

**Energy
policy
briefing**

pp. 15-24

Parliamentarians decry Donald Trump's **'alarming'**
pivot on Ukraine, loss of reliable continental ally ▶ PAGE 6

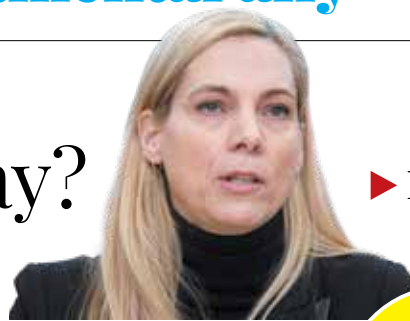
Will Minister St-Onge's **CBC
proposals** ever see the light of day? ▶ PAGE 14

**Hill
Climbers**
p. 30



THE HILL TIMES

**Diplomatic
Circles**
p. 29



THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR, NO. 2200

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2025 \$5.00

RED RACE

▶ Karina Gould sets up
her future **PAGE 4**

▶ Julia Parsons: What to expect
after the Liberal showdown
of the decade **PAGE 12**

▶ Mark Carney faces new
line of attack **PAGE 5**



Liberal leadership candidates Mark Carney, left, Chrystia Freeland, Karina Gould, and Frank Baylis debate in Montreal on Feb. 24. Screenshot courtesy of the Liberal Party of Canada

NEWS

Tariff dispute process would only offer symbolic win for Canada, but should still be used: trade observers

BY NEIL MOSS

While dispute-settlement procedures would offer Canada little relief from punishing United States trade levies, a

symbolic victory is still reason to pursue the option, say trade observers as Canada risks flouting trade rules by pushing ahead with unilateral retaliation.

Continued on **page 26**

NEWS

NDP needs to go 'back to the drawing board' on election strategy or face further drop in the polls, say pundits

BY STUART BENSON

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh says he and his party have no "plan B" in the next election other than winning, but with his

party slipping closer to single digits in the polls, strategists say he needs a better plan than to just go down swinging.

Continued on **page 27**



By Christina Leadlay

Heard on the Hill

Assistant deputy speaker Mendès being treated for cancer



In her first Facebook reel, Liberal MP Alexandra Mendès shares her recent cancer diagnosis with viewers, but says she's staying on as MP 'as long as you'd like me to continue.' Screenshots courtesy of Facebook

Liberal MP and assistant deputy Speaker **Alexandra Mendès** announced late last week that she has cancer.

Addressing her followers in what she conceded was her first-ever Facebook reel, the three-term MP for Brossard-Saint-Lambert, Que., betrayed no emotion in her 40-second-long video.

"I have been diagnosed with cancer, but hopefully it is something I will overcome thanks to medical progress that our country has done, the medical facilities that are offered," said Mendès, who has held the role of assistant deputy Speaker since 2019.

"I remain at your disposal as your MP, and I hope to remain so for as many years as you'd like

me to continue. Thanks for your support, and onwards."

This is Mendès' second stint as an MP. From 2008 to 2011, she was Liberal MP for the riding of Brossard-La Prairie. She was defeated by the NDP's **Hoang Mai** in the 2011 election, but then bested Mai to reclaim the renamed seat in 2015, and has held it ever since.

Six new faces in Parl Sec shakeup

Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** rearranged his parliamentary secretaries last week, swapping out the five MPs who've said they are not re-offering, filling three gaps left by parl secs who joined cabinet, and welcoming six new faces. There were also tweaks to existing titles, but HOH is just going to track the big changes.

Rejoining the parl sec team is **Francesco Sorbara** who becomes PS for finance and intergovernmental affairs following **Rachel Bendayan's** promotion to cabinet on Dec. 20, 2024. Sorbara, an Ontario MP, hasn't been a PS since 2021.

Ontario MP **Arielle Kayabaga** also joined the PS list. She takes over the small business file from her colleague **Bryan May**, who is now PS to the prime minister, filling the vacancy left by **Terry Duguid** who is now a cabinet minister.

And with **Élisabeth Brière** having moved up to cabinet, her former PS duties of families, children, and social development now go to Ontario's **Chris Bittle**, the current parliamentary secretary for housing, infrastructure, and communities.

Meanwhile, **Kody Blois** joins the PS team. The Nova Scotia MP becomes parliamentary secretary to the minister of agriculture and agri-good—formerly held by Ontario's **Francis Drouin**—and also PS for rural economic development, and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, previously held by fellow Blue-noser **Darrell Samson**. Neither Drouin nor Samson are seeking re-election.

With Ontario MP **Pam Damoff** also not reoffering, her former PS portfolio for foreign affairs (consular affairs) has been given to another Ontarian, **Julie Dzerowicz**, whose new file gains a new purview: Latin America. This is Dzerowicz's first PS role.

Longtime parliamentary secretary for Crown-Indigenous relations **Jaime Battiste** from Nova Scotia takes on duties for northern affairs from Newfoundland and Labrador's **Yvonne Jones** (who is not running again) as well as for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, which hadn't been assigned a parl sec previously.

Ontario MP **Tim Louis** is also joining the team as PS for

heritage, taking over the file from British Columbia MP **Taleeb Noormohamed** who is now parl sec for finance and for intergovernmental affairs (Canada-U.S.), the latter of which he's acquired from Ontario's **Jennifer O'Connell**. O'Connell keeps her previous role as PS for public safety (cybersecurity), but has had her responsibilities for democratic institutions erased (the issue appears to have been dropped from the PS rota entirely).

With New Brunswick MP **Jenica Atwin** not running again, her former role as parl sec for Indigenous services has been given to Ontario's **Terry Sheehan**. He in turn passes his erstwhile portfolio of labour and seniors to fellow Ontarian **Irek Kusmierczyk**, who's added them to his ongoing remit of employment, and workforce development. However, in taking on labour and seniors, Kusmierczyk gives up responsibilities for official languages—which he'd shared with parliamentary secretary for energy and natural resources **Marc G. Serré**—which **Viviane Lapointe** has taken over as a new face in the parl sec team. Both Serré and Lapointe are from northern Ontario.



These Liberal MPs were recently given parliamentary secretary roles: Francesco Sorbara, left, Arielle Kayabaga, Viviane Lapointe, Kody Blois, Tim Louis, and Julie Dzerowicz. The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia and Andrew Meade; courtesy of X and the CMPA

Ex-Hill reporter acclaimed as Liberal candidate

A former reporter with Hill Times Publishing has been acclaimed as the federal Liberal candidate in the southern Ontario riding of Kitchener Centre.

Liberal Party national campaign co-chair **Terry Duguid** confirmed **Brian Adeba's** candidacy on Feb. 21.

"This is my first time running for political office. I contemplated a run in 2021, but my children were too young," Adeba told **Heard on the Hill**

by email on Feb. 24, noting that issues including employment for young people, housing prices, and health care are the top concerns that inspired him to finally take the leap into politics.

"My aim in Parliament is to push for policies that will strengthen the competitiveness of Waterloo Region so that it attracts more investment that will create jobs for everyone," he explained. "I want to ensure that



Brian Adeba was with Hill Times Publishing from 2005 to 2007. He's recently been acclaimed as the Liberal candidate in Kitchener Centre, Ont. Photograph courtesy of Brian Adeba

the Canada Health Act is not eroded further."

Originally from Juba, South Sudan, Adeba reported for *Embassy newspaper*—now the Wednesday edition of *The Hill Times*—from 2005 to 2007 covering various House committees including defence, public safety, and immigration. He later covered the Heritage Committee during a stint at what was then-known as *Tech Media Reports*—which Hill Times Publishing acquired and re-named *The*

Wire Report.

Adeba has since left the world of journalism—and Ottawa—and is currently based in the Kitchener-Waterloo region with his family. For the last nine years he's worked for *The Sentry*, an investigative and policy group based in Washington, D.C.

Green MP **Mike Morrice** is the incumbent in Kitchener Centre, Ont.

Federal Court dismisses calls for Quebec riding review

And in other constituency news, the Federal Court has tossed a challenge of a riding boundary change in Quebec.

In his Feb. 21 decision in the matter of **Alexis Deschênes and Droits Collectifs Québec v. AGC, Justice Sébastien Grammond** dismissed the application to review the Quebec's Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission's

decision to eliminate the riding of **Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia** and instead attach its territory to two neighbouring ridings.

The applicants argued the new district's geographic area "is too large for a single Member of Parliament to fulfill their role adequately and provide services to their constituents,"

thereby affecting voters' right to effective representation.

Bloc MP **Kristina Michaud** is the incumbent in **Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia**, but will not be running again. Much of the current riding will be absorbed into the renamed **Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj**, currently held by Fisheries Minister **Diane Lebouthillier**.

In his justification for dismissing the review, Grammond said the commission's grounds for redistribution

"were reasonable and in keeping with the principle of effective representation developed by the Supreme Court. Relative parity of voting power is the most critical component of that principle."

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The Hill Times



Bloc MP Kristina Michaud's Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia riding will be eliminated when the next election takes place. The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia

Is Canada part of Trump's three-ring circus?

Europe and Canada represent serious obstacles to the vision the American and Russian leaders share of a racially and religiously homogenous northern hemisphere.

Joseph
Ingram



Opinion

With the antics of Elon Musk and his adolescent Musk-rats crippling the United States administration, and President Donald Trump seeking to rewrite history by suggesting that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is a dictator who initiated the current war between Russia and Ukraine, we are witnessing in real time an old Ottoman parable that “when the clown enters the palace he doesn’t become king, but rather the palace becomes the circus.”

While the U.S., Ukraine, and the European Union are major acts in the Trump circus, we are also being drawn into his tent with the president openly suggesting that Canada’s annexation and the fulfillment of America’s manifest destiny is in the interest of all on the continent. Trump’s use of tariffs to raise the cost of maintaining a sovereign Canada clearly reveals both the Darwinian nature of his ambition, and his and Musk’s ignorance of history. While a recent poll of gen-Z Canadians reveal that a small minority of them (seven per cent in the Maritimes to 19 per cent in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) are sympathetic to his imperialist ambitions, the open hostility by the vast majority of Canadians reflects a fundamentally different set of national values than our southern neighbour. Nowhere are these values more



The use of tariffs by U.S. President Donald Trump, left, clearly reveals both the Darwinian nature of his ambition, and his and Elon Musk’s ignorance of history, writes Joseph Ingram. *Images courtesy of DonkeyHoley*



evident than in the way our two countries are seeking to address the major challenges of the 21st century with policy paths that are increasingly divergent.

But to best understand what—in addition to the Trump circus—is driving our two countries apart, it is worth examining several of the most serious global challenges to our democracies, and to the economic and social fabric of the entire planet. These are forces that can only be managed by collective efforts and a multinational consensus, and which constitute critical fault lines in our widening policy responses to them.

First amongst the challenges is the development since the end of the Second World War of a more globalized world with the creation of multinational institutions, regional alliances, and new powers emerging from poverty and colonization. However, viewed through Trump’s mercantilist prism of America first, globalization is seen as working to the U.S.’s disadvantage by ceding its capacity to act independently. Hence his withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord, the UN Human Rights Council, the International Criminal Court, UNESCO, the World Health Organization, and the Iran Nuclear Deal, combined with threats to withdraw from NATO and the

World Trade Organization—all actions reflecting his distaste for a rules-based order.

In contrast, even under conservative governments, Canada has consistently stressed support for a rules-based order, and has placed itself at the heart of the globalization process and the post-war institutions built to sustain it. As expressed by then-foreign minister Chrystia Freeland in a 2018 speech delivered in Washington, D.C.: “America’s

security and the inexorable rise of the rest lies in doubling down on a ... rules-based international order. It lies in working alongside traditional allies like Canada and alongside all the younger democracies around the world.”

A second challenge is represented in the demographic transition that is warming our atmosphere at a rate which doesn’t allow nature to reconstitute itself quickly enough, and is pushing populations in the most affected

regions to emigrate at increasingly unmanageable levels. Here, too, our policy responses are fundamentally at odds with those of Trump’s America. While his administration and its supporters seek to keep immigrants from the Global South to a minimum, Canadian policy—by virtue of our history and founding by three separate nations (English, French, and Indigenous)—has produced a mosaic in which more than 26 per cent of Canadians in 2024 were foreign born, versus about 14 per cent in the U.S. Canada is increasingly made up of citizens who have learned to be more than one race or religion, knowing that their children may well be yet another racial or religious blend.

As for the threat from global warming and the scientific consensus that measures the risk, Trump and his MAGA adherents view it all as a “hoax,” and in response plan to “drill, baby, drill”—the antithesis of what has, at least in rhetorical terms, driven the Trudeau government, and in actual policy terms may well drive a successor Liberal government, especially if led by Mark Carney.

But arguably, the most consequential difference between us and our Trump-led neighbour is in our contrasting approaches to the war in Ukraine—a brutally brazen attempt by Russian President Vladimir Putin’s government to criminally absorb its neighbour and further his ambition for a Eurasian union to be governed by white, Christian orthodox males. For Putin, the EU—combined with its greater acceptance of immigrants from the Global South—is Russia’s primary threat.

While some may argue that Trump is either a surrogate or a useful idiot to Putin, his recent behaviour suggests neither. What it does reveal is an almost identical world vision to that of Putin, in which the northern hemisphere—including all North America—would be governed by white Christian males, excluding as much as possible immigrants from “s-hole countries” in the Global South.

For Trump, both Europe and Canada are key actors in his circus in that, for the moment, they represent serious obstacles to the vision he and Putin share of a northern hemisphere as racially and religiously homogenous as they can make it. Both Europe and Canada need to unequivocally communicate that they will not be part of Trump’s circus, and that Canada’s history and core values run counter to those which define him and Putin. Indeed, Canada needs to make it abundantly clear that Trump and Putin’s mythical monolith, through which the strongest win and the weaker lose, no longer bears any resemblance to Canada’s demographic and cultural realities.

Joseph Ingram is chair of GreenTech Investment Holdings/Labs, a fellow of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, a former president of the North-South Institute, and a former special representative of the World Bank to the UN and the World Trade Organization.

The Hill Times



Russian President Vladimir Putin’s war on Ukraine is a brutally brazen attempt to criminally absorb his neighbour, writes Joseph Ingram. *Image courtesy of GoodFon*

NEWS

Gould leadership bid appeals to young Liberals, paving future path, say Grits

Karina Gould is ‘the first Liberal in a while that has shown an ability to really connect with [young Liberals] and mobilize them,’ says pollster Alex Kohut.

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

The youngest candidate in the Liberal leadership race, Karina Gould appears to have traction among young Liberal voters, and while it remains to be seen how that support paves her path to the finish line, it could serve the three-term MP well into the future.

Gould, 37, launched her leadership campaign on Jan. 18 in her home riding of Burlington, Ont., and is widely seen as the third-place candidate in the race behind frontrunners Mark Carney and Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.). Also currently vying for the party’s top job is former MP Frank Baylis. The Liberal Party disqualified former MP Ruby Dhalla on Feb. 21.

Liberals will elect a new leader by preferential ballot on March 9.

Spark Insights senior director Alex Kohut, 32, said “young Liberals are a natural fit” for Gould as she looks to “build a base of support within the party,” and she’s “done a lot of outreach towards them”—work that he said “seems to be paying off.”

“Overall, certainly, she’s very far back [in polling], but with young Liberals she has almost twice the support as she has among the general voter base for the leadership race,” said Kohut,



Alex Kohut says Gould is building potential ‘lifelong relationships’ with Liberals through her leadership bid. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Liberal leadership contender Karina Gould speaks with reporters in the West Block on Jan. 23—the same day she officially submitted her paperwork to enter the race. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

who remained undecided in the race when he spoke to *The Hill Times* on Feb. 18.

A former pollster in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) office, Kohut conducted his own survey of 675 likely Liberal leadership voters aged 18 years and up from Jan. 24-31, the findings of which he’s been analyzing in regular posts on Substack. Though his survey didn’t capture the moods of any Liberals aged 14 to 17 years who would be eligible to vote in the race, Kohut’s numbers suggest a boost for Gould among younger Liberals who were polled in the early days of the race. He shared some of his otherwise paywalled findings with *The Hill Times*.

As part of the survey, Kohut had asked respondents to fill out their ranked ballot. Among respondents generally, Gould ranked a solid third, garnering seven per cent support behind Freeland at 27 per cent and Carney at 54 per cent. But among younger Liberals aged 30 and below, Gould’s support jumped to 13 per cent, while Freeland’s dropped to 16 per cent—with Carney still “well ahead”—making Gould “competitive for second place,” said Kohut. He noted Gould’s potential for growth since the survey as she was “not well known at the start of the race among Liberals.”

Kohut said he’ll be interested to see how many 14-to-18-year-olds will ultimately be eligible to vote, and whether Liberal campus clubs mobilize for Gould or another candidate.

“But it definitely is a much-needed thing for the Liberal Party to be able to sign up some young people for this leadership race, to get some more enthusiasm among younger Canadians, and

frankly, it looks like Carney and Freeland’s support base—especially Freeland’s—is a little bit older within the party, so it’s nice to have that variety, and have someone who’s speaking directly to young people,” he said of Gould.

Those connections could also serve Gould well in the future, said Kohut.

“Certainly a lot of those kind of 14-to-18-year-olds who are voting for the first time in their life, if they got excited about her—and she wants to run again in 10 years—that’s people that potentially she’s built lifelong relationships with,” he said.

“Even if she gets 12 per cent [support] in the leadership race and gets a good cabinet role or something out of this, people are going to be looking towards her because the party has been really struggling with young Canadians recently, and she’s kind of the first Liberal in a while that has shown an ability to really connect with that group and mobilize them.”

In a recent op-ed in *The Toronto Star*, Navigator’s Jaime Watt suggested that of all of Gould’s credentials, “none are as crucial to her long-term success as the sheer political instinct she’s demonstrating by running in this race.” He argued Gould is positioning herself as a potential “king or

queen maker,” but beyond that, is setting up her political future “brilliantly.”

“Karina Gould may well lose this battle. But she’s playing a much longer game,” wrote Watt.

Kohut noted that while it will take more than the youth vote to propel Gould to victory this time around, “she’s definitely building up a bit of a support coalition around young people in the race, which is potentially really good for her long term.” And while he said he couldn’t speak to her personal goals, “if you’re looking at a two- or three-election strategy ... it doesn’t hurt to have suddenly a support base of people who have voted for you before.”

Young Liberals on Gould’s campaign

Former PMO director of communications Cameron Ahmad, 32, is among those who’ve publicly



Cameron Ahmad, right, alongside then-PMO colleague Andrée-Lyne Hallé in Centre Block in 2017. *The Hill Times* photograph by Jake Wright

endorsed Gould. Speaking to *The Hill Times* from New York where he now works as a director with the Malala Fund, Ahmad said he’s long respected Gould as a leader, and sees her as a “very genuine and authentic person who is in politics for the right reasons.”

“She has brought smart ideas to the race. She brings energy and enthusiasm to the race, and she also embodies—I think—the type of politician that a lot of people can be inspired by and can see themselves in based on where she comes from, her background,” he said. “All of those ingredients make for a really strong candidate—I think we’re lucky as a party to have multiple strong candidates.”

Ahmad said it was important for the party that this race be a “real” competition, and for new people to bring new ideas and offer a “real sense of renewal.”

“My decision to support Karina is based on knowing her, and believing that she is a really powerful addition to the mix, and that she can bring something to the table, especially when it comes to renewal and energy and enthusiasm,” he said.

Ahmad said while Gould is forging important new connections through her campaign, rather than shoring up future prospects, he thinks her run is motivated by her values, and her desire to “fight for things she knows are important to Canadians and for her generation” amid the “serious risk” of a potential Conservative majority.

“Getting involved in politics and throwing yourself into public office at a young age when you can do other things with your career—which comes with, of course, a lot of pressure and a lot of risk, especially when you’re raising a family at that stage of your life—you do that because you believe in what you’re fighting for,” he said.

Kiana Pilon, 22, is a new cabinet staffer and current federal vice-president of the Queen’s University Liberal Association, and is likewise supporting Gould. She said the MP “has always made a very strong effort” to engage with her campus club, including hosting the group last fall during its annual trip to Ottawa.

“Just having that really positive interaction with her, knowing

Continued on page 28



Kiana Pilon says Gould has always made a ‘strong effort’ to connect to campus clubs like hers. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Carney shouldn't take the bait on Conservatives' 'desperate and distracted' disclosure hunt, say Liberal strategists

After rolling out the 'Sneaky Carney' moniker, the Conservatives have held three West Block press conferences and written two letters demanding proactive ethics disclosure from former central banker Mark Carney.

BY STUART BENSON

Liberal leadership front-runner Mark Carney says the hunt for his proactive ethics disclosures shows the Conservatives are "afraid" of his campaign, and the Grits' surging poll numbers. Yet while Carney is "technically correct" that he isn't breaking any rules, Conservative strategists say he shouldn't expect his critics to give up the chase or for Canadians to accept the "bare minimum" from a potential prime minister.

On Feb. 18, Conservative MP Michael Barrett (Leeds–Grenville–Thousand Islands and Rideau Lake, Ont.) sent a letter to Carney, calling on him "to be honest with Canadians about his many conflicts of interest and other ethical disclosures" ahead of the March 9 Liberal leadership vote, the winner of which will also become the next prime minister.

In the letter, Barrett accused Carney of a "failure to commit to submitting" his ethics disclosures. However, he also noted that Carney is not required to make such disclosures until he is elected to public office.

Under the Conflict of Interest Act, individuals elected to public office must make ethics disclosures of all financial and business interests within 60 days of being elected, and have 120 days to sign a public declaration of those interests.

Barrett noted that would mean Carney could potentially serve as prime minister for up to four months before making a public disclosure, which he said would be "more than enough time for you to make decisions that benefit your rich and well-connected friends."

"The rules weren't designed for a situation like this," Barrett



Liberal leadership hopeful Mark Carney says the Conservatives' recent focus on him makes it 'clear' who they are afraid to face in the next election. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

told reporters during his accompanying press conference in the West Block. "Carney needs to make that public disclosure, and he can't wait until after the Liberal leadership, [or] after the next election. He needs to do it now. He's skated far too long by avoiding the spirit of the law."

Barrett also highlighted several of Carney's previous roles and business connections, including those he held while advising the Liberal Party on economic growth. These included his board chairmanship of Brookfield Asset Management, and his connections and advisory roles with Pacific Investment Management

Company, Bloomberg, and payment-processing service Stripe.

Early last September, Carney was appointed to a party task force that advised Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) on the economy and productivity. As it was not an official government position, Carney was not required to submit a public disclosure.

Two days after Barrett's press conference, Conservative MP Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, Alta.) followed the call for Carney to make the same disclosures of his "corporate interests and assets" while focusing more specifically on his role

with Stripe in her letter and press conference.

Additionally, Garner suggested that Carney's "silence" on the company's position regarding credit card interchange fees suggested he had "something to personally gain from staying quiet."

On Feb. 24, Rempel Garner, alongside Conservative MP Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg–Haute-Saint-Charles, Que.), held a third press conference demanding that "Sneaky Carney ... come clean" about his financial and business interests, lay out his plans for a "shadow carbon tax," and explain his "sneaky accounting trick" to

divide the budget between capital and operating spending.

In response to the series of press conferences, Carney's campaign said that he has "always adhered to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism," and has already resigned from all professional or advisory roles to focus on the leadership race.

"As leader, he will work hard to earn a seat in the House of Commons, where he is committed to complying with all applicable ethics rules and guidelines to ensure that his previous experience does not create any real or perceived conflicts," wrote campaign spokesperson Emily Williams following Barrett's Feb. 18 press conference. "If [Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre] had any experience outside of partisan politics, we would call on him to meet these same standards."

Following the second press conference on Feb. 21, Williams added that the Conservatives' focus on Carney made it "clear" Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) "is afraid to face [Carney] in the coming election campaign."

While Carney has given no indication that he will be swayed by the Conservatives' demands for proactive disclosures, if the intent was to drive a wedge between Carney's fellow leadership contenders, they have not taken the bait, either.

In a statement, the campaign of Carney's closest competitor, former deputy prime minister and finance minister Chrystia Freeland (University–Rosedale, Ont.), noted that her declarations to the federal ethics commissioner are already publicly available, but did not address the absence of Carney's.

"Chrystia believes transparency and preserving public trust in Canada's elected leaders is important and ensures conflicts of interest do not occur," wrote campaign spokesperson Chantalle Aubertin.

Former Liberal House leader Karina Gould (Burlington, Ont.), the only other elected candidate in the race, also did not directly address *The Hill Times'* questions about whether Carney should disclose ahead of the March 9 vote, nor if the other unelected candidate should do the same.

"We have a system in place. Karina assumes that anyone who becomes prime minister will follow the rules," wrote campaign spokesperson Emily Jackson.

The only other remaining unelected leadership candidate, businessman and former parliamentarian Frank Baylis, said he isn't interested in "playing silly politics" with the Conservatives.

During a Feb. 20 press conference outlining his economic agenda, Baylis said he and Carney would "follow the procedures when we're elected and make full disclosures."

"I don't see any issue with that," Baylis said.

On Feb. 21, the Liberal Party announced former MP Ruby Dhalla had been disqualified from the race following a vote by the party's leadership committee regarding what it determined to be "extremely serious" violations



Conservative MP Michael Barrett held a press conference in the West Block on Feb. 18, calling on Liberal leadership hopeful Mark Carney to disclose potential conflicts of interest. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



During a press conference on Feb. 21, Conservative MP Michelle Rempel Garner also called on Carney to disclose any potential 'corporate interests or assets' he may still hold after resigning from his role with payment processor Stripe. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

NEWS

'Alarming' U.S. pivot on Ukraine showcases unreliability of Trump White House, say parliamentarians

Liberal MP John McKay says support for Ukraine will be raised when the Canada-U.S. Inter-Parliamentary Group heads to D.C. in March.

BY NEIL MOSS

Canadian parliamentarians say that Ukraine must be able to decide its own fate as the American government is increasingly viewed as an untrustworthy partner in support of the country in the war against Russia.

The United States held a first round of peace talks with Russian officials in Saudi Arabia on Feb. 18 without Ukrainian representatives present, while excluded European leaders met in France. A second set of U.S.-led discussions in Riyadh were held on Feb. 25.

Liberal MP John McKay (Scarborough-Guildwood, Ont.), who chaired the House Defence Committee prior to prorogation, described the American effort to attempt to reach a peace deal with Russia without Ukraine present as "naive," "arrogant," and "foolish."

"It strikes me as big-boy bully politics. [Russian President Vladimir] Putin has aspirations to be a big-boy bully, and he's found his current foil in [U.S. President] Donald Trump who obviously likes being a big-boy bully," said McKay, co-chair of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (IPG).

On the third anniversary of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his country needs security



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, right, visited Ukraine on Feb. 24 to mark the third anniversary of the Russian invasion, and met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

guarantees to end the war, which he suggested included NATO and European Union membership, according to a BBC report.

Speaking from Kyiv on Feb. 24, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) said that all options are on the table when asked about the deployment of Canadian soldiers to Ukraine, according to the Canadian Press.

The United Kingdom and France first came up with an idea to send a peacekeeping force of around 30,000 personnel to Ukraine when a peace agreement is reached.

Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.) previously said that Canada wants to be involved in conversations regarding security guarantees for Ukraine.

McKay said Canada has limitations regarding the level of personnel it can provide.

"But I think that we would be prepared to participate, assuming that Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian parliament have signed off," he said.

Internal reports from the Department of National Defence

have shown a limited ability for the Canadian military to conduct concurrent operations.

McKay said Canada has "quite quickly" run up against the limitations of its military bandwidth.

"It's been well documented that we've let our Forces deteriorate, particularly our ability to mount expeditionary efforts," he said.

In this environment, the Trump administration has exposed the U.S. as an untrustworthy partner, said McKay.

"At this point, the United States is proving itself to be an unreliable security guarantor, military partner, [and] political partner," he said. "It doesn't seem to have any interest in or care about the realities of what Putin wants, which is to restore the Soviet Union."

McKay said the U.S. has made it "abundantly clear" that it will pursue an isolationist course to divide the world into hegemonic spheres, describing it as a "foolish strategy."

The U.S. voted against a Feb. 24 United Nations resolution condemning Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

McKay said that Canadian parliamentarians will raise the issue when the Canada-U.S. IPG travels to Washington, D.C., for a Congressional visit next month.

But he questioned how much the U.S. is willing to listen to its allies.

"If your partner with whom you are talking is not listening, it's pretty hard to know where the path is forward," he said. "When your erstwhile ally says some absolutely ludicrous things about Zelenskyy and starting the war, it's kind of hard to know what to do, let alone make commitments to do it."

Trump has falsely claimed that Ukraine started the war. He also called Zelenskyy a "dictator."

United States' interest for Ukraine to be victorious, and for the United States to continue to support Ukraine—that has to be plan A."

He said that Ukraine needs to be a top-line issue for Canada's agenda during its G7 presidency.

If the U.S. is unwilling to support Ukraine, it is up to Canada and other allies to do so, and to provide Kyiv with security guarantees that they need, Baker said.

"We can pay a small price now to help Ukraine win, or we're going to pay a bigger price later," he said.

Baker said that it is "astounding" that the U.S. would proceed with negotiations about Ukraine without Ukraine present.

"Not only is it immensely unfair, but it's also impractical to have negotiations about Ukraine without them at the table, and without the Europeans at the table," he said.

No peace until Russia defeated, says Sen. Kutcher

Independent Senator Stan Kutcher (Nova Scotia) told *The Hill Times* that the U.S.-Russian discussions are not about "peace," but rather about "piece."

"What they are about is which piece of Ukraine Russia will get, and which piece the U.S. will get," said Kutcher, the son of Ukrainian refugees. "What we have seen is this is not a peace conference. This is an extortion opportunity."

He said that every single sovereign democratic state needs to reject the Saudi Arabia process.

"It's a template for what's in store for every sovereign democratic state. If the sovereign states—the western states—stand by and let Russia and the United States carve up Ukraine to suit themselves, then they're next," he said. "This is a full-frontal attack on the established world order."

Kutcher said security guarantees when dealing with Russia haven't worked in the past.

"Security guarantees around Russia are a waste of time. It has never abided by any security guarantee," he said, remarking that the only security guarantee that would have an effect is to boost military support for Ukraine.

"There will be no peace in Ukraine until Russia is defeated in Ukraine," he said.

nmooss@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

'Astounding' to disregard Ukraine in peace talks: Baker

Liberal MP Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Ont.), chair of the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group, described Trump's recent rhetoric on Ukraine as "alarming."

He said if Trump's proposed resolutions come to pass—including ceding Ukrainian territory and barring the country from NATO accession—it would feed into Russia's hand.

"That would be rewarding Russia for its aggression, [and] for its war crimes," Baker said. "That would only embolden Russia and other military powers, other dictatorships, to do the same—not just to the Ukrainians, but to us and others."

"A lot is at stake," said Baker, suggesting that Canada needs to be working with the U.S. to change its course.

Trudeau held a call with Trump on Feb. 22 in which the two discussed the war in Ukraine.

Baker said allies need to persuade Trump "that it's in the



Liberal MP John McKay says the U.S. is proving to be an unreliable security and political partner. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Independent Senator Stan Kutcher says the U.S.-Russia dialogue is a 'full-frontal attack on the established world order.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

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Editorial

Editorial

Drop the gloves, Canada

Now that the debates are over, voting has begun for Liberal Party members to select their next leader.

And when Liberals mark their ballots, one of the key questions candidates have said they'll have to answer is who is best to take on United States President Donald Trump.

Former central banker Mark Carney, former deputy prime minister and finance minister Chrystia Freeland, former government House leader Karina Gould, and former Liberal MP Frank Baylis all attempted to make their case in both official languages on Feb. 24 and 25 in Montreal.

It's a case they've all been making since the race to succeed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau officially began in January, but it's a pitch that has needed to evolve.

In recent weeks, Trump has proven himself to be a danger not just to Canada's sovereignty and economy, but also to the world writ large. And though anyone gunning to be head of our federal government must naturally put Canadian interests at the forefront, no one can take for granted the country's place in the global community and responsibility for keeping the peace.

The U.S. president may have finally found the line others weren't willing to cross when he started bashing Ukraine, and falsely blaming the country for being invaded by Russia. Previously, European leaders scratched their heads and awkwardly looked the other way while Trump was declaring his plans to annex Canada, Greenland, and the Panama Canal. But now that the issue is closer to their NATO door-

step, they've rallied around and put up a united front.

This is something we need to see more of. Trump is someone who is happy to run roughshod over everyone in his path, and willing to destroy his own country in the pursuit of his ego and bank account. There is no need to handle him with kid gloves, and it's becoming increasingly irresponsible to let his invective and lies go unchecked.

Sure, diplomacy, but let's not forget that if we want there to be a "rules-based international order" post-Trump—if that time is still going to be allowed to be a thing—then everyone is going to have to start being way more direct.

On a Feb. 24 visit to the White House, French President Emmanuel Macron took a step in that direction, doing the equivalent of "let me hold your hand while I say this" and correcting Trump on the spot when he spouted falsehoods about funding Ukrainian aid. Yes, Trump basically rolled his eyes as Macron did so, but it's important to have actions like that on the record.

For Canada, now that Trump's 30-day-reprieve car has nearly reached the end of the block, it's supposedly "game on" for tariffs. If the past month should have taught Canadians anything, it's that bending over backwards to appease the president is futile.

So, as Liberals—and likely in short order, Canadian voters—look to mark their ballots, let's see if anyone actually understands the rules of engagement.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

Dictators' use of propaganda to rewrite history alive and well: McElroy

Reality as the U.S. abandons 75 years of rules-based, liberal world order," (*The Hill Times*, Feb. 19, p. 10).

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy could hardly be more correct. This is all bullying by Russian President Vladimir Putin and United States President Donald Trump. The Soviet Union joined the United Nations at the end of the Second World War, and agreed that under international law sovereign nations could not be invaded. Russia signed on to an agreement in 1991 that it would guarantee Ukraine's sovereignty if they gave up their nuclear weapons. Ukraine did, but was invaded by Russia in 2014. In weak-kneed fashion, the West made a "peace deal" giving Russia the parts of Ukraine they had illegally occupied, including Crimea. Shades of "peace in our time," but the war simmered on.

The more recent invasion by Russia in 2022 was touted by Putin as a "defensive" incursion to protect his country's security. Clearly a lie, since he assumed that the Russian

army could waltz into Ukraine and take over in a few days. Definitely the real intention was to start rebuilding the Soviet Empire gifted by then-U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt to end the Second World War, and save American lives.

Trump is joining a long line of dictators who use propaganda to rewrite history. Trump calling Zelenskyy a dictator just after executing his coup in the U.S. is really rich. The goal in creating the UN was to have a world governed by the rule of law—something Trump neither understands nor respects. Putin and Trump—and others—want to return to the law of the jungle: might makes right. Is this the world we want to live in?

Yes, legal wrangling seems remote to most people, but the need to stick to agreed conventions is the cost of living in peace without fear or physical conflict. We would have much better things to apply our resources to, and a world and its climate less damaged by the absence of war.

Tom McElroy
 Toronto, Ont.

Let east-west pipeline dreams die, says Calgary reader

Retaliation is only the beginning: Poilievre pledges strong action against Trump's tariffs in campaign-style rally in Ottawa," (*The Hill Times*, Feb. 15).

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre must live in an alternate universe where pipeline companies are eager to build pipelines in every direction. Either that, or he is pandering to a gullible audience.

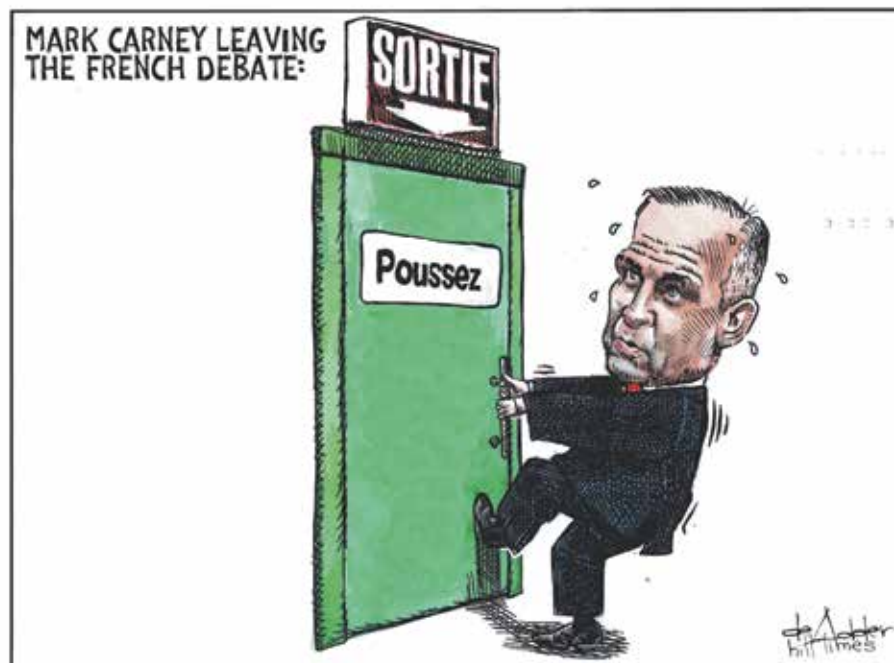
Poilievre's proposed east-west pipeline is a fantasy. There is no proponent for such a pipeline, and unless the economics of pipeline construction undergo a sudden transformation, there won't be one. Even if United States President Donald Trump imposes a

10-per-cent tariff on energy exports, Canadian exports would continue, with only a slight widening of the Western Canada Select-West Texas Intermediate—a hit to provincial coffers for sure, but less than the shortfalls caused by previous price downturns.

It would take years to build a new east-west line, if indeed one could be built. Trump would be long gone before it entered operation. The price tag would greatly exceed any tariffs he might impose on us. There's no demand in Europe for our heavy crude anyway.

An east-west line makes no sense. Let it die.

Andy Kubrin
 Calgary, Alta.



Trump's flip-flop on Ukraine

The lesson that Canadians need to take from the U.S. president's complete reversal on Ukraine is that we could easily be next.

Scott Taylor

Inside Defence



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been excluded from peace talks between the United States and Russia to end the war against his country. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

OTTAWA—Last week, as peace talks began in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to end the conflict in Ukraine, it became readily apparent that newly reinstated President Donald Trump has drastically altered the course of United States foreign policy.

The ongoing peace talks include U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. Missing from the equation is any representation from the European Union, and—more shockingly—there is no representative present from Ukraine.

When Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy protested his country's exclusion from the peace talks, things began to get a little personal.

"Unfortunately, President Trump—I have great respect for him as a leader of a nation that we have great respect for, the American people who always supported us—unfortunately lives in this disinformation space," Zelenskyy told reporters.

Despite Zelenskyy's genuflecting in his preamble, Trump took serious offence to the suggestion that he is incorrect in his assessment of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Trump ramped up the war of words with Zelenskyy, calling the Ukrainian president a "modestly successful comedian" who is currently "unelected," "a dictator," and a leader who has only four-per-cent popular support among Ukrainians. More disturbingly, Trump has also repeatedly blamed Ukraine for starting a war that could have been avoided. All of Trump's claims about Zelenskyy are, of course, false. He was a hugely popular comedian in Ukraine who was swept to power in a landslide election victory due to the fact that he was not a politician.

The claim that Zelenskyy is "unelected" is based upon the fact that elections have been suspended during the conflict with Russia. In terms of popular support, Ukrainian statistics put Zelenskyy's favourability rating at 57 per cent, which is about nine points higher than what Trump currently garners in U.S. polls.

As for starting the war with Russia, I think the world understands who invaded whom.

Just three short years ago, it would have been unthinkable for any world leader—outside of Russian President Vladimir Putin—to demonize Zelenskyy in this manner. Following the Feb. 24, 2022, Russian invasion of Ukraine, Zelenskyy became a household name synonymous with courageous defiance. When the U.S. anticipated Ukraine's defeat in the early days and offered the embattled president safe passage, Zelenskyy famously quipped, "I don't need a lift, I need ammunition."

In his trademark green T-shirt, Zelenskyy became omnipresent around the globe on nightly newscasts as the face of warrior president.

Now, virtually overnight, the Trump administration has labelled him the scapegoat and excluded Ukraine from the negotiations to determine their own future.

At his first NATO Summit, U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth simply stated that Ukraine cannot hope to reclaim the territory it held prior to the 2014 armed secession of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine. Before the U.S. has even begun to horse trade with the Russian delegation, Hegseth signalled that Ukraine would have no option but to concede territory.

Sadly, Ukraine was in a far better position back in March 2022. In those early days of the invasion, the Armed Forces of Ukraine had shocked the world with a battlefield victory over the Russian invaders. Huge Russian armoured columns had been destroyed during their attempted advance to Kyiv. The Russian military had been exposed as a paper tiger, and the NATO-supplied weaponry had made the Ukrainian army a far superior force. At that juncture, there were peace talks in Turkey with both Ukraine and Russia at the table.

It was Zelenskyy who advised the people of Ukraine that any ceasefire would require a negotiated settlement, and that would involve making territorial concessions. A 16-point deal was brokered, but the whole plan for an early peace deal fell through when then-United Kingdom prime minister Boris Johnson flew to Kyiv to convince Zelenskyy that a total victory was possible, and this outcome would be supported by NATO nations.

Zelenskyy took the bait, and the rest is history.

Now, the U.S. under Trump has reversed course, and Ukraine does not even warrant a seat at the negotiating table.

Worse yet, Trump has his eyes set on Ukraine's rare earth metal deposits as a means by which the U.S. can recuperate the billions of dollars in military aid it has supplied to Ukraine to keep them in the fight.

I do not think that Canada and the other NATO countries who have generously donated money and materiel to the Ukraine war effort did so in order to exploit their resources post-conflict.

The lesson that Canadians need to take from Trump's complete reversal on Ukraine is that we could easily be next. Compared to Ukraine, we have far more rare earth metals, which Trump could simply claim as the cost of the U.S. protecting us while we fail to spend two per cent of our gross domestic product on national defence.

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

The Hill Times

The Trump imperium



U.S. President Donald Trump looks north and sees Canada as a vassal state, with Arctic riches and shipping lanes divvied up among China, Russia, and the U.S., writes Andrew Caddell. *White House photograph by Shealah Craighead*

Things are changing as the U.S. leader backs off from America's role as 'global policeman,' and looks inwards.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



KAMOURASKA, QUE.—When I was posted abroad in Delhi, India, in 2009, I visited the Taj Mahal—a genuine marvel as it is not just a building, but also a work of art. After going to the Taj, our group travelled about 45 minutes to Fatehpur Sikri, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Fatehpur Sikri had been the capital of the Mughal Empire in the late 1500s. The Mughals dominated East Asia, conquering what is now India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, a population of 100 million people. The city was built specifically for the purpose of managing the empire, but after a decade, it was abandoned.

It is so well preserved that standing on the site, I could imagine its place in the world at the time, which was an era of nascent empires around the globe. In Europe, the Holy Roman Empire was in place, while across the channel the British Empire of Queen Elizabeth I was taking shape and moving into North America in competition with France. In the Middle East, the Ottoman Empire dominated. Japan and China were led by Imperial dynasties. Spain and Portugal were colonizing South America.

The world was being carved up into spheres of influence, and despite limited communication, lines were being drawn. Eventually, the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 established the principle of sovereignty and security of citizens. It didn't stop wars between countries, but it at least established the principle of secure borders that was incorporated into the United Nations and NATO Charters, and exist to this day.

But now, things are changing. As United States President Donald Trump backs off from America's role as "global policeman" and looks inwards, it appears he is seeking a new American *imperium* within global spheres of influence. If I am right, he will surrender Ukraine, Georgia, and the Baltic States to Russia, with President Vladimir Putin as the new Czar. China's despot President Xi Jinping has already moved into Africa, and taking over Taiwan is his life goal. Meanwhile, Trump looks north

and sees Canada as a vassal state, with Arctic riches and shipping lanes divvied up among China, Russia, and the U.S.

Isolationism is not a new phenomena in the U.S. Opposition to joining the Second World War was so intense, the isolationist and antisemitic "America First" movement led by aviator Charles Lindbergh dominated politics. And although then-U.S. president Franklin Delano Roosevelt did everything to help the United Kingdom's Winston Churchill, it was Pearl Harbor two years later that brought America into the war. If electronic media were as influential as they are today, Lindbergh would probably have beaten Roosevelt in 1940, and the U.S. would never have entered the war. Adolf Hitler would have overcome Europe, and a devastated Britain would have succumbed, as in Philip Roth's novel, *The Plot Against America*.

The allegory is pertinent today. Putin—on his last legs with sanctions, rampant inflation, and 600,000 Russian casualties in Ukraine—was thrown a lifeline by Trump's victory last November. Trump's mendacity knows no bounds, as he repeats the Kremlin's talking points; Americans should be wondering if he is a Russian asset, as has been rumoured.

The state of the world was the focus of the St. Petersburg, Fla., Conference on World Affairs I recently attended. The question on people's minds was: how do believers in the international system respond? American journalist and former UN official Eduardo Cue argued for a "new realism" in the developing world and elsewhere. "We can't tell other countries what they must do. We must accept their values and their culture, even if they are not to our liking at times, or we will get nowhere," he said.

For Canada, there is no question our approach to the world can no longer be based on idealism or western values. The world is not a progressive place: the 134 "G77" developing countries at the UN are Muslim or conservative Christian majorities, and influenced by China. The other 60, while wealthy, are the minority.

As part of that realism, we must decide with whom we will form alliances, especially if the U.S. abandons NATO. This will mean greater expenditures in defence and development, a huge investment in the North, cutbacks in government services, and personal sacrifices. As the Trumpian world is carved up, the changes are bound to be unlike anything we have witnessed in our lifetimes.

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

COMMENT

Trump's Uno reverse

White people colonizing white people is the western world eating its own tail.

Erica Ifill

Bad+Bitchy



CALGARY—What if we're thinking about U.S. President Donald Trump's 51st state declarations all wrong? Let me cook.

We should not take what Trump says at face value. However, we must take what he says as pieces of a greater geopolitical reality: the western world is in decline, and the Global South is rising. Last year, I wrote about the symbolism of South Africa's case against Israel at the International Court of Justice, and the relative position of the Global South compared to the West has only risen since then. The ascendancy of BRICS and the position of China as an alternative to American capital investments are testaments to that reality.

Trump wants to colonize the western world, hence his tough talk regarding Canada and Greenland becoming American territories. In other words, these proposals are iterations of manifest destiny and imperialistic extrication. Instead of trading with

Canada and Europe, the U.S. can seize control, extract resources, and populate the area with Americans. There is also an added benefit for white supremacists' Great Replacement Theory: these are majority white countries that would increase the percentage, and dominance, of white people. The outcome we are witnessing in America now is fascism by means of solving phantom national security threats.

White people colonizing white people is the western world eating its own tail; it's a global Uno reverse.

While everyone's eyes are on Russia's aggression in Ukraine, allow me to recontextualize it in my proposed framing. Ukraine has the unfortunate position of being in between two dominant powers: Russia and the U.S., by way of Europe. While Ukraine burns, Trump has vocalized what many leaders only say in private: Ukraine has rare earth mineral deposits—approximately five per cent of the world's deposits—in which America and Russia might share. Some are already under Russian control. Rare earth minerals are in high demand due to their use in clean technologies, batteries (including for electric cars), LCD screens, LEDs and fluorescent lighting—in other words, everything green and tech. The end of this war may result in a land grab for Russian President Vladimir Putin, and greater access to critical minerals for American tech companies. To be honest, if America wants to stay in the economic battle with China, it must have access to these natural resources. China controls

87 per cent of rare earth minerals refining capacity, and 70 per cent of production. They put the western world on notice, as *The Globe and Mail* reported: "In a tit-for-tat retaliation for President Biden's export controls on 24 types of chip manufacturing equipment, high bandwidth memory, and chip software tools, China banned certain rare earth mineral exports to the United States on Dec. 3, 2024." For the U.S., manufacturing military equipment runs through China, and so does their military dominance.

Make no mistake, these geopolitical moves are not in the service of American national security, or even the U.S. economy. These steps are in the interest of global arms manufacturing and technology, whose capital reserves are managed by global financiers. This is their show, and they do nothing for national economies since their interests are not dependent on citizenship. Consider the latest economic opportunity:

data centres, which store computing machines and hardware for remote data storage, processing, or distribution. In December 2024, then-finance minister Chrystia Freeland outlined the government's ambition to invest \$45-billion to develop data centres for artificial intelligence operations. These structural monstrosities have been touted by western leaders as promising economic drivers. Don't believe the hype.

Data centres enrich technology companies, whose effective tax rates are low due to investment tax

credits, cheap land, and other government subsidies. This can result in an economic disconnection from the nations in which they operate. In our neoliberal economic and political climates, tax revenues expand due to increases in employment. Unfortunately, these economic drivers provide few jobs, which means their formation is not in tax revenue, but in technological economic extraction. There are also tragic negative externalities: energy consumption that equals the same demand from 350,000 to 400,000 electric cars, annually; noise pollution where exposure could lead to hearing loss; gluttonous land usage that can price people out of property acquisitions, and so on. However, the returns from these capital investments are high, leading to an under-leveraged financial class that consistently earns bloated returns.

These trends exemplify how tech companies are exploiting western populaces, and cannibalizing public resources for the private gains of a few. The abuses that used to befall the Global South are now turning to the Global North with the full support of western governments. These companies are now our feudal lords, and Trump's words indicate that he will fulfill their mission of global dominance through colonizing the West. What a time to be alive.

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

The Hill Times

Investing in sport an open net for boosting bilateral relations



U.S. President Donald Trump likes winners, so let's use sports to Canada's global benefit, writes Tim Powers. Screenshot courtesy of YouTube/NHL

Success in sport has currency, particularly for a president who has a simple application for winners and losers.

Tim Powers

Plain Speak



OTTAWA—I could be like United States President Donald Trump and claim this forthcoming narrative as my own, but it is not. One of the best pieces I have seen recently about an approach to navigating the current global turmoil brought on by the 47th American president came from *The Globe and Mail's* potent sports columnist Cathal Kelly.

Kelly looked at the 4 Nations Face-Off hockey tournament and what it produced. He argued that if Canada wants to send a message to Trump's administration, it should invest more in sport to win more often. Our hockey team's victory over the U.S. on Feb. 20 was the most shining moment for Canada since 2025 began.

Our boys lifted the spirits and the step of 40 million Canadians. They also managed to finagle a public congratulatory message from Trump, who doesn't often sing the praises of someone who got the better of his side.

Sport has long been part of global diplomacy, as Olympic boycotts and full-participation games have shown. Even in the dystopian times of Trump, success in sport has currency—particularly for a president who has a simple application for who is a winner and who is a loser.

Trump has always viewed himself as a sports guy and sought the company of renowned athletes. In the 1980s, he tried on multiple occasions to become an owner of a team in the National Football League—a billionaire's club with restricted access. But he wanted to be one of the boys—one assumes—to legitimize his sense of being a big deal. He did get a team in the old United States Football League, but eventually that league folded, and Trump still

has no golden ticket in America's most powerful sport.

He recently became the first sitting president in modern memory to attend the Super Bowl, a global sporting event with no one-off type comparison. In 2028, he will be the leader who welcomes the world to Los Angeles for the Olympics.

As simple and narrow as it may seem—insert the obvious sarcasm here—Canada winning more on the world stage in sports that matter to Americans will get the president's attention, and—dare we say—some respect. After all, the president does think Canada would be better governed by hockey legends Wayne Gretzky or Bobby Orr. With neither figure likely to put their hand up, coupled with the negative sentiment in Canada over Trump's favouritism of them, I wouldn't expect a change of course for either Gretzky or Orr.

Success in sport is something of an American creed. Trump's "Make America Great Again" journey has seen many notable U.S. sports icons jump on board his train. It fits their cultural world view about the uniqueness and advantage of being an American, as well as the opportunities their country offers.

Black Hawk helicopters, fentanyl czars, and 10,000 officers at the border matter. But winning on fields, in arenas, on tracks, in gyms, or pools will capture this American president's attention, and infuse Canadians with immense pride and reinforce confidence. For Trump, it is not inconceivable to leap to the place where Nobel prize winners are less vital to a nation than a high-achieving athlete with star power. The president likes the glitter of gold.

With certain exceptions like hockey, occasionally basketball, soccer, and track, we could do more investing in sport, both publicly and privately. From a government perspective, it is also cheaper, and could lead to faster results if you infuse the sports system with new cash rather than try to procure some military hardware before it is obsolete. Private business in Canada could step up more vigorously if the return for them was the maintenance of sensible, liberalized trade with the Americans.

Trump likes winners. Let's use sports to Canada's global benefit. That is a win-win.

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

The Hill Times



For Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, the Feb. 24 call to action in Kyiv on behalf of Ukraine may be remembered as his best moment in nearly a decade in power, writes Les Whittington. Screenshot courtesy of CPAC

Ottawa looks to new partnerships in Europe as Trump's threats against Canada materialize

Canada's and Europe's leaders are trying to rewrite the framework of power to open the way for an end to Russia's murderous attack on its neighbouring state.

Les Whittington



Need to Know

OTTAWA—The collision course in Canada-United States relations looked more damaging than ever after President Donald Trump confirmed tariffs against Canadian exports next week, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau helped Europeans repudiate Trump's pro-Moscow approach to ending the Ukrainian conflict.

"The tariffs are going forward," Trump said Feb. 24 when asked if the now-paused plan to slap 25-per-cent import taxes on all goods from Canada—except energy at 10 per cent—and Mexico will be reinstated on March 4. They will be implemented "on time, on schedule," he added during a press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Trump said the tariffs will address "an abuse that took place for many, many

years," accusing previous administrations of signing trade agreements that allowed other countries to treat Americans unfairly.

The opening salvo in a real trade war that now appears to have been inevitable once Trump was re-elected, his statement signalled that the massive diplomatic campaign to avoid the tariffs by Canadians from nearly every level of government, plus business and labour, has amounted to nothing.

In fact, Trump continued in recent days to find time—in the midst of destroying the U.S. federal government and decades of peaceful international order—to say he is still unhappy with Canada. This despite the federal government's hasty, \$1.3-billion initiative to address immigration and drug issues at the border that were the president's original justification for punitive trade measures.

It seems certain now that Canadians will soon find themselves in the early stages of a crippling economic shock as the first of many tariffs Trump has threatened on Canada begin to roll in.

Besides the across-the-board import taxes on Canada now set for March 4, Trump has said he will impose additional layered tariffs on automobiles, lumber, steel, and aluminum. And further protective measures against Canadian imports could arise over the next weeks or months in accordance with the White House's plan to consider reciprocal tariffs equal to the perceived trade hindrances of every country, product by product, with which the U.S. trades.

The unknowns in the U.S.'s deliberate undermining of relations with Canada are also likely to be subject to the fall-out from the drama over Ukraine that has caught up all western nations.

Trudeau, though derided at home, has hit his stride on the international stage as Canada and its western allies struggle to recover from the upheaval in global affairs set off by Trump's coying up to Russia's Vladimir Putin, and his refusal to blame Moscow for the war in Ukraine.

On Feb. 24, as a dozen European leaders met in Kyiv on the third anniversary of the Russian attack, Trudeau took a leading position in what was a spirited collective effort to repudiate Trump's approach to achieving peace in Ukraine by appeasing Putin.

"We can't wait," Trudeau said in the war-engulfed Ukrainian capital. "The moment to stop this war of aggression, the moment to defend democracy, the moment to stand for our shared values is now. So let us seize it."

Trudeau did not rule out sending Canadian troops to Ukraine as part of a possible ceasefire agreement, saying Ottawa will work with its allies but "everything is on the table" when it comes to the "first priority" of ensuring an enduring peace. He stressed that Canada will have some kind of role in holding back "the forces of chaos that Vladimir Putin is trying to unleash on the world, to undermine all of our democracies."

It was a historic day that marked the beginning of the shift by European leaders from down-for-the-count alarm over Trump's apparent upending of the western

alliance against Russia to a new commitment to action in their own right.

Canada's and Europe's leaders are trying to rewrite the framework of power around the current talks—so far only between Washington and Moscow—to open the way for an end to Russia's murderous attack on its neighbouring state. Gathered with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Trudeau and the other leaders for the first time assumed collective responsibility for securing Ukraine's survival. They restated demands for a just and lasting peace, with Ukraine at the bargaining table and security guarantees to keep Putin from further aggression, and promised to attempt to step in with open-ended, unconditional military and financial assets in hopes of replacing possibly diminishing U.S. support for Kyiv.

For Trudeau, this latest call to action on behalf of Ukraine may be remembered as his best moment in nearly a decade in power. But his increasingly important role in this high-stakes international drama will soon be over. As of March 9, Canada will have a new Liberal leader and prime minister, and by mid-March, the country is likely to be in a federal election. So there's no way of knowing who will be the Canadian prime minister who will have to continue the urgent work of building a new partnership with Europe to challenge Putin's territorial fantasies while trying at the same time to manage relations with Canada's new adversaries in Washington.

Les Whittington is a regular columnist for The Hill Times.

The Hill Times

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OPINION

What to expect after the Liberal showdown of the decade

One of the key developments will be how the Conservative Party reacts and calibrates its message based on who wins the Liberal leadership.

Julia Parsons

Opinion



The imminent selection of a new Liberal leader, who will also assume the role of prime minister, marks a pivotal moment in Canadian politics. This leadership transition—unfolding against the backdrop of an impending federal election—presents opportunities and challenges for the Liberal Party.

Drawing on personal experience observing Conservative leadership races since 2016, I see clear parallels and valuable lessons that can be applied to the current Liberal leadership race. Understanding these parallels, and the potential implications of the leadership outcome, is crucial for anticipating the evolving political landscape and its impact on the upcoming election.

The choices made in the coming weeks will shape the trajectory of the Liberal Party, and the political conversation in Canada. Here are three key developments to watch for after the Liberal leadership race concludes:

1. Conservatives are ready to define the new Liberal leader, no matter who that is.

The Conservatives have already constructed and teased advertising against the major candidates running in the Liberal leadership race. Liberals, conversely, have largely been unable to define Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre on their terms nationally during his tenure as leader thus far. There is no clear, sustained message from the Liberals on why they think Poilievre is not the right choice for Canada.

To that end, the Liberals have largely let Poilievre define himself, which—as a very effective communicator—has meant that he has achieved a high degree of name recognition and understanding for his direct style. He has built a connection with Canadians from coast to coast without an alternative presentation directly from his opponents. Poilievre's challenge in the coming weeks will be ensuring the message is fine-tuned and calibrated to meet the new moment as

we respond to events south of the border, and globally.

There is no way the Conservatives will make the same mistake as the Liberals and allow the newly minted prime minister to carry on undefined.

2. Election speculation will only intensify.

Snap election? Throne Speech? An attempt to govern longer? There is already speculation that the new Liberal leader may immediately trigger an election. Expect a barrage of questions about the new leader's intent, particularly if they garner increased support in the polls.

Regardless of the speculation, Canadians are going to the polls soon. While the exact date remains unknown, it is an election year regardless. All political parties are preparing for that reality.

3. Policy positions will become clearer.

As an election approaches, more details of each party's plan will come to life. The Conservatives have already made many platform commitments, including policies to respond to tariff threats from the United States, reduce violent crime, and bolster national defence. Their top-line messaging will need to address the new realities amid threats from U.S. President Donald Trump on tariffs, and they are already putting forward these policy pieces. Even more will be required to meet the moment.

Meanwhile, the Liberal leadership candidates are also staking out their positions, and it will be hard for any candidate to distance themselves from policies they announced during the leadership race—or possibly their tenure as a Trudeau minister—as we inch closer to the polls.

This offers an opportunity for the Liberal leadership candidates to get out key pieces of their election platform early. A great example that Liberals can learn from Poilievre is his long-held commitment to a Blue Seal program, which would help trained and skilled newcomers more easily fill gaps as doctors and nurses. This policy he announced years ago is still touted today, long after his leadership race ended.

While each party will chart out its own vision, I predict that what will not change is the inevitability of change itself. That is a good thing because right now, amid tariff threats and economic uncertainty, Canada could certainly use a strong and renewed approach.

Julia Parsons is an account director, public affairs at Hill & Knowlton in Ottawa. Prior to joining H&K, she spent more than seven years on Parliament Hill, and has played a role on countless Conservative campaigns.

The Hill Times

No, becoming the 51st state wouldn't give us better health care—but Trump knows he's hitting a nerve



Health professionals believe in our public health-care system because they believe in equitable access to care, and you can't have one without the other, writes Bert Blundon. *Unsplash photograph by Christian Bowen*

The hard workers who keep the health system running have never been more worried about the future of Canadian health care.

Bert Blundon

Opinion



When United States President Donald Trump suggested that Canadians would have “much better health coverage” as the 51st state, he knew he was picking at an open wound.

For years, a human resources crisis has undermined the health-care systems across this country, leaving it a shell of the system it once was. The hard workers who keep it running have never been more worried about the future of health care. And they feel less valued and burnt out. The National Union of Public and General Employees recently commissioned a national survey of health professionals. More than 6,400 health-care professionals from coast to coast took part in the survey conducted by Abacus Data, and the findings are eye-opening. Ninety-one per cent of health professionals across the country say the system is in a state of crisis. As dangerously low staffing levels stretch workers to the brink, the quality of patient care is being threatened.

This survey is a first; it's a window into the experiences of health professionals we rarely recognize. From lab technicians to respiratory therapists, home-care workers to hospital nutritionists, and hundreds of other professionals—these are the people who ensure you and your loved ones get the care you need. While they may not come to mind as quickly as doctors and nurses do, their work is often what makes all health care possible.

Take, for example, the work of a cardiovascular perfusionist. Without them in the room—operating the equipment that keeps a patient's heart pumping during surgery—heart procedures would not go ahead. Equally as indispensable are those who provide community care to seniors and the

most vulnerable, as are the workers who take your blood for testing or clean your hospital room. The list goes on.

Despite the critical nature of their roles, their working conditions have deteriorated from bad to worse, and it is leading to burnout. Eighty-four per cent report being emotionally exhausted at work, with more than half experiencing a constant state of high stress and other mental health challenges. Three out of four workers are overwhelmed—largely because they are forced to work harder and longer hours in order to cover staffing gaps. To compound these challenges, wages and benefits haven't come close to keeping up with the skyrocketing cost of living. Twenty-one per cent of our workers can't meet basic living expenses, and many rely on overtime or second jobs to make ends meet.

This strain on staffing levels is one of the reasons 40 per cent of survey respondents say they are considering leaving the health-care system altogether in the next three years. Four out of five wouldn't recommend their job to a friend or family member.

The good news is that there is a way out of this cascading cycle. We must bring and keep more people in these professions, and for that we need fair compensation, a reasonable work-life balance, and enough staff to deliver quality care to everybody who needs it.

Indeed, the survey shows health professionals believe in our public health-care system because they believe in equitable access to care, and you can't have one without the other. They know the American health-care system is certainly not a model to which anybody aspires. They work hard every day not only because it's their job, but also because they are motivated to make a difference for patients and their families.

Canadians want their public health care to remain strong and accessible. This starts with listening to those who dedicate themselves to ensuring quality care is available to all of us when we need it. Every level of government has a responsibility to invest in fixing the human resources crisis. And we don't want our health-care system to be the punch line of the president's poor jokes.

Bert Blundon is president of the National Union of Public and General Employees, representing 425,000 workers across the country, including 140,000 health professionals.

The Hill Times

A decade later: did the Liberals deliver on science?

While funding injections are welcome, they don't guarantee that research will remain free from political influence.

Sarah Laframboise & Trevor Potts

Opinion



As Canada hurdles toward an early federal election, it's worth taking stock of the past decade under a self-proclaimed "pro-science" Liberal government. When Justin Trudeau's Liberals swept into power in 2015, they did so on the heels of a Harper era defined by muzzled scientists, research funding cuts, and decision-making untethered from evidence. The Liberals made sweeping promises to restore science

to its rightful place, championing "evidence-based decision-making" as a guiding principle. Ten years later, the slogans have faded. Where do we stand on these campaign promises?

Restoring data-driven decision-making: The Liberals quickly completed their election promise to restore the mandatory long-form census in 2015, a move warmly received by the science community. However, the party's commitment to make Statistics Canada fully independent remains unfulfilled. The 2016 resignation of head statistician Wayne Smith—over concerns that a centralized federal IT service compromised Statistics Canada's control over its own data—has since marked the ongoing challenges with this commitment.

Unmuzzling Canada's scientists and researchers: The Liberals made significant strides in enabling scientists to speak more freely about their work, particularly as a result of the 2017 collective agreement signed with the Professional Institute of Public Service of Canada, which resulted in the creation of science integrity policies across all departments. As of this year, 24 out of 25 required departments

have approved policies, with 23 currently in effect.

However, there remain several ongoing issues. Despite campaigning to empower scientists to speak more freely, a recent survey has found that 92 per cent of environmental scientists still experience government interference in their work or ability to communicate with the public. Furthermore, 21 out of 24 departments lack monitoring plans needed to assess the implementation of scientific integrity policies.

Placing science at the centre of federal governance: The 2017 appointment of Dr. Mona Nemer as Canada's chief science officer fulfilled a key platform commitment to place science at the heart of federal governance. Additionally, the Office of the Chief Science Officer has successfully helped embed science advisory teams within the federal government, including the Departmental Science Advisors Network, Researchers in Council, and the Chief Science Advisor's Youth Council. While this role has been renewed several times, it has not been permanently legislated through an Act of Parliament, and risks its potential elimination if not renewed in 2027.

Restoring climate and environmental science funding:

The Liberals have either met or exceeded their funding promises for freshwater research, ocean science, and agricultural research. Since 2015, they have invested \$99.6-million in freshwater research, \$173.5-million in ocean science and monitoring programs, and \$100.2-million in agricultural research.

Overall investments in research and development: In Budget 2024, the Liberal government announced a significant investment of nearly \$5-billion to bolster Canada's research and innovation sectors. This was the most significant investment into research and development in more than two decades. However, questions remain about whether this was enough to effectively maintain our top talent and innovation after 20 years of chronic underfunding to the sector. The fact remains that Canada is the only G7 country with declining gross domestic spending on research and development.

After nearly a decade in power, the Liberal government's record on science and research is mixed. The Liberals swept in with bold promises to restore

scientific integrity, champion "evidence-based decision-making," and rebuild research capacity after years of cuts and political interference. Certainly some progress has been made—Canada's long-form census was restored, scientific integrity policies introduced, and significant funding directed toward environmental, ocean, and agricultural science. But has the culture of evidence-based governance really taken root?

Lingering concerns suggest it hasn't. Despite efforts to bolster science in government, questions remain about Statistics Canada's independence, political interference in scientific work and communication, and the long-term security of the chief science adviser role. The promise of open science has yet to be fully realized, and while funding injections are welcome, they don't guarantee that research will remain free from political influence.

As we approach the upcoming federal election, the Liberals' legacy in science and research remains a work in progress. The next few months will be a test for all parties: will they double down on making science central to decision-making, or will progress stall?

Scientists, and voters, will be watching.

Sarah Laframboise is the executive director at Evidence for Democracy. Trevor Potts is the director of research and policy at Evidence for Democracy.

The Hill Times

What is the path to peace in Ukraine?

Persuade the Russian president that he simply cannot win militarily, setting the stage for substantive peace negotiations.

Earl Turcotte

Opinion



Assessing America's new posture vis-a-vis Ukraine, Canadian columnist Andrew Coyne has observed that recent pronouncements by the administration of United States President Donald Trump are not—as described by many—irresponsible concessions to Russia. They are demands aimed not at Russia, but at Ukraine, and presented to it jointly by America and Russia.

In mere weeks, Trump's America has shifted from stalwart defender of Ukraine, and—in broader terms—of democracy and international law, to effectively joining forces with an aggressor state that has flouted interna-



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, and U.S. President Donald Trump. America's transition to possible adversary has sent shock waves around the world, writes Earl Turcotte. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

tional law in an attempt to conquer a neighbour, and end its very existence as a sovereign nation.

America's transition from reliable to unreliable ally and possible adversary has sent shock waves around the world. Even a qualified "win" by Russia—in addition to its dire implications for Ukraine—sets a dangerous modern-day precedent in international relations, undermining a core principle set out in the United Nations Charter regarding the inviolability of national borders. It would also encourage

states with similar ambitions, such as China vis-a-vis Taiwan, or possibly the U.S. vis-a-vis Greenland/Denmark, Panama, or, for that matter, Canada.

Ukraine appears determined to continue to resist Russia's assault. But without the U.S., can it? I believe so, if Ukraine's remaining supporters fill any gap left by U.S. withdrawal, and—if necessary—commit their own armed forces to bolster Ukraine's military capacity, as Russia has with North Korean forces. Yes, escalate to de-escalate. Persuade Russian President Vlad-

imir Putin that he simply cannot win militarily, setting the stage for substantive peace negotiations.

Deployment of western forces must be—and must be clearly presented as—a limited military operation to restore Ukraine's borders and bring an end to Russia's attack. Not a declaration of war on Russia. Assurances must also be given that Russia's legitimate security concerns would be addressed in any ensuing peace agreement—a deal that should also include the return of Russian territory in the

Kursk region, the exchange of all prisoners of war, and the return of Ukrainian children who were kidnapped by Russia. Ukraine should also commit in advance to holding internationally monitored referendums in each of its majority Russian-speaking regions to determine if their citizens truly wish to remain part of a sovereign Ukraine, or to become part of Russia. It is then incumbent upon the international community to provide security guarantees to secure enduring peace.

Would the potential deployment of western troops to further assist Ukraine risk nuclear war? In my humble view, it's less than NATO is already prepared to risk to defend any one of its member states in similar circumstances, which would likely involve a declaration of war by both sides. And it's a risk worth taking to protect a nation under mortal threat and to send a clear message to potential aggressors everywhere that you cannot act with impunity and will not prevail.

Concurrently, the world needs to expedite the elimination of nuclear weapons, and establish effective common security arrangements for everyone.

Earl Turcotte is a former Canadian diplomat, and United Nations official.

The Hill Times

NEWS

Liberals unveil their vision for CBC/Radio-Canada's future as looming snap election jeopardizes their plans

Heritage Minister Pascale St-Onge says it's important to complete her mandate, but Carleton journalism professor Chris Waddell says he's 'not sure this will survive much longer than the announcement.'

BY SOPHALL DUCH

Heritage Minister Pascale St-Onge has laid out her government's long-awaited strategy to reform Canada's public broadcaster, but faced questions about whether the plan is likely to ever be implemented.

"I'm not sure this will survive much longer than the announcement," Chris Waddell, former director of Carleton University's Journalism and Communication school, told *The Hill Times*.

On Feb. 20, St-Onge (Brome-Missisquoi, Que.) announced a number of proposed changes to the public broadcaster's mandate, funding, and governance structure, including having the CBC/Radio-Canada's board of directors appoint the president and CEO, as well as banning ads during news programming and making its digital services free.

The plan also looks to change the funding model from one that is voted on annually by parliamentarians to one that is provided via statutory appropriations based on an annual per capita amount—a system similar to government pensions and transfer payments to the provinces.

St-Onge said changing the funding model will "remove the decision-making around funding from the political cycles, whether it's elections or the budget."

Too little, too late?

While the government wants the public broadcaster's funding to be unbound from future election cycles, the irony is that their proposed plan has to first survive a possible snap federal election.

This plan also dropped while Parliament is prorogued until March 24, so it's not a bill.



Canadian Heritage Minister Pascale St-Onge unveils her government's 'vision' for the future of public broadcaster CBC/Radio-Canada on Feb. 20. St-Onge also announced she will not be seeking re-election. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

"So how is this plan worth more than the paper that it's written on if you can't enshrine it, there's no Parliament, and there's no way to actually get this through?" asked a reporter at the announcement.

"This is why it's so important for me to complete my mandate letter by proposing this very clear plan for the future of the CBC," responded St-Onge, adding the candidates wanting to be the next prime minister should "commit to making sure that we have a viable public broadcaster for the next century." "Because it's now or never."

Most of the opposition leaders have indicated that they would bring the government down at the earliest opportunity. While the Bloc Québécois are calling for an election now, the Conservatives and NDP have said they would first want to pass legislation that deals with the tariff threats from United States President Donald Trump before voting non-confidence.

"It's unfortunate that it's taken this long to actually come out because it does now mean that it's on the verge of an election campaign, and anything announced before an election campaign risks getting overtaken by who wins the next election," said Waddell, who is also a former CBC parliamentary bureau chief.

St-Onge said that she was ready to present the plan earlier, but claimed the House filibuster that ran for much of last fall made that difficult.

Another factor that complicates the timing of St-Onge's announcement is the current

Liberal leadership race. Party members will decide their next leader, and the next prime minister, on March 9.

St-Onge said the Liberal leadership debates—held on Feb. 24 and 25—are an opportunity for candidates to speak clearly on their commitment to implement the plan.

"I'm expecting any candidate that wants to be under the Liberal Party to be in agreement with the type of decision that I'm proposing," added St-Onge, who has not yet endorsed a leadership candidate.

"I'm expecting that this be positively received, especially because it's been in our electoral platform for years to modernize the CBC and to properly fund it, and this is exactly what I'm proposing," said St-Onge.

Despite St-Onge's expectations, there is no guarantee the next Liberal leader would stick with her proposals, especially after she announced she's not seeking re-election.

"The minister who introduced this is not running again, so she wouldn't be in a new government, even if the Liberals were to win the election," said Waddell. "So it's an open question whether her successor—if the Liberals remain in power—is actually keen on implementing the plan that she is proposing."

Before announcing the plan for CBC/Radio-Canada, St-Onge started off her news conference confirming that she was on the way out of federal politics.

"As you know, I'm a new mom. This is a wonderful time in my

life, and after much consideration, I come to the conclusion that I need to make the right decision for my family and make sure that I'm fully present for the first few years of my child's life, and this is why I won't be running again in the next election," said St-Onge.

An issue of national security?

While the timing for St-Onge's CBC/Radio-Canada proposal may not be ideal for the government, she said that Trump's threats to Canadian sovereignty make support for Canada's public broadcaster a pressing matter.

"We need to envision the investments that we're making in our public broadcaster as a national security issue," she said. "We know that our sovereignty is more than ever an issue that Canadians are preoccupied about."

St-Onge made the case that "we're being asked to invest more in national defence, in our borders, but protecting Canadian sovereignty also implies investing in our need of communication and in being able to resist the foreign influence."

"I think that the vision that I'm proposing for the future of CBC should be included in any kind of plan that the next government puts forward when it comes to protecting Canada against the current global context," she said.

St-Onge said "supporting our public broadcaster is not a question of the political left or right. It's not a Liberal or a Conserva-

tive issue. It is, above all, a commitment to ourselves, our culture, and our independence."

While St-Onge said support for CBC/Radio-Canada is not a partisan issue, she still took shots at Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.).

"You cannot say you love Canada and yet pledge to destroy our public broadcaster that is central in telling the stories of our country," said St-Onge. "Pierre Poilievre doesn't know what it means to put Canada first, or else he would choose to protect the Canadian institution that belongs to Canadians."

Since becoming leader, Poilievre has consistently called for the defunding of the CBC. In a news conference held the same day as St-Onge's announcement, the Tory leader said "we're going to cut wasteful spending not just there, but across the government to bring down inflation, deficits, and taxes."

Conservative heritage critic Damien Kurek (Battle River-Crowfoot, Alta.) clarified that the public broadcaster's French services would be safe.

"Common-sense Conservatives will defund the CBC while preserving funding to ensure francophone Canadians continue to receive news services," said Kurek in a statement to *The Hill Times*.

"Amid plummeting viewership and growing irrelevancy to Canadian audiences, Justin Trudeau's Liberals are desperate to save their broken and failing propaganda machine, going so far as to writing new laws and regulations to secure even more taxpayer dollars for the CBC," added Kurek.

The Bloc and NDP are more amenable to increased support for the public broadcaster, but denounced the announcement's timing.

In a statement in French, Bloc Québécois heritage critic Martin Champoux (Drummond, Que.) said the proposals have little chance of being adopted, but they can still serve as a basis for discussion.

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) said in a statement to *The Hill Times* that "the Liberals had 10 years to make reforms to strengthen the CBC/Radio-Canada. Instead, they delayed, and prorogued Parliament—ensuring that none of these changes will ever see the light of day."

"Right now, is the time to champion the things that make us uniquely Canadian, from the CBC/Radio-Canada to our compassion for one another, health care and the values we hold close. It's not time to turn to more American content," said Singh.

But framing support for the CBC as a national security or sovereignty issue—even at a time when Canadians are preoccupied by these matters—might not sway voters in a coming election.

"I don't know of a politician who's lost an election campaign in the last 30 years for failing to be a strong advocate for the CBC. It's not likely to be a top-of-mind issue in an election," said Waddell.

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The Hill Times

THE HILL TIMES POLICY BRIEFING

ENERGY

FEBRUARY 26, 2025



Forget the tariff war, it's time to build self-reliance for Canada's energy future
p. 19

Understanding the policy implications of Canada's 'hidden energy communities'
p. 20

Climate clarity needed: don't pile up programs, focus on transformations
p. 19

Renewable energy is declining in Canada
p. 21

Bolstering domestic manufacturing can make us resilient to tariffs, and help meet our sustainability goals
p. 23

ENERGY Policy Briefing

U.S. trade war speeds up need to prioritize Canadian clean energy, say experts

Canada is on the right track in terms of the energy transition, and the current trade war only adds urgency to speed up that trajectory, says Pembina Institute head Chris Severson-Baker.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

A trade war with the United States and the threat of tariffs have shined a bright light on the importance for Canada to expand energy trade with international markets, and to strengthen its own energy security, according to sector experts.

“For the last decade at the federal level, most of the energy policy focus has been on climate and emissions reduction, and ... now increasingly with the Trump administration in the White House, we’re really seeing the need to broaden the lens to incorporate affordability of energy, and now increasingly, to incorporate security of energy for Canada,” said Monica Gattinger, a professor at the School of Political Studies and Chair of Positive Energy for the University of Ottawa. “At the end of the day, successful energy policy is about finding a workable balance between economic objectives, environmental objectives, [and] security objectives, and that’s really what the federal government needs to do at this stage.”

Canada is anticipating the possibility of the U.S. following through on a threat to implement a 10-per-cent tariff on Canadian energy, which was announced by President Donald Trump in January. Along with the energy tariff, Trump announced plans for higher 25-per-cent tariffs on all other imports from Canada and Mexico. The implementation of these tariffs was delayed until at least March 4 after Trump and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) reached an agreement in early February.

Gattinger told *The Hill Times* that this is not the first time that Canada has talked about expanding its energy trade beyond the U.S., but the current friction between the two countries might finally provide enough momentum to make that major shift a reality. The U.S. and Canada

Energy Minister Jonathan Wilkinson said ‘the role of electricity is central to Canada’s clean energy future,’ in a June 2024 Natural Resources Canada press release. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



University of Ottawa professor Monica Gattinger says if you disrupt Canada-U.S. energy trade flows, ‘you can wind up with energy security concerns for different parts of the country, notably the eastern part of the country for oil and gas.’ *Photograph courtesy of Monica Gattinger*

are each other’s largest energy trading partners, and Canada provided 60 per cent of the crude oil and close to 100 per cent of the natural gas imported by the U.S. in 2023, according to data released by the Canada Energy Regulator on Feb. 12.

“If you look at the Canada-U.S. energy trade, we are a highly interconnected [and] integrated set of energy markets, both on the oil-and-gas front and the electricity front. If you have



Ollie Sheldrick, program manager for Clean Energy Canada, says ‘energy security for Canada is going to be about leveraging our clean, low-carbon electricity system, and really doubling down on that,’ because it’s ‘where the future demand is.’ *Photograph courtesy of Ollie Sheldrick*

disruption to those trade flows across any of those commodities, you can wind up with energy security concerns for different parts of the country, notably the eastern part of the country for oil and gas,” said Gattinger. “Now this is not just about [how] Canada should expand its economic opportunities. It’s also about, ‘what does Canada need to do to strengthen the security of its own energy supplies?’ And that creates—potentially—an addi-



Canada’s focus ‘needs to shift on supporting the provinces to actually achieve what they’re trying to achieve,’ says Pembina Institute executive director Chris Severson-Baker. *Photograph courtesy of Chris Severson-Baker*

tional motivation and imperative to overcome some of the obstacles that have proven intractable in the past.”

Gattinger said the country will need a three-pronged strategy, with the first prong being continuing to make the case to the U.S. about the value of Canada in the energy trade. The final two prongs should focus on expanding domestic energy trade, and seeking out diversified trade partners outside of the U.S.

“Is that about more electricity interconnections between provinces? Is that more pipelines of oil, of natural gas—east and west—and developing ... the key opportunities?” she asked. “I would say the federal government is saying many of the right things in terms of continuing to press the case to the United States about the importance of energy trade, [and] in terms of the benefit of removing internal barriers to trade in Canada ... [and] about the importance of getting Canada’s energy resources off of its coasts to international markets. The big question is, can they actually make that happen?”

When asked about Energy Minister Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, B.C.), Gattinger said charting the future of energy policy at the federal level currently is about more than just one minister.

“What we’re looking at ... is really an existential threat coming to Canada from the United States, and so we’re really talking about, potentially, nothing short of a reorientation of the Canadian economy,” she said. “This is, yes, in energy, but also in other sectors, potentially, as well. Many ministers across the entire government are going to need to be going in the same direction to make that happen.”

Ollie Sheldrick, program manager for Clean Energy Canada, told *The Hill Times* that the two-way trade between Canada and the U.S. in 2023—encompassing oil, natural gas, electricity, and uranium—was about US\$156-billion. He described oil and fossil fuel products as volatile in price because of Trump’s tariffs, as well as other global economic factors.

“It’s a product that’s obviously not priced in Canada. This is a product that exists on a global marketplace, and it’s priced as such,” he said. “Energy security for Canada is going to be about leveraging our clean, low-carbon electricity system, and really doubling down on that, not only because it’s something that’s much more within our control, but also it’s where the future demand is.”

The current energy mix in Canada is dominated by fossil fuels, representing about 75 per cent of all the energy consumption in the country, according to Sheldrick. He said Canada is making moves in the right direction in terms of the transition to clean energy, but whether or not the country is on track to meet energy transition goals is hard to say.

In December 2023, the federal government announced a proposed regulatory framework for requiring 2030 emissions at 35 to 38 per cent below 2019 levels in the fossil fuel sector, as part of a longer-term goal of reducing emissions in the sector to net zero by 2050. Final regulations on the cap are planned for 2025.

Sheldrick said Canada is starting from a good place, in terms of the energy transition, with about 82 per cent of our electricity generation already non-emitting.

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ENERGY Policy Briefing

U.S. trade war speeds up need to prioritize Canadian clean energy, say experts

Continued from page 16

of fossil fuels, and more on to electrifying our businesses and our homes and all the things in between, and our economy at large," he said. "There's a lot to do to make sure that we get there, and—obviously—in a lot of cases this is down to sort of a province-by-province analysis of where everyone is, but overall, that's the goal. That's what the demand is, certainly, and that's where the world's moving."

When asked about Wilkinson, Sheldrick said Clean Energy Canada doesn't specifically comment on the performance of federal ministers, but did say there have been a lot of positive developments that have come out of Natural Resources Canada in recent years.

"This government's made some great moves around pieces of work like the Clean Electricity Regulation. Obviously, the [consumer] carbon price has been a very contentious issue," he said. "I'd also put in the Clean Fuel Regulations into that bucket as well."

The Canada Electricity Advisory Council, an independent panel of subject-matter experts from across Canada, released a final report on June 10, 2024, with recommendations for progressing towards a clean-electricity future. Wilkinson said that "the role of electricity is central to Canada's clean energy future," and that building out a clean electricity system will help Canada fight climate change, and "power a prosperous Canadian net-zero economy," in a Natural Resources Canada press release.

Liberal MP Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Ont.), Wilkinson's parlia-



Professor Kent Fellows says President Donald Trump's rhetoric about how the U.S. doesn't need anything that Canada produces is 'patently untrue when you look at the trade relationship.' Photograph courtesy of Kent Fellows



Liberal MP Marc Serré says Canada is on track to meet its 2030 emission's target, but there is more work to do. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

mentary secretary, said in a Feb. 21 emailed statement to *The Hill Times* that Canada is on track to meet the 2030 emission's target, but added there is more work to do, "particularly when it comes to growing our electricity grids and ensuring they are affordable, clean and reliable."

"That is why the Government of Canada is advancing the Clean Electricity Regulations to ensure we are able to meet those targets," he said in the email. "Already we have seen the phase out of coal in Alberta ahead of schedule, and there is great promise in places like Nova Scotia, which is still on coal with our new legislation to build offshore wind there."

The Liberal Party will choose a new leader on March 9, and front-running leadership candidates have announced plans to either scrap or freeze the consumer price on carbon.

Liberal leadership contender Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) vowed to scrap Canada's consumer carbon pricing regime, and to work with provinces and territories, labour and industry leaders, Indigenous Peoples, and others to find alternatives. Leadership candidate Mark Carney said on Jan. 16 that if the carbon price were removed, it would have to be replaced "with something that is at least, if not more, effective," as reported in the *Financial Post*.

The Hill Times asked Serré if uncertainty surrounding carbon pricing could have the consequence of delaying implementation of energy projects, to which he said that industrial pricing remains in place.

"We are ensuring there are no free passes for big polluters in Canada, and they must continue

to pay their fair share. It is critical to continue to be ambitious when it comes to addressing climate change," he wrote. "Industrial carbon pricing is Canada's cornerstone climate policy. By directing the Canada Growth Fund to use carbon contracts for difference as a tool to accelerate investment in decarbonization and clean growth technologies, the government is providing the carbon price certainty needed for industry to reduce emissions on a cost-effective basis."

Chris Severson-Baker, executive director of the Pembina Institute, told *The Hill Times* there is a strong case to be made that Canada is on the right track in terms of the energy transition, and that the current trade war only adds urgency to speed up that trajectory.

"The economic imperative to ... have a more efficient economy that makes better use of the energy that we have—lower-cost transportation, lower-cost heating of buildings, and that sort of thing—is the direction that we've been going in as a country, and now need to go in even faster because of the tariff threats and attacks on Canadian sovereignty," he said. "Now the focus, I think, needs to shift on supporting the provinces to actually achieve what they're trying to achieve, because there's a lot of barriers—a lot of hurdles—that need to be overcome, and one of them is that there isn't very much inter-provincial trade of electricity."

Severson-Baker said that currently, each province operates as "an island unto itself."

"We need to generate more of our own energy, and consume more of our own energy, and trade it across the country,

rather than being so reliant on north-south trade with the United States. And with this big drive to increase inter-provincial trade, I think right at the top of the list needs to be [to] support the provinces in negotiating agreements ... that would enable a massive scale-up of trade of electricity across borders," he said. "I think ... really leaning into the biggest strength that we have as a country going forward is, again, that ability to generate a lot of clean electricity at a low price and use it as much as possible in our own economy to drive down the cost of transportation, to drive down the cost of heating buildings, and to attract investment."

Kent Fellows, an assistant professor in the department of economics and the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary, told *The Hill Times* that Trump's plans for a tariff on

energy imports that is lower than the tariff on all other imported goods shows that the U.S. president is aware of the importance of Canada's energy.

"His rhetoric about how the United States doesn't need anything that Canada produces, first off, that's patently untrue when you look at the trade relationship. But second, even if he thought it were true, it wouldn't explain why it's 25 per cent across the board, oh, except for oil and gas," he said. "You've got Donald Trump complaining that they're running a trade deficit with us. If you take crude oil out of the equation, they're not running a trade deficit anymore, and that's a really important thing for anyone who's energy minister to realize [when] thinking about what the macroeconomic implications of that are."

Fellows pointed out that energy is very closely tied to natural resources, which under Canada's Constitution are a provincial responsibility, at least in terms of production.

"We have a disjointed reaction because you've got premiers who are not trusting in the federal government to negotiate on their behalf, and then you've got a lack of co-ordination on resources when what you need is to co-ordinate," he said. "I'm not sure the conversation's heading in a particularly productive direction right now because of these disconnects, but it's interesting to watch the various chess pieces try to move around the board on that one."

In regard to Wilkinson, Fellows argued that Canada is now past the point where the minister "can get away with just understanding the energy sector."

"I think they have to understand how it interplays with the rest of the economy, and I think that's really critical, given the trade relationship frictions that we're in right now," he said. "On a longer-term thing, when we get back to thinking about greening the economy and the conversations we're having now about reductions in inter-provincial trade barriers, I would really like to see parties start to campaign and think seriously about more east-west electricity infrastructure."

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The Hill Times

Canada-U.S. energy trade info



- A network of dozens of pipelines transport crude oil, natural gas, natural gas liquids (NGLs),

and refined petroleum products (RPPs) between Canada and the U.S. along with fleets of rail, marine, and freight vehicles. Additionally, 86 international power lines move electricity between provinces and states.

- Exports of crude oil, RPPs, natural gas, and NGLs to the U.S. amounted to \$163-billion for the Canadian economy in 2023, representing 21 per cent of Canada's total goods exported globally.
- Imports of crude oil, RPPs, natural gas, and NGLs

from the U.S. amounted to \$36-billion in 2023, accounting for 4.7 per cent of Canada's total goods imported globally.

- In 2023, electricity imports from the U.S. were valued at \$1.6-billion, accounting for 0.2 per cent of all goods imported to Canada from all countries. Electricity exports to the U.S. in 2023 were valued at \$4.3-billion, or 0.6 per cent of all goods exported from Canada to all countries.

—Source: Market Snapshot: Overview of Canada-U.S. Energy Trade, released by the Canada Energy Regulator on Feb. 12

Policy Briefing **ENERGY**

Forget the tariff war, it's time to build self-reliance for Canada's energy future

We can build a stronger Canada by focusing on the development of renewable energy technologies and infrastructure here at home.

Independent
Senator
Rosa Galvez



Opinion

Failing to recognize their worth domestically, Canada has been sending precious energy resources to the United States, while also tethering itself to this superpower, effectively surrendering its energy independence.

In 2023, about 97 per cent of the country's crude oil exports went to the U.S. Canada is also a net exporter of electricity, providing the U.S. with 27.6 TWh in 2023. Indeed, with 1,522 km of international transmission lines connecting Canada to the U.S., the North American energy system is highly integrated.

In 2021, the two countries committed to energy co-operation in a non-legally binding memorandum



We have the resources we need to be energy independent, and to give all Canadians energy security, writes Sen. Rosa Galvez. *Pexels photograph by Singkham*

of understanding, and released the North American Renewable Integration Study Country Reports. Canada's report concluded that co-operation was not only vital to decarbonization of our energy system pathways, but also that increased transmission and trade offered a valuable opportunity for meeting Canadian and American clean energy goals.

The integrated nature of the Canada-U.S. energy system, and our reliance on non-legally binding co-operation agreements have left Canada vulnerable to the whims of a political leader with the power—granted without our vote—to make decisions that could profoundly impact the country's economy and future.

With U.S. President Donald Trump's impending tariffs poised to disrupt trade, a growing renew-

able energy sector finds itself in a precarious position. The potential for significant supply chain interruptions stemming from a tariff war are likely to be felt intensely in this sector.

Historically, Canada's strong ties with the U.S. were viewed as a mutually beneficial relationship—and I could argue it was for a long time—but global undercurrents are shifting, change is afoot, and international relations can be fickle and prone to influence by the political climate.

With tensions mounting, the question we should be asking is not how we can retaliate against Trump's tariffs—retribution simply won't yield long-term or even short-term benefits for Canadians or for Americans; rather, we should be asking how we can strengthen Canada's economy,

become more resilient, and assert our independence.

We can build a stronger Canada by focusing on the development of renewable energy technologies and infrastructure here at home. As global demand for oil and gas wanes, and Canada-U.S. trade relations evolve, we must embrace the promise of renewables. A transition to a low carbon economy could address the multiple crises we face: climate, pollution, economic competitiveness, innovation, inflation, and affordability. Indeed, renewable energy is disinflationary, cheaper, cleaner, safer, and free from geopolitical influence.

We have the resources we need to be energy independent, and to give all Canadians energy security. This country is rich in critical minerals like lithium, cobalt, nickel, and other rare earth elements essential for the production and development of electric vehicles, batteries, and clean energy technologies. Steel and aluminum—major targets of Trump's tariffs—are key materials for renewable energy development. Instead of shipping these valuable commodities crucial to our energy future to other countries, we must recognize their domestic value. And rather than resuscitating ghost projects such as the Energy East pipeline—which would be expensive and socially unacceptable—or giving more subsidies to an already heavily subsidized sector that keeps us dependent on an old and polluting form of energy,

Canada must firmly embrace the energy transition.

We must also acknowledge the reality that without meaningful investment in Canada's energy future, our future could be dim. To this end, capital flows need to be directed towards renewable and clean energy projects, as was outlined in the Climate-Aligned Finance Act. By providing critical funding, building a strong domestic supply chain for our renewables sector, and harnessing our abundant energy generating resources, we can become an energy independent nation and a global leader in renewable energy.

Domestic supply chains are critical during geopolitical and global supply chain interruptions—a seemingly forgotten lesson learned during the pandemic. Energy independence—the kind offered by a vibrant and robust domestic renewable energy sector—would ensure Canadians have uninterrupted access to affordable energy.

In times like these, we are reminded of the value of self-sufficiency and resilience. Instead of retaliatory tariffs that will only hurt us, we must look for ways to build a stronger, sovereign, prosperous Canada. It's time to untangle our energy system from the U.S., and secure our energy future.

The Honourable Rosa Galvez is a civil-environmental engineer, and an Independent Senator for the province of Quebec.

The Hill Times

Climate clarity needed: don't pile up programs, focus on transformations

Scrapping the carbon tax would be a tragedy, but it would be a bigger one to add a new program without critically assessing the whole climate action plan.

Pierre-Olivier
Pineau



Opinion

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre has already succeeded in axing the tax. While nobody knows what the next Canadian govern-



ment will do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the federal "fuel charge"—the official name of the carbon tax—will disappear. Both leading candidates in the Liberal Party leadership race—Chrystia Freeland and Mark Carney—have announced they will replace the carbon tax with something else. But what will they do?

The carbon tax is the best instrument to drive climate action from an economic standpoint. Scrapping it is therefore a tragedy for those who want to reduce GHG emissions. But an even bigger tragedy would be to just add a new program without critically assessing and reforming the whole climate action plan.



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, left, and Liberal leadership candidates Chrystia Freeland, and Mark Carney. The next leader of the Canadian government should focus on simple—but transformative—policies, writes Pierre-Olivier Pineau. *The Hill Times photographs by Sam Garcia and Andrew Meade*

The Canadian Emissions Reduction Plan is an endless succession of overlapping initiatives. People have heard of the carbon tax, but they usually ignore the rest. There is the output-based pricing system for GHG emissions from industries. Then the Clean Fuel Regulations to reduce the carbon intensity of liquid

fuels. There's the Clean Electricity Regulations to reduce GHG emissions from power plants. Then the Methane Strategy to further reduce methane emissions beyond what is already covered by the previous actions. A cap on the oil and gas industry is discussed. In addition, there is the Clean Technology Investment Tax Credit to support the transition to net-zero emissions by giving money to clean technologies adopters. Then there are the various subsidies to households to help them buy an electric car—like the Zero-Emission Vehicle Incentive—or make their home more energy efficient—like the Canada Greener Homes Grant. Of course, businesses and organizations also get their grants and subsidies through the Low Carbon Economy Fund.

Are you lost?

You must be, if you are human. It is impossible from a theoretical or practical perspective to justify all these programs, initiatives, and regulations. Little sticks, little carrots. Some push away from carbon, and some pull towards renewables. The intention is always good from an

Continued on page 22

ENERGY Policy Briefing



Policy failures in Canada help perpetuate inequities in hidden energy communities, write Julie MacArthur and Emmanuel Ackom. *Unsplash photograph by Erica Zhou*

Understanding the policy implications of Canada's 'hidden energy communities'

These groups frequently lack access to affordable and reliable clean energy services, and include the urban unhoused, renters, and underserved Indigenous communities.

Julie MacArthur & Emmanuel Ackom

Opinion

Who deserves modern energy services? Energy is essential for socio-economic development, and livelihood improvement. The lack of modern energy services also stifles local economies as energy touches all aspects of contemporary life, from transportation and home cooling to charging our communication and work devices. However, just as the technical infrastructure that underpins modern life is relatively invisible to the average person, so, too, are some populations that

lack access to this infrastructure, significantly limiting the effectiveness of energy policies.

Hidden energy communities are groups of people with limited power and political visibility in energy policy worldwide. These communities frequently lack access to affordable and reliable clean energy services, and include the urban unhoused, renters, and underserved Indigenous communities.

Policy failures in Canada help perpetuate inequities in hidden energy communities: from heat domes in British Columbia disproportionately hitting low-income renters unable to install cooling, to reliance on expensive diesel generation in remote Indigenous communities. These energy challenges then cascade into unfair and socially costly effects—from lack of employment (through transport and connectivity limits) to ill health, poor housing quality, and sometimes even excess mortality.

Hidden energy communities represent a difficult-to-measure but growing segment of the globe—one falling increasingly behind in their access to the necessary access to power. This includes political power, as well as low-cost, low-carbon, and efficient options to meet their basic needs, from access to electricity and clean fuels at a minimum, to the technologies for generating and efficiently using new technologies like micro-grids, battery

storage, and renewable generation through solar, wind, hydro and geothermal sources.

In a particular city or regional jurisdiction, hidden energy communities are often a small minority, but aggregated across the country and around the world, their numbers are significant. For example, due to rapid urbanization, 55 per cent of the global population—4.3 billion people—is urban. One out of every three urban dwellers lives in an informal settlement, and faces tenure and inhabitation challenges and lack of services, including lack of energy access.

The urban unhoused form a growing population in cities including Vancouver, Victoria, and Toronto. Increasing incidences of pulmonary diseases, burns, or sometimes death from the use of open flames represent one impact of inadequate energy access. In 2021, 93,529 Canadians were reported to be homeless, and of this, Indigenous people are far more likely to experience homelessness. It is estimated that Canada has spent \$3.752-billion to address this problem as of 2016. The homeless population in the United States in 2016 was 634,000 people. This will cost the country US\$20-billion to solve it. This translates to the amount the U.S. spends on Christmas decorations each year.

Renters form another hidden energy community, representing more than five million households

in Canada (33 per cent). Despite variation between countries, renters generally have far less control of their living spaces, and in many urban settings are confronting a significant cost-of-living crisis, pushing more people on to the streets, and forcing residents to choose between rent, food, and heat. The power imbalance between landlords and renters creates principal-agent problems. This can result in wasteful energy choices, such as renters needing to open windows in winter when they can't control heat levels, or heat and sleep in only one room in a house to save on heating costs ("functional crowding"), leading to increased cases of respiratory disease in winter. Canadian residential retrofit policies have largely focused on homeowners and landlords, leaving renters' needs unaddressed.

While Indigenous Peoples in Canada are leading energy system innovation, the legacies of colonial systems and current policy priorities mean that those in remote locations form another hidden energy community. Energy inequities in these underserved Indigenous communities are due to disruptions to Indigenous governance systems, and the perpetuation of British colonial laws that played a role in resource seizures and erosion of trust. Meaningful execution of free, prior, and informed consent is critical to restoring the social infrastructure needed for effective

energy transitions. Financial and technical capacity-building support from government to communities can play an important role. Successful Indigenous examples are crucial to replicating community-led clean energy initiatives, as are land-back initiatives like the recent confirmation of Aboriginal title over Haida Gwaii.

Making transitions inclusive requires identifying all hidden energy communities through consistent data gathering and analysis efforts. It also requires drawing lessons from across diverse international contexts, in part to recognize the extremely challenging barriers many people in Canada face when it comes to access and uptake, and the fact that they are far from alone in facing these barriers.

Canada must ensure that no one is left behind in its clean energy transition. This is both a moral imperative, and vital to ensure that the energy transition doesn't provoke a broader backlash from underserved populations.

Dr. Julie MacArthur is an associate professor and the Canada Research Chair in Reimagining Capitalism at Royal Roads University. Her work investigates the political economy of low carbon transitions with a particular focus on how grassroots and community-led initiatives can scale up to make radical and transformative impacts to both adaptation and mitigation. Understanding the Policy Implications of Canada's 'Hidden Energy Communities' is a Cascade Institute at Royal Roads University project supported by the Accelerating Community Energy Transformation initiative.

Emmanuel Ackom is an assistant professor, and sustainability program co-ordinator with the University of North Alabama in the United States.

The Hill Times

Policy Briefing **ENERGY**

Energy Minister Jonathan Wilkinson. There are a few reasons why the lack of development of new renewable electricity capacity is a Canadian policy failure, write Warren Mabee and Balie Walker. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Renewable energy is declining in Canada

Canada now has missed a decade of opportunity to build significant new renewable capacity, leaving us behind our peers and out of step with the world.

Warren Mabee
& Balie Walker

Opinion



In 2015, the Liberals were elected with a majority government, and a mandate to address climate change. The government has made net-zero greenhouse gas emissions a cornerstone of its policy strategy and introduced a wide range of policies, including a carbon tax, a clean fuel standard, a greener home renovation fund,

and electric vehicle supports including billions of dollars for new battery plants in partnership with Ontario and Quebec. One important initiative has been the move to create a clean electricity grid by 2035, including more stringent regulations on coal-fired power.

Given this, one might expect that the proportion of renewable power in our energy mix would be rising. However, this is not the case. In 2015, renewables made up 17.2 per cent of our total primary energy supply and the contribution of all renewables to the energy mix was rising by 0.8 per cent per year, according to the International Energy Agency. By 2023, renewables made up only 16 per cent of our total primary energy supply, and the proportion of renewables is actually declining by about 0.1 per cent per year. Does this represent a failure on the part of the Trudeau government?

To understand, we must look at the changes in government approach. Past governments have used tools such as mandates, portfolio standards, and feed-in tariffs to direct government and corporate investment into green technologies—including renew-

ables—in order to reduce emissions, measuring success by the amount of new capacity added to the mix. In recent years, the federal government has been more likely to use carbon intensity targets in policy. This indeed is the cornerstone of the clean fuel standard, which focuses on the result—reduced emissions—rather than the means.

A shift towards intensity targets means that both provincial governments and companies have more latitude in the options available to reduce GHG emissions. One popular option has been to adopt natural gas instead of coal in the generation of electricity. This, coupled with population growth, has meant that our use of natural gas in the energy mix has risen by about four per cent per year, from 30 per cent of the total in 2015 to 40 per cent in 2023. Over the same period, coal has fallen from seven per cent to three per cent of the total.

Finally, governments at both the federal and provincial levels have recently put much more emphasis on nuclear energy as a non-emitting source for future electricity generation. Canada's

Small Modular Reactor Action Plan brings five provinces and one territory together with Indigenous, corporate, and municipal partners to focus on the development of new reactor designs. Larger Gen III+ reactors—e.g. the AtkinsRéalis CANDU Monark, the Westinghouse AP1000—may also see deployment in Ontario or Alberta.

These factors explain why the role of renewables has not grown, and has indeed diminished, within Canada's energy mix. It should be noted that despite the lack of growth in renewables within Canada, the country's total greenhouse gas emissions have fallen slightly in recent years, and on a per-capita basis are 30 per cent below 2005 levels, which suggests that we are making real progress, particularly given our record-setting population growth.

So is the lack of development of new renewable electricity capacity a Canadian policy failure? There are three reasons that the answer is "yes." First, renewables represent one of the cheapest options for adding electrical capacity to the grid, and the cost of energy storage—one of the biggest stumbling blocks in

renewable deployment—is falling. Steady investment in these technologies would help Canada build the expertise and capacity needed to take advantage of these technologies and keep energy prices low for consumers. Second, we are lagging our peers in investment in this space; the proportion of renewables used in the United States is increasing by 3.7 per cent per year, and in China by almost eight per cent per year. By not investing in these technologies, Canadian expertise is likely to leave to explore opportunities in other markets. Third, in the International Energy Agency's net-zero pathways, almost 90 per cent of global electricity generation in 2050 is expected to be from renewable sources.

Canada now has missed a decade of opportunity to build significant new renewable capacity, leaving us behind our peers and out of step with the world. New investment in this space is needed now.

Warren Mabee is professor and Stauffer-Dunning Chair in Public Policy at Queen's University, where he is also the director of the School of Policy Studies. His research focuses on the adoption of clean energy technologies and the intersection between technology development and policy.

Balie Walker is a PhD candidate at Queen's University in the department of geography and planning. Her research focuses on understanding the role of geography in energy transitions, and Canada's net-zero energy system design.

The Hill Times

ENERGY Policy Briefing



A recent \$4.5-million investment to improve the energy and cost efficiency of the leading carbon capture technology has Alberta's energy industry talking, writes Bonnie Drozdowski. *Pexels photograph by Jay Randhawa*

Currently there is only one widely available type of carbon capture technology, and only a few technology vendors provide it globally. Not only does that make the technology expensive, but it also means that this single technology must fit all needs.

Increased competition will help CCUS technology improve. For example, increasing the number of alternative fuel vehicles available for purchase—including those relying on hydrogen—is increasing competition, and reducing the up-front costs for consumers. They offer a range of fuel options that fit consumers' diverse needs. The same supply-and-demand equation will be true on an industrial scale for CCUS. InnoTech is helping speed that process along.

By connecting with technology developers and users, we are identifying the emerging challenges industry faces, allowing us to identify and kick-start the development of new solutions that will help reduce and capture emissions while lowering cost.

Our work in this space is already making an impact.

The \$4.5-million in funding will enable us to evaluate a new, more cost-effective and energy efficient version of the existing amine-based carbon capture process—the most widely available carbon capture technology. A new technology that captures and stores emissions directly from the exhaust stacks of heavy haulers is ready to be tested in the field as well. And we're also looking way outside the box; our team is developing brand-new technologies that reduce the need to capture carbon at all.

Not all these technologies will make it into the field, but expanding the range of potential options available is the first step to diversifying any market. By spurring their development now, we are ensuring that enough of these technologies will be available to help industry continue to reduce emissions into the future. If there was ever a time for work like this, it's now.

Bonnie Drozdowski is the executive director, environment, bio-industrial, and clean technologies at InnoTech Alberta where she leads teams with a passion for addressing environmental challenges and advancing sustainable industry practices.

The Hill Times

Diversifying carbon capture tech will help keep Canada competitive

Expanding the range of carbon capture, utilization, and storage technology options available will increase adoption and reduce the cost of this essential tool.

Bonnie Drozdowski

Opinion



Canada is entering a time of economic uncertainty. Many discussions have centred on the need to increase the productivity of the country's industries to remain competitive on a global stage. The energy industry has been looking across their operations to find ways to cut costs while maintaining efficiency and environmental performance.

There have been many conversations about various aspects of production, but finding ways to bring costs down when it comes to emissions reduction is essential to the industry remaining competitive globally. Carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) technology is a big part of that conversation.

The Jan. 29 announcement that InnoTech Alberta was

receiving a total of \$4.5-million from Natural Resources Canada, the Government of Alberta, and industry to improve the energy and cost efficiency of the leading carbon capture technology has Alberta's energy industry talking.

They already see the potential for this and other emerging commercial CCUS technologies to be integrated into their operations, reducing the emissions intensity of energy production.

But the next stage of that conversation is often more complicated. Commercially available carbon capture technology is still too expensive for widespread adoption.

We know that use of existing commercially available technology will allow industry to make

progress on reducing emissions for targeted parts of their operations, however, more variations and options in CCUS technologies are going to be needed to make more significant emissions reductions possible in the future.

Investing in the adoption of current CCUS technology isn't the only answer. We can—and should—invest in diversifying the types of technologies available for adoption.

That's where InnoTech Alberta comes in. As Alberta's leading research and technology organization, we ensure that the province is always one step ahead by providing innovative solutions to global challenges facing industries, businesses, and the public sector.

Climate clarity needed: don't pile up programs, focus on transformations

Continued from page 19

environmental perspective. But while they fire in all directions, they let the Canadian economy maintain its high energy and carbon profile.

Emissions have been going down under Justin Trudeau's government, but mostly because of the pandemic. Emissions had also been decreasing under Stephen Harper's government, but mostly because of the global financial crisis of 2008-09. New technol-

ogies slowly help Canadians become more energy efficient and lower their carbon intensity, but not at the speed required by our climate targets.

Therefore, we must ask ourselves the following question: will a series of nudges really take us to net zero?

Recent experience points towards a negative answer. Looking at the planet's limits also calls for more transformative actions.

Poillievre's Conservatives do not seem concerned by the

climate crisis, and are therefore very clear: do nothing. But is it more responsible to ignore the need for structural changes, and pretend that a panoply of marginal shifts will make it work?

Responsible leadership should focus on simple—but transformative—policies. Density of communities, strict building energy standards, active and shared mobility, plant-based diets, waste avoidance. Getting Canada on track on these five areas would increase the likelihood of reach-

ing a net-zero economy. It would also make us more competitive by increasing our efficiency. Finally, our economy would be more resilient to climate and economic shocks since we would eliminate many complex supply chains that are now required to fuel our energy intensive markets.

Whatever instrument replaces the carbon tax, the new Government of Canada should make sure it helps make real progress on densification, better buildings and mobility, less animal-based

food, and waste. These five areas are central to improving our environmental outcomes.

Voters might dislike some of the constraints that could be required to make progress, but hiding the truth can only backfire. Politicians need to have the courage to be clear on climate policy. It is a policy to transform our society. Otherwise, they will just be marginally better than the current Conservatives' clarity on doing nothing.

Pierre-Olivier Pineau is a professor in the department of decision sciences of HEC Montréal, and has served as Chair in Energy Sector Management since December 2013. He is a member of the Canadian Climate Institute mitigation expert panel.

The Hill Times

Policy Briefing ENERGY



By prioritizing development of 'green industries' like the manufacture of electric vehicles, Canada can also lower barriers to expanding trade with the European Union, write Alex Tavasoli and Holly Caggiano. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Bolstering domestic manufacturing can make us resilient to tariffs, and help meet our sustainability goals

To sustain vibrant communities in the face of unprecedented global risk, policymakers must incentivize domestic production, and clean energy independence.

Alex Tavasoli
& Holly
Caggiano

Opinion



The Donald Trump administration's tariff threats have driven Canadians to consider a question we often take for granted in our daily lives: where does our stuff come from? In response to the possibility of American tariffs as high as 25 per cent on Canadian goods, policy discussions have focused on retaliation and expanding trade relations to reduce reliance on the United States. The public, however, has been vocal about their desire to "buy Canadian" to support domestic suppliers and strengthen the local economy. This is not always easy, as many of the products we want and need are simply not manufactured domestically. Orange juice from Florida and almonds from California remind us of the vulnerabilities in our essential provisioning systems that supply us with everything from

food and cars to electricity and gasoline, computers, soap, and almost everything else that keeps our lives running.

For decades, Canada has depended on globalized trade networks to sustain its supply of food, energy, and most other goods. Undeniably, globalization has, on average, benefitted the global economy. Interconnected markets have allowed many nations—including Canada—to access cheaper goods, services, and cutting-edge technologies. This flow of goods has also enabled countries to leverage efficiencies that have driven growth and innovation across borders.

As geopolitical tensions rise and disruptive climate change impacts become increasingly frequent and severe, we can see even more clearly the fragility of this highly interconnected system. Supply chain interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic showed us one way in which our global supply chains are vulnerable to instability. Now, the threat of tariffs and trade wars further underscores the inherent risk of dependency on trade partners who may suddenly prioritize political posturing over long-standing collaboration through agreements and norms.

Lack of manufacturing capacity has long weakened Canada's economy, leaving it vulnerable to disruptions. Even before the tariff threat, a December 2024 National Bank report linked a 1.5 per cent annualized drop in business productivity to the decline of domestic manufacturing.

In this new era, bolstering our domestic manufacturing capacity has moved from an economic

plan to an acute strategic imperative. Industries crucial to not only our national security, but also our collective well-being should have strong domestic supply chains to prevent disruptions during times of crisis. Policies incentivizing the local production of critical goods will ensure that Canada can improve its self-sufficiency to better weather times of global uncertainty. Pandemics and politics to the south have presented unique moments of instability,



In this new era under United States President Donald Trump, bolstering our domestic manufacturing capacity has moved from an economic plan to an acute strategic imperative. Photograph courtesy of Gage Skidmore/Flickr

but climate change represents an existential threat to our long-term security. Scientists link climate change to extreme weather and declining resource availability globally. In Canada, this means that climate change has more than doubled the likelihood of extreme fire weather conditions.

The benefits of localized production extend beyond near-term resource security, and can support Canada's long-term transition to a sustainable economy. First, strengthening domestic manufacturing reduces the carbon footprint associated with the long-distance transpor-

tation of goods and fuels. It also provides the opportunity to foster a productive industrial symbiosis where waste materials are recycled and repurposed between manufacturing facilities to maximize efficiency and minimize waste production. By prioritizing development of "green industries" like the manufacture of electric vehicles, solar panels, or clean hydrogen, Canada can also lower barriers to expanding trade with the European Union by comply-

economies by making it harder for small businesses to thrive.

To sustain vibrant communities in the face of unprecedented global risk, policymakers must incentivize domestic production, and—clean—energy independence. This means offering tax incentives and grants for local manufacturing and clean energy, adopting public procurement policies that prioritize Canadian-made goods, and making infrastructure investments to expand renewables and modernize the grid. Strengthening the workforce through training programs will ensure a skilled labour pool, while strategic trade policies can protect key industries and boost exports of sustainable goods. These steps will fortify Canada's economy, reduce reliance on foreign supply chains, and drive the transition to a low-carbon future.

Sustainability and economic resilience go hand-in-hand. By prioritizing localized, domestic manufacturing and renewable energy production, Canada can not only shield itself from geopolitical disruptions, but also work towards long-term security in the face of growing climate impacts. In an era of rising uncertainty, a strong, self-sufficient, and green economy is the best safeguard for our future.

Alex Tavasoli is an assistant professor in the University of British Columbia's department of mechanical engineering. Her research group, the Laboratory of Future Industry, designs and builds sustainable chemical and materials manufacturing systems. She holds degrees in chemical and materials engineering from the University of Toronto.

Holly Caggiano is an assistant professor at University of British Columbia's School of Community and Regional Planning, where she leads the Planning for Climate Equity lab. Her research explores social dimensions of climate and energy transitions across North America. She holds a PhD in planning and public policy from Rutgers University.

The Hill Times

ENERGY Policy Briefing



Green hydrogen production has great economic potential for the government to create opportunities within the country in developing sectors, and fulfill international commitments, writes Ibrahim Dincer.
Photograph courtesy of Pixabay

Hydrogen sector development: are we really on the right track?

Canada is considered one of the world's leading countries in the production and use of renewable energy sources, but progress is insufficient for an accelerated transition.

Ibrahim Dincer



Opinion

Although the COVID-19 pandemic was an extremely tough experience for humanity in various aspects, it was a kind of wake-up call for the world from the energy perspective.

In early days of the pandemic in 2020, I wrote an article on "COVID-19: closing carbon age, but opening hydrogen age," and emphasized that every change brings an opportunity. That difficulty opened a door for hydrogen economy, and brought people and countries together for a common goal: considering hydrogen as a unique, carbon-free energy solution for decarbonization.

The European community introduced their "green hydrogen deal," and several other countries have also followed these transitional efforts—Canada published its own strategic outlook by December 2020. Such efforts made it clear that the energy equation had to change from fossil fuels+renewables+nuclear to renewables+nuclear+hydrogen, where hydrogen will serve as a fuel, an energy carrier, and—more importantly—as a feedstock.

In the following year, I led a study on "Challenges, opportunities, and future directions in hydrogen sector development in Canada" to help both federal and provincial governments, and a project on "Hydrogen Hub Development in Oshawa," aiming to bring all sectoral parties together to initiate hydrogen-based infrastructure for communities and sectors, including the transportation sector in particular. These studies were landmark types of work with a prime purpose to see Canada leading in developing the hydrogen economy, creating jobs and economic opportunities, addressing environmental and sustainability challenges, and making the country a better place to live.

I led another study on making a fuel and system switch from diesel-burning internal combustion engines to green hydrogen using fuel cells for ferries in Toronto Harbour. The green hydrogen was planned to be produced using floating photovoltaic panels in the harbour. This partic-

ular study raised awareness and attention, but ended up with no support to materialize the efforts. Having said that, a new era had begun. I called it "Hydrogen Age 1:0" in 2023, and explained how economic periods evolved and ended up with a hydrogen economy which should not be seen as a random coincidence, but rather as a natural occurrence.

While European and several other countries, including China and India, have become more aggressive in developing their policies, codes, and standards—making collective efforts to increase public awareness, providing substantial incentives and subsidies for the sectoral transition, and introducing various funding programs—Canada's hydrogen efforts have remained sort of slow in comparison. Of course, this does not mean that there were no steps taken, but they appeared to be insufficient for an accelerated transition.

It is important to note that Canada is considered one of the world's leading countries in the production and use of renewable energy sources, making it up to about 17 per cent, where more than 70 per cent comes from hydro, wave, and current, followed by wind and solar, as well as by biomass.

We recently studied Canada's green hydrogen production potential through renewables, and calculated it as more than 690 million tons. In calculating this capacity, the scenario was

to use excess power from hydro plants, the power from potentially installed onshore and offshore wind and solar, the power from ocean and geothermal energies, as well as biomass sources—primarily from agricultural and forest residues. This has great economic potential for the government to create opportunities within the country in developing sectors, and fulfill international commitments, such as the one with Germany. These will ultimately help the country address three targets: the Global Net-Zero Scenario, the Canada Net-Zero Scenario, and the Current Measures Scenario. The Global Net-Zero Scenario assumes Canada achieves net-zero emissions by 2050. It is further assumed that the rest of the world reduces emissions enough to limit warming to 1.5 C. It is obvious that this can only be achieved by using clean energy sources such as renewables and nuclear. There is no way to escape this responsibility, otherwise the next generation may end up paying much higher economic, environmental, health, and social prices.

Canada has to act immediately to perform the following tasks and responsibilities:

- Human capital development: essentially education and training, where universities and colleges will play a critical role, but requiring funding.

- Research, innovation, and technology development: where there is a much stronger need

to prioritize the research, innovation, and technology development agenda of the government, and allocate specific funding for hydrogen energy technologies and sectoral transition.

- Policy and strategy development with an action plan: this is something requiring multidimensional efforts from the federal and provincial governments to quickly move with plans specific to every sector.

- Sustainable funding and support: there is a strong need to develop sustainable funding and financing mechanisms. Of course, the government may not be able to undertake them all, but needs to co-ordinate the efforts in every sector and ensure that the plans move ahead as desired.

- Infrastructure development and capacity building: it is equally important to develop the infrastructure for hydrogen production, storage, distribution, transportation, and utilization in various sectors and build capacities accordingly. This way will lead to the development of a hydrogen ecosystem in the country.

- Business development and value creation: every government wants to develop business, which will create value for the welfare of the country.

This is a critical time to stick to original commitments made by the country, and provide necessary resources and support to switch to hydrogen economy while the world is facing critical political uncertainties and challenges.

Dr. Ibrahim Dincer is a professor, and director of the Clean Energy Research Laboratory at Ontario Tech University in Oshawa, Ont.

The Hill Times

Trudeau still has time to cement his defence legacy

The tumult of Donald Trump's first few weeks in office have underscored the wisdom of being strategic about which defence needs Canada should source at home.

David Perry



Opinion

Justin Trudeau has just a few weeks left as prime minister, but more than enough time to cement a legacy of launching the Canadian military on the road to revitalization. While defence never featured heavily in his government's public agenda, it nonetheless committed to a generationally significant reinvestment in Canada's Armed Forces. No previous Canadian government

has ever put forward three consequential defence investment programs as did his with *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, NORAD modernization, and *Our North, Strong and Free*. Combined, Trudeau committed to invest roughly \$250-billion to modernizing Canada's military. At the last NATO Summit in Washington, D.C., he went further, stating Canada would reach NATO's defence investment pledge target of spending two per cent of GDP on defence by 2032—the first time a Canadian prime minister explicitly indicated the country would reach the target agreed to at the 2014 NATO summit in Wales.

Notwithstanding this record, as Trudeau used to remark, “better is always possible,” and in the current fraught circumstances Canada is in now, better is needed urgently. Here are three things Trudeau can do to cement his defence legacy, set the country on a clear path to a modern, capable military, support the Canadian economy, and leave our next prime minister with a stronger hand in their discussions with United States President Donald Trump.

First, release a credible, verifiable plan to get Canadian defence spending to two per cent of GDP.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau can leave his successor with a stronger hand in their discussions with the American president, writes David Perry. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Despite a commitment to do so in July, and plenty of analysis to chart the way forward to hit the target, it has yet to happen. A full modernization of the Canadian Armed Forces requires it, and all NATO allies expect it. While defence issues have not featured heavily in the first few weeks of tense Canada-U.S. relations, they assuredly will at some point soon. Trudeau could

leave Canadian sovereignty more secure and his successor a stronger hand to deal with the American president if he leaves Canada with a real roadmap to meet our defence commitments.

Second, in *Our North, Strong and Free*, the government committed to review defence procurement. Trudeau would leave our next prime minister a better set of tools to enable Canadian defence if he can launch meaningful changes to the way we procure for defence. More than enough analysis has been done to initiate changes to bureaucratic processes that—if paired with a real prime ministerial focus—could effect meaningful change.

One initiative that has already emerged from the procurement review is an effort to craft a Defence Industrial Strategy. Amongst other objectives, it will identify what defence capabilities Canada wants to be “sovereign.” The tumult of Trump's first few weeks in office have underscored the wisdom of thinking carefully and strategically about which defence needs Canada should source at home.

The third opportunity Trudeau has to cement his legacy is to ensure some more major pro-

urement projects are moving in the right direction before he leaves, and he has an opportunity to strengthen Canada's sovereign defence capability while doing so. His government already launched the Royal Canadian Air Force on a path to modernization—including with the just-announced contract for pilot training, but it could still do more—by accelerating a project for Airborne Early Warning. The Army is in the process of reorienting to fight conventional conflicts akin to the war in Ukraine, which will require much more equipment and ammunition than prior planning assumed, as well as an ability to quickly replace both in wartime. *Our North, Strong and Free* committed to expanding Canadian ammunition production, and exploring the same for light armoured vehicles. Trudeau should take action to set that production in motion.

Finally, the prime minister is leaving office as the National Shipbuilding Strategy celebrates its 15th year. Before leaving, Trudeau can ensure that vital projects for both the Canadian Coast Guard and Royal Canadian Navy are under contract with all three partner shipyards to ensure there are no gaps in production for Canada's maritime fleets.

Trudeau is leaving a legacy of consequential commitments to rebuild the CAF. He still has time to take much needed action to strengthen Canadian sovereignty and defence.

David Perry is president and CEO of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

The Hill Times

Arctic security needs a Team Canada commitment

Diplomacy across the Arctic's deepening strategic divide is now dangerously dormant, just as tensions rise and military operations scale up.

Ernie Regehr



Opinion

Canadian sovereignty and national security have never depended solely—or even primarily—on military defence. In the Canadian Arctic, the military component is currently of growing importance, but Arctic security is still fundamentally a whole-of-government, or Team Canada, challenge.

Even the USAID website—or what is left of it—refers to the “3Ds” of security: “Diplomacy, Development, and Defence” it explains, “are the three pillars that provide the foundation for promoting and protecting U.S. national security interests abroad.” Some formulations add two more Ds: Democracy as good governance, and Disarmament.

While there are deficiencies across all five in the Canadian Arctic, neither the national nor global context warrants the defence “D” being singled out for the most urgent attention. In the real world, defence competes with other security imperatives for scarce Canadian tax dollars, and while those tax dollars may be in short supply, Arctic security needs aren't.

Arctic development that values economic equity and sustainability focuses on fundamental human security needs of northern peoples, and currently requires major upgrades to support the overall well-being of these populations—notably housing and health care. Add basic infrastructure needs and measures to mitigate the climate crisis and reverse

global warming, and those needs become even more urgent. Furthermore, action on these fronts is critically important for demonstrating Canada's responsible exercise of Arctic sovereignty.

Diplomacy across the Arctic's deepening strategic divide is now dangerously dormant just as tensions rise and military operations scale up. The refusal to engage with Russia is portrayed as moral rectitude, but that ignores a key lesson from the Cold War. Then, talks with the Soviet Union persisted despite grievous violations of international law and humanitarian obligations—like the Soviets' illegal invasion of Afghanistan and the Pentagon's war on Vietnam and Cambodia. Through it all, engagement continued, not to confer legitimacy, but to bolster security, yielding key arms control agreements and the broader Helsinki Accords.

Pan-Arctic diplomacy is needed to manage tensions, avoid dangerous military encounters and misunderstandings that can easily escalate, and to seek dialogue for exploring the conditions various parties consider essential

for easing tensions and building longer-term stability.

Good governance or democracy benefits from deeper involvement of Indigenous communities in decision-making related not only to their basic human security needs and the welfare of their communities, but also in the formation of defence policy and strategic relations—indeed in all matters affecting their Arctic homelands. Such participation is essential for building northern trust in national and regional institutions. As Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy puts it: “strong and resilient Arctic and northern communities increase Canada's defence against threats.”

Disarmament speaks to the need for sustained efforts towards effectively constraining emerging conventional weapons—notably hypersonic missiles—and current militarization trends in the Arctic, and to urge recovery of the region's still remembered traditions of co-operation. Disarmament action is also essential for challenging current trends in nuclear arsenal “modernization” and expansion, and notably in erecting guard rails for related nuclear and anti-submarine warfare patrols in the Arctic.

The defence component of Arctic security is led by NORAD renewal, but not confined to it. Upgrades include improvements to surveillance systems and

Arctic domain awareness (from outer space to the subsea space), research into emerging threats and credible responses, and infrastructure such as forward operating centres for F-35 fighter aircraft. There is an extensive list of current equipment acquisitions, including icebreakers, air-to-air missiles, early warning, and surveillance aircraft.

There is also an emerging consensus that changing strategic circumstances, not least in Washington, D.C., should prompt a new sense of urgency. The collective military challenge in the Arctic is to build and maintain preparedness that promotes stability, and avoids feeding the classic security dilemma that sees reciprocal military expansion raise tensions and diminish security within an already competitive strategic dynamic.

The sense of urgency should apply to the full range of security imperatives and it points to the utility of a Team Canada approach—an integrated whole-of-government operation that mobilizes all of the 5Ds on which security is ultimately built.

Ernie Regehr is senior fellow in defence and Arctic security at The Simons Foundation Canada, and co-founder and former executive director of Project Ploughshares.

The Hill Times

NEWS

Tariff dispute process would only offer symbolic win for Canada, but should still be used: trade observers

Canada has indicated that it would pursue immediate retaliatory tariffs in response to U.S. levies before a dispute body can adjudicate the case.

Continued from page 1

Prior to U.S. President Donald Trump granting Canada, as well as Mexico, a 30-day reprieve on 25-per-cent all-encompassing tariffs—aside from 10-per-cent measures on energy imports—the federal government indicated that it would be pursuing all legal recourse in the face of the American action.

The federal government has argued that the American threat is a violation of international trade law and existing trade pacts, but in pledging the immediate imposition of retaliatory tariffs, Canada could also be eschewing trade rules as a response is only supposed to come after a dispute-settlement ruling. Trade analysts told *The Hill Times* that the American breach requires an immediate Canadian response.

“In days gone by, the dispute settlement process—whether it’s in CUSMA [Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement] or the WTO [World Trade Organization] agreement—would give an avenue for solution, but in today’s world, these dispute-settlement processes are really not going to result in an immediate solution,” said international trade lawyer Lawrence Herman, remarking that the process is “long and cumbersome.”

“Canada has to respond. Whether or not theoretically, the dispute-settlement process in these agreements should be brought into play,” he said. “Canada’s response has to be immediate, and it has to be determined, and it has to be effective.”

Herman said the dispute-resolution system was designed for a different time and global reality.

“International law has to give way to the reality of international politics,” he said.

A dispute-settlement case is increasingly difficult since a ruling in Canada’s favour at the World Trade Organization can be appealed “into the void”—the appellate body lacks quorum to function as the U.S. has refused to allow new appointments.

Herman said that there is still value in forwarding a dispute panel despite Canada needing to respond before a ruling could come.



Any challenge by International Trade Minister Mary Ng to American tariffs would provide Canada with few material benefits. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

“Canada should pursue the dispute processes under CUSMA and the WTO agreement just to get a reading, and a final view of a dispute panel about the legality of the Trump actions,” he said. “That should be done in parallel with immediate responses Canada takes in the form of countermeasures.”

Since the start of his second term, Trump has threatened a slew of tariffs on Canadian imports, from the 25-per-cent all-inclusive levy to actions against steel and aluminum, as well as autos, and reciprocal tariffs.

International trade lawyer Mark Warner said a dispute-settlement ruling would offer little benefit for Canada aside from the optics for a domestic audience.

“There is a certain political advantage domestically to doing that,” he said. “But it will go nowhere, with a marginal benefit of maybe getting a panel decision that favours Canada.”

Warner noted that CUSMA gives the U.S. broad measures to justify tariffs based on national security concerns, as the pact notes it doesn’t limit a party’s “essential security interests” protection.

But a Canada-U.S. side letter to the agreement lays out that there will be a 60-day period of negotiations before any future Section 232 national security tariff measures can be put in place that the U.S. hasn’t abided by. Warner said it

remains to be seen what tariffs would be employed by the U.S.

Warner said unilateral retaliatory tariffs could impair Canada’s own arguments against American violation of trade law.

“Canada always used to appeal to the notion that we were a leader in the rules-based international order. Once you go outside of that, you’re in a whole different world,” he said.

In his book *No Free Trade*, Robert Lighthizer—the U.S. trade representative during Trump’s first term—said that those who complained about American Section 232 tariffs employed a “masterclass in hypocrisy” as they themselves unilaterally imposed retaliatory tariffs.

When discussing the European response to steel and aluminum tariffs, Lighthizer said while European Union members were “reaching for the vapors to calm themselves over [American] supposed violations of WTO rules, they immediately imposed retaliatory tariffs without

first availing themselves of the WTO’s supposedly sacrosanct dispute resolution process, in blatant violation of the rules.”

The current nominee for the U.S. trade representative, Jamie-Greer, served as Lighthizer’s chief of staff.

Canada cannot wait to respond, say trade experts

University of British Columbia professor Kristen Hopewell, Canada Research Chair in global policy, said that while unlikely to be enforceable, a ruling in Canada’s favour by a dispute panel would have “symbolic value.”

“It would provide sort of an after-the-fact justification for Canada imposing retaliatory tariffs, and it would show that Canada was in the right, and that U.S. had broken the law and broken WTO rules,” she said.

Hopewell said it is necessary to respond with retaliatory action before a dispute panel ruling given the slow pace that a decision would take.

“Waiting would be a real impediment. Canada and other countries that are threatened by Trump’s tariffs really need to take a strong stance and be able to strike a blow to the U.S. economy in order to impose costs on the U.S.,” she said, remarking that waiting for a panel ruling would undermine Canada’s position.

University of Ottawa law professor Wolfgang Alschner, Hyman Soloway Chair in Business and Trade Law, said it is important for Canada to make an argument that its retaliatory tariff response is WTO compliant.

“It is important that Canada and other countries stick by the rules, and try to justify whatever response they take,” he said. “It doesn’t necessarily mean that they have to succeed, but I think they have to cloud their response in an aura of legality because otherwise they might be complicit in bringing down the system that the U.S. is currently dismantling.”

Alschner said there are retaliatory tariff responses that Canada can take immediately based upon the legal argument the government puts forward.

Those would include retaliatory tariffs on the U.S.’s 25-per-cent levy threat as it can be argued that the White House is using the measure in the form of economic coercion, and not as a response to a violation of Canada’s trade commitments since Trump positioned the tariffs as a response to border and migration policy.

The potential response to steel and aluminum tariffs, as well as auto measures, offer a less clear example, as those are addressing an alleged trade harm.

Alschner said there may still be ways for Canada to make an argument that immediate retaliation is WTO compliant by arguing it is a safeguard measure to boost its own domestic industry. But he added that he doubts that it would be an effective legal strategy as there is precedent to argue that the tariffs are not safeguards, but are levies for national security purposes.

He said it would be “irresponsible” for Canada not to argue an immediate response aligns with WTO rules given the existential threat the tariffs pose.

“The rule book of the WTO really was not written for the type of economic coercion and the fundamental challenging of the norms underpinning the multilateral trading system,” he said.

He said the added benefit of launching a dispute panel is that it will increasingly offer options for other countries to support the complaint, transforming it from a bilateral issue to a multilateral one. He added the other benefit is to create a formal record of an alleged violation.

Queen’s University emeritus professor Robert Wolfe said that if Canada believes in the rules of the trade agreement it has signed with the U.S., then it should be launching a dispute panel no matter the impact a ruling may have.

“If we didn’t launch a dispute, we’d be saying, too, that the rules don’t matter, the agreements don’t matter,” said Wolfe, a past trade official in the Canadian foreign ministry. “So ultimately, you have to use the agreements.”

“You can’t not use the system,” he said. “If you think the system matters, then you have to use the system. But that doesn’t mean you have to wait for it.”

He said that if the U.S. has any qualms with unilateral retaliation from Canada, then it can launch a dispute panel.

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U.S. President Donald Trump has threatened a slew of tariffs on Canadian imports since returning to the White House more than a month ago. *Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

NDP needs to go ‘back to the drawing board’ on election strategy or face further drop in the polls, say pundits

The NDP leader presents himself as a boxer ‘fighting’ for Canadians in a new ad, but caucus could be facing an electoral knockout, says former NDP strategist Matt Chilliak.

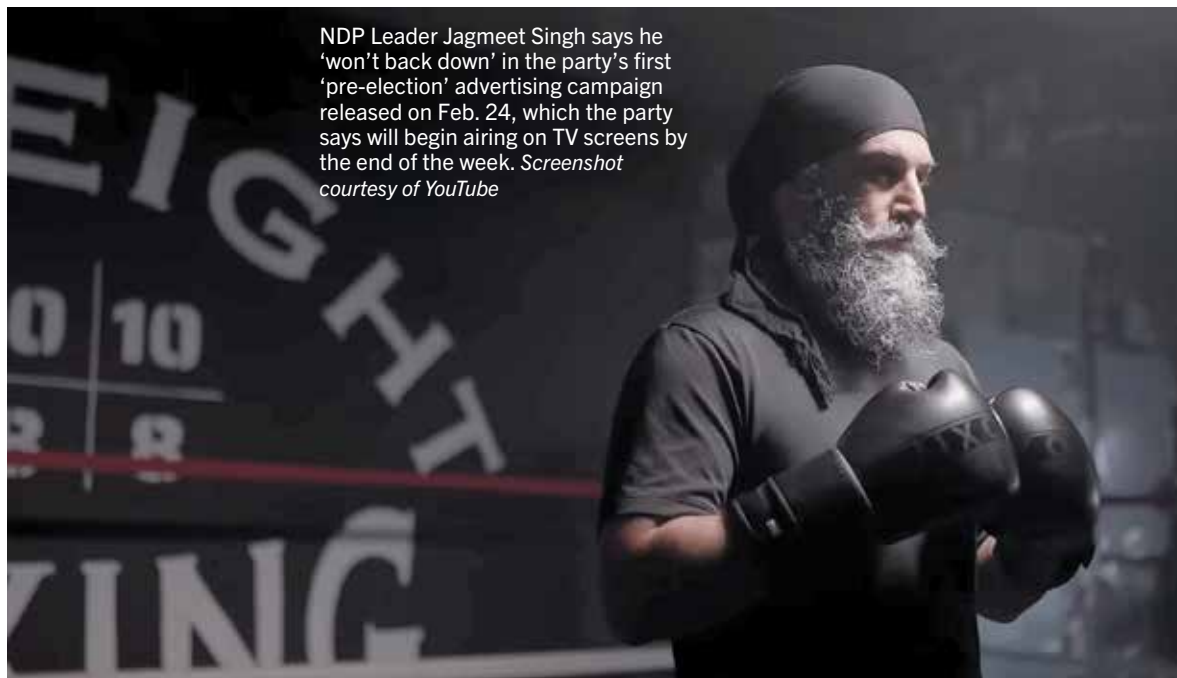
Continued from page 1

On Feb. 18, the Angus Reid Institute’s latest survey indicated a drastic 21-point increase in the Liberals’ polling, from 16 per cent support in December to 37 per cent in a hypothetical scenario where presumed front-runner Mark Carney wins the March 9 leadership race. Yet while the Conservatives saw a slight five-point decline to 40 per cent in this scenario, the NDP saw the most significant drop, down from 21 to 10 per cent. Under the hypothetical leadership of former finance minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.), Liberal support settles at 29 per cent, and NDP support levels off at 16 per cent.

Léger’s Feb. 17 poll indicated a similar downward trend, with the NDP polling at 11 per cent, down from just under 20 per cent at the end of December. Polling aggregator 338Canada also indicates a five-point drop for the New Democrats since Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) resignation on Jan. 6, with the NDP’s polling average at 14 per cent.

The 338Canada current seat projection indicates the NDP is currently on track to potentially lose more than half of its current seats, winning an estimated 11 seats should its current polling hold into the next election. The Conservatives still hold a more than 50-seat lead with 177—five seats more than is needed for a majority government in the expanded 343-seat House of Commons—followed by the Liberals with 120, the Bloc Québécois at 33, and the Greens with two.

Despite Trudeau’s pending departure and tariff threats from United States President Donald Trump reinvigorating the Liberals, Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) has yet to indicate any change in course or consideration of anything less than first place.



NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh says he ‘won’t back down’ in the party’s first ‘pre-election’ advertising campaign released on Feb. 24, which the party says will begin airing on TV screens by the end of the week. Screenshot courtesy of YouTube

“There’s no plan B; it’s all plan A,” Singh told CanadaLand podcast host Noor Azrieh during a Feb. 18 episode when asked what he plans to do if his party fails to win the next election.

“You can’t go into an election thinking anything other than ‘I’m running to win,’ and I want folks to know that I believe in it,” Singh told Azrieh, followed by a list of all the accomplishments he said his party had “forced” out of two minority Liberal governments, including the Canada Emergency Response Benefit during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the federal child, dental, and pharmacare programs.



Even if the NDP leader says he isn’t leaving, that doesn’t mean the caucus can’t disagree behind the scenes, says political strategist Matt Chilliak. Photograph courtesy of Matt Chilliak

“If we could do that, the first-ever expansion of our health care since we brought it in, with [24] MPs, I really want people to imagine what we could do if we had 100 MPs, if we were actually in government, [and] if I was prime minister,” Singh said. “Imagine the things we could do.”

However, some are also questioning whether Singh is still the best person to lead his party into the next election.

In a Feb. 6 opinion piece for *The Hill Times*, political strategist Matt Chilliak, who has worked for both provincial NDP campaigns and for the Democrats in the U.S., suggested that for the party to “turn things around



Earnscliffe Strategies’ Mélanie Richer says the party that will be the most successful in the next election will be whichever can pivot best from responding to the anger Canadians felt toward the prime minister to their fear over U.S. tariff threats. Photograph courtesy of Mélanie Richer

... Singh needs to step down as leader—immediately.”

In a follow-up interview with *The Hill Times* on Feb. 20, Chilliak conceded that with even less time for the party to enact his suggestion—and possibly slimmer chances of his preferred replacement, new Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew, wanting the job—“the clock is still ticking.”

Chilliak said he wouldn’t expect or want Singh to be sending the message that there is a “plan B” until and unless he actually decides to leave, but given the current polling landscape, the ball shouldn’t entirely be in his court.

“My hope right now is that there’s a little bit of a role for caucus to play here,” Chilliak said. “I hope they might think about some behind-the-scenes pressuring if it’s not happening already because it’s one thing when you’re just looking at numbers dwindling, but it’s another thing when there are no safe seats ... that should be ringing alarm bells for every single NDP MP.”

In a statement to *The Hill Times*, NDP MP Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, Ont.) rejected the suggestion that there is any desire for Singh to not lead the party into the next election, calling him a “steady hand through these difficult times.”

“Our NDP caucus is prepared to fight for Canadian workers, and deliver a platform that will keep them at the heart of decision-making,” Green wrote. “What we will offer come election time will be solid support for people

along with an ambitious plan to build and buy Canadian.”

On Feb. 24, the party also placed a \$500,000 bet on Singh as its champion, releasing a new 30-second “pre-election” television ad, *Fighting For You*.

“I got in the ring to take on the powerful few, and fight for you,” Singh narrates over a video of him sparring in a boxing ring, interspersed with clips of his childhood and family life.

“It’s time for someone in your corner ... I won’t back down. I won’t stop fighting for you. I’m ready.”

If the party isn’t going to consider his plan B, Chilliak said it needs to devise a better way to achieve its current goal as the party’s strategy of reminding Canadians of what it has already accomplished has not been successful.

While it’s understandable for the NDP to want to run on its record of accomplishments, even with several “massive policy wins,” voters aren’t rewarding them for it, Chilliak explained.

“If Singh is staying at the helm, they should be going back to the drawing board,” Chilliak said, adding the NDP will need to present something new and at a similar level of impact and popularity as the Liberals’ recent promise of a new high-speed rail line.

“That’s a huge promise months before an election, so I’m not looking at it with rose-coloured glasses, but they’re thinking big,” Chilliak said. “The NDP needs to do similar.”

Earnscliffe Strategies’ Mélanie Richer, Singh’s former director of communications, suggested that while the Liberals were undoubtedly benefitting from a leadership-race boost, she believes Trump’s threats have been far more significant.

“Obviously, there’s a bump for the Liberals with Mark Carney, but since Trump, even Trudeau’s numbers have gotten better,” Richer said, noting the prime minister’s approval numbers had increased by 12 points and disapproval points dropped by 16.

“We’re in a different world than we were on Jan. 5, but we’re also in a different world than last week,” Richer said. “Folks are moving from angry to scared, and I think it’ll be important for the NDP, and all parties, to figure out how to respond.”

Richer said that if the party still hopes to champion previous accomplishments, it needs to reframe that messaging in the context of responding to Trump’s threats.

“It can’t just be ‘here are the things that we’re doing that make people’s lives more affordable.’ It’s ‘here’s what we’re doing to protect their jobs and standard of living,’” Richer said, explaining that while something like dental care is an important health measure, it’s also a “massive pocket-book issue.”

“Dental care will save a family of four \$1,200 a year. If you’re worried about the difference between dental care and making your mortgage or rent that month, that’s massive,” Richer said.

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NEWS

Gould leadership bid appeals to young Liberals, paving future path, say Grits

Continued from page 4

that she's someone that cares a lot about youth definitely drew me to her initially," said Pilon, noting Gould was also the first candidate to visit Kingston, Ont., after the race started, and was "the first candidate to roll out such a robust block of policy."

While "a lot of people are framing Karina's campaign as kind of being specifically just youth related," Pilon said "youth are choosing her" because they "really believe in her vision," and "a big part of that is because she herself has been a Young Liberal."

"I think because of that experience she really understands what it means to be a youth in politics, and to want to be like a driving force," she said. "They're empowered by her, and I think especially being a young woman in politics adds another lens."

Young Liberals working on Gould's campaign similarly told *The Hill Times* they were drawn to Gould's personality, way of communicating, and her story as a former Young Liberal and woman in politics.

"I've always been a really big fan of Karina; I love the way that she communicates, and I think she's such a strong, powerful young woman ... I wasn't sure who I was going to support for leadership, and then she announced that she was running, and to me it was just like a no brainer," said Myah Tomasi, 24, a cabinet staffer who's volunteering on Gould's campaign during her off hours.

Emily Jackson, 22, comes from Gould's riding, and first met the MP when she was 15 years old and Gould came to speak at her high school. Jackson said it was Gould who inspired her to pursue politics, and it was Gould who gave Jackson her first job on the Hill. After interning in Gould's MP office since 2021, Jackson was hired to tackle communications in the House leader's office then-held by Gould in 2023. (Gould has since resigned as House leader, and Jackson has taken leave from her job to work on the campaign full time.)

"The way she spoke, she really connected to my class," recalled Jackson. "I've always looked up to Karina; in my four years working for her, those initial thoughts of being inspired never went away."



Emily Jackson has taken leave to work as a spokesperson for Gould's campaign. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Asked how key the campaign sees young Liberals to its path to success, both Tomasi and Jackson said that rather than a specific, concerted focus being put on getting out the youth vote, young Liberals seem "to be the most attracted to Karina."

"I think she really appeals to that generation of young Liberals who are looking for significant change, and policies that make sense for them ... I think a lot of young people feel very understood by her," said Jackson, highlighting Gould's pitch to restore the paid position of a Young Liberal national director to the party, and permanently cut the GST on items like children's clothing or strollers.

Gould has proposed restoring the role of Young Liberals national director as part of her pitch to renew the party and re-engage its grassroots. Freeland has likewise promised to restore the Young Liberals national director position, among other party renewal pitches.

But Gould's campaign has also made clear efforts to connect with young Liberals.

Tomasi is national Young Liberal director for Gould's campaign, putting her in charge of ensuring there's a "youth perspective on the team," connecting with youth groups, getting feedback on policy ideas, and organizing and managing youth volunteers.

So far, Gould has taken part in five events specifically with Young Liberals, and early in the race hosted a Zoom call in which all Young Liberals were invited to take part.

"On top of that, though, every time she does events, every time she does meet and greets, if she's in a community, we always do specific outreach to the youth in that riding or region or campaign club to make sure that they are aware, and we always have Young Liberals go to all of her events," said Tomasi, adding that connecting with young Liberals and visiting campus clubs is something Gould has made a point of doing throughout her years in office.

"It's not just about meeting young Liberals for the sake of getting votes."

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Myah Tomasi is national Young Liberal director for Gould's campaign. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Carney shouldn't take the bait on Conservatives' 'desperate and distracted' disclosure hunt, say Liberal strategists

Continued from page 5

of its leadership and expense rules. The party's appeal body confirmed the disqualification on Feb. 24.

While Conservatives may not get the answers they're demanding before Carney is legally required to divulge them, former Tory campaign staffer Dan Mader says that doesn't mean his party will stop asking.

"Carney is untested, and he's going to have to answer these questions now or later," explained Mader, now a founding partner with Loyalist Public Affairs. "So far, [Carney] has been able to have a very influential role in this Liberal government for many years without facing the scrutiny that he would if he'd run for office, and the Conservatives are trying to make him face that scrutiny now."

From his experience as both deputy campaign manager for policy on then-Conservative MP Erin O'Toole's successful leadership bid and the party's 2021 general election campaign, Mader said that "if you're going to have to answer a question, apologize, or come clean, it's better to do it right away than get beat up for not doing it and then do it anyway."

"It's always better to get out ahead of things than to do it begrudgingly after you've been forced to," Mader said, adding that while Carney may not be in breach of standard disclosure rules for parliamentarians, Canadians deserve to know quite a bit more about someone running to lead the country.

Yaroslav Baran, co-founder of the Pendulum Group and a former party spokesperson during the Conservatives' 2022 leadership race, agreed that while the Liberals are "technically correct" that Carney isn't required to make a proactive disclosure, given the higher stakes, he should be held to a higher standard.

"This is somebody vying for party leadership who will instantly become prime minister upon winning the race," Baran explained. "The question then becomes: is it good enough to follow the bare minimum?"

While he said he isn't certain the Conservatives' new strategy will affect the outcome of the Liberal leadership race, Baran also agreed that if Carney doesn't "get in front" of the Tory attacks, he will be vulnerable to the perception he was dragged "kicking and screaming" to disclose when the mandated time comes.

"Politically, I think it makes a whole lot of sense for [Carney] to get in front of this rather than constantly be chased by the issue," Baran said.

However, former Liberal strategist Muhammad Ali told *The Hill Times* that just because the Conservatives are demanding something doesn't mean it's an actual issue that needs to be addressed.

"The Conservatives are trying to latch on to anything they can to criticize [Carney] because they're scared," Ali said, noting that the recent surge in polling for the Liberals was most likely making the Tories "nervous."



Conservative strategist Dan Mader, founder of Loyalist Public Affairs, says Carney will have to disclose 'now or later,' and Conservatives won't give up the chase until he does. *Photograph courtesy of Loyalist Public Affairs*



Yaroslav Baran, co-founding partner with Pendulum Group, says it would be politically wise to get out in front of any disclosure than appear to be dragged 'kicking and screaming' by the Conservatives. *Photograph courtesy of the Pendulum Group*

The Angus Reid Institute's Feb. 18 survey indicated that, in a hypothetical scenario in which Carney were to win the March 9 leadership race, the Conservative lead would be cut to just three points, down from a 29-point lead in December.

After spending millions of dollars on advertising and research to frame the next election around anti-Trudeau and anti-carbon tax sentiment, the Conservatives are now scrambling to "define Carney before he defines himself," said Ali.

"A lot of voters are seeing Carney for the first time, and getting the sense of him as an accomplished banker who understands the economy," Ali explained. "Compared to Poilievre, who has zero experience outside of politics, they're probably very mindful of how that comparison will look if they haven't painted [Carney] correctly."

KAN Strategies' Greg MacEachern said the new attack line and the multiple press conferences in quick succession make the Conservatives appear both "desperate ... and distracted."

Given the increasing economic anxiety over U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff and annexation threats, MacEachern suggested that "whether or not Carney broke non-existent rules isn't really the most important thing right now."

"If this is your political play at the moment, you don't look like you're focused on what's best for Canada," MacEachern said, adding that even after three West Block press conferences, "most Canadians didn't notice, and if they did, they found it confusing, at best."

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Diplomatic Circles

By Neil Moss



No discussions ongoing over Russia's return to G7, says new Italian ambassador

New Italian Ambassador Alessandro Cattaneo talks Canada's G7 presidency, CETA ratification, and Ukraine.

Italy's top diplomat in Canada says there have been no "real discussions" to bring Russia back into the G7.

The suggestion to return to a Group of Eight was made by United States President Donald Trump earlier this month, remarking that he'd "love to have them [Russia] back," and that it was a "mistake to throw them out."

"We are not there," said Italian Ambassador to Canada **Alessandro Cattaneo** in response to a question regarding whether Rome supports Russia rejoining the group.

"This has not been the subject of real discussions because the conditions to examine the possibility are not on the ground. If and when the requisites for that will be in place, it will be the subject of discussion," he told *The Hill Times* during a Feb. 19 interview at the Italian Embassy.

Foreign Affairs Minister **Mélanie Joly** has rejected the idea, as have Conservative Leader **Pierre Poilievre** and Liberal leadership candidate **Mark Carney**. Russia has also suggested it doesn't have an interest to rejoin.

Italy transferred the G7 presidency to Canada at the beginning of the year.



Italian Ambassador to Canada Alessandro Cattaneo spent a decade of his diplomatic career with an eye on NATO. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Before the Leaders' Summit in June in Kananaskis, Alta., Canada will have a new prime minister and possibly go through a general election, ensuring that the Canadian prime minister will go from being the most seasoned leader at the G7 table to the greenest.

Cattaneo said the domestic political situation is having an effect on G7 preparations, but argued that it isn't a harmful one.

"The internal dynamics in any country of the G7—and especially the country that has the chairmanship—of course, it has an

effect on the work that is being done and is being delivered," he said. "But this is not anything negative. It is part of recognizing what democracy means, that institutions are always subject to the will of the constituents."

"It appears that we will have soon a new prime minister. So, I am confident that whoever he or she will be, [they] will be in the best position to inject new momentum in the preparation of the G7," he said.

G7 foreign ministers will meet in Charlevoix, Que., from March 12 to 14. They had previously met on the margins of the Munich Security Conference on Feb. 15.

'Turmoil' presents opportunity

Cattaneo said he is "deeply convinced" that the current geopolitical "turmoil" offers an opportunity to strengthen the trans-Atlantic relationship, remarking that Italy serves as a "privileged interlocutor" between Canada and Europe.

"There is much work we can do," he said. "As they say, 'Never waste a crisis.'"

"Let's turn the current uncertainties and turmoil into an opportunity to do something new, to do something better and smart," he said.

With Canada and the European Union under tariff threat, some have called for complete ratification of the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and

Trade Agreement (CETA). Italy is one of 10 EU countries that still have yet to ratify the pact.

Asked if he is confident that it will be fully ratified, Cattaneo said that "we have to be confident," citing the "concrete advantage" the pact gives the two countries.

"I'm confident that we will be able to work on it," he said, but noted that the question of CETA ratification is in the hands of his country's Parliament.

Cattaneo presented his letter of credence to Governor General **Mary Simon** on Dec. 10, 2024.

A career diplomat for more than a quarter century, Cattaneo has taken up his first head-of-mission post in the country that was his first international visit outside of Europe as a 17 year old when he arrived in Toronto en route to Buffalo, N.Y., where he went to study English with relatives.

The new Italian ambassador has spent much of his diplomatic career focused on defence and security, as well as the trans-Atlantic community. For a decade, he was focused on NATO, which included two postings in Brussels, Belgium, and a posting as head of the NATO division in the Italian Foreign Ministry.

He has also been posted to Israel and in the United States.

Crucial for Ukraine to be at negotiating table: Cattaneo

Cattaneo said a "long-lasting peace" for Ukraine is something that "needs to be reached."

"It needs to be reached with the full participation of Ukraine. It needs to be reached with the full participation of the European Union," he said.

U.S. and Russian representatives recently met in Saudi Arabia without any Ukrainian officials present for the start of peace talks.

Asked if any peace settlement would include a return to the pre-2014 boundaries for Ukraine, Cattaneo said it has been the consistent NATO position to not recognize unilateral modification of Ukrainian borders.

U.S. Defense Secretary **Pete Hegseth** has called a return to the pre-2014 borders an "unrealistic objective."

"It is up to Ukraine to come to the negotiating table and to freely subscribe to any settlement that the Ukrainian authorities will judge appropriate for their own people," Cattaneo said. "At this very moment, we don't recognize any change. It is up to Ukraine at a certain point to agree or not agree on what will emerge from the table."

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Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured at the 2018 G7 summit in Charlevoix, Que., will soon depart as the dean of the Group of Seven. *Prime Minister's Office* photograph by Adam Scotti



Ukraine, led by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, centre, wasn't at the table for the first round of U.S.-led peace talks in Saudi Arabia. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Hill Climbers

By Laura Rycckewaert



Immigration Minister Miller has a new acting chief of staff

Plus, a look at the team of new Official Languages and Associate Public Safety Minister Rachel Bendayan, which is led by chief of staff Isabelle Daoust.



Immigration Minister Marc Miller has a new acting chief of staff, and acting deputy chief of staff. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Minister **Marc Miller** has named an acting chief of staff for his office, with **Mike Burton** currently on leave from the post.

Burton, who's been running Miller's ministerial offices since the end of 2019, has stepped away to serve as national field director for Liberal leadership candidate **Mark Carney's** campaign. He went on leave as of Jan. 21.

Burton has been working for the Trudeau government since the end of 2015, starting as director of parliamentary affairs to then-infrastructure minister **Amarjeet Sohi**. He worked for Sohi through the minister's time in charge of the natural resources portfolio, ending as director of policy and operations. First hired as chief of staff to Miller as then-Indigenous services minister after the 2019 election, Burton has since also run Miller's office as minister of Crown-Indigenous relations.

Miller is among those who have endorsed Carney for Liberal leader.

With Burton off campaigning for Carney, deputy chief of staff **Yummy Han** has been made acting chief of staff to Miller.

Han joined Miller's office as deputy chief in September 2023—in the wake of the July 2023 cabinet shuffle that saw Miller moved from Crown-Indigenous relations to immigration—and before then had spent close to two-and-a-half years working in Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau's** office as a regional affairs adviser for British Columbia.



Mike Burton has taken leave to work on Mark Carney's leadership campaign. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Han is also a former press secretary, and West and North regional affairs adviser to International Trade Minister **Mary Ng**, and a past constituency assistant to B.C. Liberal MP **Joyce Murray**, amongst other past experience.

In turn, director of policy and legal affairs **Julia Carbone** has been named acting deputy chief of staff.

Carbone is a former constituency assistant to Miller as the MP for Ville-Marie-Le Sud-Ouest-Îles-Soeurs, Que., and has been working in his ministerial offices since 2020, starting as a policy and legal affairs adviser in his office as then-Indigenous services minister. She was first made director of policy in early 2023 during Miller's time as then-Crown-Indigenous relations minister.

In another senior-level staffing change for the office, director of operations **Bryan Rourke** has recently exited.

Another ex-constituency assistant to Miller, Rourke was hired as executive assistant to Miller as then-Indigenous services minister shortly after the 2019 election. By late 2020, he'd been given the added role of Quebec regional affairs adviser, and after the 2021 election, Rourke was elevated to his most recent title.

With Rourke's exit in mid-January, senior special assistant for operations and outreach **Arash Rahmani** is currently

acting director of operations to Miller.

Rahmani has been working for Miller since March 2023, starting as a B.C. regional affairs adviser in Miller's office as then-Crown-Indigenous relations minister.

Diane Chieng, meanwhile, joined Miller's office as an operations manager on Jan. 20. Chieng was among the 100-plus staffers caught up in the Dec. 20, 2024, cabinet shuffle, having previously been a special assistant for operations and West and North regional affairs to then-sport and physical activity minister **Carla Qualtrough**.

A former constituency assistant to Emergency Preparedness Minister **Harjit Sajjan** as the MP for Vancouver South, B.C., Chieng had been working for Qualtrough since April 2023, starting as an executive assistant to the operations team in Qualtrough's office as then-employment minister. Chieng has also previously worked with the court services branch of the BC Ministry of the Attorney General.

Who's who in Minister Bendayan's shop

A one-time cabinet staffer herself, Official Languages and Associate Public Safety Minister **Rachel Bendayan** has now built up a cabinet team of her own, which is being led by chief of staff **Isabelle Daoust**.

Prior to her election as the MP for Outremont, Que., in 2019, Bendayan was chief of staff to then-small business and tourism minister **Bardish Chagger**.

Daoust has spent the last almost two-and-a-half years as deputy chief executive officer for the Canadian Bar Association, and was previously on the association's list of registered federal lobbyists. She has a background in law, international development, and defence.

A past director of international humanitarian law for the American Red Cross and former director of the office of the deputy secretary-general of the Canadian Red Cross, Daoust served as a policy adviser to Sajjan as then-defence minister between 2016 and 2017. She went on to work as a corporate secretary for the Department of National Defence, and then as director general of Immigration, Citizenship, and Refugees Canada's case management branch.

Daoust's CV includes two years spent as a lawyer with ex-law firm Heenan Blaikie in Montreal, and as a legal adviser with the International Committee of the Red Cross, among other past jobs.

Supporting Daoust as deputy chief of staff is **Nasser Haidar**, who comes fresh from Trudeau's office where he'd been working since February 2023 when he was hired as a parliamentary affairs and issues management adviser.

Haidar is also a former special assistant for issues management to then-deputy prime minister and finance minister **Chrystia Freeland**, a past special assistant for parliamentary affairs in the Liberal research bureau, a former parliamentary adviser to then-health minister **Patty Hajdu**, and an ex-assistant to Toronto Liberal MP **Julie Dzerowicz**.

Meredith Caplan Jamieson has been hired as a senior adviser and director of strategic initiatives to Bendayan.

Caplan Jamieson was last on the Hill as a senior adviser to then-Privy Council president and intergovernmental affairs minister **Dominic LeBlanc** from the end of 2020 until the start of 2023, and has since been executive officer of public affairs and communications for the Renfrew County District School Board. Daughter



Isabelle Daoust is chief of staff to Minister Bendayan. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

to former Ontario Liberal MPP and MP **Elinor Caplan**—among other familial political connections—Caplan Jamieson is herself a former municipal councillor for Ontario's Bonnechere Valley Township, and has a background in film production, including as former executive producer and owner of Capture Entertainment.

She's also a former public affairs senior associate with Compass Rose, among a list of other things.

Sylvain Abramowicz, who previously worked in Bendayan's MP office, is now director of issues management in her ministerial office.

Luke Guimond is director of parliamentary affairs to Bendayan. It's no doubt been quite the past few months for Guimond, who was previously a parliamentary affairs adviser and issues manager to the federal employment minister. That post has seen a fair bit of ministerial turnover of late: former minister **Randy Boissonnault** resigned from cabinet in November, and then-veterans affairs minister **Ginette Petitpas Taylor** took over as employment minister until the Dec. 20 cabinet shuffle, which saw **Steven MacKinnon** take charge of the portfolio.

A former assistant to Ontario Liberal MPP **Lucille Collard** and Quebec Liberal MP **Anthony Housefather**, Guimond was first hired as a legislative assistant to then-employment minister Boissonnault in the fall of 2023, and was promoted to parliamentary affairs adviser and issues manager last year.

Taous Ait has been hired as director of communications. Ait is a former director of operations to Quebec Lieutenant **Jean-Yves Duclos**, a past senior adviser for Quebec to then-transport minister **Pablo Rodriguez**, and previously worked in the Liberal research bureau.

Finally, rounding out Bendayan's team so far is operations adviser **Mathis Rinna**.

Rinna likewise comes fresh from the Quebec lieutenant's team. In his case, he first joined that office as a special assistant in late 2023 during Rodriguez's time in the lieutenant's chair. Rinna has also previously worked in Bendayan's MP office, and for Qualtrough as the MP for Delta, B.C.

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Yummy Han is currently acting chief of staff to Minister Miller. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Diane Chieng is now working for the federal immigration minister. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Nasser Haidar is deputy chief of staff to Minister Bendayan. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Meredith Caplan Jamieson has returned to the Hill. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*



Parliamentary Calendar

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

Ontario voters head to the polls for provincial election on Feb. 27



On Feb. 27, Ontario voters will pick between parties led by Progressive Conservative Doug Ford, left, New Democrat Marit Stiles, Liberal Bonnie Crombie, and Green Mike Schreiner. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade, and courtesy of X and Facebook

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26

NDP Leader Singh to Deliver Remarks—NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh will deliver bilingual remarks titled “Stronger together: Building Canada’s resilience in the face of a trade war with United States and today’s unstable world,” at a lunch event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the DoubleTree by Hilton Montréal, 1255 Jeanne-Mance St. Details: corim.qc.ca.

President of Shell Canada to Deliver Remarks—Susannah Pierce, outgoing president and country chair of Shell Canada, will take part in a discussion, “Canadian Oil and Gas: How Do We Navigate The Moment?” hosted by the Canadian Club of Toronto. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 11:45 a.m. ET. Details: canadianclub.org.

Webinar: ‘From Carbon Cycle to Carbon Tax’—The Royal Society of Canada hosts a webinar, “From The Carbon Cycle to the Carbon Tax.” A panel of experts will explore our current measurement and monitoring capabilities globally and in urban centres, followed by discussion of how a progressive carbon tax as best positioned to encourage the necessary behaviour to meet our greenhouse gas emissions targets. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 1 p.m. ET happening online. Register via Eventbrite.

Panel: ‘Wake-up Call’—The Canadian Club of Ottawa hosts a special event, “Wake-Up Call: Canada-U.S. Relations in the Wake of Tariff Threats,” featuring keynote speaker and panellist Candace Laing, president and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 4 p.m. at the Rideau Club, 15th floor, 99 Bank St. Details: canadianclubottawa.ca.

Conservative Leader to Attend a Fundraiser—Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre will attend a party fundraiser. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 5:30 p.m. ET at the Mount Royal Club, Montreal. Details: conservative.ca/events.

THURSDAY, FEB. 27

Ontario Election—Ontario voters will head to the polls to cast ballots in the snap provincial election on Thursday, Feb. 27.

Carbon Removal Canada Conference—Carbon Removal Canada hosts its conference, “Policy to Progress: Carbon Removal Day,” to discuss current solutions and how to create the conditions for scaling carbon removal technologies. Thursday, Feb. 27, 9

a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, at the National Arts Centre. Details: carbonremoval.ca/carbon-removal-day.

‘Canada’s Untapped Power’—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts “Canada’s Untapped Power: Advancing Gender Equality for a Stronger Future,” featuring Mitzie Hunter, president and CEO of the Canadian Women’s Foundation; and Tanya van Biesen, president and CEO of VersaFi (formerly WCM). Thursday, Feb. 27, at 11:45 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, Toronto. Details: canadianclub.org.

Panel: ‘Black Leaders in Public Affairs’—Carleton University hosts a panel, “Voices of Impact: Black Leaders in Public Affairs,” on the importance of elevating Black voices and leadership in public affairs—an area that shapes policies, governance, and decisions affecting us all. Participants include CPAC journalist Omayra Issa; and Donnielle Roman, chief program officer, Ottawa Community Immigration Services Organization. Thursday, Feb. 27, at 5 p.m. ET in Room 4040, 1125 Colonel By Dr. Details: events.carleton.ca.

Conservative Leader to Attend a Fundraiser—Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre will attend a party fundraiser. Thursday, Feb. 27, at 5 p.m. ET at First Canadian Place, Toronto. Details: conservative.ca/events.

FRIDAY, FEB. 28

Press Gallery AGM—The Parliamentary Press Gallery invites members to the annual general meeting. Refreshments will be provided. Friday, Feb. 28, at 12:30 p.m. ET in Room 325, Wellington Building, 180 Wellington St. Contact: stephanie.gagne@parl.gc.ca.

Conservative Leader to Attend a Fundraiser—Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre will attend a party fundraiser. Friday, Feb. 28, at 5 p.m. ET at Lambton Golf & Country Club, York, Ont. Details: conservative.ca/events.

TUESDAY, MARCH 4

Minister MacKinnon to Deliver Remarks—Employment Minister and Government House Leader Steven MacKinnon will deliver remarks at a roundtable lunch hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Tuesday, March 4, at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

Webinar: ‘Growing Threats to Global Trade’—The Association of Professional Economists of B.C. hosts a webinar on “Growing Threats to Global Trade.” A new era of U.S. protectionism poses threats to the global economy.

Sauder School of Business trade policy chair Werner Antweiler will explore how Canada and the world economy cope with this threat. How will Canada’s political leadership engage with the new administration in Washington? Tuesday, March 4, at 1 p.m. ET happening online: cabe.ca.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

2025 Energy Summit—The Economic Club of Canada hosts its “2025 Energy Summit: Examining Canada’s Energy Landscape” featuring economists, industry executives, policymakers, and key government officials taking an in-depth look at the energy landscape in Canada. Wednesday, March 5, at 9:15 a.m. ET the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel. Details: economicclub.ca.

Infrastructure Bank CEO to Deliver Remarks—Ehren Cory, CEO of the Canada Infrastructure Bank, will deliver remarks at an event hosted by the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. Wednesday, March 5, at 3:30 p.m. MT at the Westin Downtown Calgary, 320 4 Ave SW, Calgary. Details: calgarychamber.com.

Webinar: ‘Canada-U.S. Relations’ Strategic Long Game—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts a webinar, “What is the strategic long game for Canada-U.S. relations?” Featuring former Quebec premier Jean Charest; former Privy Council clerk Janice Charette; Ian Brodie, former chief of staff to then-prime minister Stephen Harper now professor at the University of Calgary; and Christopher Sands, director of the Wilson Center’s Canada Institute in Washington, D.C. Wednesday, March 5, at 12:30 p.m. ET happening online. Details: irpp.org.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5—THURSDAY, MARCH 6

Minister Blair to Speak at 2025 Ottawa Conference—Defence Minister Bill Blair is among the speakers at the 2025 Ottawa Conference hosted by the Conference of Defence Associations Institute. Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Jennie Carignan, Vice-Admiral Angus Topshee, and Caroline Xavier, chief of the Communications Security Establishment, are also taking part. Wednesday, March 5, to Thursday, March 6, at the Fairmont Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Details: cdainstitute.ca.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6

Panel: ‘Moving Primary Care Beyond Crisis’—The Empire Club of Canada hosts a discussion, “Moving

Primary Care Beyond Crisis: What Should Canadians Expect From Our Elected Officials?” featuring Dr. Joss Reimer, president of the Canadian Medical Association; Dr. Dominik Nowak, president of the Ontario Medical Association; and Dr. Ojstoh Horn, president, Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada. Thursday, March 6, at 11:30 a.m. ET happening in person and virtually: empireclubofcanada.com.

CN CEO to Deliver Remarks—Tracy Robinson, president and CEO of Canadian National Railway, will deliver remarks on “Powering the Economy in Dynamic Times: U.S.-Canada trade, efficiency and growth,” hosted by the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. Thursday, March 6, at 11:30 a.m. MT at BMO Centre, 1912 Flores Ladue Parade SE, Calgary. Details: calgarychamber.com.

FRIDAY, MARCH 7

International Women’s Day Luncheon—The Canadian Club of Ottawa and The Honest Talk host a luncheon in honour of International Women’s Day featuring a keynote address by Lt.-Gen. Lise Bourgon with the Canadian Armed Forces who will discuss driving change, mentorship, and progress for women in uniform and beyond. Friday, March 7, at 12 p.m. ET at the Château Laurier, 1 Elgin St. Details: canadianclubottawa.ca.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8

AFN’s National Caucus of Women Leaders—The Assembly of First Nations hosts its National Caucus of Women Leaders coinciding with International Women’s Day. Saturday, March 8, happening online: afn.ca.

Campaign Leadership School—The Manning Foundation for Democratic Education hosts a new, campaign-focused training that will feature top Canadian educators alongside the U.S.-based Leadership Institute. This day-long workshop will teach managers and candidates how to plan and execute successful campaigns for public office at the local, provincial and federal levels. Saturday, March 8, at 9 a.m. ET at a location to be announced. Details via Eventbrite.

SUNDAY, MARCH 9

Liberals to Choose a New Leader—Federal Liberals will choose their new leader today, with an announcement at an event in Ottawa. Whoever is chosen to succeed Justin Trudeau will automatically become prime minister. Details: ipc.ca/2025leadership.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

Justice Karakatsanis to Deliver Remarks—Supreme Court Justice Andromache Karakatsanis will take part in a conference hosted by the University of Ottawa. She will discuss “Cultural Roots and the Law: Exploring the Intersection of Culture, Heritage, and Canada’s Supreme Court.” Wednesday, March 12, at uOttawa, FTX 147, 57 Louis Pasteur. Details via Eventbrite.

Joseph Stiglitz to Deliver Remarks—McGill University hosts an exclusive evening with Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz as he discusses his latest book, *The Road to Freedom*, with Christopher Ragan. Wednesday, March 12, at 6:30 p.m. ET at the InterContinental Hotel Montreal, 360 Rue Saint-Antoine O., Montréal. Details via Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12—FRIDAY, MARCH 14

G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting—Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly will host the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting. Wednesday, March 12, to Friday, March 14, in Charlevoix, Que.

TUESDAY, MARCH 18

Colombian Ambassador to Deliver Remarks—Colombia’s Ambassador to Canada, Carlos Arturo Morales López, will deliver remarks on “From The Home Front to The Global Stage: Colombia’s Path Forward,” part of the Ambassador Speaker Series hosted by Carleton University. Tuesday, March 18, at 6 p.m. ET at the Westin Ottawa Hotel, 11 Colonel By Dr. Details: carleton.ca/npsia.

Panel: ‘Reimagining Borders’—McGill University hosts a panel on “Reimagining Borders,” exploring the challenges governments face in managing borders in a way that responds to economic, political, and humanitarian concerns. Participants include former member of the German parliament Peter Altmaier; former mayor of San Antonio, Texas, Julián Castro; and University of Toronto professor Ayelet Shachar. Tuesday, March 18, at 7 p.m. ET at Centre Mont-Royal, 2200 Mansfield St., Montreal. Details: mcgill.ca.

Book Launch: *The Left in Power*—Carleton University hosts the launch of *The Left in Power: Bob Rae’s NDP and the Working Class* featuring author Steven High and special guests. Tuesday, March 18, at 7 p.m. ET at Perfect Books, 258 Elgin St. Details via Eventbrite.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20

Forum: ‘Advancing the MMI-WG2S+ Calls for Justice’—The Assembly of First Nations hosts the National Virtual Forum on Advancing the MMI-WG2S+ Calls for Justice. The theme, “Prevention of Human Trafficking and Sexual Trafficking,” will help inform the AFN’s advocacy positions, raise awareness, advance mandates, and develop indicators for the AFN’s Calls for Justice Progress Report. Details to follow: afn.ca.

Panel: ‘Canada-Europe Innovation Collaboration’—Signe Ratto, deputy director-general of research and innovation at the European Commission, will take part in a panel on “Stimulating collaborative innovation between Canada and Europe” hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Thursday, March 20, at 11:30 a.m. ET happening online. Details: corim.qc.ca.

Canada’s Envoy to Ukraine to Deliver Remarks—Natalia Cmoc, Canada’s ambassador to Ukraine, will deliver remarks at an event hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Thursday, March 20, at 12:30 p.m. ET happening online. Details: cdhowe.org.

Unpacking the Hogue Commission Report—The University of Ottawa hosts an event, “Canada Under Influence? Unpacking the Foreign Interference Commission Report.” Canadian experts will discuss Commissioner Marie-Josée Hogue’s report, and the legal, political, economic and policy ramifications of its findings as Canada assumes the G7 presidency and with a general election looming. Thursday, March 20, at 1 p.m. ET in Room 4101, Desmarais Building, 55 Laurier Ave. E. Details: cips-cepi.ca.

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