept. 26 for the organization's first in-person lobby day since 2018, according to Bernadette Johnson, director of advocacy and knowledge mobilization for Imagine Canada.

Advocacy priorities for Imagine Canada during the lobby day included discussing labour issues facing the charitable and non-profit sector, Johnson told *The Hill Times* on Nov. 1.

Canada's nonprofits and charities employ 2.5 million people, or the equivalent to 14 per cent of Canadian employee jobs, according to data gathered by Imagine Canada in a workforce report. The non-profit sector also contributes 8.3 per cent of gross domestic product, which is more than individual sectors such as construction, transportation, or agriculture.

The COVID-19 pandemic has "laid bare the cracks" in the operating environment for the nonprofit sector, including low-wage, low-benefit, and short-term contract jobs that are prevalent

due to short-term, project-based funding, according to the report.

Imagine Canada is advocating for the federal government to treat the non-profit sector as a valued partner on par with other industries of similar size. The organization is also advocating for the creation of a "home in government" to represent the interests of the nonprofit and charitable sector, said Johnson.

"That would be some sort of ... mechanism like a secretariat that would be tasked with understanding the issues that the charitable sector faces, and coordinating policy developments across the government," said Johnson. "We are a labour force that is chronically underpaid."

Imagine Canada is represented in-house by president and CEO Bruce MacDonald, as well as by consultant Sonja Tilroe of PAA Advisors.

During the Hill day, Imagine Canada representatives communicated with Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, B.C.), parliamentary secretary to Veterans Affairs Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe, N.B.); and other Liberal MPs including Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Ont.), and Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, P.E.I.). Imagine Canada also communicated with Conservative MPs Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, Ont.), her party's women, gender equality, and youth critic; Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, B.C.), Pacific economic development critic; and Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, Alta.), Treasury Board critic.

Behind Imagine Canada in terms of economic development advocacy in September was Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster. The non-profit organization filed 21 communication reports in September listing economic development as a subject for discussion, including a communication with Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Que.) on Sept. 27.

The Hill Times reached out to the Digital Technology Supercluster to ask about its September communications. Kiki Cloutier, a principal at Earncliffe Strategies, responded by email on Nov. 1 that the Supercluster's mission is to grow Canadian companies through enabling the creation of digital technology solutions in health, natural resources and workforce development.

"This work requires frequent communication with our colleagues in private industry, academia and all levels of gov-

ernment to support and advance innovation in the Canadian economy; and ensure Canadian industry and Canadians benefit from the economic prosperity and growth that comes from creating novel technology products, services and export," said Cloutier in the emailed statement.

Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster is represented on the registry in-house by Sue Paish, chief executive officer; Cheryl Maitland Muir, vice-president of communications and public affairs; and Laurel Buss, director of government relations.

The overall top organization in September, in terms of total communication reports filed, was Saskatchewan Polytechnic, a post-secondary educational institution in Saskatoon, Sask. The institution filed 59 communication reports for the month.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic has plans to create a new campus to be located at Innovation Place on the University of Saskatchewan campus. The campus is intended to serve as an "innovation corridor" that transforms an existing network of 11 decentralized and outdated buildings into a revitalized complex, according to a Sept. 20 press release from the Saskatchewan government.

The province is committing up to \$200-million to the project, and Saskatchewan Polytechnic is seeking a similar investment from the federal government, according to Larry Rosia, the institute's president and CEO.

"We see this as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to really ... create a 21st century, modern learning environment to supply the expert workforce that's needed for existing and emerging industries," said Rosia. "We have the province putting money into this, and we'd like the federal government to come to the table so we can make this project a reality."

Rosia said that the project timeline for the new campus will be subject to funding.

"We're in the planning process right now. There are components of it that are shovel ready and ready to go," he said. "We've gotten to a point where it's almost inevitable, but we need federal funding to put it over the finish line."

On Sept. 27, Saskatchewan Polytechnic communicated with Families Minister Jenna Sudds (Kanata—Carleton, Ont.), Labour and Seniors Minister Seamus O'Regan (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, N.L.), Small Business Minister Rechie Valdez (Mississauga—Streetsville, Ont.), and Northern Affairs Minister Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Man.).

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is represented on the registry by Rosia, as well as board of director members Cari Bode and Mitchell Holash. The institution is also represented on the registry by consultants Mary Donlevy-Konkin of Mc Kercher LLP, Richard Maksymetz of Alar Strategy Group Inc., and independent consultant Will Adams.

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2024 POLICY BRIEFING CALENDAR



Issue Date	Special Feature	Deadline
Monday, Jan. 29	Back to Parliament	Jan. 24, 2024
Wednesday, Jan. 31	Affordable Housing	Jan. 26, 2024
Monday, Feb. 5	Innovation	Jan. 31, 2024
Wednesday, Feb. 14	Health	Feb. 9, 2024
Monday, Feb. 26	Transportation	Feb. 21, 2024
Wednesday, Feb. 28	Energy	Feb. 23, 2023
Monday, March 18	Agriculture	March 13, 2024
Wednesday, March 20	EVs and EV Infrastructure	March 15, 2024
Monday, April 8	Infrastructure	April 3, 2024
Wednesday, April 17	Aviation	April 12, 2024
Monday, April 29	Health	April 24, 2024
Wednesday, May 1	Banking and Monetary Policy	April 26, 2024
Monday, May 6	Digital Privacy and Security	May 1, 2024
Wednesday, May 8	Environment	May 3, 2024
Wednesday, May 29	Defence	May 24, 2024
Monday, June 3	Renewable Energy	May 29, 2024
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Editorial

Editorial

Carbon tax reversal will come back to bite

To call a political reversal a “backflip” is usually not the best descriptor as its namesake usually involves finishing where you started, albeit while completing a fancy move in the process.

It seems somewhat apt, however, with the federal government’s decision to carve out a three-year exemption for home heating oil from the price on carbon last month.

The calculated move, targeting traditionally red Atlantic Canada, appears to have left the Liberals exactly where they were before: hounded by the opposition for not axing the levy altogether, attacked by environmentalists for not doing enough to address climate change, and pilloried by the provinces for perceived unequal treatment.

The act of political skin-saving may end up improving the fortunes of the Liberals on the East Coast come election time, but it opens up the government to renewed attacks from both those who want a more robust carbon pricing regime, and those who want it consigned to history.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has since said there will be no more pauses or exemptions to the levy, responding to calls from Alberta and Saskatchewan for a similar carve out for natural gas heating. Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe threatened that SaskEnergy would not collect the carbon tax starting January if such carve-outs were not included, setting up yet another front in the federal-provincial tussles that Trudeau has fought for years.

But if the whole premise of the scheme is to encourage consumers and businesses to move to less carbon-intensive practices, and a significant contributor to carbon emissions is excluded for political reasons, is it not unreasonable for other parts of the country to lobby for the same treatment?

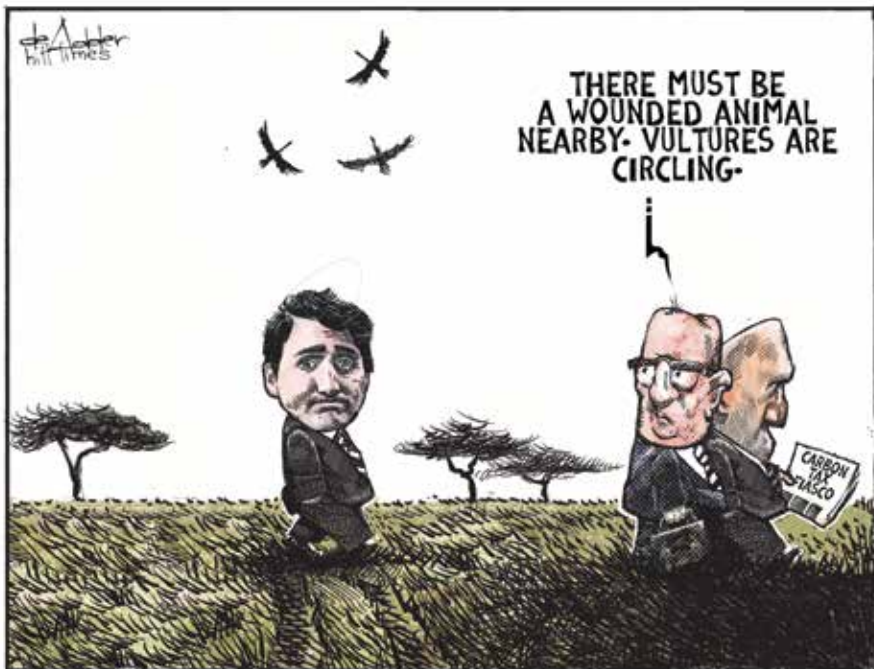
To pick apart the carbon tax piece by piece simultaneously reduces its chances of achieving its purported goals, and calls into question the government’s conviction in taking on the greatest challenge of this generation.

Even the Conservative Party, which calls for the government to “axe the tax” at every available opportunity, realizes this. The party—aware that it won’t succeed in eliminating the tax completely in this Parliament—has put forward Bill C-234, a private member’s bill that would carve out exemptions for on-farming heating.

On the other hand, the Liberals’ defence and reasoning for the scheme prior to October’s reversal rings somewhat hollow in hindsight. The worst wildfire season on record, drought, hurricanes, and flooding appear to be less significant in the party’s eyes than some bad polling numbers down east.

The Liberals’ backflip may have been an attempt to change the public’s mind and give them another chance. But the party had best hope it doesn’t trip and fall as a result.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor

Ian Shugart: may his memory be eternal

On Jan. 30, 2019, during a trip to Turkey, Ian Shugart, then deputy minister of foreign affairs, visited His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the spiritual leader of the world’s 300 million Orthodox Christians. I wrote to Shugart to express my gratitude to him for visiting the first throne of Orthodoxy; to my surprise, he wrote back without delay, thanking me for my outreach and describing his visit with the patriarch as the “highlight of the entire trip.” His unpretentious response, especially for a person in such a high-profile position, exuded the authenticity of a humble and dedicated public servant. A few weeks later, on March 18, the prime minister announced his intention to name Shugart as clerk of the Privy Council and secretary to the cabinet.

I took this opportunity to send him a congratulatory note, remarking that after his audience with the patriarch, was his

new appointment a “coincidence or blessing?!” Again, he graciously responded, and he did separately when I requested assistance with a federal program. His kind and helpful disposition—to a relative stranger—spoke loudly about Shugart’s character and integrity. In February 2021, when it was announced that he would take time off for cancer treatment, we had another exchange. While we never met in person, Shugart’s warm and affable demeanour was evident in our correspondence, and among other admirable attributes, highlighted by colleagues following his passing. Our exchanges left me with a wonderful impression which is why news that he succumbed to his sickness at the age of 66 was particularly sad. May God grant his family and friends consolation and, as we say in the Orthodox tradition, may his memory be Eternal.

Evan Sotiropoulos
Toronto, Ont.

Alberta government ad propagates fear and disinformation, writes Tom McElroy

Re: “Why do you want to make things worse with unreliable and unaffordable electricity?” (Alberta government full-page ad, page 3, *The Hill Times*, Oct. 30, 2023).

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith will say anything outrageous to capture media coverage to feed her populist followers and support fossil fuel companies. A misuse of public funds.

Good governance requires government to manage the country for the benefit of all, not just the fossil fuel companies. This ad from the Smith government is propagating fear and disinformation. Other jurisdictions, like the European Union, have better competition legislation to prevent disingenuous material being published by business and industry. Shouldn’t politicians face similar restrictions, and stop wasting taxpayers’ dollars?

Rather than trying to drag the country deeper into the use of fossil fuels, shouldn’t Alberta be leading the way to making the transition needed to avoid the consequences of climate change? Fossil fuels have caused terrible air and water pollution, and the CO₂ is devastating our planet with unprecedented fires, floods, storms, and droughts.

The transition Canada is making is not hasty. It is necessary, inevitable, and must be fast. Every day we delay reducing fossil fuel consumption will reward

us with many times the cost in reducing damage, loss of life, and environmental catastrophe.

Alberta was the first province in the country to put wind-power on its power grid. Then-premier Rachel Notley negotiated contracts producing electricity at prices below coal-fired power. Energy storage for peak demand needs more work, but many options are being tested, including battery storage, pumped-hydro, geothermal energy, and long-distance DC power lines connecting areas of production and consumption. Hydrogen storage, likely a major element in heavy rail and truck transport, will become an important element of our energy system.

The International Energy Agency indicates nearly 50 per cent of electricity generated globally by 2030 will be based on renewables. Smith recently denigrated this agency whose expert staff’s analysis is based on information gathered from more than 50 countries.

The federal government is doing a bad enough job with the fossil fuel file without Smith urging them to more folly. Scientists have known for almost 200 years that CO₂ was going to eventually cause destructive changes to our atmosphere. Trying to delay action for decades more is a crime against humanity.

Tom McElroy
Toronto

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Canada's Middle East policy is 'strategically catastrophic' and 'outrageously inhumane,' writes CJPME representative

Re: "CJPME's representative seems hell-bent on misconstruing Israel, writes B'nai Brith's Barclay," and "No moral equivalencies between Palestinian terrorist organizations and Israeli army: Honest Reporting Canada," (*The Hill Times*, Oct. 30, letters to the editor). If arguments like Robert Walker's and William Barclay's are taken seriously, Canadian diplomacy is on the road to disaster. This is not only a matter of principle. The current direction of Canadian Middle East policy is as strategically catastrophic as it is outrageously inhumane.

More than 8,000 Palestinian civilians have been killed in October by Israeli Defence Forces, including more than 3,500 children. These horrors will go down in history with the bombing of Guernica.

Worse even than the direct killings, Israel Defence Forces' tightened siege on Gaza now stands as a spectacular violation of the fourth Geneva convention. "To the fullest extent of the means available to it," reads Article 55, "the occupying power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population." Israel's cut-off of food, water, and medicine is a war crime.

Barclay flees the numbers in an effort to explain why Israeli lives matter, and Palestinian lives don't. But there are more and more of us in Canada who will not let these questions slide. How many dead Palestinians, in this implicit calculus, equals a dead Israeli? Is there even a limit?

The old line that Israel's mass killing of civilians lacks "intention" will no longer work.

The record of Itamar Ben-Gvir, Israel's national security minister, does not tell the whole story—but it does punctuate it. Ben-Gvir rose in Israeli politics as the leader of an anti-Palestinian terrorist organization banned as such under Canadian law: Kahane Chai (Kach).

Until recently, Ben-Gvir displayed a portrait on his living-room wall of Baruch Goldstein, the mass murderer who in 1994 sprayed Palestinians at Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque with live fire from his army-issued weapon, killing 29 and injuring 125.

Denials come cheap. The story that the victims bombed themselves was, after all,

precisely the story of the perpetrators at Guernica. Israel's war lines are not even consistent. To pretend that Ben-Gvir's Israel does not target civilians—as if a perpetrator's declaration of intent can be taken at face value—is to drive the credibility of our national discussion into the mud.

We owe to ourselves, out of basic human decency, to rise to the seriousness of the situation. Last week, Gaza City's al-Quds Hospital received repeated bomb threats from Israel. The Israeli bombings are now nearing the hospital, where hundreds of patients are joined by more than 12,000 Palestinian civilians seeking shelter. This has to stop.

Canadian leaders once followed Britain by reflex with that loyalist "ready, aye ready" of former prime minister Arthur Meighen. They (and, yes, the dominant ethnic groups of which they form a part) then shifted their allegiance to the United States. On Palestine, as on other world issues, deference to American leadership seemed like a good bet.

Donald Jamieson, external affairs minister for the Pierre Trudeau government, once brushed off parliamentary critics who complained that on Palestine "we are at odds with our good friends the Japanese, or at odds with our good friends the Europeans, and forget that we were not at odds with our best friend, the U.S." Agreement with the United States seemed agreement enough.

Soon, however, the world may be treated to the spectacle of a Biden-Trump election that not even the United States public wants. American leadership is in destructive decline.

By pushing for a more balanced foreign policy, including in support of the Palestinian freedom struggle, new Canadians open a better path. The pressure for peace must now expand. An end to Israel's occupation is urgent, and immediate demands for a ceasefire must ring loud and clear.

Dan Freeman-Maloy
Director of strategic operations,
Canadians for Justice and Peace in the
Middle East,
Montreal, Que.



Dan Freeman-Maloy is the director of strategic operations at Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East and is based in Montreal. *Handout photograph*

Until Hamas is gone, there is no chance for peace



U.S. President Joe Biden, left, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, pictured Oct. 18, 2023, in Tel Aviv, Israel. *Photograph courtesy of @POTUS*

Re: "Circles of sorrow emerge from the grim arithmetic of war," (*The Hill Times*, Oct. 30, by Michael Harris). The definition of insanity is to do the same thing over and over, and expect a different result. For 75 years, the same scenario has unfolded in the Middle East: Hamas or other violent jihad groups attack Israel; Israel responds; blunts the attack and gets the upper hand; the world blames Israel and cries out for a ceasefire; Israel agrees, and the violent group rearms to prepare for the next attack. Yet this is exactly what Michael Harris advocates in his column. Not this time. The glee with which these barbaric acts were committed and publicized by these terrorists have made it clear that there should be no ceasefire until Hamas is destroyed.

Kudos to Harris for acknowledging that, "No one with a heart or a conscience could disagree with Netanyahu's goal. Hamas must go." But then he continues, "But there are major questions about how Israel proposes to eliminate the terror group, which more than earned its oblivion with the Oct. 7 massacre." I disagree.

I wonder why there is plenty of fuel, medicine, water, and food for the terrorists, but not for the people in Gaza? Could it be that there would be no shortage of fuel, medicine, water, and food were it not for Hamas putting their needs ahead of the needs of the people they are supposed to serve? Could it be that for Hamas the priority is for the fuel to provide heat and electricity to their tunnels, communication networks, and missile launchers rather than to the homes and hospitals in Gaza?

I wonder why Harris chose to refer to a *New York Times* investigation in suggesting that there really is doubt as to whether the missile that destroyed the northern Gaza hospital came from Israeli forces or from within Gaza. To Harris, this is just another example of "fog of war." Never mind that *The New York Times* was embarrassed by prematurely jumping onto the "Israel-is-at-fault" bandwagon before any facts were in. Never mind that Canadian and American officials publicly acknowledged that there

was clear evidence supporting the Israeli position. Never mind that Hamas representatives like Ghazi Hamad blatantly lie, claiming, for example, that Hamas had no intention to kill Israeli citizens in the Oct. 7 attack. Somehow Harris ascribes the same degree of credibility to Hamas as he does to Canadian and American officials.

On Oct. 7, Hamas terrorists attacked Israel knowing full well it was a war it could not win, and one that would inflict immense suffering on its own people. Sadly, events are now unfolding exactly as Hamas anticipated. To Hamas, the greater the number of people who die, the greater the clamor for a ceasefire, and for blame to shift to Israel. I suspect that they must be pleasantly surprised by the outpouring of support they are receiving worldwide.

War is hell. In spite of Israel's best efforts to abide by international rules of armed combat, too many innocent lives will be lost. Residents of Gaza deserve better. But their anger is misplaced. It should be directed towards their leaders who, as former Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban famously said in 1973, "never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity". In 1947, both sides were provided with the same opportunity to build a society. One side did so, electing leaders that put their people first, welcomed refugees with open arms and integrated them into their society. The other side did the exact opposite. Since then, on numerous occasions, the people in Gaza and the West Bank have been offered virtually everything they have wanted. Their leaders rejected all offers.

Harris rightly advocates for a just peace with a safe and viable homeland for both parties. I agree. But there can be no compromise with those that chant "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." To those sympathizers, the only acceptable resolution to the Mideast conflict is to have a Mideast without any Israel. Until Hamas is gone, there is no chance for peace. Until Hamas is gone there should be no ceasefire.

Alan Williams
Ottawa, Ont.

Opinion



If Prime Minister Justin Trudeau were to resign, the clear advantage the official opposition now enjoys in the polls would be at risk, writes Michael Harris. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

On Trudeau's future, Tories should be careful what they wish for

As long as Justin Trudeau's around, the Conservatives are on the cusp of returning to power. But should the prime minister exit, it could be a whole new ball game for Pierre Poilievre's party.

Michael Harris

Harris



HALIFAX—No matter what nonsense goes in Question Period—that orgy of bragging, slugging, and attempted sand-bagging that tries to pass for reasoned debate and accountability—Canadians are getting the picture: none

of the major leaders can be taken at their word.

Canadians know that things are not as rosy as the Liberal government claims, not as bad as the Conservative Party complains, and not as easily solved as the NDP naively declares.

So we have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7? Groceries and gasoline are still way too expensive. Increasing competitiveness in the grocery business won't change that in a hurry. Message to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: free heat pumps are not the answer to the anger in the land.

So the carbon levy is too onerous and Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre wants to "axe the tax?" Poorly timed sloganeering after a summer of massive wildfires and floods across the country. Making polluting free again doesn't deal with climate change. Message to Poilievre: time to get a coherent policy on this existential file, and put aside the "apple a day" politics.

So NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh wants to drop the GST for all home heating, not just oil? Here's the rub. That would seriously reduce federal revenues at exactly the time

the NDP is pushing for more social spending. Fighting climate change aside—and that is a huge aside—how is reducing government revenues while shelling out major money on a national pharmacare program fiscally responsible?

It is unlikely that any of these matters of policy will soon get a proper airing in the House of Commons, where the main item of business is turning the quip into the clip of the day. That's because the Conservatives' politics of aggrievement and personal attacks have been so successful. When something works, you keep doing it.

Poilievre has skillfully focused the general grumpiness in the country on a single person: Trudeau. Everything is broken, and it is all Trudeau's fault.

At least that is the mantra. It has been an undeniable hit at the political box office. The polls have the Liberals looking at the Conservative vapour trail as it zooms ahead of the government in public popularity. Not only do Canadians apparently dislike their former prince of politics, a majority of them would like Trudeau to resign before they get a chance to give him the boot.

Poilievre has been so successful in scapegoating Trudeau for all that is wrong in the Canadian universe that even Liberals are getting nervous that the current leader may be about to lead them over a cliff.

Senator Percy Downe has publicly mused that Trudeau will determine his political future as leader by this February. Downe doesn't speak for the party, but if the Liberals become any more unpopular, others may find their voices on the issue of Trudeau's future. Leader to liability is a well-worn path in public life, especially when the personal attacks just keep coming.

It was the Conservatives' relentless personal assaults that drove David Johnston to resign as special rapporteur on foreign interference in Canadian elections. If Trudeau were to decide to make a career change and resign as leader of the Liberal Party, that would be seen in some quarters as another victory for Poilievre's attack-dog politics.

This much is certain. At this moment in time, the Conservatives hold the whip-hand. The government is looking tired, defensive, and vulnerable. If an election were held today, and the polls have it right, the Conservatives would not only triumph, but win a significant majority government.

But all of that is premised on the Liberals going into the next election with Trudeau as leader. The official opposition has scored most of its political points by vilifying the current prime minister as privileged, inept, and out of touch with the realities most Canadians face.

And then there is the prime minister's judgment issue: black-face decades ago, the lingering odour of the SNC-Lavalin affair that unjustly cost Jody Wilson-Raybould her cabinet post, and the infamous trip to a billionaire's island when Canadians are having trouble paying the rent and putting food on the table.

But if Trudeau were to resign, the clear advantage the Conserva-

tive Party now enjoys in the polls would be at risk. Their strategy suffers from the defect of its best point: if Trudeau is to blame for everything—as Poilievre has so adroitly and persuasively argued—what happens if he is no longer there?

What would happen, for example, if someone like Sean Fraser became Liberal leader before the next election?

Fraser is articulate in both English and French, impressive on his feet, and without the personal baggage that is dragging down Trudeau. He has also performed credibly in one of the toughest portfolios a minister can draw: housing. It is also worth remembering that Fraser pulled off the monumental feat of ending the MacKay family dynasty's Conservative hold on the Nova Scotia riding of Central Nova.

And what would happen if the Liberals chose an estimable new leader from outside caucus, someone like Mark Carney?

Unlike Fraser, or anyone else drawn from caucus, Carney could not be criticized as a Trudeau cabinet minister who propped up all the dubious policies and would serve up more of the same. Carney would start with a clean political slate.

Carney would also be uniquely qualified to deal with what the Conservatives themselves insist is a pressing priority: Canada's burgeoning national debt. Who would Canadians want in charge of that process: Kid Bitcoin, or the former governor of the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England?

As long as Trudeau is around, and barring a miraculous political resurrection, it looks like the Conservative Party is on the cusp of returning to power.

Should that change, should Trudeau exit, it could be a whole new ball game for Poilievre and his party. Which is only to say that in politics as in life: be careful what you wish for.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

The Hill Times

The takedown of Buffy Sainte-Marie is painful to witness

The story was explosive. But with too many holes in the content, it should have been left untold.

Sheila
Copps

Copps' Corner



OTTAWA—The takedown of Buffy Sainte-Marie is painful to witness. The CBC claims its evidence is airtight, but there appears to be a number of holes in the exposé about Sainte-Marie not being Indigenous.

According to the CBC, the singer-songwriter's claim to Indigenous roots has been contradicted by her birth certificate and even some members of her own family.

The birth certificate upon which the CBC based its story says that Sainte-Marie was born to parents Albert and Winifred Santamaria. Sainte-Marie says that she was adopted by Albert and Winifred, who changed their names to Sainte-Marie after the war because of racism against Italians.

The CBC story claimed "many instances over the years of contradictory statements from the singer regarding that personal history."

The story recounted how many awards and recognitions that had come to Sainte-Marie in part because of her unique status as an Indigenous artist in a white world.

Sainte-Marie was named *Billboard's* Music Award for Top Artist in 1964 just after she was described by *The New York Times* as "one of the most promising new talents on the folk scene today."

But it also laid out the multiple times that Sainte-Marie had self-ascribed different Indigenous origins, claiming that she has been Algonquin, Mi'kmaq, and Cree at different times to different news outlets.

Former *Globe and Mail* reporter Jan Wong had this to say on X about the claim that Sainte-Marie was not adopted because of her birth certificate. "Hey @CBCNews your Buffy Pretendian story rings false. I did quick search of adoptee births in Mass: 'An amended birth certificate, created after an adoption is finished, lists the name of the adoptive parents just as if the child had been born to them originally.'"

There were certainly a number of inconsistencies in the way that Sainte-Marie recounted her life story at various moments in her career.

But it is undeniable that she fought for Indigenous rights at a time when no one was really listening very hard.

Some have claimed she appropriated this identity to further her career.

But given that she burst onto the folk scene in the 1960s, it is pretty hard to see how her Indigenous heritage claim would have been developed simply to support her rise in the music world.

In the 1960s, being Indigenous was no ticket to success. Instead, negative stereotypes prompted many Indigenous Peoples to hide their identity.

Sainte-Marie was consistent in her fight for Indigenous Peoples, and her claim to attachment to her people.

She wasn't the first to be accused of Indigenous appropriation, and she won't be the last.

Last week, Newfoundland Premier Andrew Furey visited Labrador to deliver a series of apologies to residential school survivors. Over a few days, the premier visited five Inuit communities to deliver solemn apologies.

That visit happened a month after Furey made a similar apology to the NunatuKavut Community Council.

The premier's first apology was attacked by members of the Innu nation and the government of Nunatsiavut, claiming the NunatuKavut community has no legitimate Inuit identity.

That difference of opinion was virally reflected in the House of Commons two years ago when the Inuit Member of Parliament attacked her colleague in Labrador for falsely claiming her Inuit heritage.



Buffy Sainte-Marie speaks after Canada Post unveiled a stamp in her honour at an event in Ottawa on Nov. 18, 2021. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Then-NDP MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq was forced to apologize for a Twitter post in which she demanded that Liberal MP Yvonne Jones "validate her Inuk-ness."

Jones characterized the attack as "lateral racism," and told the media that "I don't think I have to prove my identity ... I know who I am. I know who my grandmother and my great-grandmother was ... I can trace my Inuit history in Labrador back to the early 1800's."

But the very public fight was a reflection of the challenges that come with clarifying Indigenous lineage.

The CBC obviously thought it was doing a deep dive into the real story behind Buffy Sainte-Marie.

But the backlash caused by the story, and the questions around adoption practices more than 80 years ago have not been fully answered.

It is a disservice to Sainte-Marie's lifelong Indigenous commitment to believe that a colonial birth certificate holds all the answers to her birth history.

The story was explosive. But with too many holes in the content, it should have been left untold.

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

The Hill Times

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Opinion

Yep, Canada urgently needs more capital here at home

If we could get an extra five percentage points of the Canadian Pension Plan and other institutional pools of capital currently flowing into foreign markets diverted to the future Canadian economy, that could mean billions more dollars each year for investment in domestic enterprise, jobs, and high-value exports.

David
Crane

Canada &
the 21st Century



TORONTO—Canada does not suffer from a lack of savings. But every year a significant share of our reserves end up supporting growth in other countries at a time when we urgently need more capital here at home to create our own economy of the future. This needs to change.

Our pension funds, mutual funds, insurance firms, and other managers of Canadian savings



Our pension funds, mutual funds, insurance companies, and other managers of Canadian savings send billions of dollars every year to the United States, the Asia-Pacific, and Europe to invest in their growth companies while young Canadian firms find themselves starved of funds, writes David Crane. *Image courtesy of Pixabay*

send billions of dollars every year to the United States, the Asia-Pacific, and Europe to invest in their growth companies while young Canadian businesses find themselves starved of funds. This limits their growth, and many end up selling out to foreign corporations since they cannot pursue their potential to scale up into world companies owned and headquartered in Canada.

Xanadu Quantum Technologies, a company founded in 2016 and which, since then, has built what is said to be the world's most powerful quantum computer, which they call Borealis. The company says that Borealis can accomplish tasks in a fraction of a second, ones that the world's best supercomputer would take 9,000 years to complete.

Yet in a brief filed with the House Industry and Technology Committee, the company said that it had to look to U.S. investors to fund its growth. "Highly innovative Canadian companies, like Xanadu, who are developing new deep technologies like quantum

computing, biotechnology, medical devices, innovative clean-energy hardware, or new materials rely heavily on private investment in order to fuel the early stages of their R&D activities and company growth," it said. But the money is likely to come from other countries, not Canada.

As Xanadu's representatives told the MPs, the firm had more than 170 professionals, with the majority holding advanced degrees, and almost 60 per cent of them new Canadians. The growth and accomplishments to date had been financed mainly by venture capital investment of about US\$250-million. Early this year, the company also received \$40-million in federal funding through the Strategic Innovation Fund. But access to foreign investment, mainly from the United States, had been crucial, with its Series B and Series C rounds totalling about US\$100-million each.

"This pattern of investment is unlikely to change in our future rounds, due to the very small

number of such investors in Canada, and eventually the majority ownership of the company will likely be held by foreign venture investors," Xanadu went on to say. But what happens when these investors want to exit as they undoubtedly will? There's a strong possibility it would then be sold to a foreign multinational which would then own all the intellectual property and other intangible assets.

Just last month a deal was closed in which another Canadian tech company, GaN Systems, was sold to the giant German semiconductor company Infineon Technologies for US\$830-million. The sale gives GaN the capital needed for growth, but the profits will flow to the German owner.

The problem is not a shortage of Canadian capital. For example, the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board's (CPIB) annual report for the 2022-23 financial year shows that of its \$570-billion portfolio just 14 per cent, or about \$80-billion, was invested in Canada—in bonds, equity,

infrastructure, real estate and other assets—compared to 36 per cent in the United States, 26 per cent in Asia-Pacific, 18 per cent in Europe, and six per cent in Latin America.

One reason, no doubt, was that the five-year average annual rate of return on Canadian investments was 4.9 per cent, compared to 9.6 per cent in the United States, 6.0 per cent in Latin America, 5.1 per cent in the Asia-Pacific, and 3.1 per cent in Europe. For the past year, investments in Canada earned a 0.3 per cent return, compared to 3.6 per cent in the U.S. Canada had the lowest return of any of the five regions.

It was noteworthy that Canada's share of CPIB's highly profitable private equity portfolio, which includes venture capital, was just one per cent, compared to 57 per cent in the U.S., 24 per cent in Europe, 17 per cent in the Asia-Pacific, and one per cent in Latin America.

Other pension funds also have big and growing portfolios. At the end of 2022, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec had a portfolio of \$401.9-billion, 25 per cent of it invested in Canada. Other pension plans in Ontario and Alberta, for example, had portfolios ranging from just more than \$100-billion to about \$160-billion. AIMCo, which manages pension and other funds for the Alberta government, had the highest level of Canadian investment, at 42 per cent. The federal government's Public Service Pension Fund had a \$128-billion portfolio—but of the \$34.3 billion invested in public equities, only 11 per cent was unvested in Canadian equities.

It is, to be sure, the responsibility of investment managers to ensure that they generate sufficient returns so, for example, pensions will be there when needed. Even so, there is a responsibility on those managing our savings to do more to seek out and grow Canadian companies that will deliver high future returns.

What we also need is a structure that will increase the flow of Canadian savings into our businesses of the future, companies like Xanadu and GaN Systems. Two federal initiatives may have some impact, but neither is geared to help provide high levels of patient capital needed to build our future anchor companies. The Canada Innovation Corp. is focused on supporting R&D projects. The Canada Growth Fund is centred on clean tech companies to achieve net-zero emissions, not the much wider innovation economy.

If we could get an extra five percentage points of the Canadian Pension Plan, mutual fund, insurance portfolio, and other institutional pools of capital currently flowing into foreign markets into the next Canadian economy instead, that could mean billions more dollars each year for investment in Canadian enterprise, jobs, high value exports, and the wealth needed to support valued public services.

This is where we need some truly creative thinking.

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

The Hill Times

Speaking at the Economic Club of Canada on Oct. 30, Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly presented a detailed new foreign policy framework. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Joly unveils astute policy framework, but must bridge gaps between words and action

The framework stands on two planks: defending Canadian sovereignty, and using pragmatic diplomacy to prevent international conflicts.

Bhagwant Sandhu

Opinion



OTTAWA—Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly has finally unveiled her foreign policy framework. It is astute and perceptive. She deserves to be congratulated. All she has to do now is to bridge the gap that exists between the words of her framework and the actions of her government.

The framework stands on two planks: defending Canadian sovereignty and using pragmatic diplomacy to prevent international conflicts. Speaking at the Economic Club of Canada on Oct. 30, Joly described the framework in detail, demonstrating that she has thought through all the pressing issues from multilateralism to geopolitical rebalancing. Canada, she concluded, “cannot afford to close ourselves off from those with whom we do not agree.”

To prove that she means business, Joly needs to chalk up a few quick wins. She could arbitrate, for example, an end to the skirmishes between Rwanda and Congo, or she could partner with, say, Qatar in its negotiations between Israel and Hamas. There is no shortage of opportunities. As Joly herself noted about a year ago, the world needs a Canada that is “good at convening.”

The unfortunate part is that Joly has her work cut out for her. Just three days before her speech, Chief of Defence Staff General Wayne Eyre was suggesting that Canada is at war with Russia and China. He was perhaps echoing Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau’s drive to make Canada battle-ready, and support the hegemonic ambitions of NATO and the United States.

The war in Ukraine is of course Trudeau’s flagship project. Since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, he has committed over \$8-billion to Ukraine, with \$2.4-billion going for direct military assistance. Yet, as his policy objectives for a regime change in Russia keep failing, and as Ukrainians run for cover, Trudeau is adamant that he will fuel the war, “for as long as it takes.”

In his classic book, *On War*, published in 1832, Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz theorized that war is the use of violence to preserve peacetime policies. Given his proclivity to mimic the overseas agenda of the U.S. and his endless references to the “rules-based international order,” one could assume that Trudeau and indeed the Americans want to protect the privileges of neoliberalism which are under threat by the economic rise of China.

Joly did acknowledge that the neoliberal order is “fracturing” and “shifting beneath our feet.” With refreshing insight, she also

added “we must resist the temptation to divide the world into ideological camps.” Does this mean that her government will abandon neoliberalism? Not quite.

Elaborating on the first pillar of her framework—defending our sovereignty—Joly actually argued the Canada must increase its military footprint to make us “a reliable partner who contributes to peace and security by increasing our military presence.” That last bit of Orwellian doublespeak casts doubts on Joly’s sincerity and intentions for the framework. It could be all for show.

A sceptic could even question the timing of her speech. It comes days before the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting—set for Nov. 11 in San Francisco. U.S. President Joe Biden is expected to use the occasion to foster rapprochement with Chinese Premier Xi Jinping. It is possible as such that Joly’s talk about “pragmatic diplomacy” is nothing more than a warm-up act to lay the political groundwork for Biden.

To be fair, however, throughout her speech Joly exuded an aura of someone who cares about

the state of the world, and who genuinely wants to chart a new course for Canada’s foreign policy vision and place in the world as a middle-sized power. But the Trudeau government’s eight years of quiet belligerence make it difficult to rush in and buy into Joly’s earnestness.

In Latin America alone the Liberals have repeatedly encouraged opposition parties to use legal loopholes to create a constitutional crisis and delegitimize elected leaders. In 2018, they sponsored an attempted coup d’état against Venezuela’s President Nicolás Maduro; in 2019, against Bolivian President Evo Morales; and in 2021, against President Pedro Castillo of Peru.

Elsewhere, they have slapped embargoes and punitive sanctions against governments, individuals, businesses, and entities in 24 countries, including Lebanon, Haiti, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe. These measures have been proven to hurt only the poor working classes and the already destitute.

Joly’s framework is a sound, well-reasoned policy paradigm. The real test of its value will be in its implementation. The sad fact is—at this late stage of the game—it may not matter. With the Liberals trailing by double digits in the polls, it’s probably only the diehard wonks paying any attention to how the government frames the future of its foreign policy direction.

Bhagwant Sandhu is a retired director general from the federal government. Between 2002-21 he held senior roles in several departments, including Fisheries and Ocean Canada, Infrastructure Canada, the Treasury Board Secretariat, and Public Works Canada. He has also held executive positions in the governments of Ontario and British Columbia.

The Hill Times

Opinion

Gauging the power of consultants

While politicians do usually heed the counsel of their consultants, that doesn't always make them unthinking marionettes.

Gerry Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade. Photo illustration by Neena Singhal

OKAVILLE, ONT.—According to a couple of guys I recently overheard at the gym, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau doesn't make his own decisions.

As one of them put it, "It's people in the backrooms who make the policies. They tell politicians what to do and say."

Of course, this idea that politicians are basically puppets whose strings are pulled by powerful behind-the-scenes consultants is a common one.

Recall, for instance, how Republican political consultant Karl Rove was often referred to as the "brain" of former U.S. president George W. Bush, while here in Canada, political observers would routinely call one-time Liberal strategist Gerald Butts the "brains behind Justin Trudeau."

Indeed, this notion of politicians bowing to their advisers is so common that I once worked on a campaign where we tried to use that perception to our advantage.

We basically told our candidate to go out and tell the media some-

thing along the lines of, "My consultants have told me not to support this policy because they say it's bad politics, but I'm supporting it anyway because I care more about the future of my country than I do about crass political tactics."

The idea was we were trying to cast the candidate as an independent thinker, as his own man, as a principled and conscientious politician who did politics differently, even if that meant disregarding the advice of cynical professional consultants.

Still, the fact that it was his consultants who told him to say

he was ignoring his consultants made the whole thing kind of ironic.

At any rate, at this point, you're probably wondering if consultants really are that powerful? Are they truly like some modern-day Rasputins, shadowy characters who wield enormous influence over elected officials?

Well, the answer to that question is complicated.

For one thing, it depends on the politician.

Some politicians, for example, do rely extremely heavily on the advice of their consultants for just about every decision they make, from whether they should support a new tax to what colour tie they should wear for the gala.

Other politicians, by contrast, might hear out their consultants, but at the end of the day, for good or for ill, they'd rather trust their own political instincts and savvy.

Maybe I'm wrong about this, but I'd be willing to bet Donald Trump will often ignore his consultants if only because he thinks he's much smarter than them.

Also, it's important to keep in mind that politicians have influences other than their circle of paid consultants.

Some politicians are influenced more by their own inner moral code.

Again, to use an example from my own experience, I worked on a campaign where I and other consultants on the team urged the candidate to launch a savagely vicious media campaign against his opponent as that was the only way we thought he'd have a chance of winning.

He adamantly refused us, not because he didn't think such a campaign would work, but because he firmly believed taking such a negative route would forever mar his reputation.

Finally, it should be noted that when it comes to influencing politicians, consultants often play second fiddle to spouses.

Many a time politicians have turned down a consultant's carefully thought-out strategic plan mainly because their wives/husbands didn't like it.

Hey, when it comes to influence, nothing beats pillow talk.

So, I'd say, the bottom line is while politicians do usually heed the counsel of their consultants that doesn't necessarily make them unthinking marionettes.

Mind you, if you think a politician you like is doing something wrong, it's always tempting to blame the consultant.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

The Hill Times

Idle no more, but in what direction is Poilievre running on Indigenous policy?

Pierre Poilievre is right: Indigenous communities are more successful when they can determine their own futures. This is not something for a federal government to 'give.' The hard work of reconciliation is making sure Indigenous Peoples have the right support to do the job themselves.

Frances Abele & Catherine MacQuarrie

Opinion



The reconciliation agenda appears to be rapidly sliding down the list of Liberal priorities. While it is far too early to plan for a Conservative victory in the next federal election, what if they do come to power? In particular, what will this mean for Indigenous-Crown relations, and the lives of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis citizens? What sound policies is Pierre Poilievre promising as a possible future prime minister?

Poilievre says he is "listening and learning." Perhaps as a result, his recent statements are more sophisticated and less overtly discriminatory than in 2008 when he said residential school survivors needed to "learn the value of hard work" instead of being compensated for years of abuse.

There are other more troubling past positions. Poilievre's Fair Elections Act (2014) created significant barriers to Indigenous voters. In 2020, he called blockades protesting for Wet'suwet'en decision-making rights over pipelines "illegal," demanding police action. (A year later, he was proudly supporting "freedom" blockaders in Ottawa and on the borders). In May 2021, he and his party voted against bill C-15, the framework for Canadian imple-

mentation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Poilievre said it was undemocratic if Indigenous nations who were pro-development could be derailed by others who had concerns about industrial and extraction projects in their territory. He also promises to repeal 2019 legislation that gives Indigenous Peoples a clear role in assessing environmental, and other impacts of proposed development.

Now positioning himself as a future prime minister, Poilievre's pronouncements seem to contradict earlier beliefs. His statement for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation declared, "we lock arms with Indigenous people as we work to empower them with the freedom to bring home a better future." He was more specific in a pre-recorded video address to a national audience of First Nation chiefs last December: "I will support you in determining your own futures and own unique rights that existed millenia before the creation of Canada; rights that are affirmed in treaties and protected by the Constitution ... I will give you back control of your revenues ... ;I will work with you to find ways to ensure we protect the environment and respect First

Nations as the best environmental stewards that we have ... And I also believe you should be the principal beneficiary of natural resource projects that happen in your lands and territories."

These words might sound good, but does Poilievre understand what they really mean in practice? Like so many of his promised solutions to other issues, they skim over deep complexities. Successive court decisions constitutionally obligate Canadian governments to recognize and respect a wide range of Indigenous rights, including the right to be consulted (with the aim of consent) on land use in their traditional territories, and to govern themselves in a wide range of jurisdictions; ultimately making them, in effect, a third order of government in Canada. How and to what extent will a Poilievre government work to uphold these rights, even in the face of provincial reluctance?

It's encouraging to hear a willingness to "give back control of revenues" and make sure Indigenous Peoples are principal beneficiaries of economic development on their lands. But how will this work in practice? Based on Poilievre's parliamentary speech regarding UNDRIP, the right to be

self-determining doesn't seem to include the right to say "no".

And how will he act on the root causes of poverty, disease and social pain stemming from federal policies such as residential schools, the Indian Act, and tightly held government purse strings? The previous 10 years of Conservative government saw a concerted attack on Indigenous rights. It led to massive national protests by Indigenous people under the banner "Idle No More". What will be different this time?

Poilievre is right about one thing: Indigenous communities are more successful when they are able to determine their own futures. This is not something for a Canadian government to "give." The hard work of reconciliation is making sure Indigenous Peoples have the right support and elbow room they need to do the job themselves.

Frances Abele is distinguished research professor and chancellor's professor emerita in the school of public policy and administration at Carleton University. Catherine MacQuarrie is a fellow of the school of public policy and administration. Both are part of the Rebuilding First Nations Governance Project.

The Hill Times

Supreme Court dares Canada's polarized politics to do better

Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard Wagner and his fellow jurists have done their job. Now it is up to the politicians. The hurry-up offence doesn't work in a courtroom.

Mike Blanchfield & Arash Golshan

Opinion



When it weighed in on the unconstitutionality of the federal Impact Assessment Act (IAA), the Supreme Court of Canada suggested a constructive path forward—one that dared Canada's polarized politics to do better.

In its Oct. 13 decision, a 5-2 majority of the court wrote in a non-binding opinion that the federal government overstepped its jurisdiction into provincial affairs through the IAA's power to review energy, mining, and other industrial projects to protect the environment and Indigenous people.

The decision declared key sections of the law unconstitutional which thrilled an Alberta government that brought forth the challenge. The court said that parts of the law were constitutional, and affirmed that the federal government still maintains some jurisdiction over such projects. It urged the two sides to collaborate to find a solution.

The opposite happened. The federal and provincial governments reacted with two wildly disparate interpretations. The result is a political dissonance that



Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard Wagner wrote, in the majority opinion of court, 'Parliament and the provincial legislatures to exercise their respective powers over the environment harmoniously, in the spirit of co-operative federalism.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

comes with dire consequences—it is a setback in the fight to reduce GHG emissions and the race to a net-zero future.

This is abundantly clear in the context of the Public Policy Forum's (PPF) recent Project of The Century report, which described the pressing need to massively expand Canada's electricity grid. The report describes this two-fold challenge: cleaning the remaining 16 per cent of the grid, and expanding it two to three times by 2050.

The PPF's report dedicated an entire chapter to the "hurry-up offence" strategy, our attempt to showcase the urgency of getting shovels in the ground as soon as possible for the electricity build-out. The "hurry-up offence" is a central theme that drew upon the football metaphor that stresses playing the game differently in the face of a clock rapidly ticking down.

The fallout of the recent Supreme Court decision flies in the

face of that speed-focused strategy. If anything, it embodies a far more troubling sports metaphor that is all too familiar to Canadian hockey fans—the political bickering amounts to "ragging the puck" or wasting time that will run out the clock.

Climate change doesn't care about any of this. It won't wait for our fights to be over before it shows its worst impacts. This is also true for the flow of investments that will be redirected to other jurisdictions in the absence of policy certainty.

Remember, Canadian utilities are getting offers to move their investment south of the border and export electricity north due to the United States' clearer regulatory system, and the advantages offered by the Inflation Reduction Act.

Experts and observers have been warning about the potential for the court's opinion on the jurisdictional conflicts in the IAA to spill over into the implementation of a Clean Electricity Regulation (CER), or the federal government's long-anticipated emissions cap on the oil and gas sector.

This legitimate concern is not being acknowledged—at least publicly—in Ottawa. At a post-ruling press conference, Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault said the federal government would table amendments to make the law constitutional, and "following the guidance of the court and collaborate with provinces and Indigenous groups to ensure an impact as-

essment process that works for all Canadians." Energy and Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson repeatedly emphasized his hope this would be the last time Ottawa and provinces brought their fights to the court.

There is next-to-no chance of that happening given the Alberta government's declaration.

The possibility of continued legal wrangling over every single misalignment between the provincial and federal governments defies the imperative of the hurry-up offence strategy, and hinders Canada's ability to get all hands-on deck for the project of the century—building out the clean electricity grid in the drive to net zero.

These conflicting views, which are threatening the CER, can be addressed.

Independent observers are increasingly coming to the conclusion that the current draft regulation does need some critical fixes with regard to its flexibility

measures, without which an unacceptable risk will be imposed on the system's reliability and affordability.

The regulation's 75-day consultation period ended last week, but this phase might need to be extended to allow for more reflection by all the stakeholders before its finalization in early 2024. Regional Energy and Resource Tables can serve as a critically helpful structure to ensure the final version of the regulation is reflective of provinces' real-world concerns.

Arguably, the political consequences of the potential shortfalls in electricity affordability or reliability have historically been shouldered by the provincial governments. As mentioned in our report, "Canadians tend to view affordable and reliable electricity as something of a birthright and are not hesitant to hold to account provincial governments that disappoint them on rates or policy."

Our report acknowledges that there are many obstacles to doubling or tripling the capacity of our grid to meet the needs of 21st century electrification, but it makes clear there is one way forward, one that amplifies what Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard Wagner wrote in the majority opinion of court.

Wagner called for "Parliament and the provincial legislatures to exercise their respective powers over the environment harmoniously, in the spirit of co-operative federalism."

PPF also underscored this fundamental requirement in its July report, calling for "the political will to act quickly and hold the public imagination along the grand journey to a cleaner, healthier future."

Today, we're adding emphasis to that key phrase—to act quickly. The time has come for political leaders to sideline Wagner and his fellow jurists. The judges did their job, now it is up to the politicians.

The hurry up offence doesn't work in a courtroom.

Mike Blanchfield is PPF's director, Energy Policy. Arash Golshan is a PPF policy associate. This column has been reprinted with permission from the Public Policy Forum.

The Hill Times



Veritas (truth) statue on the west side of the Supreme Court of Canada building in Ottawa, May 2021. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault seen on the Hill on Oct. 24, 2023. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The Big Photo

The Big Photo

Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem, left, and deputy governor Carolyn Rogers, pictured Oct. 30, 2023, before the House Finance Committee in the West Block to answer questions about the price of housing in Canada. *The Hill Times* photographer Andrew Meade has been shooting committees on the Hill for years and is always looking for a decent shot: "I took this picture just before the chair hit his gavel and the photographers were shooed out of the committee room. There's no big story behind the photo other than waiting and hoping for Macklem and Rogers to sit down and look up at us for a split second, unfortunately that didn't happen and this picture is the closest I could get. But I'm happy with it."



The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Opinion



Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly, pictured on the Hill. Recent Canadian foreign policy decisions highlight a concerning double standard. Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza lacks the vigorous condemnation one might expect, given the contrast to Ukraine, writes Khaled Al-Qazzaz. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Canada is at a crossroad and must reconcile its foreign policy with historical injustices

Two realities are undeniable: first, occupation is the epitome of injustice. No amount of political, economic, military, or media rationale can alter its definition in history's eyes. Second, these actions will inevitably be recorded in history. It's essential that we stand on the right side of history, and the sooner we do, the better.

Khaled Al-Qazzaz

Opinion



Recently, Canadian social media has been brimming with powerful analogies. Many voices are drawing connections, arguing that those who stand with Ukraine should similarly stand with Palestine. This conversation points to what many perceive as a double standard in Canadian policy. The inconsistency in Canada's foreign policy becomes even more apparent when juxtaposed against its approach towards First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. Reflecting on its own colonial history, Canada's steadfast support for Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories appears incongruous. This begs the question: how can a nation genuinely address its own past wrongdoings while seemingly condoning another nation's unlawful actions?

The digital age has democratized dialogue, and Canadians are increasingly challenging our country's stance, demanding consistency in advocating for justice and human rights, both domestically and internationally.

The historical approach of the Canadian government in responding to injustices offers valuable insights into its current stance on the Middle East crisis. Canada's colonial heritage and the sway of influential entities entrenched in settler colonial perspectives have cultivated policies imbued with notions of ethnic supremacy,

resulting in systemic discrimination against diverse groups. This is also evident in Canada's approach to domestic challenges like systemic Islamophobia within government institutions. It also manifests in the continued unjust treatment of Indigenous populations.

Canada's historic systemic injustices towards its Indigenous communities have often been compared to the plight of the Palestinian people. Similar to the way the residential school system (1880s-1996) sought to coercively assimilate Indigenous children into Euro-Canadian culture, along with the dispossession of Indigenous lands and the resulting intergenerational trauma, the Palestinian people have endured decades of displacement, occupation, and denial of basic human rights, with concerted attempts to erase their cultural identity. As Canada grapples with its own historical transgressions through truth and reconciliation processes, it is imperative that it also recognizes and condemns the injustices faced by the Palestinian people.

Canada has repeatedly found itself on the wrong side of history. The country's delayed support for the African National Congress (ANC), a movement that opposed apartheid in South Africa and eventually democratically elected,

is a case in point. Under Pierre Trudeau's leadership, Canada not only reaped benefits from investments in South Africa, but also indirectly bolstered apartheid by backing an IMF credit and inadequately enforcing an arms embargo.

These historical political stances are mirrored in Canada's current unequivocal support for Israel, while undermining the Palestinian right to freedom and self-determination.

Recent Canadian foreign policy decisions highlight a concerning double standard. Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza lacks the vigorous condemnation one might expect, given the contrast to Ukraine. While Canadian leaders laud Ukraine's right to self-defence and denounce Russia's invasion, their approach to Israel's occupation of Palestine starkly differs. Ukrainians rightfully defend their homeland with Canada's support, yet it's hypocritical for Canada to deny Palestinians their right to resist Israeli occupation.

Canada's leaders seem to be misreading the situation, perhaps insulated in their bubble. The majority of Canadians have consistently championed what is right and stood up for human rights. The current political position that resists a call for a ceasefire and fails to hold Israel accountable

for international violations does not align with Canada's official commitment to justice and international law.

Across the nation, thousands of Canadians are repeatedly taking to the streets to protest against the relentless killing of civilians in Gaza, and their persistent presence day after day speaks volumes. Canadians are evolving, driven by generational shifts, changing demographics, and a rising social justice movement that better understands our settler-colonial history. The discussions on reconciliation with our own history across the country have reshaped discourse in academia and mainstream media, heightening collective awareness of colonization. The nation's diverse immigrant communities, many hailing from regions deeply affected by colonialism, see the Palestinian occupation for what it is. Younger Canadians with increasing access to live first hand information through social media are distinguishing between political messaging and the truth on the ground.

As structural biases and hypocrisy become more apparent, the veneer upheld by politicians defending Israel's unquestionable right to self-defence is crumbling.

Two realities are undeniable: first, occupation is the epitome of injustice. No amount of political, economic, military, or media rationale can alter its definition in history's eyes. Second, these actions will inevitably be recorded in history. It's essential that we stand on the right side of history, and the sooner we do, the better.

Khaled Al-Qazzaz is the executive director of the Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council. He also serves as the chair of the board for the Institute of Religious and Socio-Political Studies.
The Hill Times

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Our Coverage



Both sides react to MVNO decision from CRTC

Both BCE Inc. and Quebecor Inc. have reacted to the CRTC's decision that Bell Mobility's offer on mobile virtual network operators (MVNO) should be adopted by arbitration. The decision was released Tuesday. Bell said the commission has recognized that Canadians are already paying less for mobile...



Federal arbitrator releases free time political broadcast schedule

Broadcasting arbitrator Monica Song has released her list of free time political broadcasting allocated to the federal parties. The last update was in March. Time is allocated according to a formula that takes into account Parliamentary seats and share of the popular vote. The governing Liberals lead the...



St-Onge cites professor to quiet Conservative MP on online bills

Conservative MP Rachael Thomas brought a motion before the House of Commons Industry Committee Thursday regarding the government's Online News Act and Online Streaming Act. The Liberals, Bloc Québécois, and New Democrat MPs on the panel voted to defeat it.

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News

Fall economic statement should include tax filing help, banking reforms, say advocates for lower income Canadians

Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland says this year's fall economic statement will be 'narrowly focused' on three areas: housing, affordability, and fiscal responsibility.

BY KEVIN PHILIPUPILLAI

As food bank usage hits record highs across the country, groups representing lower income Canadians say they are optimistic about the affordability measures Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland has signalled in advance of the fall economic statement. But they are also calling for "a more comprehensive" approach that tackles poverty from multiple angles.

Freeland (University—Rosedale, Ont.) has so far declined to say when she will release this year's fall economic statement, but she has given some indication in recent weeks about the kinds of affordability measures the government is contemplating.

Freeland, Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Que.), and Treasury Board President Anita Anand (Oakville, Ont.) previewed the fall economic statement at a press conference on Parliament Hill on Oct. 24. Freeland said the update would be "narrowly focused" on three areas: housing, affordability, and fiscal responsibility. This followed an Oct. 17 announcement from Freeland's office about measures to "ensure Canadians are treated fairly by their banks."

Elizabeth Mulholland, CEO of Prosper Canada, told *The Hill Times* on Oct. 30 she is "really excited" by the banking reforms the government has promised recently or is already working on implementing—such as expanding access to low- and no-cost bank accounts, cracking down on certain fees at big banks, reducing the criminal rate of interest, and expanding access to credit.

But Mulholland said she is hoping the fall economic statement will also include "a more comprehensive" and "multi-pronged" approach to affordability. That means helping



Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne, left, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, and Treasury Board President Anita Anand hold a press conference on Parliament Hill on Oct. 24 to preview this year's fall economic statement. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

people file their taxes so they get access to income security programs for which they are already eligible, helping low- and moderate-income households build up emergency savings, and forgiving the CERB debt of people who cannot afford to repay it without starving or losing their homes, she said.

Prosper Canada is a national charity working to expand economic opportunity for Canadians living in poverty. Mulholland said roughly one in five people with low incomes don't file their taxes, and that this group is missing out on \$3,700 on average from tax credits and income supports to which they are entitled—and often more in the case of families with children and people with disabilities.

She said the government has launched pilot programs that provide grants to community tax clinics that help people file their taxes, and that these grants could be expanded and made permanent. She added that with additional resources, these clinics could also work outside the tax season to help people file taxes from previous years.

"And that's when you really get large lump sums of money that people are often owed—tens of thousands of dollars. And that's a life changing opportunity for somebody living on a low income to really turn their financial life around," said Mulholland.

Food Banks Canada, a charity that represents food banks across the country, announced last week that food bank use has hit all-time highs. The group's annual report



Elizabeth Mulholland from Prosper Canada says the government should expand funding to community tax clinics that help people get access to the income support programs to which they are entitled. *Photograph courtesy of Prosper Canada*

says there were "an unprecedented" 1.9 million visits to food banks in March—an increase of 32 per cent from the previous year—and that 18.4 per cent of people in Canada now live in food-insecure households.

Food Banks Canada says it "sounded the alarms" in its 2022 report, but that this warning "has largely gone unheeded," as the lack of government action, at all levels, has exacerbated the problems it identified a year ago. The group's policy recommendations call on governments to tackle low incomes and poverty—"the root causes of food bank use"—while also providing immediate relief for millions of people.

Since Food Banks Canada released its report on Oct. 25, opposition MPs have repeatedly drawn attention to the record demand for food banks across the country.

Conservative MP Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, Que.) said in the House on Oct. 27 that 872,000 people in Quebec—one in 10 Quebecers—are relying on food banks each month. Conservative MP John Barlow (Foothills, Alta.) added in the House later that day that a third of food bank users across the country are children. Both joined other Conservative MPs in blaming the government's carbon tax, and Conservative MP Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Ont.) criticized what he called the government's "inflationary spending" for the rise in food insecurity.

Under questioning from Conservative finance critic Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, Alta.), Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem told the House Finance Committee on Oct. 30 that government spending has, at times, worked at cross purposes with the central bank's efforts to lower the rate of inflation.

"It would be helpful if monetary and fiscal policy was rowing in the same direction," Macklem told the committee.

Bloc Québécois MP Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, Que.) told the House on Oct. 28 that the Liberals have not kept an election promise to invest \$1-billion over five years for a school food program.

ACORN Canada looking for further details on Freeland's promise to address 'junk fees' charged by banks

ACORN Canada, a union of low- and moderate-income people, has been cautiously optimistic about Freeland's promise to address several banking issues that disproportionately affect lower income households. But ACORN representatives have also said they are waiting for further details that will clarify how ambitious these reforms will be, and how quickly they will be implemented.

The organization has highlighted Freeland's Oct. 17 promise to crack down on "junk fees," starting with non-sufficient fund (NSF) fees. These are charges in the range of \$45 to \$50 that Canadian banks apply when customers don't have sufficient funds to cover a transaction. ACORN representatives say NSF fees are an additional hardship that push people who are already struggling financially away from mainstream banks and towards payday lenders that charge "predatory" interest rates.

Donna Borden, co-chair of the East York (Toronto) chapter of ACORN Canada, said in an Oct. 24 statement that she was "glad to see" the government promise to act on NSF fees, and called for these fees to be lowered to \$10 or eliminated entirely.

She pointed out that nearly three quarters of the largest banks in the United States have eliminated NSF fees, saving their customers an estimated US\$2-billion a year according to the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. "Canada has been falling behind other countries in holding large banks accountable," said Borden.

Advocates have also called for the federal government to create a national standard for a safe, low- or no-cost bank account, to cut down on fees for online transactions, and to provide lower-income households access to well-regulated, low-cost alternatives to high-interest payday and installment loans.

ACORN has been skeptical about efforts to introduce such measures on a voluntary basis, and has called on the government to make such reforms mandatory for Canadian banks. Mulholland, however, said a collaborative approach would more likely be sustainable in the long term.

"You could say 'we're going to make the banks do it, and they're just going to have to lose money on it,'" she said. "But that doesn't feel very sustainable to me. And I would predict that if the government changed, that would go out the window."

Mulholland said a more collaborative approach might see the federal government absorbing some of the cost of screening borrowers and supporting them with financial education and coaching, while the banks administer the loans and put up the necessary capital.

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Gun control advocates ask Senators to pass Liberals' 'incomplete' firearms bill 'as quickly as possible'

Gun rights group says it will likely appeal a Federal Court ruling upholding the government's May 2020 ban on 1,500 specific models of 'assault-style' firearms'

BY KEVIN PHILIPUPILLAI

As a Senate committee holds hearings on the Liberals' controversial firearms legislation, a Federal Court ruling has given the government a rare win on this file by upholding its partial ban on assault weapons.

The Senate National Security, Defence, and Veterans Affairs Committee is hearing from gun control groups, gun rights groups, survivors of mass shootings, hunters, Indigenous leaders, and other interested parties as it studies Bill C-21—the government's landmark firearms bill.

Heidi Rathjen, a spokesperson for the gun control group PolySeSouvient, told *The Hill Times* on Oct. 31 that her group is asking Senators to pass Bill C-21 as quickly as possible—without amendments—because any delays may jeopardize the bill.

PolySeSouvient, founded by survivors and families affected by the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre in Montreal where a gunman killed 14 women and injured 14 others, has been critical of the government in recent months for backing down on an assault weapons ban in the face of political opposition. But Rathjen said the group has decided that "over the last year and a half, we have gotten the most we can get in terms of improvements" to the bill, and that "we almost lost the freeze on handguns" through the contested process.

Rathjen said the bill is "incomplete" because it is missing a ban on assault weapons, but that her group has secured commitments from the government to introduce separate regulations to ban assault weapons.

PolySeSouvient is also calling on Senators to apply pressure on the government to close an existing regulatory "loophole" that makes it possible for people to legally purchase high capacity magazines that are pinned at five rounds and modify them after the fact to accept their full illegal capacity.

Rod Giltaca, CEO of the Canadian Coalition for Firearm Rights (CCFR), told *The Hill*



Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc has told Senators the government will engage with hunters, sport shooters, and other groups "who have very legitimate concerns" about how Bill C-21 and accompanying regulations will be implemented. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Times on Oct. 31 that he would be telling Senators that his primary objection to Bill C-21 is the ban on handguns. "It's going to have a tremendously negative effect on half a million Canadians" who own handguns, said Giltaca, and on Canadians' private property rights more broadly.

Based on data from the RCMP that there are approximately 1.2-million legal handguns in Canada, he estimated that their owners stood to lose "about a billion dollars worth of private property" when their handguns are eventually confiscated.

Bill C-21 would make permanent the existing regulatory freeze on the import, sale, or transfer of handguns, meaning the current owners of legal handguns would not be able to transfer ownership to other licensed owners. These weapons would eventually have to be surrendered to the government when their owners die.

Federal Court upholds May 2020 ban on 1,500 models of assault weapons

The Senate hearings kicked off on Oct. 23 with testimony from Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.). A week later, the government got a somewhat unexpected win when Justice Catherine Kane of the Federal Court upheld a May 2020 order-in-council banning approximately 1,500 models of assault-style firearms, which the Liberals have described as weapons designed for the battlefield, and not for hunting or sport shooting.

The federal cabinet issued the disputed order-in-council on May 1, 2020—less than two weeks after the mass shooting in Portapique, N.S.—without any prior notice in the *Canada Gazette*. The CCFR and other gun rights groups challenged the order-in-council that same month, saying such a sweeping ban should have gone through the legislative process.

Giltaca has previously suggested that the looming legal challenge against the partial ban on assault weapons may have been the reason the government chose the longer legislative route—Bill C-21—for its proposed ban on handguns.

PolySeSouvient said in an Oct. 30 press release that the Federal Court ruling should be seen as confirmation that the government's authority "to limit what type of guns can legally be owned by Canadians is explicit and unequivocal."

The approximately 1,500 models of assault-style firearms banned by the May 2020 order-in-council are now classified as "prohibited," but these are still in the hands of their owners because the federal government established a two-year amnesty period in which to set up a buyback program. Public Safety Canada recently extended this amnesty until Oct. 30, 2025.

Rathjen said it is "very frustrating" that the government hasn't launched the buyback program yet.

"It's been three and a half years and they just extended the amnesty again because they're not ready," she said. "New Zealand did it in within six months. Australia did it in about a year—maybe a year and a half."

"We're hoping that under the new minister this will become a priority," said Rathjen.

Giltaca said he was waiting to hear back from his legal team about whether to appeal the Federal Court ruling, but that "the feeling in the room now is that we are going to, and we're going to do it soon."

"The judge has just taken the government's word," he said. "All Canadians should be concerned about the fact that it's been pretty clearly demonstrated that they have no property rights whatsoever in Canada."

The CCFR said in an Oct. 30 press release that it had deployed "an entire team of lawyers" to challenge the May 2020 order-in-council, with financial support from "over 100,000 individual firearm owners."

When asked what bearing the Oct. 30 Federal Court ruling will have on Bill C-21, Giltaca said these were largely two different matters since the May 2020 order-in-council dealt with bans on assault weapons while his primary objection to Bill C-21 is related to the ban on handguns.

Senators push LeBlanc for details on promise to ban existing assault weapons

The Liberals upset hunters, the Assembly of First Nations, and their own rural MPs last November by introducing 300-plus pages of amendments that significantly broadened the scope of the bill to include bans on 482 specific models of assault-style firearms that are currently legal in Canada. The government withdrew the contentious amendments in

February, proposed a new assault weapons ban in May that would apply only to new firearms, and got the bill through the House with the support of the NDP and the Bloc Québécois.

ISG Senator Donna Dasko (Ontario) questioned LeBlanc at the Senate committee hearing on Oct. 23 about what happens now to the assault-style weapons that the government tried to ban in the November amendments.

"Last fall you introduced in amendments a list of 482 models that you felt were dangerous. I would like to get a commitment from you that those guns are going to be made illegal," said Dasko, pointing out that if the government believes these models are too dangerous to be out in public, then it should be acting to remove them.

LeBlanc replied that he agreed with Dasko's underlying concern, but said Bill C-21 would not have passed the House with those amendments attached. "So in a minority Parliament we worked with opposition parties and came up with what we thought is a thoughtful compromise that moves us in the direction that you articulated," LeBlanc said.

He did commit to using a separate regulatory process to ban these 482 additional models of assault weapons, while adding that an advisory committee of experts will provide guidance on an appropriate process to compensate licensed owners who bought these guns lawfully.

Under questioning from ISG Senator Julie Miville-Dechêne (Inkerman, Que.) on Oct. 23, LeBlanc was reluctant to commit to a timeline for these additional bans, citing the various elements required for the regulatory process. He did say, however, that he "would be disappointed" if these regulations were not in place one year after Bill C-21 comes into force, saying the process "should not be the pretext for a delay."

LeBlanc also told ISG Senator Peter Boehm (Ontario) that the government will continue to engage "in a thoughtful way" with hunting, sport shooting, and other groups "who have very legitimate concerns" about how the legislation and accompanying regulations will be implemented. "We think and hope we can answer their concerns, and will continue to diligently work down that list and ensure that it is balanced," said LeBlanc.

Given the Conservatives' lead in the polls, the Liberals have also tried to use Bill C-21 to future-proof their proposed assault weapons bans to a certain degree. Rathjen said Bill C-21 includes language that would prevent a future government from using an order-in-council or other regulatory authority to downgrade the classification of specific models of firearms that have already been classified as "prohibited."

This could essentially prevent the Conservatives from using an order-in-council to reverse Liberal orders-in-council banning assault weapons. A future government would instead have to go through the legislative process to undo bans on specific models.

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News

'I personally believe it's not enough': supporters at Poilievre's Atlantic 'axe the tax' rally say Trudeau's changes to carbon tax won't sway their vote

In St. John's, N.L., Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's common-sense message is resonating with young voters.

BY IAN CAMPBELL

ST. JOHN'S, N.L.—A day after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made changes to his marquee environmental policy, Conservative supporters at a rally in St. John's, N.L., still cheered in response to Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's call to "axe the tax."

A crowd of at least 150 people was in attendance at the Delta Hotel in downtown St. John's on the evening of Friday, Oct. 27, for a rally in the ridding presently held by Labour Minister Seamus O'Regan (St. John's South-Mount Pearl). Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) was on a short tour of Atlantic Canada, which had also included a stop in Nova Scotia the day prior.

Atlantic Canada has been a bastion of support for the Liberals in all three of Trudeau's (Papineau, Que.) election victories, particularly in his initial mandate in 2015 when his party won every ridding in Atlantic Canada. However, recent polling has seen the Liberals dropping in the region, with opposition to the carbon tax seen as a key factor in that shift in support. Polling conducted by Abacus Data from Sept. 19 to 25, found that if a federal election were held at that time, the federal Conservatives would win 42 per cent of the vote in the province, while the Liberals would win 33 per cent and the NDP 23 per cent. This represents a 15-point drop for the Liberals from the 2021 federal election, a nine-point gain for the Conservatives, and a six-point gain for the NDP.

Shortly before Poilievre took the stage for his Oct. 26 "Axe the Tax" rally in Windsor, N.S., the prime minister—flanked by members of his Atlantic caucus—announced two key changes to the carbon tax. The rebate for rural residents will be doubled, and there will be a three-year pause on the tax applying to home heating oil—an energy source that is disproportionately used in Atlan-



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre addresses the media at an Oct. 27 press conference in St. John's, N.L., before holding his 'Axe the Tax' rally that evening. *The Hill Times* photograph by Ian Campbell

tic Canada. With the next fixed election date set for no later than the fall of 2025, that means that regardless of when the election happens, the pause on the tax in home heating fuel is set to remain in effect until after Canadians go to the polls.

In his speech, Poilievre suggested that his Atlantic tour had pushed the prime minister to make the change to his policy.

"So [Trudeau] found out that I would be coming to Atlantic Canada for a big 'axe the tax' tour—he learned that we were going to have record smashing crowds in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland—and he outright melted down," said Poilievre to an enthusiastic crowd.

He also took direct aim at O'Regan, pointing to instances where the Liberal MP and cabinet minister had voted in favour of the carbon tax. Poilievre claimed O'Regan had been "begging the prime minister" to pause the tax, and suggested this is what led to the change.

The Hill Times reached out to O'Regan's office to ask if had indeed called on the prime minister to change course on the carbon tax, and what his views were on the new policy measures.

His office did not comment on whether O'Regan had advocated to the prime minister for the policy change, but in a statement to *The Hill Times* O'Regan said the change was a way to lower emissions "with everyone on board."

"Electric home heating is cheaper, cleaner, and more reliable. But the up-front cost of electric heat pumps has been preventing many people from making the switch," said O'Regan. "We're doubling down on our program to make sure everyone can access electric

heat, and we're giving them the time to do it. Now, no matter where they live or how much you earn, you'll have access to cleaner, more reliable home heating. This is how we'll lower emissions—with everyone on board."

Some supporters at the rally said the changes by the government were positive, saying any step to help with issues of affordability was welcome news, but most said it was not enough to restore support for the Liberal government.

"I personally believe it's not enough," Mujammel Hridoy, an attendee at the rally, told *The Hill Times*. "It probably helps a little bit, but we still need to work" on further changes.

'Not his first rodeo': attendees respond to Poilievre's speech

Throughout his speech, Poilievre linked the carbon tax to other cost of living issues.

"We know that farming takes fuel," Poilievre said to the crowd. "So if you tax the diesel of the farmer who grows the food, and the trucker who ships the food, then you tax all who buy the food. And that's why the carbon tax is not just on your fuel and your gas. It's a tax on the food that you eat."

He used a crate of apples as a prop to illustrate that example, as well as to highlight several of his other key message points—a reference to a recent viral video in which he eats an apple while challenging the premise of several questions asked by a reporter.

Poilievre's use of these props to reference the video elicited laughter and applause from the crowd, as Poilievre gave apples

away as prizes at several points throughout the speech.

Those in attendance told *The Hill Times* this style was resonating with them.

"Fairly boisterous, funny, had excellent comic timing. It's clear that he's very practised. It's not his first rodeo," said Nicholas Moraine. "In terms of delivering on the philosophical precepts of his campaign, I think he did very well. Crowds seem to enjoy it."

Moraine said he has at various times been a card-carrying member of the Conservative party and the NDP, voted for the Liberals when Trudeau came to power in 2015, and most recently was supporting the People's Party of Canada. However, with Poilievre as Conservative leader, he has shifted his support back to the Conservatives.

"[I was] recently drawn back into the fold by the turn-back towards populism, which I don't treat as a dirty word," said Moraine.

Two other attendees, who described themselves as long-time Tories, said there was a large contingent in the crowd who appeared to be new to Conservative events.

"It's kind of funny, we said when we came in, 'There's not as many Tories here—longtime Tories,'" Brandon O'Brien told *The Hill Times*. Instead, the people in attendance were "normal people that are coming to a rally for ideas they believe in, from people that share those ideas, and ideas that resonate with them," he said.

Kenneth Wiggins said he had observed the same at an event Poilievre held in St. John's during the Conservative Party leadership race in 2022.

"There was so many faces that are new. And same thing here," he said. "A lot of lot of new blood."

Wiggins said the appeal is coming from "common-sense ideas," noting the island of Newfoundland is hit particularly hard by fuel costs because so many essential products need to be shipped in by boat.

"People are losing their homes, people are finding it hard to buy groceries, people are finding it hard to gas up their cars," said Wiggins. "So he's offering to go back to a common-sense idea. And it's resonating with people who are suffering."

Rio Flynn said she is one of those new supporters who has been following Poilievre for

about two years, describing him as "a very smart, very intelligent person" who "gives the message really clear."

She said she felt motivated to support Poilievre because of "the changes that he's trying to make for Canada."

"I'm an immigrant. I'm from Philippines. And I've been here almost 14 years now," said Flynn. "And I've seen the big changes—inflation and everything. So I don't want my child to grow up, you know, having hard times. So we're trying to make sure that we have a good future."

Flynn said the recent changes made by Trudeau to the carbon tax were not enough to change her view.

"No. He's gotta go," said Flynn.

Ryan Smith, another attendee at the rally, said the change to the tax policy does help, but he remains a strong supporter of Poilievre.

"Absolutely does [help] because I'm, you know, a young person who's trying to save up and get their own place," said Smith. "And honestly, it's so demotivating to see the way that things are going right now."

He called Poilievre "the hero without the cape that we need," saying "we are all essentially sick and tired of the state that we've been left with from Trudeau's irresponsible decisions with our money, and we're ready to get it back."

"I've been following Poilievre for about two-and-a-half years now," said Smith. "First time, I've ever actually been politically ecstatic about anything. Because, you know, at the end of the day, I'm getting older, I'm getting wiser. And I'm starting to realize my vote really counts."

Meanwhile, Hridoy said Poilievre is connecting with younger voters because he is "very powerful and motivational."

"Basically the only reason I'm here is I really like him as a person," said Hridoy. "He's very inspirational to me—his leadership style and the way he speaks, it's very inspirational for young generations. And I feel like, as a future aspiring political leader, I personally think it's good to follow somebody who does have similar ideology and thoughts."

With the election possibly still two years away, attendees said they felt confident the party was not peaking in the polls too soon, and could sustain its momentum.

"It'd be foolish to try and predict the future and say that is not possible for us to [peak too soon]," said O'Brien. But, he said, "I think that if anything, we're still gaining momentum. I don't even think we're anywhere close to our peak at this point. If you look around—I mean, I'm 30 years old, almost, and I've never seen a rally quite of this significance in Newfoundland & Labrador for my whole life, and I've been politically involved since I was a very young man—you know, junior high ... and I've never seen quite the same amount of enthusiasm or numbers, so I think we're a long way away from our peak."

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‘The party wants this riding very badly’: at least 22 candidates consider run for Tory nomination in Liberal-held riding of Pickering-Uxbridge, Ont.



Liberal MP Jennifer O'Connell, right, with Tourism Minister Soraya Martinez Ferrada. At least 22 Conservatives are interested in seeking the party's nomination in O'Connell's riding of Pickering-Uxbridge, Ont. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The Greater Toronto Area riding is a target for the Conservatives in the next election, say potential candidates Anthony Yacub and Raveenie Rajasingham.

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they have to go through the green-lighting process where the party conducts a rigorous check to determine if there's anything in a candidates' background that rival parties could use against them in the next election. All parties undertake intense vetting of candidates to avoid the risk of a negative story leaking during an election campaign. Those issues can become national stories, and put the party on the defensive.

It remains to be seen how many of the 22 candidates actually submit the detailed nomination

papers, and how many successfully complete the vetting process. Only green-lit candidates will end up on the ballot paper for the nomination election.

The Conservatives are using the ranked or preferential ballot system for the nomination election.

Under this system, riding association members will rank all candidates in order of preference. If none of the candidates wins 50 per cent plus one of the votes after the first ballot, the ballots belonging to the candidate who ranked last are eliminated, and his or her votes will go to the remaining candidates. This process continues until one of the candidates receives the majority of the vote. Members cast their vote only once, but ballots continue to be redistributed by dropping the last-place finisher until a clear winner emerges.

Pickering-Uxbridge's MP, three-term Liberal Jennifer O'Connell, was not available for an interview last week. O'Connell, who is parliamentary secretary to the public safety, democratic institutions and intergovernmental

affairs minister, won the riding in 2015 from Conservative MP Corneliu Chisu, winning 50 per cent of the votes to Chisu's 38 per cent. In 2019, the incumbent Liberal MP garnered 51 per cent of the vote, and the Conservatives won 29 per cent. But in the 2021 election, the Liberal vote share went down to 46.9 per cent, while the Conservative share rose to 36.1 per cent.

Chisu represented the riding from 2011 to 2015. He won the riding in 2011 by defeating long-time Liberal MP Dan McTeague by a margin of 2.6 per cent. McTeague represented the riding from 1993 to 2011. The 2011 election was the worst in the Liberal Party's history when, for the first time, they were the third-place party in the House. In that election, the Conservatives under Stephen Harper won a majority government, and the NDP became the official opposition for the first—and so far only—time.

Currently, all national public opinion polls are showing that the Conservatives under leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) are ahead of the Liberals with a double-digit margin. According

to polling aggregator 338Canada.com, if an election were to happen now, the Conservatives would get 41 per cent of the vote, the Liberals 27 per cent, the NDP 18 per cent, the Bloc Québécois seven per cent, the Greens four per cent, and the People's Party three per cent. Under this scenario, the Conservatives would win a majority government. Based on these numbers, the Conservatives would win between 170-226 seats, the Liberals 58-113 seats, the Bloc 23-36 seats, the NDP 12-34 seats, and the Greens one to three seats.

The same aggregator is also projecting the riding of Pickering-Uxbridge as a likely Conservative gain.

Meanwhile, Yacub, who is a psychotherapist, told *The Hill Times* that for the duration of the nomination election, he has taken a leave of absence from his responsibilities as the riding president. Prior to working as a therapist, Yacub worked for a bank, but was let go of his job during the COVID-19 pandemic for refusing to disclose whether he was vaccinated. He told *The Hill Times* that it was his personal choice not to get vaccinated because he was worried about potential side effects.

"I was a young, in-shape, healthy guy, I play basketball," said Yacub. "And I have never seen in my life the government mobilized to the degree that it did for this cause because we've had humanitarian crises in the past, we've had homeless people on the street, we have drug addicted people in downtown Toronto. And I said to myself, 'I don't want to be the first guy.' I respect individual choice, if you want to take the vaccine, take the vaccine. But for me, in my particular moment in time, I have another 80 years ahead in my life, I don't want to see a side effect come along, like mesothelioma or something like that, that I see on television."

Vaccine mandates was one of the key election issues in the 2021 federal election. The Liberals used

it as a wedge issue which worked to their advantage, and they were re-elected to a third mandate.

Raveenie Rajasingham, a cardiac diagnostic specialist who is also a potential candidate in the riding, said that Pickering-Uxbridge is a swing riding and, based on the national polling numbers, the Conservatives are likely to win it. She's currently in the process of filling out her nomination

papers, and will submit them in the coming days.

"Things have changed. What started eight years ago [when Liberals came to power] to now—even the last three years—you've probably seen by the polls," said Rajasingham, who is the president of the Canadian Tamil Congress.

"Liberals are doing so bad [in the polls], and this may be a time for a change for a lot of people, and Pickering will be a riding that's going to change that."

Frank McMillan, a former riding association president, said that he did not know that so many

potential candidates had expressed interest in seeking the Conservative nomination in this riding. He predicted that the final number of candidates who will end up on the ballot will be a lot fewer than 22, chiefly because a majority

may not be fulfil all the requirements and steps involved in the vetting process. McMillan, who is supporting Rajasingham, said that even though the Conservatives have carried this riding only once in 30 years, the change in electoral boundaries, population demographics, and most importantly, the Liberal unpopularity amongst Canadians, his party is highly likely to win next time around.

"The party wants this riding very badly," said McMillan. "It's a very multicultural riding which is very good. Everybody around here gets along very well. This is not a riding where there's a lot of fighting going on usually."

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Anthony Yacub, 24, is the Conservative riding association president in Pickering-Uxbridge, Ont. He has taken a leave of absence as riding president to seek his party's nomination in the riding. *Photograph courtesy of Anthony Yacub*



Corneliu Chisu represented the riding of Pickering-Uxbridge as a Conservative MP from 2011 to 2015. *The Hill Times* file photograph

News

As ceasefire debate rages at home, support for Israel and concern for

Stronger language about humanitarian obligations show Canada's recognition that Palestinian civilians are 'caught in the middle' of conflict, says Gilles Rivard.

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in the region, according to some ex-diplomats.

"I think Canada is at this moment not keeping its distance, but we want to show that we have to be careful with that situation. Even though we're 100 per cent supportive of Israel, we are very concerned about their action in Gaza," said Gilles Rivard, a former Canadian deputy permanent representative to the United Nations. "There's a lot of people in Gaza that have nothing to do with it, but they are like a piece of ham between two pieces of bread. They're caught in the middle."

Canada was one of 45 countries to abstain from a vote in the United Nations General Assembly about the "protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations." The 14-point resolution included calls for an "immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce," that all parties abide by international law, the unhindered provision of essential goods, services, and humanitarian access to civilians in Gaza, and the unconditional release of all "captives."

The resolution passed with the support of 120 member states,

while 14—including Israel and the United States—were opposed. All other members of the G7 joined Canada in abstaining.

Canada earlier proposed an amendment adding that the General Assembly "unequivocally rejects and condemns the terrorist attacks by Hamas that took place in Israel starting on 7 October 2023 and the taking of hostages, demands the safety, well-being and humane treatment of the hostages in compliance with international law, and calls for their immediate and unconditional release."

The amendment failed to attain the two-thirds majority required—88 countries in favour, 55 against, and 23 abstentions—though all other G7 countries voted in favour.

In a statement published after the resolution, Global Affairs Canada said the amendment was "an effort to ensure the General Assembly acknowledged that this situation arose because of unconscionable terrorist attacks by Hamas on Israeli civilians" on Oct. 7.

"The resolution as drafted did not mention this fact. We consider it essential that the international community speak clearly in condemning this terrorism by Hamas," the statement said, going on to describe Canada as "disappointed by the failure of the General Assembly to condemn Hamas."

Bob Rae, Canada's permanent representative to the UN, told the General Assembly prior to the vote on the amendment that the body must demonstrate to Palestinian and Israeli civilians that they acknowledge their plight, and noted there was "no hierarchy" of death. But he said that Canada could not support the text of the resolution as it was drafted, and that "the critical reason for how we got here has already

been forgotten by so many, as if it never happened."

On the amendment, Rae said that "facts are facts. On Oct. 7, Hamas committed attacks of terror by killing and kidnapping innocent men, women, and children. We, in this Assembly, have an obligation to name two things not mentioned in the draft resolution—the organization that bears responsibility for those events and its consequences, and the deliberate cruelty of the murders and hostage-taking that is still underway."

Rivard said that such resolutions are mostly symbolic, but can be useful for gauging the positions and nuances of each member state. "You can debate for hours about a sentence because it sends a signal of a country's position," he said. "It gave us an opportunity to project how Canada sees the situation, and this is the objective of this kind of resolution."

When trying to move such amendments in the UN General Assembly, Rivard said missions would hold consultations and discussions with a range of different countries to gauge their perspectives and the kind of language that would be acceptable to them.

"You consult your allies, your friendly countries, and also countries with whom you have good relations but that have different views," he said. "You can consult people from the Non-Aligned Movement, from the G77, and you're also in close consultation with Ottawa. If you want to modify the language, there is consultation at the public service level and political level, and then you come up with a proposal to make some amendments."

Saeid Mirzaei Yengejeh, a University of Ottawa law professor who spent more than 30 years working at the United Nations, including on co-ordinating the

Israeli ambassador to Canada Iddo Moed scrums with reporters after a press conference in the National Press Theatre on Oct. 30, 2023, held by Israeli survivors and families of victims of the conflict in Israel and Gaza. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



positions of the Non-Aligned Movement, said the language Canada used in its amendment included "naming and shaming" that may not have been helpful in humanitarian objectives.

"That amendment called for the condemnation of Hamas, while at the same time asking for the release of hostages. These two do not go together," he said. "If you want an organization to release hostages, you can't first condemn them and then ask for something."

"If the aim was for [Canada] to align itself with the U.S. and Israel, that works for that purpose," he said of Canada's amendment. "If the aim was to make arrangements for the release of hostages, the resolution was not conducive to that purpose."

Michael Lynk, a former UN special rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian Territory, said the abstention may not have happened without the internal debates within the Liberal caucus on the need for a ceasefire.

"Justin Trudeau has a caucus that is increasingly reflecting the diversity of Canadians, including Arab Canadians, and Muslim Canadians, and Canadians whose ancestry comes from the Global South," said Lynk, who is an associate professor at Western University's law faculty. "If it hadn't been for that split, and the ongoing debate in the Liberal caucus, Canada likely would have

voted 'no' along with the United States. This is, if you'd like, a tiny victory, but one can hope for a lot more from Canada."

Lynk said Hamas deserved to be condemned at the UN, and that indiscriminate attacks on civilians were clear violations of international law and "prima facie war crimes." But he said that the amendment was bound to fail if it only cited the "violations of international law by one side."

"[Canada] would have had a much better chance of getting a victory on that amendment if it had included a resolution that equally condemned and criticized the violations of international law by both sides," he said.

At the time of publication, the Israel Defence Forces said more than 1,400 Israelis were killed during or in the aftermath of Oct. 7, of which more than 1,000 were civilians. At least 240 people were taken hostage.

An official Israeli source told Canadian reporters that between 1,200 and 1,500 Hamas and Islamic Jihad fighters took part in the attack on the ground, while about 4,200 rockets were launched.

The IDF also said 19 soldiers have been killed in battles inside the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, Gaza's health ministry said more than 9,000 Palestinians have been killed in the territory, though did not provide a breakdown between civilians and fighters. Another 133 Palestinians



Bob Rae, Canada's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, told the UN General Assembly that member states must acknowledge 'the organization that bears responsibility for those events and its consequences, and the deliberate cruelty of the murders and hostage-taking that is still underway.' *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Canada walks fine line at UN between Palestinians' welfare, say observers



have been killed in the occupied West Bank, according to the Palestinian Authority's health ministry, while an Israeli military reservist was also killed.

Calls continue in Canada for ceasefire

In Canada, both the Liberal government and Conservative opposition have called for humanitarian pauses in order to provide necessary aid and supplies to civilians.

Some members of the Liberal caucus want Canada to call for a ceasefire, as has the NDP. The

New Democrat caucus sent a letter to Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) on Nov. 1 calling for a ceasefire, and said that more than 100,000 Canadians had written to the party about the issue.

Pro-Palestinian activists held sit-ins at 17 MPs' offices in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec on Oct. 30 calling for a ceasefire.

The same day, Iddo Moed, Israel's ambassador to Canada, told reporters that his country would not "cease fire because we have a murderer shooting at us, continuing to shoot at us, and there is no

reason why we should stop. He will just continue to do more."

The Israeli Embassy in Canada shared video with journalists on Oct. 30 and Nov. 2 of the Oct. 7 attack and its aftermath as captured by security cameras, portable cameras strapped to Hamas militants, and images from first responders.

The videos included footage of shootings of Israeli civilians, the breaching of border fences, and the loading of bodies into vehicles. The first responder footage, taken in the aftermath of the shootings, included images of bloodstained houses and shelters.

Official Israeli sources said the 10-minute video shown to reporters on Oct. 30 had also been shown to Canadian government officials, and was intended to demonstrate the full extent of the horrors committed during the attacks. They compared it to the Allied forces' distribution of footage from liberated Nazi death camps at the end of the Second World War.

A longer, 43-minute video was shown to reporters, including from *The Hill Times*, on Nov. 2, and included footage of attacks on kibbutzim, IDF bases, and the Nova music festival. It included footage of the murder of civilians, desecration of corpses, and the kidnapping of hostages.

The longer video had not yet been shown to Canadian government representatives at the time of publication, according to officials.

Relatives of some of those killed or taken hostage during the Oct. 7 attacks visited Ottawa to meet with Trudeau, other MPs, and the media last week. During a press conference on Oct. 30, they said that efforts to see the hostages released should be the top priority for all.

"I'm sure that the international pressure isn't enough, because they're still there," said

Itay Raviv, whose uncle and aunt were kidnapped from their home in the Kibbutz Nir Oz, and whose cousin was killed. "Hamas is a terror organization and they do not co-operate with any international organization... the Red Cross hasn't visited the hostages... the whole world needs to deal with this as a top priority... every day, every hour that they're there is a crime against humanity."

Toronto-based Aharon Brodutch, whose sister-in-law was kidnapped from Kibbutz Kfar Aza with her three children, said

both Israeli and international efforts should be solely focused on ensuring the safe return of all hostages.

"This is not about taking sides in a conflict, this is very basic. Every person who is having dinner with his family and sees his children realizes that children don't belong in tunnels while you're being held hostage," he said. "Any kind of pressure on all sides that can be put to end this, that's what needs to be done."

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How Countries Voted on the UN Resolutions on Middle East, Oct. 27, 2023:

Resolution Calling for a Sustained Humanitarian Truce between Israel and Hamas, Leading to Cessation of Hostilities:

YES (120)

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Russia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

NO (14)

Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Fiji, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Tonga, United States of America

ABSTAIN (45)

Canada, Albania, Australia, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Iceland, India, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Palau, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, South Korea, South Sudan, Sweden, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Zambia

DID NOT VOTE (14)

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Eswatini, Jamaica, Liberia, Rwanda, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, Togo, Turkmenistan, Venezuela

How Countries Voted on Canada's Amendment to Condemn Hamas: (did not pass)

YES (88)

Canada, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Myanmar, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Korea, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay

NO (55)

Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bolivia, Belarus, Brunei, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, North Korea, Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Guinea, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Tanzania, Yemen

ABSTAIN (23)

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Botswana, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, Laos, Lesotho, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nepal, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Serbia, Suriname, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago

OTHER (25)

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Gabon, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela

Aharon Brodutch, whose brother's family is believed to be among the 240 hostages taken by Hamas on Oct. 7, said it was vital that the release of those held captive be Israel and the international community's top priority. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



News

If polling trends don't change for Liberals, expect more and louder voices for change in leadership, say political players

Senator Percy Downe has stated publicly what Liberals have been talking about privately since the 2021 election, say Liberal insiders. But pollster Frank Graves says the Liberals are experiencing regime fatigue and he's not so sure a change in leadership is the best way out. Graves suggests the Libs may need a clearer and bolder vision to win voters back.

Continued from page 1

chiefly because of the high debt, slowdown in the economy and affordability issues. He pointed out that the next February will be the 40th anniversary of Pierre Elliott Trudeau taking a walk in the snow and deciding to step down as prime minister, and his son could do the same.

"The federal Liberal Party members are excited [for] next Feb. 29, 2024, is a leap year. Many are hoping it will be snowing that day," Downe said, referring to Pierre Trudeau's famous walk in the snow on Feb. 28, 1984. He decided to resign as prime minister the next day.

Prior to the interview, Downe wrote an op-ed for *The Hill Times*, which was published in the Oct. 30 issue. The same op-ed was carried by the *nationalnewswatch.com* on Nov. 1. Downe's comments on the Liberal leadership opened a floodgate of media coverage last week. All major news organizations across the country covered this story.

Downe, who served in some of the most senior positions in the Chrétien government from 1993 to 2003, agreed that it's a tough call for any prime minister to leave the most powerful political office in the country. But, Downe said, it's always better to leave when you're at the peak of your career. He cited the example of hockey



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on the Hill on Oct. 26, 2023, laughed off any suggestions last Wednesday about a potential change in leadership for the next federal election. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

player and former Liberal cabinet minister Ken Dryden leaving hockey when he was at the top of his NHL career.

"Ken Dryden, who wrote an excellent book on hockey about [10] years ago called *The Game*, had a quote in that book. He left when he was at the peak of his NHL career, he left the NHL to do other things and he quoted a French movie actress, Brigitte Bardot, who quit making movies when she was at the height of her popularity. In the book, he quotes her saying, [she] was asked why she left and stopped making movies and she said, 'I leave before being left. I decide,'" Downe told *The Hill Times*.

"He [Trudeau] should talk to Ken Dryden."

On Nov. 2, Lawrence Martin, a veteran *Globe and Mail* columnist, wrote a piece headlined "Why doesn't Justin Trudeau understand that Canadians want change," arguing that an eight to 10 year cycle is a powerful dynamic in Canadian politics.

"Surely Justin Trudeau knows about the unofficial 10-year rule: The one that says Canadians allow prime ministers a decade or thereabouts at the helm, before they want change. The latest example was Stephen Harper, who tried to extend his stay in 2015, only to be sidelined by Mr. Trudeau," wrote Martin in his column. "A 10-year time frame is fair. It is a lot of time—more than enough, actually. It gives a leader ample opportunity to put his or her priorities in place. Then fatigue tends to set in and the time-for-change chorus grows."

The Prime Minister's Office declined to offer a comment for this article. In a scrum on Parliament Hill, Trudeau dismissed Downe's comments.

"Oh Percy, yeah. How's he doing?" the prime minister asked, to which a reporter indicated that he wants Trudeau to resign.

"Oh well, ... I wish him all the best in the work that he's doing," said Trudeau with a smile on his face, before heading into the House.

According to polling aggregator 338Canada.com, if an election were to happen now, the Conservatives would win 41 per cent of the vote, the Liberals 27 per cent, the NDP 18 per cent, the Bloc Québécois seven per cent, the Greens four per cent, and the People's Party three per cent. Under this scenario, the Conservatives would win a majority government.

Meanwhile, in addition to the drop in the polls, Liberal MPs and insiders are also concerned that the party has been losing popular vote support in general elections since 2015, and formed government in the last two elections with the lowest percentage of votes in Canadian history. In 2015, the Trudeau Liberals won a majority government with 39.5 per cent, or 6.9 million votes. The Conservatives won 31.9 per cent or 5.6 million; the NDP 19.7 per cent or 3.4 million, the Bloc Québécois 4.7 per cent or 821,144 votes and the Greens carried 3.4 per cent or 602,933 votes.

In 2019, the Liberals were re-elected with a minority government with 33.1 per cent or six million votes; the Conservatives 34.3 per cent or 6.2 million votes; the NDP 16 per cent or 2.9 million; the Bloc Québécois 7.6 per cent or 1.3 million; the Greens 6.5 per cent or 1.1 million and the PPC 1.6 per cent or 294,092 votes.

In 2021, the Liberals won 5.5 million or 32.6 per cent of

the votes; the Conservatives 5.7 million or 33.7 per cent; the NDP three million or 17.8 per cent; the Bloc Québécois 1.3 million or 7.7 million; the Greens 396,988 or 2.3 per cent; and the People's Party of Canada 840,993 or 4.9 per cent of the votes.

The Trudeau Liberals won the last two elections with the lowest popular vote in Canadian political history by only 32.6 per cent and 33.1 per cent, respectively. And prior to that, the lowest margin was when the Joe Clark Progressive Conservatives won a minority government with 35.9 per cent of the votes in 1979.

Former senior Liberals and caucus members have been concerned that if the Liberal popular vote slips even slightly in the next election, they will lose government.

"Our vote total keeps shrinking, and from a political point of view, that's the end of the line," said the former senior Liberal. "It's problematic. Very problematic. If this continued, you start looking at [Michael] Ignatieff-type numbers if this doesn't start turning around quick," said the source, referring to the 2011 election, when the party ended up in third place for the first time.

Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, said that with the plunging polling numbers to expect more high profile Liberals to speak up about change in leadership for the next election. He pointed out that when Trudeau became party leader in 2013, he took pride in bringing generational change to the party, and veteran Liberals were systematically pushed out from influential positions within the party and caucus.

A key step in that direction was to drop veteran Liberals in the Red Chamber from the national caucus in 2014, and since 2015, Trudeau has appointed only Independent Senators. Downe now caucuses with Canadian Senators Group because the Liberal group no longer exists. So, Bricker said that some of the Liberals who may speak up about a change in leadership could be the ones who have served in various senior positions in the party in the past, but were let go after the prime minister came to power.

"A sympathetic ear is going to get harder to find, people who before—because of the authority of the government and the position that Trudeau was in—would remain silent because they didn't want to get on the wrong side of things, are now going to start popping up now," said Bricker. "Percy Downe is just one, the other ones are going to start popping up, and this particular Liberal administration is not one that feels itself particularly aligned with the old Liberal brand, or the people who used to be the Liberal Party in Canada. So those Liberals who have been pushed out by the Trudeau loyalists, they're going to be the ones who are going to start popping up."

A senior Liberal who spoke on a not-for-attribution basis to *The Hill Times* said that the low polling numbers for the Liberals are making party insiders and MPs nervous. The speculation about a potential change in leadership has been going on since 2021, and it intensified with dropping polling numbers in the last few months. This source said that Downe stated publicly what the party insiders have been chatting about privately.

"Before, people would discuss it, but it wasn't as open," said the source. "But when something like this comes out in the open, obviously, it does have an impact. The polling numbers that we have now are very alarming."

Frank Graves, CEO of Ekos Research, said he's not surprised that Liberals are worried about the dramatic drop in their popularity. He said the Liberals are experiencing regime fatigue, and the Conservatives are ahead by comfortable double-digit margins, which is making the governing party members nervous. Graves said that one obvious potential solution is to change the leader, but it's not clear to him if this will address the issue.

"Is the change of leadership even the most important thing to do, or do [the Liberals] need to kind of present a clear and bolder vision that will convince Canadians that even though they are fatigued with some of the personalities and the leader, that if they do vote for them with this clear package, that they will be better off and the country will be better off?" said Graves. "So that's another option, which I think is probably a more promising avenue, but I don't know. I mean, it's, it's hardly surprising that there will be calls for a change of leadership."

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A rundown of Environment Minister Guilbeault's ministerial team

Continued from page 5

in the environment portfolio, and has been in place since.

Swift joined Guilbeault's then-burgeoning environment office after the 2021 election, starting as a special assistant for Ontario regional affairs. He was promoted to policy adviser at the start of this year. A former 2020-21 GreenPAC intern in McKenna's office as the then-Liberal MP for Ottawa Centre, Ont., Swift was subsequently hired as a special assistant for policy and parliamentary affairs to McKenna as then-infrastructure minister, where he worked for roughly eight months before moving to Guilbeault's team.

Hurley has similarly been working for Guilbeault since late 2021. Originally hired as a special assistant for Atlantic regional affairs, she was promoted to her current role at the start of this year. She's a former research associate with the Future of Marine Ecosystems Lab in Halifax, and a former youth host for Ocean School.

There's also senior advisers **Kurtis Layden**; **Jennifer Lash**, who's focused on outreach; and **Eddy Pérez**, who's focused on international affairs.



Kurtis Layden is a senior adviser. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Layden returned to the environment minister's office in October. A former assistant to then-Liberal MP **Matt DeCoursey** and Liberal MP **John Aldag**, Layden became an Atlantic regional adviser and assistant to the parliamentary secretary to then-environment minister McKenna in early 2019. He was promoted to policy and parliamentary affairs adviser after Wilkinson took over the portfolio following that year's election, and was bumped up to "senior" status in 2022. Layden exited the office at the end of 2022 to become director of policy to then-fisheries minister **Joyce Murray**, who was dropped from cabinet in the July shuffle.

Lash has been working for Guilbeault since the end of 2022, joining the minister's team after roughly five years as a principal with Sisu Consulting in British Columbia. She's also a former executive director of the Sisu Institute, and with the Living Oceans Society.

Pérez joined the environment office earlier this year, fresh from five years working for Climate Action Network Canada, most recently as international climate diplomacy director. Since 2020, he'd also been busy as a climate change and justice course lecturer at the Université de Montréal. Amongst other past experience, Pérez is an ex-communications and outreach intern with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

Change in Geneva, and was previously active with the NDP.

Elena Mitchell continues as operations director to Guilbeault, having been promoted to the role this past May. She began working for Guilbeault in 2020 during his time as then-heritage minister. Starting as an executive assistant, Mitchell worked her way up to Ontario regional adviser before following Guilbeault to the environment portfolio after the 2021 election, becoming a senior operations manager. Her past jobs include roughly two years spent as an administrative assistant in the deputy minister's office at Transport Canada.

Kelsey Lane is Atlantic regional affairs adviser to Guilbeault. She was a recent addition to the minister's team at the time of the shuffle in July, and is a former senior transportation co-ordinator with the Ecology Action Centre and past executive director of the Halifax Cycling Coalition.

Eric Amyot continues to cover the Quebec desk in Guilbeault's office, as he's done since being hired this past May. Before then, Amyot was a Quebec regional affairs adviser to then-housing, diversity, and inclusion minister **Ahmed Hussen**. He's also a former aide to Quebec Liberal MNA **Marwah Rizqy**.

Liam Olsen is regional affairs adviser for British Columbia and the Prairies. Recently elected president of the Young Liberals of Canada, Olsen first joined Guilbeault's office as executive assistant to the minister's chief of staff in January 2022. He's also an ex-constituency intern in Wilkinson's office as the Liberal MP for North Vancouver, B.C., a former senior fellow with the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, and a former part-time constituency assistant to new Citizens' Services Minister **Terry Beech** as the MP for Burnaby North-Seymour, B.C.



Liam Olsen covers the B.C. and Prairies regional desks. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Catherine Hu is now an assistant to both the operations and communications teams.

Oliver Anderson remains director of communications to Guilbeault, working closely with director of media outreach **Bruce Cheadle**, press secretary **Kaitlin Power**, and **Olivier Auger**, who's been promoted to communications adviser.

Anderson began working for Guilbeault at the start of 2022 after roughly six years working for the federal agriculture minister, starting as a communications adviser to then-minister **Lawrence MacAulay**—who was shuffled back into the portfolio in July—and ending as communications director to then-minister **Marie-Claude Bibeau**. Prior to joining MacAulay's team in early 2016, Anderson was manager of



Oliver Anderson is director of communications. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

engagement programs with United Way in Ottawa.

Cheadle has been working for the federal environment minister since April 2021, starting as a senior special adviser for communications to Wilkinson. A former Canadian Press reporter, Cheadle retired from a 30-year-long career in journalism at the start of 2017, and soon after became communications director to then-Treasury Board president **Scott Brison**, later doing the same for Brison's portfolio successor, **Joyce Murray**. He's also a former director of issues management to McKenna as then-infrastructure minister.



Kaitlin Power is press secretary to Minister Guilbeault. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Power has been Guilbeault's press secretary since the start of 2022, and before then worked as a communications adviser in his office as then-heritage minister starting in March 2021. She's also a former assistant to Public Services Minister **Jean-Yves Duclos** as the Liberal MP for Québec, Que.

Auger landed his first ministerial gig in January 2017, beginning as a digital communications adviser in **Mélanie Joly's** office as then-heritage minister. From 2018-2019, he worked off the Hill, largely as a public affairs adviser in the office of the Governor General of Canada. He returned after the 2019 election, becoming an assistant in Guilbeault's MP office, and joined Guilbeault's environment office this past spring as a special assistant for communications.

Kathleen Legault-Meek is director of parliamentary affairs. A former legislative assistant to then-senator **Dennis Dawson**, she's been working for Guilbeault since the start of 2020, beginning as a legislative assistant in his office as heritage minister.

She was later promoted to policy adviser there, and was promoted again to her current role when she followed Guilbeault to the environment portfolio after the 2021 election. Legault-Meek is also a former assistant to then-Liberal MP **Michel Picard** and Liberal MP **Steven MacKinnon**.

Gabriel Brunet continues as parliamentary affairs adviser. First hired as a special assistant for communications under then-minister Wilkinson in early 2021, he stepped in as press secretary during Guilbeault's transition into the portfolio at the end of that year, subsequently taking on his current role. Brunet is a former analyst with the general secretariat of the Centre de services scolaire de Montréal, and a former project manager with Mongeau Pellerin, among other past jobs.



Parliamentary affairs adviser Gabriel Brunet. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Sean Mitchell is now issues manager to Guilbeault. A former assistant to Liberal MP **Lloyd Longfield**, he's been working for the environment minister since August 2022, previously as a special assistant for policy and parliamentary affairs.



Issues manager Sean Mitchell. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Marie Froggatt continues as the minister's executive assistant as she's been since this past April. Her past experience includes time as executive assistant to the director general of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada's spectrum management operations branch.

Justin Kho is executive assistant to the chief of staff, now Kippen. He joined Guilbeault's office not long before the July shuffle and is also a former part-time assistant to Longfield, among other past roles.

Christy-Ann Ferguson continues as Guilbeault's ministerial driver.

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Books & Big Ideas

‘My business for a long time was finding humour in every day’: a Q&A with comedian and author Rick Mercer

‘It’s absolutely true that the way we speak with one another in the House of Commons is not acceptable in any workplace, anywhere in the country. I’m a huge advocate for a webcam on every single desk, so you can log in during Question Period or any other debate and see if your Member of Parliament is participating in a respectful way, or if they are a boorish asshole that should be thrown out of the classroom,’ says Rick Mercer.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Canadian comedic stalwart Rick Mercer has won multiple awards for his television work including *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, *Made In Canada*, and *The Rick Mercer Report*, and has penned a number of bestselling books like *Talking to Canadians: A Memoir*, *Rick Mercer Final Report*, and *A Nation Worth Ranting About*.

This year, Mercer has a new book out, *The Road Years: A Memoir, Continued...* and spoke to *The Hill Times* about his career, his take on the tenor of politics in Canada today, and his adventures on the road delving into the lighter side of life in talking with Canadians.

You’ve written a number of books throughout your career. Can you walk us through what your new book is about, and your writing process?

“It’s harder than I thought it would be.



Comedian and author Rick Mercer’s new book *The Road Years: A Memoir, Continued*, which he wrote during the pandemic, covers everything from his early years to his work on *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*. Photograph courtesy of Michael Grajewski

“I was very fortunate that we had a lot of great adventures on the road, and met a lot of great people and had experiences that I never thought in a million years I would be able to have all of them back-to-back.

“There was a bit of an embarrassment of riches when it came to choosing what I would write about.

“It’s not really about me, it’s about my time on the road and some of the people I encountered because there were literally thousands of them.

“Some of them are ministers, some of them are athletes, some of them are regular folks who go to work every day.

What do you make of the tenor of political discussion in this country today?

“I can guarantee you someone has written that story before, and they thought that they were right then, and that it’s worse than it was before.

“There’s certain phrases being repeated: ‘is there too much power concentrated in Brian Mulroney’s office?’ The answer is ‘yes.’ And now Justin Trudeau has passed Stephen Harper, so these things just keep

getting worse, quite frankly, and eventually, they’re going to have to be at a tipping point.

“It’s absolutely true that the way we speak with one another in the House of Commons is not acceptable in any workplace, anywhere in the country.

“I’m a huge advocate for a webcam on every single desk, so you can log in during Question Period or any other debate and see if your Member of Parliament is participating in a respectful way, or if they are a boorish asshole that should be thrown out of the classroom.

“I think it would change everything, and the only reason they’re getting away with this is that there’s no one saying it.”

Many Canadians have watched your interviews with a number of prime ministers throughout the years. Do you cover some of those interactions in your new book?

“I talked about shooting with Stephen Harper, which was fairly controversial—if you can believe it or not—for a couple of reasons.

“One, nobody could believe that Stephen Harper was actually

going to do that, and he did it and it was controversial because he came across so well, and came across as personable.

“I like to think that I have very few skills, but one of them is that I can make someone look good, and I actually consider that part of my job.”

What would your advice be to people who need to guide this country through what the world is going through right now?

“I can’t even begin to speak to what it’s like being in any individual’s shoes, but I can armchair quarterback—but we all know armchair quarterbacks don’t know what it’s like to actually be in the position.”

“For someone like yourself, whose job it is to consume everything and anything that you can about these issues, it does get overwhelming.

“Of course, politicians are also in that boat, and I can tell you, it’s much better for your mental health when you’re on my side of the fence.”

Does there need to be a more softer side in explaining Canadian politics to people these days?

“There were elements of humour in the House of Commons that I grew up watching that drew me to politics. If you look at George Baker or John Crosbie: you had two, not only potential titans, but they were on opposing sides of the House, both from Newfoundland, lots of water under the bridge.

“No one questioned their intelligence—I can assure you of that—they were so quick on their feet, and their humour was so evident. And they remained friends.

“It was a different time when I was on the Hill. With *This Hour has 22 minutes* some things were planned in advance, but often we created on the fly.”

What would be your advice to aspiring journalists who cover politics, and is there anything else you are keeping an eye on?

“You have to keep your sense of humour. That doesn’t mean that it’s the funny side of climate change or any number of issues, and I know what it’s like. My business for a long time was finding humour in every day.”

“There are periods in our time, internationally and nationally, where there aren’t a lot of laughs.

“I had a lot of options about what to write about because we were on the road for a long time, and the lens that I looked at every single thing was whether it’s funny or not.

“I often just want to escape by reading something that’s fun or funny, and the options are few and far between.”

“So that’s all I wanted to do was write a book that people would find enjoyable and funny and encapsulate the entire country.”

The Road Years: A Memoir, Continued, by Rick Mercer, Penguin Random House, 304 pp., \$27.95

mlapointe@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Comedian Rick Mercer, left, with the late Neil Peart, the iconic drummer for the illustrious Canadian band Rush. Photograph courtesy of Rick Mercer



Stuart Benson

Party Central

Diva Renée Fleming dazzles at NAC 25th Anniversary Gala

National Arts Centre raised over \$500,000 for youth arts education at its annual gala on Nov. 1.

The National Arts Centre celebrated the 25th anniversary of its annual gala on Nov. 1 with a night at the opera, bringing together Ottawa's arts and philanthropic circles to raise more than half a million dollars to support arts education in Canada.

Arriving just before 5 p.m., **Party Central** assumed his post along the red carpet in the Canal Foyer for the gala's VIPs who had been invited to a special pre-show dinner ahead of the night's headline performance from American soprano **Renée Fleming**.

Party Central spotted several of the NAC's board of directors strutting their black-tie best down the crimson catwalk, including NAC president and CEO **Christopher Deacon**; **Guy Pratte**, board of trustees chair, and his wife **Mary**; trustee **Yasmine Laroche**; **Gail Asper**, chair of The Asper Foundation; StrategyCorps' **Lisa Samson** alongside her journalist/podcaster husband **Paul Wells**; **Shannon Day-Newman**, Laureate Circle Ottawa board of directors chair, and her husband **Don Newman**, retired CBC senior parliamentary editor; and **Adrian Burns**, former chair of the NAC board of trustees alongside her husband, **Greg Kane**. Burns stepped down from her role on the board last year, and 2022's gala was in her honour, raising \$1-million for the newly created Adrian Burns Fund for Women Leaders in the Performing Arts.

Speaking of fundraising, the NAC Foundation's new CEO, **Juniper Locilento**, and her predecessor **Jayne Watson**, who retired last year, were also in attendance, as well as **Susan Glass**, foundation board chair, and her husband **Arni Thorsteinson**, and board members **Tom and Susan D'Aquino**, **Robert Tennant**, and **Diane Obam**.

This year's gala honoured foundation super donors **Earle and Janice O'Born**, a former foundation board chair. The couple are responsible for the single largest contribution in NAC history of \$10-million, and the NAC's O'Born room is also named after them.

As those VIPs made their way upstairs to the NAC's Canada Room for a two-course dinner—Arctic char and seaweed-crust yellowfin tuna in a sea buckthorn emulsion and Acadian sturgeon caviar, followed by forest mushroom-spiced P.E.I. Beef tenderloin medallion with Juniper Farms' vegetables and a birch-infused rosemary jus—**Party Central** took his own dinner break in the NAC greenroom, dining on a turkey sandwich and a Pepsi.

As the remainder of the gala attendees began to arrive for the pre-concert reception just before 6:30 p.m., **Party Central**

made his way back into the main foyer and was allowed access to the "High Note" reception, managing to scrounge a couple of Alberta Angus beef balls and samosas before showtime.

Once attendees and **Party Central** took their seats inside Southam Hall, the NAC orchestra, led by maestro **Alexander Shelley**, the NAC's orchestra music director, captured the crowds' attention with a rousing rendition of Georges Bizet's *Toreadors* from *Carmen* to hail the arrival of the diva Fleming. Appearing at the NAC for the second time since 2002, and in her first reunion with the NAC orchestra since 2013, Fleming treated the audience to a selection of works from **George Frideric Handel's oratorio Alexander Balus**; **Gabriel Fauré's Mandoline, Op. 58, No. 1**; and **Jules Massenet's Allons! ... Adieu, notre petite table** from his opera *Manon*.

After a brief intermission, Fleming returned to the stage in a sparkling orange gown with a slightly more contemporary set list, performing *I Want Magic* from André Previn's opera *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *You'll Never Walk Alone* from the musical *Carousel*. **Party Central** will admit there was a slight sense of nervous trepidation when Fleming encouraged a singalong before she began her performance of *I Could Have Danced All Night* from *My Fair Lady*, but that feeling quickly evaporated as this reporter had clearly underestimated how many trained singers were in attendance.

After the performance, **Party Central** was also welcomed up to the VIP afterparty; however, this reporter must apologize that any shred of journalistic professionalism may have fallen to the wayside upon first sight of the dessert trays. While there were undoubtedly plenty of interesting and influential people in attendance, **Party Central** was far more concerned with the liquid nitrogen ice cream sundaes, crêpes with brandy-flamed peaches and brown sugar, "snowshoe" pastries—think mini Beaver-tails—topped with cinnamon sugar, candied bacon and whipped cream, or the hundreds of dessert shooter verrines in s'mores, strawberries and crème, and tiramisu varieties. There was also a very tasty cherry brandy martini with a hopefully edible floating NAC Gala logo.

After a quarter century in support of arts education, the NAC Gala's \$500,000 fundraising total for this year brought the event's lifetime philanthropic total to over \$15-million since 1987. That money benefits the National Youth and Education Trust by providing much-needed resources for the National Arts Centre's youth and education programming all across the country. Established by the NAC Foundation in 2001, the Trust is the primary resource for youth and education funding at the NAC.

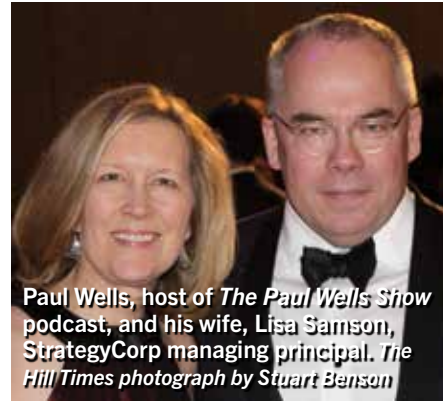
sbenson@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Maestro Alexander Shelley leads the NAC orchestra at the 2023 NAC Gala on Nov. 1. Photograph courtesy of the NAC



Guy Pratte, left, NAC board of trustees' chair, and his wife Mary. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



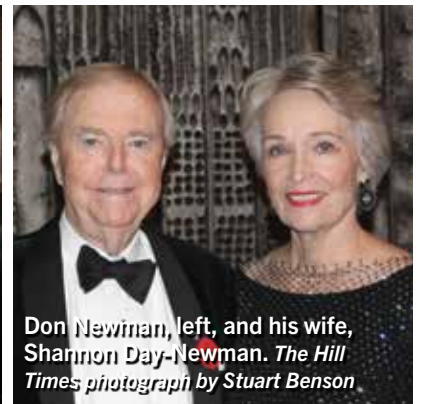
Paul Wells, host of *The Paul Wells Show* podcast, and his wife, Lisa Samson, StrategyCorp managing principal. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Soprano Renée Fleming and the NAC orchestra, led by maestro Alexander Shelley, receives one of four standing ovations. Photograph courtesy of the NAC



Greg Kane, left, Adrian Burns, former chair of the NAC board of trustees, Shannon Day-Newman, Laureate Circle Ottawa board of directors chair, Don Newman, retired former CBC senior parliamentary editor. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Don Newman, left, and his wife, Shannon Day-Newman. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Soprano Renée Fleming performs alongside the NAC orchestra led by Maestro Alexander Shelley. Photograph courtesy of the NAC



The gala afterparty featured plenty of sweet treats including these s'mores shooters. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



The NAC Gala afterparty featured cocktail was a cherry brandy martini, complete with edible logo. Or at least Party Central hopes it was edible. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Greg Kane, left, Adrian Burns, and RBC's Marjolaine Hudon. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Kathryn Tremblay, left, CEO and cofounder of Altis Recruitment; French Ambassador Michel Miraillet and Marjolaine Hudon. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Event VIPs enjoyed a private pre-show reception. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson

Opinion

Joe Maingot wrote the book on parliamentary privilege, and he was my lifelong friend

Joe Maingot became one of the country's leading experts on parliamentary privilege, was well-known in the Hill community, and kept active all his life. In July 28, 2022, the 91-year-old cycled from his Sandy Hill home to *The Hill Times'* downtown newsroom to say hello.

Ian Morrison

Opinion



I first met Joseph Maingot during a public hearing of the Senate's Special Committee on Poverty on Dec. 4, 1969, chaired by Senator David Croll. I was a young program co-ordinator for the Frontier College, and Joe showed up because he had served as a college labourer-teacher in Cassiar, B.C. He earned his way through Osgoode Hall Law School by working at the College's Toronto office basement as a shipper.

From that day on, Joe and I became lifelong friends. As law clerk and parliamentary counsel



In 2012, Joe Maingot returned to Iqaluit to visit the community where he'd served as the first postmaster in 1956-57. Samantha Dawson, writing in the *Nunatsiaq News*, reported that 'Maingot remembers dodging pools of water while travelling across the sea ice in a qamutik attached to 10 dogs in the middle of the summer 56 years ago.' Photograph courtesy of Samantha Dawson/*Nunatsiaq News*

to the House of Commons, he often facilitated my access to parliamentarians. He was friendly with most—if not all—Members of the House, including ministers, then-prime minister Pierre Trudeau, and opposition party leaders.

Later, I realized that in addition to his legal and drafting services to MPs, Joe had become a noted expert on parliamentary procedure not just in Canada, but also throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.

At numerous Speakers' receptions, I realized that my friend was a respected scholar, contributing to the efficient and orderly functioning of Parliament through his noted books. The first was *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, (Butterworths, first edition, 1982), which John Holtby, writing in the autumn 1983 edition of the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*,

described "as an important and long-awaited event for those interested in matters related to that much-used and abused parliamentary word 'privilege'.... For parliamentarians, 'privilege' can be equated with 'freedom'—freedom to speak without fear of being answerable to the courts for words spoken in the House."

By the time the book was published, Joe had been appointed to the Law Reform Commission of Canada. His encyclopaedic mind then generated *Politicians Above the Law* (2010) and *Parliamentary Immunity in Canada* (Lexis Nexis, 2016). A new edition, retitled *Politicians Above the Law and the Rule of Law*, was issued in 2022, and he was awaiting print copies from his publisher in France at the time of his death.

Among his many volunteer commitments, the Inter-Parlia-

mentary Union sent him to various developing countries, including Kyrgyzstan, Yemen, and East Timor to advise on parliamentary matters, and as an observer to the Orange Revolution election in Ukraine in 2010. He also volunteered in South America, and the Canadian North for Development and Peace.

Just five months ago, on May 30, my friend Erin O'Toole, in a debate regarding foreign interference with parliamentarians, stood in the House and quoted from page 235 of the second edition of Joe's book: "Any attempt by improper means to influence or obstruct a Member in his or her parliamentary work may constitute contempt." Joe's voice lives on!

Much to my surprise, Joe married my partner Pauline Couture's mother Simone in 1998—to become my step-father-in-law.

This new relationship drew us even closer together, and led to pleasant times with his children and Pauline's siblings.

Following Joe's travels seemed like a full-time job. In 2012, Joe showed up in Iqaluit to re-connect with that community where he had served as the first postmaster in 1957. Samantha Dawson, writing in the July 26 edition of the *Nunatsiaq News*, reported that "Joseph Maingot remembers dodging pools of water while travelling across the sea ice in a qamutik attached to 10 dogs in the middle of the summer 56 years ago."

"Maingot, now 81, was Iqaluit's first postmaster, working to save money for law school in Toronto, and was hired by the RCMP in 1956 and 1957 to run the post office, which was a little shack attached to the RCMP station.... The long hours of daylight didn't bother him, because as a student it gave him 'plenty of time to read', but there were kids playing outside as late as midnight or 1 a.m. he said.... Maingot is on his way to Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord."

In 2003, Joe walked 800 kilometres over the Camino de Santiago de Compostela route in Spain. He walked part of the Canterbury-to-Rome trail, and with his sons to Vimy Ridge to pay homage in 2007 to his father's service there. He played hockey and skied into his late 80s, and bicycled to church at least once in the last year of his life.

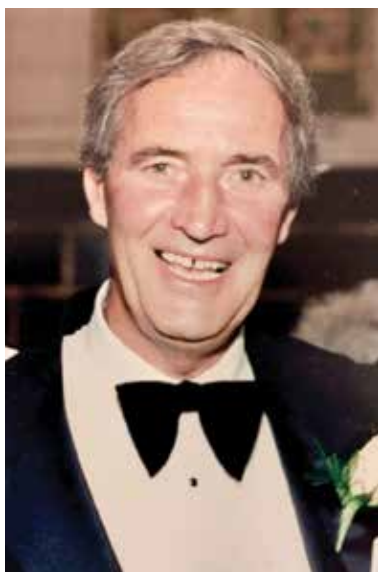
He attended the opening gala of the National Arts Centre in 1969 and never stopped supporting it, attending every event he could. He seemed unstoppable.

This remarkable life came to an end on Oct. 23, at the age of 92, from complications of surgery after a fall at his new home in Ottawa.

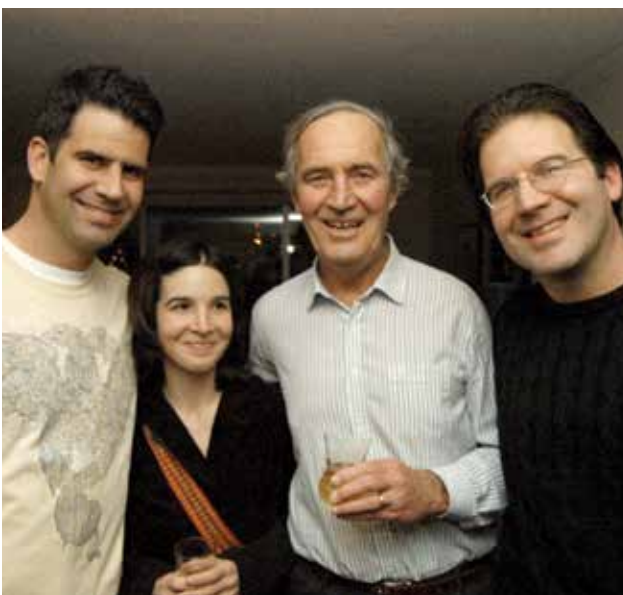
His funeral will take place at 2 p.m. on Nov. 17, 2023, at St. Joseph's, on 174 Wilbrod St. in Ottawa, the church where he was baptized in 1931 and married in 1998.

Ian Morrison is a founder of the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, and is Joseph Maingot's stepson-in-law.

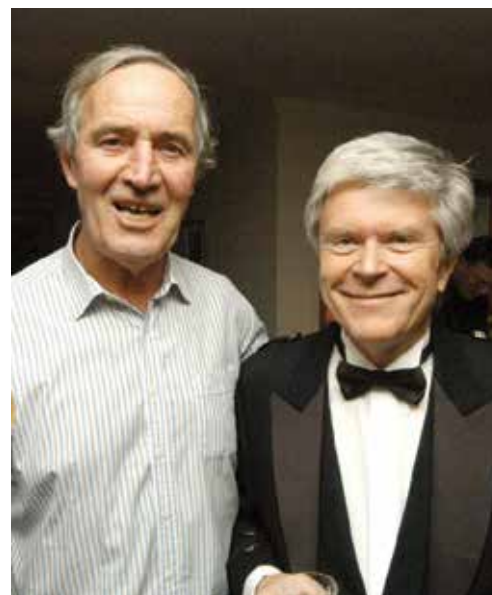
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Joe Maingot on his wedding day in August 1998. Photograph courtesy of Peter Maingot



Maingot, third left, with his children, Patrick, left, Albani, and Peter. Photograph courtesy of Claude L'atour



Maingot and Ian Morrison, his friend who became his son-in-law. Photograph courtesy of Joe Maingot's family



Maingot, 91, pictured in *The Hill Times'* newsroom on July 28, 2022. He rode his bike from his home in Sandy Hill to our downtown newsroom and picked up some books while he was here. *The Hill Times* photograph by Kate Malloy

India's High Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Verma to deliver remarks at the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations on Nov. 7

India's High Commissioner to Canada Sanjay Kumar Verma will deliver remarks at a lunch event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 11:30 a.m., ET. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



MONDAY, NOV. 6

House Sitting—The House will sit Nov. 6-10. It will break for one week (Nov. 13-17) and will resume sitting on Monday, Nov. 20, and will sit for four weeks (Nov. 20-Dec. 15). It's scheduled to return on Monday, Jan. 29, 2024.

#ChampionChildrenInEmergencies Reception—Results Canada hosts a parliamentary reception to draw attention to the urgent needs of children living in emergencies ahead of the Global Refugee Forum. This reception will centre the voices of refugee youth advocates with lived experience from the Refugee Education Council. Monday, Nov. 6, at 6 p.m. ET in Room 268, Valour Building, 151 Sparks St. Details online: resultscanada.ca. RSVP: gabriel@resultscanada.ca.

TUESDAY, NOV. 7

CBC President to Deliver Remarks—The Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal hosts a conversation in French with Catherine Tait, president and CEO of CBC/Radio-Canada, on "A World Without Radio-Canada." Tuesday, Nov. 7, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the DoubleTree by Hilton Montreal, 1255 Jeanne Mance St. Details online:

Indian High Commissioner to Deliver Remarks—India's High Commissioner to Canada Sanjay Kumar Verma will deliver remarks at a lunch event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Tuesday, Nov. 7, 11:30 a.m. ET at Sofitel Montréal, 1155 Sherbrooke St. W. Details online: corim.qc.ca.

Ministers Ng and Boissonnault Participate in Panel—International Trade Minister Mary Ng and Employment Minister Randy Boissonnault will take part in a panel discussion, "Manufacturing Canada's Future," part of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters' conference from Nov. 6-8. U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Cohen will also deliver

today's keynote. Tuesday, Nov. 7, at 1 p.m. ET at the Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr. Details online: cme-mec.ca.

Panel: 'An Immigration System for Canada's Future'—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts a lunch panel: "An Immigration System for Canada's Future: Perspectives on Where to Go From Here." Participants include Louise Baird, senior assistant deputy minister, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Tuesday, Nov. 7 at 12 p.m. ET in Suite 300, 67 Yonge St., Toronto. Details online: cdhowe.org.

Chief Statistician to Deliver Remarks—Carleton University hosts a fireside chat with Chief Statistician Anil Arora on the topic "The Ethical Use of Data for Public Good" exploring how public policy is informed by data, and what ethical considerations are made in the collection and use of data relating to Canadians. Tuesday, Nov. 7, at 5:30 p.m. in the Richcraft Building, Carleton University, 1125 Colonel By Dr. Details online: events.carleton.ca.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 8

Minister Khara and MPs at Canadian Caregiving Summit—Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities Minister Kamal Khara will deliver remarks at the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence's Canadian Caregiving Summit at 9 a.m. Then at 11:45 a.m., Parliamentary Secretary to the Employment Minister Irek Kusmierczyk, Conservative MP Anna Roberts, Bloc MP Luc Thériault, NDP MP Bonita Zarrillo and Green MP Mike Morrice will take part in a panel, "View from the hill: Championing care." Wednesday, Nov. 8, at the Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr. Details online: canadiancaregivingsummit.ca.

Lecture: 'Federalism and the Climate Crisis'—McGill University hosts this year's Mallory Lecture: "Federalism and the Climate Crisis: Can

Climate Action and Intergovernmental Harmony Co-Exist?" University of British Columbia professor Kathryn Harrison will argue that heated federal-provincial conflicts reflect the fundamental incompatibility of climate change mitigation and economic reliance on fossil fuels. Canada thus faces a choice between two valued goals: intergovernmental harmony and climate action. Wednesday, Nov. 8 at 4 p.m. in the Billiards Room, 3450 Rue McTavish, Montreal. Details online: mcgill.ca.

IRPP's Fall Lecture—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts its 2023 Fall Lecture, featuring University of Toronto professor Akwasi Owusu-Bempah, co-author of the 2023 book *Waiting to Inhale: Cannabis Legalization and the Fight for Racial Justice*. Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 4:30 p.m. at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St. Details online: irpp.org.

Peter Wallace and Paul Wells on Policymakers—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts the Tom Kierans Lecture 2023. Peter Wallace, former secretary of the Treasury Board of Canada, and columnist Paul Wells will discuss "The Divide Between Policymakers and Those They Serve." Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 5:30 p.m. at 67 Yonge St. Suite 300. Details online: cdhowe.org.

Vimy Gala—The Conference of Defence Associations Institute hosts its Vimy Gala where Jacqueline O'Neill, Canada's first Ambassador for Women, Peace, and Security, will receive the 2023 Vimy Award for her contributions to Canadian security and defence, and to the promotion and preservation of Canadian democratic values. Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 6 p.m. at the War Museum, 1 Vimy Pl. Details online: cdainstitute.ca.

MPs Erskine-Smith and Naqvi to Take Part in Debate—Liberal MPs Nathaniel Erskine-Smith and Yasir Naqvi will join their fellow candidates

vying for the leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party for the fourth in a series of debates, happening in Ottawa. Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 7 p.m. ET at 1385 Woodroffe Ave. The results of the ranked ballots will be announced on Dec. 2. Details online: ontarioliberal.ca.

THURSDAY, NOV. 9

Conference: 'Building Momentum Toward Net Zero'—Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault and Energy and Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson will take part in the "Building Momentum Toward Net Zero" conference hosted by the Net-Zero Advisory Body and the Canadian Climate Institute. Other participants include Geoffrey R. Pyatt, assistant secretary for Energy Resources, U.S. Department of State; and Corinne Le Quééré, chair, High Council for Climate, France. Thursday, Nov. 9, 8:30 a.m., in the Trillium Ballroom, Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr., Ottawa. Register at climateinstitute.ca.

Keynote: 'Positioning Canada For Global Success'—The Canadian Club of Ottawa hosts a lunch event, "Positioning Canada For Global Success," with Marc Parent, president and CEO of CAE Inc., for a discussion on the importance of championing domestic innovation and private sector collaboration in creating global leaders and advancing Canada's international influence. Thursday, Nov. 2, 11:30 a.m., Fairmont Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Tickets available through canadianclubottawa.ca.

MONDAY, NOV. 13—WEDNESDAY, NOV. 15

Research Summit on Healthy Aging—The 2023 Royal Society of Canada's G7 Research Summit on Healthy Aging will take place from Nov. 13-15. Scholars from across disciplines will take a global view through a Canadian lens to explore new paradigms of preventive care, new treatments including gene editing, and built environments that facilitate healthy aging for Canadians in all stages of life. Speakers to be announced. This event will take place at Marriott on the Falls, 6755 Fallsview Blvd, Niagara Falls. Details online.

TUESDAY, NOV. 14

Pierre Karl Péladeau to Deliver Remarks—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts a lunch event with Pierre Karl Péladeau, president and CEO of Quebecor, who will deliver remarks on "How Canada is Becoming a Global Leader in Telecom Competition." Tuesday, Nov. 14, 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET, Fairmont Royal York, Toronto. Tickets available at canadianclub.org.

Pearson Progressive Leadership Awards Gala—Former Conservative cabinet minister Lisa Raitt will host this year's Pearson Progressive Leadership Awards Gala. This event recognizes outstanding progressive leaders in various sectors of our society including business, labour, academia, civil society and politics who make a difference in their fields and beyond. Tuesday, Nov. 14, 6 p.m. ET, One King West, 1 King St W, Toronto. Contact: info@thepearsoncentre.ca.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 15

CAPP CEO Delivers Remarks—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts

Lisa Baiton, president and CEO of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, who will deliver remarks on "Canada's Strength as a Global Leader in Responsible Oil and Natural Gas Development." Wednesday, Nov. 15, 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET. Ticket information at canadianclub.org.

THURSDAY, NOV. 16

Webinar: '(Mis)understanding Russia'—The Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History presents a webinar, "(Mis)understanding Russia: A Diplomat's Reflections," featuring Leigh Sarty, a former diplomat who spent the better part of his career dealing with Russia, including two postings at the Canadian Embassy in Moscow (1996-1999; 2012-2016). Thursday, Nov. 16, 4-6 p.m. ET, online. Register at billgrahamcentre.utoronto.ca.

AmCham Thanksgiving Dinner—U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Cohen will attend the American Chamber of Commerce in Canada's Thanksgiving Dinner. Thursday, Nov. 16, 6 p.m. ET, Arcadian Court, 401 Bay St., Toronto. Register at amcham-canada.ca.

FRIDAY, NOV. 17

Seminar: 'The Use of Legislative Time'—The Canadian Study of Parliament Group hosts a seminar, "The Use of Legislative Time," exploring procedural, practical, and philosophical questions about the use and regulation of parliamentary time, both in chamber and committee proceedings. Friday, Nov. 17, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET, Room 425, 180 Wellington St. Register via [Eventbrite](https://eventbrite).

Book Launch: *The Harris Legacy*—Conservative MP John Williamson will host the launch of Alister Campbell's new book, *The Harris Legacy*. Friday, Nov. 17, 6-8 p.m., Room 268, Valour Building, 155 Sparks St. Register at canadastrongandfree.network.

FRIDAY, NOV. 17—SATURDAY, NOV. 18

Canada Strong and Free Regional Networking Conference—The Canada Strong and Free Network hosts its Regional Networking Conference, an exchange of organizational best practices—not a discussion of public policy issues. This year's theme is "Sustaining Momentum." Conservatives from across Canada will dialogue and debate about the most important issues facing our country today. Nov. 17-18, at Red Deer College, 100 College Blvd, Red Deer, Alta. Register at canadastrongandfree.network.

SATURDAY, NOV. 18

MPs Erskine-Smith and Naqvi to Take Part in Debate—Liberal MPs Nathaniel Erskine-Smith and Yasir Naqvi will join their fellow candidates vying for the leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party for the final debate. The results of the ranked ballots will be announced on Dec. 2. Saturday, Nov. 18, 1 p.m. ET, Brampton. Details at ontarioliberal.ca.

MONDAY, NOV. 20

Book Launch—The Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History hosts the launch of former U.S. congressional staffer Rob Goodman's new book: *Not Here: Why American Democracy is Eroding and How Canada Can Protect Itself*. Monday, Nov. 20, 4-6 p.m. ET, Campbell Conference Facility, Munk School, 1 Devonshire Pl., Toronto. Register at billgrahamcentre.utoronto.ca.

TUESDAY, NOV. 21

Canadian Airports Council Reception—The Canadian Airports Council is hosting a reception on Nov. 21, at Social Restaurant and Lounge, 537 Sussex Dr., starting at 5 p.m. ET. RSVP to: CAC_RSVP@getproof.com

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