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Sudan mothers fight feds' 'apathy' to bring Canadian kids home



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CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

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The Samara Centre is keeping an eye on online political discussions this election, both to help Canadians navigate potential risks, and to highlight the positives. Photograph courtesy of Unsplash, illustration by Joey Sabourin, and screenshots courtesy of Reddit, YouTube, and Bluesky

NEWS

'I want to feel part of this moment': Trump effect spurs expats to cast ballots from abroad

BY JARED HILLEL

With less than one week until the federal election, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre and Liberal Prime Minister Mark Carney have embarked on their final, all-out stretch of the campaign. While domestic voter turnout is expected to be high, Canadians abroad may also help to shape the outcome by casting ballots in record-breaking numbers. According to Elections Canada, more than 89,000 international ballot kits have been issued as of April 17—potentially tripling the number of expats who cast valid ballots in 2021.

A leading factor seen to be driving this expat mobilization is the ever-present figure of United States President Donald Trump. Threats of annexation, coupled with unprecedented tariffs, have angered Canadians, pushing relations between the two allies to a historic low. While a souring of relations could have been predicted, Trump's antagonism has led to some unexpected turns. One of them—a resurgence of the Liberal Party—has already come to fruition. The second, an uptick of Canadian citizens worldwide heading to the polls, may soon become a reality as well.

"I started thinking about voting when Donald Trump came in," said Augustin Baudoin, a tech entrepreneur who has

NEWS

Read it on Reddit? Project looks to help Canadians navigate online political conversations

BY LAURA RYCKEWAERT

The potential for misinformation, disinformation, and other forms of manipulation—like astroturfing and foreign influence—is ever-present in online conversations today, and amid Canada's 45th general election campaign, this Samara Centre for Democracy has launched a new initiative aimed at helping

Canadians better understand the dynamics of online political discussions.

Dubbed "Verified," the project is using data collection and open-source machine learning technologies to analyze online conversations, with a planned focus on Canadian political discussions on Reddit, YouTube, and Bluesky.

"The driving aim here is to empower Canadians to understand

how our online political ecosystem works," Samara's CEO Sabreana Delhon told *The Hill Times*.

"We really want to be responsive to this moment. We want to offer clarity and encouragement ... at a time when a lot of Canadians are paying more attention to what's happening politically and what's happening in Canada, but might feel overwhelmed or uncertain when navigating online spaces."

The recent Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions has also brought greater awareness of the potential for manipulation of online discussions, noted Delhon.

Samara has undertaken similar initiatives in the past using its "SAMbot" software application to

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Heard on the Hill



By Christina Leadlay

'A very classy man': Ex-Trudeau and Turner minister Ed Lumley has died



Former Ontario MP Ed Lumley, left, pictured with Tom Axworthy in 2019. Lumley, who served in various roles in both Pierre Trudeau and John Turner's respective cabinets, died on April 16, aged 85. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Ed Lumley, who served in Pierre Trudeau and John Turner's respective cabinets, died on April 16, aged 85. He'd had many health challenges including a recent illness, according to the *Cornwall Standard-Freeholder*.

An entrepreneur who was born in Windsor, Ont., Lumley's first foray in politics was as mayor of Cornwall, Ont., from 1972 to 1974. In 1974, he successfully ran for the Liberals in a federal byelection in the

Ontario riding then-known as Stormont-Dundas.

During his 10 years in the House of Commons, Lumley held a couple of parliamentary secretary roles before the elder Trudeau appointed him as minister of state for trade in 1980. Lumley was promoted in 1982 to minister of industry, and for regional economic expansion.

Then, during Turner's brief stint as prime minister, Lumley served as minister of communications

and of regional industrial expansion in 1984. He was defeated in that fall's federal election by the Progressive Conservatives' Norman Warner.

After he'd returned to a career in the private sector, in 2000, Lumley was appointed to lead a commission examining MPs' salaries and compensation, and consulted then-prime minister Paul Martin on various government issues. Lumley served as chancellor of the University of Windsor from

2006 to 2019, and was appointed to the Order of Canada.

"It feels like it's the end of an era... We always felt that he brought such light and connection to our riding," ISG Senator Bernadette Clement, also a former mayor of Cornwall, is quoted as saying in the *Cornwall Standard-Freeholder*.

"I've met him a number of times, as somebody who participated in political life, he was a great supporter... he was there, he was accessible," she said.

Former Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien recalled Lumley as "a very classy man" and "a very good friend of mine," as reported in the *Cornwall* paper. "He became a member of Parliament and he was my parliamentary secretary when I became the minister of finance, and he moved up in the cabinet alongside me."

"Ed was a beacon of strength and smarts whether he was in business, politics or as Chancellor," shared Penny Collette—whose husband, David, served alongside Lumley in the Trudeau and Turner cabinets—on X on April 16.

New book, *Unravelling MAiD in Canada*, out now

McGill-Queen's University Press published a new book yesterday, which it's already calling "an indispensable reference tool" of "critical reflections and valuable insights as more jurisdictions consider their own assisted dying laws and policies."

Unravelling MAiD in Canada: Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide as Medical Care is edited by Ramona Coelho, K. Sonu Gaid, and Trudo Lemmens. Weighing in at over 500 pages, the book is available in hardcover, paperback, and in the lighter electronic format.

"This book grew out of our involvement in parliamentary, public, and academic debates following the 2015 Supreme Court of Canada *Carter v. Canada (AG)* decision, and the subsequent legislative and policy initiatives," the trio wrote in the book's preface.

"As editors we have in common that we have been critical of various components of Canada's medical assistance in dying (MAiD) regime and participate in those debates. The policy and parliamentary debates were also the context in which we started working with several of the authors included in this volume."

Coelho is a family physician in London, Ont., and a founding member of Physicians Together with Vulnerable Canadians. Gaid is professor and governor at the University of Toronto, and chief of psychiatry at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. And Lemmens is professor and Scholl Chair in Health Law and Policy at the Faculty of Law and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health of U of T.

Get your tickets to GGPAA gala on June 14

Tickets are now available for the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards taking place on June 14.

This gala event will take place at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, where it's been held for many years.

Billing itself as an "exciting and elegant celebration of Canada's highest distinction in the performing arts," the evening will feature red-carpet arrivals of the laureates and special guests, tributes and performances, as well as a pre- and post-event cash bar, and a live band at the on-site after party.

Among the laureates are music and entertainment producer Bob Ezrin; composer Denis Gougeon; actor Graham Greene; comedian and actor Patrick Huard; artist, producer, and choreographer Sandra Laronde; composer and performer Jeremy Dutcher; performance artist and arts administrator April Hubbard; and filmmaker Joshua Odjick.

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Feds win CAJ's Code of Silence Award

This year's Code of Silence Award goes to the federal government for its continued fight with Indigenous groups on accessing residential school records, while the three main federal political parties received "dishonourable mention" for being coy about the data they collect from voters.

"The federal government continues to expend considerable efforts that prevent [Indigenous] communities from accessing valuable [residential school] documents that attest to the details of this truth. It's shameful," said Canadian Association of Journalists president Brent Jolly in the April 16 release announcing the 2024 recipient of the federal Code of Silence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Government Secrecy.

Presented annually by the CAJ, the Centre for Free Expression at Toronto Metropolitan

University, and the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, the Code of Silence Awards "call public attention to government or publicly-funded agencies that work hard to hide information to which the public has a right to under access to information legislation," reads an April 16 press release.

The "dishonourable mention" for the federal Liberal, Conservative, and New Democratic parties is due to them each appealing a British Columbia Supreme Court decision that ruled federal political parties are subject to the province's privacy laws, an issue *The Hill Times* has covered extensively.

"Modern politics is powered by data," Jolly said. "But in 2025, Canadians are largely in the dark about what data parties collect in order to fundraise, campaign and/or target them in their pursuit of political power."

Ex-Liberal staffer launches polling firm during busiest time in politics

The launch of Alex Kohut's new polling firm came during one of the busiest times in Canadian politics.

Kohut launched North Poll Strategies last month, just days after Mark Carney won the Liberal leadership and nine days before the federal election call.

The former PMO staffer sees the timing as "a great opportunity" to showcase new survey methodologies, and offer "fresh voices and perspectives in the polling conversation in Canada," he told *Heard on the Hill* by email on April 17.

"This is a project that I've thought about for a long time," he wrote on his Substack on March 14, noting he'd also rebranded his daily online newsletter as *The North Poll with Alex Kohut*.

Until recently, Kohut was a senior director with Spark Advocacy where he'd been since 2023. Prior to that, he tackled research and advertising analysis for then-prime minister Justin Trudeau for roughly six years, starting as an analyst in 2016 and ending as senior manager in 2022. It was through that role that Kohut saw "how vital having high-quality data can be when making strategic decisions and advancing progressive policies," he told HOH.

"I wanted to make use of the skills I learned in that environment and from the advocacy campaigns I've worked on since leaving PMO, and founding my own polling firm has given me the freedom to do just that!"



Former Trudeau PMO staffer Alex Kohut launched his own polling firm, North Poll Strategies, on March 14. *Photograph courtesy of Alex Kohut*

Kohut's Ottawa-based firm is currently a one-man shop, but he said he plans "to run more of a boutique polling firm that brings a more personal approach to the work."

"I've been in the polling industry since 2016, and I'm used to working on smaller teams where I've been managing every step of the research process, so the learning curve has been entirely on the logistical side," he told HOH last week. Part of those logistics includes juggling both his election polling work and writing his daily newsletter, which Kohut said has been "a fun challenge to tackle."

As for his plans post-election, Kohut said he has "some longer term goals after April 28" including getting more involved in the public conversation around this country's politics.

"I want North Poll Strategies to be known as a polling firm that asks interesting and illuminating questions," Kohut said.



Canadian Association of Journalists president Brent Jolly in November 2024. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Election ad men: Carney, Trudeau, and Trump play starring roles in the party's biggest hits, say digital advertising experts

The Hill Times asked three partisan digital communications experts to look at the 'best' campaign ads so far from the Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP.



As parties look to appeal to voters and crush their opponents, they're drawing on links to former prime minister Justin Trudeau, U.S. President Donald Trump, and raising red flags about Mark Carney's resumé. Screenshots courtesy of YouTube

weekend, the effectiveness of those messages may be too late.

Ahead of the start of advanced polling, *The Hill Times* assembled a panel of digital communications experts to analyze the most effective, viral, and resonant political ads released since the election began.

Panellists looked at one ad each from the Liberals, Conservatives, and NDP, and judged the hits, where they missed the mark, and that one perfect shot.

The Liberals: *Canada is ready to step up*

Launched: April 14

Runtime: 27 seconds

Description: The ad features Prime Minister Mark Carney's

April 3 speech, when he "paused" his campaign and returned to Ottawa to convene his council on Canada-U.S. relations in response to United States President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs the day before. His speech is accompanied by an upbeat soundtrack, and interspersed with images of the Ambassador Bridge connecting Detroit, Mich., and Windsor, Ont.; Trump in the Oval Office, and b-roll of blue-collar workers in hard hats standing in front of Liberal campaign signs and a large Canadian flag.

Transcript: "The global economy is fundamentally different today than it was yesterday. Our old relationship with the United States is over. While this is a tragedy, it is also the new reality. Canada must be looking elsewhere to expand our trade to build our economy and to protect our sovereignty. And if the United States no longer wants to lead, Canada will."

The Hits:

Zubin Sanyal, who led former prime minister Justin Trudeau's digital strategy during the 2021 campaign, said that while the speech may have been scripted, it shows Carney "in the wild" rather

Continued on page 16


BY STUART BENSON

The final week of the 45th general election campaign is the last chance for political parties to unleash blockbuster advertising

in the hopes of landing one more hit before April 28. However, with

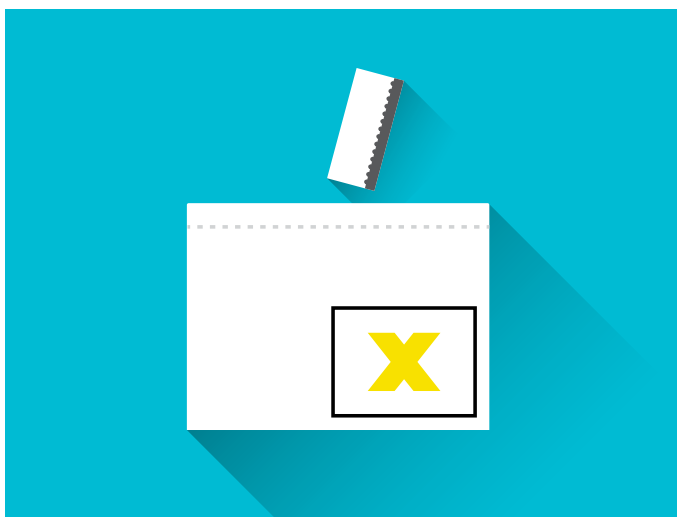
millions of Canadians casting their ballots over the Easter long

FEDERAL ELECTION / MONDAY, APRIL 28

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‘I can’t go back and I can’t go forward’: Sudanese mothers struggle with delays to bring Canadian children home

Canadian officials have yet to create a pathway for Sudanese mothers to come to Canada with their children, who are citizens.

BY NEIL MOSS

Mothers of Canadian children stranded while attempting to flee the harrowing Sudanese Civil War say Ottawa isn’t moving to help clear the roadblocks that would provide them with a pathway to enter the country.

In a number of cases, Canadian citizens—namely, children of Sudanese mothers and Canadian fathers—haven’t been able to come to Canada as their mothers seek temporary visas to accompany them across the border. Advocates for their cause allege that the Canadian government has responded to the situation with “apathy.”

The Hill Times spoke through a translator with two Sudanese mothers who have been trying to bring their children to Canada. In both cases, their children’s Canadian fathers have died.

While the families wait, there is little access to education and health care for the Canadian children.

Delays have been further prolonged during the election campaign as advocates have been told the cases won’t be advanced during the caretaker period, despite the convention providing for action in emergency situations.

One hope is that the government can give the mothers an interim solution through a temporary visa since that would allow them to make humanitarian and compassionate grounds applications for permanent residency, but to do so, they need to be within Canadian borders. So far, that isn’t an option that the government has indicated it would pursue.

One Sudanese mother—whom *The Hill Times* is referring to as A. due to the sensitivity of her situation—is waiting with her two children in Egypt since the Canadian government has yet to indicate a solution for the family to come to the country.



Salma Mohammed, left, with her four-year-old son, Mohammed Mostafa, who is a Canadian citizen who has been unable to leave Sudan. Photograph courtesy of Salma Mohammed

Since July, A. has been in contact with officials in Canada’s embassy in Cairo, and providing requested information to authorities, but each interaction has led to increased delays and an unclear path forward.

Her specific case has also been raised with Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) since last summer.

She was married to a native of Edmonton, Alta., who died in a crash while in Sudan in 2015.

A. arrived at a camp for internally displaced people in Halfa, near the Sudan-Egypt border, in June 2023. When she got there, A. implored the Canadian Embassy to help her family cross the Egyptian border.

“We were stranded,” she said through a translator. “[I told them that] this is not a safe situation for my children. We left Khartoum and the war to get more safety, and now we are stranded.”

At the camp in Halfa, A.’s third child died in a drowning accident at the age of eight.

A could cross the border herself since Egypt is accepting people with Sudanese passports, but her children could not as they just had Canadian citizenship.

“I was asking the embassy, ‘Please, help me,’” said A. At the camp, the family was staying in a schoolhouse, which didn’t have any doors.

“The embassy never helped us even when I told them that my son who is Canadian passed away,” she said.

Without a resolution, A. had to make the decision in late August



A.’s 11-year-old twins have no access to formal education in Egypt. Photograph courtesy of A.

2023 to leave the camp, and illegally enter Egypt with her surviving twin son and daughter. She later told the Canadian Embassy that she was able to make it to Egypt.

“I told them just due to the circumstances to save my children, I had to leave this way,” she said. “When I reached out to the embassy, I thought that they would at least be cognizant of the incredible circumstances that we are under,” she said.

The embassy was working on issuing temporary passports for A.’s children, but that still didn’t address how she could join them in Canada. She implored the Canadian Embassy for help, and told them that her children can’t leave without her.

At the same time, the embassy had stopped providing financial supports for those who were displaced by the civil war.

A. said the response from the Canadian Embassy was, “We couldn’t help you. We couldn’t give you anything further,” and that it suggested seeking assistance with the United Nations.

She was able to get protected persons status, but not financial support from the UN. A. was later able to get some assistance from a local charity.

Now in Egypt, A.’s 11-year-old children don’t have access to education, so their mother said she does her best to help teach them at home. They also have limited access to health care.

“I’m absolutely defeated. I have spent this time crying. I have gone through one hardship to an even harder hardship,” she said. “I left a war—a place of death—and I’ve come here where everything has been so challenging.”

“I feel like I can’t go back, and I can’t go forward,” she added.



“My kids, their life is stopped. They can’t go to school. They can’t get health care.”

She said that she had expected Canadian authorities to appreciate the nature of the circumstances.

“I figured that at least that they would show compassion to my children who are Canadian ... and that they would at least help us given how exceptional our circumstances are,” she said.

World’s worst humanitarian crisis

Sudan’s Civil War passed the two-year mark earlier this month. It has been described as the world’s worst active humanitarian crisis, leading to more than 3.5 million refugees, and 8.8 million people internally displaced.

Casualty estimates range from 150,000 and up, with little hope for peace anytime soon. International reaction and media coverage of the devastating conflict has been muted compared to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the war in Gaza.

In an April 15 G7 foreign ministers’ statement, the top diplomats deplored the use of forced starvation as a tactic of warfare, and called on all sides to uphold international law obligations.

“As a direct result of the actions of the SAF [Sudanese Armed Forces] and the RSF [Rebel Support Forces], the people of Sudan, especially women and children, are enduring the world’s largest humanitarian and displacement crises, and continued atrocities, including widespread conflict-related sexual violence, ethnically motivated attacks and reprisal killings. These must end immediately,” the statement read.

International NGO Save the Children noted earlier this month that, on average, a child has been forced to escape from their home in Sudan every 10 seconds since the start of the civil war.

“The number of children displaced in Sudan—and their young age and vulnerability—is



Refugees in the Zam Zam internally displaced persons camp in Sudan. United Nations photograph by Eskinder Debebe

'Apathy, systemic racism, and utmost reluctance'

In Canada, advocates have been trying to push the government to grant a temporary solution for the mothers to bring their children to Canada.

"We have not heard back a response," one advocate told *The Hill Times*, speaking on a not-for-attribution basis.

The source said that the response to these mothers has mirrored how the government has responded to Sudanese refugees as a whole.

"They're completely unwilling to execute any further policies on this, and there's a lot of bureaucratic inertia related to anything pertaining to Sudan," the advocate said.

"We've told them these Canadian children are starving. These Canadian children are not going to school," the source said, remarking that the government has responded to the desolate situation with "apathy, systemic racism, and utmost reluctance."

The source said that advocates have been reaching out to IRCC for months, but when a meeting was finally held shortly before the election campaign kicked off, officials said that little progress would be made as the government was moving into caretaker mode.

"Our last meeting, it was not optimistic. [They said] that there could be no new policies or anything," the source said.

The caretaker convention forces the government to "act with restraint" as there is no legislature to test its confidence. However, it still allows for government action that is "urgent and in the public interest."

During the 2021 federal election campaign, IRCC was criticized for citing the caretaker convention for delays in processing Afghan refugees as the Taliban took over.

"It's disappointing the election has caused these delays, and disappointing that the several months Minister Miller had before the election, he didn't do anything on this," the advocate said.

Miller was made aware of the case of A. and her children directly, according to the advocate who spoke with him.

In mid-March, Rachel Bendayan was sworn in as the newest immigration minister.

Prior to citing the caretaker mode, IRCC officials told advocates that a plan was in development.

"It wasn't a formal public policy, but things were in development," the advocate said, remarking that for now everything is "up in the air, unfortunately."

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staggering. The world has a duty of care for children, and we are failing them," Mohamed Abdiladif, country director for Save the Children Sudan, said in a press release.

Ottawa previously launched a family unification program that was capped at 3,250 applicants for Sudanese refugees. But the regime was heavily criticized for delays, as reported by *The Hill Times* last year.

In February, then-immigration minister Marc Miller announced additional plans to resettle more Sudanese refugees, which "could help more than 7,000 additional people impacted by the conflict in Sudan"—including resettling 4,000 government-assisted refugees by the end of 2026.

IRCC spokesperson Matthew Krupovich said that the department "continues to prioritize the processing of temporary and permanent residence applications already in our inventory for those affected by the conflict in Sudan."

"This includes individuals who are still in Sudan and those who have fled the country to surrounding regions," he said in an email. "We are working to process applications as quickly as possible."

Krupovich cited the expansion of applications in February under the family-based permanent residency pathway for those affected by the conflict. That program wouldn't apply to Sudanese mothers where their only surviving Canadian family is their children.

"We cannot speculate on future policy decisions," he said. The department didn't directly respond to if a pathway was being created for Sudanese mothers with Canadian children.

It also didn't directly respond to a question regarding whether it is applying the provisions of the caretaker convention to pause the processing of emergency cases.

Krupovich said since the civil war started that Canada "has welcomed over 9,000 permanent residents affected by the conflict."

'Higher expectations'

Salma Mohammed and her four-year-old son Mohammed Mostafa have been stranded near the war-torn Sudanese capital of Khartoum. Mostafa's father, Khalid, died in July 2023 after having a seizure. Before his death, the native of London, Ont., was planning on sponsoring his wife and son to come to Canada.

"[My] husband always told [me] how Canada is taking care of their citizens—living their life with dignity and access to social services," Mohammed said through a translator. "[I] had higher expectations for [my] son as a Canadian citizen that he will be protected and safe."

That hope has been far from reality for Mohammed and her son. Due to the chaos of the war, there have been difficulties getting the Sudanese birth certificate for Mostafa, since the father or a member of his paternal family needs to be present to issue the document.

She was hoping that the Canadian government would reach out and help her son.

"He is a Canadian citizen, and he deserves to be evacuated and living in peace, not a conflict zone," Mohammed said.

She said that her son has been left behind by the government instead of being given protections he should be granted as a Canadian citizen.

After trying to flee across the Egyptian border, the pair had to return to Sudan get needed documents, but have been unable to leave again because of the increasingly precarious conflict. She

and Mostafa are currently stranded in Khartoum.

"At the beginning, it was a safety issue as there was a lot of shooting and missiles would fall on houses," Mohammed said. "But now, [my] main struggle is financial."

She said that she can't afford to leave Sudan to go to a Canadian Embassy to have Mostafa's citizenship processed.

Canada has suspended operations of its embassy in Khartoum since April 2023. The closest embassy is in Egypt.

While Mostafa now has the needed birth certificate, there still would need to be a pathway created that would allow Mohammed to come to Canada with him. She doesn't have anyone that can sponsor her, and a child under the age of majority cannot sponsor a parent.

In the meantime, Mostafa has no access to school, and the health-care system is collapsing in Sudan.

Mohammed said that as her son approaches school age, she can't plan for what the next day will bring or for Mostafa's future.

"There's no light at the end of the tunnel," she said.

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Supply management consensus emerges but Grits, Tories accuse each other of past capitulation

Supply management has become a proxy for Canadian nationalism, which means politicians will want to own it during the campaign, say observers.

BY NEIL MOSS

During the ongoing election campaign, all major parties have pledged to vehemently defend supply management with little policy contrasts between them, but the Liberals and Conservatives are sparring over historical missteps in negotiating away access in past trade talks.

Longtime Conservative agriculture critic John Barlow, running for re-election in Foothills, Alta., accused the Liberal government of sacrificing supply-managed sectors in the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). In turn, Liberal Agriculture Minister Kody Blois, who is up for re-election in King-Hants, N.S., chastised the Conservatives for doing the same during trade negotiations with the European Union.

Barlow said that the Conservatives have “always defended” supply management.

“Which is different than the Liberals who sold supply management on CUSMA,” he said during an April 17 debate hosted by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, citing the elimination of class six and seven pricing for skim milk powder.

Blois said Barlow “may forget” that the Conservatives negotiated away supply-management access in the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. Negotiations for the deal with the EU began under the Harper Conservatives, but the pact was signed by the Liberal government in 2016.

“We were under real duress. We made sure compensation was there. Glad to hear the Conservatives talking about supply management 75 per cent into this campaign,” Blois said.

During the debate, Blois noted that he has the most supply-managed farmers east of Quebec living in his riding.

On March 28, in the early days of the federal contest, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet—who is running for re-election in Beloeil-Chambly, Que.—held a campaign stop at a dairy farm.

The Bloc has pledged as part of its campaign platform to



Party leaders are in agreement that supply management won't be on the agenda in future trade talks. Pixabay photograph by Waldo93

re-introduce a private member's bill to ban supply management concessions in trade negotiations. It has twice tried to pass similar legislation. The most recent effort died on the Order Paper in the Senate at the call of the election after receiving all-party support in the House.

Representing the Bloc at the agriculture debate, incumbent Yves Perron placed blame on both the Liberals and Conservatives for the bill failing to pass in the Senate.

“We've had systematic blocking [of the bill] by Senators appointed by [then-prime minister Justin] Trudeau,” said Perron, who is seeking re-election in Berthier-Maskinongé, Que.

“The Conservatives as well also blocked [the bill] in the Senate.” Blois said that Liberal Leader Mark Carney has been “clear” that supply management won't be on the negotiation table.

That pledge was included in the Liberal platform that was released on April 19, with a reference to negotiations with the U.S.

Canadian dairy has been a frequent target of U.S. President Donald Trump, who has argued that Canada places an exceedingly punishing tariff on imports.

Carney hasn't committed to supporting a Bloc bill to ban supply management concessions in trade talks.

“It's not necessary to make laws for negotiating positions,” he said, according to a Canadian Press report.

All but two Liberal MPs—including now-Housing Minister Nathaniel Erskine-Smith—voted



Agriculture Minister Kody Blois says Prime Minister Mark Carney has been “clear” that supply management won't be a topic in trade talks. But Carney says it's not necessary to legislate the pledge. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

for the Bloc bill in the last Parliament.

Blois spotlighted the Conservatives' voting record on the bill.

“The Conservatives ... with regards to the bill were very weak in the House,” Blois said in French. “We are open to discussions around bills, but it's very important to elect and make sure that people are strong around supply management.”

The Conservative caucus was divided on the bill, with 56 MPs voting in favour and 49 against. Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre voted in favour of the bill, but voted against a mirroring bill in the preceding 43rd Parliament.

Barlow responded by once again criticizing the Liberal government for throwing dairy farmers “under the bus” during CUSMA negotiations.

Poilievre has vowed to rapidly renegotiate CUSMA, but there

is an open question of whether that can be done without the U.S. demanding more access to Canada's supply-managed sectors.

In an April 18 speech, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh trumpeted enacting laws that will protect supply management.

Supply management's Trump bump

Simon Fraser University assistant professor Alex Rivard, who has researched Canadian public opinion on supply management, said the issue isn't likely to drive many votes given the similarities between the parties.

“Supply management is probably the only issue that all parties agree on,” he said. “It's also the issue where the difference between the parties is who supports it the most.”

He said the importance of the issue can be diminished by how well it is understood, with references by leaders to protecting supply management often not mentioning what sectors are at stake: dairy, eggs, and poultry.

“Canadians might think it applies to more agricultural areas than what they think,” he said.

In a 2021 study, Rivard found that only 4.7 per cent of respondents could correctly identify the three commodities that make up the supply-management regime without identifying any additional incorrect commodity.

He said that the issue has been increasingly wrapped up in an anti-Trump message than one about the system in itself.

“I think what is happening here is that this is getting lumped into broader protections and tariffs against Trump,” he said. “People might not know what it is, but they know it involves Americans taking our dairy or whatever.”

He said the anti-American link allows Canadians to fully endorse the system without necessarily knowing what it is.

“It's like a proxy for ... Canadian nationalism,” he said. “You can defend yourself by supply management and trying to defend Canadian nationalism at the same time. I think that's exactly what we are seeing.”

Rivard said the electoral fight is over who can be seen as the biggest backer of the system.

Former NDP staffer Cameron Holmstrom said the only way that the issue is likely to motivate voters is if a party was arguing to scrap the system.

“I don't think anyone is so far outside the status quo for the positive of protecting it that it really makes a big difference,” said Holmstrom, now founder and principal of Niipaawi Strategies.

“The only party over the last 10 years who's run on actually affecting and doing away with supply management was Maxime Bernier's People's Party. Everyone's always been on side,” he said. “The difference here is between the words and actions.”

He said that it is unlikely that the Bloc will garner an abundance of votes for introducing its supply management bill given it had cross-party support.

Holmstrom said a Quebec voter would have the option of voting for a Bloc MP or a potential government MP who can directly impact the issue.

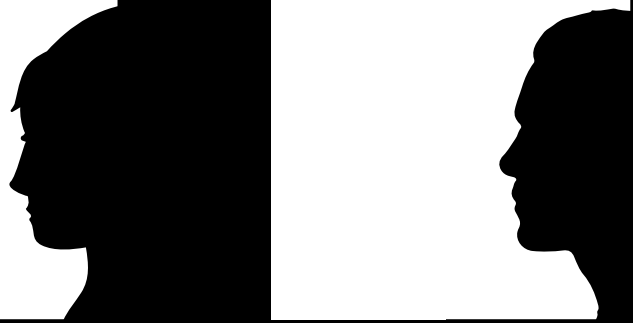
“I think [voters] are looking at people who are going to have a chance at being at a government table—that's hurting the Bloc, it's hurting the NDP,” he said.

Despite that, Holmstrom said that both the Liberals and Conservatives have their “flaws” on supply management as previous governments have negotiated away access.

But that is diminished because the parties are not actively campaigning to bring down the system. Holmstrom noted that opposition to the regime mainly comes from economists “of a certain bent,” and not the political class.

“When it comes to the system itself, there's a lot of agreement around it,” he said.

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Editorial

Editorial

The federal election will affect more than just the domestic front

One of the emerging narratives about the 45th general election is that it is among—if not the most—sequential ballot-casting exercise in decades.

“This is not a business-as-usual election,” Ekos president Frank Graves told *The Hill Times* last month. “This is an election which will be fought for existential questions about the future of the country.”

At the heart of those questions is what will become of Canada’s relationship with the United States as President Donald Trump redefines diplomatic norms.

To that end, political parties have spent the past few weeks campaigning on the promise that they will be the right choice for the country moving forward in a world where Canada is potentially far less dependent on its American neighbour.

With \$1-trillion in goods and services exchanged between the two nations and nearly one million Canadian jobs on the line, the stakes are high. Party leaders have presented their visions for managing this crucial relationship, as well as their approaches to working with European allies. The outcome of the election will determine how the next leader navigates these complex challenges.

But all this has meant that other issues which might usually factor into an election campaign have fallen by the wayside, since tariffs, trade, and economic and physical security have dominated the loudest political conversations.

As Rose LeMay, *The Hill Times* columnist and author of the new book

Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, wrote in her recent column: “This may be one of the first elections that Canadians are looking squarely at our own unity in the face of external pressures. This may be one of the first elections that we are choosing to vote for ‘we’ instead of ‘me.’ Because it could be worse—we could be in the U.S. and literally getting scooped up by uniforms for the colour of our skin.”

But that “we” should also extend to the global community, and Canadians should be thinking about the effect their choice at the ballot box will have on the rest of the world—especially those who may be geographically far, but still intimately linked to Canada.

As *The Hill Times*’ Neil Moss reports, the election call has stymied the already glacial—if not non-existent—progress made by mothers trying to flee the civil war in Sudan and bring their Canadian-citizen children to the country.

“We’ve told them these Canadian children are starving. These Canadian children are not going to school,” said one advocate trying to find a solution for the mothers, remarking that the government has responded to the desolate situation with “apathy, systemic racism, and utmost reluctance.”

The race to showcase who is the best Trump foil should not overlook the ongoing issues that exist within government, and voters should hold everyone—whether they’re in cabinet currently or seeking the job—to account for what kind of country we want after April 28.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor



Future MPs should stand up for the rule of law and human rights

What is currently happening in the world is worrying. We are witnessing the weakening of the rule of law and the potential abuses involved, as we are seeing in the United States. We are experiencing a dangerous ripple effect that threatens hard-won human rights gains across the world. Canada is not immune to these abuses.

In recent years, international justice has come under attack in many ways. International protection mechanisms are ignored, respect for territorial integrity is flouted, and international aid is cut off. Anti-rights movements are gaining ground everywhere. The global consensus on human rights that has taken more than 80 years to build, enabling Canadians to live in peace and security, is in serious jeopardy.

According to estimates by the United Nations and The Economist Intelligence Unit, more than one-third of the world’s population currently lives under authoritarian regimes, which also account for a third of the global economy. This is twice as many as 30 years ago, in a context where multilateralism is necessary to deal with the international crises that have an impact here in Canada: climate change, gender-based violence, pandemics or humanitarian crises.

To avoid the rise of authoritarianism, the party that will form the next government must maintain international aid, and exercise proactive leadership to defend the rule of law and human rights in Canada and around the world.

Although Canada generally ranks high in terms

of respect for the rule of law—12th out of 142 states according to the World Justice Project’s 2024 index—its performance over the past eight years has been declining. Canada must take all necessary steps to protect the key elements of this rule of law, i.e. a fair, accessible, and inclusive system of laws and standards based on the essential values of a democratic society.

The rule of law counteracts abuses of power and protects citizens against arbitrary decisions, corruption, and injustice perpetrated by states and non-state actors alike.

History shows that building the rule of law takes time, while dismantling it happens suddenly. Now, more than ever, Canada must refuse to back down from these principles.

Canadian human rights organizations and advocates are asking all candidates and political parties in this federal election to commit to upholding the rule of law and protecting human rights at home and around the world.

Karine Ruel
 Executive director,
 Lawyers without
 Borders Canada
 Montreal, Que.

Also signed by:
**Equitas-International Center
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**Amnistie internationale
 Canada francophone**
**International Bureau for
 Children’s Rights**
**Association québécoise des
 organismes de coopération
 internationale**

Mark Carney puts it all on the line

Whatever happens on April 28, Mark Carney will be remembered as the man who stepped up to offer his services to fellow Canadians in this moment of national trauma.

Les Whittington

Need to Know

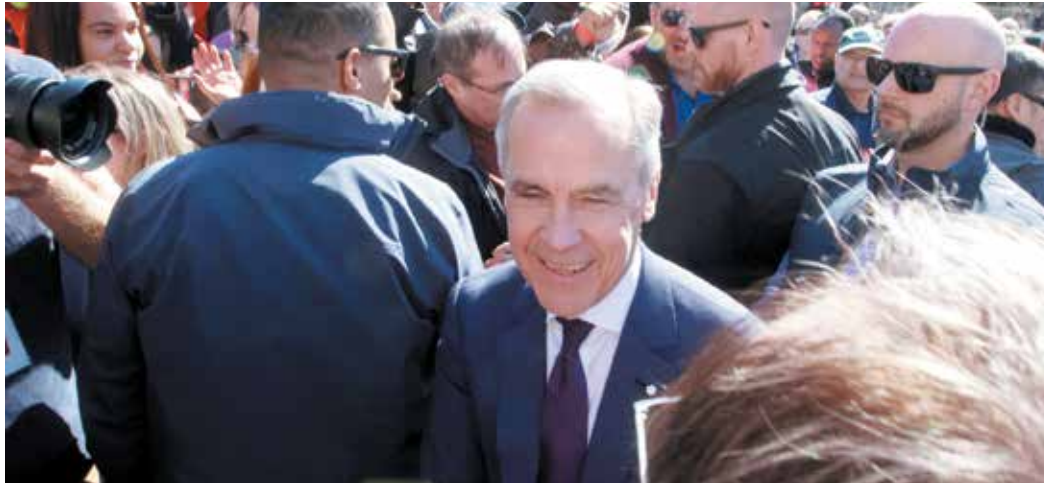


OTTAWA—He's still the only person to quote baseball legend Yogi Berra to the House of Commons Finance committee.

"A nickel ain't worth a dime anymore," Mark Carney told MPs during a discussion of inflation back when, as Bank of Canada governor, he appeared regularly at the committee.

He's the only person I've ever heard of who—as legend would have it—ran the 42-kilometre New York Marathon without any special training for it.

And Canada's current prime minister is the only non-Brit to be appointed governor of the Bank of England in its 300 years. Carney, who headed Canada's central bank at the time, initially turned down the job. But then-United Kingdom chancellor George Osborne redoubled his recruitment effort, and, on Nov. 27, 2012, stunned the city by announcing Carney's appointment



Prime Minister Mark Carney greets supporters at a rally outside of the Lusitania Portuguese Club of Ottawa on April 20. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

to the most powerful non-elected position in the country.

"Mark Carney is the outstanding central banker of his generation," Osborne told the British House of Commons, adding that the then-47-year-old Canadian would bring the "strong leadership and external experience the Bank needs."

Then-Canadian finance minister Jim Flaherty, who had appointed Carney as a surprise choice to head Canada's central bank in 2008, reacted a bit emotionally. "Mark has been a superb governor of the Bank of Canada for ... more than five years. And so, his loss will be felt," Flaherty said. Flaherty's remarks didn't reflect the fact that, by that time, he was grumbling privately that Carney was drawing more public attention than he was as finance minister. (And Flaherty had reason to be concerned. Carney recently revealed that then-prime minister Stephen Harper had offered him the finance portfolio in 2012.)

While at the Bank of England, Carney's efforts to reform banking systems extended far beyond Britain. He retained his role as head of the G20-created Financial Stability Board, which made him probably the most important international figure trying to tighten up global banking regulations to avoid another economic meltdown at the hands of reckless wheeler-dealers.

Outside of Bay Street, the Bank of Canada has generally been little understood by Canadians, so it's not surprising that people have wondered in the weeks since Carney jumped into the electoral fray if he had the experience, political radar, and thick hide needed to keep cool and stay focused in the cauldron of public life.

But, in the sedate, ivory tower world of traditional central banking, Carney has been a very rare exception. He broke the mould at the sleepy Bank of Canada, creating a rock-star status in a few years as he revolutionized the

central bank's style and communications. By 2011, there was already speculation about the whiz kid from Fort Smith, N.W.T., eyeing the country's top political job—although he dismissed the idea. And he didn't fear controversy. He set off an uproar in 2012 by urging Canadian corporations, which were sitting on what he labelled \$500-billion in "dead money," to start investing their holdings to improve the economy.

Carney helped Canada get through the 2008 financial mess. But that crisis could be seen as fairly minor compared to the Brexit issue that Carney confronted at the Bank of England. Before the historic 2016 referendum on the U.K.'s future, he infuriated Brexiters by warning of the significant economic risks of leaving the European Union. But after Brexit was approved—in what he described as his "toughest day" in that job—Carney emerged in the public spotlight to reassure Britons that their central bank had prepared in advance

for the coming uncertainties, and vowed to limit the financial damage.

Since leaving public service in 2020, Carney has stood out as probably the pre-eminent leader in the effort to combine principle and opportunity to channel massive global corporate investment into the post-carbon economic transition. At the same time, drawing on what some call the hard-nosed attitude acquired in years as an investment banker and corporate executive, the new Liberal leader has stopped the bleeding from his party's signature but unsellable climate action policy: the consumer carbon tax. And, making it clear that commitments to social justice have to be balanced with economic and political reality, he has similarly promised to ease the permitting process for pipelines and other energy infrastructure, and done away with the Liberals' proposed capital gains tax hike.

There are not many people of whom one might say that becoming prime minister without ever previously having run for elected office is not completely surprising. But Carney has redefined qualifications and traditions everywhere he's gone. Whatever happens on April 28, it will be remembered that the man who has only in the past few weeks started calling himself a politician has stepped up to offer his services to fellow Canadians in this moment of national trauma brought about by the United States' sudden destructive turn.

Les Whittington is a regular columnist for The Hill Times. The Hill Times

OPINION

Canada can be an agriculture powerhouse if we meet the moment

While the country invests significantly in innovation, it lags in translating those inputs into tangible, high-quality outputs.

CSG Senator Mary Robinson

Opinion



Canadians are more focused on nation building than they have been in decades. During these



Canada can capitalize on untapped agriculture and agri-food potential if we boost productivity, invest in infrastructure capacity, and address chronic labour disruptions, writes Senator Mary Robinson. *Pexels photograph by Jannis Knorr*

times, it is important to recognize our strengths. As luck would have it, Canadians sit in one of the

most resource-rich countries in the world. With mineral, energy, forestry, and agriculture assets,

we enjoy the ultimate strength of being able to diversify our global markets, increase our innovative

capacities, and above all, realize our strategic opportunities for growth in areas like infrastructure, productivity, capital investment, and technology deployment.

In fact, the country's untapped agriculture and agri-food growth potential was most notably brought up in the first report of the Advisory Council on Economic Growth, *A Better Future for Canadians*, released in 2017. Ultimately viewing the country as a "trusted global leader in safe, nutritious, and sustainable food in the 21st century," the report set an ambitious target of increasing agri-food exports by 2027 to the amount of \$75-billion, with an \$11-billion increase in agriculture exports and a \$19-billion increase in value-added processed food exports by 2025. Canada could achieve this, it noted, by having the private sector lead strategy development, investing in trade infrastructure, addressing labour shortages, promoting international trade, and supporting the

Continued on page 21

OPINION

Canada's economic future depends on women—the next government has an opportunity to deliver

Voters should be looking closely at how each party plans to unlock women's full economic potential.

Mitzie Hunter



Opinion

As Canadians prepare to vote on April 28, economic uncertainty is top of mind. With United States tariff threats and trade disruptions unfolding, the risk of a recession on the horizon, and daily costs climbing, many people are anxious about what lies ahead. But here's one thing we can't afford to overlook: the key to a stronger, more resilient future lies in unlocking women's full economic potential.

When women thrive, our economy thrives. It's not just about fairness—it's about growth, innovation, and future-proofing our country. In a time of uncertainty, that's a strategy we can count on.

We've seen promising steps over the past decade. The expanded Canada Child Benefit now offers families up to \$7,787 per year for each child under the age of six. The Pay Equity Act laid important groundwork for wage fairness in federally regulated workplaces. And \$10-a-day childcare is becoming a reality in most provinces and territories, with federal agreements extended to 2031. These are game changers for working parents and the broader economy.

But progress is fragile. Women still earn just 84 cents for every dollar earned by men—and the gap is even wider for Indigenous women, racialized women, and newcomers. Caregiving and unpaid work—which contribute an estimated 25 to 37 per cent of GDP—continue to fall disproportionately on women. And the care economy—dominated by racialized and migrant women—remains undervalued and underpaid.

The picture is especially stark in housing. Nearly 30 per cent of women-led households experience core housing challenges—meaning inadequate, unsuitable, or unaffordable housing. Hidden homelessness disproportionately affects women, gender-diverse people, and children, yet it's often excluded from housing policy calculations. Every day, roughly 700 women and children are turned away from shelters due to lack of space.

And trade disruptions? While initial tariff impacts may hit sectors like manufacturing, the effects won't stop there. As economic strain moves through the system, service industries like education, health care, and finance—where women make up a

significant part of the workforce—can also be affected. We've seen in past downturns that shocks in one area often led to layoffs and instability in others. We need solutions that recognize how deeply connected all sectors—and all workers—really are.

As we head to the polls, voters should be looking closely at how each party plans to unlock women's full economic potential as a pillar of Canada's resilience and prosperity.

Here's what to look for:

1. Childcare that works—for families and workers

The \$36.8-billion investment in early learning and childcare through 2031 is vital. But childcare isn't just about spaces—it's about people. Early childhood educators, 96 per cent of whom are women, are still earning around \$20 an hour with limited benefits. We need a real workforce strategy that ensures decent pay, stability, and respect for care workers. That's what turns childcare into economic infrastructure.

2. Real action on pay equity and employment equity

Legislation is one thing—implementation is another. We need enforcement, transparency, and investment to get more women—especially those facing intersecting barriers—into high-growth fields. The Employment Equity Act Review Task Force gave us the roadmap. Now's the time to follow it.

3. Housing policy that reflects lived realities

Federal programs need to address the full spectrum of housing insecurity—including hidden homelessness and the unique barriers faced by Indigenous, Black, and racialized women. The goal of cutting core housing needs by 50 per cent by 2027 is bold—but without deeper investment and intersectional analysis, it's just a promise.

4. A care economy that cares for workers

We need concrete commitments: better wages, stronger labour protections, and clear, accessible immigration pathways for care workers—many of whom are racialized migrant women who've long faced precarious conditions despite being essential to our economy.

This isn't about partisan politics. No party has all the answers—but every party has a responsibility to act. Our recovery, resilience, and economic potential depend on making gender equality a central pillar of Canada's economic strategy—not an afterthought.

When women and gender-diverse people are supported, communities thrive, and economies grow.

Let's vote for a future where gender equality isn't pushed to the margins—it's the fuel for prosperity.

Mitzie Hunter is president and CEO of the Canadian Women's Foundation, Canada's public foundation for gender justice and equality. Learn more at canadianwomen.org. Hunter is also a former Ontario Liberal cabinet minister.

The Hill Times

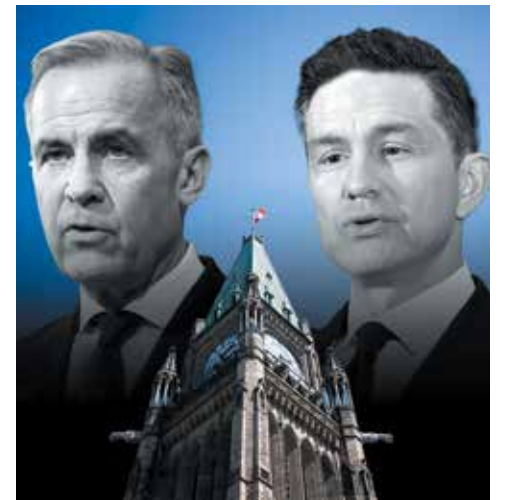
COMMENT

To err is human, to predict malign

If the polls are right, I will be proved very, very wrong on April 28 after previously predicting the decimation of the Liberals in this year's election.

Andrew Caddell

With All Due Respect



This is a referendum election on who—between Liberal Leader Mark Carney, left, and Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre—can deal with U.S. President Donald Trump, writes Andrew Caddell. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and illustration by Joey Sabourin

KAMOURASKA, QUE.—Jeffrey Simpson was my favourite columnist for years. *The Globe and Mail* premier journalist's dominance of the op-ed page was so evident, he was every public servant's go-to source of information. Of course, this was in the golden age of newspapers.

While he was normally bang-on with his analysis of the politics of the day, he sometimes erred. And with an unusually modest transparency, he would wrap up each year with a column listing his mistakes over the preceding year.

This tradition came to mind not at the end of 2024, but more into this past January and March, as Mark Carney took over from Justin Trudeau as prime minister of Canada. You may recall this was something I predicted, but rejected as the solution for the faltering Liberals.

In a Sept. 18, 2024, column titled "Two scenarios leading to Liberal oblivion," I wrote: "If he has the chance to run, Carney may suffer the fate of John Turner, Kim Campbell, and so many other anointed leaders who fell flat. He may not have the time to establish a political persona or policies, depending on when a leadership convention takes place, and the timing of the next election, scheduled for Oct. 20, 2025 ... it will be hard for [Carney] to appeal to your average pipefitter, farmer or barista: his 13 years at Goldman Sachs give him an air of privilege and wealth Whether the leader is named Trudeau or Carney, it looks as if the Liberals are toast."

I also had the temerity of writing a column last November that began: "It is sometime in the future. Pierre Poilievre has been elected to lead a Conservative government with an overwhelming majority."

I admit: if the polls are right, I will be proved very, very wrong on April 28. The question must be posed: despite what seemed like a sure thing back in November, how is Conservative Leader Poilievre losing, and how has Carney beaten the spread?

On the face of it, it makes no sense. Carney—as the debates last week proved—is not a natural campaigner. He is the Valium of orators, the Perry Como of politicians. In large halls with huge crowds, Poilievre has had people on the edge of their seats. Carney has them on the edge of slumber.

But Carney doesn't have to win over the large crowds, he only needs to reassure television viewers. As former Ontario premier Bill Davis said, "Bland works." Marshall McLuhan wrote of how television is a "cool" medium, in which a calm and quiet person comes across as trustworthy,

while a loud person is perceived as overly aggressive.

Former prime ministers Brian Mulroney and Pierre Trudeau rarely whipped up crowds, but on television they came across as in control. This is Carney's advantage in a campaign run mostly on television.

Normally, the deal breaker for voters is the quality of the local candidate or tax cuts. This time, that doesn't matter. This is a referendum election, and the ballot question is: who can deal with United States President Donald Trump? Is it Carney or Poilievre? NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh and Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet are not even in the conversation.

Poilievre is chasing the narrative of domestic politics that worked for him up to now: hard on crime, emphasizing affordability, smaller government and bureaucratic waste. He has a surfeit of votes in the West, so his overall numbers must be discounted: the 200 seats in Quebec and Ontario will decide the outcome. And domestic issues have been mostly trumped—so to speak—by international ones.

This last week of the campaign will see party leaders seeking gains in "toss-up" ridings, and securing the ones they have. Revealing their platforms now may not make a difference as I think most Canadians have made up their minds already, with millions voting in advance polls.

In our parliamentary system, the prime minister is the leader with the most seats, so popular vote is not a major factor. For that reason, I always base my predictions on an analysis of each riding and region. I believe this election will mirror 2015, when Justin Trudeau's Liberals won 184 seats and a majority.

If the trends hold up, I am predicting: LIB 197, CPC 119, BLOC 19, NDP 8. We'll see; I could be wrong again.

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

Federal election brings new crop of defence promises to break

Both governing parties have a proven track record of neglecting Canada's national defence and veterans.

Scott Taylor



Inside Defence

OTTAWA—At a Montreal campaign stop on April 14, Prime Minister Mark Carney pledged that if his Liberals were re-elected, they would cut through the bureaucratic Gordian knot which has long hamstrung all of Canada's military procurement projects.

To achieve this lofty goal, Carney promised to modernize procurement rules and regulations, and to create a standalone centralized procurement agency for the Canadian Armed Forces.

While not exactly a catchy policy promise to the ears of your average Canadian voter, for those

in the defence community, Carney's comments may sound somewhat familiar.

That would be because the Trudeau Liberals made this exact same promise to fix the stalled military procurement process during the 2015 federal election campaign. Once elected, the Trudeau Liberals focused instead on "sunny ways," and promptly forgot about their promise to streamline the military acquisition process.

Thus, they were able to dust off this neglected policy pledge in time for their 2019 federal election platform. This time around, the Trudeau Liberals promised to create an agency called Defence Procurement Canada in order to "ensure that Canada's biggest and most complex defence procurement projects are delivered on time and with greater transparency to Parliament."

Six years later, the Carney Liberals are able to trot out the same old proposed solution for a problem which they have failed to actually address for more than a decade.

Now, before I am accused of being a Conservative Party shill, let me profess that my lifetime experience has taught me that neither the Conservatives or the

Liberals are fully invested in supporting a strong military, or providing benefits for veterans.

For many military veterans who wax nostalgic for the good old glory days of the Armed Forces, the prime villain in the saga is former defence minister Paul Hellyer.

It was Hellyer's initiative to "unify" the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army, and the Royal Canadian Air Force into the single entity to be known as the Canadian Armed Forces. That was accomplished in 1968, and unification was still in full effect when I joined in 1982.

During that era, all three service branches wore the same "rifle green" uniforms.

When then-prime minister Brian Mulroney and his Progressive Conservatives were elected in 1984, the Cold War was still at its zenith. At that juncture it was the policy of then-United States president Ronald Reagan to invest heavily in the arms race in order to bankrupt the Soviet Union.

Mulroney was in lock step with Reagan on this initiative, and this was reflected in Canada's 1987 White Paper on Defence. This blueprint called for the acquisition of 12 nuclear-powered submarines, a regular force

strength of 120,000 personnel, and a fleet of 400 brand-new main battle tanks.

One morale boosting initiative that was implemented under Mulroney was a return to the three distinctive service branch uniforms.

However, in 1991, the Reagan strategy of outspending the Soviets succeeded, and the Soviet Union imploded. With the commie threat collapsed, so, too, were Mulroney's promises to build a strong military. The nuclear submarine purchase was cancelled, the main battle tank acquisition was scrubbed, and by the time Mulroney stepped down in 1993, the CAF was paying bonuses for personnel to leave the ranks.

Under the Force Reduction Program, the regular force was rapidly reduced from 90,000 to 65,000 people virtually overnight. Newly elected prime minister Jean Chrétien had campaigned on the promise to cut even deeper into the CAF budget. He kept that promise by cancelling a project to replace the Sea King helicopter fleet and a purchase order to buy replacement utility vehicles for the Army.

After what has since been dubbed the "Decade of Darkness" under Chrétien's Liberals, the

Stephen Harper Conservatives inherited in 2006 a broken Armed Forces that was already waging a war in Afghanistan. As such, Canadian defence spending rose out of necessity to simply keep our troops alive.

It was largely a case of begging and borrowing equipment and weaponry from our allies, albeit with no foresight for a long-term rebuild of our military institution. By the time Harper left office in 2015, Canada's defence spending was reduced to less than one per cent of gross domestic product. Harper also infamously closed a large number of Veterans Affairs outreach offices across Canada.

Under then-prime minister Justin Trudeau, the Liberals actually increased defence spending to 1.3 per cent of GDP, and they reopened many of the Veterans Affairs offices closed by Harper.

Despite this reality of bipartisan neglect, the generally accepted belief among Canadian voters is that Liberals are weak on national defence whereas the Conservatives are hawkish. The truth is that both governing parties have a decades-long, proven track record of neglecting Canada's national defence and veterans.

Whichever way you cast your vote in the coming election, do not believe the promises made regarding defence investment. Promises made ... promises broken.

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

The Hill Times

OPINION

Harnessing the power of block voting

Akolisa Ufodike & Oladapo Akinsipe



Opinion

Canada's upcoming federal election on April 28 takes place amid growing uncertainty. Voters are seeking leadership that delivers practical, inclusive solutions to pressing challenges. For BIPOC Canadians, these issues are not abstract policy debates—they are lived realities. Economic inequality, limited access to health care, and systemic overrepresentation in the justice system remain persistent and deeply personal concerns.

Despite being among the most educated groups in the country, Black Canadians continue to earn 20-25 per cent less than white Canadians with comparable qualifications. Black women face particularly high unemployment and wage gaps. Racialized immigrants face the trifecta of being more likely to be underpaid, unemployed, or underemployed. At the same time, racialized people are more likely to be renters,

and disproportionately affected by housing unaffordability.

Health-care access is another area of concern. Black Canadians experience higher rates of chronic illnesses such as hypertension and diabetes—as do Indigenous Peoples—yet often face barriers to diagnosis and treatment. Reporting from the Canadian Institute for Health Information found that nearly six million Canadians lack access to a family doctor, with racialized populations disproportionately affected.

In the justice system, the numbers are equally stark. Black Canadians represent nine per cent of the federal prison population, but only 3.5 per cent of the general population. Disparities in policing and sentencing contribute to this overrepresentation—issues that have yet to be meaningfully addressed through reform.

Which political party is willing to address these systemic challenges in a serious and sustained way?

The Liberal Party has frequently emphasized diversity in its public messaging, with initiatives such as the Black Opportunity Fund designed to address systemic inequities. However, slow implementation, limited

funding, and a lack of measurable outcomes have left many in the Black community questioning the party's commitment. There is also some skepticism about whether the party's inclusivity goes beyond optics. More recently, the release of a largely symbolic Africa Strategy was met with widespread criticism, reinforcing the perception that Canada continues to miss a crucial opportunity to shift its approach to the continent from aid to trade.

With the rise of populism since the 2021 federal election, current Conservative Party messaging has increasingly pushed back against diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, mirroring United States-style "anti-woke" rhetoric. This stance leaves little room for meaningful dialogue on the specific challenges faced by racialized Canadians. Racialized communities are not preoccupied with race—they are preoccupied with rejecting racism.

The real issue is that some political leaders continue to deny the existence of systemic discrimination, revealing a troubling disconnect from Canada's shifting voter demographics. This lack of meaningful engagement underscores a broader issue in Cana-

dian politics: Black and racialized voters are often acknowledged, but rarely prioritized. This is exemplified by the absence of racialized individuals in the most senior ranks of the major parties' campaign leadership teams.

This stands in contrast to the U.S., where political parties actively court Black and Latino voters—who together make up about 30 per cent of the population—with targeted platforms and sustained outreach. In Canada, racialized groups now account for 25 per cent of the population, yet the political parties are not making comparable efforts.

The missed opportunity is not just political, but civic. Block voting—where communities vote collectively around shared interests—has helped shape American electoral outcomes for decades. In Canada, the potential is there, but has not been fully realized.

The good news? Voter turnout among racialized Canadians is strong. In the 2019 federal election, turnout among Black Canadians was 80 per cent. South Asian, Arab, and Latin American Canadians also show consistently high participation rates across federal, provincial, and municipal elections.

At a time when mis- and dis-information and voter apathy can

undermine democracy, Black and racialized communities have an opportunity to assert their voice by showing up at the ballot box, and by demanding that parties offer more than promises and presence at cultural gatherings.

What's needed now is a clear set of policy priorities from political leaders—not just symbolism or performative gestures. Voters want to know: will governments fund culturally competent health-care services? Will racial disparities in employment, policing, and incarceration be directly addressed?

The answer may well depend on how these communities choose to engage—and how parties respond. One thing is clear: Canada's future will be increasingly shaped by whether its politics reflect the diversity and priorities of its people.

Dr. Akolisa (Ako) Ufodike, PhD, is an associate professor at York University, and a public administration executive recognized for advancing equity in governance and public policy. Dr. Oladapo (Dapo) Akinsipe is a dual board-certified physician and clinical assistant professor at the University of Calgary, serving as president of the Black Physicians Association of Alberta, and advancing equity in health care across Canada and the U.S.

The Hill Times

‘Trump effect’ galvanizing Grit Guilbeault’s prospects in rematch against NDP’s Machouf

With little sign of the Conservatives or the Bloc, the NDP and Green candidates in Laurier–Sainte-Marie, Que., are hoping to convince voters Parliament can stand up to the ‘Trump menace’ without the Liberal incumbent.

BY STUART BENSON

MONTREAL—As the Canadian electorate grapples with the fallout from United States President Donald Trump’s tariff actions, incumbent minister Steven Guilbeault may be one of the biggest beneficiaries of the surge of nationalism is having on the Liberals’ electoral fate in his downtown Montreal riding of Laurier–Sainte-Marie.

However, challengers like the NDP’s Nimâ Machouf are hoping to convince the riding’s progressive populace they don’t need Guilbeault to rebuff the “Trump menace.”

Taking its name from Canada’s seventh prime minister, Wilfrid Laurier, and a former parish church dedicated to Saint Mary, the majority francophone riding is a tourist-heavy area, including the hotel-and-condo-lined René Lévesque Boulevard in Ville-Marie, the stone Temple Dogs guarding the entrance to Chinatown on Saint-Laurent Boulevard, and the Gay Village along Rue Sainte-Catherine. Following the 2022 redistribution process, the riding also includes the Old Montreal and port area, as well as the eastern parts of the arts and cultural hubs of The Plateau and Mile End, and the eastern part of downtown Montreal.

In the week leading up to the leaders’ debates, *The Hill Times* contacted the campaigns of candi-



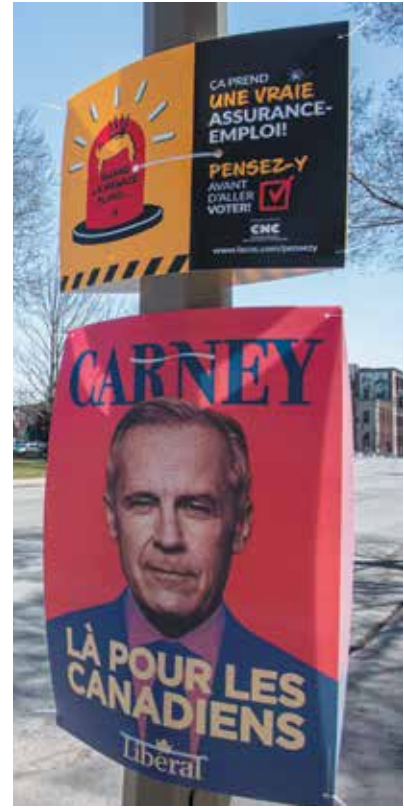
Campaign signs for Liberal Candidate Steven Guilbeault and NDP candidate Nimâ Machouf in the Montreal riding of Laurier–Sainte-Marie. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

dates from the five major parties in the riding, requesting an interview with their candidates at a location of their choice. Only the Liberal, NDP, and Green Party candidates responded to that request.

People see the progress, says Guilbeault

Ahead of the English-language leaders’ debate on April 17, *The Hill Times* met Guilbeault at his chosen venue, Café Leo on Rue Berri, which was filled with L’Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and Collège CDI students busily working on year-end assignments.

In 2001, Guilbeault—the former Greenpeace activist infamous for numerous high-profile acts of “civil disobedience”—climbed the



A National Council of the Unemployed campaign sign affixed to a streetlight above the Ivan Demidov-inspired Carney sign outside of Radio-Canada headquarters in Montreal. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

CN Tower and unfurled a banner that read “Canada and Bush: Climate Killers.” However, in 2019, he traded in the orange activist jumpsuit for the Liberal red campaign sign.

Six years later, and after stints as both the federal heritage and environment minister, Guilbeault was given charge of the Canadian culture and identity, Parks Canada, and Quebec lieutenant portfolios by new Prime Minister Mark Carney on March 14.

While Guilbeault has been a favoured villain of conservatives, particularly in the West and in Canada’s energy and resource industries, in his overwhelmingly progressive riding, it is his perceived concessions and support for those industries and lack of action



Liberal incumbent Steven Guilbeault sat down with *The Hill Times* in his Montreal riding of Laurier–Sainte-Marie to discuss ‘the Trump effect’ on his constituents, their disappointment with his record, and re-evaluation of his party’s progress on April 17. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

to address climate change that sit at the heart of the discontent.

Constituents who spoke to *The Hill Times* said that disapproval stems from his government’s purchase of a \$4.5-billion pipeline, approval of the Bay du Nord offshore oil and gas production facility off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, and ultimately axing the consumer carbon tax rate before the Conservatives could.

As of last September, Guilbeault had begun trailing the NDP’s Nimâ Machouf—a candidate he has defeated twice previously—and had fallen to a nearly 10-point deficit by the beginning of January. Guilbeault has faced Machouf in the previous two federal elections, winning by a 16-point margin in 2019, and a much-reduced five points in 2021.

Guilbeault was unequivocal about the cause of the complete reversal of his political fortunes: “the Trump effect.”

Issues such as the cost of living, housing affordability, and homelessness are still very much “on the radar,” and constituents are also concerned with support for the arts and cultural institutions, Guilbeault said. However, he said the top issue, by far, is their worry over Trump and how his tariffs will affect everything else.

Guilbeault noted that those concerns are acutely felt by his riding’s sizable community of artists and businesses, which rely heavily on tourism from the United States.

While the riding has changed hands several times since its creation in 1988, Guilbeault said the progressive values of its constituents have not.

Liberal Jean-Claude Malépart held the riding of Sainte Marie, later Montreal-Sainte-Marie, and then Laurier Saint-Marie, from 1979 until he died of a heart attack while in office in 1989. Gilles Duceppe was elected in a byelection in 1990, and represented the riding from 1990 until 2011 when he was defeated by the NDP’s Héléne Laverdière, who repre-



NDP candidate Nimâ Machouf says Guilbeault hasn’t ‘delivered the goods’ on the environment since his election in 2019. *The Hill Times* photograph by Stuart Benson



Green Party candidate Dylan Perceval-Maxwell stands beside one of his campaign posters featuring a photo from his 1993 election campaign challenging then-Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe. *The Hill Times* photograph by Stuart Benson

sented the riding from 2011 until she stepped back in 2019. Duceppe led the Bloc Québécois for 16 years in three stints, in 1996, 1997-2011, and in 2015.

Since Duceppe’s defeat, the Bloc has fallen to third in each election, now polling five points behind the

NDP at 14 per cent, according to 338Canada.

Guilbeault said that, unlike some ridings, his constituents are far more interested in which candidate will best represent their interests rather than the colour of their campaign signs.

“I benefit from a lot of people who wouldn’t describe themselves as Liberals, and who may not normally vote Liberal, but they seem to be voting for me,” Guilbeault said, noting that many of those supporters may have voted NDP in 2011 and 2015.

Beyond his riding, Guilbeault said he has been lending a hand with door-knocking in the surrounding areas to support his incumbent colleagues, and the Liberal challenger in Rosemont–La Petite-Patrie, Jean-Sébastien Vallée, who is looking to unseat the NDP’s Alexandre Boulerice.

Boulerice is projected as the likely winner on 338Canada, polling at 47 per cent to Vallée’s 28 per cent.

Guilbeault also said that in the nearby ridings where the Bloc had been resurgent, he is now hearing those supporters offer themselves instead to the Liberals “unprompted.”

“About half the people at the door will tell us, ‘we want to work for you guys,’” Guilbeault said. “They’re not shy about saying it.”

The Bloc candidate, Emmanuel Lapierre, an author and history professor at a Cégep in Granby, Que., did not respond to *The Hill Times* request for an interview.

Conservative candidate Mathieu Fournier also did not respond to a request for comment.

Alongside the lack of Conservative campaign signs in the area, Fournier does not currently have a completed candidate profile or photo on the party’s website. A LinkedIn search returned a match with an assistant to a senior adviser to the Conservative Party in Ottawa. Prior to Fournier, Stefan Marquis was supposed to carry the Conservative banner in the riding, but was removed April 1 after recent social media posts resurfaced related to conspiracy theories surrounding COVID-19, vaccines, the World Economic Forum, and the invasion of Ukraine.

One of the more common signs in the riding, appearing nearly as frequently as Guilbeault’s, are the orange-and-black placards from the National Council of the Unemployed (CNC), demanding improved employment insurance programs and a reformed social safety net to respond to Trump’s threats. Registered as a third-party advertiser, the CNC states that it has affixed thousands of campaign signs—in addition to online advertising—across Quebec.

However, while the Trump effect has overshadowed the discontent a portion of Guilbeault’s constituents have expressed over his record since being elected and coaxed back into the Liberal column, there are still signs of the lingering progressive backlash.

Guilbeault said that while he recognizes the growing discontent among his constituents, he has also seen a marked increase in the credit he is receiving for the progress made.

Noting that the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, or COP15, was held just a few blocks away at the

Palais des Congrès de Montréal, Guilbeault said there is a “stronger feeling” in Montreal and his riding specifically toward the commitments achieved at that conference.

“It’s felt strongly here that Canada stepped up to the plate to get the world to agree to protect 30 per cent of the planet by 2030,” Guilbeault said. “There is criticism, but there are also people who see that progress, and I have a lot of people coming to see me on the street and thank me for the work that I do, more so than I’ve ever seen before.”

‘Trump menace’ can be opposed ‘with or without Guilbeault’: Machouf

Speaking over coffees and oversized French toast sticks at Café Big Trouble on Rue Saint-Denis in Montreal’s Latin Quarter, Machouf’s choice of venue holds greater significance than a proclivity for the cafe’s greenery, board games, and all-day breakfast with fresh-brewed, bottomless coffee.

An educator at the nearby UQAM and epidemiologist specializing in infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, Machouf was also active in her community to safeguard it during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When the pandemic restrictions began to ease, Machouf also helped local businesses such as Café Big Trouble access carbon dioxide detectors and other protective equipment, enabling them to reopen safely.

Machouf said her primary message to potential constituents has been to remind them of who stood by them in difficult times, and who was nowhere to be found.

“People remember me and they tell me they appreciate the role I played during COVID,” Machouf said. “But where was Guilbeault?”

In the next “difficult period” Canada faces from the “Trump menace,” Machouf said she hopes voters will consider who they believe will be there for them.

While the Liberals may want the fear of Trump to be on the minds of Canadian voters, Machouf said her constituents do not have to give in, noting the slim chance of a Conservative victory in the riding.

“Any of the other parties will stand strong in the face of Trump,” Machouf said, noting that while she expects Carney to become the next prime minister, he will be able to do so “with or without Guilbeault.”

Machouf said she has also been attempting to remind her primarily progressive and ecologically conscious constituents that when they initially voted for Guilbeault in 2019, “they didn’t vote Liberal, they voted for the environment.”

“When people voted for him, it wasn’t to approve Baie du Nord, or to buy pipelines and give tax breaks to big polluters,” Machouf said. “He got power and he didn’t deliver the goods, so why vote for him again?”

The Green Party’s Dylan Perceval-Maxwell is the most senior candidate in the riding, having run in the riding five times between 1997 and 2008, and in a Laval, Que., riding in 2011.

This year, Perceval-Maxwell, who briefly contested for party leadership in 2020, is running nearby to co-Leader Jonathan Pedneault, who is running in the neighbouring riding of Outremont.

Pedneault declined an impromptu interview with *The Hill Times* on April 18 as he waited for his morning beverage at Café Dispatch on the corner of St. Laurent Boulevard and Duluth Avenue where the two ridings touch. Perceval-Maxwell said Pedneault’s disinvitation from that week’s leaders’ debates should not discourage the Greens or any progressive party from thinking strategically.

“Trump is understandably pushing people towards the Liberal, but my main point in running is to educate people that you can vote strategically here,” he said, noting that he would be fine with his supporters voting for either Machouf or Guilbeault.

“I’ll get a lot of votes from people who are angry at [Guilbeault], but I’m not that mad,” he explained, noting that for people who care about the environment and want a candidate committed to fighting climate change, any of the three will do.

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The Hill Times



The Jacques Cartier Bridge overlooks the Maison de Radio Canada as it crosses the Saint-Laurent River in Montreal. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Green Party co-Leader Jonathan Pedneault, left, bumped into Perceval-Maxwell during his morning coffee run to Café Dispatch on April 18, which sits on the border of the pair’s neighbouring Montreal ridings. *The Hill Times* photograph by Stuart Benson

'I want to feel part of this moment': Trump effect spurs expats to cast ballots from abroad



U.S. President Donald Trump's antagonism could lead to an uptick of Canadian citizens worldwide heading to the polls. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade and courtesy of Flickr/The White House

'Turnout tends to go up for elections that are seen as highly consequential, and this one is shaping up to be among the most important in our lifetimes,' says Dalhousie professor Lori Turnbull.

Continued from page 1

spent the past seven years living in San Francisco, Calif.; Paris, France; and London, U.K.

Baudoin said he has felt disconnected from Canada's federal elections, but talks of annexation prompted him to register for the first time. "My main concern is who is best positioned to deal with all the uncertainty that Trump has brought," he explained, pointing out that he has picked up on feelings of anxiety amongst many of his friends back home.

While there is no exact count of Canadians living abroad, the number is estimated to be in the millions. According to Elections Canada, only a fraction of these citizens—about 27,000—cast valid ballots in the 2021 election out of the 55,696 voting kits issued. Another 11,699 ballots were returned too late to be counted. To be eligible, citizens must apply to be on the International Register of Electors, which permits them to vote by mail-in special ballot. The only requirement is that one must have lived in Canada at

some point in their lives, and be over the age of 18.

Amanda Bittner, a political science professor at Memorial University, said she isn't surprised by the surge in global engagement.

"The global world order that we are accustomed to is being threatened, and a lot of Canadians are worried about this," she explained.

For Bittner, voting while abroad can be a way to reaffirm one's identity. "When so much feels like it's at stake, I think deciding to vote can be considered nationalistic."

This very sentiment has resonated with Markus Tralla, a data analyst who moved to London, U.K., four years ago.

"Last time I voted was in 2015," said Tralla. "But these threats from Trump have solidified a national consciousness, and I want to feel part of this moment." Despite having no plans to return to Canada in the immediate future, Tralla said he intends to vote for the NDP. "I care about Canada's perception on the international stage, and that includes choosing a leader who feels distant from Trump."

The issue of whether Canadians living abroad could vote first came to prominence in 1993 when the Elections Canada Act was amended by Parliament. Legislation was passed stating that non-residents were only eligible to vote if they had been abroad for fewer than five years. This decision was reversed in 2015 when the Trudeau government scrapped the five-year limit. The Supreme Court confirmed this change in 2019, ruling that the restriction was unconstitutional and that non-residents have the right to vote regardless of how long they have lived outside Canada.

Once the restrictions were eased, the number of non-resident voters who cast valid ballots in the 2019 election tripled to 32,720



Voting while abroad can be a way to reaffirm one's identity, says professor Amanda Bittner. *Photograph courtesy of Amanda Bittner*



Markus Tralla, who now lives in the United Kingdom, last voted in 2015. *Photograph courtesy of Markus Tralla*



Dalhousie professor Lori Turnbull says she expects higher turnout from Canadians both at home and abroad. *Handout photograph*

from the 10,707 ballots counted in 2015, continuing the upward trend from the 6,069 counted in 2011. However, these numbers are still a fraction of the overall population of Canadian expats. This has, in turn, led to a self-perpetuating cycle, where due to the low turnout rate, politicians invest little into reaching expats, and the turnout rate remains low.

Unlike the Democratic Party in the U.S., which maintains offices overseas, Canadian parties have no such infrastructure. To fill in the gap, two relatively new entities have emerged: a Liberal association called Grits Abroad, and Canadian Conservatives Abroad (CCA). Both are grassroots organizations with no official ties to their federal counterparts. The groups serve to help expats navigate the mail-in ballot system, and CCA occasionally hosts events as well.

Timothy Veale, director of Grits Abroad, founded his organization after former prime minister Justin Trudeau's resignation this past January. Having lived outside Canada for nearly 30 years, Veale said he hopes to shore up support for the Liberals, while enhancing voter participation more broadly.

"The parties don't seem to recognize us ... the fact that we're so sizable and get no attention communicates to me that there is a lack of interest and a lack of care." Veale points to insufficient information, but also a complex registration system as to why turnout remains consistently low, adding that "expats do care, they are just unaware."

Despite similar numbers of Americans and Canadians living abroad, turnout amongst U.S. expats is nearly eight times higher. While not optimistic about reaching American levels of participation, Veale said he hopes to see the Canadian number break six figures, stating this would be "a relative improvement that would still show room to grow."

On the other side of the aisle, CCA co-founder Georganne Burke—a former Conservative strategist who splits her time between Ottawa and Florida, and is also the Canadian chapter lead for Republicans Overseas—said she has noticed significantly more engagement among Conservatives this year than in 2021 when her group was started.

"There is no question about it, this has been really busy compared to the last election," she said, adding that they have been in touch with potential voters in countries as far as the Philippines, Malaysia, and Hong Kong. Burke acknowledged that the tight polls have also played a factor, creating "an increased urgency that we have never seen before."

According to Lori Turnbull, a political science professor at Dalhousie University, Trump's threats directed towards Canada have drawn additional attention to this election.

Turnbull said she expects higher turnout from Canadians both at home and abroad given the significance of the stakes.

"Turnout tends to go up for elections that are seen as highly consequential, and this one is shaping up to be among the most important in our lifetimes," she said.

The Hill Times

Party leaders have final faceoff in Montreal

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade



Liberal and Conservative Party supporters gather outside the federal leaders' English-language debate at La Maison de Radio-Canada in Montreal on April 17.



Prime Minister Mark Carney arrives for the second and final leaders' debate.



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, right, and his wife Anaida greet supporters as they arrive for the debate in Montreal.



Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet disembarks his campaign bus outside of La Maison de Radio-Canada.



An NDP squad cheers for their party leader.



New Democratic Party Leader Jagmeet Singh, left, speaks to reporters after arriving for the debate with wife Gurkiran Kaur Sidhu.



A Pro-Palestine advertisement van drives past Liberal Party supporters gathered outside the federal leaders' debate on April 17.

Election ad men: Carney, Trudeau, and Trump play starring roles in the party's biggest hits, say digital advertising experts

Continued from page 3

than the more common recycling of rally or press conference speeches.

"The ad succeeds because it repurposes something authentic, not manufactured, and voters can spot the difference," explained Sanyal, now a principal at Earnsccliffe Strategies.

While the final line may be the most effective, Earnsccliffe's Tyler Hudy, a former digital media director for Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe, said the penultimate line—"Canada must be looking elsewhere to expand our trade to build our economy and to protect our sovereignty"—is the one that resonates the most.

While Hudy said he isn't convinced Carney's policies will follow through on the language of national strength and self-reliance, "the tone aims at moderate voters concerned about Canada's economic place in the world."

"It gestures toward ambition, even if vaguely," Hudy said.

Former NDP digital director Michael Roy told *The Hill Times* the ad is filled with shots that are "perfectly on brand and on message for Carney," particularly in a campaign dominated by Trump, trade, and Canadian sovereignty.

"Our old relationship with the United States is over" at the top of the ad is his strongest line as prime minister, [and] shows Canadians what kind of leader he will be."

The Misses:

Sanyal: Carney's got the calm, competent thing down. That's catnip for older voters. But if the Liberals want to win back younger millennials, they will need more than competence. They'll need someone who makes them feel something. Without that, the Liberals risk leaving a key demo on mute.

Hudy: "While this is a tragedy, it is also the new reality." Calling Canada's changing relationship with the U.S. a "tragedy" feels defeatist. It implies the government is a spectator, not a problem-solver. Voters need a champion, not a bystander.

Roy: The visuals in the opening shot are solid, but the large podium and Carney's slumped shoulders make him look small.

One Perfect Shot:

Sanyal, 0:10-0:11: The abrupt push in on Carney's face does a lot of work. It gives weight to lines like "the new reality" and "Canada will," and turns them into something you're meant to



remember. Simple, deliberate editing that sticks the landing.

Hudy, 0:22-0:23: "If the United States no longer wants to lead, Canada will." This is the ad's standout moment. Visually, the shot is prime ministerial and one that signals national pride and unity. It's confident, ambitious, and social-media ready. It cleverly reframes Liberal internationalism as global leadership and sounds like something a prime minister should say. It feels big. It works.

Roy, 0:17-0:19: Chef's kiss. It combines two powerful themes we've seen repeatedly since Mr. Carney took office: pride in our country and a focus on economic security. This ad skillfully weaves his words together with images that combine these two themes in a simple, memorable way.

The Conservatives: Canada can't afford a fourth Liberal term

Launched: April 7

Runtime: 30 seconds

Description: The ad features black-and-white images of then-prime minister Justin Trudeau embracing Carney at the Liberal leadership convention last month, accompanied by a narrated call-and-response asking why Trump prefers the Liberals, answered by archival video and audio of Carney.

Transcript:

Narrator: "Why does Trump want a fourth Liberal term?"

U.S. President Donald Trump: "I think it's easier to deal actually with a Liberal."

Narrator: "Because Mark Carney will continue the same Liberal policies that have made

Canada weak. He'll keep oil in the ground ..."

Prime Minister Mark Carney: "Oil reserves, proven reserves, need to stay in the ground."

Narrator: "...and he'll keep Liberal laws that block mines, pipelines, and energy projects ..."

Carney: "We do not plan to repeal Bill [C-69]."

Narrator: "...keeping Canada hostage to the Americans."

Trump: "... it's to our advantage actually."

Narrator: "Canada can't afford a fourth Liberal term."

The Hits:

Hudy: "He [Carney] will keep Liberal laws that block mines, pipelines and energy projects." This line reminds voters that the Liberals'—and Trudeau's—environmental legacy, one Carney openly supports, is par for the course in a "lost Liberal decade" that shows no signs of ending. At a time when the country needs its energy sector, it signals more roadblocks, not more opportunity.

Sanyal: The Conservatives have been hammering Trudeau for a decade, and they're not switching it up now. The words hit, but it's that last image that drives it home: vote Carney, get more of Trudeau.

Roy: Simplicity. It combines a simple message with clear and concise arguments. That's a critical ingredient in any effective political ad.

The Misses:

Hudy: **Trump:** "I think it's easier to deal actually with a Liberal." Trump is a polarizing figure, even on the right. Quoting him risks confusing the audience. Is this a criticism or an endorsement? The ambiguity dilutes the



impact and distracts from the tighter economic messages that follow.

Sanyal: The energy will still fire up the base, but it's not the issue that peels votes off Carney. The Conservatives need to make gains in Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec, and I haven't seen polling that indicates pipelines are top of mind in battleground ridings. In a moment of global flux, this line of attack feels more like muscle memory than strategy.

Roy: Carney and Trudeau, over, and over, and over. At this point in the campaign, it's clear that both Trudeau and the carbon tax are non-issues for voters. Yet the Conservative campaign continues to try to tie Carney to both.

One Perfect Shot:

Hudy, 0:28-0:30: Affordability isn't just an economic talking point; it's a national anxiety. This line taps directly into it. If Canadians truly want change, this is all they need to know.

Sanyal, 0:28-0:30: The shot says it all. Just mix in Trudeau, and the reaction is baked in.

Roy, 0:28-0:30: Like so many Conservative ads, the closing slate sums up the message well. Perhaps the strongest part of this closing line isn't the photo, but the reminder to voters that this will be the fourth term of this Liberal government that's past its prime.

The NDP: Mark Carney's Red Flags

Launched: March 13

Runtime: 31 seconds

Description: The newspaper tear-away style ad, features cut-out images of Carney, accompanied by simple text and narration, as well as an increasing number of red flag emojis filling the screen.

Transcript: "Liberal Leader Mark Carney has quite the resumé, but let's take a closer look. He was vice-chair at Brookfield when they evicted tenants

and raised rents to boost corporate landlord profits, and he was caught lying about Brookfield's environmental record to make more money for investors. For Carney, making the rich richer is just another day at the office. That's a big red flag. Mark Carney: in it for billionaires, not for working people."

The Hits:

Roy: This is the most creative ad of the campaign so far. The "red flag" trope follows in the tradition of Jack Layton's "hashtag fail" in the 2011 leaders' debate. This ad is designed to connect with women—a core voting group for the NDP.

Hudy: This is classic NDP. It's clean, emotionally loaded, and straight down the pipe. It hits the core identity of the party, working-class, anti-elite, without over explaining.

The Misses:

Roy: The closing is just a bit too on the nose. Although "in it for billionaires, not you" is the NDP's core message, the ad would be stronger if it ended on the flags.

Hudy: The attacks on Brookfield get lost in the weeds. Will the average voter fact-check Brookfield's ESG record? Unlikely. Instead of corporate disclosures, the ad would've hit harder by sticking to kitchen-table issues: affordability, housing, or trust.

One Perfect Shot:

Roy 0:18-22: Carney getting buried in his own red flags is so emblematic of the times we live in. Just like in dating, the ad reminds us that you want to choose the candidate with the fewest red flags, and Carney has too many for comfort.

Hudy, 0:10-0:12: Housing is a major pressure point for the Liberals, and this gets right to that point. It's not just policy, it's personal. Many voters know someone priced out or pushed out. That's what makes it sticky.

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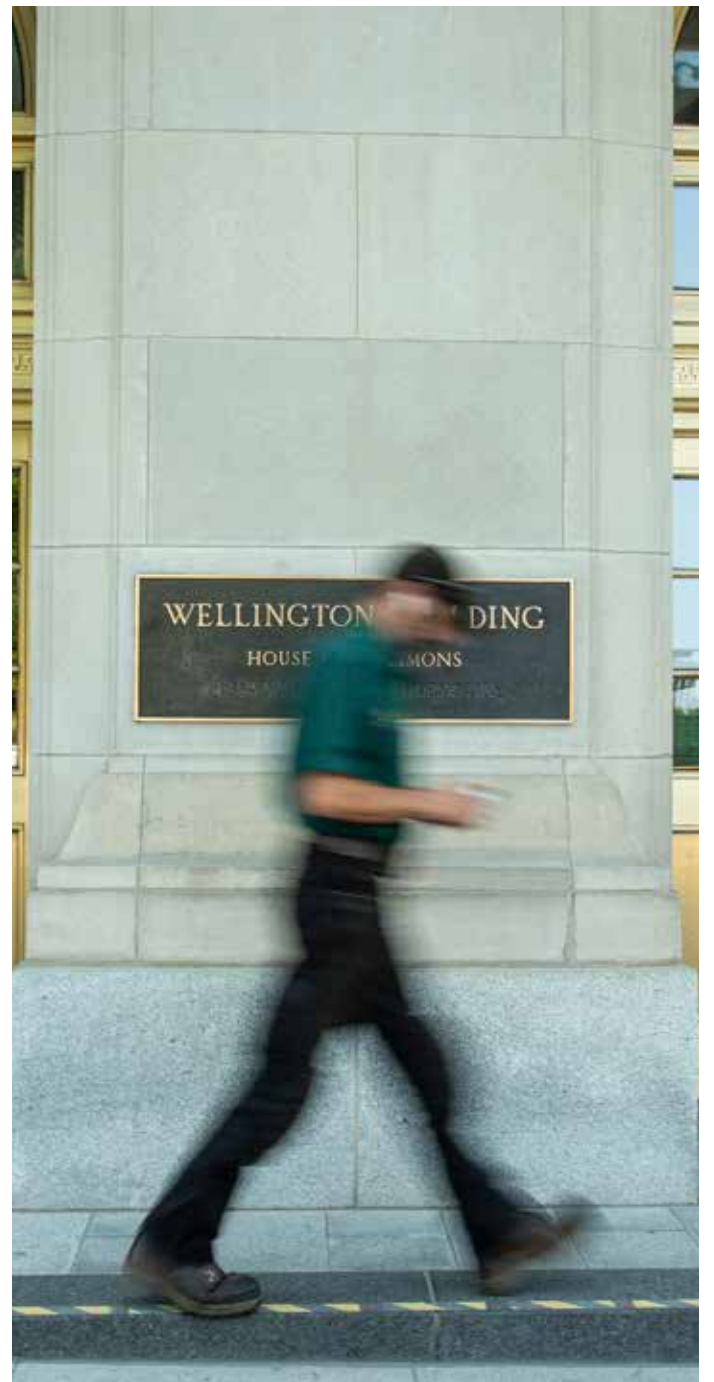
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Read it on Reddit? Project looks to help Canadians navigate online political conversations

Early assessments of the popular subreddit r/Canada found a few ‘power users’ dominated the discourse, meaning ‘a very small group of people have a lot of power to shape the conversation.’

Continued from page 1

assess tweets directed at candidates during the 2021 federal election—which identified roughly 18.7 per cent of the more than two million tweets analyzed as being “likely toxic”—as well as during the 2022 Ontario election, a series of 2022 municipal elections, the 2023 Toronto mayoral by-election, and Alberta’s 2023 election.

Verified is a similar exercise with a different approach. While Samara is “still paying attention to the experience of candidates online and their working conditions,” Delhon said the centre wanted to put a focus on voters, and “what they’re talking about, and where.”

Twitter, now known as X, notably is not part of this election’s project. Delhon said the reasons for that are multifold. For one, “X is openly hostile to civil society researchers, and has been litigious towards organizations that have drawn attention to the spread of mis- and disinformation, and harmful content on that platform.” It’s also become “cost prohibitive” and “very expensive to gain access” to the required data.

“We feel like we’ve captured the evolution in that platform, and we’re also looking to be responsive to where voters actually are,” said Delhon.

Along with “tracking where information threats such as misinformation bots and foreign interference are present,” researchers are also seeking to “understand the positive, and the pro-democracy aspects of social media platforms, and identify the spaces” where such engagement is happening.

In its first report of the series, Samara looked at political conversations on Reddit in the five days leading up to the March 23 federal election call, specifically amongst users on the subreddit r/Canada, which the centre notes is the largest Canadian subreddit



Liberals Pam Damoff, right, Carla Qualtrough, and Harjit Sajjan all referenced their experiences with toxicity in announcing their decisions not to seek re-election this year. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade



Among Canadian political figures, Liberal Leader Mark Carney, left, and Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre dominated political discussions on the r/Canada subreddit. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and illustration by Joey Sabourin

on the platform with roughly 3.8 million members.

“In light of recent changes to the online news landscape in Canada, particularly the Meta news ban,” Reddit has become “a particularly important platform for Canadian civic engagement,” said Delhon.

Future reports as part of the Verified project will include a focus on mis- and disinformation on YouTube, and on the experiences of both candidates and journalists on Bluesky, said Delhon.

Analyzing 494 posts featuring 87,195 comments and replies from more than 20,000 Reddit users between March 18 and 23, researchers found that “a small number of users on r/Canada are having an outsized influence on online discussions,” with 28 per cent of all posts on the subreddit coming from just nine users, and 26 users having contributed more than 50 per cent of posts. Moreover, the 150 most active commenters on the subreddit accounted for at least 14 per cent of all comments analyzed.

“The fact that so few users account for such a high percentage of submissions means that a very small group of people have a

lot of power to shape the conversation,” reads the report.

Such “power users aren’t necessarily a negative thing,” it continues, but do point to a vulnerability on the platform: “if their engagement is unproductive or intentionally manipulative, they could be skewing online discussions to shift narrative and public opinion, or to spread disinformation,” increasing the potential for astroturfing or foreign influence in discussions.

“People see Reddit as a public forum to read other user-generated content, and it’s not readily apparent that it’s only a few people that are producing a percentage of the submissions,” noted Delhon.

Of the more than 80,000 Reddit comments analyzed by Samara over the five days leading up to the election, only 2,943—or 3.3 per cent—were identified as abusive. “Abuse appears to be spread out across the entire commenting user base, rather than concentrated around a few users,” reads the report. Roughly two per cent of all comments and replies examined during this period were deleted by users or removed by moderators.

Samara took another look at the r/Canada subreddit in its second report released on April 10, this time focusing on conversations over the first four full days of the campaign—March 24 to 27—during which time 56,136 comments were made on 278 different posts. The analysis identified a clear focus on Canada-United States relations among users discussing domestic politics over that period.

Of the more than 50,000 comments assessed, 1,737—or roughly 3.1 per cent—were deemed to be abusive, a notable proportion of which related to U.S. President Donald Trump. The word “Trump” was the “most common non-expletive word among abusive comments,” and the fifth-most common overall accounting for 183 of the comments classified as abusive, notes the report.

Looking at just the titles of the 278 posts analyzed, Samara found roughly 38 per cent specifically referenced Canada-U.S. relations. And beyond titles, “Canada-U.S. relations took up the most conversational space,” with health care, for example, being the focus of only nine posts, while China and India accounted for 10 posts each.

Samara also found a distinct focus on the two federal party leaders topping public opinion polls: Liberal Leader Mark Carney and Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre.

Carney was referenced in the titles of 65 of the 278 posts analyzed, while Poilievre appeared in 39. They were followed by Alberta Premier Danielle Smith with 16 posts, and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh with eight. Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, and Green Party co-Leaders Elizabeth May and Jonathan Pedneault were each referenced twice, with no posts referencing People’s Party Leader Maxime Bernier.

Comments assessed bear out a similar focus, with Carney referenced in 4,623 individual comments, followed by Trump at 4,166, and Poilievre at 4,036—for the Conservative leader, Samara counted comments referencing both “Poilievre” and the moniker “PP.” The fourth-highest number of comments referenced “Trudeau,” which Samara noted could capture references to both former prime ministers Justin Trudeau and Pierre Trudeau, followed by Smith with 888 comments, Singh with 495 comments, and Elon Musk with 427 comments.

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The Hill Times

Tariffs take centre stage as Liberals look to hold Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi



Liberal Sophie Chatel, left, Conservative Brian Nolan, New Democrat Gilbert W. Whiteduck, and People's Party candidate Todd Hoffman are among the candidates contesting the renamed riding of Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi, Que. Handout photographs

BY HUNTER CRESSWELL

Just like on the national stage, the local race in the western Quebec riding of Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi is feeling the effects of the United States' tariffs on Canadian goods and interprovincial trade barriers.

Candidates are positioning themselves as the best placed to help future-proof the local economy and represent residents amid the threats from across the southern border.

Liberal Sophie Chatel is looking to hold onto her seat on April 28 in her first re-election bid, facing off against Conservative candidate Brian Nolan, the New Democrats' Gilbert W. Whiteduck, Bloc Québécois candidate Suzanne Proulx, Green Claude Bertrand, and People's Party of Canada (PPC) candidate Todd Hoffman.

The Liberal Party has represented the riding since 2015. Formerly known simply as Pontiac, the riding was renamed Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi during the 2022 redistribution of federal electoral districts.

Chatel said she's running again when so many of her fellow Liberal MPs decided not to re-offer because she wants to see the riding transition to a clean economy.

"That means prosperity for the next 100 years, right?" she said during a March 28 phone interview. "Or until there's another economic revolution. To me, it's the role of an MP to mobilize its community ... help businesses to transition, [and] support organizations to transition. So my vision is to have a green and prosperous region."

Chatel said that U.S. tariffs are "deeply concerning," and threaten the region's forestry and agriculture sectors.

"That's why I support the plan proposed by a Mark Carney-led government to push back against these tariffs, protect affected workers and industries, and build a stronger, more resilient economy," she said.

Nolan, who was not available for an interview ahead of deadline, told the region's *The Equity* newspaper he wants to see more jobs brought to the region. "We are rich in forestry, we're rich in mines and I think what we have to do is not only exploit our materials, but also to transform the resource within our region, instead of sending our raw material all over the country or even to the United States. So, we should create jobs in our own riding, and

that way, we're going to employ our local people at home."

When it comes to the tariff threat, Whiteduck didn't mince words. He called U.S. President Donald Trump a "bully," and said that his "erratic and destructive autocratic behaviour" is already affecting Canadians.

"There are many businesses, farms, and people in the Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi riding who could be directly affected, and are already being affected by the uncertainty and threats," he said. "But people shouldn't get too alarmist and over-react, either, because that's exactly what [Trump] wants."

Whiteduck said that the NDP's platform includes support for people and businesses as the Canadian economy distances itself from the U.S. out of necessity. This includes expanding support for people who lose their jobs, and stopping public procurement from American firms unless there isn't an alternative.

Bertrand said that while the riding isn't home to large industries set to be directly impacted by the tariffs, its forestry businesses, farms, and outdoor outfitters could feel the pain.

"One should expect that both the federal and provincial governments will have to provide some financial assistance to individuals and businesses not unlike the assistance that was provided during the pandemic," he said. "However, such assistance cannot possibly be sustained in the long term."

Hoffman knows the woes of interprovincial trade barriers more than most. He's the founder, owner, and brewer for Brauwerk Hoffman in Campbell's Bay, Que.—a mere 16 kilometres from Ontario—but he can't sell his beer across the Ottawa River.

"Every business I've been involved in, these interprovincial trade barriers hindered trade and commerce between Ontario [and] Quebec, and it's not just unique to me," he said.



Bloc Québécois candidate Suzanne Proulx, left, and Green candidate Claude Bertrand. Handout photographs

Hoffman and the PPC propose scrapping those barriers as one remedy to offset the economic shock of the tariffs.

"Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi is geographically well-positioned to experience an economic rebirth if these barriers can be lifted," he said.

Grits hope to hold on as NDP, Tories look to regain seat

Based on Statistics Canada's 2021 census data, the redrawn riding of 26,513 square kilometres has a population of 111,138 people, with 84,964 electors on the preliminary list. The average Pontiac resident earned a median total income of \$48,800 in 2020. Almost 80,000 residents are bilingual, while 19,155 speak only English, 30,565 speak only French, and 425 don't speak either official language.

Since the redistricting, the riding no longer includes the municipality of Val-des-Monts, Que. It also lost part of the city of Gatineau, but gained part of the Plateau area of Hull.

The mostly rural riding stretches across southwest Quebec. It is bordered by the Ottawa River to the south and Dumoine River to the west. It reaches north to the MRC Pontiac and MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau. The riding's eastern border includes the municipalities that touch the Gatineau River's eastern shore.

It encompasses 35 municipalities, six unorganized territories, the First Nations reserves of Kitigan Zibi and Lac-Rapide, the Township of Low, and the cities of Maniwaki, Gracefield, and Gatineau.

During the 2021 election, Chatel won 43.4 per cent of the vote, ahead of Conservative candidate Michel Gauthier's 20.6 per cent. The Bloc took 16.8 per cent of the vote, while the NDP earned 11 per cent, the PPC candidate took 4.5 per cent, and the Green candidate rounded it out with 2.8 per cent of the vote, according to Elections Canada.

Prior to Chatel, the riding of Pontiac was represented in Parliament by Liberal MP Will Amos who resigned in 2021 amid controversy. He was first elected in 2015 with 54.5 per cent of votes to beat out the incumbent NDP candidate Mathieu Ravignat who garnered 22.5 per cent of the vote.

Ravignat represented the riding starting in 2011 during the "Orange Wave," which saw 59 NDP candidates elected across Quebec. He was elected with 45.7 per cent of the vote over Conservative incumbent Lawrence Cannon who took 29.5 per cent of the vote.

Cannon had represented the Pontiac riding since 2006 when nearly 34 per cent of voters chose him over Liberal incumbent David Smith.

Chatel cites record

During her time on Parliament Hill, Chatel said she's most proud

of her work to push the Gatineau-Ottawa tramway forward; her collaboration with Independent Senator Rosa Galvez to introduce Bill S-289, An Act to amend the National Capital Act (Gatineau Park); her work on the region's biodiversity protection plan; and her work on the rural caucus to secure funding for the local journalism initiative.

Chatel said that her campaign strategy includes door-knocking, advertisements, posters throughout the riding, and interviews with media.

"I would say it is an historical time," she said. "And it is a unique campaign because at the same time we are campaigning, we are uniting our community to protect ourselves against the impact of tariffs, and so what I've been doing all week is going to several local businesses and encouraging the buy local initiative."

Nolan seeks political beginning

Nolan, a Chelsea, Que., resident and businessman, doesn't have experience in elected office, according to LinkedIn and his campaign website.

According to LinkedIn, he is a board member of Sprout AI, a company that sells pre-fabricated, indoor cultivation facilities.

"Together, we can create a brighter future—one where every citizen has the opportunity to succeed, and where government works effectively to support that success. I am ready to listen, learn, and lead," he states on his campaign site.

Nolan also has experience working in the federal government and operating a cannabis business, according to his LinkedIn.

His platform includes cutting taxes, curbing inflation, and stopping crime.

Proulx mounts electoral return

A former Parti Québécois Member of the National Assembly, Proulx represented the provincial riding of Sainte-Rose from 2012 to 2014. Her roles in then-premier Pauline Marois' government included parliamentary assistant to the immigration minister, to the minister of employment and the status of women, and vice-chair of the Committee on Health and Social Services.

She spent two years as Bloc party president, and "has over 30 years of experience as a general manager in organizations in various industrial sectors, including metallurgy, primary production, the automotive industry, transportation, and local and regional economic development," according to her Bloc candidate bio.

Whiteduck looks to inspire his First Nation in Parliament

Whiteduck served as chief of the Kitigan Zibi First Nation from June 2008 to March 2015—a role his brother Jean Guy currently holds, and his third cousin Dylan held immediately prior.

"What I want to do is to be able to open the door for other young Indigenous people," Gilbert

Whiteduck said during a March 28 interview. "We need to have our voice heard, and we can be a voice for all the people."

Whiteduck, who most recently spent nine years as program lead/counsellor at the Wanaki Treatment Centre, said he helped his community build a school, a cultural centre, a radio station, and a centre for people with disabilities, and he wants to continue that work at a larger scale.

"I want to be a voice of civility. I want to be a voice of reason, affirming what the riding is saying," Whiteduck said.

"I'm someone that's followed politics for a long time, and often I was let down by what I was seeing. I know Question Period and how it works, but I was let down by those personal attacks, and I'm seeing it now in the election. That's not my way ... Here's where I stand, here's who I am. If you feel I'm the person, then vote for me. And if you don't, I fully respect you anyway. I'm not going to go after you. I live here, and I will die in this riding," he added.

Hoffman inspired by liberty

Hoffman said that the People's Party's stance on opening up interprovincial trade and against government mandates related to the COVID-19 pandemic are what made him become one of the founding members of the party in 2018.

But the PPC, like other third parties, faces an uphill battle.

"It's going to be a race between two parties. So this is where I got a big challenge, not just me, but the Greens and NDP, too," Hoffman said.

To get this message out there, he's doing interviews, putting up signs, and going to local government meetings to talk about his platform.

Bertrand looks to resonate with voters

Bertrand, a former engineer and military pilot, said that he's running under the Green banner because its platform—beyond just protecting the environment—aligns with his values.

"The Green Party is there to remind everyone that we're not doing better with the environment, and we have to get on with it. We have to stop talking. We have to start walking the walk," he said.

Bertrand added that housing and food affordability, funding the CBC, investing in high-speed rail projects, and reforming the electoral process are planks in the Green platform that resonate with him and Pontiac-Kitigan Zibi voters.

"When it comes to the ballot box, [people] tend to vote—unfortunately—strategically just to ensure that, for instance, the Conservatives don't win. People will probably vote Liberal, even though it might not be their favourite party," he said.

A ranked voting system or proportional representation could give third parties more opportunities to get candidates elected, he said.

The Hill Times

Digging up a hidden election issue: development and control of critical minerals

At issue is whether a part of our sovereignty is about to be given up with a lopsided ‘agreement’ that gives the U.S. access to and control of Canada’s critical minerals with little to no regard for Indigenous rights and the environment.

Ken Rubin

Opinion



Prime Minister Mark Carney, left, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, U.S. President Donald Trump, Elon Musk, and U.S. Vice-President JD Vance. Critical minerals will remain high on Trump’s chaotic negotiating agenda after the April 28 election. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade, Sam Garcia, Flickr, Wikimedia Commons, and illustration by Joey Sabourin

already knew that Treasury Board blocked NRCan’s desire to brand its critical minerals campaign efforts separately from the Government of Canada branding. So, no Ring of Fire slogans, or separate logos, or claims for critical minerals being the “new Big Oil” running the economy, full stop.

The communication plans acknowledge that the feds would have to overcome “misconceptions about [critical minerals] extraction, processing, recycling”; “have to contend with vocal members against [critical minerals] development”; recognize there are “human rights violations across the mining industry,” as well as “cultural sensitivities and Indigenous rights”; and contend with “other countries that have more enticing regulatory systems or funding options.” That’s a tall order to deal with to get a slick PR campaign up and running.

It appears as though there are no plans to share their internal communications/marketing plans with many more outsiders and the general public. They have not sought input, for instance, from outside public interest groups like Mining Watch Canada.

So far, those internal communication plans provide a weak and incomplete narrative that is hardly going to excite much interest or explain U.S. intentions.

The mining resource industry—primarily foreign-owned—has yet to take up mining minerals designated “critical” in a big way. But the federal government has started to throw billions of dollars and incentives at electric vehicle plants, and hopes that fewer regulatory restrictions will increase critical minerals mining ventures.

With so much at stake, you would think Canada’s new road to resources program for critical minerals would be better presented, responsibly thought through, less political, and more honest.

At issue is whether a part of Canada’s sovereignty is about to be given up with a lopsided, underhanded “agreement” that gives Trump access to and control of Canada’s critical minerals with little to no regard for Indigenous rights and the environment, and done under strict high-security secret terms.

That needs to be answered by political contenders in this election.

Ken Rubin writes on transparency matters. He is reachable via kenrubin.ca.

The Hill Times

in potentially massive proposed projects like the Ring of Fire in Northern Ontario. They also started blocking Chinese companies’ involvement in Canadian critical minerals projects out of security concerns.

But Canada’s adopted critical mineral strategy soon came under fire from Environment and Sustainable Development Commissioner Jerry DeMarco, as well as from environmental and Indigenous groups.

DeMarco’s 2024 report found that the lead federal agency, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), had not done enough analysis to weigh and monitor the benefits of increasing Canada’s supply of critical minerals against impacts on both the environment and to Indigenous communities where previous mining activities have had significant detrimental effects.

Many Indigenous groups protested they had not been consulted, and could see potential harm to their territories and way of life. Environmentalists saw the critical mineral push as not protecting Canada’s globally significant carbon sinks, such as forests, wetlands, and peat lands, and expressed concern that such isolated mining ventures would be too risky and not contribute to fighting climate change as heralded.

Yet more mineral exploration work is now underway with a few projects advancing that appear to suit both Canadian and American interests. Some provincial governments, such as British Colum-

bia and Ontario, have reacted to Trump’s tariffs by fast-tracking domestic critical minerals projects, and by starting expensive roads and infrastructure development, calling this retaliation.

The Canada-U.S. critical minerals alliance may be frayed, but Trump’s recent renewed call for more American mining activity does not mean he wants critical mineral projects in Canada blocked and highly tariffed.

The Canadian public keeps hearing generalizations about the importance of critical minerals to the country’s future, but knows very little about this mining sector, its impact on them, whether their tax dollars are or will be wisely spent, or about who is in control.

Released access-to-information documents from NRCan show many meetings and vague bureaucratic plans for externally communicating the federal critical mineral strategy. The NRCan-led communications committee, created in 2023, involves a dozen federal departments and agencies from Transport, Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change, Crown-Indigenous Relations, Global Affairs, and Export Development to the less-than-independent Canada Infrastructure Bank.

The marketing plans discussed behind closed doors call for a buy-in for significant critical minerals investments by provincial governments, the mining industry, and trade associations, and with support from Indigenous organizations and selected academics.

This effort will need the help of hired experts to do videos, create a website and workshops, along with pop-ups and banners at places like mining industry conventions. Such campaign-like pitching would cost some \$300,000. The big expense of \$200,000 would be for retaining a marketing expert consulting firm.

So far in 2024, NRCan media relations indicates they have spent money on two sole source contracts: \$39,550 with Content Strategy Inc. on a web strategy, and \$39,550 on still-secret communications strategy advice from Believeco Partners Ltd., which has offices in Canada and the United States.

The intended culmination of their PR/marketing plans is holding a Canada Dialogue Forum in 2026, which has yet to be announced.

To make Canada “a thought leader on [critical minerals],” this Canadian government communications committee envisages needing selected media partners “like the industry’s Canadian Mining Journal or the international industry’s Mining Journal, “to publish interviews and video presentations,” though both are hardly neutral independent media outlets. Should there be media inquiries along the way, they would be dealt with through a rigid chain-of-command route only providing officially approved statements.

But the federal communications group noted it could well run into barriers. For one thing, they

CBC/Radio-Canada is an essential service worth protecting

There is a definite need to reform the public broadcaster, but a failure to preserve it would remove a cornerstone of our country when we need to build it up.

PSG Senator
Andrew
Cardozo



Opinion

During this election campaign, a CBC News reporter overheard and then broke the story of the juvenile tricks by two Liberal partisans to make fake buttons that would make the Conservatives look bad. The CBC also went after Liberal Leader Mark Carney mercilessly on the Paul Chiang affair. Most Liberals would argue they got a rough ride from the public broadcaster.

Yet, Carney is talking about giving CBC/Radio-Canada more money while Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre is talking about defunding the Crown corporation.

I published a report on the future of CBC/Radio-Canada just before the federal election began in late March, which drew from a debate in the Senate on the future



Letting go of the public broadcaster would allow for the complete domination by America of our communications system, writes PSG Sen. Andrew Cardozo. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

of CBC/Radio-Canada, and hearings at a Senate committee on local programming by the public broadcaster.

In early April, Carney issued the Liberal plan on the subject. I would like to believe the party read my report, but suffice it to say we place a similar value on the national public broadcaster, as do apparently some 80 per cent of Canadians.

I called it an “essential service.” The Liberals called it a “reliable Canadian public forum in a sea of misinformation.”

I wanted to see no budget cuts, while Carney has promised a modest increase, now with the possibility of much more following a review. Keep in mind that the Conservative position is to see a cut of \$1-billion, defunding the English-language service,

and keeping what will then be an impoverished French-language Radio-Canada.

I am of the view that public broadcasting has a very specific and important role in a democracy. It builds and enhances our national identity through its news and entertainment programming, providing a place for national dialogue, for hearing about each other, and generally advancing a sense of culture and national identity, and as such, sovereignty.

As most print and broadcast news media in Canada have been falling away—or dying outright—the online world is nowhere near taking its place. The CBC ends up being the *de facto* guardian of free and fair media.

Just think of this: if we let it go, the last source of media about Canada will be from X, owned by

Elon Musk, who doesn’t believe we should be a country. Does that not make us a little more like the 51st state?

The CBC is not perfect, but it does many things well, and should to do a lot more better. Rather than cancelling this national communications icon, in a democracy we have the ability to redefine and refocus it in light of the ever-changing sense of our nationhood and the fast-evolving communications technology. It really isn’t that difficult if we agree on where it needs to go.

There are many things the CBC can do differently, but these are five that I think are important, and were the core of my Senate report:

- Focus on the core objectives, which include building the Canadian nationhood, being accurate and reliable, and being tech savvy in a constantly evolving field.

- Reform and reorganize within the same budget. If any party wants to offer more funds, I’m all for it, but not having such an increase must not preclude the much-needed change.

- Manage perceived bias, which has always been an issue for the CBC. It’s been called too right, too left, too woke, too old-fashioned, too white, too Indigenous, too central Canada, too separatist, too federalist, etc. That is to be expected as it tries to reflect the complexity of this country, so this is an issue that the public broadcaster has to work on transparently and constantly.

- A need for more local programming. This is a call that comes from across the country, and is necessary not only for the people in each region, but also for us to hear from each other.

- Sharing content, especially news and current affairs—for free—with other traditional and especially online media is an issue that we need to consider.

More than ever, CBC/Radio-Canada is an essential service. It’s essential to our sense of nationhood and pride, and to creating better communications among Canadians. It’s essential in this new world of disappearing traditional media, and the rapid growth of disinformation in online media. There is a definite need to refocus and reform the public broadcaster, but a failure to preserve it would remove a cornerstone of our country when we need to build it up.

Letting go of the public broadcaster would allow for the complete domination by America of our communications system.

My plea to the Liberals, New Democrats, and Greens is to put forward bold ideas about the future of the public broadcaster.

My plea to the Conservatives and People’s Party is to please reconsider your policies on CBC/Radio-Canada, especially in light of the existential threat we face in this country.

Andrew Cardozo is an independent Senator for Ontario, and member of the Progressive Senate Group. He is a past commissioner at the CRTC.

The Hill Times

Canada can be an agriculture powerhouse if we meet the moment

Continued from page 9

emerging agri-tech sector through incentives.

At the time of release, Canada ranked fifth in global agriculture exports and 11th in agri-food exports, with the sector accounting for 6.7 per cent of Canadian GDP (approximately \$112-billion) and employing 2.1 million Canadians. As of 2023, the sector employed 2.3 million people, provided one in nine jobs in the country, and generated seven per cent of GDP (around \$150-billion). While this may appear promising, Canada actually dropped to seventh place in global agriculture and agri-food exports, and, according to RBC’s newest report—*Food first: How*

Agriculture Can Lead a New Era for Canadian Exports—is shockingly on course to drop to ninth by 2035 if corrective measures aren’t taken. The report goes on to note, importantly, that while the country’s exports have quadrupled in value since 2000, Canada’s market share has declined by almost 12 per cent. This means our global competitiveness is slipping, and while the sector is growing, Canada is failing to utilize agriculture and agri-food to its maximum capacity. We are moving backwards.

Notably, both reports forecast impressive returns-on-investments for the sector in technology and capital investment. For example, by increasing investment in food processing technol-

ogies—not just their discovery, but, crucially, their development and delivery—Canada would reap lasting positive impacts on productivity. Similarly, under the high-growth strategy outlined by the RBC report—with emphasis on the scaling up and accelerated adoption of food processing technologies, closing the digital accessibility gap, modernizing export infrastructure, and regulatory alignment with the Global South—Canada can unlock as much as \$44-billion in agriculture and agri-food export value by 2035, returning the country back to its fifth-place ranking. Complementary to these findings, Farm Credit Canada estimates that if the sector could return primary agriculture’s productivity

growth back to where it was two decades ago, it could add as much as \$30-billion in net cash income over 10 years.

Here lies our advantage. For generations, we have been a leader in agriculture exports, and boast globally coveted agriculture resources that are the envy of our trading partners. Having 15 free trade agreements that cover 51 countries and 1.5 billion consumers worldwide, Canada significantly contributes to feeding the world. To maximize our capacity on this front, we must address our innovation shortcomings.

Under the Global Innovation Index, in 2024, Canada ranked 20th in innovation outputs yet eighth in innovation inputs. This “innovation paradox” highlights

that while the country invests significantly in innovation, it lags in translating those inputs into tangible, high-quality outputs.

This is our opportunity. Canada can be an agriculture and agri-food powerhouse if it boosts productivity, captures more domestic value-add opportunities, invests in infrastructure capacity, addresses chronic labour disruptions, and facilitates growth in emerging key sectors like agri-tech. It is a tall order, but to weather this storm and turn adversity into prosperity, we must market ourselves as a reliable trading partner committed to producing the world’s food for tomorrow.

Senator Mary Robinson is a proud Prince Edward Islander who is a former managing partner of a sixth-generation family farm operation. In 2021, she was named one of the Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Atlantic Canada by Atlantic Business Magazine. She is a member of the Canadian Senators Group.

The Hill Times

OPINION

2025 ELECTION

Why health, environment, and justice must be centred in election platforms

We need parties to commit to preserving and expanding the health benefits and avoided health-care costs of current and proposed environmental regulations.

Triya Tessa Ramburn
& Kristina Swain

Opinion

In an election race focused on United States tariffs and aggression, politicians must remember what it is they are fighting for: the people of Canada. The best politics put people's well-being at the heart of decision-making.

One of the most important indicators of people's health and well-being is the environment in which they live. Here in Canada, the current environmental crisis



Political parties must do more to protect the health of those facing the greatest burden of environmental harms, such as older adults, children, pregnant people, and people with disabilities, write Triya Tessa Ramburn and Kristina Swain. *Unsplash photograph by Nikoline Arns*

is decreasing safety, increasing illness and disease, and causing millions of premature deaths. It is also costing billions of dollars in health care. Putting health, justice, and the environment at the heart of politics can save lives, enhance health, and save money. This is an opportunity that all political parties can embrace.

As physicians, we see firsthand how untreated environmental harms lead to illness among our patients. In the Vancouver heat wave of 2022, Dr. Triya Tessa Ramburn saw a patient in the emergency room with severe mental illness seeking care due to worsening suicidal ideation. The patient lived in a group home with no air conditioning and she

explained that the extreme heat was contributing to her suicidal thoughts. Extreme heat events have indeed been associated with higher rates of suicides.

Similarly, last summer during an unseasonably hot day in Winnipeg, one of Dr. Kristina Swain's dementia patients developed non-exertional heat stroke. The patient lived alone in an assisted living facility. Although his suite had air conditioning, his dementia kept him from recognizing that it was over 30 C in his apartment, and kept him from knowing how to turn on the AC unit. Fortunately, his son stopped in for a visit, found the man in declining condition, and brought him in for urgent medical care.

As doctors, we have the ability to treat the symptoms of an illness but are often powerless to address the root causes of that illness, including the social and environmental determinants of health. We need politicians to address the factors we cannot.

The United Nations warns of the triple crisis of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change. Scientists have concluded that the Earth is beyond the safe operating limit to support humanity. Indeed, British Columbia's blistering summer of 2021 resulted in 619 heat-related deaths and the destruction of Lytton, B.C. Extreme heat events have been linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression, PTSD, suicidality, and intimate partner violence.

In addition, chemical pollutants in the air have been linked with increasing rates of respiratory and cardiovascular disease, reproductive and neurological disorders, and lung cancer. Yet there are more than 350,000 chemicals registered for use across the globe, and tens of thousands of these are in use here in Canada.

But there is hope: evidence shows that government policy can turn this tide. Government interventions to reduce air pollution at the source, for example, can lead to decreased clinic visits, hospitalizations, premature births, cardiovascular illness, and mortality.

Government action to protect the environment and address environmental justice can deliver significant health benefits to people across Canada—all while providing substantial economic savings. Looking at some recent examples, the Clean Electricity Regulations are expected

to reduce a range of toxic air pollutants, resulting in health benefits ranging from \$5-billion to \$8-billion through 2050.

This is why we are calling on all parties to centre health, justice, and the environment in their political platforms. We need parties to commit to preserving and expanding the health benefits and avoided health-care costs of current and proposed environmental regulations. This is not the time to go backwards.

Finally, we call upon all political parties to do more to protect the health of those facing the greatest burden of environmental harms. Children, pregnant people, older adults, people with disabilities, and racialized communities have disproportionately higher disease rates linked with exposure to oilsands tailings ponds, fracking, chemicals like PCBs and PFAS, plastics, and other hazards. Parties can help address this by committing to establishing a permanent Office of Environmental Justice, and pledging to deliver on the National Strategy Respecting Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice Act.

Climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss are making people in Canada sick. We need speedy, large-scale government action to curtail the factors that drive this deepening health crisis. This is not a partisan issue: protecting people's health and well-being sits at the heart of politics. It's time for all parties' political platforms to reflect this.

Dr. Triya Tessa Ramburn is a resident doctor specializing in psychiatry based in Vancouver. Dr. Kristina Swain is a care of the elderly doctor based in Winnipeg. The Hill Times

The roadmap to protecting Canada's economy with energy

The federal election provides a critical opportunity to translate shifting public attitudes into a coherent and forward-looking energy policy.

Dennis Darby

Opinion

Canadians will head to the ballot box at the end of April with our economy under serious threat. The Trump administration has assumed an aggressive diplomatic and economic posture that is increasingly hostile, protection-

ist, and unpredictable towards its closest ally and most important trading partner.

This existential threat is forcing Canadians and policymakers to update their views on government priorities and economic policies. Among the most noteworthy shifts is a renewed appreciation for the vital role our energy sector—and energy exports—play in supporting our economic strength and geopolitical security.

Recently, Quebec Premier François Legault signalled openness to energy infrastructure once deemed politically impossible in his province. "We're open to these kinds of projects," he said referring to pipelines, adding that "opinion is changing right now in Quebec"—a statement that would have been unimaginable just months ago. Polling from early March backs this up: 74 per cent of Canadians support building a cross-Canada pipeline from Alberta to Eastern Canada, including nearly 60 per cent of respondents in Quebec.

The federal election underway provides a critical opportunity to translate shifting public attitudes into a coherent and forward-looking energy policy. All parties must put forward plans to increase investment in domestic energy production, expand infrastructure such as pipelines and liquefied natural gas export terminals, and fast-track projects that enhance national energy security while reducing global emissions. The recent open letter from Canadian energy executives—"Build Canada Now: An Urgent Plan to Strengthen Economic Sovereignty"—offers a credible roadmap to do so.

That roadmap includes the politically challenging but necessary step of abandoning the proposed federal oil-and-gas emissions cap, a policy that threatens to force production cuts and deter investment in critical compliance technologies such as carbon capture and storage. A molecule of carbon dioxide from an oil and gas producer is no different from one

emitted by a combustion engine or an agricultural operation—their effect on the climate is the same. Yet this policy unfairly singles out one source, one industry, and one region, imposing an excessive burden on a sector that is fundamental to Canada's prosperity.

Worse still, the proposed regulations to implement the emissions cap are underpinned by flawed and opaque analysis. Environment and Climate Change Canada's cost-benefit assessment underpinning these regulations underestimates compliance costs, violates federal guidelines by evaluating the policy over a shortened time horizon, and withholds key assumptions on project timelines, technology costs, and production forecasts. Canadians are being asked to accept a policy that could do permanent damage to one of the country's most vital industries based on incomplete evidence. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated occurrence. A similarly inaccurate and flawed cost-benefit analysis by the

department is also the basis for draft methane emissions regulations that were released last year.

Canada's next government will need to act with urgency to unlock the full potential of our energy sector, and abandoning a flawed emissions cap policy is an obvious place to start. Doing so will not compromise Canada's climate goals. Increasing this country's energy exports can displace higher-emissions energy abroad, while encouraging investment and innovation to reduce the emissions intensity of our own production.

Moving forward with an energy-abundance agenda has never been more urgent. It can support the well-being of Canadian businesses, workers, and communities, and allow this nation to preserve our sovereignty by taking back control of our economic destiny.

Now is the time for all federal parties to commit to a pragmatic energy policy reset—one that reflects today's geopolitical realities, prioritizes economic resilience, and fully embraces the vital role that energy plays in Canada's future prosperity. Canada's energy resources are not just a competitive advantage—they are a lifeline.

Dennis Darby is the president and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters. The Hill Times



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.

Canada Growth Summit dives into unleashing country's potential in Toronto on April 24



Privy Council Clerk John Hannaford, left, former Conservative cabinet minister Lisa Raitt, and Ontario Premier Doug Ford are among the participants in the Public Policy Forum's Canada Growth Summit in Toronto on April 24. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

Bruce Heyman to Deliver Remarks—Former U.S. ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, now CEO of Power Sustainable, will deliver remarks on the environment at a lunch event hosted by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Wednesday, April 23, at 11:30 a.m. ET at a location to be announced in Montreal. Details: corim.qc.ca.

Panel: 'Charting Canada's Arctic Future'—Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, will take part in a panel discussion, "Charting Canada's Arctic Future," hosted by the Canadian Club of Toronto. Other participants include Sean Boyd (Agnico Eagle), Heather Exner Poirot (Macdonald-Laurier Institute), and Jessica Shadian (Arctic360). Wednesday, April 23, at 11:30 a.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York, Toronto. Details: canadianclub.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Canada Growth Summit 2025—The Public Policy Forum hosts the Canada Growth Summit 2025 on the theme "Unleashing Canada's potential in turbulent times." Participants include Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Privy Council Clerk John Hannaford, former Conservative cabinet minister Lisa Raitt, former ambassadors Louise Blais and Marc-André Blanchard, and former chief trade negotiator Steve Verheul, among others. Thursday, April 24, at 7:30 a.m. at the Fairmont Royal York, 100 Front St. W., Toronto. Details: ppforum.ca.

Holocaust Remembrance Day—The National Holocaust Monument Committee, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa host the Holocaust Remembrance Day service, honouring the memory of the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, the Survivors, and to preserving the memory and lessons of the *Shoah*. Participants include Israel's Ambassador to Canada Iddo Moed, Greece's Ambassador to Canada Ekaterina Dimakis, Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe, among others. Thursday, April 24, at 11 a.m. ET at the National Holocaust Monument, 1918 Chaudière Crossing, Ottawa. Register at aw.goose0@gmail.com.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

'An Inclusive Parliament?'—The Canadian Study of Parliament Group hosts "An Inclusive Parliament?" exploring equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in legislative spaces, from the experiences of legislators themselves to public engagement and staff participation behind the scenes. Friday, April 25, at 9 a.m. ET at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144

Wellington St., Ottawa. Details via Eventbrite.

The Walrus Talks: Tariffs—The Walrus Talks@Home presents a webinar on "Tariffs: Discussing What the U.S. Trade War Means for Canada, Both Now and in the Future." Speakers to be announced. Friday, April 25, at 12 p.m. ET happening online: thewalrus.ca.

Superintendent of Financial Institutions to Deliver Remarks—Peter Routledge, head of the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, will speak at a lunch event hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Friday, April 25, at 12 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

Civic Engagement Forum on the 2025 Election—The SVG Association of Ottawa hosts a civic engagement forum bringing together members of Ottawa's African, Caribbean, and Black communities to explore what this election could mean for us, how we stay informed, and why our collective engagement matters more than ever. Friday, April 25, at 7 p.m. ET at the Ottawa Black Business Alliance, 255 Montreal Rd. Register via Eventbrite.

Heart Health Summit Networking Dinner—Join delegates of the Canadian Women's Heart Health Summit for a networking dinner at E18teen Restaurant. Friday, April 25, at 7 p.m. ET, 18 York St., Ottawa. For details: womensheartsummit.ca

FRIDAY, APRIL 25—SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Heart Health Summit—The Canadian Women's Heart Health Summit will welcome national and international experts and women living with heart disease and stroke to discuss the future of women's heart, brain, and vascular health. Friday, April 25 to Saturday, April 26 at Rogers Centre Ottawa, 55 Colonel By Dr. Details: womensheartsummit.ca

FRIDAY, APRIL 25—SUNDAY, APRIL 27

IMF and World Bank Ministerial Meetings—The 2025 Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund will take place from Friday, April 25, to Sunday, April 27, in Washington, D.C. Details: worldbank.org.

MONDAY, APRIL 28

Federal Election Day—Canadians from coast to coast to coast will head to the polls to vote in the snap election called by Prime Minister Mark Carney on March 23.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Conference: 'Greenland, NATO, and the Future of the North'—ISG

Senator Peter Boehm will deliver the keynote speech at "Greenland, NATO, and the Future of the North" hosted by the Canadian International Council and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Tuesday, April 29, 8:30 a.m. ET at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs, 1 Devonshire Place, Toronto. Details: thecic.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

CANIC 2025—The Canadian Military Intelligence Association hosts CANIC 2025, the Canadian Intelligence Conference. Participants include Nathalie Drouin, national security and intelligence adviser to the prime minister, and her predecessor Richard Fadden, among others. Wednesday, April 30, at 7:30 a.m. ET, Ottawa Conference and Event Centre, 200 Coventry Rd. Details via Eventbrite.

Panel: 'Rethinking the 'One China' Policy'—Former Liberal MP John McKay will take part in a panel discussion, "Rethinking the 'One China' Policy," hosted by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office. Other participants include former Canadian ambassador to China Guy Saint-Jacques, ex-vice chief of defence staff Mark Norman, and Bonnie Glaser from the German Marshall Fund. Wednesday, April 30, at 8:30 a.m. ET at the Delta Ottawa City Centre. Register via Eventbrite.

THURSDAY, MAY 1

World Press Freedom Day Lunch—World Press Freedom Canada hosts its annual luncheon on the theme "Disinformation and Democracy: Standing on Guard." Former newscaster and current disinformation watchdog Kevin Newman will address the threat that the growing flood of disinformation poses to Canadian unity, security and democracy, and to the country's traditional media. Thursday, May 1, at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St., Ottawa. Details: worldpressfreedomcanada.ca.

Panel: 'Canada vs. Trump'—The Economic Club of Canada hosts a lunch event, "100 Days of Disruption: Canada vs. Trump" featuring Flavio Volpe, president, Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association; Benjamin Tal, deputy chief economist, CIBC Capital Markets; and Jeremy Kronick, C.D. Howe Institute's director of monetary and financial services research. Thursday, May 1, at 11:45 a.m. ET in Toronto. Details: economicclub.ca.

FRIDAY, MAY 2

Corporate Control with Nora Loreto—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, activist, author, and journalist Nora Loreto will discuss *The Social Safety Net*, the second book in her landmark series, *Corporate Control* for a deep dive into systemic inequality and the corporate web spun

around Canada's economy, society, and politics. Friday, May 2, at 8 p.m. at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 3

The Certainty Illusion with Timothy Caulfield—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, University of Alberta professor Timothy Caulfield will discuss his book, *The Certainty Illusion*, lifting the curtain on the forces contributing to our information chaos, and unpacking why it's so difficult—even for experts—to escape the fake. Saturday, May 3, at 11:30 a.m. at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

SUNDAY, MAY 4

From Truth to Reconciliation with Rose LeMay—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, *The Hill Times* columnist Rose LeMay will join Bruce McIvor to discuss their respective new books: *Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*, and *Indigenous Rights in One Minute: What You Need to Know to Talk Reconciliation*. Sunday, May 4, at 4 p.m. ET at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

Canada in the New World Order with Lloyd Axworthy—As part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival, former Liberal cabinet minister Lloyd Axworthy will discuss what is Canada's role in the world and what are our most pressing threats and opportunities. Sunday, May 4, at 5:30 p.m. ET at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa. Details: writersfestival.org.

TUESDAY, MAY 6

National Prayer Breakfast—Held under the auspices of the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons, the National Prayer Breakfast includes Canadian and international Christian faith leaders, ambassadors, MPs, Senators, and Canadians tuning in from across our nation and abroad. Tuesday, May 6, at 7:30 a.m. ET at Rogers Centre Ottawa, 55 Colonel By Dr. Details via Eventbrite.

Lisa Raitt to Deliver Bell Lecture—Former Conservative cabinet minister Lisa Raitt will deliver this year's Dick, Ruth and Judy Bell Lecture, hosted by Carleton University. Tuesday, May 6, at 7 p.m. ET at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre, 355 Cooper St., Ottawa. Details: carleton.ca.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

Patrons Circle Dinner with Gerald Butts—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts its Patrons Circle Dinner with Gerald Butts, former principal secretary

to then-prime minister Justin Trudeau, now adviser to Prime Minister Mark Carney and vice-chair of the Eurasia Group. Wednesday, May 7, at 5:30 p.m. ET at 67 Yonge St., Suite 300, Toronto. Details: cdhowe.org.

MONDAY, MAY 12

Lunch: 'Legal Ethics and the Attorney General'—The University of Ottawa's Public Law Centre hosts a conversation with Andrew Martin on his forthcoming book *Legal Ethics and the Attorney General*, looking at the position of Canada's attorney general, emphasizing the ethical standards they must uphold as lawyers and the importance of professional accountability in maintaining the rule of law. Monday, May 12, at 11:30 a.m. ET at uOttawa, Fauteux Hall, Room 202, 57 Louis-Pasteur Priv. Details via Eventbrite.

TUESDAY, MAY 13

Webinar: 'Lobbying in Post-Election Ottawa'—Lobbying Commissioner Nancy Bélanger will take part in a webinar hosted by the Public Affairs Association of Canada's Saskatchewan Chapter on "New Government, New Reality: Lobbying in Post-Election Ottawa." This session will explore what public affairs professionals need to know to effectively and ethically navigate federal lobbying in the post-election environment. Tuesday, May 13, at 2 p.m. ET happening online: publicaffairs.ca.

TUESDAY, MAY 13—THURSDAY, MAY 14

Sustainable Finance Summit—The Sustainable Finance Summit is scheduled to take place in Montreal from Tuesday, May 13, to Thursday, May 14. This year's theme is "Aligning Finance with Planetary Boundaries." Details: somet-financedurable.com.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

Senator Plett's Retirement—Today is Manitoba Conservative Senator Donald Plett's 75th birthday, which means his mandatory retirement from the Senate.

Lunch: 'AI Sovereignty in a Shifting Global Order'—The Canadian Club of Ottawa hosts a lunch event, "Canada at a Crossroads: AI Sovereignty in a Shifting Global Order" featuring Erin Kelly, co-founder and CEO of Advanced Symbolics, AskPolly, and Niraj Bhargava, co-founder and CEO of NuEnergy.ai. Wednesday, May 14, at 12 p.m. ET at the Château Laurier, 1 Rideau St. Details: canadianclubottawa.ca.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

Trade Conference 2025—The Canadian Global Affairs Institute hosts Trade Conference 2025 taking place in Ottawa. Wednesday, May 21. Details to follow: cgai.ca.

THURSDAY, MAY 22

Yves Giroux to Deliver Remarks—Parliamentary Budget Officer Yves Giroux will deliver remarks at a virtual event hosted by the C.D. Howe Institute. Thursday, May 22, at 12:30 p.m. ET happening online: cdhowe.org.com.

TUESDAY, MAY 27

Lunch: 'Investing in Canada's Defence Industrial Base'—The Canadian Club of Toronto hosts a lunch event, "Security and Prosperity: A Business Case for Investing in Canada's Defence Industrial Base." Participants include Unifor national president Lana Payne, Business Council of Canada president and CEO Goldy Hyder, former Canadian ambassador Louise Blais, OMERS president and CEO Blake Hutcheson, Bombardier Inc.'s president and CEP Éric Martel, and ATCO Ltd.'s president and CEO Nancy Southern. Tuesday, May 27, at 11:30 a.m. ET at a location to be announced. Details: canadianclub.org.

THURSDAY, MAY 29—SUNDAY, JUNE 1

FCM Annual Conference—The Federation of Canadian Municipalities' annual conference and trade show will take place at the Rogers Centre in Ottawa from Thursday, May 29, to Sunday, June 1. Details: fcm.ca.

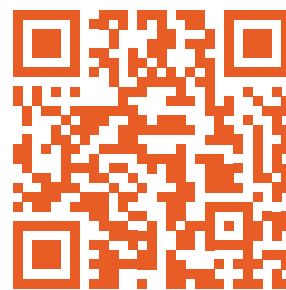


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