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THE HILL TIMES

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NEWS

Face supplant: minister recognition neither 'net positive nor negative' for Liberal election, leadership hopes, say politicos

BY STUART BENSON

The departure of Seamus O'Regan from the Liberals' front bench will only further erode party unity and efforts to quell dissent and dissatisfaction with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's leadership, say politicos. But whether or not there is a major shakeup in cabinet or even if Trudeau were to leave his post, recent polling by Abacus Data suggests that most Canadians couldn't pick some of the most prominent cabinet members out of a lineup—much less care for the in and outs of cabinet or the

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Can you name all of these people? According to a recent survey by Abacus Data, when shown an image only 39 per cent of Canadians could name Chrystia Freeland, top left, 20 per cent knew Mélanie Joly, 19 per cent got Anita Anand, seven per cent knew Mark Carney, bottom left, and four per cent picked out either Sean Fraser and Dominic LeBlanc. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and Sam Garcia

NEWS

Presidential ticket upheavals present murky prospects for 2026 review of North American trade deal

BY NEIL MOSS

With United States Vice-President Kamala Harris likely to take top spot on the Democratic presidential ballot, and firebrand Senator J.D. Vance joining former president Donald Trump's Republican ticket, their history of opposing Canada's North American trade pact raises ques-

tions over how their respective administrations may handle the review.

After weeks of mounting pressure to end his re-election bid due to concerns about his age and cognitive acumen, U.S. President Joe Biden announced in a July 21 post on X that he was departing the

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NEWS

Minister Anandasangaree says reconciliation still 'key pillar' of Liberal plan following charged AFN reception

BY STUART BENSON

A year after assuming the role from his well-respected predecessor, the honeymoon period is over for Crown-In-

igenous Relations Minister Gary Anandasangaree, who received his share of lumps from attendees at this month's

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Christina Leadlay

Heard On The Hill

Liberal MP Fisher to host fundraising ‘toast’ for outgoing Halifax mayor and ex-MP Mike Savage



Outgoing Halifax Mayor Mike Savage, left, will be honoured at an event hosted by Liberal MP Darren Fisher in Dartmouth, N.S., on July 25. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

It's a toast, and it's a fundraiser. Just don't call it a roast.

The Liberal riding association in Dartmouth-Cole Harbour, N.S., is hosting “an evening of heartfelt toasts” in honour of outgoing Halifax Mayor **Mike Savage** on July 25.

“This evening is all about honouring Mike's incredible contributions to our community with a heartfelt toast, not a roast,” Liberal MP **Darren Fisher** posted on Facebook on June 27, promising “good food and good friends,” “heartfelt stories and laughs.”

So it's not a roast, it's a friendly “toast,” but it's also a chance to raise funds for the riding association. Interesting.

Savage, 63, sat in the House of Commons as the Liberal MP for Dartmouth-Cole Harbour from 2004 until 2011 when he lost his seat to the NDP's **Rob-**



Three-term Liberal MP Andy Fillmore is in the running to replace Savage as Halifax mayor. *Photograph courtesy andyfillmore.ca*

ert Chisholm. In October 2012, Savage was elected mayor of Halifax, and was re-elected in 2016 and in 2020. He announced this past February he would not seek a fourth mandate.

“Twelve years is long enough. It's time for me to plan for life after being mayor,” Savage said in announcing his decision on Feb. 13. “I don't know what that will be, but I know there is something else.”

The event will take place July 25 at the Mic Mac Aquatic Club in Dartmouth, N.S.

Meanwhile, **Andy Fillmore**, the three-term Liberal MP for Halifax—just across the harbour from Dartmouth—announced on July 3 that he is officially running to replace Savage as Halifax's mayor.

While he announced on June 17 that he would be resigning his seat and not returning to the Hill after the summer break, Fillmore hasn't made it official, and still appears on the House of Commons website as the current MP.

As of July 18, nine people were registered to run for mayor. Election day is Oct. 19.

New interim spy chief named

Public Safety Minister **Dominic LeBlanc** has handed the reins of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to **Vanessa Lloyd**—at least for the time being.

In a July 19 press release, LeBlanc named Lloyd as the interim CSIS director, effective July 20,

following **David Vigneault's** abrupt retirement earlier this month after seven years on the job.

Lloyd's term is for six months, or whenever a new, permanent director is named. A CSIS fixture since 1998, Lloyd “has taken on numerous challenges within the organization, including as CSIS' first chief transformation officer in charge of an ambitious agenda to equip CSIS as a forward-leaning intelligence service better able to respond to current and future threats,” the release said. Lloyd's most-recent role with the agency was as deputy director of operations, “responsible for directing CSIS' human intelligence collection, intelligence analysis, security screening and threat reduction efforts.”

Tory MP Lianne Rood named 2024 Produce Champion

Conservative MP **Lianne Rood** called it a “great honour” to be tapped as the “2024 Produce Champion” by the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) earlier this month.

The annual award goes to a parliamentarian who's “been supportive of the produce industry and executive at bringing industry issues to the forefront on Parliament Hill,” reads a July 9 CPMA press release.

“Rood has been actively engaged in issues important to the fresh fruit and vegetable sector and a strong voice holding the government accountable to supporting

issues important to our sector,” CPMA president **Ron Lemaire** said in the release.

First elected in 2019 in the Ontario riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, Rood has sat on the House Agriculture Committee since 2020.

“I come from a multigenerational produce farming family, and I understand the issues that are important to the success of the Canadian produce industry. This is something I am passionate about, and I will continue to champion Canadian agriculture through my role in Parliament,” Rood posted on X that same day.

Tom Mulcair gets Corporate Knights award

Former federal NDP leader **Tom Mulcair** received Corporate Knights' 2024 Lifetime Award of Distinction at a ceremony in Toronto to late last month.

The academic and columnist said he was “truly honoured” in a July 27 post on X.

The award recognizes how the ex-Quebec politician's “work changed the way government thinks about sustainable development,” according to a post from Corporate Knights, a media firm focused on advancing a sustainable economy.

“The distance between what politicians say about the environment and what they do is sometimes enormous,” said Mulcair in a video of his acceptance speech posted on YouTube. “I found it more than a little bit ironic that in a recent budget bill, the government proposed the creation of the offence of greenwashing for companies that don't do what they say on the environment.”

Home of longest-serving PCO clerk is for sale

For just \$5.9-million you can own a small hotel that's big on history in what's recently been touted as one of Canada's most liveable communities.

McGee's Inn at 185 Daly Ave. in Ottawa's Sandy Hill neighbourhood has been for sale for more than nine months now.

Since 1984, it's been a 14-room hotel—currently run by the Armstrong family—but the property

was first built as a family home for **John McGee** in 1886.

At the time, McGee—brother of **Thomas D'Arcy McGee**, one of the fathers of Confederation who was assassinated on Sparks Street in 1868—was clerk of the Privy Council, having been appointed four years earlier by then-prime minister **John A. Macdonald**. John McGee and his wife **Elizabeth Crotty** raised nine children on Daly Avenue, and remained there for 30 years, according to the McGee's Inn website. McGee would go on to be Canada's longest-serving PCO clerk from 1882 to 1907.

The 8,500-square foot fully furnished building doesn't have a unique heritage designation, but is in a Heritage Conservation District, according to **Linda Hoad**, vice-president of Operations at Heritage Ottawa.

“It is a Category 1, the highest category [...] considered to be contributing and important to maintaining the overall character of the Heritage Conservation District,” she told HOH on July 18. Hoad noted that owners of property in such provincially designated districts are expected to maintain the heritage attributes of a building's architecture, like windows, stone or brickwork, and porches.

“This building has obviously been very well maintained, which is excellent,” she said, adding that “Heritage Ottawa would want to see the building maintained in use.”

“A lot of heritage buildings have been converted to office use, but I am not sure that would be permitted here,” said Hoad, noting Daly Avenue's residential zoning. “It certainly doesn't have to be a hotel. It could be apartments, condos. Any residential use.”

Earlier this month, realtor Re/Max's 2024 Liveability Report listed Sandy Hill among the top 10 list of such neighbourhoods in Canada. While it conceded that “liveability” was subjective, the report defined the term as “the qualities that give each homeowner the true satisfaction of living in their neighbourhood, such as access to affordable homes, green space, restaurants, entertainment or other amenities.”

Curiously, the report overlooks Sandy Hill's heritage which includes having been the community of choice for three prime ministers, six fathers of Confederation, and Canada's first woman Senator.

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The Hill Times



The house at 185 Daly Ave. was built for Canada's longest-serving Privy Council clerk in 1886. *Screenshot courtesy of realtor.ca*



Donald Trump told the crowd at the Republican National Convention last week that he was alive on stage 'only by the grace of almighty God.' Photograph courtesy Gage Skidmore/ Flickr

Trump and the last stand of the American Christians

According to a 2023 survey, 87 per cent of Americans who identify as Republicans said they believe in God. Only 66 per cent of Democratic voters did.

Gwynne Dyer

Global Affairs



LONDON, U.K.—The past week has been a roller-coaster ride for Donald Trump.

First he's the target of an assassination attempt. However, that makes him God's Chosen One because he survived, and it looks like the presidency is in the bag because Joe Biden can't even finish his sentences. But then Biden quits, and suddenly Trump is the old white guy, up against an opponent who's 20 years younger.

Religion has played a big part in Trump's rise, although he is not

religious himself. That's why he told the crowd at the Republican National Convention that "I stand before you only by the grace of almighty God."

Trump was claiming that God is on his side because he must win the "Christian" vote. The Republican Party used to be a fairly broad church, but these days its core support comes from a particular brand of American Christians who are very visible, but not as numerous as they seem.

These Protestant "evangelical" Christians have taken to calling themselves Christian Nationalists, and they can be counted on to vote Republican no matter what. However, there are only enough of them to put Trump back in the White House if a lot of other Americans don't vote at all.

In effect, the Republicans have now become the local version of the Party of God. The numbers tell the tale: 87 per cent of Americans who identified as Republicans in a survey last year said they believe in God. Only 66 per cent of Democratic voters did.

This does not necessarily imply that evangelical Republicans really think Trump is one of their own. They know that he has been married three times, boasts about groping women, and was convicted by a jury of sexually abusing and defaming journalist E. Jean Carroll.

Trump is famously "transactional" in both his personal life and his political behaviour. (The old-fashioned word for this is "unprincipled.") However, evangelical Christians are quite capable of being transactional, too: they'll

“**There's no grounds for complaint about Trump pretending to pray, and his audience pretending to believe that he really means it. It's no shabbier than a lot of other political deals.**”

get on Trump's bus if it's going in the direction they want.

There's no grounds for complaint about Trump pretending to pray, and his audience pretending to believe that he really means it. It's no shabbier than a lot of other political deals. But it probably won't be enough now that Trump doesn't have a tragically diminished opponent like Biden because American Christianity is in retreat.

Almost every country or region used to have its own version of religious belief, and if that's where you were born, that was what you believed. After all, everybody else around you seemed to believe it, so it must be true.

But then came mass education and mass media, and people became aware of the wider world around them. There are half a dozen big religions, and lots of smaller ones. At best only one of them can be right. Maybe none of them are. And why should it be the one my grandparents believed?

For most of the West—and also for most of East Asia—the old beliefs are no longer normal. There are still many believers, and most people are happy to continue the traditional religious rites of passage like marriages and funerals. Likewise, the ancient seasonal festivals like Christmas and Chinese New Year. But the religious core has evaporated.

In the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Australia, only around 30 per cent of the population see themselves as religious. In Japan, South Korea, and China, only about 15 per cent do. Moreover, the trend line is downward in every case.

In the midst of this, the United States has seemed the great exception: a developed country in which religion still dominates in public life. But it's really more of a grand illusion because the rot—that's what it is—set in quite a while ago.

In 2001, a Gallup poll reported that 90 per cent of Americans believed in God. In another poll taken last year, only 74 per cent did. That's a drop of almost exactly one per cent per year, which is what you might call an inexorable trend.

It's inexorable because it is driven almost entirely by generational turnover. Older Americans are not losing their faith; their children are just not buying into it. The 2023 version of the same poll revealed that among 18-to-34-year-old Americans, only 59 per cent believe in God.

The U.S. is a lot less different than it thinks it is. The Heartland will remain true to the old ways for a while longer, but most Americans live within a few hours' drive of the East or West Coasts, and that puts them in the modern time zone.

Trump cannot rely on the Christian vote alone to bring him victory. If younger Americans vote in large numbers, his fake religiosity is political poison.

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

The Hill Times

News

Face supplant: minister recognition neither 'net positive nor negative' for Liberal election, leadership hopes, say politicians

The people who matter already know the names, faces, and birthdays of every cabinet member, regardless of leadership aspirations, says Yaroslav Baran.

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pre-machinations of a potential leadership race.

According to Abacus' survey of nearly 2,000 Canadians released on July 15, 94 per cent of respondents recognized photos of Trudeau (Papineau, Que.), 84 per cent knew NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.), and 66 per cent recognized Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.). Of those who recognized Poilievre, 44 per cent had a positive view of him, with 43 per cent holding a negative impression, a +1 net favourability rating, compared to Trudeau's -35 rating.

Of the five cabinet ministers Abacus asked respondents to

identify—Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.), Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.), Treasury Board President Anita Anand (Oakville, Ont.), Housing Minister Sean Fraser (Central Nova, N.S.), and Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.)—as well as consistently rumoured candidate former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, none came close to 50 per cent recognition, with the men failing to break into double digits.

While Freeland is the most recognizable by far, only 39 per cent of respondents could identify her, followed by Joly at 20 per cent, Anand at 19 per cent, Carney with seven per cent, and Fraser and LeBlanc tied at four per cent. For current Liberal supporters, recognition is similar for Freeland (39 per cent), lower for Anita Anand (14 per cent), and higher for Joly (26 per cent), Carney (10 per cent), Fraser (eight per cent), and LeBlanc (seven per cent).

Yaroslav Baran, co-founder of the Pendulum Group and a former party spokesperson during the federal Conservative's 2022 leadership race, said he wasn't surprised by the polling numbers, and doesn't believe the lack of

familiarity is either "a net positive or negative."

"During peacetime, the vast majority of people do not pay attention to politics other than peripherally, and they tune in more during elections," Baran said, noting that most likely explains the greater recognition for Singh than Poilievre.

"Voters have not gone through one or several election cycles watching things like leaders' debates which allow people to map names to faces," Baran explained, adding that between elections, a large portion of those who do pay attention aren't doing so by watching Question Period or a live press conference on CPAC.

"Radio is still king," Baran said, noting that the most-consumed political news content is drive-time radio programs like the CBC's *World Report* or *Your World Tonight*, formerly *The World at Six*, whose audiences regularly dwarf their televised counterparts.

While most Canadians may not be able to place Freeland or Fraser, Baran said that doesn't mean voters don't know there is a minister of finance or housing, and what their roles are—and that even those with high recognition may not have garnered it for necessarily positive reasons.

"The highest recognition was among the most news-making roles; it's a function of how much airtime they get," Baran said, adding that it would make sense that Freeland, as the face of the budget, and Joly as the face of Canada's foreign policy, would receive the highest scores, followed by Anand, a former minister of national defence and the procurement minister during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As for what those levels of recognition say about their chances in a potential leadership bid, Baran said the people who matter already know the names, faces, and birthdays of every cabinet member, regardless of leadership aspirations.

"The world to whom leadership race machinations matter are completely separate from the general population," Baran said. "The people paying attention to them now, and plotting to help or oppose them are already inside the Liberal bubble."

Considering those ministers and Carney already have massive national platforms at their disposal, Baran said he doesn't believe there is much that can be done at this juncture to improve those numbers either, and isn't convinced that would even be beneficial to a potential leadership run.



"It may not even be all that relevant for the general public to tune in much more if you're interested in running a leadership campaign," Baran said. "You want Liberal Party members to know you and like you, so you can start building your brand awareness—not just name recognition, but some sort of thematic resonance that is attached to your name is far more important than how many members of the general public can recognize your face."

Former Liberal ministerial staffer Greg MacEachern, now a founder and principal at KAN Strategies, said that from an advertising and marketing perspective, the Liberals may now be suffering from the consequences of an overreliance on Trudeau's personal brand without sufficient plans for what comes next.

"In advertising and marketing, the example that's often used is the Martha Stewart Brand, where her advisers realized that—at some point—she might not be around, and prior to her prison sentence, they had already begun to avoid using her image with the brand, which helped it survive," MacEachern explained.

Unlike the era of then-Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien, the current Liberal cabinet doesn't have the same strong personalities "waiting in the wings," MacEachern said, pointing to the likes of John Manley and Paul Martin, who represented the right flank of the party, alongside Sheila Copps and Lloyd Axworthy on the left.

However, those ministers also benefitted from the drastically different media landscape of the time, MacEachern said, noting that they only had to compete for airtime on one of two national newscasts that far more Canadians tuned into than they do today.

"Politicians just don't have that luxury, so it's gotten harder and harder to reach the eyes and ears



Pendulum Group's Yaroslav Baran says he isn't surprised by Canadians' lack of recognition of political players as most only really tune in during elections, and 'during peacetime' for those who are paying attention, 'radio is still king.' Photograph courtesy of Pendulum Group



Grit strategist Greg MacEachern says the Liberals may be suffering from an overreliance on the strength of Trudeau's personal brand without sufficient plans for what comes next. Photograph courtesy of Greg MacEachern



Jordan Paquet says at a time when concerns over caucus unity and Trudeau's future as leader continue to swirl, the loss of a close ally like O'Regan will only increase the pressure for him to make a big change, and win more allies on his backbench. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



According to a survey of nearly 2,000 Canadians, 98 per cent could identify Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, 66 per cent said they could identify Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, and 84 per cent could identify NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

tion of the labour file provided a convenient lateral move for a government, which avoided the use of the term “cabinet shuffle” for MacKinnon’s appointment. However, following the July 19 Rideau Hall ceremony, reporters repeatedly asked MacKinnon for his assessment of whether major changes are needed to the Liberal leadership team. “This caucus is four-square behind our leader. This caucus is four-square behind the policies that we’ve adopted, and proud of [our] record. We have obviously a challenging political situation, and we’re going to be bringing, I think, into sharper relief the contrast and the choices Canadians will have to make as they go to the polls in the next election. We have to do that, I think, a lot better,” MacKinnon said. Paquet said that at a time when concerns over caucus unity and Trudeau’s future as leader continue to swirl, the loss of a close ally like O’Regan would only increase the pressure for him to make a big change, including a larger cabinet shuffle to win more allies on the backbenches.

In his three-page statement about his resignation from cabinet, O’Regan called it a “difficult” decision, citing an increasingly challenged work-life balance, and the need to spend more time with his family, but celebrated his time in government and in cabinet variously as former minister of natural resources, Indigenous services, and veterans affairs. “We live in hectic times,” he wrote in the letter released on X. “This is a time to unite not divide, create not destroy, and build rather than break this great country of Canada.” Paquet, a former principal secretary to then-Conservative interim leader Rona Ambrose, said that while last year’s shuffle was an attempt to improve the government’s image in the eyes of voters, for any future shuffle, “the only thing that matters is how it keeps the caucus together.” “Trudeau can’t afford to lose many more allies,” Paquet said, adding that while the prime minister still had the support of his key staff and his cabinet—at least those who want to keep their jobs—he



Former labour minister Seamus O’Regan announced his resignation from cabinet on July 18 in a three-page letter posted to X. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

of Canadians when the media has less and less resources,” MacEachern said. Conservative pundit Jordan Paquet, a senior consultant with Bluesky Strategy Group, said that anyone “waiting in the wings” for their shot at the leadership should be cautious about building too large of a public profile only to be seen as “the one holding the knife” in Trudeau’s back. “That won’t win them a lot of allies, so I think the smart ones are quietly keeping key people close to them, and making phone calls to key organizers while not necessarily spelling out that they want to run for leader,” Paquet explained. “They’re building networks while being loyal foot soldiers.” Since the June 24 byelection loss of Liberal stronghold in Toronto-St. Paul’s, Ont., Trudeau has been weathering increasingly vocal calls for a shakeup. Some Liberal MPs urged an in-person

caucus meeting to address leadership concerns, while others called for changes in the senior team. Trudeau’s caucus and cabinet have also been met with increasing questions about their confidence in his leadership, as well as that of Freeland, with rumours she could be replaced by Carney in an upcoming shuffle. While the selection of House Leader Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Que.) to replace O’Regan (St. John’s South-Mount Pearl, N.L.) as labour and seniors minister quelled rumours that O’Regan’s departure would open the door for a small shuffle during the already-scheduled virtual cabinet meeting on July 19, they returned almost immediately after MacKinnon’s swearing-in ceremony. MacKinnon has served as interim government House leader since January when Karina Gould (Burlington, Ont.) went on parental leave, and his assump-

would need to shore up his support amongst his backbench, particularly those in competitive ridings who may still be considering whether or not to run again. “He’s going to have to do something to quell dissent,” Paquet said. “Or it very well may get to the point where there’s gonna be enough caucus members that just say ‘we can’t win with this current leadership,’ and he has a full revolt.” While Trudeau may have unexpectedly gained himself some time with a rapid succession of events including the attempted assassination of former United States president Donald Trump, the Republican National Convention, and incumbent Joe Biden’s withdrawal from the presidential race taking up most of the political oxygen in the week leading up to his vacation, the questions he will need to answer and the decisions he has to make will still be waiting for him in Ottawa when

he returns from British Columbia in August. *The Hill Times* previously reported that Liberal sources expect a shuffle before the cabinet retreat in Halifax, N.S., scheduled for Aug. 25-27. If there is a cabinet shuffle this summer, it will most likely be the last one before the next election, Paquet said, but he doesn’t believe it will make much difference in the outcome. “Canadians aren’t going to vote for or against the next government based on the cabinet ministers; whether they bring in Carney, or whether Freeland stays or goes, none of that is really going to matter,” Paquet explained. “As far as public interest is concerned, the average Canadian is enjoying their summer on a camping trip or enjoying barbecues and whatnot. They’re not focused on who’s in and out of the cabinet.” *sbenson@hilltimes.com*
The Hill Times



Steven MacKinnon speaks to reporters outside Rideau Hall following his appointment as the new minister of labour and seniors on July 19. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Do Canadians recognize their politicians?		
1. Party Leaders:	Can Name	Can't Name
Justin Trudeau	98%	2%
Pierre Poilievre	66%	34%
Jagmeet Singh	84%	16%
Yves-François Blanchet	20% (49% in Quebec)	80% (51% in Quebec)
Elizabeth May	47%	53%
2. Liberal cabinet/Potential leadership contenders		
Chrystia Freeland	39%	61%
Mélanie Joly	20%	80%
Anita Anand	19%	81%
Mark Carney	7%	93%
Sean Fraser	4%	96%
Dominic LeBlanc	4%	96%

—Source: Abacus Data

News

Presidential ticket upheavals present murky prospects for 2026 review of North American trade deal



For Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, centre, there is reason to believe that Republican vice-president nominee J.D. Vance, left, and likely Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris may not be the keen on having a painless review of CUSMA in 2026. Flickr photograph by Gage Skidmore, The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade, and White House photograph by Adam Schultz

U.S. Vice-President Kamala Harris was one of 10 Senators to vote against CUSMA in 2020.

Continued from page 1

race, and endorsed Harris to be the Democratic nominee for president. Since then, scores of high-ranking Democrats have endorsed the vice-president.

As a U.S. Senator, Harris was one of only 10 Senators to vote against the renegotiated NAFTA in 2020, citing insufficient environmental protections. Vance is an avowed isolationist, who railed against NAFTA—calling the pact “a bad trade deal that sent countless good jobs to Mexico”—during his speech at the Republican National Convention on July 18. The Trump-negotiated Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA)—which will undergo a mandated review in 2026—largely updated, but maintained elements of the previous NAFTA.

Canada, the United States, and Mexico will all have to decide whether to renew the pact for it to continue. If one or more partners decides not to renew, it would start a 10-year process of annual reviews, which could end in the

deal expiring in 2036 after 16 years in force.

“Even though this doesn’t dissolve the agreement, in my opinion, it creates a whole lot of uncertainty for investors,” said Laura Dawson, Future Borders Coalition executive director and a past economic adviser in the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa. “When this agreement is the legal basis for North American trade—75 per cent of Canadian exports go to the United States, and a considerable share of Canadian GDP is dependent on trade—if the foundation for Canada’s economic competitiveness is getting shakier and shakier, then Canada’s in trouble.”

Dawson was one of a handful of Canada-U.S. observers who were called on to brief Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) and his cabinet earlier this year on the state of the relationship ahead of the Nov. 5 U.S. presidential election.

She said that there is a growing bipartisan approach south of the border that is questioning the value of the international trading system.

“Both Democrats and Republicans are really cooling on trade agreements, and the importance of strong trading relationships. They’ve been pulling in the carpet and looking inwards. No matter who ends up in the White House, Canada has a lot of work to do to re-convince Americans of the im-

portance of the integrated trading relationship.”

But she said dealing with a return of the Trump administration will pose the most trouble for Canada as the former president has pledged to impose a 10 per cent tariff on all imports.

“We know that from the last go-round with President Trump, he likes to have two or three shots across the bow for emphasis in the early days, and these are the sorts of big events that could either affect Canada directly, or [have a] ripple effect.”

Dawson added that Vance’s place on the ticket may bring added attention to the Canada-U.S. border. “He’s very concerned about fentanyl ... and [it] coming across the Canadian border,” she said.

Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.), who co-chairs the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group, said the selection of the “aggressive” Vance is “a huge signal” regarding future appointments in a potential second Trump administration.

Vance is “emblematic” of future secretary picks, and a departure from the tone of the past, said McKay, who drew a sharp contrast to former vice-president Mike Pence and the role Vance would play as second-in-command.

“Pence was a lap dog. This guy will be an attack dog. He’s always demonstrated a terrific ability to be detached from any level of morality.”

Vance was critical of the Canadian government’s handling of the 2022 convoy protests, posting on social media that “the Canadian truckers have killed zero people and are being treated like terrorists in their own country.”

McKay said there are a number of issues that could be thrust into the spotlight in the Canada-U.S. relationship, including CUSMA, the border, NATO, and NORAD.

“None of them seem to be prepared to fall our way. With Trump and a collection of acolytes as secretaries, it could be quite a devastating time for Canada,” he said.

The Toronto-area MP said Trudeau’s handling of Trump was effective the first time around, but that approach may not be available to Canada with Trump presidency 2.0.

“They made sure the secretary-to-minister relationship was a solid one, so that when he had a crazy thought, the minister could phone the secretary and ask ‘What does that mean?’” he said.

“Those lines are done now. It becomes far more important that we act at a congressional level with whatever is left of the Democratic Party. I don’t think we’ll be able to count on the reasonable Republicans. ... They will all be beholden to the Trump juggernaut,” he said. “We won’t be able to count on the Republicans in Congress.”

Some observers of the Canada-U.S. relationship told *The Hill Times* that despite the rhetoric targeting free trade, there is a recognition that CUSMA is too important to walk away from.

“In Congress, there was a very big bipartisan majority in favour of the agreement—notwithstanding Kamala Harris—and it has remained popular,” said Christopher Sands, director of the Canada Institute at the Washington, D.C.-based Wilson Center.

He said that one thing to watch out for is if the next administration will try to seek trade promotion authority, which would give the White House the power to propose new changes to the North American agreement during the review.

He said the dispute over Canada’s digital service tax will likely be heightened as the California-native Harris is closely aligned with Silicon Valley.

With Trump picking Vance to join his ticket, it could be seen as the former president trying to cement his economic nationalist and populist view after his time in office comes to an end, Sands said.

“Putting in a much younger person, who shares his views on

that front, is designed to keep the party moving in that direction after he leaves office,” he said. “So, you can expect that to become more part and parcel of the party.”

Sands said one aspect of a Trump-Vance administration that Canada may have to brace for is a lessened focus on electric vehicles.

As a Senator, Vance forwarded a bill to scrap a Biden administration tax credit for EVs in favour of an equal discount for gas- and diesel-powered vehicles.

Flavio Volpe, president of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers’ Association, said Canada can’t just sit around and wait for the next renewal of CUSMA.

Like Dawson, Volpe also briefed cabinet on the Canada-U.S. relationship earlier this year.

He said the Americans are in a position of unique leverage to try to restructure the agreement, as Canada and Mexico will likely want it to continue, adding that once the process starts it could very well not be finished by the same administration, given it is a 10-year process.

“What’s guaranteed is that it doesn’t matter who the president is, [they] aren’t going to be the president that is ultimately going to cancel the deal in 10 years or walk away from it,” Volpe said. “There is a very long tail, and I think that is advantageous to all parties, so that you can play politics with it, but ultimately, you’re not going to burn yourself.”

He said Trump has publicly stated the benefits of the deal, adding that if Trump returns to the White House, Canada would be familiar with the players.

Many observers of the Canada-U.S. trade relationship believe Robert Lighthizer would return to Trump’s cabinet. The trade lawyer served as the U.S. trade representative during the NAFTA renegotiations, and built a close relationship with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.).

Former diplomat Louise Blais, who twice served as Canada’s consul general in Atlanta, said having Harris on the top of the Democratic ticket, and Vance on the Republican ticket won’t change much for Canada, as they are known entities.

“For us, it just means the players are falling into place,” she said. “The work just continues.”

—with files from Samantha Wright Allen
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The Hill Times



Trade insider Flavio Volpe says even if an American administration doesn’t sign on to renew CUSMA in 2026, it won’t be the same administration that will decide if the deal ends in 2036. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Opinion

Comment

Canada must expel Russian diplomats, declare Russia a terrorist state

The deliberate targeting of young patients and their families is a callous protraction of Russia's broader attack against the children of Ukraine.

ISG Senator Stanley Kutcher & Marcus Kolga

Opinion



The Russian bombing of a children's hospital in Kyiv on July 8 represents a brutal new low in President Vladimir Putin's genocidal war against Ukraine.

Video footage showing Russian missiles deliberately striking the Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital—the equivalent of Toronto's SickKids Hospital—demonstrates the calculated, criminal intent behind this atrocity.

Analysts with the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine said it is "highly likely" the hospital took a direct hit from a Russian KH-101 cruise missile, the latest in the 1,878 attacks on Ukrainian health-care facilities since February 2022, as documented by the World Health Organization.

The deliberate targeting of young patients and their families is a callous protraction of Russia's broader attack against the children of Ukraine. Since the start of its invasion, tens of thousands of Ukrainian children have been kidnapped, and forcibly relocated to remote regions of Russia. There, their Ukrainian identity and language are systematically erased through a vicious process of psychological indoctrination.

For the youngest victims of Russia's colonial terror, accountability and justice are beyond their reach. Unless the West responds forcefully, they'll continue to be targeted. The international community's reluctance to send weapons to Ukraine to defend its skies and strike back beyond its borders have facilitated these vicious attacks, and will enable future Russian atrocities. While United States President Joe Biden is being rightfully criticized for his prohibition of Ukraine using American weapons to strike at the source of these attacks, all NATO country leaders—including ours—must share in this shamefully misguided strategy.

On July 9, the Czech minister of foreign affairs, Jan Lipavský, demanding an explanation from the Russian ambassador to the UN, said the "murderers who attacked children in hospital were the dregs

of humanity and that he should relay that message in Moscow." Every western government, including Canada's, should do the same.

The demand for an explanation should be followed by the expulsion of Russian diplomats from Canada, and a declaration that, at the very least, the Russian state is a terrorist organization.

As far as we know, however, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has not even summoned the Russian ambassador to address this latest atrocity.

Inexplicably, some 70 Russian diplomats remain in our country, in addition to honorary consuls, who use their privileged position to sow disinformation and advance Russia's malign interests. The continued presence of these diplomats, representing a country waging war on a UN member state in violation of international law, begs the question: exactly what are they doing here?

Since the infamous defection of Igor Gouzenko in 1945, we know that Russia uses the cover of diplomacy to deploy intelligence agents to identify and collect assets in Canada and manipulate Canadian policy. This includes information and influence operations, as well as the incitement of hate towards communities and activists who are critical of the Kremlin's policies.

An expulsion of diplomats and intelligence agents from Canada would have consequences. Russia would likely expel Canadian diplomats from Moscow as a tit-for-tat response. The impact of this on Canadians would be negligible.

Canada must demand answers from Russia's ambassador for the savage targeting of children, and declare Russia a state sponsor of terror. We must end the impunity of Russian agents using diplomatic cover to advance Russia's interests in Canada, engage in information warfare, and incite hate against communities and critics of Putin's murderous neo-imperialist regime.

As Russian democratic opposition leader and chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov told us: "there is no justification for the presence of so many agents of the Putin regime in Canada. Russia is a terror state waging war, from bombing children's hospitals in Ukraine to acts of sabotage and assassination across the globe. Canada must not live in denial of this truth and must stand against Russia's terrorist regime by expelling these operatives and by holding Putin to account by designating him and his regime terrorists."

Canada must act decisively. What is taking so long?

Dr. Stanley Kutcher is an Independent Senator for Nova Scotia. Marcus Kolga is a senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, and founder of DisinfoWatch.

The Hill Times

Kamala Harris has entered the chat

There is now a responsibility on white liberals, moderates, and centrists to practice what they preach, and vote to save democracy.

Erica Ifill

Bad+Bitchy



Vice-President Kamala Harris has excited the Democratic base, which will ostensibly affect turnout in the U.S. presidential election. No one was excited about Sleepy Joe. White House photograph by Lawrence Jackson

participated in a Zoom call for the presumptive Democratic nominee. The organizers are part of Harris' sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, the oldest Black sorority in America. They raised \$1.5-million just off that call.

4. The money, honey. Harris is breaking fundraising records with zeal. The Associated Press reports, "In total, Harris' team raised more than \$81-million in the 24-hour period since Biden's announcement" in both small and large donations—from the grassroots to corporations (blame Citizens United). AP described the details of her financial reach, where "888,000 grassroots donors made donations over the previous 24 hours; more than 500,000 were making their first contribution of the 2024 campaign cycle." Promising, as she's anointed by the donor class, prominent Democratic politicians, and the grassroots. Hopefully this will galvanize the party.

5. Turnout. Evidently, Harris has excited the Democratic base, which will ostensibly affect turnout. No one was excited about Sleepy Joe.

6. Age. Trump is now the old man trying to smatter words together, creating incoherent speeches.

7. The Democratic Party is already framing Harris as the prosecutor going up against the criminal. They can't say she's not tough on crime, having exploited non-violent—sometimes innocent—prisoners to keep them in prison to fight California wildfires. As California's attorney general, Harris championed a truancy law that prosecuted the parents, disproportionately negatively affecting BIPOC and poor parents. As prosecutor, she has been accused of withholding potential exculpatory evidence from the defence. In fact, as described by the *New York Times*, she has had a troubling habit of turning "legal technicalities into weapons so she could cement injustices."

8. The memes, fancams, and TikToks have already begun, turning Harris' presumptive nomination into a cultural moment.

Now that Harris has entered the race, the American election can now be characterized a choice between young and old, the past and the future, and the North and the South. This is an election of the white electorate, one that has been impressive and regressive as the pendulum swings from one election to another. In other words, there is now a responsibility on white liberals, moderates, and centrists to practice what they preach, and vote to save democracy. White Republicans are locked into their cult leader, so we know which way that wind is blowing. The question is: will white moderates choose democracy over the benefits of their whiteness?

Erica Ifill is a co-host of the *Bad+Bitchy* podcast.

The Hill Times

OTTAWA—Anyone else exhausted from living in unprecedented times?

On July 21, United States President Joe Biden unexpectedly did the expected: he bowed out of the presidential race, and then endorsed Vice-President Kamala Harris. She will be the first Black woman and first South Asian presidential nominee in American history. Since Biden's cataclysmically rancid debate performance, his tragedy of an interview with George Stephanopolous, and an ignominious humiliation of a NATO speech, Democrats were running scared—but not before gaslighting the public, trying to convince us that what we saw we didn't see, and telling us "it was a bad night." However, the Democrats can't complain about the predicament in which they find themselves. The party establishment knew that voters had concerns about Biden's fitness for at least a year.

No one should want to be the first—and certainly no Black woman. The amount of technology-facilitated gender-based violence will skyrocket from already-high current level. For Harris, running for president in a post-COVID environment will be more vitriolic than the last time she ran in 2019. And that vitriol will seep into the mainstream—especially the rancorous vernacular—threatening the safety of Black women, specifically, and BIPOC women, generally.

Would America vote for a Black woman? Yes.

You may be surprised to hear this from me, especially since I have no faith in the goodness of white people when it comes to race, and analogously, no faith in the goodness of men when it comes to gender. However, I do believe white American centrists will vote for a Black woman. And there are a few reasons for this:

1. They have no choice. White America has been scolding Black people—like they always do—to vote for Biden because democracy will die under Trump's authoritarianism. Now it's their turn to vote for a Black woman to save democracy.

2. Unlike previous generations, millennials don't lean more conservative as they age. According to the *Financial Times*, "having reached political maturity in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, millennials are tacking much further to the left on economics than previous generations did." Millennials became the largest generation of voters in 2020, and their representation will continue to grow in 2024, according to the Pew Research Center. Two generations—millennials and generation Z—have overtaken both generation X and baby boomers.

3. As the backbone of the party, Black women have already begun to organize. On July 21, tens of thousands of Black women

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Editorial

High stakes require full-court press on the U.S.

Keeping up with our southern neighbours can be an exercise in frustration and futility.

From the will-they-or-won't-they intrigue of the jury that ultimately decided to convict former United States president Donald Trump, to that having no apparent effect on his prospects as the Republican 2024 nominee, to the "Bye Biden" campaign after a disastrous debate performance, to the attempted assassination on Trump, to incumbent President Joe Biden dropping out as the Democratic nominee, it's been a wild few months.

All of these constantly moving parts have likely made things difficult for the members of "Team Canada," who have been focusing on outreach to U.S. politicians and stakeholders in a bid to shore up bilateral relations with whomever is next to occupy the Oval Office.

We know from the pre-Trump presidency approach that you have to be prepared for all eventualities—and then even that might not be enough.

Canada was undoubtedly caught flat-footed in 2016, with the Liberals not creating the necessary links beyond those required in the presumed event of a Hillary Clinton victory.

The current engagement has been an attempt to rectify that, but the present environment also showcases why it's so important—and also very difficult.

With unprecedented, history-making events seemingly taking place every

week, the unpredictability of the American presidential election landscape has showcased just how important it is for Canada to have broad links with the United States.

And those links can't just be with politicians because regardless of who sets up shop in the White House, America is going to be about America.

In 2021, there were people breathing a sigh of relief after Trump left office who had to be quickly disabused of that notion of free-and-easy relations under Biden because guess what? Domestic politics always take priority. Remember how Biden immediately nixed the Keystone Pipeline permit?

The review of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement is looming large, and as *The Hill Times'* Neil Moss reports this week, it's probably going to be contentious, regardless of which party wins in the U.S. or who forms government in Canada in 2025.

This outreach should be happening on both sides of the aisle—it's not good enough for one party to be leaning into knowing Kamala Harris' favourite Montreal smoked meat shop and one to skate by on rooming with J.D. Vance in college.

On a side note, maybe this is why having a decent residence for a Canadian consul general isn't the worst thing in the world. You can't wine, dine, and relationship-build at the bodega.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

Canada can't afford false claims about climate change: Toronto reader

Re: "Use C-59 to curtail feds crying environment 'wolf': letter writer," (*The Hill Times*, July 10, p. 8).

A letter writer recommends extending Bill C-59's deceptive marketing provisions to the Canadian government. That's not a bad idea. I would also include political parties that make false claims about government policy.

Take Canada's carbon pricing mechanism. Recent research from the University of Calgary and the Bank of Canada have debunked the myth that Canada's carbon price has driven up costs. Those who peddle this myth are mum on the quarterly rebate cheques sent to most Canadians, which the letter writer would have received on July 15. Canada is among 73 countries that price carbon in some fashion, and one of the very few that provide rebates to residents.

The claim that carbon pricing isn't working also deserves scrutiny. While the international Climate Action Tracker still gives Canada a rating of "Highly Insufficient" because its fossil fuel sector continues to grow, it notes that "Canada's emissions are finally starting to trend downwards as the government continues to implement its climate policy agenda...."

There's no question that the carbon price could be improved. It isn't applied at the wellhead, which is why the fossil fuel sector is one of the few in Canada whose emissions are on the rise. Canada is working on an oil and gas emissions cap to address this gap.

Also faulty is the argument that Canada shouldn't price carbon because its global emissions are small.

While it's true that China emits a whopping 30 per cent of global carbon emissions, low emitting countries like Canada collectively produce more than China.

Guess who leads that pack? Canada—the world's 10th largest greenhouse gas emitter. What message would it send to all the other small emitters that Canada elects to do nothing because its domestic contribution is relatively low?

Carbon pricing and other measures are sending a market signal to invest in clean energy technologies. Happily, world economies are transitioning away from fossil fuels. Canada cannot afford false claims that encourage it to take a backseat to this economic transition.

Cheryl McNamara
 Toronto, Ont.

Caddell is right—the North is something we all need to experience, says letter writer

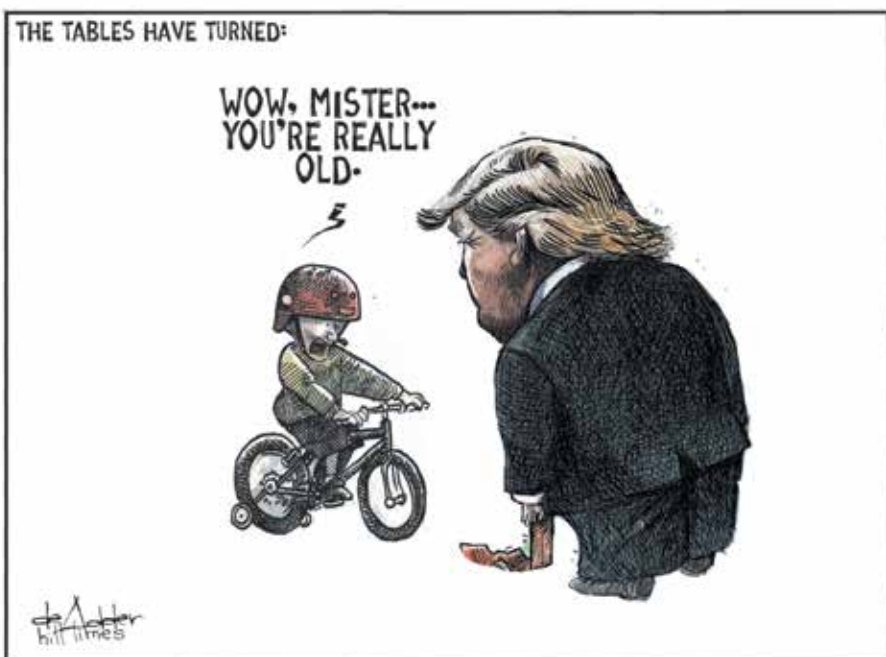
Re: "We can no longer ignore the North," (*The Hill Times*, July 10, p. 9).

Thanks to Andrew Caddell for his delightful report from his trip North. I was shocked to learn that Whitehorse, Yukon, now has a population of 42,000. When my husband and I were there eight years ago, it was about 23,000. I couldn't agree more with his mention that Canada needs to take the North more seriously. It's a monstrous landmass loaded with resources and is pretty well open to anyone who might like to "drop in" and do whatever they want to do there. I doubt that our security is up to scratch by any stretch of the imagination.

I'm one of the lucky three per cent who have been North of 60, not as far as the Arctic (it's on my list), but twice to

the North and it is absolutely spectacular. I'm speaking of visiting in the summer, of course. Our daughter had a week-long business trip to Nunavut at the end of March one year and found that to be wonderful, too, if cold at times. I can only encourage people to see this beautiful and for me, magical, part of our country. My first sighting of it was flying over it for hours on our way to Asia many years earlier. I very highly recommend considering it if at all possible—it is expensive, I'll admit—but we are a northern people, after all. We should be acquainted with more of our country than just the strip along the 49th parallel.

Mary Rosebrugh
 Ottawa, Ont.



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Cutting the CAF to the bone

The Liberals' heady promises of shiny new equipment in the distant future may be a case of too little, too late.

Scott Taylor

Inside Defence



OTTAWA—Following the recent NATO Summit in Washington, D.C., Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Defence Minister Bill Blair sheepishly returned to Ottawa after being thoroughly chastised by their allied counterparts.

Despite the Trudeau Liberals increasing Canada's defence budget by more than 54 per cent since they were elected in 2015, the NATO honchos want even more money spent on military hardware.

Thus, Blair and Trudeau have pledged that, by 2032, Canada will spend that magical NATO

target figure of two per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) on the defence budget. Of course, that promise is not worth the paper upon which it is not written, as there is little-to-no chance that Trudeau and Blair will still be steering the government eight years from now. To be fair, there are a lot of major purchases underway which will indeed spend a lot of money, but most of those projects will not see deliveries until well into the future.

For the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Liberals announced they would purchase 88 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters at a purchase price of \$19-billion. Keep in mind, this is the one aircraft that the Trudeau Liberals vowed to never buy during the election campaign of 2015.

While two of these F-35s flew over Ottawa on Canada Day in the RCAF's 100th anniversary flypast, those aircraft were flown by the Vermont Air National Guard. That was because Canada will not receive its first F-35 until 2026, and the final delivery of the 88th fighter is due in 2032. The full life-cycle cost of the F-35 is now estimated at a whopping \$74-billion.

Last month, there was a lot of hype announcing the fact that Irving Shipbuilding is starting the

construction of a fleet of 15 new River-class destroyers.

This is not a new project by any means as it is the product of the 2010 National Shipbuilding Strategy launched by the Harper Conservatives.

Until last month, these warships were designated the Canadian Surface Combatants, and the design is based upon the British Type 26 frigate. Nevertheless, the Royal Canadian Navy does not expect to commission the first of the River-class destroyers until 2030, with the 15th and final warship entering service in the early 2040s.

The cost for this acquisition project is now estimated to top \$100-billion. Not factored into that equation is what the Canadian government will need to spend to keep the current fleet of 12 Halifax-class frigates serviceable until that date. The City-class frigates entered service in the early 1990s, and although they have all gone through a thorough mid-life refit and modernization, the maintenance costs will only balloon as these vessels age out.

Another big spending announcement made coincidentally while Trudeau and Blair were at the NATO summit is the proposed acquisition of 12 modern diesel-electric submarines. This project is in

its infancy, and there is no timeline for when Canada's submariners can expect the new fleet.

Of course, for anyone familiar with Canada's current submarine capability—or, more accurately, our lack thereof—the question begs just who the hell is going to operate these 12 new submarines? At present, the RCN possesses four used British diesel-electric submarines that were built in the 1980s. Canada took possession in 2004.

However, the log books show that since 2021, only one of these submarines—HMCS Windsor—has even put to sea. In two brief patrols in 2022 and 2023, HMCS Windsor logged a grand total of 57 days at sea.

The RCN admits that the reason for this is a shortage of qualified personnel. This amounts to a true conundrum wherein you cannot qualify submariners without going to sea, and you cannot go to sea without qualified submariners.

This, of course, is not the only instance of the Liberal government putting the cart before the horse to solve a defence problem. Shortly after they were elected in 2015, the Liberals announced that the RCAF had a capability gap in that they did not have enough pilots and qualified ground crew

to meet both Canada's NORAD and NATO commitments.

The solution was to announce the sole-source purchase of 18 Super Hornets from Boeing. When Boeing took Bombardier to the international trade tribunal over an unrelated civilian contract, the Trudeau Liberal government voiced their displeasure, and declared that Boeing was no longer a "trusted" supplier. The Super Hornet deal was scuppered, and to address the capability gap, Canada instead purchased 18 legacy F-18s that had been mothballed by the Australian Air Force.

As a result of the lengthy refurbishment of these aircraft, not all have actually entered service with the RCAF to date.

This past March, the RCAF suspended its advanced fighter training due to the advanced age of its CT-155 training aircraft fleet. For the record the 24-year-old CT-155s are considerably newer than the RCAF's fleet of CF-18 fighters. As the RCAF awaits the 88 new F-35s, would-be fighter pilots are awaiting slots on training courses of allied air forces.

All of that to say that the Liberals' heady promises of shiny new equipment in the distant future may be a case of too little, too late.

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

The Hill Times

Forty years on, CSIS deserves more respect

The Trudeau government doesn't seem to have taken threats to Canada with the gravity they deserve. There can be serious security consequences for that neglect.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



KAMOURASKA, QUE.—Around this time 40 years ago, I was present at the creation of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). The legislation creating the agency had been passed by the House and Senate a few weeks before, and it was proclaimed in mid-July. As an assistant to then-solicitor general Bob Kaplan, I had spent the previous 18 months working with a small team—including future CSIS director Ted Finn—to get the bill passed.



Then-solicitor general Bob Kaplan, left, signs the papers making CSIS official, with then-CSIS director Ted Finn on July 16, 1984. Photograph courtesy of Andrew Caddell

It was far from easy: both civil liberties groups and politicians were wary of creating a civilian intelligence agency. Civil libertarians thought intelligence threats could be dealt with by an innocuous agency. The NDP and some Liberals were essentially against its creation at all, while the Conservatives were skeptical there was a need to take the responsibility away from the RCMP.

This despite two Royal Commissions—Mackenzie in 1969 and McDonald in 1981—as well as Quebec's Keable Inquiry, which listed a litany of sins by the RCMP Security Service, including burning a barn to prevent a meeting between the Black Panthers and the Front de libération du Québec. For the average Canadian, including many of my colleagues on Parliament Hill, there

was a question as to what secrets Canada needed to protect.

Two issues arose soon after CSIS was in place. The first was that the RCMP took away the special computers that allowed them to check criminal records, as CSIS officers were not police officers. And as the act allowed for the RCMP to deal with "apprehension" of criminal intelligence activities, it developed its own capacity for detection, effectively in competition with CSIS.

While Kaplan had instructed the RCMP and CSIS to collaborate closely in a mandate letter in late July 1984, there was some distrust of the new agency by the Mounties. This lack of co-ordination was the most important cause of the failure to prevent the Air India bombing a year later.

In the succeeding four decades, our intelligence capacity was upgraded several times, notably in the wake of the attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. Since then, CSIS and the RCMP have had to deal with the enormous changes in technology, and the efforts of our adversaries to undermine our democratic institutions, threaten diaspora communities, and disrupt relations with our allies.

In the wake of the ongoing inquiry into foreign interference by Justice Marie-Josée Hogue, the Trudeau government recently passed new legislation providing for new foreign interference offences, transforming how CSIS shares intelligence, and establishing a foreign influence transparency registry. That should be a shot in the arm for CSIS, but the government's treatment of the agency has not been exemplary.

Writing in *The Hub*, former CSIS agent Andrew Kirsch suggested the prime minister and senior officials "don't often read CSIS briefs ... they take our intelligence with a huge grain of salt ... [and] don't think our findings are worth following up on."

In response to a CSIS brief saying China had "clandestinely and deceptively interfered" in the 2019 and 2021 general elections, Trudeau told the Hogue inquiry, "There is a certain degree of—I would not say skepticism—but of critical thought that must be applied to any information collected by our security and intelligence

services." Although any expert recognizes the distinction between intelligence and evidence, and officials have a variety of sources to rely upon, CSIS intel should not be so casually dismissed.

The recent departure of CSIS director David Vigneault was greeted with applause in some quarters, given the leaks to the media during his tenure. But with the rejection of their analysis by the PMO, did CSIS agents feel compelled to bypass the chain of command? Kirsch again: "Today, I fear that, at a time when their job is more difficult than ever, we may be losing our will to support those who are working to keep us safe. This is a dangerous direction to be going in."

I agree. Forty years on, CSIS deserves respect from those in power. I hope the new interim director, Vanessa Lloyd, will take the time to defend field officers as well as educating those in power about the threats to Canada. Up until now, the Trudeau government doesn't seem to have taken them with the gravity they deserve. And there can be serious security consequences for that neglect.

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

The Hill Times

Opinion

Parliament and schools are recessed for the summer, leaving bills for children behind

We need policymakers to create a vision for Canada by setting specific, measurable targets for children's well-being, and working towards achieving them.

Lisa Wolff
& Ryan
Voisin
Opinion



The school year is over for most kids, and Parliament is also on a summer break, leaving crucial unfinished business languishing

on the table in the House of Commons and the Senate. There have rarely been so many bills focused on children at one time on the Hill, a function of the maturity of the 44th Parliament, and the MPs and Senators who have recognized children's unmet needs and rights. Yet these initiatives have stalled, unable to gain the necessary traction to become law, their prospects dimming by the day as the current Parliament heads into an election.

Among the numerous bills left in legislative limbo are those addressing vital issues such as marketing to children, school food programs, online harms, online privacy, citizenship rights, physical punishment, the voting age, and a national child and youth strategy. Each of these bills represents a step toward creating a safer, healthier, and more equitable environment for Canadian children. Despite committee studies and advocacy efforts

inside and outside Parliament, these bills have yet to cross the finish line.

These bills are not just paper tigers. They are a recognition of the multifaceted challenges facing our children and teens, and a willingness by parliamentarians of all parties in both the House and the Senate to bring a much-needed focus on the youngest generation—the one that can't vote, and doesn't appear on the lobbyist registry. However, the lack of progress also highlights a significant gap in our approach: the absence of a cohesive national child and youth strategy. Without clear targets and a unified vision, these well-intentioned initiatives risk fading into oblivion.

As we look towards the fall, these bills deserve a prominent place on the legislative agenda. Bill S-282 to establish a national strategy for children and youth in Canada has passed second reading, and has been referred to

the Senate Social Affairs, Science, and Technology Committee. We can't let critical bills like this stall out. We need policymakers to create a vision for Canada by setting specific, measurable targets for children's well-being, and working towards achieving them. A 2020 UNICEF Report Card ranked Canada 30th out of 38 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in terms of child well-being, which most of us believe is unacceptable. In the coming spring, a new Report Card will tell us if Canada's legislative and policy efforts since then have been enough to lift our children up.

Investing in children is not just a moral imperative—it is a social and economic one, as well. As hand-wringing continues about Canada's stagnant GDP per capita, there is a clear path forward: childhood disadvantage costs Canada 2.7 per cent of GDP every

year according to a new OECD report, so eliminating it with the right policies and services will improve economic growth. While cash transfers and early childhood education services help, they are still half-measures—not adequate or inclusive enough to benefit those from very low-income families, Indigenous communities, or racialized groups. Childhood socio-economic disadvantage leads to poorer health, and lower incomes in adulthood. This affects the country's overall productivity and growth potential. Research consistently shows that every dollar invested in children's social protection and care, health, and education yields significant returns in terms of productivity and societal stability.

As we take a summer break, let us not lose sight of the opportunities waiting on the parliamentary table. When we get back to business, let us harness the momentum we have built and push these critical bills across the finish line. The future of our children—and indeed, our nation—depends on it.

Lisa Wolff is director, policy and research at UNICEF Canada. Ryan Voisin is managing director of Inspiring Healthy Futures, a pan-Canadian, cross-sectoral network of champions for children's health and well-being based at Children's Healthcare Canada.

The Hill Times

The killer whales are speaking, but is the minister of transport listening?

Now is the time for a transition plan towards watertight regulations that can reverse the possibility of Southern Resident killer whales going extinct this century.

Aneri Garg &
Peter Ross
Opinion



Studies have shown that killer whales' ability to communicate is extremely sophisticated, but they still can't seem to be able to get Transport Canada to understand them.

The endangered Southern Resident killer whale's home includes the Salish Sea on British Columbia's west coast, which is largely designated for their protection. However, their habitat is a highway for an increasing number of cruise liners, tankers, and cargo vessels



Transport Minister Pablo Rodriguez needs to listen to what the killer whales have been trying to say, and should enact better shipping pollution regulations, write Aneri Garg and Peter Ross. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

which run right through their home—where they feed, rest, meet, play, and give birth. There are only 74 known Southern Resident killer whales left in existence, and they are under perpetual threat by the noise, pollution, and a lack of food in this marine freeway.

For animals who rely on their ability to communicate—to hear each other—to forage, socialize, and raise their young, large ships can be deadly. Cruise liners are also responsible for two-thirds of shipping waste. That's the equivalent of half the world's population flushing a toilet into B.C.'s coastal waters every year.

Transport Canada had an opportunity to regulate the noise and pollution of marine traffic last month, but instead chose

to cut and paste weak interim measures from last year. These temporary measures achieved little to protect killer whales. Now is the time to see a transition plan towards watertight regulations that can reverse the possibility of Southern Resident killer whales going extinct this century.

The minister of transport may not understand what killer whales are trying to say, but he can certainly understand us when we say that Southern Resident killer whales are facing dangers that can be prevented. The minister has the power to immediately activate solutions like regulating large ships to stop dumping their waste with impunity across the entirety of Canada's coastal jurisdiction.

Most importantly, there needs to be an absolute ban on the use of scrubbers in Canada's coastal jurisdiction to have any positive effect on the ecosystem. Scrubbers are a particular problem because of how they have been used to dupe regulators into believing that ships are operating sustainably when all they do is turn air pollution into water pollution. In 2022, Environment Canada calculated a whopping 88 million tonnes of toxic scrubber wastewater entered B.C. coastal waters.

Scrubbers take pollution from the exhaust and dump it into the water. Scrubber wastewater is highly acidic, and contains metal contaminants linked to cancer, DNA damage, and the adverse maternal health of killer whales. For the shipping industry, they are a way to cheat and get a cleaner fuel rating for air exhaust while still burning cheap and dirty fuel. For killer whales they are a threat to their existence and recovery.

Transport Canada has an enormous opportunity to protect killer whales by simply aligning with other countries that have already made the evidence-based decision to ban the use of scrubbers. It also has the power to enable regular, independent monitoring—essen-

tial to ensure that ships on the marine freeway are following the rules.

The irony here is that part of the appeal of cruise ships is that they provide an opportunity for people to witness the amazing and fragile marine life on B.C.'s wild coast. However, weak pollution regulations and increasing marine traffic threaten the very thing that people want to see.

The endangered Southern Resident killer whales will now be feeling the impacts of a seven-fold increase in the number of petroleum tankers exporting oil products from the newly expanded Trans Mountain pipeline, and the continued growth in the number of cruise ships visiting coastal waters.

Canada's minister of transport needs to listen to what the killer whales have been trying to say, and should enact better shipping pollution regulations and bring them into permanent policy. Acting today can turn the tide and ensure a thriving future for these animals for generations to come.

Aneri Garg is the Canada shipping campaigner at Stand.earth. Peter Ross is a senior scientist at the Raincoast Conservation Foundation.

The Hill Times



The Conservative leader's wife, Anaida Poilievre, has a great deal of control over the party paraphernalia available for sale, writes Éric Blais. Screenshot courtesy of bringithome.ca

The Poilievres' mom-and-pop shop

In the sea of political merchandise, Anaida Poilievre's personally curated line stands out.

Éric
Blais

Opinion



Political paraphernalia has become ubiquitous, not just at political rallies, but also anywhere supporters are happy to act as mobile billboards promoting politicians, policies, parties, or whatever political beliefs they espouse. I recall once going through airport security standing behind a woman proudly wearing a faded Ford Nation t-shirt. I doubt she was heading to an Ontario Progressive Conservative political rally. Yet of all the clothing options available to her that day, she chose to clearly signal her political identity.

These days, no one seems to be able to dress for the part and get his followers to do the same better than Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, at least in Canada. While it doesn't compare to the paraphernalia on display at Donald Trump rallies in the United States, it is nevertheless impressive by Canadian standards.

The term "paraphernalia" used to designate articles of personal property given to a married woman by her husband before or during marriage, and regarded in law as her possessions over which she has some

measure of control. It's from the Greek *parapherna*, meaning "bride's property beyond her dowry." In the context of political merchandise, "paraphernalia" refers to the items that supporters use to express their allegiance to a particular candidate or cause.

It's a particularly fitting term for the merch available for sale on the Conservative Party of Canada's website. If one is looking for caps, T-shirts, and hoodies, the web redirects to bringithome.ca, where visitors are invited to join the movement and to "shop the look."

This is where one learns that the Conservative leader's wife, Anaida Poilievre, has a great deal of control over the paraphernalia available for sale. Her personal touch and involvement in the creation of the merchandise add a layer of authenticity and family values to the items offered by the Conservative Party. The pitch for the Bring It Home merch is commonsensical. The product line "embodies the desire for change and the need for the common sense of the common people, united for our common home." Supporters can purchase a unisex "axe the tax" or "fire the gatekeeper" hoodie for \$50, or get a notification when the \$35 camouflage "Bring It Home" hat with a leather logo is no longer out of stock.

We also learn that: "From its very inception through to its final realization, Anaida Poilievre spearheaded every facet of the Bring it Home Merchandise. She is the creative mind behind the vision, and is the lead of its operational and branding aspects. She created the designs of the Special Edition logos with the help of a talented graphic designer, Greg. Anaida is responsible for supplier and merchandise

selection, fulfilment logistics, marketing, branding and more. Bring it Home Merch is inspired by Canadian patriotism and the need for change."

The call to action encourages supporters to be seen and heard: "There is a growing movement gaining in strength and momentum across our country and it's because of YOU. You are the ones who get up every day, you work hard, and you boldly stand up for what you believe in. Let's show the rest of the country just how powerful this movement is. Whether it's a Common Sense shirt on your back, a Bring it Home hat, or a sleek tumbler sitting on your desk, 'represent and make your mark.' Be seen. Be heard."

For \$35, you can be seen wearing a "W.T.F." T-shirt, for "Where's The Funds," and be heard on #ArriveScam! This particular item is only available in English. So are the "Axe The Tax" and "How Do You Like Them Apples?" T-shirts.

Undecided voters who choose to browse in the Liberals' online boutique will find a much broader assortment of apparel, including baby onesies, as well a wide

range of accessories including an apron, a cheese board, beer glasses, and a whiskey gift set. But it's all very uninspiring. All items feature only the party logo, without any additional slogans or messages. You won't find a T-shirt with the inscriptions "Sunny ways, my friends. Sunny ways," or a Women For Trudeau hoodie with the line "Because it's 2015."

If the official paraphernalia offered by the Conservative Party isn't bold enough to express one's strong desire for change, there are plenty of more provocative items for sale by vendors looking to tap into the movement on platforms like Etsy. There's a "Justin Trudeau tax climate patriotism shirt political sweatshirt axe the tax Canada Day Trudeau election conservative Pierre Poilievre gift" sold by the Common Sense Coalition. The word salad item description must be an attempt at search engine marketing. The text on the pure comfort crewneck is also a mouthful: "I identify as an over taxed under represented non woke pissed off Canadian!"

Cathy, the creator of this Etsy shop, writes that she wanted to express her frustrations with the direction this country is taking: "Creating t-shirts and other merchandise that people can display to express their feelings, while not having to directly engage people. When others see how you feel, it can spark unity or conversation with others that think they are alone. No matter what side of the political isle [sic] you are on, we all want Canada to prosper so that future generations do not have to go through what we are going through right now."

This sums it all up. We're increasingly on separate islands—not opposite aisles—wearing T-shirts expressing our political views.

Cathy also writes that the Common Sense Coalition supports local business in Canada for Canadians. She has plenty of foreign competitors selling on Amazon.ca, including Ruizaua which is based in Taiwan's rural township of Zhuqi, which sells F-Trudeau decals. Other items—grouped by Amazon under the category "funny trudeau stickers"—include Canadian Tire's logo with the line "Canadian Tired of Trudeau"—something the retailer's legal team might want to look into.

In the sea of political merchandise, Anaida Poilievre's personally curated line stands out. By taking the reins of the Bring It Home merch, she adds a touch of authenticity that resonates with supporters, and sets it apart from the generic offerings of its opponent.

Should her husband bring it home, become prime minister, and axe the tax, I suspect Mrs. Poilievre will unveil a new collection to keep the movement moving. As the Conservative Party looks to the future, it will be interesting to see how this strategy evolves, and whether it continues to resonate with supporters. Hopefully, any future collections will focus on themes of unity and tolerance, helping to bridge the divides that currently characterize Canadian political discourse.

Éric Blais is president of Headspace Marketing in Toronto.

The Hill Times

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News

Minister Anandasangaree says reconciliation still ‘key pillar’ of Liberal plan following charged AFN reception

There’s still an ‘ambitious agenda’ before the next election, but reconciliation is a ‘generational goal,’ says Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Gary Anandasangaree

Continued from page 1

Assembly of First Nations general meeting.

Following his keynote address to the AFN on July 10, Anandasangaree (Scarborough–Rouge Park, Ont.) took questions from First Nations leaders who criticized him and his deputies for their poor outreach and inattentiveness during meetings.

“Quit being on your phone and talking, and listen,” Regina Crowchild, a proxy for Chief Roy Whitney of Tsuut’ina First Nation in Alberta, told Anandasangaree. “That’s what you’re here for.”

Crowchild had similar criticisms for Anandasangaree’s deputy ministers, whom she accused of “spend[ing] an hour or two with us while looking at their phones” when they visited communities.

Vera Mitchell, the chief of Poplar River First Nation in Manitoba, criticized the government for its slow pace on child-welfare reform, and Ojibways of Onigaming Chief Jeffrey Copenace accused Anandasangaree of “disrespecting historic treaties” with the government’s attempt to include Métis governments in those agreements, referring to Bill C-53.

Speaking with reporters after the question-and-answer period, Anandasangaree defended his government’s record, pointing to the “unprecedented amounts of money” it had invested since 2016.

“More importantly, we have reset the relationship in a way that cannot be turned back,” Anandasangaree told reporters. “And I fundamentally believe that that is what Canadians will be looking for [in the next election]; that’s what Indigenous people will be looking for.”

However, First Nations leaders, advocates, and politicians who spoke with *The Hill Times* shared similar concerns.

Expectations were high for Anandasangaree as he took over the role from now-Immigration Minister Marc Miller (Ville-Marie–Le Sud-Ouest–Île-des-Soeurs, Que.) in the July 26, 2023, cabinet shuffle.

Cam Holmstrom, founder of Nii-paawi Strategies and a former NDP staffer, told *The Hill Times* that Miller was a rarity in Canada’s history of federal-Indigenous relations.

“When a minister leaves, we aren’t used to saying ‘oh, don’t go,’ we’re usually happy to see the back of them,” Holmstrom explained, adding that part of Miller’s success was a genuine commitment to building relationships.

“I think Anandasangaree was in a decent position to come into this role,” Holmstrom said, adding that the rookie minister had built his own foundation of relationships as a member of the House Indigenous and Northern Affairs committee, as well as his time as parliamentary secretary to then-Crown Indigenous relations minister Carolyn Bennett.

However, during the Toronto-area MP’s time as minister, one lobbyist—who spoke on a non-attribution basis so as not to jeopardize work with First Nations communities before the department—said Anandasangaree confirmed many of the fears raised when Miller was removed from the file.

“Miller was the first [Crown-Indigenous] minister to show and receive respect, [and] with the change, it was a clear signal that reconciliation moved down the priority list,” the lobbyist said. “All of us who represent First Nations are getting anxious because we’re basically a year away from an election, and the closer we get, the slower things move.”

In a July 22 interview with *The Hill Times*, Anandasangaree said that Indigenous reconciliation and building better nation-to-nation relationships with communities remain a “key pillar” of the Liberal government, and defended what he called “remarkable achievements” over the past year.

While he recognized Miller had been a “remarkable advocate” during his time as minister, with the relationships and record of achievements to match, Anandasangaree said he had been able to leverage his own relationships from Day 1.

“I was able to build on the work of Minister Miller and Bennett prior to that, and we’ve had some significant wins,” Anandasangaree said, noting that later in the day, he

would be signing the third modern treaty in B.C. in the past five weeks.

Anandasangaree, alongside Chief Ken Price of the K’ómoks First Nation and B.C. Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Murray Rankin initialed a draft treaty with an effective date projected for 2028 once it has been ratified by the nation. Anandasangaree and the B.C. government have also signed draft treaties with the Kitselas First Nation on June 24, and with the Kitsumkalum First Nation on June 25.

On July 15, Anandasangaree also delivered a historic apology to the Dakota and Lakota First Nations, who had been designated as “refugees” by the federal government, as many had migrated from what is now the United States. This designation denied them treaty benefits, and excluded them from economic agreements with the federal government. He said that apology held special significance, as one of his first tasks as minister was signing the White Cap Dakota modernized treaty, which made the nation the first self-governing Indigenous nation in Saskatchewan.

However, one of the largest tasks left on his plate remains Bill C-53, the Recognition of Certain Métis Governments in Alberta, Ontario, and Saskatchewan, and the Métis Self-Government Act, which has faced significant pushback from First Nations and Métis communities.

Last May, *The Hill Times* reported that Anandasangaree had provided cabinet with options for the bill’s fate, which has been languishing at the report stage since February. In April, APTN reported that the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and the Provincial Métis Council were withdrawing their support for the bill.

According to two sources who spoke to *The Hill Times*, Anandasangaree provided three options: withdrawing the bill, letting it remain on the Order Paper until Parliament is prorogued or an election is called and allowing it to die, or amending the bill.

Anandasangaree said that the government was still “recalibrating and looking at what the next steps are,” and it would have a “better sense” of the new direction in the fall.

Another cited indication of reconciliation’s demotion was the absence of the word “reconciliation” in the April 2024 budget speech delivered by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University–Rosedale,

Ont.). Additionally, while the budget still contained \$9-billion in new funding for Indigenous child and family services, education, health care, housing and on-reserve income assistance, that total is half the \$18-billion contained in the 2021 budget.

However, Anandasangaree noted that since 2015, the government has invested \$160-billion in Indigenous reconciliation efforts, but the amount of funding committed to the budget will fluctuate year over year as specific claims are resolved.

“There will be years when the funding spikes, and other years when it is not as high, but make no mistake: we are doubling down, and will continue to work toward closing the infrastructure and housing gap,” Anandasangaree explained, adding that the challenge of addressing that gap is primarily due to a decade of “complete neglect and lack of investment” by the previous Conservative government under then-prime minister Stephen Harper.

“The catch-up time is quite significant,” he continued. “Going forward, we need to ensure that these investments are sustained and continue unabated to close that gap, wherever it exists, whether it be infrastructure, Jordan’s principle, or child welfare, but I think the progress we’ve made is significant.”

While Anandasangaree recognizes that progress may not seem significant for communities still facing substantial challenges posed by dilapidated infrastructure and housing, his message to them is to hold on just a little longer.

“Make no mistake, that is going to change,” Anandasangaree said.

With a little more than a year left until the next federal election is scheduled to occur, Anandasangaree said there was still a “very ambitious agenda” with plenty of work left to do to fulfill the now more than two-and-half-year-old mandate letter first addressed to Miller in December 2021.

Anandasangaree said he hoped to target several key issues, including Bill C-16 recognizing Haida Nation self-governance, settling agricultural benefits in the Prairies, and the signing of further modern treaties, particularly in British Columbia.

On broader reconciliation goals, Anandasangaree said that while progress had been slow, with the government failing in 2023 to achieve any of the Truth

and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) 94 Calls to Action, or the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), “what’s important is that progress is being made.”

The government has been “working earnestly” to fulfill the MMIWG Calls to Justice, Anandasangaree said, including the implementation of a “Red Dress Alert” pilot project with the government of Manitoba, which he hopes to be able to expand nationwide. Anandasangaree also pointed to the \$20-million that had each been committed by the feds and the government of Manitoba to continue the search of the Prairie Green landfill, which is believed to contain the remains of First Nations women Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran, and a third unidentified Indigenous woman.

Anandasangaree said the landfill search—and MMIWG more broadly—is one of the toughest issues he and the government face, but he credited Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew for his co-operation in “supporting the families and ensuring the search goes on.”

“It’s a commitment I made essentially on my first day on the job, which I hope will yield answers,” Anandasangaree said. “But in a much broader sense, we need to continue to do the work to ensure that all Indigenous women can feel safe in their own communities.”

Additionally, Anandasangaree highlighted the generational nature of accomplishing many of the TRC’s Calls to Action, including the work the government has started on First Nations’ child welfare reform, beginning with Bill C-92 recognizing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities’ jurisdiction over child and family services, and the recent the \$47-billion settlement for long-term reform of First Nations child and family services, which was announced on the final day of the AFN general assembly on July 11.

“If you look at [2023] as a one-year marker, no, we couldn’t complete this [Call to Action] in a year, but I want to suggest it will take a generation for us to get to a point where we have met the full demands imposed by those calls to action,” Anandasangaree explained. “When we talk about the progress we need to make, it will be generational, but we are going in the right direction, and we’re going with a robust number of undertakings that will lead us towards a much better place in the future. So, I’m very optimistic that we’re on the right track, and our commitment is no less today than it was in 2015.”

While the federal government has made progress on several of those calls, including the passage of Bill C-29 to establish a national council for reconciliation, a 2023 status update by the Yellowhead Institute said that at the government’s current rate of progress—an average of 1.625 completed per year since 2015—it will take another 58 years, or until 2081, to complete all 94.

sbenson@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Argentina offers alternate July 1 party

The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia



Kazakh Ambassador Dauletbek Kussainov, left, and Argentine Ambassador Josefina Martínez Gramuglia attend Argentina's national day reception at the official residence on July 1.



El Salvadorian Ambassador Ricardo Alfonso Cisneros Rodríguez, left, Guatemalan Ambassador Guisela Atalida Godínez Sazo, Martínez Gramuglia, and Mexican Ambassador Carlos Manuel Joaquín González.



United Arab Emirates Ambassador Fahad Saeed Al Raqbani, left, Ukrainian Ambassador Yuliia Kovaliv, and Indonesian Ambassador Danief Tumpal Sumurung Simanjuntak.



Martínez Gramuglia, left, and Transport Minister Pablo Rodríguez.

Film fest prepares for launch



The 27th Latin American Film Festival kicked off with a reception at the Cuban Embassy on June 20. Mexican actor Horacio Castelo, left, Mexican Ambassador Carlos Manuel Joaquín González, and Erick Augusto Bernard Mateo, chargé d'affaires of the Dominican Republic Embassy



Ricardo Alfonso Cisneros Rodríguez, ambassador of El Salvador to Canada and Group of Embassies of Latin American Countries president, delivers remarks.



Peruvian Ambassador Manuel Gerardo Talavera Espinar, left, Christian Embassy executive director Darlene McLean, and Liberal MP Chandra Arya.

Kosovar deputy PM tours Ottawa



Kosovar Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Donika Gërvalla-Schwarz, right, presents Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly with a gift during her visit to Ottawa on May 27.



Kosovar Ambassador to Canada Adriatik Kryeziu, left, Liberal MP John McKay, Gërvalla-Schwarz, and Kusari-Lila meet in the West Block on May 28.



Guests enjoyed the variety of finger food samples from the Latin American countries on offer.



Independent Senator Peter Boehm, left, Gërvalla-Schwarz, Kosovo MP and Kosovo-Canada Friendship Group chair Mimoza Kusari-Lila, Kryeziu, and Gërvalla-Schwarz's political adviser Shpëtim Hajdaraj.



Gërvalla-Schwarz, left, and Liberal MP Marie-France Lalonde, parliamentary secretary to the defence minister.



Talavera Espinar, left, Independent Senator Rosa Galvez, and Chilean Ambassador Juan Carlos García Pérez De Arce.



Laura Ryckewaert
Hill Climbers

Trio of staff additions, title changes in Justice Minister Virani's shop

Plus, Mental Health and Addictions Minister Ya'ara Saks has a pair of new aides.

Justice Minister and Attorney General **Arif Virani** recently welcomed three new staff to his team, including new assistants focused on operations and communications, while three others have taken on new titles.

Starting with the new hires, on July 8, **Caitlin Galipeau** started at work as a special assistant for communications in Virani's office. A few days earlier, on July 2, **Nate Feldman** officially joined the justice team as a new special assistant for operations.



Nate Feldman is now a special assistant for operations to Minister Virani. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Feldman is a former constituency assistant to Mental Health and Addictions Minister **Ya'ara Saks** as the MP for York Centre, Ont., and a recent graduate of Queen's University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in political science. Feldman worked on then-Ontario Liberal candidate **Karim Bardeesy's** campaign in the provincial riding of Parkdale-High Park, Ont., ahead of the 2022 election. He's also a former policy intern with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

In June, Virani welcomed **Mehdi Najarali** to his office as his new executive assistant.

Najarali spent the last year and a half—roughly—as an assistant to British Columbia Liberal MP **Joyce Murray**. He's also a former assistant to Ontario Liberal



Mehdi Najarali is Minister Virani's new executive assistant. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Justice Minister Arif Virani, right, at a June press conference alongside Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc. Virani has added three new staff, and promoted three others within his office. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

MP **Leah Taylor Roy**, and while working towards a bachelor's degree in public relations at Humber College, over the summer of 2021, he did a public relations internship with Brown & Cohen Communications & Public Affairs. Najarali has since also graduated from Carleton University with a master's degree in political management.

Turning to staff promotions, **Chantal Tshimanga** has traded in her title as special assistant for parliamentary affairs and West regional affairs for that of senior Indigenous relations, operations, and parliamentary affairs adviser.



Chantal Tshimanga is now a senior Indigenous relations, operations, and parliamentary affairs adviser to Minister Virani. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Tshimanga first joined the justice office under then-minister **David Lametti** at the end of 2021, originally covering both West and North regional affairs, in addition to parliamentary affairs. A former constituency assistant to now-Citizens' Services Minister **Terry Beech** as the MP for Burnaby North-Seymour, B.C., between 2016 and 2018, Tshimanga has since spent roughly two years as a special assistant with the human resources unit in Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau's** office. Outside of politics,

her past experience includes time spent as director of procurement for Givway and Co., a company that makes backpacks and which she helped found in 2014.

Policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser **Lindsay Jean** has been bumped up to "senior" status within Virani's office. A former lawyer with Lavery Lawyers in Quebec, Jean has been working for the federal justice minister since February 2023, starting under then-minister Lametti.

Maha Jawass, who was originally hired as executive assistant to the chief of staff in October 2023, has been given the added role of regional affairs adviser for the Prairies. Jawass is a former Liberal staffer at Queen's Park, and a former communications specialist with Family Service Toronto, amongst other past jobs. Like Feldman, she was part of Bardeesy's 2022 campaign team, for which she was a volunteer co-ordinator.

Virani's office is now 22-staff strong. Led by chief of staff **Lisa Jørgensen**, it otherwise currently includes: deputy chief of



Maha Jawass now wears two hats in the justice minister's office. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

staff and director of parliamentary affairs **Seth Pickard-Tattrie**, director of litigation **Morgan MacDougall-Milne**, director of rights implementation **Tania Monaghan**, director of policy **Jessica Spindler**, senior policy advisers **Dahlia James** and **Keith Torrie**, policy adviser **Isabelle Laliberté**, senior operations and Ontario regional affairs adviser **Chris Knipe**, director of operations **Alicia Castelli**, director of communications **David Taylor**, press secretary and deputy director of communications **Chantalle Aubertin**, issues manager and parliamentary affairs adviser **Anna Lisa Lowenstein**, judicial affairs adviser **François Giroux**, special assistant for judicial affairs **Mélanie Le Bouédec**, and regional adviser for the Atlantic as assistant to the parliamentary secretary **Charlie Skipworth**.

Speaking of Minister Saks, there is a pair of new hires to catch up on for her office as minister for mental health and addictions.

Last week, **Megan Trower** officially joined the minister's team as a digital communications adviser. Trower spent the last almost two years as a junior program officer with the Canada Revenue Agency, the first year of which overlapped with her final year of undergraduate studies at the University of Ottawa, where she earned a bachelor's degree in communication and media studies.



Megan Trower is a new digital communications adviser to Minister Saks. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Emily Kanter is director of communications to Saks, and also currently oversees press secretary and issues adviser **Yuval Daniel** and communications adviser **Ghada Abid**.



Jacob Wilson is now a special assistant for parliamentary and Quebec regional affairs to Minister Saks. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Jacob Wilson is another fresh face on Saks' team, and has been hired as a special assistant for parliamentary and Quebec regional affairs. Wilson was most recently an assistant to Alberta Liberal MP **George Chahal**, and is a former House of Commons page as part of the 2022-23 cohort. His LinkedIn profile indicates he's in the midst of his undergraduate studies at Carleton University, where he's studying public affairs and policy management, and political science and government.

Jeremy Proulx is director of parliamentary affairs to Saks, while **Hilary Morgan** is director of operations. **Sarah Welch** is chief of staff to the minister.

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The Hill Times

Want a competitive change of pace? Summer Games kick off in Paris on July 26



A different kind of race: the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics and Paralympics may offer some political respite when things get going on July 26. Photograph courtesy of Nicolas Michaud/Flickr

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

House Not Sitting—The House is on its summer break. It resumes sitting on Sept. 16, and will sit for four weeks from Sept. 16-Oct. 11, but will take Monday, Sept. 30, off. It breaks Oct. 14-18, and resumes sitting on Oct. 21. It sits Oct. 21-Nov. 9, and breaks on Nov. 11 for Remembrance Day week until Nov. 15. It resumes again on Nov. 18, and is scheduled to sit from Nov. 18 to Dec. 17.

Bank of Canada to Announce Overnight Rate—The Bank of Canada will announce its decision on the target for the overnight rate and publish the *Monetary Policy Report*. Wednesday, July 24, at 10 a.m. Details online: bankofcanada.ca.

Minister Ng to Attend Fundraiser—International Trade Minister Mary Ng will join Liberal MP Wilson Miao for a fundraising event for the Richmond Centre-Marpole Federal Liberal Association. Wednesday, July 24, at 6 p.m. PT at the Little Karp Seafood Restaurant & Bar, 8631 Alexandra Rd., Richmond, B.C. Details: liberal.ca.

FRIDAY, JULY 26—SUNDAY, AUG. 11

Summer Olympics—Cheer for Team Canada as they take part in the XXXIII Olympic Summer Games. Friday, July 26, to Sunday, Aug. 11, in Paris, France. Details: olympics.com.

TUESDAY, JULY 30

UNICEF Canada Virtual Roundtable—As climate change drives an increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires in Canada and around the world, children are at greater risk. Join UNICEF Canada for a virtual roundtable on “The Impact of Wildfires on Children and How to Protect Them,” an expert-led discussion on wildfires and the implications for children in the context of climate change. Tuesday, July 30, 1-2 p.m. ET. Register online. Contact bpuszkar@unicef.ca for information.

Minister Ng to Attend Fundraiser—International Trade Minister Mary Ng will join Liberal MP Lisa Hepfner for a fundraising event for the Hamilton Mountain Federal Liberal Association. Tuesday, July 30, at 6 p.m. ET at Em Oi,

542 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, Ont. Details: liberal.ca.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 7

Royal St. John's Regatta—Keep an eye out for federal politicians at the annual Royal St. John's Regatta. Wednesday, Aug. 7, in St. John's, N.L. Details: stjohsregatta.ca.

Minister Anand to Attend Fundraiser—Treasury Board President Anita Anand will join Liberal MP Kody Blois for a fundraising event for an evening filled with conversation and refreshments. Wednesday, Aug. 7, at 5 p.m. AT at Maritime Express Cider Co., 325 Main St., Kentville, N.S. Details: liberal.ca.

MONDAY, AUG. 12

Ministers Champagne and McKinnon to Attend Fundraiser—Innovation Minister François-Philippe Champagne will join Labour Minister Steven Mackinnon for a fundraising event for the Gatineau Federal Liberal Association. Monday, Aug. 12, at 9 a.m. ET at Club de golf Rivermead, 150 ch. Rivermead, Gatineau, Que. Details: liberal.ca.

TUESDAY, AUG. 20

Senator Jaffer's Retirement—Today is British Columbia ISG Senator Mobina Jaffer's 75th birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 4

Bank of Canada to Announce Overnight Rate—The Bank of Canada will announce its decision on the target for the overnight rate. Wednesday, Sept. 4, at 10 a.m. Details online: bankofcanada.ca.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 10—TUESDAY, SEPT. 24

UN General Assembly—The 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly opens today with a high-level General Debate. Tuesday, Sept. 24, to Tuesday, Sept. 24, in New York City.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 12

Privy Council Clerk Hannaford to Deliver Remarks—John Hannaford, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, will deliver remarks at

a roundtable lunch hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Thursday, Sept. 12 at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details online: cdhowe.org.

MONDAY, SEPT. 16

House Resumes Sitting—The House will resume sitting on Monday, Sept. 16.

MONDAY, SEPT. 23

Space Canada's Annual Parliamentary Reception—Brian Gallant invites you to Space Canada's third Annual Parliamentary Reception featuring networking with leaders of Canada's emerging space ecosystem, food and drinks, several space-related interactive displays, and a special guest speaker. Monday, Sept. 23, 5-7 p.m. ET at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building. Details and RSVP to: RSVP@space-canada.ca.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 24

Next Frontier in Canada's Digital Divide—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts a virtual event, “The Next Frontier in Canada's Digital Divide.” Participants include Ian Scott, former CRTD chair; Bill Murdoch, executive director of Clear Sky Connections; and Elisha Ram, senior assistant deputy minister at Employment and Social Development Canada's Income Security and Social Development Branch. Tuesday, Sept. 24, at a time to be confirmed. Details online: irpp.org.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 25

CUTA 2024 Policy Forum—The Canadian Urban Transit Association hosts its 2024 Policy Forum in Ottawa. Some of North America's leading transit and urban mobility experts will discuss the industry's future and the role of federal public transit policy. This year's event will focus on affordability, regional coordination and integration, and transit's role in addressing Canada's productivity gap. Wednesday, Sept. 25 at the Hilton Garden Inn Ottawa Downtown, 361 Queen St. Details via Eventbrite.

MONDAY, SEPT. 30

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation—The fourth annual National

Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day, is today, honouring the children who never returned home and Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities.

FRIDAY, OCT. 4—SATURDAY, OCT. 5

The Francophonie Summit—The Francophonie Summit will take place on Friday, Oct. 4, to Saturday, Oct. 5, in Villers-Cotterêts and Paris, France. Details: francophonie.org.

SUNDAY, OCT. 6—FRIDAY, OCT. 11

ASEAN Summit—The ASEAN Summit will take place in Vientiane, Laos, from Sunday, Oct. 6, to Friday, Oct. 11.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 9

Roundtable Lunch with U.S. Ambassador Cohen—U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Cohen will take part in a roundtable lunch event hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Wednesday, Oct. 9, at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

Annual Bill Graham Lecture and Dinner—Louise Blais will moderate a discussion featuring former Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien and former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo during the second annual Bill Graham Lecture on International Affairs. Wednesday, Oct. 9 at 6 p.m. at Arcadian Court, 400 Bay St., Toronto. Details online: thecic.org.

THURSDAY, OCT. 10

Frank McKenna Awards 2024—The Public Policy Forum hosts the “Frank McKenna Awards 2024: An evening celebrating outstanding public policy leadership in Atlantic Canada.” Honourees to be announced. Thursday, Oct. 10, at 5 p.m. AT at Pier 21, 1055 Marginal Rd., Halifax. Details online: ppforum.ca.

SUNDAY, OCT. 13

Senator Bellemare's Retirement—Today is Quebec PSG Senator Diane Bellemare's 75th birthday, which means

her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

SATURDAY, OCT. 19

B.C. Election—Voters in British Columbia head to the polls today for the provincial general election.

MONDAY, OCT. 21

New Brunswick Election—It's general election time in New Brunswick, with the province's residents voting for their next members of the Legislative Assembly.

MONDAY, OCT. 21—SATURDAY, OCT. 26

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting—The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting will take place in Apia, Samoa, from Monday, Oct. 21 to Saturday, Oct. 26. Details online: samoachogm2024.ws.

MONDAY, OCT. 21—FRIDAY, NOV. 1

COP16 Conference on Biodiversity—The COP16 Conference on Biodiversity will take place from Monday, Oct. 21, to Friday, Nov. 1, in Cali, Colombia. Details online: cbd.int.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 23

Bank of Canada to Announce Overnight Rate—The Bank of Canada will announce its decision on the target for the overnight rate and publish the *Monetary Policy Report*. Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 10 a.m. Details online: bankofcanada.ca.

MONDAY, OCT. 21—SATURDAY, OCT. 26

IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings—The 2024 annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will take place in Washington, D.C., from Monday, Oct. 21, to Saturday, Oct. 26. Details: worldbank.org.

MONDAY, OCT. 28

Saskatchewan Election—Voters in Saskatchewan head to the polls today for the provincial general election.

TUESDAY, OCT. 29—THURSDAY, OCT. 31

CAEH24: The National Conference on Ending Homelessness—The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness will host its 11th annual Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa from Tuesday, Oct. 29 to Thursday, Oct. 31. Registration is open. Details online: caeh.ca.

TUESDAY, NOV. 5

Senator Omidvar's Retirement—Today is Ontario ISG Senator Ratna Omidvar's 75th birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

U.S. Presidential Election—The U.S. presidential election happens on Tuesday, Nov. 5. Former U.S. president and current Republican candidate Donald Trump will face off against the Democrats' yet-to-be-official new presidential candidate (following President Joe Biden's withdrawal from the race). The presumptive nominee is incumbent Vice-President Kamala Harris.

THURSDAY, NOV. 14

EDC President Lavery to Deliver Remarks—Mariead Lavery, president and CEO of Export Development Canada, will take part in a roundtable lunch hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Thursday, Nov. 14, at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

TUESDAY, DEC. 31

Foreign Interference Commission Reports—The Foreign Interference Commission's final report will be released on Tuesday, Dec. 31. For more information, check out foreigninterferencecommission.ca.

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

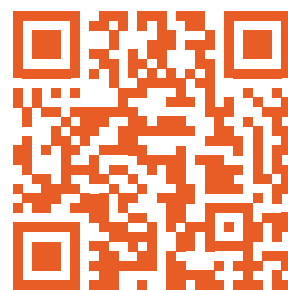


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