

There is a major **El Niño** building over the next couple of years and it will be a profound **wakeup call** for Canadians. Society-wide denial will no longer be possible. **Bill Henderson p. 12**

Canada needs to act

Michael Harris

p. 10



THE HILL TIMES

Douglas Roche

p. 11

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR, NO. 2034

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2023 \$5.00

NEWS

Hybrid House sittings will further boost PMO and opposition leaders' control over backbench MPs, says former Grit cabinet minister Easter

BY ABBAS RANA & JESSE CNOCKAERT

The decision to make hybrid House sittings permanent will further strengthen the control of the Prime Minister's Office and opposition leaders' offices over backbench MPs, and weaken the accountability process of powerful political figures in the country, says a former Liberal MP who served for 28 years in the House as a backbench MP and cabinet minister.

"This new system takes power away from Members of Parliament and hands it over to the whip's office and the leaders' office. That's really what it does even more," said former Prince Edward Island Liberal MP Wayne Easter in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "MPs themselves com-

Continued on page 20

NEWS

Feds asked to consider national fire service as country grapples with 'new normal' wildfire season

So far this year, more than 2,600 fires have burnt through 5.3 million hectares. As of June 15, 458 fires were burning across the country, of which 235 were out of control. Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair said this year's fire season is the worst of the 21st century.

BY STEPHEN JEFFERY

As Canada faces its worst wildfire season in more than 20 years, NDP MP Richard Cannings has joined some academics in calling for the federal government to consider the creation of a national firefighting service to assist provinces with forest fires.

"I think the federal and provincial governments are doing all they can, I don't want to take away from their efforts. But I just think we should be looking at doing things differently in the future," said Cannings (South

Continued on page 18

NEWS

Ontario Liberal leadership hopefuls trade barbs, each claiming to be more qualified: 'I'm the only one who actually runs a government,' says Crombie

BY ABBAS RANA

The divisive Ontario Liberal leadership election is off to a heated start with rival candidates trading barbs, each claiming to be better qualified than the other to lead the embattled party back to power.

"What sets me apart is that I am a strong, experienced leader, I'm the only one who actually runs a government, with a \$4-billion budget, operations and capital," said Mississauga Mayor and former Liberal MP Bonnie Crombie, who entered the Ontario Liberal leadership contest last week, in an interview with *The Hill Times* last week in Ottawa.

In the current contest, two incumbent and two former federal Liberal MPs are running for the provincial party's top job. They include: three-term maverick Liberal MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Ont.); first-term Liberal MP Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Ont.); Crombie, a former one-term Mississauga MP; and Liberal MPP Ted Hsu, a former Ontario Liberal MP. Naqvi served as a senior cabinet

Continued on page 16



Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair's office said the federal government is continually assessing its 'emergency management approach to ensure we are being responsive to the needs of communities.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Publications Mail Agreement #40068926

0 94922 81130 1



Mike Lapointe

Heard On The Hill

Erin O'Toole snapped up by ADIT Group, Canada Post honours Thelma Chalifoux, and Bluesky to host ice cream social



Conservative MP and former party leader Erin O'Toole will resign his seat when the House breaks for summer, taking on a new role as president and managing director of risk advisory firm ADIT North America. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

Anyone pondering former Conservative leader **Erin O'Toole's** post-politics plans did not need to wait long.

Three days after his farewell speech in the House on June 12, risk advisory firm ADIT North America announced that the former veterans affairs minister would become its president and managing director.

In a June 15 press release, the Paris, France-based ADIT Group announced that O'Toole, who has represented Durham, Ont., since his first election win in 2012, will lead its operations in Canada and Mexico, combining the work of its former subsidiary companies GoExport and Salveo.

"GoExport is a Quebec-based trade consultancy with a 15-year track record of helping exporters, agencies, and SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] grow their sales by accessing new markets around the world," the press release said. "Salveo Canada also has an established presence in Canada and Mexico offering payroll services, recruitment and outsourced export and business development services for SMEs, sub-national governments, and public agencies."

ADIT Group describes its mission as "to eliminate risks and reduce the uncertainty related to growing businesses or investment opportunities around the world." The company's website states that it specializes in strategic intelligence, business integrity and compliance, business security, business diplomacy, and territorial intelligence and operational deployment.

O'Toole announced on March 31 that he would resign his seat

when the House breaks for summer. He was Conservative leader between August 2020 and February 2022.

Canada Post honours first Indigenous woman appointed to the Senate with special stamp

To honour the first Indigenous women appointed to the Senate, Canada Post unveiled a commemorative stamp of the late **Thelma Chalifoux**, a Métis activist and trail-blazer, on June 13 in St.

Albert, Alta. "Chalifoux was a powerful force for social justice and women's and Indigenous rights," the press release stated, adding that she was "known for her kind heart and boundless energy. She channelled the strength she gained from her own personal challenges to help others and speak up against discrimination."

Chalifoux, who died on Sept. 22, 2017, at the age of 88, was appointed to the Senate by prime minister **Jean Chrétien**. She retired in 2004. As a young mother, she left an abusive husband and fought to regain

custody of her children who were forced into child welfare, according to the release. She became a fieldworker for the Métis Association of Alberta (now the Métis Nation of Alberta), and later co-founded the Slave Lake Native Friendship Centre. She also ran the community's first safe house for women fleeing domestic violence. She was a land claims negotiator from 1979-1982 and from 1996-1998, and was involved in constitutional talks in the early 1980s as part of a Métis delegation to Ottawa. After retiring from the Senate, she helped found the Michif Cultural Institute, now called the Michif Cultural Connections and the St. Albert's Meadowview Centre for Women's Health and Wellness in St. Albert. She also served as an Elder at the Nechi Institute: Centre of Indigenous Learning and was Métis Elder-in-Residence at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

On June 11, Canada Post also released a stamp honouring **Nellie Cournoyea** at an event in Ulukhaktok, N.W.T., and one on June 12, commemorating **George Manuel** in North Vancouver, B.C.

Bluesky Strategy Group to host ice cream social June 20

Speaking of ice cream, Bluesky Strategy Group is marking its 20th anniversary with an ice cream social on Tuesday, June 20, at the corner of O'Connor and Sparks streets. Keep an eye out for the

Merry Dairy ice cream truck. Bring a toonie and Bluesky will match all proceeds to the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa. The ice cream social happens from 12-2 p.m. It's invitation only.



The Hill Times photograph by Kate Malloy

Telus, MPs pack kits for kids



Conservative MPs **Jamie Schmale** and **Melissa Lantsman** turned out to help Telus pack 250 Kits for Kids on the Hill on June 13. *Photograph courtesy of Telus*

More than 50 MPs joined 25 Telus employees to pack 250 Kits for Kids for their 18th annual Telus Days of Giving on the Hill on June 13. Some of the MPs who turned out to help were: Minister of Rural Economic Development **Guide Hutchings**; Liberal MPs **Andy Fillmore**, **Taleeb Noormohamed** and **Yasir Naqvi**; and Conservative MPs **Jasraj Singh Halian**, **Jamie Schmale**, and **Melissa Lantsman**. Telus has distributed more than 200,000 backpacks for children since 2006, and this year will be distributing 19,000 kits across Canada, Telus says.

Premiers to meet in Winnipeg next month

Canada's provincial and territorial first ministers will gather in Winnipeg from July 10-12 for the summer meeting of the Council of the Federation.

Manitoba Premier **Heather Stefanson**, who chairs the council, will host her counterparts at the Fort Garry Hotel in



Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson will host the Council of the Federation's summer meeting in Winnipeg in July. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

downtown Winnipeg. A meeting between the premiers and national Indigenous leaders will also be held at Assiniboine Park on July 10.

An agenda is not yet available, but infrastructure is likely to be one of the hot topics, if a letter from the premiers to Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** is any indication.

The June 15 letter outlines the premiers' infrastructure priorities, and warns that the provinces and territories are "experiencing unprecedented inflationary pressures and cost escalations on existing projects due to supply chain issues and input costs that are creating fiscal burdens on our communities."

Winnipeg last hosted a Council of the Federation meeting in August 2010, when then-Manitoba premier **Greg Selinger** hosted the leaders for talks about economic recovery, water issues, health care, and international relations.

PIPSC says one-size-fits-all return to office order 'undermines' worker productivity

During National Public Service Week, Canada's second-largest public service union, the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC), canvassed its members to get a sense for how back-to-the-workplace policies are going, and where recruitment and retention stands.

"Six months into the implementation of a one-size-fits-all return to office order, our members report that the policy has undermined their productivity, increased their cost of living, forced them to waste time in traffic—and it hasn't improved collaboration," said PIPSC President **Jennifer Carr**.

Eighty per cent of meetings are still happening virtually, said Carr, and that "public service professionals have been ordered into an office to be part of a Zoom or Teams calls they could have dialed into from home."

"The proposed benefits of returning to the office are nowhere to be found," said Carr.

PIPSC also released a statement on June 15 noting that more than one-third of public service professionals are so unhappy with the government's one-size-fits-all return to office order that they are considering leaving their roles.

"When nearly one in five members of the federal public service is over the age of 55, approaching retirement age, we cannot afford to lose half of our youngest workers," said Carr. "The government won't be able to deliver the services Canadians rely on if it's not able to address the major recruitment and retention problem it's created with its own flawed return to office policy. These numbers add up to a public service in peril."

mlapointe@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



9 out of 10 cyber attacks
begin with a phishing link

Gmail phishing protection
was built to **block 0** more than
100 million attempts a day

Learn more at safety.google



Safer with Google



Be careful with this message

[Back to safety](#)

News

New PCO clerk Hannaford works well with civil service and political staff, sources say, with ‘job one’ to help ‘shepherd this government through the next two years’ before election



Outgoing Clerk of the Privy Council Janice Charette, left, and incoming clerk John Hannaford. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

A public servant since 1995, John Hannaford has served in many senior-level positions, including as deputy minister of International Trade, and foreign and defence policy adviser to the prime minister.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

When he becomes the top federal bureaucrat on June 30, John Hannaford's priority will be to help “shepherd this government through the next two years” before the next federal election is scheduled to take place, according to one of his predecessors.

Hannaford was tapped as the new clerk of the Privy Council on May 30 by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.). The appointment followed Janice Charette's retirement after four decades of service in the federal government.

At the helm of the Privy Council Office (PCO), Hannaford will have his hands full, said former clerk Michael Wernick. One of the most influential or important tasks any clerk has is related to appointments, he said.

“Basically, you have a big say in placing people in jobs, moving people around, shuffling them, getting people to leave, firing people,” said Wernick. “And that extends right across a whole range of appointments that go under your signature and your recommendations.”

No two transitions the same, says Wernick

Wernick said “no two transitions would be alike. Everyone is different, in terms of the advance warning that the outgoing person is leaving and how much time before the next person takes on the job.”

“This one is probably a bit of an outlier in being premediated and planned and predictable,” said the former clerk.

Wernick said that his guess is that Hannaford has been likely walking around Intergovernmental Affairs, operations and communications, visiting the mailroom, and “just learning everything about PCO itself, because that's one of your jobs—you're now deputy minister of that department.”

Hannaford's transition into the role will be very different from Wernick's experience, who told *The Hill Times* that when he started as clerk in 2016, he got a “brand new, effervescent, ambitious government with a strong majority,” referring to the 2015 election when the Trudeau government was first elected.

At the beginning, Wernick said his job was assisting a new

prime minister and a new finance minister who had to deliver their first budget.

“[Hannaford's] been dealt a very different hand—in the last two years of a very tired and creaky government that's increasingly error-prone—and with an election coming,” said Wernick. “Job one will be helping shepherd this government through the next two years.”

Hannaford was foreign and defence policy adviser to Trudeau from 2015-2019

Currently the deputy minister of Natural Resources, Hannaford joined the federal public service in 1995 and has served in a number of senior-level positions, including as deputy minister of International Trade, and as foreign and defence policy adviser to the prime minister.

Hannaford served as Canada's ambassador to Norway from 2009-2012, before serving as assistant secretary to the cabinet (foreign and defence policy) in the Privy Council Office, foreign and defence policy adviser to the prime minister, and deputy minister of International Trade between 2019-2022.

Hannaford was appointed as a senior official at the Privy Council Office, effective June 1, 2023, until he assumes the role of clerk.

Mollie Johnson, currently the associate deputy minister of Natural Resources, will assume the duties of deputy minister of the

department on an interim basis until a new deputy minister is appointed, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Based on his previous experience, Hannaford has built a trusted relationship with Trudeau and his chief aide, PMO chief of staff Katie Telford.

Serving as Trudeau's foreign and defence policy adviser from 2015-2019, Hannaford was in the room with the prime minister for all consequential geopolitical discussions and decisions, and continued to be relied on for advice on global issues afterward.

“He commands the trust and respect from the prime minister to Katie [Telford] ... on down,” a senior government official previously told *The Hill Times* about Hannaford's continued influence on foreign policy while he was in a more-domestic focused post at Natural Resources.

Hannaford was noted as being one of the most trusted bureaucrats for foreign policy advice and analysis, alongside David Morrison, another former foreign

He is also regarded as someone who works well with both the civil service and political staff.

Clerk is ‘custodian of all the big issues,’ says Zussman

David Zussman, a former public service commissioner who led then-prime minister Jean Chrétien's transition to power in 1993, said “the clerk has to worry about the urgent and the very important.”

“And since he's the custodian of the public service, he's also the custodian of all the big issues—medium term and long-term problems,” he said.

Zussman acknowledged that there is a “strong tradition in Canada is that, individually, the clerk stays on, but usually with a new government stays on for a short period of time.”

When announcing Hannaford's appointment, Trudeau said “Hannaford brings a wealth of experience and a strong reputation to this important role” and that he was “confident that his longstanding commitment to serving Canadians will allow him to lead our world-class public service as it continues to implement the Government of Canada's agenda and make life better for people across the country.”

The role of the clerk of the Privy Council is to advise the prime minister and elected government officials in managing the country from an objective, non-partisan, public policy perspective, according to the PMO.

Trudeau also congratulated Charette on her upcoming retirement and thanked her for her nearly 40-year-long career in



Former clerk of the Privy Council Michael Wernick says ‘job one’ for the new clerk ‘will be helping shepherd this government through the next two years.’ *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

and defence policy adviser to the prime minister and the current foreign affairs deputy minister at Global Affairs Canada.

After his time in the PCO, Hannaford became the deputy minister of International Trade, before taking on the same role at Natural Resources Canada. He also has a deep background working in Canada's foreign service. With a legal background, Hannaford has also worked on trade law and human rights while at the Pearson Building.

service of Canada and Canadians, including as the second woman to serve as clerk of the Privy Council.

“To honour and recognize her exceptional contribution to public service, Ms. Charette will be appointed as a member of the King's Privy Council for Canada prior to her retirement,” according to the statement.

—With files from Neil Moss
mlapointe@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



9 cyberattaques sur 10 sont déclenchées par un lien d'hameçonnage

La protection contre l'hameçonnage de Gmail bloque  plus de 100 millions de tentatives par jour

Pour en savoir plus, consultez la page g.co/securite



Sécurité accrue avec Google



Soyez prudent,
ce message semble risqué

[Retour à la sécurité](#)

News

Bell Media job cuts, including seasoned Hill journos, spark worries from fellow reporters and editors

In an internal memo, Richard Gray, Bell Media's vice-president of news, said it needs to significantly adapt to how it delivers news and will move to a single newsroom approach across brands. But some seasoned reporters got the axe.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Journalists and experts say Bell Media's 1,300 job cuts last week—which included a number of prominent Parliament Hill journalists such as CTV's Glen McGregor and the network's Ottawa bureau chief Joyce Napier—is another blow to the news business.

In an internal memo sent to staff on June 14, Richard Gray, vice-president of news at Bell Media, said “the industry continues to be greatly impacted by operating losses across all news divisions, the current economic downturn, inflation, a prolonged advertising slump with no signs of immediate recovery, and a more challenging regulatory environment that has not adapted to new realities facing media.”

Gray said Bell Media needs to significantly adapt to how it delivers news. “We will immediately address this by becoming more nimble, multi-platform in our content-sharing approach and putting a renewed emphasis on telling Canadian stories. We will make gathering and delivering news more efficient and cost effective, at the same time enabling journalists to tell more stories on all platforms in real time. To enable this plan we will be moving to a single newsroom approach across brands, allowing for greater collaboration and efficiency,” Gray stated.

Gray said CTV will add four new videographers in St. John's, N.L.; Regina, Sask.; Fredericton, N.B.; and Charlottetown, P.E.I.; and will cut its foreign bureaus in London, U.K., and Los Angeles, Calif. The Washington, D.C., bureau will be scaled back, he said. Executive producer Rosa Hwang is leaving. David Hughes, Ramneek Gill, Sophia Skopelitis, and Jonathan Kay will be expanding their oversight within the news division as it shifts from a “vertical” to a “horizontal” management structure, he said. As well, Joanne Woo, who's currently at CTV Ottawa, will be the news director for CTV News and manager of the Ottawa News Operations, and Correy Bellamy, with CTV's corporate digital product division, will be the director of digital growth.

“These changes will provide additional support for the strategic initiatives introduced recently at team meetings: restructure workflow and editorial, engage

and mobilize and grow audience,” Gray stated.

John Ivison, Ottawa bureau chief at the *National Post*, told *The Hill Times* he's known both McGregor and Napier for years: “Glen since his days with the *Ottawa Citizen* and Postmedia News.”

“Both are people of the highest ability and integrity. McGregor could have been a bloodhound in another existence, such is his doggedness and resourcefulness,” said Ivison. “I think people are particularly stunned at their treatment because they are real professionals at the top of the game. What is there to aspire to in top media organizations anymore?”

“You work hard, you show loyalty, you do a great job, you attain a level of seniority based on that excellence and then you become an expensive liability that needs to be dumped,” said Ivison. “It's very disheartening for journalists, but also for their audiences.”

Chief international correspondent Paul Workman, London news bureau correspondent Daniele Hamamdjian, and Los Angeles bureau chief Tom Walters were also among those who were let go from the organization.

Carleton University professor Chris Waddell, a former CBC News Parliament Hill bureau chief and now program director for the bachelor of media production and design program, and former director of the School of Journalism and Communication, said he thought the cuts at Bell were a “function of a bigger issue that's going on, [which is] the collapse of the existing business



CTV's national news Ottawa bureau chief Joyce Napier, left, and reporter Glen McGregor. Both were let go by the network as part of 1,300 job cuts announced last week. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade, photograph courtesy of Twitter

model for Canadian private television.”

Co-author of *The End of the CBC?*, published in 2020, Waddell said one of things mentioned in the book “was what we saw coming.”

“The private Canadian television model has been built essentially on private television doing local news, doing national news, and purchasing a lot of programming from the United States that they run in primetime that gets a large audience,” said Waddell.

Waddell said what is happening now, and what he thinks Bell is in effect signalling is happening, is a shift away from the traditional model where the producers of programs—which are almost all American—sold the rights to Canadian broadcasters to air locally.

“The Canadian broadcaster has made a lot of money doing that because they get large audiences, and they sell advertising around it. And they've made a lot of money doing that,” said Waddell. “But what the American producers of programming have decided or have discovered is that rather than market it, and sell a license to Canada to be able to show it in Canada, they could make more money if they either a) sold it to the global streaming platforms, or b) gave it to their own global streaming platforms and stop selling off licences to Canada or whoever else that might be.”

“And I think that's what we're seeing at the moment,” he said.

In terms of reporting, Waddell said the things that cost the most are reporters who have been around for a long time, who have the experience and the background, as opposed to young reporters and junior reporters who are just starting out.

“It saves you money on a spreadsheet,” said Waddell. “But what you lose when that happens is you lose the affinity the audience has with those people, you lose the background. They have the knowledge, the experience,

and you lose the ability they can offer you to be mentors and to help the younger people you're hiring avoid falling into traps and making mistakes or doing other things—to help them become better journalists.”

‘One of the darkest days I've seen in the last several months’

Canadian Association of Journalists president Brent Jolly called the cuts one of the “darkest days I've seen in the last several months” and that it was “definitely a punch in the gut to see this happen again, and again, and again—and you sort of wonder, when is it going to stop?”

Jolly said these moves have a lot of impact within the newsroom and within the organization.

“The value of having seasoned people on Parliament Hill, I think, is exceptionally important both now and for the future just to be able to keep people's feet to the fire,” said Jolly.

“At the end of the day, it's reporters and it's also the public who loses, because we see fewer people being able to transmit the news every day for democracy, and it's a problem for our ability to know what's going on and being able to hold institutions accountable,” said Jolly.

CBC journalist Hannah Thibedeau tweeted she was “sad to hear about the layoffs at Bell Media” when “so many amazing colleagues and journalists lost their jobs in a time when more accountability is needed.”

Political strategist Greg MacEachern tweeted he was “very sad to hear Joyce Napier is part of the Bell/CTV cuts announced today” on June 14. “As bureau chief, as well as my Friday ‘boss’ on her *Power Play* panels, I've always admired that she had an entire career with [Radio-Canada] in French before starting an entirely new career in English with CTV.”

mlapointe@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Online News Act has momentum to pass before summer, but firearms bill needs more time, say lobbyists

There are 118 bills before the House and Senate, with both chambers set to adjourn soon for the summer and resume sitting in the fall.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Legislation intended to force tech giants to compensate Canadian media outlets for the news content that appears on major online platforms is likely to cross the royal assent finish line before the House and Senate rise for the summer, while the proposed firearms bill will probably rank high as a priority in the fall, according to some lobbyists.

"[Bill C-18] is a promise that [the federal government] made to Canadian news organizations. As of right now, you're sort of in this environment where companies such as Meta are basically able to take Canadian news content and repost it without having to compensate, more or less, the intellectual property holder," said Ashton Arsenault, vice-president at Crestview Strategy and former ministerial staffer in Stephen Harper's Conservative government. "The legislation, in essence, would create a negotiation framework to bring those parties together ... and it was promised to Canadian news organizations for a long time and I know the government is really committed."

There are currently 118 bills under consideration in the House and Senate. The House is scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23, while the Senate is scheduled to sit until at least June 29, with both chambers set to resume in mid-September.

Before rising for summer break, Bill C-18, the Online News Act, is among the legislation that stands a good chance of passing, according to Arsenault. The bill, introduced by Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Que.) in the House on April 5, passed third reading in the Senate with about a dozen amendments on June 15. The Liberal government will review the Senate's amendments, and the bill is likely to face a final vote in the House this week.

"C-18 is going to have enough runway to finish. My



Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez introduced Bill C-18, the Online News Act, in the House on April 5. The bill passed third reading in the Senate with about a dozen amendments on June 15. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

guess is that's probably the priority to get across the finish line," he said. "Given the fact that the Senate usually sits an extra week or two, my guess is they're going to do what they can to get that across the goal line."

Among the Senate changes are an amendment for the bill to come into force six months after its passage, and another that would require the issuance of fines if confidential data is revealed outside of arbitration.

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters welcomes the bill as an important step in providing a necessary framework for fair negotiation between news organizations and online platforms,



Crestview Strategy vice-president Ashton Arsenault says that Bill C-18, the Online News Act, 'is going to have enough runway to finish' before the summer break. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

according to a statement on the group's website.

In contrast, the bill has drawn criticism from Facebook owner Meta, which warned it will withdraw Canadians' ability to see and share news on its platform if Bill C-18 passes without significant changes.

In a May 8 statement, Nick Clegg, Meta's president of global affairs, argued that Meta does not benefit unfairly from people sharing links to news content. Sharing links to news stories on Facebook actually benefits publishers because it helps grow their audience and sell more subscriptions, according to Clegg.

Cam Holmstrom, an NDP strategist and founder of Niipaa-



John Delacourt, senior vice president at Counsel Public Affairs, says passing Bill C-21 would send the right kind of message that 'Parliament can still do Canadians' work for them.' *Photograph courtesy of John Delacourt*

wi Strategies, told *The Hill Times* that he doesn't think Meta's threat to remove news permanently is likely to stop Bill C-18 from moving forward because of a similar situation that occurred in Australia.

Facebook imposed a ban for viewing and sharing news on its platform in Australia for eight days in 2021 after the country's government passed the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code. The ban was lifted after a deal between Australia's government and Meta was announced on Feb. 23, 2021.

"They could try [a ban in Canada], and if their were an election coming in the fall, it might be an effective threat and could potentially affect things," said Holmstrom. "But as we saw with what happened in Australia, that went away after a few months, and people went on about their lives, and no one had a problem with the legislation."

When the House and Senate return in the fall, Bill C-21, an act to amend certain acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), will likely be a high priority, according to Arsenault. The government will need more time to review the bill properly before it is ready to be passed, he said, adding that the firearms legislation has created a possible "sticky situation" between Liberal and NDP MPs.

"I think everybody wants to ensure that the bill receives as much scrutiny and as much—let's

call it sober second thought—as possible in advance of moving towards royal assent on that," said Arsenault. "There is a good chunk of NDP MPs that would be rural representatives, and by and large, rural Canada hasn't been terribly enthusiastic about that legislation."

Bill C-21, sponsored by Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino (Eglinton-Lawrence, Ont.), was introduced on May 30, 2022, in an effort to address gun violence and to strengthen gun control in Canada by advancing a national "freeze" on handguns. Amendments to the bill introduced in November 2022 by Liberal MP Paul Chiang (Markham-Unionville, Ont.) were pulled back on Feb. 3, 2023, amid concerns from critics they would restrict access to many types of hunting rifles.

John Delacourt, senior vice-president at Counsel Public Affairs and a former Liberal staffer, told *The Hill Times* that passing Bill C-21 in the fall could be important because it would send a signal to Canadians that the government can build a consensus around responsible legislation.

"We've got to figure this out. We've got to have an adult conversation about how we're going to manage the regulation of firearms going forward," said Delacourt. "I think it would send the right kind of message—that in a polarized environment, with all the polarized rhetoric around firearms legislation—that Parliament can still do Canadians' work for them. Most Canadians want to see sensible legislation passed. There's every indication that the work's been put in."

Sajjid Lakhani, manager of government relations and strategy for Impact Public Affairs and a former special assistant for Liberal MP Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam, B.C.), told *The Hill Times* that moving forward on national pharmacare will be another government priority in the fall.

The NDP tabled legislation to establish a universal single-payer pharmacare system in Canada on June 13, in a move that NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, B.C.) described as an effort to pressure the Liberal government on the file, as reported in CBC News.

Establishing a national universal pharmacare program by the end of 2023 is a condition of the supply-and-confidence agreement between the Liberals and the NDP.

"As we get back to the House after the summer, the pressure will really be on the current government ... to know and decide what policies to prioritize. It's a minority government, there's always a possibility that an election could be called and that really rests on this supply-and-confidence agreement between the Liberal government and NDP," said Lakhani. "It really signals that pressure, and reminds Canadians of how much a priority it is to the NDP, and as well as to the stability of this government."

Jcnockaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Editorial

Editor Kate Malloy
 Managing Editor Charelle Evelyn
 Digital Editor Samantha Wright Allen
 Executive Editor Peter Mazereeuw
 Interim Digital Editor Chelsea Nash
 Deputy Editors Stephen Jeffery, Laura Ryckewaert
 Deputy Digital Editor Ian Campbell
 Assistant Deputy Editor Abbas Rana
 Publishers Anne Marie Creskey,
 Jim Creskey, Leslie Dickson, Ross Dickson
 General Manager, CFO Andrew Morrow

Editorial

O'Toole delivers good final House speech, but MPs likely won't listen to his famous last words in Commons

Former Conservative party leader Erin O'Toole, who is resigning his House seat, delivered an important last speech in the Commons on June 12, cutting through a lot of the phoniness on the Hill right now. Like so many other departing MPs do before they exit politics, O'Toole cut to the chase. He pleaded with MPs on all sides of the House to stop the nastiness and to debate the future of the country with national purpose and much more co-operation. He pilloried performance politics, social media, and the rise of conspiracy theories as destructive forces that threaten our democracy, and he asked MPs to put the country first, not their politics. Unfortunately, it's unlikely that MPs will actually listen to O'Toole's famous last words in the House.

"Too many of us are often chasing algorithms down a sinkhole of diversion and division. We are becoming elected officials who judge our self-worth by how many likes we get on social media, but not how many lives we change in the real world. Performance politics is fuelling polarization, virtue signalling is replacing discussion, and far too often we are just using this Chamber to generate clips, not to start national debates," O'Toole said.

"Social media did not build this great country, but it is starting to tear its democracy down. If we are not careful, there will soon be a generation of young voters who have never even heard a point of view different from their own. I fear that ignorance

of the views of others will slowly transform into a dislike of others, and we can see that starting to happen," O'Toole said.

"We are a country that sent our citizens far from our shores several times to fight for liberty alongside other countries in multilateral efforts. Canadian diplomats, including a future prime minister, helped draft the agreements built on that sacrifice to give us decades of peace and security, creating NATO, the United Nations and the Commonwealth, but today, too often, we are allowing conspiracy theories about the UN or the World Economic Forum to go unchallenged, or we attribute sinister motives to these organizations or people in a way that is simply not true or not fair. If we do this more, we are allowing others to define the debate for us and we risk allowing others to set the course for this country, because too many members on all sides of this Chamber—and from time to time I have been guilty of it myself—are becoming followers of our followers when we should be leaders."

Party leaders set the tone and it's up to them to lead and to put the country first, as O'Toole said. It's time for respectful, serious discussions in the House, and that's on both sides of the House Chamber, including all the party leaders. Something has got to finally give, and it should be someone who can lead real change in the House Chamber.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

MPs should avoid all-expenses-paid tours: Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East

Re: "Incoming sponsored travel rules for lobbyists will limit 'educational opportunity' for MPs and Senators, say CIJA and Results Canada," (*The Hill Times*, June 12). CIJA's claim that its "fact-finding missions" to Israel are "not a lobbying exercise" is questionable.

Indeed, such trips were very common during South Africa's late apartheid years, exactly because they had the effect of building sympathy abroad. In 1986, 64 Canadians (including several MPs) went to South Africa on a highly publicized fact-finding mission, which abruptly cancelled the promised itinerary to the Black township of Soweto. As one participant complained, "If we don't see Soweto, we're being whitewashed." And sure enough, at the conclusion of the tour, most participants went away with overwhelmingly positive views of the country. As *The Globe and Mail* reported, "The South African government will be pleased with the reports they take home."

Then, as now, it is impossible to ignore the ethical implications of touring an apart-

heid state on behalf of its supporters. Such tours cannot help MPs see the "whole view," but only reinforce the power dynamics that already exist on the ground. Regardless of what ultimately happens to these trips because of changes to the Lobbyists' Code of Conduct, MPs should seriously reconsider whether it is possible to understand the realities of military occupation from the perspective of the occupier.

For these reasons, MPs should avoid all-expenses-paid tours with pro-Israel advocacy organizations. If an MP decides to go anyway, they should at the very least insist on setting up additional meetings with Palestinian and Israeli human rights defenders, and devote equal time and resources to this part of the itinerary. Finally, MPs must make sure to push for access to the Gaza Strip and other areas restricted by the Israeli government.

Michael Bueckert
 Vice-president,
 Canadians for Justice and Peace
 in the Middle East
 Montreal, Que.

Boluarte's government committed to dialogue, writes Peru's envoy to Canada

Re: "Canada must suspend arms exports to Peru and speak out against lethal racism," (*The Hill Times*, June 5), written by Marina Navarro, Ketty Nivyabandi, and France-Isabelle Langlois. Please allow me to clarify some statements made in this opinion column.

After former president Pedro Castillo's message to the nation on Dec. 7, which was regarded as a coup d'état, Peruvian institutions acted swiftly to protect democracy and ensure constitutional succession. This response has been acknowledged by international organizations and confirmed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Castillo's removal and preventive imprisonment was in line with Peru's legal system, following judicial orders on charges of rebellion, criminal organization, and corruption. Castillo is currently undergoing due process, and his fundamental rights are being respected.

While most protests have valid demands addressing historical issues, there have been, unfortunately, instances of violence. Some groups have attacked law enforcement, property, critical infrastructure, and attempted airport seizures. Peru respects the right to protest, but condemns such violence. The loss of human lives in a violent context is deeply regretted by President Dina Boluarte and the government.

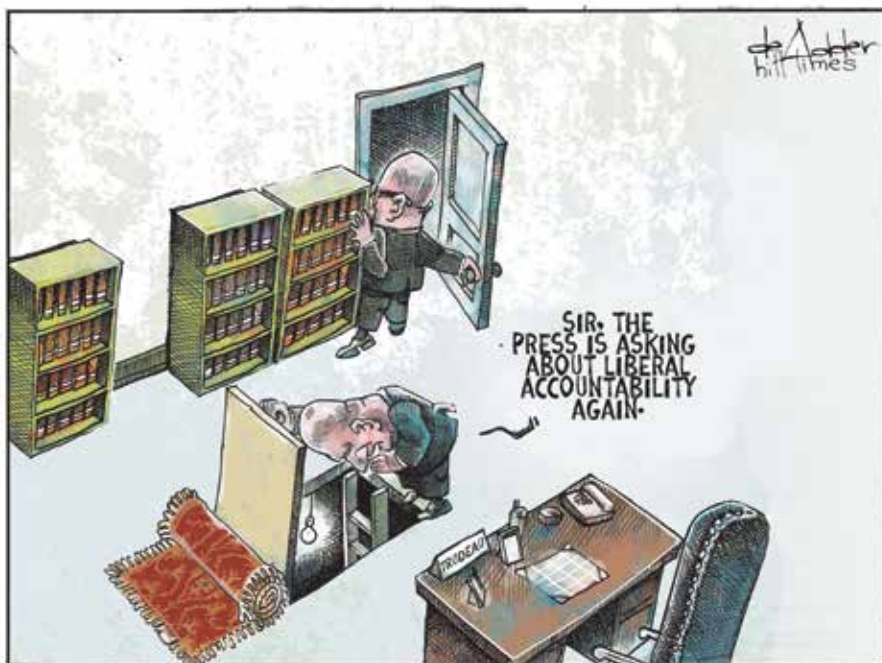
Peru is committed to promoting and protecting fundamental rights, including peaceful protests. There is no policy of human rights violations or "racism" as inaccurately stated in the opinion column. Cases of allegations of unlawful use of force are being investigated by the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Peru has laws encouraging Indigenous Peoples' political participation through mechanisms like the "originary people quota," encouraging the participations of members of originary communities in regional and municipal elections, public actions supporting Indigenous Peoples, including bilingual education, health-care services, interpretation services, anti-racism policies, and prior consultation in accordance with ILO 169 Convention.

Although challenges persist, the Peruvian State is making progress towards the fulfillment of human and collective rights. Recent human rights missions have recognized Peru's constructive co-operation with UN mechanisms.

President Boluarte's government is committed to dialogue and addressing immediate concerns. Social peace and economic reactivation are crucial for meeting the demands of vulnerable populations.

Roberto Rodriguez
 Ambassador of Peru to Canada
 Ottawa, Ont.



EDITORIAL

NEWS REPORTERS Stuart Benson, Jesse Cnockaert, Mike Lapointe, Neil Moss, and Kevin Philipupillai
COPY EDITOR Christina Leadlay
PHOTOGRAPHERS Sam Garcia, Andrew Meade, and Cynthia Münster
EDITORIAL CARTOONIST Michael De Adder
COLUMNISTS Andrew Caddell, John Chenier, Sheila Copps, David Crane, Jim Creskey, Gwynne Dyer, Michael Harris, Erica Hill, Joe Jordan, Rose LeMay, Alex Marland, Arthur Milnes, Tim Powers, Susan Riley, Ken Rubin, Evan Sotiropoulos, Scott Taylor, Nelson Wiseman, and Les Whittington.

ADVERTISING

VICE PRESIDENT MARKETING AND MULTIMEDIA SALES Steve MacDonald
DIRECTORS OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Craig Caldbick, Erveina Gosalci, Martin Reaume, Ulle Baum

DIGITAL AND DESIGN

CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER David Little
DIGITAL AND PRODUCTION MANAGER Joey Sabourin
SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER Serena Masonde
GRAPHIC DESIGNER Neena Singhal

ADMINISTRATION

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Tracey Wale

SUBSCRIPTIONS

MARKETING DIRECTOR Paul Goubko
SUBSCRIPTIONS AND LICENSING EXECUTIVE Lakshmi Krishnamurthi
LOYALTY AND SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER Melanie Grant
OFFICE AND CIRCULATION MANAGER Jessika Miner
MARKETING EXECUTIVE Shailee Shah
SUBSCRIPTIONS SALES EXECUTIVES Karen Koul, Haiqa Hammad

DELIVERY INQUIRIES

circulation@hilltimes.com
 613-688-8821

THE HILL TIMES

Published every Monday and Wednesday by Hill Times Publishing Inc.

246 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E4
 (613) 232-5952
 Fax (613) 232-9055
 Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
 www.hilltimes.com

Please send letters to the editor to the above street address or e-mail to news@hilltimes.com. Deadline is Wednesday at noon, Ottawa time, for the Monday edition and Friday at noon for the Wednesday edition. Please include your full name, address and daytime phone number. *The Hill Times* reserves the right to edit letters. Letters do not reflect the views of *The Hill Times*. Thank you.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40068926
 RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO: CIRCULATION DEPT.
 246 Queen Street Suite 200, Ottawa, ON K1P 5E4



Conservatives' backing of private member's bill shows abortion debate is far from settled

The U.S. is experiencing a wave of anti-women and anti-gay legislation. Canadian pundits said this could not happen here, but recent news stories paint a different picture.

Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner



OTTAWA—A Conservative private member's attempt to revive the abortion debate by conferring unique legal status on pregnant women was clobbered in the House last week.

The governing Liberals united with New Democrats and the Bloc Québécois to defeat Bill C-311 by almost a two-to-one margin.

Opponents of the bill introduced by Saskatchewan Conser-

vative MP Cathay Wagantall numbered 205. Supporters mustered only 113 votes.

Under most circumstances, that should be the end of the story. But with the Conservatives leading in national public opinion polls, and their strong support for the bill, it will only be a matter of time before the question of the legal status of fetuses ends up being litigated when a future Wagantall bill is passed.

Witness the debate concerning the Violence Against Pregnant Women Act in Parliament to understand why this legislation could represent a threat to legal abortions in the country.

The United States is already experiencing a wave of anti-women and anti-gay legislation as a result of a Supreme Court ruling that put legal abortions at risk in parts of their country.

Canadian pundits said this could not happen here, but another item in the news last week paints a different picture.

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith named her cabinet, including a health minister with a strong bias against legal abortions. Adriana LaGrange served as education minister in the United Conservative Party government of former premier Jason

Kenney. In that role, she presided over one of the largest public sector cuts in Alberta history, firing 20,000 educational assistants, substitute teachers, bus drivers and maintenance staff.

With LaGrange at the helm and Smith's well-documented ruminations on private medicine, it likely won't be too long before the new government moves to start charging for more health services.

Even more concerning is the minister's opposition to legal abortion in the province. Her maiden speech in the Alberta legislature four years ago was entitled, "The lord leads me where he needs me."

While she was a school trustee, LaGrange served on the provincial board of Alberta Pro-Life. In her first provincial election, she was backed by RightNow, an activist anti-abortion organization.

As education minister, LaGrange introduced a controversial piece of legislation requiring parental notification when any student joined a gay-straight alliance club. The original protection from parental notification was designed to protect those students who could face danger if their parents became aware of their sexual orientation. Students were

also denied the right to use the word 'gay' or 'queer' in describing after-school clubs, and administrators were permitted to keep their inclusivity policies secret.

If LaGrange was controversial in education, there is no reason to think she won't repeat that history in health. Those who think that access to abortion is safe across the country need to face facts.

Wagantall in Saskatchewan and LaGrange in Alberta are only the tip of the iceberg. When the bill on pregnant women was introduced, the Conservative party was pretty much unanimous in support, starting with the leader.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre has said that he will not introduce legislation on abortion, but he has also stated that other members of his caucus are free to do so.

He is the only leader ambivalent about his support for the LGBTQ2S+ communities, refusing to attend Pride parades or showing visible support for those struggling with a wave of homophobia across the country.

With a raucous parliamentary session coming to close, Poilievre's popularity continues to outstrip that of the governing Liberals.

Abacus Data released a poll last week in which 35 per cent of

the respondents said they would vote Tory if an election were held today. That number had increased three percentage points since the previous month, while the Liberals were down two points at 28 per cent.

The appetite for electoral change is there and the Conservatives are the beneficiaries. Approximately 80 per cent of those polled said it is time for a change in government.

Polls move, and most would agree that both Poilievre and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau are stellar campaigners. The fight may come right down to the wire in a tight election in 2025 (or whenever it happens).

If there is a Conservative majority win, do not be surprised if limitations on women's reproductive rights and rights for those in the gay community resurface.

Premier Smith did not hide her intention to move toward health privatization.

Her party has many abortion opponents sitting in the legislature. A key one is now occupying the health minister's chair.

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

The Hill Times

Poilievre has an energy advantage

Even the gruffest Conservative can't help but be dazzled by Pierre Poilievre's high-energy personality. And yes, he has tons of energy.

Gerry Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit



Pierre Poilievre has vigorously waged war on several fronts: if he's not savaging the Liberals over foreign electoral interference allegations, then he's blasting them over their spend-happy fiscal policies, or assailing his party's perceived enemies in the media, writes Gerry Nicholls. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

just beneath the party's surface (how could there not be given all its fractious ideological clans?), but for the most part, the Tories appear to be marching in lockstep to the beat of the same drum.

Of course, Conservatives also seemed similarly united under former prime minister Stephen Harper, but let's face it, that unity was mainly the result of savage party discipline.

By contrast, Poilievre has (so far) not needed to employ iron-fisted leadership tactics to keep his troops in line.

So, why are the normally unruly Conservatives suddenly so harmonious?

Well, the most obvious answer is they sense blood in the water.

In other words, Conservatives see Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's anemic polling numbers, they see the Liberal government embroiled in various scandals, they see economic anxiety rising amongst Canadians, and they figure it's time to close ranks behind their leader because victory is close.

Like I said, that's the most obvious answer, but I also think there's more going on here.

Specifically, I believe even the gruffest Conservative can't help but be dazzled by Poilievre's high-energy personality.

And yes, he has tons of energy.

Consider, for instance, how Poilievre has vigorously waged war on several fronts: if he's not savaging the Liberals over their handling of foreign electoral interference allegations, then he's blasting them over their spend-happy fiscal policies, or enthusiastically assailing the Conservative party's perceived enemies in the media.

Basically, Poilievre is always taking the initiative, he's always putting the Liberals on the defensive and he's always on the attack against his foes.

Remember how former U.S. president Donald Trump labelled his one-time political rival Jeb Bush as "low-energy," well, Poilievre is the opposite: he's high-energy.

And in politics, being perceived as high-energy is always a good thing for a politician, since it suggests confidence, courage and decisiveness.

To put that another way, high-energy generates charisma. This is why politicians often do their best to present themselves as high-energy.

I remember an ad put out by the Ontario Liberal Party about 10 years ago which featured then-leader Kathleen Wynne jogging along the province's rural roads.

That visual was accompanied by Wynne's voice-over narration saying, "Here are things most people don't know about me: one, I love running. Two, I try to speak simply and get to the point. Three, I set goals—really hard-to-accomplish goals. Four, I never stop until they're done."

The message behind that ad was clear: Wynne is determined, vigorous and unwavering.

Former prime minister Jean Chrétien sent out a similar message when he had himself photographed water-skiing.

Or, to take a more recent example, consider how many photo-ops we've seen of Prime Minister Trudeau paddling a canoe or running through the woods.

Indeed, throughout his political career, Trudeau has consistently presented himself as high-energy.

At any rate, getting back to Poilievre, my point is Conservatives are likely attracted to his high-energy persona, which helps to create a sense of party unity.

Aiding Poilievre in this regard is that his energy is bona fide, it's part of who he is as a person; it's real and it matches the energy of his supporters.

So, the next election should be interesting, as it'll match Poilievre's energy against Trudeau's.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

The Hill Times

Politics



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, left, and Donald Trump. The consequences of the former U.S. president's approach have been catastrophic for the Republican Party, but the Conservative Party of Canada seem transfixed by his 2016 victory, writes Michael Harris. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade and photograph by Gage Skidmore/Flickr

Congress has become dysfunctional. Bigots and Trump flunkies now run important committees, like justice and oversight. Faith in the intelligence and justice system is at an all-time low, and journalists are seen as objects of suspicion—if not loathing—by MAGA loyalists who are no longer interested in the facts, unless they reinforce their cult's most dearly held views.

A study for *The Hill* in the U.S. presented a stunning number. While just seven per cent of people who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016 said that living in a democracy was not important to them, that figure rose to 22 per cent for Trump voters. So why not just suspend the Constitution, as Trump has suggested?

Although he likes to talk about making Canada the “freest” country in the world, Poilievre, like Trump, has little use for the media. Strange, because the media remains one of the country's central marketplaces of discourse.

The current Liberal government has given financial support to keep several sectors of the troubled newspaper industry alive, including the pro-Conservative *National Post*. It is a public policy that has both pros and cons.

Poilievre, by comparison, has committed to shuttering the CBC. Not reinventing it, not modernizing it, not reforming it. Killing it.

If Poilievre's commitment to free speech is dumping one of the country's most important institutions, one of the few that knits the country together in both television and radio, then the question is this: Whose free speech benefits from that? Could it be politicians who don't like being fact-checked, questioned, and held to account, who prefer the one-way manipulation of talking selfies?

The point is this. *The Washington Post's* motto, “democracy dies in darkness,” is only part of the story. Democracy also dies in deceit. When people seek the top political job of running a country, they have every right to criticize and hold to account the government of the day.

But they don't have the right to carry hyperbole into a much darker place. No one should confuse lying about your opponent's alleged sins and misdemeanours with holding them to account. At least, not in a democracy.

One of America's founding fathers, John Adams, was rather pessimistic about democracies. The second president of the United States observed that they don't last very long, and in the end commit “suicide.” Electing candidates who lie, as Trump has shown the world, is the most direct route to the demise of democracy.

As former Conservative leader Erin O'Toole said in his farewell speech in Parliament about the conduct of politics in this country: it is time to adopt a higher standard.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist. The Hill Times

Trump hands Poilievre's Conservatives the bully's blueprint to power

Those seeking the highest office have every right to criticize and hold to the government to account, but not to carry hyperbole into a much darker place. It is time to adopt a higher standard.

Michael Harris

Harris



HALIFAX—Pierre Poilievre, the “My Pillow Guy” of Canadian politics, is at it again.

But the man who specializes in taking selfies has nothing so useful on offer as the head-huggers Mike Lindell flogs in those cringeworthy TV ads. In the Conservative leader's latest “video,” shot in a subway station, what Poilievre presents—with that ever-pointing little index finger—is more falsehoods about important public issues.

As adroitly pointed out by Gary Mason in *The Globe and Mail*, Poilievre's claims that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is responsible for the housing crisis is patently false. Speculative and predatory international investors, one of the main causes of high housing prices, do not make an appearance in the videos. As usual, these videos are emotion-heavy and fact-averse.

Nor is Trudeau keeping drug addicts on the street and in a mess by giving them the very substances that have ruined their lives. That's how the opposition leader depicts safe injection sites, despite the informed opinions to the contrary of addiction specialists and police, who know that such sites save—not take—lives.

That is done not, as Poilievre claims, by giving these addicts dirty drugs, like the lethal ones they buy in dark allies. They get them in a rehabilitative setting. Again, Poilievre rates a 10 on the Pinocchio scale for this dangerous populism. But it plays well with people who like to think of Trudeau as a pusher.

Apparently, all it takes for Poilievre to spin out the whoppers like a sleepless Donald Trump ranting on Truth Social is his rage coach, a set of facts to mangle, and a target whose demise would be to his direct political advantage.

It is always the same target: Justin Trudeau. Whether a Canadian has no roof over their head or not enough grocery money, it's Trudeau's fault. Poilievre's political future depends on Canadians buying his junk political analysis. If they do, the Conservative Party of Canada will have done the same damage to Canadian democracy as Trump has done to American democracy.

The irony of Poilievre relentlessly training his “firehouse of falsehoods” on Trudeau is that it is totally unnecessary. There is a far better way to get Canadians to vote for you, Poilievre. Talk about Trudeau's policy decisions, why you oppose them, and how you would have done a better job. You, too, can converse without sneering.

Lord knows there is a lot to talk about, including pipelines that should or shouldn't have been bought; the success or failure of Canada's aspirational carbon emission targets; whether Ottawa is or isn't paying its fair share for health care; and so on. That way, people would see how your mind works, apart from the low art of sloganeering. They would see what you actually stand for, and why you would make a better prime minister than your favourite whipping boy.

But the Conservative Party and its leader seem transfixed by what happened in the Unit-

ed States back in 2016. Trump proved that it is possible to lie and slander your way into the White House. He handed his Canadian political cousins the bully's blueprint to power.

By vilifying Hillary Clinton and Nancy Pelosi, by convincing Americans that everything was broken in their once-great country, and by waging war on any newspaper, TV station, or journalist that outed his egregious lies, a greedy and ruthless real estate developer with multiple bankruptcies behind him became president.

The consequences of Trump's approach have been catastrophic for the Republican Party. They have tied their fate with a twice-impeached president. Since leaving office, Trump has been twice indicted, and faces the likelihood of being indicted again for election interference in Georgia this August.

The GOP is stuck with a guy who says that, even if he is convicted, he will not drop out of the presidential primaries. However popular Trump may be in wackier zones of the Republican Party, felons do not make the ideal candidates in presidential elections.

The consequences of Trump's misrule have been equally disastrous for the U.S. Under his non-stop torrent of lies and rabid partisanship, racism has reappeared in American politics.

At 100 years old, Kissinger pushes back against demonizing China

When *The Economist* recently asked Henry Kissinger his thoughts on China's global role today, he said he wants a permanent dialogue between the U.S. and Chinese presidents.

Douglas Roche

Opinion



EDMONTON—Henry Kissinger turned 100 years old recently and, to mark the occasion, *The Economist* magazine interviewed him for eight hours over two days. Since I have long been critical of Kissinger's *realpolitik* diplomacy, I searched the text of the interview to see whether he is mellowing in old age—or perhaps I am.

For many years, I reviled Kissinger for his part in the carpet bombing of Cambodia during the Vietnam war, his belief that tactical nuclear weapons could be used, and his overthrow of the reformist Salvador Allende in Chile. Yet, he prepared the way for U.S. president Richard Nixon to recognize the People's Republic of China.

The Economist asked Kissinger what he thought of China's global role today. Here he pushed back against current political thinking in the West, which wants to demonize China and wall it off politically. Instead, Kissinger wants a permanent dialogue to start between the American and Chinese presidents. Kissinger would have the American president say to his counterpart: "Mr. President, the two greatest dangers to peace right now are us two. In the sense that we have the capacity to destroy humanity. I think we should agree between ourselves to try to avoid such a situation." In Kissinger's view, the fate of humanity depends on whether the U.S. and China can get along.

He does not think China seeks global military domination. Rather, he sees the Chinese system as more Confucian than Marxist. Confucianism teaches a sort of cosmic harmony, and Kissinger thinks the only dominance today's Chinese leaders seek is economic. "A war over Taiwan would set back China's internal evolution substantially," he said. As for the prospects of today's big countries finding a route to co-existence even though they are arming for war, Kissinger surprisingly said: "I think it's possible that you can create a world order on the basis of rules that Europe, China and India could join, and that's already a good slice of humanity. So if you look at the practicality of it, it can end well—or at least it can end without catastrophe and we can make progress through it. But it will require vision and dedication."

I found it revelatory that Kissinger, the man who always put power over morality, is now talking in ways that—while he doesn't say so explicitly—point

to a common security agenda as the only way to ensure common survival. However, the rules for a "world order" cannot be written just by the U.S. Kissinger did recognize this in the interview, but he did not go on to make the necessary conclusion that no one state can maintain military dominance in such a world order.

The former U.S. national security adviser is now advocating for "human understanding" and "reason" to prevail. That's certainly a step forward, but the cheer I felt on reading this was quickly dashed by reading a speech, given June 2, by the current U.S. national security adviser, Jake Sullivan.

Sullivan asserted that the U.S., through its nuclear weapons modernization program, will "sustain our military advantage for decades to come." He added: "These modernization efforts will ensure our deterrent capabilities remain secure and strong as we head into the 2030s—when the United States will need to deter two near-peer nuclear powers for the first time in its history."

Kissinger is calling for "reason" to prevail in producing a world order out of the present chaos. Sullivan clings to American military dominance. Apparently, Kissinger, though lofty in vision, will not contradict current U.S. policy, still mired in the past.

What has military dominance ever produced but war? The whole message of the modern world is that everyone is vulnerable to problems that sweep across borders—pandemics, climate change, food security—and that only cooperation, not more confrontation, among countries will save humanity.

Kissinger is still backing the insidious military doctrine of nuclear deterrence while professing to want a world order. It can't be done. One cancels out the other. He admits that Artificial Intelligence may take weapons of mass destruction out of control. So why can't he advocate to abolish them?

Although *The Economist* treated Kissinger as a sage, he couldn't say the words "common security." This was the sage advice I was looking for. True, this centenarian has mellowed, but not enough for me.

Former senator Douglas Roche's new book, *Keep Hope Alive: Essays for a War-free World*, will be published in the fall.
The Hill Times

THE HILL TIMES' POLITICAL AND PARLIAMENTARY REPORTING INTERNSHIPS FOR INDIGENOUS AND BLACK PEOPLE

The Hill Times is excited to announce its internship program for aspiring Indigenous and Black journalists. We are seeking passionate applicants who are eager to pursue a career in journalism and have a keen interest in politics, policy, and governance. These paid internships will take place at The Hill Times newsroom located in Ottawa.

About The Hill Times:

The Hill Times is a dynamic, twice-weekly newspaper and daily news service dedicated to providing comprehensive coverage of Parliament Hill, the federal government, and federal politics. Our readership includes cabinet ministers, Members of Parliament, Senators, federal public servants, political insiders, lobbyists, foreign diplomats posted to Canada, industry associations, authors, journalists, and academics. We pride ourselves on our unique insider perspective, offering unparalleled insights into federal politics.

Job Description

The internship will include writing news and features in a fast-paced newsroom, where successful applicants will be mentored in a challenging but supportive environment. Interns will be tasked with covering hot topics from an insider perspective, including:

- Breaking political news
- What makes Parliament tick (legislation, MPs, political staff, the PMO, the House, and Senate)
- Finance and budget
- Lobbying
- Public service
- Environment and climate change
- Foreign policy
- Politics and polarization
- Innovation and technology
- Justice and public safety

This internship is a paid, full-time, contract position. Internships vary in duration from three months to one year, depending on the availability of the applicant and the newsroom. Please state your availability on the application, keeping in mind there is a three-month minimum.

Qualifications:

For this internship, we will be considering both candidates who have studied and worked in journalism, and other professionals who have strong writing skills, a passion for politics and governance, and want to take up a career in journalism.

You must have a strong work ethic, a positive attitude, and a passion for journalism. Interns should be enthusiastic, talented, curious, and intelligent.

We are looking for candidates who bring energy, ideas, and new perspectives to Canadian politics and governance. Strong writing skills and the ability to work quickly and accurately are essential.

To apply:

Send a cover letter indicating availability for the internship and resumé, along with two to three examples of your reporting/writing to: jobs@hilltimes.com.

Your application should demonstrate:

With journalism experience:

- A range of reporting, with a strong component of news coverage.
- Proven ability to report thoroughly, write well, synthesize, and organize information.
- Reporting experience outside school assignments and a demonstrated commitment to journalism as a career.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Life experience that contributes to your development/ability as a journalist.

Without journalism experience:

- Strong writing skills
- A passion for community, politics, or governance.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Life experience that contributes to your development/ability as a journalist. Please submit a short letter outlining your experience and why you want to become a journalist.

We thank all applicants for their submissions, but only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.

THE HILL TIMES

Opinion

Opinion

This is our El Niño wakeup call and it is our last chance, people

The feedbacks are starting to kick in and soon the momentum will be irreversible. We should never have allowed ourselves to be this close to catastrophe.

Bill Henderson

Opinion



GIBSONS, B.C.—“We need to be on a war footing. It has to be all hands on deck. We need to alter and change our societies and economies. And I just don’t see that happening. I don’t know what it’s going to take. But something has to give. Something has to change,” said British Columbia fire ecologist Robert Gray.

There is a major El Niño building over the next couple of years, and this longtime climate activist thinks it will be a profound wakeup call for Canadians. Society-wide denial will no longer be possible; we will be looking over a precipice in fear and panic; we will have to recognize our culpability and responsibility. We will have to accept the need for deep systemic change.

Canada is a major producer of fossil fuels. Canadians—though few in number globally—have a very high personal carbon footprint. We have been a major con-

tributor to what will finally be seen as an existential threat to civilization if not humanity itself.

Don’t we already know that climate change is this existential threat? Yes, but the implicative denial we share society-wide hasn’t let us confront the full reality of our predicament, and our full complicity and responsibility. We are still trying to increase the production of fossil fuels—now a potential fatal toxin—and we are still in an ineffectual mitigation plan to fail. We are still sleep-walking in hopium, and we are going to have to wake up to the full nightmare we are helping to create.

The major El Niño will spike temperatures; rising temperatures are expected to cross the 1.5 Celsius line, if only temporarily. Extreme weather events—with the potential for major disasters—will unfortunately make more news. Heat waves in regions already more vulnerable are one possibility, perhaps escalating ecosystem damage.

I’m going to sketch out the view from the precipice and what I expect the El Niño awakening will mean, and what possibilities I think will emerge. I’m going to be positive—I’m a lifelong team sports guy and positive is how I think we should play even if we’re behind a couple with barely minutes left to play.

As we approach a 1.5C rise in global mean temperature from the stable Holocene, pre-industrial era, climate, monotonic warming brings serious-enough problems. Extreme weather events combined with vulnerable populations and other building stresses in our world today feeds the ‘four horseman’ problems from which humanity has always suffered.

Toxic smoke from forest wildfires in Quebec and Ontario covered the Ottawa-Gatineau region for at least three days recently, created off-the-charts unhealthy air quality. This photo of the Museum of History in Gatineau, Que., was taken on June 6, 2023. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*



Canada is a rich and technologically advanced nation, and we can handle the local dimension of these problems. It will be expensive and draining, but nuclear war or a worst-class pandemic arising from disaster in more vulnerable countries will be an increasing threat to our safety. The projected monotonic rise in temperature by 2C or 3C

is dangerous, but adapting to it is possible.

The real building danger—the precipice on which we stand—is non-linear warming precipitated by the warming caused by humans burning fossil fuels (and our land use changes). There are potential feedbacks like decreasing albedo from the melting Arctic and/or

the presently safely sequestered carbon in soils, forests or permafrost becoming greenhouse gases (GHGs) and/or a breakdown in the circulation of warming in the world’s oceans. These feedbacks could cascade and push global temperatures up by 4C, 5C or even 10C to a globally uninhabitable environment where only a small

fraction of the present population could survive, and then only in a few potentially safe remnant areas.

Climate scientists have been trying to tell us that the threshold for this feedback-fuelled warming is somewhere over a 1C rise in temperature (probably between 1.5-3C). After at least three decades of knowing about this possibly

fatal-to-humanity threshold—three decades of failure to even halt the increase of GHG emissions—we are now close to, if not already over, the brink.

The feedbacks are starting to kick in, and soon the momentum will be irreversible. We should never have allowed ourselves to be this close to unimaginable catastrophe.

But of course we downplayed the climate dangers and wanted mitigation to be only a tweak to our very fortunate lifestyles. Like our prime ministers, we didn’t want and feared deep systemic change, and believed that we could use revenues from increasing fossil-fuel production to build a renewable tech solution that kept our fossil

fuel-powered economy chugging along. Like oil and gas industry management and the investor class, we refused to recognize that the party was over and chose instead to believe in carbon pricing, 100 per cent renewables, and now hydrogen, and carbon capture and storage. Emissions kept increasing but when we looked at our leaders, they didn’t seem too concerned.

Climate change is an emergency, but up until now we have been able to practically deny its existence and continue to live our lives as if the threat were minimal. But now we are going to have to wake up.

It is as if we had just visited the doc and he told us again that we have a potentially fatal condition requiring major regime change but now he’s pointing out how close to death we already are. We are dead man walking.

“You didn’t give up your bad habits. You didn’t do the regime change, diet, exercise, treatment, etc., advised and now you’re close to death. There’s still a chance, but you’ll have to completely change your ways, a complete regime change, and stop working to undertake one last chance at treatment; or, more practically, book your time at the hospice because it’s now obvious how you’ve left it way too late.”

Except with climate change it’s not us who are the victims—unless you are a young person—but innocents in more vulnerable parts of the world today and all future generations.

Our production and use of fossil fuels—from which we have greatly benefitted—is creating massive and probably fatal damage to those vulnerable in

the future. Our failure to effectively mitigate is a trauma and death sentence for our children and theirs. Those alive around the middle of this century will be in a horrific nightmare of irreversible catastrophe as the scientist/doctors diagnose impending doom.

The building El Niño is going to shred denial. Look what we’re doing to all we know and love, all we care about and all our futures. How guilty are we? How hot is hell? Why didn’t we act when we could have when there was still time?

We’ve seen massive fires, super hurricanes, devastating droughts, raging flooding and lethal heatwaves—but we still didn’t wake up to our denial and act. We’re still investing billions in future fossil fuel production. Something has to change. But I’m betting that this major El Niño will be a biblical wake-up call impossible to ignore, and that we will finally act responsibly.

In Canada, we will finally do what we should have done decades ago: form an emergency coalition government and regulate a complete wind-down of fossil fuel production and use. (Probably after close to civil war divisiveness and violence.) We will need every major fossil fuel producer globally to do likewise and the wind-down will have to be very rapid—at least half by 2030 and completely by around 2040.

We’ll finally realize that each year we don’t act—each year of pretend mitigation—makes effective mitigation much more difficult. We’ll finally realize that each year of staying in denial is propelling us over the precipice.

Bill Henderson is a long-time climate activist based in Gibsons, B.C. The Hill Times

When you’re in the middle of forest fires, stop adding fuel

Approval for the TMX should be rescinded and all other fossil fuel subsidies abolished. The Government of Canada should divert these funds to supporting electrification and the development and installation of cleaner energy supplies and to building the workforce for tomorrow’s clean-energy infrastructure.

Trevor Hancock, Daniel Rainha & Tim Takaro

Opinion



On June 17, 2019, then-environment and climate change minister Catherine McKenna proposed a motion to declare a national climate emergency in

Canada. The motion supports Canada’s commitment to meeting the emissions targets outlined in the Paris Agreement. While not a formal government motion, it was approved in the House by 186 votes to 63. The very next day, the cabinet approved the Trans-Mountain pipeline expansion (TMX) which will add another 238,000 metric tons of CO2 per day to our emissions, raising temperatures and fuelling future fires.

Last week, it announced another \$3-billion for TMX to move Alberta’s bitumen from the oil sands to the British Columbia coast for export. In doing so, it is literally adding fuel to the fires with the increased emissions that are driving increased temperatures, drying forests, and dangerously lowering the threshold for ignition leading to unprecedented fires.

In reality, the government has not acted as if it truly is a climate emergency in Canada. Since that declaration of a climate emergency, we have seen communities burned to the ground and more than 600 die in a heat event in British Columbia. Now, four years after the declaration, tens of thousands of people have been evacuated amid forest fires across Canada that have come earlier in the year and are unprecedented in terms of scale and ferocity. Yet the government continues to support the fossil energy industry.

Last week, it announced another \$3-billion for TMX to move Alberta’s bitumen from the oil sands to the British Columbia coast for export. In doing so, it is literally adding fuel to the fires with the increased emissions that are driving increased temperatures, drying forests, and dangerously lowering the threshold for ignition leading to unprecedented fires.

And that is not the only support this government is providing to the fossil energy industry.

In 2022 alone, Environmental Defence reported federal government subsidies for fossil fuel production were more than \$20-billion. Canada is the only G7 country with increasing emissions since the commitment to reduction was made in Paris in 2015. The Canada Energy Regulator’s most recent report on production plans shows the oil sector alone continuing growth past 2030 to 5.8 million barrels per day (a 16 per cent increase from 2021) even under their “evolving scenario.” Under current policies, it is projected to increase to 6.7 million barrels (8.7 million metric tons of CO2) per day.

As health professionals, we are concerned with protecting the health of current and future generations. The air pollution created by the forest fires—which is affecting major cities in Can-

ada and the United States—has seen Ottawa’s air quality health index go off the 1–10-point scale to 10+. These climate change-related forest fires are a clear and present danger to the health of large populations from coast to coast. We can expect an increase in respiratory disease and deaths due to this heavy air pollution. With more forest fires expected throughout the summer, there will be more health impacts to come, not to mention the mental anguish and suffering of those who lose their homes and in some cases their livelihoods due to climate-driven disasters.

This cannot just become the new normal to which we must adapt—that is morally indefensible. We could have reduced the risk decades ago, so we must reverse Canada’s contribution to the carbon emissions problem and rising temperatures now to reduce future risks.

We call on the government finally to act in accordance with the House of Commons motion to declare and act upon the undeniable climate emergency. We join the World Health Organization in its demand for governments to “stop paying for pollution” by supporting the fossil fuel industry. Approval for the TMX should be rescinded and all other fossil fuel subsidies abolished. Instead, the Government of Canada should divert these funds to supporting electrification and the development and installation of cleaner energy supplies and building the workforce for tomorrow’s clean-energy infrastructure.

Use the pipeline right-of-ways for buried east-west high voltage electric lines. Let B.C.’s hydropower be the storage battery for Alberta’s fast-growing solar production. When the sun is shining in Alberta it sends power west allowing B.C. to fill hydro

reservoirs, and when the sun is not shining, B.C. sends power east to Alberta.

A phase-down of fossil fuels, diversification of the energy sector and a shift to subsidizing energy conservation and greater efficiency along with clean, renewable energy sources will allow Canada to truly meet its Paris commitments, reduce future climate-driven disasters, and support a livable planet for everyone.

Dr. Trevor Hancock is a retired professor and senior scholar at the school of public health and social policy, University of Victoria, in Victoria, B.C. Dr. Daniel Rainha is a professor at the school of health and human performance, Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. Dr. Tim Takaro is professor emeritus, with the faculty of health sciences, Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

The Hill Times



An aerial view of the Donnie Creek Complex fire in northern British Columbia on May 27. Use the pipeline right-of-ways for buried east-west high voltage electric lines and let the B.C.’s hydropower be the storage battery for Alberta’s fast-growing solar production, write the authors. *Photograph courtesy of the B.C. Wildfire Service*

Opinion



Irwin Cotler, left, Richard Fadden, Ward Elcock, and Louise Arbour would all be excellent candidates to lead an inquiry into foreign interference, along with three other people suggested by the main opposition parties, writes Dean Baxendale. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and file photographs

David Johnston has resigned. Now what?

Rather than appoint one rapporteur, Trudeau should call a public inquiry headed by a three-person panel lead by a chair. To avoid politicizing the nominations, the PM could appoint the chair, and each of the three opposition parties could appoint one person to the panel.

Dean Baxendale

Opinion



Late in the afternoon on June 9, as Canadians were leaving work, getting supper on, and generally doing their best to avoid the news, David Johnston

resigned from his position as Canada's special rapporteur on foreign interference. It was an ignominious end to a doomed endeavour, and to an otherwise dignified career. In a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Johnston gave his reasons:

"When I undertook the task of independent special rapporteur on foreign interference, my objective was to help build trust in our democratic institutions. I have concluded that, given the highly partisan atmosphere around my appointment and work, my leadership has had the opposite effect."

"Highly partisan atmosphere" was only part of the problem, however. From the start of his appointment, Johnston was subjected to relentless critiques not only by the opposition parties, but also by political analysts, members of the intelligence community, and the media. And with good reason.

Never mind that Johnston had been chosen as governor general by former Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper: the Tories went for the jugular on his connections to the Trudeau family and the Trudeau Foundation. Meanwhile, the Quebec press devoted copious ink to Johnston's past connections with China. Since Johnston's appointment, writers like Terry Glavin had unearthed the obvious: Johnston's

long-term ties to the Laurentian elite, the Canada China Business Council, the Trudeau Foundation, his advancement of Confucius institutes, and the public fawning over Xi Jinping in numerous engagements in China made him an illogical choice for conscientious objectivity.

Charles Burton said in *iPolitics*, "At this point, the best thing is for David Johnston to gracefully withdraw and allow for a rigorous, properly staffed and funded investigation into the disturbing issue at hand." Burton was right. The Trudeau government should have seen this coming, and realized why Johnston was a wholly unsuitable choice for the position of rapporteur.

The question now is: where to go from here? On that, Johnston also expressed his views: "I encourage you to appoint a respected person, with national security experience, to complete the work that I recommended in my first report. Ideally you would consult with opposition parties to identify suitable candidates to lead this effort."

Johnston's advice is sage, but after his experience in the role, good luck finding someone else willing to take it on. Other former GGs are unlikely to stick their necks out. Former university presidents, same. And Katie Telford already has a job.

In other words, it's a short—if non-existent—list.

There's also the fact that investigating foreign interference in elections and the wider questions about transnational repressions and elite capture is a task too large for one person. As we have learned, it is a hydra with many heads, spanning politics, business, media, and academia. China's meddling in Canadian elections is not in doubt, but the extent of its impact is. Asking one individual to head up this Sisyphean task means an even slimmer chance of finding a single candidate willing to expose themselves to this kind of trashing and public scrutiny.

Here is a better solution: Rather than again appoint a single rapporteur, the prime minister should call a public inquiry headed by a panel of three people, with a chair to lead it. To avoid politicizing these nominations, the PM could appoint the chair, and each of the three opposition parties could appoint one individual to the panel. Or they could all pitch into a short list, from whose names would be drawn on consensus.

Many names come to mind. The chair could be someone with a legal background and who has gravitas, such as former long-time Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, who served as minister of justice and attorney general of Canada and

now chairs the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights and is the Liberals' appointee to the Inter-parliamentary Committee on China. Or former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour, who served on the International Criminal Court and who headed a review into sexual harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces.

As for panellists with intelligence and military background, as Johnston suggests, there is no shortage of expertise to draw on. Former heads of CSIS Richard Fadden—who is on record as saying an inquiry is necessary—or Ward Elcock, who holds a different view on the inquiry issue, but supports the establishment of a foreign agents registry. Scott Newark, a former Alberta Crown prosecutor who has also served as executive officer of the Canadian Police Association and director of operations at the Washington, D.C.-based Investigative Project on Terrorism. And Garry Clement, former director, Proceeds of Crime, with the RCMP, who holds more than 32 years of policing experience with expertise in money-laundering and is now director, Proceeds of Crime, with Versabank.

Trudeau needs to do this not just for Canada's democracy, but for the nation's Chinese diaspora.

We should allow no community to again be oppressed, intimidated and threatened. Our opposition politicians need to put partisanship aside for the sake of these people, our country, and our democratic values. Values that David Johnston would no doubt want his replacement to uphold—but with a lot less baggage.

Dean Baxendale is president and publisher of *Optimum Publishing International* and CEO of the *China Democracy Fund*.

The Hill Times

Fifty years apart, Trudeau governments prefer tobacco harm reduction to protective laws

It took almost two decades before the tobacco control mistakes of the 1970s were remedied by the Mulroney government in 1988. Let's hope we don't have to wait that long for flavoured e-cigarettes to be removed from the market.

Cynthia Callard

Opinion



Two years ago this week, then-health minister Patty

Hajdu committed to “do more to protect youth from the risks of vaping” by publishing a draft regulation to end the use of sweeteners and flavourings in electronic cigarettes. It is now clear that her successors do not intend to put these restrictions in place. As the Senate was informed last week, the government is now focused instead on helping adult smokers switch to electronic cigarettes.

This is not the first time that a Trudeau government has chosen harm reduction over youth protection in the tobacco file. In June 1971, then-health minister John Munro introduced a law to ban cigarette advertising and regulate packaging, only to abandon it shortly afterwards. Decades later, government documents were released which revealed that there had never been an intention for this bill to be passed into law, but rather to let it trigger opposition and put the idea of advertising bans to rest. Munro's successors focused instead on helping adult smokers switch to light cigarettes.

The tobacco harm-reduction approaches of these two Trudeau governments have much in com-

mon. Then, as now, the strategies are based on the assumptions that products which emit fewer chemicals will cause less disease, that smokers can be induced to switch products through persuasion, that relaxed regulation will leverage market forces to encourage smokers to switch, and that the potential gains exceed the risks of increased addiction by subsequent generations.

By promoting light cigarettes to smokers instead of curbing cigarette marketing, the Pierre Trudeau government helped tobacco companies recover from the lung cancer scares of the previous decades. It enabled the companies to rebrand their products, refocus their messaging and recruit a new generation of nicotine addicts.

By promoting e-cigarettes to smokers instead of curbing e-cigarette marketing, the Justin Trudeau government is enabling tobacco companies to re-invent their products and to recruit new generations of nicotine addicts. Racing cars and billboards are no longer allowed to encourage children to try smoking, but sleek designs, fun flavours and product novelties for

e-cigarettes which send a “try me” message are permitted.

The less hazardous (“low tar”) smoking program of the 1970s failed to reduce harm, and there are no signs of success for the current government's harm reduction (e-cigarette) approach. Relaxed regulations on vaping products have not increased the proportion of smokers who are trying to quit or the success of those who do. Smoking rates are falling, but only because smokers and former smokers are dying more quickly than they are being replaced.

There are, however, signs this policy is failing by increasing nicotine use among children and never smokers. Last year, among Canadian children in grades 10 to 12, 12 per cent were vaping daily and two per cent were smoking daily—up from two per cent for each behaviour five years earlier. Young children are quickly addicted to e-cigarettes: one quarter of kids who have tried an e-cigarette even once are vaping every day. Among Canadian vapers, there are more never smokers than former smokers. Vaping products have not become

the off-ramp for smoking, but they have become the on-ramp for nicotine addiction.

If the government wants to shift nicotine addicts to different drug delivery systems, there are less risky options than “light touch” regulations on the nicotine industry. This government can require a phase-out of combustible cigarettes (as is being done with internal combustion passenger vehicles), it can make combustible cigarettes non-addictive by requiring that nicotine be removed (as New Zealand is doing), it can make cigarettes less pleasant to smoke and reduce the harms to the environment by banning filters (as the World Health Organization proposes).

If the intention is for e-cigarettes to be used only by smokers, the supply of these products can be under therapeutic management (as Australia has done). This would allow e-cigarettes to be made available to Canada's three million smokers without allowing manufacturers to tempt Canada's four million teenagers with try-me flavours and designs.

It took almost two decades—and a change in government—before the tobacco control mistakes of the 1970s were remedied. Regulatory controls on tobacco companies were not in place until the Mulroney government adopted them in 1988.

Let us hope we do not have to wait that long for flavoured e-cigarettes to be removed from the market.

Cynthia Callard is the executive director of Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada.

The Hill Times

David Johnston, super vetting government information consultant, bows out

Nobody ever said freeing-up Ottawa with so many government insiders afraid of public disclosures or having independent inquiries would be easy.

Ken Rubin

Opinion



OTTAWA—The biggest existential transparency crisis in years—the degree of China's penetration in Canada and its electoral process—came to a superficial head in the David Johnston episode.

Exposed was just how secretive and incompetent Canada is among all western nations.

The Trudeau government thought its exclusively decided appointment of special rapporteur David Johnston would suffice as the “public” face for reviewing Chinese interference in recent Canadian elections and beyond.

Johnston, as a government management consultant, did not disappoint. He rejected holding a public inquiry and told opposition leaders last month that they had to be sworn to total secrecy to review the secret intelligence records he had seen.

Setting himself up as the ultimate government access-to-information officer vetting the records and offering limited and incomplete tidbits on China's election interference was, however, never going to cut it politically.

It took Johnston time to resign after the House rejected more than once his and the government's approach to handling the information he gathered.

Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc, who is close to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the PCO/PMO machinery of government, has been given the task of turning things around.

It's ironic that LeBlanc, whose father had been a governor general, is put in charge of looking with opposition political leaders for a judge without partisan ties to head a public inquiry. Just think, too, of a judge ever having to come before a parliamentary committee on his or her preliminary or final findings.

Public inquiry appointments are normally done exclusively by the government and there is no mechanism in place for this selection by an independent public appointment commission office.

As well, public inquiry terms of reference are normally done by the government in power. But with the sensitive security intelligence subject matter, LeBlanc and Trudeau are counting on terms they and all parties can live with, putting the onus on other political parties to act “responsibly.”

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre's only demand so far is that the inquiry report be completed before the next election is due to be called.

Public inquiries, however, always seem to go on longer than agreed, usually asking for exten-

sions and for more money from the government. Elections, too, can be called earlier than those dates fixed by law. And enacting any changes an inquiry could suggest before the next election would be difficult to do.

What's most disconcerting is that everyone—from Johnston, the government's security adviser Jody Thomas, and opposition parties—all agree that Canada's national security information management system is neither functioning well, nor is it transparent.

Even the prime minister's chief of staff Katie Telford, when she testified at a parliamentary committee, expressed frustration about declassification of records and noted there are missing information links that cannot be confirmed or denied.

Johnston's conclusion, however, that there was no real evidence that the Trudeau government ignored CSIS reports on Chinese election interference was widely disputed.

LeBlanc, as the government point-person, wants to have secret talks with legal and national security experts on holding a

public inquiry or about holding any public hearings at all as Johnston had been promising. At least Johnston had wanted these experts to testify publicly, along with groups being targeted by Chinese interference.

But the way, Canada's appointment and information access system offers little comfort for the public or for real-time disclosures.

We need a public inquiry to free up some information, even though the government will spend millions on such hearings. But governments cannot operate in crises and public inquiry-mode indefinitely.

The way Ottawa fences-in access to information, unless drastically reformed, ensures continued poor and corrosive data management and weak reviews.

Nobody ever said freeing-up Ottawa with so many government insiders afraid of acting or wanting public disclosures or having independent inquiries would be easy.

Ken Rubin writes regularly on transparency issues and is reachable via kenrubin.ca

The Hill Times

News

Ontario Liberal leadership hopefuls trade barbs, each claiming to be more qualified: 'I'm the only one who actually runs a government,' says Crombie

Even if Bonnie Crombie fails to win the Ontario leadership, the Mississauga mayor says she will still run for the provincial Liberals in the next election.

Continued from page 1

minister in the provincial cabinets of Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne. His last portfolio in the Wynne cabinet was minister of justice and attorney general.

Crombie served as an MP from 2008-2011 and has been the Mississauga mayor since 2014. Erskine-Smith, a three-term MP, has made his name in the last eight years for doing politics "differently" by speaking up when he disagreed with his own party's policies. Even in national caucus meetings, he's not been shy about making his policy differences known to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.). Except for confidence votes, Erskine-Smith does not hesitate to vote against his own party if he disagrees with a piece of legislation. This is unusual because, in order to get promoted to be a parliamentary secretary, committee chair or cabinet posi-



Two incumbent and two former federal Liberal MPs are seeking the Ontario Liberal leadership, including Mississauga Mayor and former Liberal MP Bonnie Crombie, left; Liberal MPs Yasir Naqvi and Nathaniel Erskine-Smith; and former Liberal MP Ted Hsu. *The Hill Times* file photographs

tion, usually MPs like to toe the party line.

Hsu represented the riding of Kingston and the Islands from 2011-2015 in the House of Commons, but did not seek re-election. He successfully ran provincially in the 2022 election and is representing the Ontario riding of Kingston and the Islands.

Crombie told *The Hill Times* last week that she's better qualified for the job compared to other candidates because of her governing experience at the City of Mississauga. She said that Naqvi ran individual cabinet portfolios, not the entire government, and Erskine-Smith is a maverick and it will be a challenge for him to be a leader.

"Everyone brings different skills to the table and Yasir has had some very meaningful portfolios, but again, only one small portfolio versus running an entire government," said Crombie. "Nate has been a very effective voice, contrarian voice, but it's very hard to be the maverick and the leader because these are not complementary skills to be the outspoken maverick, and then build a team around you and say, 'Now I want to lead.'"

In a written response to Crombie's comment, Erskine-Smith said: "Leadership is acting with integrity. I've done politics differently at the same time as I've worked alongside colleagues to shape the government's agenda."

"We will rebuild this party with a commitment to empower local communities by empow-

ering parliamentarians. And by bringing young people into our party, to deliver on issues that matter to them like housing affordability," he wrote. "Bonnie Crombie has a well-established NIMBY track record and it will be a liability for our party to have a worse record on housing than [Ontario Premier] Doug Ford."

When asked to expand on what he meant by writing that Crombie has a "well-established NIMBY track record" or any examples he could cite to substantiate his claim, he did not respond.

In an email to *The Hill Times*, Crombie said that during the campaign she will be able to convince Ontario Liberals that she is best placed to lead the party in the next election.

"Nate and I are both seeking to rebuild and re-energize the Ontario Liberal Party," Crombie wrote. "I look forward to the campaign, and I am confident that my record on housing issues will convince Ontario Liberals that I am the best candidate to lead our party and defeat Doug Ford."

Naqvi, in an email to *The Hill Times*, did not directly address

Crombie's claim that she's more qualified than the Ottawa MP.

"My campaign is about transforming the Ontario Liberal Party—that means building a bigger, more inclusive party, ready to knock on doors, defeat Doug Ford in 2026, and restore the promise of Ontario," said Naqvi.

"Every time a new candidate enters the leadership race, it pushes all of us to have bolder ideas, engage in more conversations, and forces us to work harder to find practical Liberal solutions to the complex problems of the day. It makes our party stronger. We need ideas that help kids struggling in overcrowded classrooms, that keep our ERs

open, and ensure that everyone in Ontario can live a good life that's affordable. These ideas aren't right or left, they are to make everyone's life easier to live."

In last June's provincial election, the Liberals ended up with only eight of 124 seats—one more than in the 2018 election—meaning they will remain without official party status in the legislature for a second consecutive time. The required threshold for official party status in Ontario is 12 seats.

The last two elections turned out to be the worst in the provincial party's history. Ford's Progressive Conservatives won a second majority with 83 seats, Andrea Horwath's New Democrats won 31, Steven Del Duca's Liberals eight, Mike Schreiner's Greens one, and one Independent MP was elected. Del Duca failed to win his own seat. Both Horwath and Del Duca stepped down as party leaders on election night. This past February, MPP Marit Stiles was acclaimed as the new NDP leader.

The Liberals are set to vote for their new leader through ranked ballots on Nov. 25-26, with the results to be announced on Dec. 2. The deadline to enter the race is Sept. 5, and the entry fee is \$100,000. Of this fee, \$25,000 is refundable.

According to an Abacus poll released last week, the Ford Progressive Conservatives had the support of 36 per cent of Ontarians, compared to 27 per cent for the Liberals, 26 per cent for the NDP and six per cent for the Greens. As for the Liberal leadership candidates, Crombie had the net positive impression of 26 per cent among Liberal Party supporters. According to this poll, 34 per cent had a positive impression of Crombie, eight per cent negative, 28 per cent neutral and 31 per cent did not know.

Erskine-Smith had the net support of 10 per cent, 17 per cent positive, seven per cent negative, 30 per cent neutral and 46 per cent don't know; Naqvi had a net support of eight per cent, 15 per cent positive, seven per cent negative, 34 per cent neutral and 44 per cent did not know; and Hsu had a net positive of 10 per cent, 16 per cent Liberal supporters had a positive impression, six per cent negative, 34 per cent neutral and 44 per cent did not know.

The online poll of 1,000 Ontarians was conducted from June 6-11 and had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

If Crombie wins the leadership, she will have to step down from her position as Mississauga mayor. Last year, Crombie received a salary of \$177,417, including benefits. Since the Ontario Liberal Party does not have an official party status and the party is without a leader at this time, it won't have new funds to pay the new leader's salary. Crombie said that should she win the leadership, she will raise enough funds to get the party ready for the next provincial election and to pay her salary. Even if she fails to win the party leadership, Crombie said, she would run as a Liberal candidate in the next election.

arana@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Former Ontario Liberal leader Steven Del Duca stepped down last June after he failed to win his seat in the 2022 provincial election. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



The Progressive Conservatives under Doug Ford won a second landslide majority government in last June's Ontario election. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

On foreign interference, Liberals leave opposition looking ‘a little bit confused and stunned’

Former Grit staffer Muhammed Ali says the Libs need to capitalize on this moment when they face less pressure and start leading the conversation. But former Tory national campaign manager Fred DeLorey says he doesn't think the opposition parties are actually interested in fixing the problem right now.

BY IAN CAMPBELL

The issue of foreign interference has had “a little less steam” since the governing Liberals sought to put the ball in the opposition's court last week, but all parties still face tough choices about how they will navigate the issue going forward, say observers.

After dominating the news cycle for months, the issue grew more quiet over the past week, following a June 10 press conference held by Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.), in which he called on opposition parties to provide “concrete” suggestions on how to move forward following the June 9 resignation of former governor general David Johnston as special rapporteur on foreign interference. Johnston said the “highly partisan atmosphere” around his appointment was making it impossible for him to help grow trust in Canada's democratic institutions.

Pollster and CEO of Nanos research Nik Nanos said the move by LeBlanc has eliminated some of the primary “irritants” the Liberals were struggling to manage. But, he said Canadians will expect all parties to find a “path forward” on the substantive issue of foreign interference—not just the politics of an inquiry.

“The Liberals could have avoided all this torment if they had, out of the gate, decided [on] foreign interference in our democracy we should start off by consulting the opposition parties to get them to be part of the process,” he said.



At a June 10 press conference, Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc called on opposition parties to provide ‘concrete’ suggestions on how to move forward on the issue of foreign interference in Canada's elections. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In his view, the Liberals originally handled the matter as a “public relations exercise,” which explains their approach of having turned to Johnston in hopes that his reputation as a distinguished Canadian might shield them from the issue.

“But this is not a public relations exercise,” said Nanos. “Canadians want to know what's going to be put in place so that this doesn't happen again. And I think it's fair to have the opposition parties engaged.”

That invitation to engage has now changed the nature of the debate for opposition parties.

Former Conservative Party staffer Fred DeLorey, who served as his party's national campaign manager for the 2021 federal election—one of the campaigns at the centre of the current foreign interference controversy—told *The Hill Times* the recent move by LeBlanc had left the opposition parties looking “a little bit confused and stunned.”

“It's like, ‘sorry guys, you're the dog chasing the car, you finally caught up to the car, and now you don't know what to do,’” he said.

DeLorey, who has repeatedly said he does not support calls for a public inquiry, said the opposition's approach to date has been “all about political strategy” and “not how to actually deal with foreign interference.”

“I don't think any of the opposition parties are actually trying to make sure our elections are safe for the next elections,” said DeLorey. “And that's just the trap that opposition parties fall into. ... They're just looking through everything through a political lens, which is not necessarily good when what we need is good policy on this.”

Rather than devoting their energy to suggesting terms for an

inquiry, DeLorey said he would prefer to see MPs focus on finding ways to address “legislative gaps” to ensure the problem doesn't happen again.

He said addressing foreign interference requires co-ordination between Elections Canada, CSIS, and the RCMP, but the current legislation makes it difficult for those organizations to talk to each other. He said finding a legislative solution to make one of those organizations—likely Elections Canada—the lead on the issue, and allowing them to better communicate with each other would be more productive on the part of opposition MPs than rehashing how the matter was handled in the past.

Former NDP MP Peggy Nash, who says she supports a public inquiry, said the opposition parties must be careful not to allow

the onus to shift entirely from the government onto their shoulders.

“The reason there's a little less steam this week is because the ball is in the opposition's court to at least communicate some thoughts about a process, if not specific names,” said Nash. “But then the ball is in the government's court again to make a decision and the clock is ticking if we're going to get any kind of a report prior to the next election.”

Nash said the government's request for suggestions means opposition parties “have an obligation to offer some input, but ultimately, the government will make this decision.”

Former Liberal Party staffer Muhammed Ali, who is now a vice-president at Crestview Strategy, said the Liberals need to capitalize on this moment while they are facing less pressure on the issue.

“I think the Liberals need to take advantage of the opportunity of getting some breathing room to start leading the conversation, as opposed to responding reactively all the time,” said Ali.

He suggested they could do this by taking further action on items such as the foreign agent registry that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) had outlined in March at the same time he had announced the creation of the special rapporteur position.

“They need to sort of show ownership and leadership on the file, instead of waiting for this to become an issue again,” said Ali.

An inquiry will not be a ‘grand public display,’ says security expert

Leah West, an international affairs professor at Carleton

University who specializes in national security law, told *The Hill Times* that despite the contentious political environment around the topic, there is legislation—the Inquiries Act—that already prescribes much of what could realistically be proposed by the opposition parties or implemented by the government.

“It's not that a public inquiry couldn't happen,” said West. “A commission of inquiry can be struck. It's just that so much of what we're talking about will likely have to happen behind closed doors—to protect either individual security and privacy, or national security information—that you're not going to get the grand public display that I think people are looking for.”

West said it is possible to have a commission of inquiry that looks at national security information. The government, she explained, would need to instruct the commissioner of the inquiry that they will be able to see this information in camera, and the commissioner would eventually produce both a classified and public version of the final report.

However, West noted, the commission would likely be a very different experience from recent public processes, such as the Public Order Emergencies Commission or the inquiry into the mass shooting in Nova Scotia, because these involved a degree of public discussion about who knew what information when, which she said would not be possible on the topic of foreign interference.

“Much of the nitty gritty of the stuff that the opposition seems keen to understand”—including questions of who knew what, and when—may not make it into a public final report, said West, because the ‘what’ aspect could not be divulged publicly, leaving the ‘who’ and ‘when’ without meaningful context.

However, said West, that doesn't mean such an inquiry would not be valuable. She pointed to the Arar Inquiry, Iacobucci Inquiry, and Air India Inquiry as examples of inquiries that dealt with national security information and produced helpful final reports.

“I still rely on the reports from all of those other inquiries,” said West. “They are still very important to understanding Canada's national security landscape. They taught us very important lessons.”

She said in forming suggestions, opposition parties should focus on suggesting criteria for what they are looking for in a commissioner, and guidelines for how the commission should do its work.

“They could say that they want them to be able to see classified information, and hear in-camera testimony, but to the fullest extent possible, have transparent open public hearings,” suggested West. “They could say they want to hear from academics and community groups ... They could even put down questions that they want the commissioner to look into ... [and] suggest questions the commissioner then needs to respond to.”

icampbell@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Pollster Nik Nanos said the Liberals originally handled foreign interference as a ‘public relations exercise.’ *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

News

Feds asked to consider national fire service as country grapples with 'new normal' wildfire season

So far this year, more than 2,600 fires have burnt through 5.3 million hectares. As of June 15, 458 fires were burning across the country, of which 235 were out of control. Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair said this year's fire season is the worst of the 21st century.

'This now qualifies unfortunately as Canada's worst wildfire season of the 21st century,' Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair, pictured, told reporters on June 12. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Continued from page 1

Okanagan-West Kootenay, B.C.), his party's emergency preparedness critic.

"I think it just makes sense to have a firefighting service—I think a civilian service is what would work best—that is available for deployment on a moment's notice," he added. "If, for whatever reason, the fire season in Canada is quiet that year, we could contract it out to other countries that need it, just like we're getting help from other countries now."

So far this year, more than 2,600 fires have burnt through 5.3 million hectares. As of June 15, 458 fires were burning across the country, of which 235 were out of control.

"This now qualifies, unfortunately, as Canada's worst wildfire season of the 21st century," Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair (Scarborough Southwest, Ont.) told reporters on June 12.

Fisheries Minister Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, B.C.) told reporters on June 15 that 83 fires were active in British Columbia alone.

"I do remember how, as [British Columbia's] environment minister in 2003, the Kelowna fires were unlike anything we had ever experienced, and, unfortunately, it is feeling increasingly like this is the new normal," she said.

Ken McMullen, president of the Canadian Association of Fire

Chiefs, used a single word when asked how members of his organization were faring at this point in the season: "Exhausted."

"Canada has never seen this many fires at this intensity spread out this early in a fire season in recent memory," he told *The Hill Times* on June 12. "These men and women from all over Canada as well as our neighboring partners that have come in to assist, they're just running on fumes. There are good days, bad days, quieter days, or very active days, but nonetheless, your heart and soul goes into it every single day."

As of last week, approximately 5,000 firefighting personnel were engaged, including firefighters,

incident management personnel, overhead specialists, and members of the Canadian Armed Forces. International resources have been deployed from Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, France, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, and the United States.

Mike Flannigan, professor of wildfire science and the British Columbia innovation research chair in predictive services, emergency management and fire sciences at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, B.C., said a federal service to combat forest fires would mitigate some of the problems that arise when sharing resources between jurisdictions during emergencies.

"In Canada, we share resources, and fire management agencies are really good at response, but there's room for improvement in prevention, mitigation, and I would say preparedness, too," he said. "My concerns are that we're too reactive."

The bulk of wildfire response responsibilities lie with the provinces and territories. If a wildfire situation overwhelms an individual jurisdiction's resources, the Canadian Interagency Mutual Aid Resources Sharing Agreement ensures that other provincial, territorial, and federal equipment, personnel, and aircraft can be deployed.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) co-ordinates that resource sharing and mutual aid between federal, provincial, and territorial wildland

fire management agencies. CIFFC was first created in 1982, but its mandate was expanded to include co-ordination in prevention and mitigation management in 2021.

Internationally, Canada and the United States have a reciprocal forest fire fighting arrangement, while CIFFC and member agencies have similar arrangements with counterparts in Australia, Mexico, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Flannigan said the requests for help were often only made once fires had already started to spread, in what he described as a worldwide problem with emergency management.

"It's a knee-jerk reaction rather than proper planning, and it's not just Canada and the United States that do this," he said. "These are well-trained professionals, but it's just getting to deal with the predictive services side of things, and many fire management agencies either don't have predictive services or it's lip service in the true sense of the word."

Flannigan said a national firefighting service, which could be activated in advance of expected favourable wildfire conditions, would not leave provinces and territories second-guessing whether fires will spring up in their own area while their firefighters have been sent to other jurisdictions.

"When you ship [firefighters], they're generally on 15-day deployments, and after serving for 15 days, they have to have time off," he said. "If you had a national fleet, you would avoid some of that game-playing because you wouldn't have to worry about asking, 'If I ship them away, will I be putting myself at risk?' because it's all your own territory or land that you're looking after."

In a statement emailed to *The Hill Times* on June 15, Blair's office said the federal government stood "ready to assist any province or territory if it is required. We also learn from these events, and continually assess our emergency management approach to ensure we are being responsive to the needs of communities."

"We also recognize that there is a need in all provinces and territories for additional firefighting resources," the statement said, pointing to a June 1 announcement that the Government of Canada has signed nine agreements as part of the first phase of the Wildfire Training Fund, as well as a pilot project between Natural Resources Canada and the International Association of Fire Fighters to train structural firefighters to respond to the fires in the wildland-urban interface.

The Wildfire Training Fund is a \$37.5-million program to boost Canada's wildfire firefighting capacity. The nine agreements will amount to the hiring and training of more than 300 Indigenous firefighters and 125 Indigenous fire guardians this season, Blair's office said in the statement.

The wildfires were the subject of an emergency debate moved by Cannings in the House on June 5.

"When I started reading reports and hearing from experts



Smoke over Ontario and Quebec on June 3 as captured by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer on NASA's Aqua satellite. Photograph courtesy of NASA Earth Observatory

Continued on page 19

Continued from page 18

on what we could be doing differently, I thought it was very much time for an emergency debate on this," he told *The Hill Times*. "The situation was getting seemingly worse every day, and we went from Alberta to Nova Scotia to Quebec, there was sort of a never-ending news cycle of worsening conditions, and I thought we should be talking about this in the House."

He said an increasing number of forest fires reaching the wildland urban interface (where human settlements meet the natural environment), especially in rural or Indigenous communities, added to the urgency of changed practices.

"In 2021, I remember when I was in the federal election campaign, the Okanagan Valley was on fire," Cannings said. "I was campaigning with all my precious belongings in my car because I didn't know if those two fires behind my house would turn and come at my neighborhood."

"If we have that training and trained personnel, if we have a stockpile of equipment, I think that would go a long way to easing the pressure on small communities and even whole provinces in the future," he said.

Cannings said governments should also be funding and encouraging more firesmart programs outside fire season, such as hardening the exteriors of houses and thinning forests directly surrounding communities.

"That takes more money, effort, and planning, it would keep forestry workers employed, it would provide fibre



The Chapel Creek wildfire north of Blue River in British Columbia. Photograph courtesy of BC Wildfire Service

for local mills," he said. "A more open forest wouldn't sustain a crown fire as easily as some of the thicker younger forests that we have now around cities and towns."

The 2023 season started in April, with record-breaking dry conditions and heat in parts of Alberta, Northwest Territories, and north-east British Columbia.

"Unfortunately, we had a rash of human-caused fires, and we were off to a very fast start. May is the busiest month for Alberta, but this was an exceptional May," Flannigan said, noting fires at Slave Lake in 2011, Fort McMurray in 2016, and Chuckegg Creek-High Level in 2019.

The fires in British Columbia and Alberta were followed by fires in Saskatchewan, Manitoba,

Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. When discussing the issue, Flannigan said it was important to note both the size and the impact on communities. Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated across the country so far this season, while millions in both Canada and the U.S. were affected by poor air quality from the wildfire smoke.

"This is a busy fire year. All indications point to more busy fire years in the future—not every year, some years it'll be cooler and wetter—but we're going to see more fire in the future," Flannigan said.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) was asked about measures that the federal government intended to take to improve the speed at which firefighting equipment was built and distributed during a news conference in Saguenay, Que., on June 14.

"First, we're going to focus on getting through this particular season, giving all the resources we can and people need to be able to stay safe and get through this particular fire season," he said. "But at the same time, we're going to have lots of conversations about what is needed for the coming years to make sure that we're able to keep Canadians safe and able to deal with the extreme weather events that are continuing to come."

McMullen said his organization has been lobbying for the creation of a national fire adviser position, similar to the U.S. Fire Administration. The U.S. administration is managed within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and McMullen said a Canadian equivalent could either work separately or in concert with a national disaster office.

"Without knowing the details of what the office of national disaster would look like, or a FEMA-type model, we are sticking with our recommendation that at this point, the government could create a national fire adviser, probably easier and sooner," he said.

Flannigan said that the idea of a federal service was intended to start a conversation, and wouldn't necessarily solve all problems.

"Canada's been either very good or very fortunate that we

haven't had large loss of life like we've seen in California and Australia, places where there's professional modern fire management," he said. Thirty-one people died in California's 2020 wildfire season, the state's worst on record. Thirty-four people died directly during Australia's "Black Summer" bushfire season in 2019-

20, while hundreds more died from smoke inhalation.

"Fort McMurray could have really gone sideways [in 2016], but it didn't," said Flannigan, referring to the death toll. "But who knows, maybe in the next one we won't be so fortunate."

sjeffery@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Countries that have deployed firefighting personnel to Canada so far this year

- Australia
- Costa Rica
- Chile
- France
- New Zealand
- Portugal
- Spain
- South Africa
- United States



Facts about wildland fires in Canada

- Canada has about nine per cent of the world's forests. Each year over the last 25 years, about 7,300 forest fires have occurred. The total area burned varies widely from year to year, but averages about 2.5 million hectares annually.
- Only three per cent of all wildland fires that start

each year in Canada grow to more than 200 hectares in area. However, these fires account for 97 per cent of the total area burned across the country.

- Fire suppression costs over the last decade in Canada have ranged from about \$800-million to \$1.5-billion a year.

Source: Natural Resources Canada, June 7, 2023

Expected shifts in wildland fire patterns

- Climate change during the 21st century is expected to result in more frequent fires in many boreal forests, with severe environmental and economic consequences.
- From global climate models and scenarios, researchers are interpreting how climate change and climate variability may alter patterns of lightning, fuel moisture, temperature, precipitation and vegetation—all factors that can affect fire occurrence.
- Fire-prone conditions are predicted to increase across Canada. This could potentially result in a doubling of the amount of area burned by the end of this century, compared with amounts burned in recent decades. Boreal

forests, which have been greatly influenced by fire through history, will likely be especially affected by this change.

- Other climate change impacts that could add damaged or dead wood to the forest fuel load (for example, as a result of insect outbreaks, ice storms or high winds) may increase the risk of fire activity.
- New research is aimed at refining these climate change estimates of fire activity, and at investigating adaptation strategies and options to deal with future fire occurrence. There is growing consensus that as wildland fire activity increases, fire agency suppression efforts will be increasingly strained.

Source: Natural Resources Canada, 2022



Australian firefighters deployed to fight the Canadian wildfires inspect a scorched area after a fire passed through the area. Photograph courtesy of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

News

Hybrid House sittings will further boost PMO and opposition leaders' control over backbench MPs, says former Grit cabinet minister Easter

Liberals have weakened the accountability measures in the House, and should remember they will not be in power forever, says Bloc MP Alain Therrien.

Continued from page 1

plain about, 'well, nobody listens to me in the leader's office.' Well, they're gonna listen to you a heck of a lot less with this kind of plan in place than they are right now, because you're not going to be able to walk up to their office and say, 'listen, buddy, I disagree with you.'"

In a 171-137 vote last week, the House of Commons made 50 changes to the standing orders, making hybrid sittings permanent. These changes now allow MPs to participate in the House debates and committee work remotely. Also, MPs now will be able to vote electronically on specific pieces of legislation from anywhere in Canada.

One of the key reasons that the government has cited for these changes is to make Parliament more family friendly. Hybrid sittings were first introduced in the House at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 which made it impossible for MPs to take part in the House proceedings in-person.

Easter, who represented the riding of Malpeque from 1993-2021, said that it was understandable to have this arrangement in the COVID days, but now the House should be back for regular sittings. He said this new arrangement will affect all facets of an MP's parliamentary work, including House debates, committee meetings, caucus meetings, and the cut and thrust of daily Question Period, chiefly because of the lack of personal interactions amongst government and opposition MPs.

He said that a backbench MP's job—government or opposition—is to hold the executive to account, and that voting on specific pieces of legislation and committee work are some of the most important tools at their disposal for this objective. In the absence of in-person sittings, MPs can't exchange views, hold



Former Liberal cabinet minister Wayne Easter, who served for 28 years as an MP, says that the hybrid House sittings will further weaken MPs' role in holding the government to account. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

private discussions or build alliances to make informed decisions on how to vote in the House or in committees. Easter said that a key mistake that every government—whether Liberal or Conservative—makes is to take power away step by step from the opposition and their ability to hold the government to account. In this process, the governments of the day forget that they're not going to stay in power forever, he said.

"Because you're not there [in the House]," said Easter. "When you're in the House, you walk across and you talk to a member of like mind in your own party or in the other party, and you build a little alliance and you say that, 'well, let's go talk to the minister,' or 'let's get together and we'll vote this way.' You build alliances to challenge the powers that be you can't do that over zoom."

He said if the government wants to make parliamentary life more family friendly, the House administration should boost the services that MPs need to take care of their families. Easter said that MPs have been traveling to Ottawa and looking after their families for decades. The key difference is that now things are easier compared to 50 years ago. So, if an MP can't travel to Ottawa or take care of their family responsibilities, they should not run for this position.

He cited the example of Angus MacLean, a P.E.I. Progressive Conservative MP from 1951-1976, who used to come to Ottawa by train in January, return for a couple of weeks at Easter, then go back to Ottawa and stay until June. In those days, MPs did not even have constituency office staff. MacLean later served as his province's premier.

"That's the way it was. They didn't have constituency staff [back then]," Easter told *The Hill*

Times. "And our people today think this is hardship. It gets tiresome flying, I know, and I listened to [NDP MP] Peter Julian and others who, yes, they've been [on] a long flight from Vancouver. There's no question about that, we're a big country. Do you want to be an MP or not?"

He said the House sits for about half a year and even on those days, some MPs arrive in Ottawa on Monday mornings and leave Thursday evenings. He said he served in the House for about three decades and, in his opinion, an MP attending the House virtually is not the same as in-person. During his parliamentary career, he said, whenever there was a time when he or another MP needed time off for some family emergency, the whip's office always tried to accommodate their needs.

Nine-term Liberal MP Judy Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Ont.) disagreed with her former colleague. She said she supported the new hybrid model, as it was previously a challenge for MPs to take time from the House if they were dealing with a personal or family challenge. The reason for that, she said, was that the House leader's offices had to maintain a certain number of MPs present just in case there was a surprise vote, especially during minority governments. Sgro also disagreed that the new model would give more control to the PMO and opposition leaders' offices.

"You had to practically have somebody dying; otherwise, you had to be here," said Sgro. "It's so different with this hybrid, because if you've got an important medical appointment, you have flexibility now, you didn't have that before you had to be here. And that was it."

Conservative House Leader Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, Sask.) argued in an emailed

statement to *The Hill Times* on June 13 that permanent hybrid sittings in the House would lead to the cancellation of important committee meetings. House administration has had to cancel dozens of committee meetings in the current session because of a lack of resources to provide virtual participation, according to the statement.

"[Prime Minister] Justin Trudeau avoids accountability any chance he gets. He'd rather be on vacation. So it's no surprise he's permanently giving himself the ability to phone it in. Instead of working to help Canadians, who can barely pay their bills or put food on the table, this out of touch prime minister is using valuable time in Parliament to make his life easier," said Scheer in the emailed statement.

Conservatives will be "at the ready" throughout the summer, said Scheer in the statement.

"[Conservative Leader] Pierre Poilievre and the common sense Conservatives are calling on the Liberal government to cancel their vacations and work through the summer to tackle Trudeau's affordability crisis that Canadians will not get a holiday from. We called on the Liberals to scrap their disastrous budget that is making life more unaffordable for Canadians and start over," Scheer said in his statement.

MPs debated the proposal for permanent hybrid sittings in the House on June 12. Conservative MP John Nater (Perth—Wellington, Ont.) argued that the motion to introduce permanent hybrid sittings is an attempt by the Liberals to "unilaterally change the accepted rules" of Parliament without the consensus of all the parties.

"The changes the Liberal government is proposing would give even more power to the whips and party leaders, and take away the rights and privileges of individually duly elected parliamentarians. It is a fundamental principle in this place that the standing orders ought to be respected, and up until now, the changes ought to require consensus. It is clear from the debate thus far that the government does not have that consensus," Nater told the House. "The provisions for hybrid were brought in as temporary measures during the lockdowns of COVID-19. They were only there as a matter of necessity and should not be a permanent change so that members of Parliament can avoid this place."

Nater also argued that virtual meetings make it easier for Lib-

eral ministers to avoid interaction with the media and thereby avoid accountability.

Also on June 12, Bloc Québécois House Leader Alain Therrien (La Prairie, Que.) warned that Government House Leader Mark Holland (Ajax, Ont.) has set a precedent by proceeding according to the will of the majority, instead of obtaining unanimous consent.

"The Liberals will not be in power forever, even though that is what they believe. At some point, the Conservatives will be in power. What will happen the day that the member is in opposition and sees a Conservative government—probably with a majority eventually—unilaterally, on its own, decide how Parliament will work?" Therrien told the House in French. "How will he react when that poor example is followed by the Conservatives?"

Holland responded that the current situation is very different.

"It is possible for a majority government to change the rules, but in the current situation, another party, the NDP, supported the amendment," Holland told the House. "Also, the change to the standing orders was originally supported by all parties. In fact, every party uses this system every day here in the House."

Debate around hybrid sittings continued in the House on June 13, when Conservative and Bloc Québécois MPs continued to voice concerns about permanent hybrid sittings and the Liberal motion to make that change.

Bloc Québécois MP Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, Que.) told the House that there was an urgent need to set up a hybrid parliament during the pandemic, but that she sees no urgency at the moment that would require a permanent change to how the House works. She said the Liberal government is forcing a vote on a last-minute motion before Parliament rises for the summer.

"All of this landed on us out of the blue on June 8, when the government announced a motion that would have to be voted on before the House rose for the summer. In fact, the government practically threatened to stop us from leaving for our ridings this summer until this system is adopted, despite the fact that, as I mentioned already, there is no emergency," said Normandin in French to the House. "The parties were not consulted. Aside from the government talking to the NDP, no discussion was had and no letter sent. We were not told that the government wanted to table a notice of motion containing these elements."

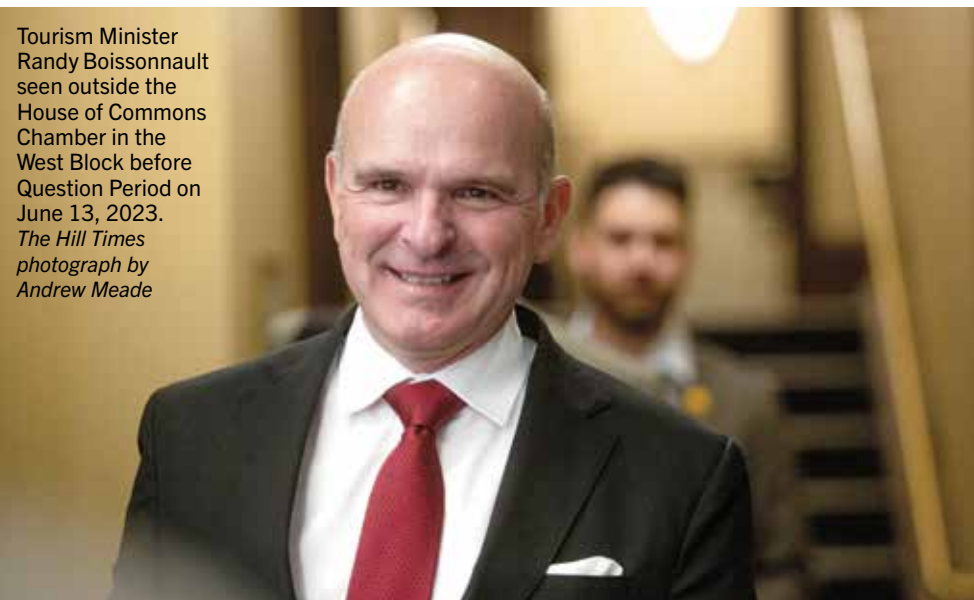
NDP House Leader Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, B.C.) told *The Hill Times* in an emailed statement that "the NDP will be supporting changes to continue with a hybrid Parliament. Being able to participate remotely ensures that, even if an MP gets sick or has an emergency in their riding, they are still able to make their constituents' voices heard by voting and speaking on issues that matter to Canadians."

arana@hilltimes.com
jcnockaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Laura Ryckewaert
Hill Climbers

Tourism Minister Boissonnault officially has a new comms director



Tourism Minister Randy Boissonnault seen outside the House of Commons Chamber in the West Block before Question Period on June 13, 2023. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Plus, Labour Minister Seamus O'Regan has a new Ontario regional affairs adviser, and Transport Minister Omar Alghabra is down an issues manager.

Tourism and Associate Finance Minister Randy Boissonnault officially has a new director of communications in his office, with Marie-Pier Baril having dropped "acting" from her title at the end of May.



Marie-Pier Baril is officially communications director to Minister Boissonnault. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Baril, who has been working for Boissonnault since the end of 2021, stepped in as acting communications director in May 2022 when Alexandra Bernier began her maternity leave.

Last month, Bernier officially ended her time working for the minister, and on Parliament Hill (at least for now). She's now busy as director of public affairs with National Public Relations in Québec City. A former Quebec Liberal staffer, Bernier

came to Ottawa in early 2016 to work as an advance in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office. She left almost three years later in late 2018 and spent time working off the Hill, including as an adviser with the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council's secretariat, before returning to work for Boissonnault after the 2021 election.

Baril officially took over as the minister's permanent new communications director on May 23.

A former email engagement co-ordinator for the federal Liberal Party, Baril landed her first ministerial role in the spring of 2018 when she was hired as deputy press secretary to then-foreign affairs minister Chrystia Freeland. At the start of 2020, Baril moved over to then-diversity, inclusion, and youth minister Bardish Chagger's office as manager of communications and issues management. A few months later, she moved offices again to become press secretary to then-women and

gender equality minister Maryam Monsef. Baril worked for Monsef until the 2021 election—which saw the two-term MP lose her seat—after which she joined Boissonnault's team.

Farrah-Lilia Kerkadi continues as press secretary to the minister, whose office is run by chief of staff Elliott Lockington.

Staff moves for ministers O'Regan and Alghabra

Labour Minister Seamus O'Regan has found a new Ontario regional affairs adviser for his office, with Eric Nicol having recently joined the minister's team.



Eric Nicol is now covering Ontario regional affairs for Minister O'Regan. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Nicol takes over from Julia Pennella, who's been juggling the Ontario desk, along with serving as an issues manager to O'Regan.

Pennella remains in the labour minister's office and will take over as acting director of parliamentary affairs in July, with current parliamentary affairs head Damien O'Brien set to go on paternity leave at the end of the month.



Transport Minister Omar Alghabra speaks with reporters on his way into a Liberal caucus meeting in the West Block on May 17. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



Julia Pennella will soon step in as acting director of parliamentary affairs to O'Regan. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

Nicol is a former assistant to Ottawa Liberal MP Yasir Naqvi—who's currently in the running to become the next leader of the Ontario Liberal Party. He began working for the MP after the 2021 federal election. Nicol has a bachelor's degree in political studies from Queen's University, and a master's degree in international relations and affairs from the University of Ottawa.

A former assistant to then-Toronto Liberal MP Adam Vaughan, Pennella has been working for Liberal ministers since early 2021, starting as an issues adviser to then-seniors minister Deb Schulte. After that year's federal election, she joined O'Regan's team as an issues manager. Pennella took over the Ontario desk last year.

Over in Transport Minister Omar Alghabra's office, issues manager Ellen Kennedy bade farewell in late May.

Kennedy had been working for Alghabra since March 2022. Starting as a special assistant for communications, she was promoted to her most recent role last November.

In more belated news, Patricia Sibal, who, as reported, left her post as a senior policy adviser to O'Regan in February, is now a senior policy adviser to the transport minister. She joined Alghabra's office under the same title in March.



Patricia Sibal is a senior policy adviser to the transport minister. *Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn*

An ex-government relations consultant with Crestview Strategy, Sibal began working on the Hill at the beginning of 2022, starting as a policy and Ontario regional affairs adviser to O'Regan. She was promoted to senior policy adviser there last fall.

Miled Hill is director of policy to Alghabra.

Of note: Angad Dhillon, who stepped in as acting chief of staff to the transport minister in February when Mike Maka left to run Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Minister Sean Fraser's office, has permanently taken over the role.

lryckewaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Stuart Benson

Party Central

Prime minister holds court at his garden party

Fresh off his Parliamentary Press Gallery Dinner snub, Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** got plenty of face-time with the oh-so-democratically integral fourth estate, hosting a large smattering of journalists, a handful of cabinet ministers, and political staffers at his annual media garden party on June 13.

As the asbestos-and-rat-infested 24 Sussex Dr.—the prime minister's official residence across the street—was closed by the National Capital Commission last November to complete long-awaited repairs, the highly anticipated and strictly off-the-record garden gathering was held at the Trudeau family's now-primary residence, Rideau Cottage, located on the grounds of Rideau Hall.

Following the long march down the cottage's side entrance driveway—with several RCMP cruisers, a surveillance van complete with a hovering drone, and an X-ray machine to scan attendees' bags awaiting our approach—**Party Central** and *The Hill Times* pre-party entourage arrived under the big white tent for what is likely the last social event of the calendar before the House adjourns.

While this particular regeneration of **Party Central** has not had the pleasure of attending the event previously, the new location was nice and spacious under the canopy of what is reportedly estimated to be a newer and larger big white tent. Additionally, as the various members of the media, ministers and MPs mingled, it became immediately apparent that this was, in fact, a Trudeau party.

While the first clue was the transition from a **Michael Bublé** song into a track by The Tragically Hip, there were also plenty of refreshing suds provided by garden party regular Nita Beer Company.

While noted IPA-enjoyer Trudeau opted for the Nita Biju, **Party Central** felt the still rather warm summer weather paired better with the Ten12 blonde ale.

Another Trudeau-favourite—and U.S. Secretary of State **Antony Blinken**-date-night locale—North and Navy were also on-hand, serving up plates of tuna tartare and *cacio e pepe* freshly made from a giant wheel of parmesan cheese.

Fellow Ottawa eateries Town/Citizen offered fresh shrimp-sandwich sliders, and *Sí Señor* handed out plenty of *tinga de pollo* tostadas and vegetarian pastor tacos, as well as the Merry Dairy, dishing out scoops of salted caramel and hibiscus passionfruit ice cream, all served in eco-conscious, biodegradable containers.

In the spirit of recycling, the napkins provided with the various passed appetizers seemingly were still emblazoned with "24 Sussex" in gold lettering, reportedly in an attempt to put a dent in the "boxes" of the things, as Trudeau reportedly told the *National Post*'s **Bryan Passifiume**.

As Trudeau and his wife **Sophie Grégoire Trudeau** held court with a rotating circle of journo, **Party Central** is also certain eldest son **Xavier Trudeau** made an appearance to take advantage of some of the free food beckoning from his front lawn. It's his house, too.

There were also about a dozen of Trudeau's cabinet ministers in attendance,

including Environment Minister **Steven Guilbeault**, Intergovernmental Affairs Minister **Dominic LeBlanc**, Mental Health and Addictions Minister **Carolyn Bennett**, Treasury Board President **Mona Fortier**, Northern Affairs Minister **Dan Vandal**, Official Languages Minister **Ginette Petitpas Taylor**, Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister **Marc Miller**, Rural Economic Development Minister **Gudie Hutchings**, and National Resources Minister **Jonathan Wilkinson**.

Members of the PMO included chief of staff **Katie Telford**, deputy chief of staff **Brian Clow**, and senior adviser **Ben Chin**, alongside Clerk of the Privy Council **Janice Charette** (who's retiring on June 24) and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs **David Morrison**.

There were also plenty of ministers' staffers in attendance, including a notably stressed handful from Public Safety Minister **Marco Mendicino**'s office. **Party Central** also finally got to put an in-person face to a name for a handful of staffers this reporter regularly connects with to try and speak with their boss, including **Zachary Caldwell**, Bennett's director of communications, and **Riyadh Nazerally**, director of communications for WAGE Minister **Marci Ien**.

The Hill Times' newsroom was there in near-full force, including **Charelle Evelyn**, **Laura Ryckewaert**, **Stephen Jeffery**, **Chelsea Nash**, **Christina Leadlay**, **Kevin Philipupillai**, **Neil Moss**, **Andrew Meade**, and **Mike Lapointe**, as well as *Hill Times Research*'s **Tessie Sanci**, *The Wire Report*'s **Paul Park**, and *Parliament Now*'s **Katie Schultz**. There were also several *Hill Times* publishing alumni in the crowd, including *The Globe and Mail*'s **Bill Curry**, *The Narwhal*'s **Carl Meyer**; *The Canadian Press*' **Marie-Danielle Smith**; *National Post*'s **Anja Karadeglija**; *CTV News*' **Rachel Aiello**; and *Politico*'s **Kyle Duggan**.

CBC's **Catherin Cullen**, **Evan Dyer**, and **Elizabeth Thompson** were also spotted, alongside *Power & Politics* host **David Cochrane**, who presumably jumped in an Uber the second the show was finished.

Costa Rica-bound **John Ivison** of the *National Post* was also spotted alongside his colleagues **Chris Nardi**, **Ryan Tumilty**, and **Catherine Levesque**, as well as *The Globe and Mail*'s **Ian Bailey** and **Campbell Clark**.

Le Journal de Québec's **Guillaume St-Pierre** (who is currently president of the Parliamentary Press Gallery), *Politico*'s **Zi-Ann Lum**, *The Logic*'s **Murad Hemmadi**, Reuters' **Steven Scheer**, freelancer **Dale Smith**, and *The Toronto Star*'s **Althia Raj** and **Tonda MacCharles** rounded out the journo contingent.

Looking back, it was nice to have a quiet garden party with colleagues before Bell Media's "Red Wedding" layoffs the following day—though **Party Central** hears those incredibly talented and hard-working journalists at the short end of the downsizing stick threw one hell of a party at the Métropolitain Brasserie later that night.

sbenson@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, centre, enjoys a cold Nita Biju IPA with David Schellenberg, left, of Operation Come Home; Tommy Desfossés, James Grant, Nita chief beer officer Andy Nita, and Sophie Grégoire Trudeau. Photograph courtesy of David Schellenberg



The Prime Minister's Garden Party on June 13 at Rideau Cottage. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau holds court with Radio-Canada's Valerie-Micaela Bain, left, the *Toronto Star*'s Tonda MacCharles, and *Le Journal de Québec*'s Guillaume St-Pierre, right. Photograph courtesy of Jason Leroux, APTN



A chef from North and Navy prepares cacio e pepe, pasta with cheese and pepper, in a giant wheel of parmesan cheese. The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson



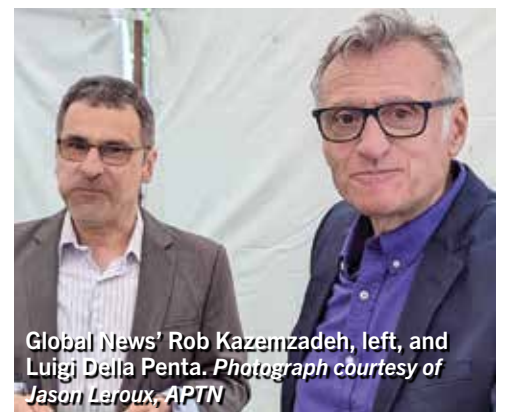
Cacio e pepe and tuna tartare provided by North and Navy. The Hill Times photograph by Chelsea Nash



The prime minister's garden party was held this year at Rideau Cottage on June 13, though the monogrammed napkins didn't get the memo. Photograph courtesy of Brian Passifiume



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau talks to the soon-to-be retiring CPAC's Dan Fonda. Photograph courtesy of Jason Leroux, APTN



Global News' Rob Kazemzadeh, left, and Luigi Della Penta. Photograph courtesy of Jason Leroux, APTN

Parliamentary Calendar

House scheduled to adjourn for summer on June 23, set to resume sitting again on Sept. 18



She's out of here: Canada's federal Minister of Sport Pascale St-Onge, pictured on the Hill. The House is scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23 and will resume sitting on Sept. 18. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

MONDAY, JUNE 19

House Sitting—This is the final sitting week for the House, which is scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23. It will break for 12 weeks (June 23-Sept. 18) and will resume sitting on Monday, Sept. 18. It will sit for three weeks (Sept. 18-Oct. 6), and will adjourn on Friday, Oct. 6, for a week. It will resume sitting on Monday, Oct. 16, and will sit for four consecutive weeks (Oct. 16-Nov. 10). It will break for one week (Nov. 13-17) and will resume sitting on Monday, Nov. 20, and will sit for four weeks (Nov. 20-Dec. 15). It's scheduled to return on Monday, Jan. 29, 2024.

Four Byelections Take Place Today—Byelections will be held in the following four electoral districts: Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Que.; Oxford, Ont.; Portage—Lisgar, Man.; and Winnipeg South Centre, Man.

2023 World Development Report launch—The Aga Khan Foundation Canada and Cooperation Canada host the launch of the 2023 World Development Report. Report co-director Çağlar Özden will discuss the World Bank's proposed framework to maximize the positive impact of global migration. Other participants include Rema Jamous Imseis, UN High Commissioner for Refugees representative to Canada; and Daniel Rubenson, Metaketa researcher and professor at Toronto Metropolitan University. Monday, June 19 at 4:30 p.m. ET at the Delegation of the Ismaili Imam, 199 Sussex Dr. Register via Eventbrite.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

Bluesky Strategy's Ice Cream Social—Bluesky Strategy Group is marking its 20 years in business with an ice cream social on Tuesday, June 20, 12-2 p.m., 35 O'Connor St. Look for the Merry Dairy truck out in front of the Bluesky Strategy Group's office. Bring a toonie and Bluesky will match all proceeds to the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa. RSVP: RSVP@BlueskyStrategyGroup.com.

Panel: 'Brain Injury, Mental Health and the Military'—Former Liberal

cabinet minister and hockey hall of famer Ken Dryden will take part in this brown-bag lunch on "Brain Injury, Mental Health and the Military Profession" hosted by the CDA Institute and the Concussion Legacy Foundation. Other participants include MGen (Ret'd) Denis Thompson, colonel of the Regiment for the Royal Canadian Regiment; Dr. Samantha Bureau, director of International Programs, Concussion Legacy Foundation; and Tim Fleischer, executive director, Concussion Legacy Foundation of Canada. Tuesday, June 20 at 12 p.m. ET at the KPMG Offices, Suite 1800, 150 Elgin St. Details: cdainstitute.ca.

Webinar: 'Indigenous Insights on Accessibility and Disability'—In honour of National Indigenous History Month, the Canadian Accessibility Network hosts a webinar, "Pathways to Change: Indigenous Insights on Accessibility and Disability," a panel discussion to raise awareness about the unique barriers and realities faced by Indigenous persons with disabilities. Tuesday, June 20 at 11:30 a.m. ET happening online. Details: events.carleton.ca.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21

OAS General Assembly—The LIII Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States will take place from June 2-23, 2023, at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C.

THURSDAY, JUNE 22

Mayor's Breakfast—Ontario Minister of Transport Caroline Mulroney is the special guest at the Mayor's Breakfast, hosted by Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe, the Ottawa Board of Trade and the *Ottawa Business Journal*. Monday, June 19 at 8 a.m. ET at Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Ave. W. Details: businessottawabot.ca.

Webinar: 'Rethinking the Role of the CAF in Emergency Response'—The CDA Institute hosts a webinar on "The Future of Domestic Operations: Rethinking the Role of the CAF in Emergency Response." A panel of experts will discuss how can the Canadian Armed

Forces optimize their involvement in domestic emergency response without compromising their primary mission of defending Canada against external threats, and can the creation of a multi-sector intervention force improve the coordination and effectiveness of emergency response efforts in Canada? Thursday, June 22 at 10 a.m. ET online. Register at cdainstitute.ca.

Munk Debate on AI—The Munk Debates presents "Be it resolved, AI research and development poses an existential threat." Arguing in favour of the motion are Yoshua Bengio, professor at Université de Montréal; and Max Tegmark, professor doing artificial intelligence and physics research at MIT. Arguing against are Yann LeCun, vice-president and chief AI scientist at Meta and Silver Professor at NYU; and Melanie Mitchell, professor at the Santa Fe Institute. Thursday, June 22. Details online.

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

Senators Host Chinese Exclusion Act Anniversary—ISG Senator Yuen Pau Woo and Conservative Senator Victor Oh, in partnership with Action! Chinese Canadians Together, will host a National Remembrance Ceremony to mark the 100th Anniversary of the Introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Friday, June 23, in the Senate Chamber, at 3 p.m. ET in the Senate Chamber. Details: chineseexclusioncentenary.ca.

TUESDAY, JUNE 27

Webinar: 'The Endless Indigenous Water Controversy'—The Macdonald-Laurier Institute hosts a webinar, "The Endless Indigenous Water Controversy." First Nations leaders with direct experience in the water sector will speak to the challenges they face, the progress that's been made, and lay out the extensive work that still needs to be done to bring Indigenous water services up to national standards. Tuesday, June 17 at 11:30 a.m. ET happening online. Register via Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28

AFN Special Chiefs' Assembly—The Assembly of First Nations hosts a Special Chiefs Assembly to determine an appropriate remedy, if any, resulting from the human resources investigation which may include, but is not limited to, the removal of the national chief from office. This event will take place online. Details: afn.ca.

FRIDAY, JULY 7—SUNDAY, JULY 30

Theatre: Affairs of State—The Classic Theatre Festival and *The Hill Times* present Louis Verneuil's *Affairs of State*, a rediscovered post-Second World War comedic gem that originally ran two years on Broadway. This funny, intriguing story about diplomatic deals and double-crosses behind closed doors in Washington, D.C., features a memorable love quadrangle that threatens the appointment of a new under-secretary of state. Revisit an age when satirical comedies were smart, sassy, insightful, and fun, with all the wit and charm of the Turner Classic Movies era. Eight shows a week. *Hill Times* readers enjoy 20 per cent dis-

count tickets with the HTAF code. Arts Court Theatre, 2 Daly Ave., Ottawa. For information, classictheatre.ca, 613-695-9330.

MONDAY, JULY 10—WEDNESDAY, JULY 12

Premiers' Summer Meeting—Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson, chair of the Council of the Federation, will host the 2023 summer meeting of

Canada's premiers. Monday, July 10 to Wednesday, July 12 at the Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg. Details: canadaspremiers.ca.

TUESDAY, JULY 11—THURSDAY, JULY 13

Assembly of First Nations AGM—The Assembly of First Nations hosts its 44th Annual General Assembly. Tuesday, July 11-Thursday July 13 at the Halifax Convention Centre, 1650 Argyle St. Details: afn.ca.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

Forfeiting Russia's Billions to Rebuild Ukraine—The World Refugee & Migration Council, the Embassy of Ukraine and the Parliamentary Centre Present: Forfeiting Russia's Billions to Rebuild Ukraine, June 20, 4 p.m.-6 p.m., followed by a reception. The Rideau Club, 99 Bank St., Ottawa. RSVP: <https://forms.gle/AkGVYcs9UfXjXmN6>

THE HILL TIMES CLASSIFIEDS

CONDO FOR RENT



LOVELY BUNGALOW GARDEN HOME AT THE FOOT OF SKI VORLAGE IN WAKEFIELD, QC.

2 bedrooms, large kitchen with appliances, large dining and living rooms, with flat screen TV. Available for long-term rental occupancy as of July 8, 2023. Fully furnished if desired. Rent is \$2,200.00 per month. Walking distance from doctors' clinic, pharmacy, English primary school, grocery store, restaurants, downhill skiing at Vorlage, and Wakefield pickleball. 20 minutes from downtown Ottawa. Details and more photos available on request. Phone (819) 827-1014, email gandmlegault@sympatico.ca.

Information and advertisement placement: 613-232-5952 ext. 263 classifieds@hilltimes.com

Do you have a house to rent or sell? Items or products to sell?

Advertise them in The Hill Times' classifieds section.

classifieds@hilltimes.com
613-232-5952

NOW LEASING

60 STANLEY



APARTMENTS
1 & 2 Bedrooms
from \$2,100s monthly

WALK TO WORK?

Rent a suite at 60 STANLEY Ave., minutes from Global Affairs Canada.

19 corner apartments, new kitchens, in-suite laundry, parking and more.

Visit www.rockshirerealty.com

(613) 416-2957 60stanley@rockshirerealty.com

Rockshire Realty Inc.
270 MacLaren St., Ottawa ON K2P 0M3

EQOE. Prices and plans subject to change without notice. Subject to availability.

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.

Inside Ottawa 2023

Power & Influence



Inside Ontario 2023

Power & Influence

Order your package today!



This year's Ontario guide includes:

- Legislature key contacts
- Members of the legislative assembly with photos
- Cabinet minister offices and their key political staff contacts
- Party roles, ministers and critics
- Opposition contacts
- Agencies of Parliament
- Media contacts
- Committee members and clerks
- Sitting calendar for 2023
- Seat breakdown

This year's Ottawa guide includes:

- MP profiles with current photos, Hill and constituency contact info, and riding details from latest census
- House committee clerks, membership and photos
- PMO and PCO staff contacts
- Cabinet ministers' staff contacts
- Speaker's office contacts
- List of ministers, parliamentary secretaries and opposition critics
- 2023 sitting calendars for House and Senate



The ubiquitous little pocket guide to Parliament Hill:
The Inside Ottawa Directory 2023 &
The Inside Ontario Directory 2023 is now on sale.

<https://www.hilltimes.com/product/inside-ottawa-and-inside-ontario-package/circulation@hilltimes.com> • 613-688-8821

