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THE HILL TIMES

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CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

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NEWS

Senate Conservatives stall Online Streaming Act, insist government accept Upper Chamber's amendments

BY CHRISTOPHER GULY

The controversial Online Streaming Act (Bill C-11), which has been bounced between

the House and Senate since it first passed the House last June, hit another road block in the Upper Chamber last week.

It happened after Conservative Senator Don Plett (Manitoba-Landmark) introduced an amendment to a motion intro-

duced on April 18 by Quebec Senator Marc Gold (Stadacona), which called for agreement on the amendments made by the

House of Commons to the Online Streaming Act and that the Sen-

Continued on page 6

NEWS

Next election expected to be even nastier, and Trudeau will have to prove he still has 'gas in his tank,' say political players

To win the next election, Justin Trudeau needs to redefine himself as 'a safe and reasonable choice,' compared to Pierre Poilievre, says Clive Veroni, but it's going to get downright nasty, say pollsters.

BY ABBAS RANA

The next federal election campaign is expected to be one of the nastiest in recent history, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will have



The current political players: Justin Trudeau, left, Pierre Poilievre, Chrystia Freeland, Yves-François Blanchet, Mélanie Joly, Elizabeth May, and Jagmeet Singh. To win the next election, Trudeau and his team will have to prove to voters that they still have ideas that will improve Canadians' quality of life. The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade and compilation by Neena Singhal

Continued on page 32

NEWS

Uptick in violent crime 'definitely has political implications,' say pollsters, as Conservatives' push for bail reform, tough-on-crime policies lays groundwork for campaign

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Following an uptick in violent crime across the country in recent months, pollster Frank Graves says the rise is "real and definitely has political implications," with pollster Nik Nanos saying increasing calls from the Conservatives blaming the government for the problem is laying the groundwork for the next election "so that [Pierre Poilievre's] on the record for being tough on crime."

"What's happening to our cities after eight years of Trudeau and his crazy coalition with the NDP? I'll tell you what's happening: Tuesday morning, Calgary,

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Mike Lapointe
Heard On The Hill

Policy magazine celebrates 10 years covering Canada's political and policy landscape



Happy Anniversary, Policy mag: From left to right, contributors to the 10th anniversary edition of *Policy* magazine include editor and publisher L. Ian MacDonald, associate editor and deputy publisher Lisa Van Dusen, Conservative strategist Geoff Norquay, pollster and pundit Allan Gregg, and award-winning broadcaster Don Newman. Photographs courtesy of Twitter, Lisa Van Dusen, Geoff Norquay, James Park/Carleton University and The Hill Times photograph by Cynthia Münster

Contributors and readers gathered for a working lunch to celebrate 10 years since the launch of *Policy* magazine at Ottawa's legendary Rideau Club on April 18. Contributors to the magazine's 10th anniversary edition include **Thomas S. Axworthy**, who served as principal secretary to prime minister **Pierre Trudeau** during the negotiation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations **Perry Bellegarde**; associate professor and director of the School of

Public Administration at Dalhousie University **Lori Turnbull**; **John Delacourt**, senior vice-president at Counsel Public Affairs; pollster and pundit **Allan R. Gregg**, who's now at Earncliffe Strategies; **Geoff Norquay**, who served director of communications to former prime minister **Stephen Harper** during his time as leader of the opposition; award-winning broadcaster **Don Newman**; and the magazine's associate editor, **Lisa Van Dusen**. Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**'s long-time official photographer, **Adam Scotti**, also

contributed a piece on a decade of Canadian images. Scotti's image of Trudeau graced the cover of the magazine's first-ever issue in April 2013. *Policy* magazine's editor and publisher, **L. Ian MacDonald**, a former columnist for the *Montreal Gazette* and ex-speechwriter to former prime minister **Brian Mulroney**, told *The Hill Times* that, from the outset, the magazine never wanted to establish a retail product. MPs and Senators receive the printed version of the magazine in their offices, and press gallery

members, along with members of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Business Council of Canada, also have ready access to copies. Advertisers in the publication include some big-ticket Canadian companies, such as Barrick Gold and CN. When asked about his outlook on the publication's next 10 years, MacDonald said "hopefully, when the next technological revolution occurs, we won't get swamped by it and we'll be here in 10 years and 15 years and carry on."

This just in: Parliamentary Press Gallery has a new executive, kind of

The Parliamentary Press Gallery has a new executive and everyone was acclaimed. **Guillaume St-Pierre**, a reporter for *Le Journal de Québec*, is continuing as president. **Louis Blouin**, a reporter for Radio-Canada, is back as the vice-president; CBC News reporter **Elizabeth Thompson** stays on as treasurer, while CBC News reporter **John Paul Tasker** remains secretary.

The executive's six directors were all acclaimed, as well. They are: CTV reporter **Rachel Hanes**; *Toronto Star* reporter **Stephanie Levitz**; *The Hill Times* interim digital editor **Chelsea Nash**; *Le Devoir*'s **Boris Proulx**; The Canadian Press' **Mia Rabson**; and Radio-Canada reporter **David Richard**.



Le Journal de Québec's Guillaume St-Pierre is continuing as Parliamentary Press Gallery president. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Former directors **Luigi Della Penta**, from Global News; **Émilie Bergeron**, from La Presse Canadienne; and **Catherine Lévesque**, from the *National Post* did not run again for the executive. And that's all, folks.

Donald Savoie has new book out, *Canada: Beyond Grudges, Grievances, and Disunity*

Donald Savoie, one of the country's most respected scholars and a leading expert on the machinery of government, has a new book out, *Canada: Beyond Grudges, Grievances, and Disunity*. "The Canadian federal government has shown a greater willingness to apologize for historical wrongs than other Western countries and has also outperformed other nations in helping victims make the transition to full participants in the country's political and economic life," reads the book's back jacket. "Savoie maintains that Canada continues to thrive despite the many shortcomings in its national political institutions and the tendency of Canadians to see themselves as victims, and that our history and these shortcomings have taught us the art of compromise. Canada's Constitution and its political institutions amplify rather than attenuate victimization; however, they have also enabled Canadians to manage the issue better than other countries. Canadians also recognize that the alternative to Canada is worse, and this more than anything else continues to strengthen national unity" the jacket continues. "Drawing on his extensive experience in academe and as an adviser to governments, Savoie provides new insights into how Canada works for Canadians." The book is 329 pages long and is published by McGill-Queen's University Press. mlapointe@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Monday's photo

Holocaust Remembrance Day:

Holocaust survivor Cantor Kraus at the Yom HaShoah commemoration service at the National Holocaust Monument in Ottawa on April 18, 2023. The prime minister and other political leaders spoke at the event commemorating the estimated six million Jews killed in the Holocaust by Nazi Germany.

The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade



The clean-up of dirty money has officially launched

The Liberal government announced a suite of fairly remarkable measures to tackle money laundering with its recent budget. These long-overdue initiatives will enhance the detection, policing, and prosecution of money laundering.

Mary-Jane Bennett

Opinion



You might have missed it, but the Liberal government announced a suite of fairly remarkable measures to tackle money laundering with its recent budget. These long-overdue initiatives will enhance

the detection, policing, and prosecution of money laundering.

The process of making cash gained by criminal means appear as if it was generated by legitimate work has become big business in Canada.

Criminals are washing as much as \$133-billion in the country every year according to the Criminal Intelligence Service of Canada, the country's organized crime intelligence unit. The agency recently reported strong links between money laundering and two priority drug markets: cocaine and methamphetamine.

In British Columbia, money from drug trafficking is often laundered through real estate purchases. By 2015, half of Greater Vancouver house sales were through shell corporations that serve to hide the identity of the real owner.

Criminals can create these dummy companies to hide their true identities. Dirty money cannot move undetected through the economy without them. That's why *The Economist* calls them "the getaway cars of financial crime."

With the recent budget, the government renewed its commitment to have private companies maintain a searchable register clearly establishing the true or beneficial owner of these shell companies. Until now, that person or entity

could easily remain hidden behind corporate filings.

The step is long overdue. A decade ago, G20 leaders, including Canada, agreed to create these registries, what the signing documents labelled a "priority concern."

Five years later, Canada finally inked agreements with the provinces and territories committing them to make the necessary amendments to their Corporations Acts to enact provincial registries. In 2019, the federal government amended the federal Corporation Act to require registries for federally registered companies.

A single registry—under federal criminal law power—would have been a far better approach. Between 2019 and 2022, nine provinces changed their Corporations Acts to require provincial registries clearly listing ownership in companies created in their provinces. But Alberta and the three territories have yet to amend their Corporations Act to launch their own.

Further, the approach and reach of the registers vary widely across the provinces. Quebec is in the vanguard position in requiring those companies who do business (MSBs) in the province—but were incorporated elsewhere—to also register in Quebec. Its registry will include partnerships and trusts ensuring transparency to those arrangements set up to shelter assets from

creditors or tax authorities, for example. The federal register along with Quebec's will be publicly searchable, with possible exemptions. In other provinces, the extent of a registry's availability is restricted to tax and police authorities with varying degrees of access to other authorities, such as securities commissions or financial regulators.

While the register's benefit is weakened by the lack of a standard approach, the recent budget is clearly innovative in other respects. To address money laundering and terrorist financing, the government will consider new laws, such as Unexplained Wealth Order legislation along with renewed investigative and criminalization powers. One, for money services businesses, is long overdue.

While Canada's big banks have policies in place to ensure that mandated reporting and compliance requirements are met, so-called money services businesses—like bureaux de change and foreign money transfer firms—don't always have similar risk assessment and reporting obligations set up. For this reason, they have become the drug traffickers' financial institution of choice. MSBs—there are more than 650 in Canada, according to the Financial Action Task Force, the global anti-money laundering standards-setter—have also been used in terrorist financing.

Clearly more measures are needed to close loopholes and other legislative gaps. Canadians, however, should be aware that the clean-up of dirty money has officially launched.

Mary-Jane Bennett, BA, LLB, practised law in Manitoba and British Columbia, and recently released a paper on money laundering for Massey College, University of Toronto.

The Hill Times

FOREST PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE FROM WITHIN

Derek Nighbor, President and CEO, and the Board of Directors of Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) are pleased to announce the following staff promotions.



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Learn more about our team here: <https://www.fpac.ca/about-forest-products/team/>



News

Private, public sector unions fall in line behind PSAC in solidarity in early days of one of the biggest strikes in Canadian history

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, UNIFOR, and the Canadian Labour Congress have all expressed their solidarity and support for the Public Service Alliance of Canada's strike action.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

Unions representing both private and public sector employees across Canada have lined up in solidarity with the Public Service Alliance of Canada, who have voted to strike over the failure to reach a collective bargaining agreement with the federal government, and began picketing on April 19.

On Monday, April 17, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) national president Chris Aylward announced that the union had placed a time limit on negotiations between his union and the federal government. On April 18, the union announced it was in a legal strike position, starting at 12:01 a.m. the next day.

Thousands of workers, many in Ottawa and on Parliament Hill but also across Canada, then took to the picket lines.

"We truly hoped we wouldn't be forced to take strike action, but we've exhausted every other avenue to reach a fair contract for Canada's federal public service workers," said Aylward in a late-night statement on April 18. "Now more than ever, workers need fair wages, good working conditions and inclusive workplaces. And it's clear the only way we'll achieve that is by taking strike action to show the government that workers can't wait."

Bea Bruske, president of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), told *The Hill Times* that "there's never been any question that we wouldn't support any of our affiliates who are at the bargaining table to reach a fair deal for their members."

"Knowing what the cost is of absolutely everything with the rate of inflation, these workers, just like all other workers are



Public Service Alliance of Canada members picket the Treasury Board Secretariat office at 90 Elgin Street on April 20, 2023. Thousands of federal public service workers in Canada's largest public service union have been on strike since April 19. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

feeling a significant pinch," said Bruske.

The CLC is the largest labour organization in Canada, bringing together dozens of national and international unions, provincial and territorial federations of labour and community-based labour councils, and represents more than three million workers across the country, according to their website.

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, the federal government's second largest union behind PSAC, announced on April 18 that they would be suspending consultation with the federal government at the request of PSAC, effective April 19.

This includes consultation with federal government employers within all Treasury Board Secretariat departments, federal Crown Corporations, the Canada Revenue Agency and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency "until such time as the PSAC strike has concluded," according to PIPSC president Jennifer Carr, who was seen on the picket lines in Ottawa last week.

Unifor, Canada's largest private sector union, also expressed solidarity with PSAC, indicating that "during this crucial period, we stand alongside PSAC's 155,000 sisters and brothers" at the union in their conflict with the Treasury Board and the Canada Revenue Agency.

"We wish to express our unwavering solidarity on behalf of 315,000 Unifor members and our support for all PSAC members who are confronted with the necessity to strike in order to obtain the respect they deserve," according to an April 19 statement, signed by national president Lana

Payne, national secretary-treasurer Len Poirier, and Québec director Daniel Cloutier.

"We understand the challenges you are facing and we stand by you in this fight," according to the statement.

McGill University sociology professor Barry Eidlin, who studies class, politics, social movements, and institutional change, said he was not surprised that a number of other unions have issued statements of solidarity with PSAC.

"It's not unprecedented, but it's also not taken for granted," said Eidlin. "But I will say that I think I do get the sense that there's sort of a moment of labour unity that we're seeing now—and I'm not just referring to the PSAC situation—but just more broadly, there is just more of a sense of needing to stand together," said Eidlin.

PSAC, and the Union of Taxation Employees, a component of PSAC representing 35,000 workers, have emphasized that 155,000 workers were now in a strike position.

But according to the *Ottawa Citizen*, the approximate number of PSAC members nationally ranges from between 155,000 to 163,000. Of those, 128,000 are eligible to strike, as 35,000 were deemed to be essential workers. Approximately 100,000 PSAC workers joined the picket line on April 19, and those on strike make \$75 per day in strike pay.

And according to *National Post* reporting on April 21, barely one-third of 120,000 striking federal public servants in PSAC cast a ballot during a vote described as having "major irregularities" that raise "significant concern" for the federal labour board.

'I can't stress enough how disappointing this is,' said Treasury Board President as strike descends

"I can't stress enough how disappointing this is, based on the progress we've made at the negotiating table," said Treasury Board President Mona Fortier (Ottawa-Vanier, Ont.) in an April 19 press conference. "This is not where we should be."

Fortier said the two sides have been able to resolve a number of issues through mediation, and put a "fair competitive wage offer on the table."

The government presented a nine per cent wage increase for PSAC over three years, as well as proposals on telework, shift premiums, improved leave with pay, and measures to support employment equity and diversity and inclusion. Publicly, the union has been looking for a 4.5 per cent increase every year over three years.

"The government has been waiting for almost a year for PSAC to come back to the table since our first offer so we can negotiate a deal with employees," said Fortier, who said public servants work very hard for Canadians.

"However we cannot sign a blank cheque," said Fortier, who said "numerous" PSAC demands are "unrealistic" and some would have "grave repercussions" on the capacity of the government to provide services to Canadians.

Workers at the Canada Revenue Agency, whose union represents 35,000 workers and is a component of PSAC, has also voted for a strike mandate, and

were among those who picketed on Parliament Hill.

Players keeping a close eye on potential for back-to-work legislation

In an open letter addressed to Fortier on April 19, Bruske reinforced CLC's "strong opposition" to any attempt by the federal government to introduce back-to-work legislation against federal public-sector workers who are members of PSAC.

In response to a call from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) to ensure all departments maintain full service to small business, continue negotiation to ensure a long-term and affordable collective bargaining agreement is signed, and prepare back to work legislation should strike action last more than a few days, the CLC's letter to Fortier said "we are in total disagreement with the push by the [CFIB] for back-to-work legislation."

"It is wrong of them to ask the government to violate these workers' rights and to misrepresent PSAC's demands," wrote Bruske. "For Canadians and small businesses to have the services they rely on, we need strong public service and high quality public services. The best and only way to ensure continued high-quality public services for Canada's small businesses is for the government to negotiate a fair deal."

When asked about the possibility of back-to-work legislation, Bruske told *The Hill Times* that she thought it's "always a possibility," pointing to the government's use of legislation during the Port of Montreal strike in 2020 as well as with Canada postal workers in 2018.

NDP House Leader Peter Julian (New Westminster-Burnaby, B.C.) made an appearance on Parliament Hill's grounds early on April 19 alongside NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby, B.C.), who waded into the crowd taking selfies and walking arm-in-arm with workers.

Julian told *The Hill Times* that morning that the workers assembled in front of Parliament "are very determined."

"And they should be. We've seen the federal government contracting out, spending hundreds of millions of dollars on consultants rather than providing the supports for the front-line workers that are absolutely so essential," said Julian, who also noted the affordability crisis Canadians are now navigating.

Julian emphasized that the NDP would "absolutely not" support any back-to-work legislation.

"You've got Pierre Poilievre who's supported back-to-work legislation every single time. The Conservatives are very anti-workers, they really believe in cultivating billionaires rather than providing supports for front-line workers," said Julian. "And so there is no doubt in our mind that the Conservatives will, as they do, have a knee-jerk reaction for back to work legislation. The NDP will oppose it as we have consistently."

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News

Senate Conservatives stall Online Streaming Act, insist government accept Upper Chamber's amendments

The controversial Online Streaming Act, which the House first passed last June, is back in the Senate again, and is expected to be voted on this week.

Continued from page 1

ate “not insist on its amendments to which the House of Commons disagrees.”

Gold’s amendment added that the Red Chamber took note of the federal government’s “stated intent that Bill C-11 will not apply to user-generated digital content and its commitment to issue policy direction to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission [CRTC] accordingly.”

The next day, Manitoba Senator Raymond Gagné, Gold’s legislative deputy in the Senate, proposed amending the motion to replace the words “stated intent” with “public assurance.”

In response, Plett, who is the Opposition leader in the Senate, said the Upper Chamber was given no notice of the government amendment and successfully obtained an adjournment to the debate “to review this a little more.”

On April 20, Plett presented his own amendment in which the Senate would “insist on its amendments to which the House of Commons disagrees” and that the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications “be charged with drawing up the reasons for the Senate’s insistence on its amendments.”

Plett’s amendment will be voted on this week.

Previously, Senators made 26 amendments to 12 clauses of the 50-page bill that was sent to the Commons following an exhaustive June-to-December review last year by the Senate’s Transport and Communications Committee, the longest study ever conducted by a Senate committee.

In an April 20 statement, Plett said that the federal Liberals “decided to reject the most substantive and important Senate amendments on Bill C-11,” including “one which sought to exclude the social media posts of ordinary Canadians from regulation.”



Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez, pictured recently in a Hill scrum, told members of the Senate Transport and Communications Committee last November: ‘When it comes to this bill, the platforms are in; the users are out. This bill is simply about platforms paying their fair share toward our culture.’ But the Conservatives aren’t buying it. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

“The government’s rejection of this amendment should alarm all Canadians,” said Plett. “It confirms the fears that so many witnesses expressed to the Senate committee studying the bill: that ordinary Canadian creators may well become targets for the CRTC.”

With only 15 Conservatives serving in the 105-seat Senate (with 16 vacancies), Plett’s amendment won’t likely pass. But it has stalled the passing of a bill Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Que.) expected to receive royal assent two months ago—a year after he introduced it in the House as a successor to Bill C-10, which his predecessor, now-Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, Que.) tabled in November 2020.

At the Canadian Media Producers Association’s (CMPA’s) annual Prime Time conference in Ottawa this past February, Rodriguez said the government would support any or all amendments as long as none of them “weaken” the objective for a “modern bill” recognizing that “we’ve changed the way we look at things.”

“A telephone has become a television, and we can shoot or edit on a tablet,” he said.

The federal Liberals obtained support from both the Bloc Québécois and the NDP to accept 20 of the Senate’s 26 amendments, including two with modifications, and pass the House

a second time, on March 30, by a 202-117 vote.

The Online Streaming Act, which amends the 32-year-old Broadcasting Act to bring it into the digital age, would, in part, require a “foreign online undertaking,” such as Netflix, to “contribute in an equitable manner to strongly support the creation, production and presentation of Canadian programming.”

Bill C-11’s goal is to ensure “that Canadian talent can succeed both here and abroad,” Rodriguez told members of the Senate Transport and Communications Committee last November.

“I’ve heard concerns, as we all have, about social media and social media creators,” Rodriguez said. “But this bill is not about them. Social media creators can continue to create and succeed, just as they do right now.”

“When it comes to this bill, the platforms are in; the users are out,” the minister said. “This bill is simply about platforms paying their fair share toward our culture.”

But not everyone agrees. One Conservative insider told *The Hill Times* that “when the government says that platforms are in, creators/content is out—it’s beyond disingenuous.”

“What does the government think is impacted if not the content on those platforms,” said the Conservative insider who was not authorized to speak publicly about the proposed legislation.

“It would be like saying they’re regulating grocery stores, but that doesn’t mean the food is regulated. It’s ludicrous. It also makes no sense that the government insists that user-generated content won’t be regulated, but has resisted every attempt to include that clear, definitive language in the bill.”

Once Bill C-11 becomes law, the federal cabinet will send a policy direction to the CRTC, which will then implement a regulatory framework following public consultations, likely to begin early next year.

However, at the CMPA’s Prime Time event in February, Rodriguez insisted that the commission is “not going to be judging the content of social-media users.”

But the Conservatives say that Canadians’ freedom of expression is threatened by the Online Streaming Act.

They posted a “Kill Bill C-11” website that calls on the federal Liberals “to stop their censorship law that will control what Canadians watch and listen to online,” and which would give “government gatekeepers ... the power to control which videos, posts and other content Canadians can see online.”

Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Man.), who serves as parliamentary secretary to Government House Leader Mark Holland (Ajax, Ont.), said that the suggestion that C-11 is “about government-imposed censorship is just stupid.”

“But I suspect that there are some who feel they might be able to raise money or get attention by spreading misinformation,” he added.

Yet earlier this month, *The Canadian Press* reported that in 2021, staff at the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada believed an unspecified *Toronto Sun* article contained “serious errors of fact risking (and) undermining public confidence in the independence of the board as well as the integrity of the refugee determination system,” according to documents from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, which refers eligible refugee-protection claims to the IRB, an independent body.

Facebook and Twitter were asked to remove the article, but denied the request.

Sun Media columnist Lorne Gunter acknowledged in the *Toronto Sun* that he wrote the piece based on a “confidential draft document” circulated within the IRB in which its chairperson and CEO,

Richard Wex, “laid out a massive expansion of the reasons under which refugee claimants could be admitted to Canada,” based on what Gunter wrote were claims involving “intersectionality.”

He said the IRB asked the *Sun* “to correct or pull my column,” and “when that route failed ... the then director of communications for the IRB approached the big social media platforms to ask that they take down any posting of my column and prohibit users from linking to it.”

The *Sun* story situation was revealed in documents tabled in Parliament by Conservative MP Dean Allison (Niagara West, Ont.), which had 214 examples of the federal government asking for social-media content to be removed between January 2020 and February 2023, as CP reported. Posts were removed by Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and LinkedIn about half the time “for reasons such as impersonation or copyright violations.”

But social media companies often kept posts “that the government and its departments believed were offensive,” CP reported.

Quebec Conservative Senator Leo Housakos (Wellington) tweeted that the government requests serve as “Exhibit A ... for those who think bureaucrats like those at the CRTC wouldn’t use their authority under C11 ... to censor social media.”

“As I’ve said before, our warnings about censorship aren’t unfounded,” Housakos, the Senate’s former Speaker and current chair of the Senate’s Transport and Communications Committee.

However, in a statement to *The Hill Times*, Rodriguez said that “freedom of expression is at the core of everything we do.”

“It’s no secret,” Rodriguez said, that Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) “loves conspiracy theories.”

But C-11, said the minister, is “about making streaming platforms pay their fair share towards Canadian music, TV shows and movies.”

“We’ve been clear since the beginning: If you benefit from the system, you should contribute to it,” Rodriguez said.

His Tory counterpart, however, believes that that C-11 has no business regulating the internet in the first place.

Conservative MP Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, Alta.), her party’s heritage critic, said in an interview last month that the Broadcasting Act was introduced to regulate television and radio “because there was deemed to be a finite resource—limited channels, limited availability of spectrum,” and French language and culture needed to be “represented within these platforms.”

By contrast, “the internet is infinite,” she said. “If you want a presence on the internet—no matter what your language is or your culture is, you can have a presence on the internet. So we do not need the government to regulate the internet space to make sure there is somehow fair access.”

The Hill Times



Our vision:

Greener manufacturing across Canada

Professor Audrey Moores
Department of Chemistry, McGill



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McGill's researchers are driven by their vision of a sustainable future. Collaborating across disciplines and with partners, they are accelerating solutions for a greener, more prosperous world.



McGill

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Editorial

If Trudeau wants to win the next election, he has to ensure he's 'not out of touch' with Canadians

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has been saying since the last federal election that he is planning to run in the next one. With three successive election wins under his belt, a fourth consecutive win will be a challenge. The last prime minister who was able to win four elections was Wilfrid Laurier, and that from 1896-1911. It's a tough challenge for any party or prime minister to remain in power for a decade.

Dan Arnold, a former top adviser and pollster to Trudeau who played a critical role in the first three Liberal election wins, told *The Hill Times* that the Liberals will have to ensure they are not "out of touch" with average Canadians in the next election campaign. According to Arnold and other political insiders, some of the big issues in the next election will be: high gas prices, inflation, and the cost of living. So in this context, when Canadians read stories that their prime minister has been vacationing at a Caribbean resort belonging to billionaire, it sends the wrong message. According to a Radio-Canada story, Canadian taxpayers paid \$160,000 just for security and staff for the vacation. The prime minister and his family spent eight days between Dec. 26 to Jan. 4 of this year at his billionaire family friend Peter Green's estate. Green has also made a large donation to the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation which has also been in the news for weeks for all the

wrong reasons. As of last week, Trudeau had not said publicly whether he had personally paid any of his expenses for his vacation at Green's estate. To add insult to injury, Trudeau's advisers raised concerns internally that Trudeau should not take this vacation at a time when Canadians are struggling with his cost of living, but he still went ahead.

In 2016, the story about Trudeau vacationing at the Aga Khan's island in the Caribbean dogged him for months. That vacation cost taxpayers more than \$271,000. In 2021, the prime minister and his family began a family vacation at Tofino, B.C., on the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. After this story made headlines, the prime minister apologized. More recently, the opposition parties blasted him for staying at a luxurious \$6,000-per-night suite in London when he went to attend Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in London.

Trudeau may claim that he cares about Canadians and understands what they go through on a daily basis, but at a time when people are struggling with affordability issues, actions speak louder than words. In politics, "perception is reality," and if Trudeau wants to win another election, he will have to be careful and not make unforced errors before it's too late. He should try to show better that he understands ordinary Canadians. That's his next big challenge.

The Hill Times

Letters to the Editor

There is more to the malaise in the education system than funding: Tom McElroy

Re: "Ford's new budget will hurt students: letter writer," (*The Hill Times*, April 17, letter to the editor). There is more to the malaise in the education system than funding. We used to have schools that educated people. Now we have a system that just pushes them through. The value of a high school education, or even a university degree, has been so reduced that employers are saying they don't need any educational credentials—they will train people.

When I went to university in 1968, most of the educational support came directly from government. But as students, we had to either meet educational goals or be turfed out. This meant that the best students got educated, not just the richest ones. (I was kicked out for a year because I spent too much time doing theatre and playing bridge in second year.) In the United Kingdom, they have just launched a new initiative to restore the importance of mathematics in the education system since this is seen as a key workplace skill, while many of our

students drop mathematics as soon as they can.

In recent years, parents and governments have forced schools to devalue discipline and downgrade reasonable educational standards. It is worse at the university level, where it has led to large numbers of very unhappy students who really shouldn't be there, trying to cheat their way through instead of grasping the opportunity to learn. As a side effect, the higher support given to universities has led to community colleges converting to universities and abandoning their role of educating skilled workers to support our economy. Parents and students are paying a huge price, both in money and emotional stress, for an 'education' that has diminished value. In the workplace, people are held to rigorous standards. Schools need to do the same, to prepare students for the real world.

Tom McElroy
 Professor emeritus and senior scholar,
 York University
 Toronto, Ont.

Budget 2023: concerns about Canada's receding role in game-changing solutions for kids

I am writing to echo the concerns raised by many Canadians regarding the lack of new investments for programs that support children, adolescents, and women around the world in the 2023 federal budget. The absence of such investments is a clear indication that Canada is stepping back from its global leadership role, which is simply unacceptable.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the largest continued backslide in vaccinations for other infectious diseases in three decades, with 25 million children un- or under-vaccinated, six million more than in 2019. Moreover, this is happening against an unprecedented global hunger crisis, with up to 60 million children under five years of age projected to be acutely malnourished by the end of 2022. In emergency contexts, children under five are the most vulnerable, with illness and death rates 20 times higher than standard level.

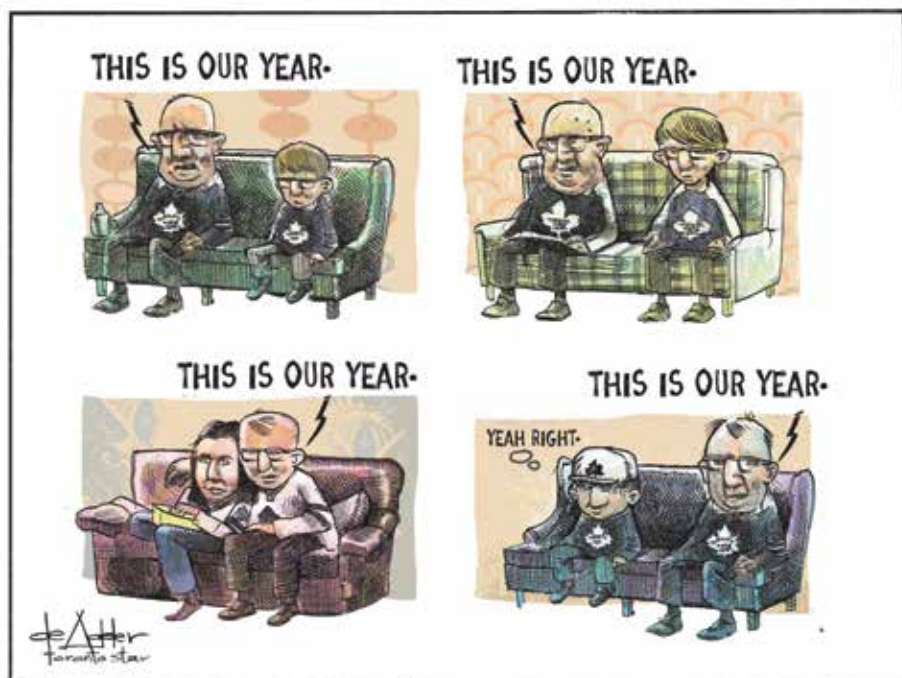
Therefore, it is crucial that we invest in children's health, nutrition, education, and

development, as these early investments accumulate throughout a child's lifetime, benefiting their children and society as a whole. Moreover, investments in children are among the most cost-effective that governments can make, with each US\$1 spent on health yielding a US\$20 benefit for lower-middle-income countries.

It is especially disappointing that the Budget 2023 has no new investments in such programs, given Canada's historic track record of leading the charge in protecting children's rights. From the Muskoka Initiative launched in 2010 to the recent \$1.2-billion pledge to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Canada has demonstrated a commitment to child survival.

By building on its historic track record, Canada can lead the way once again and achieve the central ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to 'leave no one behind.'

Vanessa Liang
 Montreal, Que.



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Poilievre should beware of tying himself to Musk

In reaching out to Elon Musk, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre left the impression he's trashing Canadian broadcasters while aligning himself with a billionaire who has turned the social media world upside down

Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner



OTTAWA—BuzzFeed News is shutting down and Twitter users are fleeing the platform in droves. Fox News has been

hit with a \$787.5-million lawsuit for publishing false information about Dominion Voting Systems presidential election count in 2020. The media world—social and otherwise—is roiling.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre reached out to Elon Musk, the current owner of Twitter, to ensure the company identifies the CBC as a government-funded media outlet. Political parties are lining up on one side or the other of the media divide.

To fight back, CBC has joined the “Global Task Force for public media,” whose aim is to underscore the fact that editorial independence is protected by law. No government has any influence on what to cover. The task force is accusing Twitter of misrepresenting their editorial independence.

While the Fox saga was unfolding in the United States, it involved Dominion, a Canadian-founded company.

In Canada, last week's media attention was largely focused on the Twitter fight between Poilievre and the CBC.

Poilievre went hard after the CBC in English, but was strangely

silent in French. He has pledged to fully defund the CBC, but at the same time, he says the Radio-Canada arm of the organization should remain.

His call to defund the CBC cites the total annual \$1.24-billion federal government subsidy. That promise has created a tidal wave of opposition in Quebec.

The Twitter attack succeeded in drawing attention to the Conservatives' plan to cancel funding for the CBC, which may not have been in the party's game plan.

Defunding the CBC is obviously very popular with Poilievre's base. But the same cannot be said for the rest of the country.

In Quebec, Radio-Canada is untouchable, and Poilievre's Twitter attack woke the province up to his plan, but not in a good way.

Both the New Democrats and the Bloc Québécois attacked Poilievre. His decision to make a “government-funded” tagline plea to an American billionaire raised the ire of just about everyone.

That outreach also hurt him in the rest of the country, even with those who are not the strongest supporters of the CBC.

It left the impression that Poilievre was trashing his own country's broadcasters while aligning himself with Musk, who has turned the social media world upside down with his Twitter changes.

While Poilievre's popularity numbers remain competitive, he cannot win the election with a wipeout in Quebec.

And a campaign promise to cancel funding for Radio-Canada will certainly gain him no friends in *La belle province*.

In response to the “government-funded” tagline, the CBC announced it would no longer be using Twitter to cross-pollinate radio and television stories.

Other users have also been dropping off *en masse*, but it is unclear at this point which alternate social media site will fill in the gap left by the Twitter exodus.

South of the border, what could be the world's largest defamation decision made waves in media outlets everywhere, except on the Fox News Channel.

The culpable channel only broadcast the Dominion payout three times, with a total of about six minutes of coverage.

While the financial outcome of the case was stunning, the agreement did not force Fox media personalities to apologize or acknowledge the lies. Instead, a statement issued by the corporation was the only recognition that multiple lies were repeated on the network in an effort to convince

Americans that the election was stolen from Donald Trump.

A Fox statement acknowledged “the court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false. This settlement reflects Fox's continued commitment to the highest journalistic standards.”

Legal trouble in pursuit of the truth does not end there. Dominion is also following up on defamation cases against other news outlets and Trump lawyers and supporters, including Rudy Giuliani.

Meanwhile, Fox's Tucker Carlson has just produced a documentary suggesting the United States should move in to take over Canada and liberate it from Justin Trudeau's communist tyranny.

Carlson may not realize it, but Poilievre should know that a Fox attack on the Liberal leader will actually push more people into Trudeau's corner.

By allying himself with Musk, the Tory leader runs the risk of alienating Canadians.

The media landscape is changing rapidly, in Canada and globally. The Dominion defamation suit reaffirms that the truth matters when it comes to broadcasting, but Twitter can hang a false handle on the CBC with impunity.

Musk's rocket blew up last week. So may Twitter.

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

Trudeau, climate change and aliens

Nationalism will always trump internationalism. It's for this reason that polls usually indicate that one of the least popular government programs is foreign aid. Justin Trudeau likely understands this political reality, which is why he usually promotes his green agenda in nationalistic terms.

Gerry Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit



OKAVILLE, ONT.—Former U.S. president Ronald Reagan

once openly mused about the benefits of an alien invasion.

While speaking before the United Nations, he declared, “I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world.”

Reagan was ridiculed for this comment, but essentially his point was accurate.

Given the tribalistic nature of humans, only the sudden appearance of an extraterrestrial menace would convince us to put aside our nationalistic, ethnic, and ideological differences so we could unite towards achieving a common goal to save humanity.

(Side note: this was the plot premise for an episode of the 1960s TV show, *The Outer Limits*.)

Anyway, as far as I know, there are no alien armadas heading towards Earth, meaning our planet is as disunited as ever.

And it's this disunity, this inability for most of us to envision ourselves as part of a common human tribe, that poses a political challenge for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and for other like-minded politicians who are pushing climate change agendas.

After all, in theory, the easiest and most powerful argument Trudeau could make to support his climate change plans is to say



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured on the Hill on April 19, 2023, will emphasize how Canada will become a world leader in green technology, which will ultimately increase both the country's prosperity and its world-wide prestige. In other words, if you happily pay your carbon tax, you're a good patriot, writes Gerry Nicholls. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

we need to do what we must to save humanity from an environmental catastrophe.

But, in reality, that approach wouldn't go over very well.

Just imagine, for instance, if Trudeau got up in Parliament and said something like, “Under my climate plan, Canadians will get poorer, our standard of living will fall, we will have to make

do with less, but these sacrifices are necessary to ensure a greater global good.”

Sure, those people who consider themselves to be “citizens of the world” would applaud such a statement, but most Canadians see themselves first and foremost as citizens of Canada, and as such they would demand the prime minister put the interests of this country ahead of any “greater global good.”

My point is: nationalism will always trump internationalism.

It's for this reason that polls usually indicate that one of the least popular government programs is foreign aid.

At any rate, Trudeau likely understands this political reality, which is why he usually promotes his green agenda in nationalistic terms.

That's to say he will emphasize how Canada will become a world leader in green technology, which will ultimately increase both the country's prosperity and its world-wide prestige.

In other words, if you happily pay your carbon tax, you're a good patriot.

Meanwhile, ideological tribalism also plays a part in selling climate change policies.

If you want to be considered a member of good standing in the

left-wing, progressive movement, you must support sustainable environmental policies, such as fighting climate change.

And yes, these approaches do work.

However, there are also powerful tribal arguments that hinder Trudeau's climate change agenda.

For example, I suspect Canadians would be open to the argument that Canada's paying disproportionately too high a price to fight climate change, while other countries—i.e., China—are getting off easy.

Another powerful nationalistic argument, one peppered with populism, would be to say Trudeau's climate change policy is less about stopping global warming and more about pandering to his rich foreign friends in the World Economic Forum.

Believe me: that could sting. Finally, there's the ideological dimension.

Simply put, if Conservatives believe Trudeau's climate change initiative is integral to the left-wing movement's philosophy, many will automatically oppose it for just that reason.

Anything the left is for, they're against.

With all this in mind, maybe Trudeau's best strategy would be to say climate change is an alien plot to conquer Earth.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.
The Hill Times

Politics



By writing the biggest cheque in U.S. history in a defamation suit, Fox News hosts Laura Ingraham, left, Sean Hannity, and Tucker Carlson were spared their moment of truth in front of the country, writes Michael Harris. Photographs courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Truth loses out in Fox News-Dominion settlement

Fox News has gotten away with treating the most egregious breach of trust in media history as a mere cost of doing business.

Michael Harris

Harris



HALIFAX—Here's the bottom line on last week's epic debacle in the Fox News-Dominion Voting System lawsuit: cash by the carload ensured that the truth did not prevail, took Fox off journalistic death-row, and left the network's host-serial liars in the same positions of power they used to divide a nation with information they knew to be false.

That, apparently, is what having a spare \$780-million in your jeans can do.

The claim by Dominion's lawyers that this unholy settlement was a victory for the truth doesn't pass the laugh-test. It is as absurd as the network's claim that the settlement "reflects Fox's contin-

ued commitment to the highest journalistic standards."

Those words are the death march of effrontery. When you lie for pay, you have already established that you have no journalistic standards, unless it is Fox's unique gold standard: converting bullshit into bullion.

Under the agreement, Fox did not admit to lying, did not have to air a proper story about the settlement, or even broadcast an apology to the company that it defamed or the huge audience it misinformed.

Instead, they got away with admitting that certain "falsehoods" about Dominion were aired on the network. The inference of that particular word is that the cable network got a few facts wrong. You know, the stuff of the "our mistakes" section in every newspaper. The reality? Fox knowingly fed its audience lies about the 2020 election to keep the cash rolling in from its Democrat-hating audience. Call it what it was: malicious perversion of the facts for profit, and pandering to a base that would pay for receiving its version of the facts.

By legitimizing and spreading Donald Trump's lie that U.S. President Joe Biden won a corrupt election with the help of doctored voting machines, Fox played a direct role in sending a violent mob to the Capitol Building on Jan. 6, 2021.

That display of iconoclastic tribalism ended with the savage beating of Capitol policemen. It

sent a slew of legislators, gathered in the Capitol to certify the election results, fleeing for their lives. A gallows was erected on site, and a chant went up to "hang" then vice-president Mike Pence. Most important of all, five people actually died in this coup attempt, and hundreds of others were permanently traumatized. As the chief echo chamber of Trump's Big Lie, Fox was an accessory to that outcome.

For these reasons, this is what should have happened in this important civil case: Rupert Murdoch should have taken the stand to answer questions.

Since he knew that the story Trump was peddling about election fraud was false, why did he allow Fox hosts to incite MAGA supporters to riot at the Capitol by repeating *ad nauseum* Trump's lie as truth?

Why didn't Murdoch listen to warnings from Fox board members like former House Speaker Paul Ryan who warned him that peddling such patently false narratives as "news" was dangerous business?

And did "Murdoch the Mogul" really think that pursuing profits by telling lies to an audience his network duped was worth the violence, injury and death that Fox helped trigger? Did he think he had anything to apologize for?

Tucker Carlson, the Benedict Arnold of journalism, should have testified under oath, as well.

Why would Carlson demand that a colleague at Fox be fired

for telling the truth? That is what he did to Jacqui Heinrich, and all because she had the temerity to fact-check and then debunk a Trump tweet claiming that Dominion voting machines had changed votes from Trump to Biden.

Why would Carlson go on air and advance Trump's conspiracy theories about crooked voting machines when he was privately writing to colleagues, "the software stuff is shit"?

And why would he "slobber" all over a man he privately claimed to hate "passionately", a politician he said was a "demonic force," and a "destroyer"?

That is exactly what Carlson did when he interviewed Trump on his program, after the former president was charged with 34 felony counts of falsifying business records to conceal a hush-money payment to an adult film actress who claims they had an affair. Carlson let Trump blab on about "nuclear warming" and a third world war without once taking him to task over his bizarre comments.

Murdoch and Carlson should have been joined on the stand by all of Fox's sorry sycophants to explain why they had such contempt for their audience that they publicly promoted what they laughed at privately and ridiculed.

But the sultans of cynicism never faced accountability, just an accounting issue. By writing the biggest cheque in U.S. history

in a defamation suit, Murdoch, Carlson, Sean Hannity, Laura Ingraham, et al, were spared their moment of truth in front of the country. And that is the saddest thing of all in this shabby affair.

Why? Because Fox has gotten away with treating the most egregious breach of trust in media history as a mere cost of doing business. In making the Dominion Voting System lawsuit go away, they can now go straight back to the work that might have been stopped if Americans had been given the opportunity to see the depth of this network's depravity in court. Anything for a buck, including turning the United States into a house divided against itself after decades of polarizing lies from Fox.

The surest sign that it will be funny business as usual at Fox News is the network's response to yet another mega lawsuit coming its way from an election software company. Florida company Smartmatic is suing Fox News, hosts Maria Bartiromo, Jeanine Pirro, former host Lou Dobbs and former Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani for \$2.7-billion.

Smartmatic claims it was defamed by Fox more than 100 times with overt lies, including the allegation that the company played a part in fixing the 2020 election.

Fox's response?

It was "newsworthy" to broadcast the false stories about Smartmatic, and the company's lawsuit would put a "chill" on Fox's First Amendment Rights. The right to lie for ratings and profit.

No one should be surprised that more chequebook justice is on the way.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

The Hill Times

Natural Resources Transfer Agreements based on a fundamental misunderstanding of First Nations' inherent rights

Governments must convene a first ministers conference with First Nations to initiate changes to the Canadian Constitution and recognize First Nations sovereignty in more than just words.

based on a fundamental misunderstanding of First Nations' inherent rights and laws as the original inhabitants of this land.

First Nations laws and legal orders still exist, and our Nations have always lived on these lands and maintained that this land is ours. First Nations in Manitoba did not surrender their land, and we will continue to assert our sovereignty. This is recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta quickly called Minister Lametti's comments "dangerous and divisive." This statement led Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to state that "we will not be touching the NRTA."

Although it was promising to hear from a federal representative of the Crown that Canada is finally willing to discuss the unfinished Canadian constitutional business created by the NRTA that was imposed on First Nations without their free, prior, and informed consent, it is disheartening to hear from provincial Crown representatives from Manitoba and other NRTA provinces that they do not want to pursue reconciliation with their First Nation Treaty partners, despite their clear understanding of the implications of dealing with the NRTA.

It is ultimately disappointing that the federal government changed its position at this time, despite the UNDRIP and the government's rhetoric surrounding reconciliation.

Dealing with the NRTA is an obvious political and election issue, requiring strong political will from both federal and provincial governments.

The political posturing of the federal and provincial governments is not surprising. The first iteration of federal UNDRIP legislation, introduced by a member of the NDP, was opposed by Manitoba's previous premier, Brian Pallister, despite Manitoba committing to reconciliation and the principles in UNDRIP in the Path to Reconciliation Act, which has been law in Manitoba since 2016.

Clearly, the principles of European supremacy are firmly embedded in Canadian law, even in the context of the country's approach to its own legislation surrounding the UNDRIP. This may explain the disconnect or lack of understanding between statements and action by the federal and provincial governments.



Justice Minister David Lametti stated that he would be 'looking at' the 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreements at the recent Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs' Assembly. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

With the Manitoba general election scheduled for the fall of this year and a federal election potentially taking place soon, all federal and provincial parties should commit to and demonstrate concrete actions towards reconciliation.

To that end, the governments must convene a first ministers conference with First Nations to initiate changes to the Canadian Constitution and recognize First Nations sovereignty in more than just words.

If the current provincial governments are unable to do so, other provincial political parties should step forward to work with the current federal government's stated willingness to finally reconcile

Canada's unfinished business with its treaty partners.

As survivors of genocide, First Nations in Manitoba will continue to assert our rights. Once governments are prepared to commence authentic reconciliation, including the implementation of our treaties and the eradication of colonial fabrications, we will remain present and willing to engage in discussions and advance forward.

Grand Chief Cathy Merrick is grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. Senator Mary Jane McCallum represents Manitoba and is a member of the Senate Energy, the Environment, and Natural Resources Committee.
The Hill Times

Grand Chief Cathy Merrick & Senator Mary Jane McCallum



Opinion

Recently, there were two major statements made that were met with hope by First Nations in Manitoba.

First, on March 30, 2023, a joint statement was released by the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Dicastery for Culture and Education. This statement formally repudiates the Doctrine of Discovery and associated Papal decrees that legitimized the seizure of Indigenous lands throughout the world.

Second, at the recent Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs' Assembly, Justice Minister David Lametti stated that he would be "looking at" the 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreements after discussions with the Chiefs in Assembly.

The Doctrine of Discovery is a religious concept used for centuries to justify Christian colonial conquest. It is overtly racist and advanced the superiority of European people, cultures, and religions, and allowed for them to invade and steal the lands and resources of Indigenous Peoples. The repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery was long overdue, and First Nations were left to wonder what effects this repudiation would have.

That answer seemed to come with the minister's announcement that he would look into the 1930 Natural Resource Transfer Agreements (NRTA). These agreements transferred federal control over land and resources to the Prairie provinces, including the province of Manitoba.

What do the Doctrine of Discovery and the NRTA have in common? They are

NOT THE NUCLEAR LOBBY



OTTAWA EVENTS

Tues. Apr. 25, 10 a.m. - Red Light for Nuclear Build-up
[Centennial Flame, Parliament Hill]

Tues. Apr. 25, 5 p.m. - Debate: Do We Need to Scale up Nuclear Power to Combat Climate Change?
[U of Ottawa & Online]

Thurs. Apr. 27, 7 p.m. - Forum: Is New Nuclear a Smart Climate Solution?
[Quaker House & Online]



Not-the-Nuclear-Lobby.ca

Global



It's not easy for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to challenge the military-industrial complex, which drives U.S. policy, which in turn, drives NATO. He deserves credit, writes Douglas Roche. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Trudeau is right to resist defence lobby's call for more military spending

NATO doesn't do holistic peace. Always demanding more money for arms, it intimidates its own members.

Douglas Roche

Opinion



EDMONTON—Credit Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who is a politician, with telling the truth. A leaked Pentagon document, bearing the seal of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Trudeau told NATO officials privately that Canada will never reach the military spending target of two per cent of GDP agreed to by members of the alliance. Asked about this, Trudeau pointedly did not deny saying it.

The prime minister did say: "I continue to say, and will always

say, that Canada is a reliable partner to NATO, [a] reliable partner around the world."

Canada currently spends 1.29 per cent of its GDP on NATO, which this year, translated to \$29-billion. This makes Canada the 13th largest military spender in the world, and the sixth largest in NATO. The government plans to spend \$553-billion over the next 20 years to buy new weapons systems like fighter jets, armed drones, and warships.

To move to a full two per cent would require the government to starve already under-funded health and housing needs. The public would never stand for it.

The two-per cent target is one of the greatest frauds ever perpetrated on a gullible public by the military-industrial complex, which drives American policy, which, in turn, drives NATO. Trudeau deserves credit for challenging it.

It's not easy for Trudeau to do this, for he is surrounded by military hawks for whom no amount of military spending is ever enough. The Conference of Defence Associations Institute released an open letter, signed by dozens of political and military luminaries, calling on Ottawa

to stop backsliding on national defence.

The institute wants "a major reassessment of our defence posture" and more money for NATO. This is the defence lobby speaking, and they have big voices (Richard Fadden, Andrew Leslie, and Rick Hillier are among the signatories). They drown out another set of equally distinguished Canadians (including Margaret MacMillan, John Polanyi, and Veronica Tennant) who have pleaded with the government to understand that peace doesn't come from the barrel of a gun.

Thanks to the Ukraine war, the militarists today are beating a very loud drum. Russia's ruthless invasion of Ukraine has unleashed a demand for more arms, and world military expenditures this year will climb well over \$2-trillion. Public attention in the West is fixated on defeating Russia at all costs. So it is easy for the war planners (who command the headlines) to proclaim that the government must "make significant additional funding available to address the long-standing deficiencies in military capabilities and readiness."

NATO is driving the new clamour in Canada for more military

spending. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg doesn't hide his displeasure with us for not meeting the two per cent target. What Stoltenberg doesn't say out loud is that NATO policy is driven by the United States, which undertakes excessive military spending beyond belief. America's planned \$842-billion military budget for 2024 is greater than the next 10 greatest military spenders combined.

All this is commanded by the military-industrial complex, led by five powerful defence contractors in the U.S., who virtually control the proceedings of the armed services committees in Congress. The military-industrial complex (warnings about it go back as far as the Eisenhower administration) operates on the assumption that future "strategic competition" with Russia and China is inevitable. There's no cap for research on artificial intelligence weaponry.

Canada is caught up in this headlong dash for rearmament. NATO is now an express train roaring through a dark tunnel. No one knows what's on the other side of the tunnel, but the fear-mongers tell us it must be bad. Once again, fear overcomes

good judgment. Thankfully, Trudeau has—at last—issued a red flag to NATO.

Pierre Trudeau, the father of the present prime minister, told me in 1984, when I was named Canada's ambassador for disarmament, that NATO's obsolete policies were one of the biggest thorns he had had to endure as prime minister. George Kennan, the famous U.S. diplomat who first proposed the policy of containment of the Soviet Union, called NATO expansion "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-Cold War era." Still, the expansion goes on (Finland has just been taken in) and the false belief that bigger and better weaponry will bring peace continues to bamboozle the public.

The fallout from Justin Trudeau's reluctance to keep paying obeisance to NATO is just getting started. The peace movement in Canada, hitherto cowed by the spurious charges that calls for negotiations to end the Ukraine war amount to appeasement of Russia is awakening. The Canadian Pugwash Group is now mobilizing its members to advocate for international leaders to bring Russia and Ukraine to the negotiating table.

Trudeau has opened up the issue of just how much money is required for adequate Canadian defence. Just look at the faces of his cabinet as they surround him in Question Period: a group split group between those who've been swayed by the NATO machine; the others fearful that NATO will lead them into perpetual militarism. Public opinion on NATO's efficacy will be an important factor in how Trudeau responds to the brow-beating he is now taking from his military alliance "allies."

The issue of peace in the world is far larger than the Russia-Ukraine disputes. Peace is a global issue. Thus, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is now preparing "A New Agenda for Peace," which will address a myriad of challenges the international community faces today. Guterres says that in order to protect and manage the global public good of peace, we need a peace continuum based on a better understanding of the underlying drivers of conflict, a renewed effort to agree on more effective collective security responses, and a meaningful set of steps to manage emerging risks. This is a holistic approach to peace.

NATO doesn't do holistic peace. Always demanding more money for arms, it intimidates its own members. How else can you explain Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland's cut, in the recent budget, of \$1.3-billion from Canada's already meagre international assistance program? NATO bloats; the poor suffer.

Douglas Roche is a former Canadian senator and author. His new book, *Keep Hope Alive: Essays for a War-free World*, will be published in the fall.

The Hill Times

The national crisis of policing

As parliamentarians, we must be proactive to protect the public by demanding the Mass Casualty Commission's recommendations be acted upon.

Green Party
Leader
Elizabeth May

Opinion



How are we to come to terms with the growing pile of reports and inquiries that tell us policing in Canada is not working? And how do we respond to the increased public insecurity about rising random violence: from vehicles plowing into children, to stabbings and shootings on public transit? We are potentially on a collision course of demands for more police at precisely the time we need to engage in a deep and fundamental transformation of policing.

The Nova Scotia Mass Casualties Commission's deeply disturbing report led *The Globe and Mail* to editorialize, "Canada's national police force needs to be torn down to its foundations and then those foundations need to be dynamited."

But as harrowing as the report is on the Portapique, N.S., litany of horrors, it is hardly the first.

The report on the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls made it clear that Indigenous women do not feel safe turning to the RCMP for protection or action. The Civilian Complaints Commission report on the Prince George RCMP detachment documents specific reasons why. Anti-Indigenous racism runs through the force, as well as through some locally controlled police forces, as the most recent report on the Thunder Bay, Ont., police makes clear. As well, too many Indigenous and racialized people are killed in so-called "wellness" checks. One death is too many, but the June 2020 killing of a young Nuu-chah-Nulth woman, Chantal Moore, by an Edmundston, N.B., policeman remains unexplained.

The brutality of the RCMP Community Industry Response Group will soon be investigated by the Civilian Complaints Commission. The British Columbia courts have already found this para-military branch of the RCMP has violated the Charter in expanding injunction restrictions with "exclusion zones" designed to keep reporters from witnessing violence towards non-violent and Indigenous land-defenders and elders. The violence against non-violent old-growth forest defenders at Fairy Creek, B.C., and towards Wet'suwet'en, B.C., hereditary chiefs stands in sharp contrast to the kid-glove protections offered the perpetrator of the Nova Scotia killings of April 18-19, 2020.

We know from the 2021 Bastarache report that the RCMP has failed to protect its own female officers from sexual harassment. Band-Aid solutions have failed to ensure respect for women.

And to the many reports and inquiries we have the deeply shocking report of the Mass Casualty Commission. We can add to the knowledge that the RCMP has a problem with misogyny and racism, that there existed a bias to believe the wealthy,



A memorial in Halifax for the victims of the April 18-19, 2020, Nova Scotia killings. It is time to stop the pile of reports of police failings from growing. We must find the best examples of policing across Canada, figure out what those police forces are doing right in de-escalating violence, writes Elizabeth May. Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

wife-beating, white guy. Is it widespread or restricted to the perpetrator in Portapique?

We know from the Portapique report that not just one individual or group of RCMP officers, but a number of them—some in rural Nova Scotia, some in Halifax—over a long period of time, faced with different reports of violence and reports of criminal conduct by the perpetrator chose to disbelieve his accusers. Reports of his criminal activities were ignored. Even when he had physically assaulted someone who went to the police complaining of the attack or that the perpetrator had stolen from him, the investigating officer(s) concluded that the theft had not happened and that the accuser was in the wrong.

Over and over again, the wealthy, white dentist was believed, and his victims were not.

It is the Mass Casualties Commission Report that provides the most sweeping and transformative recommendations for change. Over 72 pages, the recommendations amount to remaking of the approach and mindset brought to policing. They call for better education and training of the RCMP, taking a public-health perspective to prevent violence, adopting a better gender lens through women-centred risk assessments, a focus on the coercive element of violence against intimate partners, and many steps that reflect the complex nature of a national crisis.

It is time to stop the pile of reports of police failings from growing ever higher. We must find the best examples of policing across Canada, figure out what those forces are doing right in de-escalating violence, and replicate the best. Simultaneously, we must ramp up mental-health supports and provide greater security for Canadians, particularly on public transit.

As parliamentarians, we must be proactive to protect the public by demanding the Mass Casualty Commission's recommendations be acted upon.

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May represents Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.
The Hill Times



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Opinion

Canadian ownership is critical if we are to prosper from minerals strategy

Some degree of long-term public equity may be the only answer if we want to ensure that a reasonable share of our mining sector is Canadian-owned, and that younger Canadian companies don't have to feel that selling is their only option.

David
Crane

Canada &
the 21st Century



TORONTO—The unfriendly bid by Switzerland-based mining giant Glencore to acquire Teck Resources, one of Canada's last mining giants that is still Canadian-controlled, raises an important question for the Trudeau government: with a number of global mining giants to make even pricier bids beyond the \$23 billion offered by Glencore, would the government use Investment Canada to block a foreign takeover? Or will our critical minerals and rare-earth mining potential become even more of a foreign-dominated sector than it already is?

The Trudeau government has been pushing hard to promote Canada as a reliable world leader in critical minerals and rare earth, and there's no doubt there is potential. But will this potential lead to the emergence and scaling up of Canadian-controlled mining companies, or will we become a country with much mining but few domestic mining companies, with the wealth benefits captured largely by foreign corporations? There's much reason to believe that critical minerals and rare earths will be just another branch-plant activity. While the Liberal Party once preached the importance of sustaining a high level of Canadian ownership and control in the economy, it seemingly no longer sees that as important.

Late last year, the federal government published *The Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy*, with Natural Resources Minister



Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson described critical minerals as presenting a 'generational opportunity for Canada.' But Canadian ownership will be necessary if we want to retain some of the profitable wealth from our own natural resources, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade.

Jonathan Wilkinson declaring that "critical minerals present a generational opportunity for Canada in many areas: exploration, extraction, processing, downstream product manufacturing and recycling. The federal government is committed to seizing this opportunity in a way that benefits every region in the country." Industry Minister François-Philippe Champagne added that "Canada's leadership in this space has never been more important," adding that "Canada can—and will be—the solution" as the world seeks needed resources.

A list of 31 minerals considered by Canada to be "critical" has been published, and Budget 2022 and Budget 2023 set aside billions of dollars for big subsidies, along with rich tax incentives, to drive projects and attract foreign corporations. At the same time, Canada has promised to speed-up environmental hearings for foreign mining and energy projects in Canada.

There is much in the strategy that makes sense, such as allocating \$40-million towards the \$112.4-million Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation, to accelerate the development and commercialization of Canadian innovations in the mining sector, investing much more in the geosciences to improve our knowledge of what resource reserves

we actually have, and improving sustainable infrastructure to improve access resources. But there are problems of excessive expectations. For example, many rare earth and critical minerals are available in other parts of the world, while in many cases, Canada is neither a leading producer nor the location of plentiful minerals. At the same time, technologies will change, so for example, the world could end up with a glut of lithium or cobalt as new battery technologies emerge.

But a bigger challenge is the wide gap between what the government often promises and what it delivers. The minerals strategy says Canada "must ensure that value is added to the entire supply chain, including exploration, extraction, intermediate processing, and advanced manufacturing and recycling. We must create the necessary condition for Canadian companies to grow, scale-up, and expand globally in markets that depend on critical minerals." Given that so much of the industry is foreign-controlled, what are the necessary conditions for Canadian companies to prosper, and how will the government prevent them from becoming the next takeover targets? There are some promising home-grown companies. They include Neo Performance Materials, First Cobalt Corp., Li-Cycle Holdings and Nano One

Materials Corp. But will they be much bigger, Canadian-controlled companies five years from now?

Over a two-year period, in 2006-07, almost all of Canada's biggest mining and metals companies were the target of foreign takeovers and they had an easy time getting Investment Canada approval. This massive foreign takeover of much of this industry sector only raised concerns after the fact, when it was too late. In 2006, Inco was acquired by Brazil's Vale for \$17-billion, Falconbridge was bought by Swiss mining giant Xstrata for \$22.5-billion, and steelmaker Do-

fasco was purchased for \$5.5-billion by Luxembourg-based Arcelor (in turn acquired by Indian steelmaker Mitta), for \$5.5-billion. The following year, Alcan was acquired by Australia's Rio Tinto for \$32-billion, steelmaker Ipsco was bought by Sweden's Svenskt Stol AB for US\$7.7-billion, and steelmaker The Steel Company of Canada was sold to U.S. Steel for \$1.7-billion.

There are many exciting projects underway in our country today, but it is interesting to see how many are foreign-led. The Nechalacho rare earths mining project in the Northwest Territories, along with its Saskatchewan-processing facility, is owned by Vital Metals in Australia. The North American Lithium mine that just opened in Quebec is jointly owned by Australia's Sayona Mining and U.S.-based Piedmont Lithium. Australia's Wyloo Metals acquired Noront Resources in the Sudbury region in Ontario for \$133-million. And Australia's BHP is building a massive potash mine in Saskatchewan.

To ensure Canadian ownership, we will need a public entity that can be a patient or long-term investor with sufficient equity to block a foreign takeover. In a Quebec project, Nemaska Lithium, which is mining lithium, and building a refinery for battery-ready version of the alkali metal, ownership is divided equally between Livent, a U.S. company, and Investissement Quebec, a public agency. We have the proposed Canada Growth Fund, to be capitalized with \$15-billion and combine public and private capital, which could be used to provide equity for new or expanding Canadian companies. We have the Canada Development Investment Corp., which can hold investments in the public interest, and already does.

Some degree of long-term public equity may be the only answer if we want to ensure that a reasonable share of our mining sector is Canadian-owned, and that younger Canadian companies don't have to feel that selling is their only option. In fact, domestic ownership will be necessary if we want to retain some of the profitable wealth from our own natural resources.

David Crane can be reached at crane@interlog.com.
The Hill Times

Notable foreign takeovers

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HEALTH

Health Minister
**JEAN-YVES
DUCLOS**
*keeps a low
profile*

Canada's
**PHYSICIAN
SHORTAGE**

Importance of
**LABELLING
ALCOHOL**

BURNOUT
among
**HEALTH-
CARE
WORKERS**

**COMPASSION,
FATIGUE,
and health-care
PROVIDERS**

**HEALTH
BENEFITS**
of community hubs

Foundation of
GENDER EQUALITY

Accelerating
INTEROPERABILITY

New
**HEALTH
DEAL**
*needs
transparency*

NATUROPATHIC
*medicine emerging
answer to*
**HEALTH-CARE
CONCERNS**

Canada
**DISABILITY
BENEFIT**
needs to be hefty



Health Policy Briefing

Experts call on Health Minister Duclos to rise to challenge of health-care system transformation

The federal health minister's job has likely never been more complex, given the global pandemic and human resources challenges, but funding alone cannot rebuild Canada's strained health systems and the biggest hurdle is 'breaking down the silos' between different jurisdictions across Canada.

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

A transformation is needed to fix Canada's health-care system, with a recent multi-billion dollar funding deal struck between Ottawa and the provinces representing only the beginning, according to health-care sector experts.

To help improve the health-care system, the federal government pledged to increase health funding to provinces and territories by \$196.1-billion over 10 years, including \$46.2-billion in new funding, during a meeting of first ministers in Ottawa on Feb. 7.



Paul-Émile Cloutier, president and CEO of HealthCareCAN, says a transformation of Canada's health care system is a long-term issue, 'but if we don't start talking about it today, we'll be in the same position 10 years from now.' Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos said 'Canadians deserve better health care and we need immediate actions to address current and future challenges,' in a press release from the Prime Minister's Office on Feb. 7. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Paul-Émile Cloutier, president and CEO of HealthCareCAN, told *The Hill Times* that the funding deal is a good start for addressing the short- and medium-term challenges facing health care in Canada, but said long-term solutions are still needed.

"We need to look at the system as a whole and bring together key players across the health system ... to discuss how to transform the way health care is delivered, so that it better meets the needs of the people across the country for now, as well as for the future," said Cloutier. "I feel that the timing is right for having that discussion ... because all of the health-care providers, [and] the stakeholder groups are very much aligned that there's a need for transformation."

The funding deal included a \$2-billion Canada Health Transfer top-up to address immediate pressures on the health-care system.

"Canadians deserve better health care and we need immediate actions to address current and future challenges. These investments will support those actions so that people have timely access to family health services and that we have less people waiting for treatments, diagnosis, and surgeries, and more mental health and substance use services across the country," said Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos (Quebec, Que.) in a press release from the Prime Minister's Office on Feb. 7.

Provincial premiers initially expressed disappointment in

the health funding proposal as it fell short of their ask of about \$300-billion in new spending over 10 years. However, the premiers decided to accept the funding deal following a meeting of the Council of the Federation on Feb. 13.

An analysis by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) released on April 20 concluded that the health funding deal between the provinces and the federal government represents the most significant investment into health care in more than two decades, with an average of \$16-billion in increases per year over 10 years. Coming in second in terms of total money spent on health care was the deal struck by former Liberal prime minister Paul Martin in 2004, which amounted to an average increase of \$12.3-billion per year, according to the analysis.

However, the CMA argues that funding alone cannot rebuild Canada's strained health systems, and said in the analysis that the 2023 health funding agreement "is an opportunity for governments to demonstrate to Canadians that they can work together to make meaningful and transformative changes to the way health care is delivered across the country."

"A significant increase in federal funding, the introduction of new accountability measures, and recently announced provincial and territorial plans to improve their respective health systems should give patients and provid-

ers hope that change is not only possible, but it's happening," said Dr. Alika Lafontaine, president of the CMA, in a press release. "What we now need is ongoing political will to make brave decisions to reform how we deliver care, improve access for patients and create better working conditions for providers. We owe it to the patients and health professionals to leverage this moment in time to expand access, support our workforce and drive lasting improvements."

Cloutier said that he thinks Duclos is up to the challenge of addressing the changes needed in health care over the long term. He described Duclos as an "outcome-orient individual" who wants to engage with people. As an example, Cloutier cited the Coalition for Action for Health Workers that was formed on Nov. 1, 2022, to address the challenges of health-care workers.

"This is not the conversation that you do over a weekend and you solve the problem. This is a long-term issue, but if we don't start talking about it today, we'll be in the same position 10 years from now," said Cloutier. "I don't think [Duclos] has got time for discussion just for the sake of discussion. He wants to engage people, but I think he likes to see results."

The biggest hurdle to transforming the health-care system is "breaking down the silos" between different jurisdictions across Canada, which has been

a long-standing challenge from even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Cloutier. Every province and territory has its own public health act.

"This discussion has to be done in a very diplomatic way. It's got to be done in a very tactful way. But it has to be done. Someone has to start that conversation," said Cloutier. "[Duclos is] the right kind of person, because I think he understands the political environment. He understands Quebec. He understands the provinces very much. And I think that for him to start that conversation under his leadership ... would be an excellent start."

The funding deal between Ottawa and the provinces also included an announcement of \$505-million over five years towards the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), the Canada Health Infoway, and federal data partners to work with provinces and territories on developing new health data indicators, and to support the creation of a Centre of Excellence on health workforce data.

"We also need to ... implement a pan-Canadian health workforce strategy that gather workforce data and develop solutions to tackle the health workforce shortage," said Cloutier. "I know that they put \$500-million both to CIHI and also Infoway, but that needs to be implemented, and I think it needs to be implemented in consulting with the stakeholder groups. They just can't do that on their own."

The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) released a policy brief on Dec. 13, 2022, containing recommendations for how to strengthen public health systems in Canada. The association argued in the brief that the federal government should establish a cross-jurisdictional Public Health Systems Working Group, which would begin by defining a common set of core public health functions, along with a common framework of high-level goals for the provision of public health services. The federal government should also establish a new Canada Public Health Act that would detail the federal mandate for supporting public health services, according to the brief.

"What it means is establishing a pan-Canadian understanding of what public health services should be doing in our country, [and] ideally, setting standards to which they should be performing ... and clearly laying out the role of the federal government in this area," said Ian Culbert, executive director of the CPHA. "Every province and territory has their own public health act. Some of them are very out of date, and they don't all address the different core functions of public health in the same fashion. They're not described equally. There's a great inconsistency. There's this binding force that federal legislation could have if it was developed collaboratively with provinces and territories."

The CPHA policy brief explains that "public health" is often misunderstood to mean the

Continued on page 26

HEAL

Organizations for Health Action

Health and Human Resources Survey

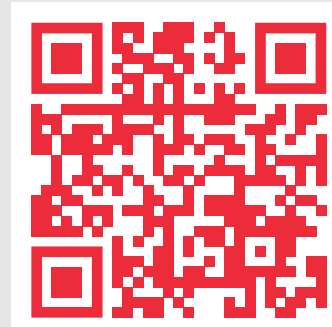
HEAL launched a Health and Human Resources Survey for our members. We received 5,000 responses across all provinces and territories, from large urban centers to remote communities. Collectively, HEAL represents over 650,000 health professionals across Canada.



indicated that they were considering leaving their profession for reasons other than retirement, such as mental health and well-being concerns.



would consider remaining in the profession if their main concerns were resolved.



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Health Policy Briefing

We need to overcome the barriers to address Canada's physician shortage

There are actions that can be taken now to help ameliorate the health human resource crisis.

ISG Senators Stan Kutcher & Mohamed Ravalia

Opinion



Concern remains about the many jurisdictional challenges that bedevil attempts to address the issue of quick, equitable and efficient access to licensure for international medical graduates, write ISG senators Stan Kutcher and Mohamed Ravalia. Photograph courtesy of Pixabay

More quick, equitable, and efficient access to licensure for international medical graduates (IMGs) who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents has been a longstanding issue which has finally piqued the interest of both federal and provincial/territorial governments alike.

While we applaud recent interest in addressing this complex issue, concern remains about the many jurisdictional challenges that bedevil attempts to achieve success. We are hopeful that some specific federally-led initiatives can overcome long-standing barriers, and thus rapidly help address our ongoing physician shortage while ensuring that Canadian standards of medical practice are met.

We have identified three considerations for immediate action.

Firstly, we support the two-stage examination format of the National Assessment Collaboration (NAC), but are concerned that many IMGs may not have

had previous experience with objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) formats, and that this may be a significant barrier to exam success.

The federal government can assist in mitigating this barrier by directly funding OSCE preparation courses through medical schools or settlement agencies.

Secondly, upon successful completion of the NAC-mandated exams, IMGs are required to complete a time-defined clinical practice assessment. This is called the practice ready assessment (PRA) and can be conducted in both academic and community settings under the supervision of qualified physician evaluators. Successful PRA completion allows the IMG to challenge one of the two certification examinations (College of Family Physicians of Canada, or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada). A small pan-Canadian PRA

network to evaluate IMGs clinical competencies exists, which allows for comparable, standardized and transparent assessment for all candidates, regardless of where the PRA is conducted. The provinces and territories are responsible for oversight of these programs.

However, the number of PRA slots available is very limited and demand far outweighs supply. This imbalance creates a bottleneck that limits the number of IMGs that can proceed on the pathway to licensure.

The federal government can provide limited and targeted funding to enhance the capacity of existing PRA programs, and to create new PRA programs where needed.

Thirdly, for IMGs with insufficient residency training or for those who are identified through the NAC-mandated assessment process as requiring upgrading, access to residency training

programs is necessary. This route does not require the creation of new medical schools with their attendant substantive costs and delays before coming online. This can be achieved by funding of residency training slots which can be located in rural and remote areas as well as in urban settings under existing programs.

The federal government could provide funding for increases in the number of residency spots in areas where patient need is greatest, for example: family practice; child and adolescent psychiatry; and geriatric medicine. While some additions to current numbers of residency training spots may be needed, many such spots already exist. These spots are filled by visa training programs that train IMG physicians who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents, and who then return to their country of origin. Because of this

visa cohort, these slots are not available to train IMGs who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents for practice in Canada. A reallocation of some of these would have almost immediate impact on addressing physician shortages in Canada.

Changing this allocation is a low-hanging fruit opportunity. Currently, about 50 per cent of all IMGs in residency training are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents, but are visa trainees. According to the National IMG Database report, the number of IMGs in residency training between 2011-2021 increased from 4,167 to 4,690, but this number was entirely made up of visa trainees, not by IMGs who were Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

The federal government can help address this issue either through its visa entry requirements, or by targeted funding that would increase access to residency training positions that are currently not available for IMGs who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

In short, while the House Health Committee's recent report (*Addressing Canada's Health Workforce Crisis*) appropriately noted the importance of focused long-term collaboration between the federal government and provinces and territories, there are actions that can be taken now to help ameliorate this health human resource crisis.

The immediate question is: if it is clear that some interventions are possible now, who will act, and when?

Nova Scotia Senator Stan Kutcher is a psychiatrist and member of the Independent Senators Group. Newfoundland and Labrador Senator Mohamed Ravalia is a family physician and member of the Independent Senators Group.

The Hill Times

Health risks and the importance of labelling

Bill S-254 would amend the Food and Drugs Act to require a warning label on alcoholic beverages.

Senator Patrick Brazeau

Opinion



Only one in four Canadians is aware that alcohol is indisputably linked to at least seven fatal cancers, writes non-affiliated Senator Patrick Brazeau. Photograph courtesy of Pexels

Canadian Public Health Association, the Ontario Public Health Association, Toronto Public Health, Princeton Alcohol Use Disorder Society, Fraser Health, Queen's University Health Board, Nova Scotia Health, Durham Region Medical Officer of Health, Vancouver Coastal Health, and radiation oncologist Dr. Fawaad Iqbal.

Other key organizations that support health-risk warning labels include the Canadian Medical Association and the World Health Organization.

Several Senators have spoken to Bill S-254, emphasizing how critical it is that the bill makes it to the committee stage. Within a Senate committee, it can be analyzed word by word, expert witnesses can testify and be questioned, and everyone will be able to critique it from every conceivable angle on live television.

We have reached out to every Senate group and received ap-

proval of S-254 in principle along with agreement that it should go forward to committee.

We have yet to hear from the official opposition within the Senate regarding its desire that it go to committee. But given the general popular support for honest health labels—apart from the alcohol lobby—I am optimistic that the bill will get to committee soon.

I invite all my colleagues to give this idea due consideration and to do the rigorous legislative work necessary so that Canadians are given facts about their most precious resource: their health.

Born in Maniwaki, Que., non-affiliated Senator Patrick Brazeau is a member of the Algonquin community of Kitigan Zibi. He is a vigorous advocate for mental health and suicide prevention issues, and has recently introduced Bill S-254 in the Senate regarding labelling of alcoholic products.

The Hill Times

My bill, S-254, An Act to Amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages), is making its way through the legislative process. The bill would make it mandatory to include that alcohol is a class-one carcinogen. Given that only one in four Canadians is aware that alco-

hol is indisputably linked to at least seven fatal cancers, there is no time to waste in making labels honest regarding health risks.

Since introducing Bill S-254, I have received overwhelming support and encouragement from

far and wide. I have received many personal letters urging me to continue this fight. As well, many health authorities are publicly supporting this bill. At press time, these supporters include: the Canadian Cancer Society, the

LET'S ACCELERATE THE DELIVERY OF NEW MEDICINES TO CANADIANS



As Canadians, we aspire to have a leading health care system that includes access to the best medicines, enhancing quality of life for everyone. But the wait time to access new innovative medicines to treat mental health, cancers, autoimmune diseases like arthritis, and other chronic conditions has become unacceptably long.

In my past experience as a front-line pharmacist, I have seen first-hand the impact that delays in medication access have on Canadians. I remember one woman asking how her husband could access a cancer therapy that had recently been approved for sale in Canada but was not yet accessible to people who relied on a public drug plan. This situation stayed with me; I felt powerless to help her. Unfortunately, I know this scenario continues to happen today in pharmacies across Canada. I empathize with the health care professionals who are facing these anguishing situations and discussions daily.

The unfortunate reality is people who rely on public drug plans wait, on average, almost two years longer for approved medicines to be covered than people with private drug coverage. These delays are concerning for patients and should be for governments because new medicines often can contribute to the sustainability of the healthcare system by allowing people to return to work sooner, and avoiding costly hospital stays, surgical procedures, and other treatments. This is particularly important in the current context of health care staffing shortages across the country.

In some cases, access to innovative therapies is a time-sensitive issue, particularly for cancers and progressive chronic diseases. By working together, government and industry can – and should – do better for Canadians.

In theory, the objective is simple: ensure that new medicines that Health Canada have approved for use become available and accessible to patients in a timely manner. So, why is timely access to medication an issue?

Drug funding assessment and negotiation processes lead to long wait times and unpredictability



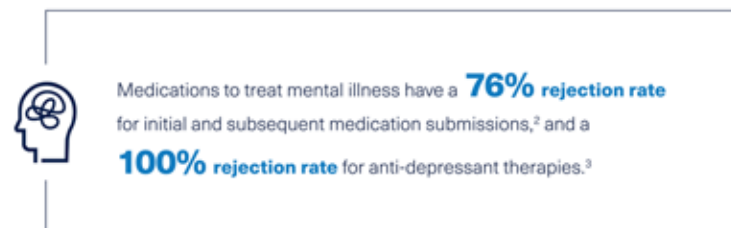
On average, Canadians with public drug plan coverage wait two years to access approved, new medications. That's nearly two times longer than in most peer countries within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). For context, Canada ranks 19th out of 20 OECD countries in the time it takes to secure public reimbursement for new medicines. Fewer than half of new medicines launched globally are launched in Canada.

Innovative Medicines Canada notes that we experience lengthy and unpredictable price negotiations with the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance (pCPA), a coalition of provincial and territorial drug plans. The pCPA process accounts for almost half the time from marketing approval to patient access. And a significant portion of this time is largely administrative – such as picking up a file for negotiation and listing a drug on formulary after the negotiation is complete.

A great place to start is to address the long delays in public reimbursement of approved innovative medicines. Here are three specific examples of how patients and the health care system suffer the consequences of delay.

Mental illness

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, one in five Canadians experience a mental illness in their lifetime. Poor mental health is among the top contributing factors leading to in-patient care for people living with schizophrenia and mood disorders, and is the lead cause



of emergency room and acute hospitalizations. Treating mental health disorders can effectively decrease the impact on healthcare resource utilization and lead to better patient outcomes.

And yet the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH), one of Canada's health technology assessment agencies, has a 76 per cent rejection rate for initial and subsequent medication submissions, and a 100 per cent rejection rate for anti-depressant therapies. Compare this to a 48.5 per cent rejection rate for non-mental health treatments. Rejected medications and delayed coverage of new medicines restrict the range of treatment options for patients. We applaud the federal government's focus on improving mental health care by supporting evidence-based solutions. We would encourage the federal government to extend this approach to the assessment of new mental health medicines by federal drug plans, which cover Indigenous people, refugees, and other vulnerable populations.

Cancer



Cancer is the leading cause of death in Canada; one in four Canadians will die from cancer. Yet, Canada is amongst the slowest of the developed countries to reimburse medicines through public coverage plans. This leads to delays for breakthrough therapies, which can be up to three years in some instances.

Access to cancer care varies dramatically depending on the province or territory in which Canadians live, and the pandemic has only accelerated cancer care challenges when it comes to screening delays, surgical backlogs, resource challenges and increased public demand for support.

Inflammatory arthritis



Inflammatory arthritis includes a group of chronic autoimmune conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and psoriatic arthritis. These are progressive diseases that can cause irreversible damage, therefore early diagnosis and treatment is paramount to delay or stop the progression of the disease and prevent long-term disability.

In 2020, the average time to list new inflammatory arthritis medications on public formularies following Health Canada approval was 665 days. Furthermore, up to 25 per cent of approved arthritis therapies are not accessible to Canadians on public plans.

The way forward

Optimizing the pathway for Canadians to access innovative medicines in a timely way would be a step in the right direction.

At AbbVie, we believe the federal government can play an important role in advancing policies that will improve patient access to new medicines by directing federal funds to the provinces to help them improve their drug plans, and by partnering with the provinces and territories to modernize the Health Technology Assessment process. We applauded the recently announced Drugs for Rare Disease strategy, which will allocate funding to the provinces to enhance screening, diagnosis and treatment of patients with rare conditions.

In addition, the federal government and many provincial governments have taken a step in the right direction by re-committing to life sciences in Canada. The pandemic made clear the importance of the sector to health system resilience and health security.

We are ready and open to work with government on solutions.

Sustainable solutions require us all to get involved. There is an opportunity and an urgent need for government, assessment and negotiation bodies, and industry to collaborate to evolve and enhance our medication access systems. We have a collective duty to work together to elevate the current standards of care for Canadians and ensure people have more timely access to innovative medicines. This allows our front-line health care workers to do what they were trained to do: offer the best care and treatment for each individual patient.

So let's change the paradigm and ensure that each patient gets the right treatment when they need it most. We owe it to Canadians.

**By: Arima Ventin, Executive Director,
Market Access and Government Affairs, AbbVie Canada**

References available upon request

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Health Policy Briefing

Canada needs urgent solutions to address burnout among health-care workers

Canada's health workforce is being pushed to the breaking point under the accumulated weight of years of resource constraints.

NDP MP
Don Davies

Opinion



Canada's health workforce crisis has reached a breaking point. Across the country, staffing shortages are leading to emergency room closures, hospital overcrowding, delayed surgeries and diagnostics, family doctor shortages, and long wait lists for continuing care.

This places enormous strain on care existing providers. Unfortunately, this chaos has become a day-to-day reality for Canada's health-care workers.

Despite their sacrifices and best efforts to provide every

patient with timely, high-quality care, they are being pushed to the breaking point under the accumulated weight of years of resource constraints.

And this is not new. Prior to COVID-19, Canadian health-care workers were already experiencing burnout and job dissatisfaction at alarming rates. However, the pandemic made working conditions far worse. Consequently, health care workers are now leaving the profession in greater numbers than ever before. This, in turn, is creating a vicious cycle by adding additional pressure on remaining staff.

And the consequences are stark. According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, 40 per cent of Canadian health care workers are burned out, 50 per cent intend to leave the profession, and only 60 per cent are satisfied with the quality of care they can provide.

Without adequate resources to keep up with patient needs, health care workers are facing what experts call 'moral distress.' Moral distress occurs when a person is unable to take what they believe to be the ethically appropriate course of action due to institutional or systemic barriers. For example, staff at

the Alberta Children's Hospital recently reported experiencing moral distress when they were so overwhelmed with patients they worried a child could die in the waiting room.

This should not be happening in a country as wealthy as Canada. Parents should never have to fear that their child could die for want of care in a hospital, and health-care providers should never be abandoned without the necessary resources to take care of their patients.

Frontline health-care workers, experts, and professional bodies have put forward many practical solutions for revitalizing Canada's health workforce in both the short and long term. These include increasing training and residency opportunities for Canadian students, expanding pathways to licensure for internationally trained workers, implementing pan-Canadian licensure, improving data collection and sharing, investing in preventative health, implementing team-based care models, expanding public long-term care beds, restoring administrative capacity, and improving financial incentives for underserved areas.

Health-care worker retention and return will require compre-

hensive action to address the root causes that are currently driving people from the sector. After all, any effort to add workers to Canada's health care sector will be futile if we are simultaneously losing experienced practitioners. All levels of government must, therefore, work together to ensure manageable workloads and safe workplaces, improve compensation and benefits, provide better support for mental health, and protect work-life balance for health-care workers.

My home province of British Columbia has recently shown important leadership on this front by becoming the first Canadian province to adopt mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios as part of its plan to improve workload standards. This policy is a key element of the province's new tentative agreement with British Columbia nurses, which also includes "record-setting compensation."

However, Canada's health workforce crisis is ultimately a national issue. It cannot be resolved by forcing jurisdictions to compete for a shrinking pool of staff. The federal government urgently needs to partner with the provinces and territories to scale up best practices for the reten-

tion, return, and recruitment of health-care workers.

After recently establishing bilateral health funding agreements in principle, the federal government is currently negotiating detailed targets, timelines, and common indicators with the provinces and territories. These discussions will provide a key opportunity to establish ongoing intergovernmental collaboration for resolving Canada's health workforce crisis.

Nevertheless, these bilateral agreements will be grossly insufficient in the absence of immediate action.

The federal government must not stand by in the face of this mounting crisis. Our country needs urgent solutions to address burnout and moral distress among health care workers. In their absence, both the well-being of frontline providers and the quality of patient care will continue to needlessly suffer.

NDP MP Don Davies, who represents Vancouver Kingsway, B.C., was first elected in 2008, and re-elected in 2011, 2015 and 2019. Davies serves as the NDP critic for health and deputy critic for public safety and emergency preparedness.

The Hill Times

Policies to protect kids' health good for future health spending, too

Banning e-cigarette flavours and restricting the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children are vital to making our kids healthier adults.

Andrew
Pipe

Opinion



The short- and long-term health consequences of what people consume are dramatically different.

In the short term, indulge in something a little too much and you are likely to suffer for a day

or two. But you can fix it by giving your body a little TLC.

In the long term, unhealthy behaviours eventually catch up to you with big consequences, both for your personally and for our health system.

Federal government health policies also have two timelines: the short-term and the long-term. While short-term policies providing immediate results are popular, long-term policies are critical to ensure future generations grow up in an environment that protects their health to the greatest extent.

Successful long-term policies prevent the types of short-term challenges the government faces today, while ensuring a healthier population in the future. What better legacy could a government leave?

To their credit, the current federal government has recognized the need to make long-term policy decisions to improve the health of Canadians. Many of these initiatives have, laudably, received multi-party support, including enacting front-of-package nutrition labelling requirements which will

make shopping for healthier food choices much easier.

But there is more the federal government can—and must—do to protect the health of Canada's youth. We suggest starting with two vital policies addressing youth vaping and nutrition.

The first is to expand the proposed ban on e-cigarette flavours to include mint/menthol—an initiative that would help limit the attractiveness of vaping to young Canadians. Nine out of 10 young people cite flavours as an important reason why they started vaping and why they continue to do so. The allure of vaping flavours, the popularity of vaping among youth, and the nicotine addiction which occurs so rapidly are concerning due to the adverse health impacts associated with e-cigarettes.

Five provincial and territorial governments have adopted or implemented policies that include mint/menthol in the flavours they prohibit, allowing only tobacco flavours to be sold.

The federal government is in the process of banning certain fruit and candy flavours, but has

not included mint/menthol, which it must do to be truly effective in preventing young Canadians from starting to vape and becoming addicted to nicotine.

The second is finally making good on a long-standing promise: introducing regulations to restrict the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to protect the health of children in Canada. This crucial element of the government's long-held healthy eating strategy has had a tortuous legislative journey, having been supported in 2019 by the House, but never completing the process before that year's federal election.

We are in a long-term epidemic of poor dietary health for our kids, fuelled by ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks, and driven in large part by their daily, unrelenting exposure to marketing of unhealthy food and beverages across all media in many settings.

The marketing of unhealthy food and beverages, often using attractive and well-known cartoon characters or mascots, increases our children's vulnerability to desiring—even

demanding—these products. It is an onslaught against which even the most determined parent can be found wanting.

It is time to speak up for our children and prevent them from being unfairly influenced by food marketers. We have a duty to protect them.

The government must introduce comprehensive regulations restricting the marketing of food and beverages high in sodium, sugars and saturated fat to children under 13 years by this fall, as committed to by Health Canada. Industry self-regulation simply is not sufficient to control this marketing onslaught.

Improving the health of Canadians is a big effort. It takes immediate short-term measures such as increasing health funding to meet urgent needs, but we also have to play the long game. We need to make policy decisions today, particularly those affecting the long-term health of our children, that will have a big positive impact on their health, and our health system, for years to come.

Andrew Pipe, MD, is a board member with Heart & Stroke and a clinical researcher at the University of Ottawa. He has been described as Canada's foremost expert on smoking cessation and the former chief of the division of Prevention and Rehabilitation at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute.

The Hill Times

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Health Policy Briefing

Canada Disability Benefit needs to be hefty enough to lift Canadians with disabilities out of legislated poverty

The Canada Disability Benefit would provide regular income support to Canadians with disabilities aged 18–64 years, supplementing provincial or territorial disability assistance. The benefit could provide people with disabilities enough income to lift them out of poverty, but this can't happen until Parliament passes Bill C-22.



Rabia Khedr
& Art
Eggleton

Opinion

Imagine having to sell the wheelchair, walker, or cane that you rely on to get around just to pay your rent or buy groceries.

Imagine skipping meals because you cannot afford to buy enough food for yourself and your children. Imagine worrying each month that you could be evicted if you cannot scrape together enough money to pay your rent.

Low-income Canadians with disabilities do not have to imagine these hardships. The 1.4

million Canadians with disabilities who live in poverty face this reality every day, and inflation and the rising costs of food and housing are only making life more difficult for them. Many have disabilities that prevent them from working full-time—or at all—or that put them in low-paying jobs.

The meagre amounts that provincial and territorial disability support payments provide do not come close to covering the costs of groceries, rent, medication, specialized equipment and other expenses, keeping people in poverty and forcing many to work illegally or under the table or to live precariously just to make ends meet.

Many Canadians with disabilities feel abandoned and unvalued

by society, and overwhelmed by the daily hardships they face. They need help, and they need it now.

One long-awaited solution is the federal government's proposed Canada Disability Benefit. It would provide regular income support payments to Canadians with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 64 years. The payments would not replace provincial or territorial disability assistance, but would supplement it.

The benefit could transform the lives of people with disabilities, providing them with enough income to lift them out of poverty.

However, they cannot receive the extra support until Parliament passes Bill C-22, which creates the framework for the benefit. The bill has been before Parliament since last June when it was first introduced by the government. It recently passed in the House of Commons and is now before the Senate.

While the bill must follow the usual course to become law, time is of the essence. Low-income Canadians with disabilities need the money in their pockets now.

The federal disability benefit would offer them a lifeline.

While many of the important details of the benefit—including the amount—are still to be determined by regulation, the draft

legislation offers hopeful signs that the benefit will actually reduce poverty for Canadians with disabilities.

The draft legislation importantly requires the benefit to be indexed to inflation, meaning that the amount people receive would automatically increase each year to match the cost of living.

Bill C-22 also requires the federal government to take into consideration Statistics Canada's official poverty line when setting the benefit's amount.

These two considerations are critical. Without it, the amount of the benefit could be too low to make a significant difference.

The Canada Disability Benefit must not be a symbolic gesture, but needs to be of an adequate amount to make a difference to the many Canadians who are struggling every day.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of poverty for working-age disabled Canadians was far higher than for those without disabilities, with 28.3 per cent of severely disabled people between the ages of 25 and 64 years living in poverty, compared to 10 per cent for those without disabilities.

During the pandemic, working-age people with disabilities were mostly excluded from federal pandemic-related finan-

cial supports, keeping them in a precarious situation. Since then, things have only gotten worse.

The housing crisis in Canada today acutely affects low-income people with disabilities. Affordable housing is simply not available. While some provinces do include a shelter allowance as part of their disability assistance, the amount provided is far below the average cost of rent in most locations.

Inflation has increased the costs for almost everything, yet most provincial and territorial disability benefits are not linked to the cost of living. With rising prices for food, shelter, and other goods and services, many people with disabilities are falling deeper into poverty.

Another important part of the bill is a requirement for the federal government to collaborate with Canada's disability community to design the benefit, including the application process, eligibility criteria, amount, and an appeal process. This brings Canadians with disabilities to the planning table, giving them a voice, and respecting the disability mantra of "nothing about us without us."

People with disabilities cannot afford to keep waiting. Parliament must pass Bill C-22 this spring.

Then, work must begin immediately to create the benefit, ensure that it is substantial enough to make a difference, and get it into people's hands as soon as possible.

Rabia Khedr is the national director of Disability Without Poverty and CEO of DEEN Support Services. Art Eggleton is a former Senator, MP, cabinet minister, and a former mayor of Toronto. He is a long-time advocate to alleviate poverty in Canada.

The Hill Times

Naturopathic medicine continues to be an emerging answer to Canada's health-care concerns



Shawn
O'Reilly

Opinion

Today, more people than ever before are seeking and benefiting from naturopathic medical care and the number of naturopathic doctors (NDs) is growing at record rates to accommodate this increased demand. There are more than 3,000 NDs in Canada from coast to coast to coast who continue to be the answer to Canadians' growing health-care needs.

Naturopathic medicine is a distinct primary health-care system that blends modern scientific knowledge with traditional and

natural forms of medicine. It has been practised in Canada since the end of the 19th century. The individualized approach which focuses on the overall health of a patient rather than solely focusing on addressing symptoms is a hallmark of the primary care provided by Canada's NDs.

Despite the longevity of and increased demand for naturopathic medical care, misconceptions exist that need to be addressed in order to have a complete understanding of the practice. One of the greatest misconceptions is that NDs lack formalized and regulated credentials. However, becoming an ND in Canada requires seven or more years of post-secondary education including four years of full-time study with clinical rotation in an accredited naturopathic medical

program, and successful completion of standard entry to practice exams. NDs have a broad scope of practice (including prescribing and IV therapies where permitted) and oversight by a regulatory authority in six Canadian jurisdictions to date—requisites which no one can suggest are negligible.

NDs work collaboratively with other health-care professionals, including medical doctors, to promote a more holistic approach to care, integrating standard medical diagnostics such as blood work with a broad range of therapies including clinical nutrition, diet and lifestyle counselling, herbal medicine, physical medicine, homeopathy, traditional Chinese medicine/acupuncture and intravenous/injection therapies.

For a country that is constantly looking for innovative ways to

address our growing health care challenges, naturopathic medicine has the potential to become a positive disruptor due to its ability to address primary health-care needs, particularly in the areas of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and depression along with lifestyle-associated challenges, while also providing highly qualified professionals to bolster the primary care workforce. For example, NDs are increasingly approached by veterans for mental and emotional care as well as pain management, knowing that NDs use a broad range of therapies to help veterans face health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, sleep disturbances, opioid dependencies, and chronic pain.

Additionally, naturopathic medicine has a strong role to play

in improving health-care access for Canada's Indigenous populations. Through NDs' evidence-informed use of plant medicine and therapies, as well as their focus on the body's natural abilities to heal itself and the connection between the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of healing, NDs can provide culturally safe care for health-care systems and Indigenous Peoples respectively—aiding in the removal of systemic barriers that currently exist.

With the increased strain on our health-care systems, the inclusion of NDs in publicly funded multi-disciplinary primary health-care settings is proposed as an achievable strategy to fill gaps in health human resources and advance the movement toward individualized holistic care. But, to accomplish this, there must be continued collaboration with governments to improve access to and coverage of the services provided by naturopathic doctors.

To learn more about the important role NDs play in Canadian health care visit: cand.ca.

Shawn O'Reilly is the executive director and director of government relations of the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors.

The Hill Times

Black communities miss out on public health benefits that community hubs offer

Community centres led by ethno-cultural communities provide a safe space to obtain culturally appropriate support services, contributing to the community's health and wellbeing.

Amina Mohamed

Opinion



Community and cultural centres play a critical role in public health.

The sports and recreation activities, and the leisure and education programs they offer, give people an opportunity to improve their fitness, live healthier lives and learn new skills. They also serve as a meeting place where individuals can connect with others in their community, reducing loneliness and isolation.

Community centres led by ethno-cultural communities not only offer these benefits, they also provide a safe space for community members to share and preserve their history and culture and obtain culturally appropriate support services, contributing to the community's health and well-being.

Yet not all groups have equal access to this type of social infrastructure.

A recent study on public investment in Black infrastructure by the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation (SCCR) and the Infrastructure Institute at the University of Toronto found that neighbourhoods in Toronto with a high proportion of Black residents, particularly those of Somali origin, lack access to such facilities.

Of the 36 cultural centres the study examined, only five were Black-led and they focused on arts and activism rather than recreational and other programming.

The lack of community centres is made worse by the effects of quickly gentrifying cities that push many Black residents into poorly resourced and underfunded neighbourhoods.

The gap in social infrastructure can and has negatively affected the health and wellbeing of Black communities already burdened with years of systemic discrimination and anti-Black racism that have resulted in higher levels of poverty and poorer health outcomes for many Black Canadians.

While efforts are underway by the SCCR to build a Somali-led culture and recreation facility in Toronto, the centre, and others like it, need financial and policy support from all levels of government, including the federal government, if they are to succeed.

The biggest barrier to creating Black-led cultural and community centres is the cost. They are expensive to build, requiring large capital investments. While other ethno-cultural communities have previously

funded their centres through donations from community members and by land sales, the legacy of anti-Black racism and discriminatory policies against Black communities mean that there are fewer opportunities for Black communities to raise all the needed funds themselves.

The federal government can help remove the cost barrier by making capital funding for Black-led community centre projects a priority in its infrastructure investments.

Besides capital funding, the federal government must prioritize investments in community-led projects that focus on building multi-purpose centres in neighbourhoods without other social infrastructure. Multi-use facilities in these neighbourhoods would provide a hub where community members and others could take part in recreational and cultural programs and access other social services.

The centres could be a resource for new parents. They could provide a safe space for young people in the neighbourhood to interact with each other and learn new skills. They could connect seniors and newcomers with support services. They present a meaningful opportunity to transform marginalized communities through direct investments in public health through mental health services, family-oriented programming and the promotion of healthy living.

Historically, marginalized groups have been left out of government decision-making processes, leading to outcomes that do not always meet the community's needs. This trend requires immediate disruption. It is essential that the federal government create a policy and funding structure that clearly identifies and addresses how investments will benefit the community.

Amina Mohamed is the head of strategic communications for the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation.

The Hill Times

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Health Policy Briefing

Compassion fatigue, moral distress and moral residue facing health-care providers

This is not a call for yet another report on how to fix a health-care system which appears to be collapsing under the weight of unrelenting demands at a time of decreasing personnel and financial resources. It's a call for a new kind of sustained commitment.

Françoise Baylis

Opinion



country, are burned out—they are physically and mentally exhausted and, in some cases, they suffer from compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue is where the trauma of others is experienced by health-care providers as their own trauma which makes it difficult, if not impossible, for them to provide effective patient care. Imagine, for example, the trauma experienced and, in some cases, internalized by those who witnessed untold deaths as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For some health-care providers, moral distress and moral residue are layered on top of this.

Moral distress arises when there is a disconnect between what a person sincerely believes should be done and what they actually do. This can be the result of institutional constraints, hierarchical structures, errors of judgment, personal failings, or other circumstances beyond a person's control. Consider, for example, the decision to discharge frail patients when they are not medically or functionally ready in an effort to free-up beds or to alleviate pressure in the emergency room. Perhaps the equipment required for safe discharge is not available. Perhaps commu-

nity services and home care are unable to provide the necessary supports because they are already at full capacity.

Moral residue is the emotional remnant of moral distress. It is what a person carries with them from those times when they were unable to do the right thing.

Taken together, compassion fatigue, moral distress and moral residue account for high levels of absenteeism. They also explain why some health care providers have chosen to work part-time or to retire early. The resulting staff shortages have increased the workload for others which, in turn, has increased stress in an already heavily burdened and fractured health-care system.

To date, responses to the labour shortages have been many and varied. Across the country there has been increased use of information technology and artificial intelligence in operational and administrative tasks, increased use of video communications, increased efforts at worker retention, compressed training programs for nurses, an expanded role for pharmacists, and increased use of nurse practitioners and certified physician assistants. Nurse practitioners are registered

nurses with additional training and experience. Physician assistants are medical professionals with a two-year degree modeled on the training provided to physicians. These various responses have proven insufficient, however.

Against this backdrop, the question arises: can the federal government help the health-care system contend with inadequate staffing and worker retention?

As health is a shared responsibility, this is a complicated question. My best answer at this time is for the federal government to complement ongoing efforts by the provinces and territories to financially shore up the existing health-care system while at the same time making targeted investments in creative design projects aimed at revamping the current system to better address the needs and challenges of the 21st century. To be clear, this is not a call for yet another report on how to fix a health-care system which appears to be collapsing under the weight of unrelenting demands at a time of decreasing personnel and financial resources. Rather, it is a call for a new kind of sustained commitment to co-operative federalism to

achieve the goal of providing Canadian residents with high quality health care.

To this end, the federal government, in the role of convener, could facilitate important grass-root conversations among care providers and residents about hopes and expectations for health and wellness. At this time, access to health care is a high priority for Canadians. This has translated into calls for more primary care physicians without much discussion about the current hub and spoke model where "information flows through and decisions are made by" the primary care physician (the hub). This is not the only way to provide care. Moreover, there are many good reasons to think that it may not be the best way to provide patient-centred care. Critical questions to consider are: do we need more primary care physicians or more primary care? And how might these be different?

Françoise Baylis, CM, ONS, PhD, FRSC, FCAHS, FISC, is a member of the Governing Board of the International Science Council, and a distinguished research professor emerita for Dalhousie University.

The Hill Times

New health deal needs transparent monitoring and evaluation process to make sure health-care outcomes improve

Gail Attara & Louise Binder

Opinion



receipt of treatment. This is the longest wait time recorded in this survey's history—and it is a whopping 195 per cent longer than wait times reported in 1993, when it was just 9.3 weeks.

Lengthy wait-times result in more cancer patients dying. For all patients, wait times have serious consequences, such as increased pain, suffering and mental anguish. In many instances, wait times can result in poorer medical outcomes, transforming potentially reversible illnesses or injuries into chronic, irreversible conditions or even permanent disabilities.

Canada also has a doctor shortage. Many Canadian families might not even be able to access primary care. A recent

Canadian Medical Association Journal survey found that more than one in five Canadians—an estimated 6.5 million people—do not have access to a family physician or nurse practitioner.

The devastating human costs behind the statistics should concern all of us.

Some organizations have put hard numbers around this. A report from All.Can Canada predicts that disruptions to cancer diagnosis and care alone could lead to 21,247 more cancer deaths in Canada over the next decade, representing 355,173 years of lost life.

For breast cancer screening, a six-month interruption could lead to about 670 additional advanced breast cancers and 250 more breast cancer deaths. For colorectal can-

cer, a six-month delay in screening could increase colorectal cancer cases by about 2,200 with 960 more colorectal cancer deaths.

The good news is that the federal government has taken steps to try to ameliorate the problem.

In February, the prime minister announced an investment of over \$198-billion to help improve the health care system, noting that the public will judge whether this deal is a success. The four key areas of investment include family health services, health workers and reducing backlogs, mental health and substance use services, and modernizing the health care system.

As the leaders of a new grass-roots collective of patients and patient group leaders, Patients for Accountable Healthcare, we will hold the federal, provincial and territorial First Ministers accountable for this deal.

Of concern, the agreements do not have a transparent monitoring and evaluation process built in, so the federal government should take immediate steps to track and determine the success of these investments. Eventually, the data plan that the Canadian Institute for Health Information is leading will provide some answers, but that is years away.

Canadians deserve accountability now. We need to know how this money is being spent and we need to see direct improvements in health care quality and access as a result.

Our health-care system must provide timely, equal, and equita-

ble access to resilient, safe health care, respecting the Canada Health Act, while being accountable to the public.

If the government doesn't monitor progress of the new deal, you can be sure Canadians will.

At Patients for Accountable Healthcare, the underlying values guiding our work are respect, meaningful and ethical engagement, accountability, transparency, timely access, excellence, capacity building and mentorship, social justice and safety. We should expect no less from our health system.

We are enlisting the help of patients in urban and rural and remote parts of the country, and from all ethnicities and backgrounds, to join us in monitoring and sharing findings from each jurisdiction.

We will not shy away from undertaking relevant education to patients, caregivers, and the public. We will monitor and evaluate the progress of this new deal using measurable, transparent, patient-oriented outcomes, to assess changes that adapt to the needs of the individual.

It would be most effective if the government invited us to the table. After all, health care is for the people.

Gail Attara is the chief executive officer of the Gastrointestinal Society. Louise Binder is a health policy consultant with the Save Your Skin Foundation. Together they lead Patients for Accountable Healthcare.

The Hill Times

The Canadian health-care system is letting us down. Cancer care is just one of the many disease areas harmed by the pandemic resulting in a lack of access to doctors, hospital beds and operating rooms. We need to do better.

Patients are waiting longer than ever to receive medically necessary treatments.

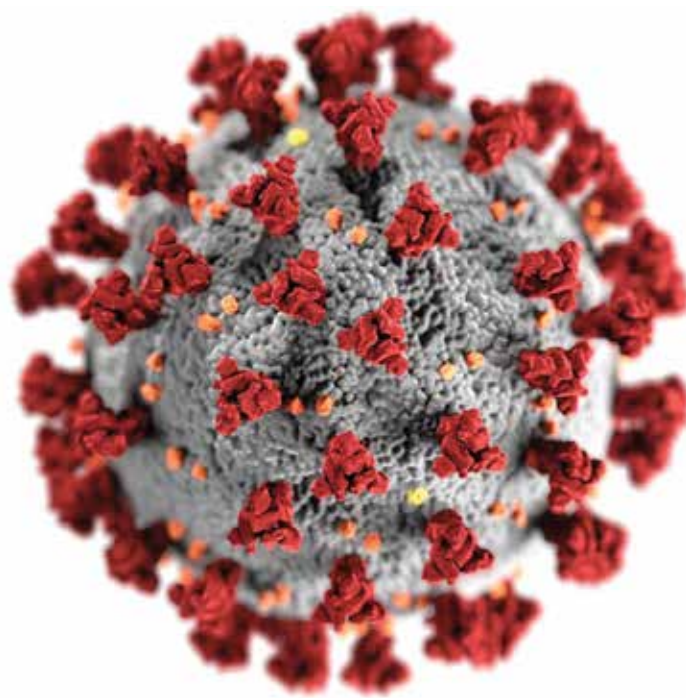
Specialist physicians surveyed report a median waiting time of 27.4 weeks between referral from a general practitioner and

Without a foundation of gender equality, health infrastructure everywhere will continue to crumble

Health workers, especially women, reported high levels of burnout and moral distress during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many leaving the field all together.

Julia Anderson

Opinion



As governments work to rebuild the health-care architecture that crumbled during the pandemic, they have an opportunity to draw a new blueprint that incorporates gender equality at every level, writes Julia Anderson, the CEO of the Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health. Photograph courtesy of Pixabay

The COVID-19 pandemic taught most of us a lesson that health-care workers have long known: 'just' enough is not enough.

Having just enough staff, who make just enough money, working in clinics and hospitals with just enough resources doesn't produce stable health systems. It's the health-care equivalent of living paycheque to paycheque, crossing your fingers for no unforeseen expenses.

COVID-19 was the ultimate unforeseen expense, and health-care workers in Canada and abroad were left to pay the price. Health workers (especially women) reported high levels of burnout and moral distress, with many leaving the field altogether. Within a few short months, the same workers who had been pointing to cracks in the system before the pandemic were surrounded by evidence that they were right all along.

For women in health care, who occupy 90 per cent of frontline positions globally, this 'I told you so' moment is overdue.

Health workers around the world have been scraping by with a *just enough* approach for years. At work, they have carried the burden of inadequate resources, insufficient pay, and exclusionary systems. At home, they have borne the brunt of unpaid caregiving responsibilities, while contending with unequal access to their own health services.

Women in the health workforce contribute US \$3-trillion annually to the global economy, but half of this is unpaid work. When women health workers are paid, they are making 24 per cent less than their male counterparts.

Now, as governments work to rebuild the health architecture that crumbled during the pandemic, they have an opportunity to draw a new blueprint—one that incorporates gender equality at every level. Canada's inclusion of expected gender impact of new measures in annual federal budgets is one example of what this type of consideration could look like.

The invaluable health workforce must also be properly recognized. This starts with paying all health workers a fair living wage, from those who keep our clinics and hospitals clean, to community healthcare workers and midwives—the backbone of care in many communities globally.

Currently, there is a shortage of 900,000 midwives worldwide, creating a dangerous lack of contraceptive care, maternal care,

and sexual and reproductive health care, particularly in rural and remote areas.

These individuals are the first line of defence when we are faced with new and unprecedented threats to global health, as we are today.

Building strong, resilient health systems demands a more global outlook. COVID-19 erased any doubt that the health climate of one part of the world affects all others.

Nearly overnight, the world watched as a cluster of dots on a map in China became a sea of red spanning the globe.

Polling conducted by the Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health highlights the growing understanding of the importance of global solutions. Nearly 80 per cent of Canadians agreed that unless COVID is controlled in all parts of the world, we can't return to normal life in Canada, while more than 70 per cent supported the government investing to help ensure healthcare workers everywhere in the world get access to a COVID-19 vaccine.

Over the past three years, we've seen firsthand that global health is Canadian health. When health systems in any part of the world are stretched thin, we all feel the tension. And when health workers anywhere are pushed to their limit, we all suffer the consequences.

The barrier to creating strong resilient health-care systems is not a lack of know-how. It's the political will to do things differently, to overhaul the systems that have failed to protect the women on the frontlines of healthcare, and the girls inspired to follow in their footsteps.

Calls to invest in a more gender responsive, integrated and equitable health-care system have been repeated many times before, but the stakes have never been higher. With years of progress on global health undone due to the pandemic and climate change and international conflict posing additional threats, we must put the right systems in place to reclaim lost gains.

It is time we work here at home and around the world to create stable, equitable, resilient health systems that are built to last. Anything less is simply not enough.

Julia Anderson is the CEO of the Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health (CanWaCH).

The Hill Times

Notable and noteworthy:

- Women in the health workforce contribute US\$3-trillion annually to the global economy, but half of this is unpaid work. When women health workers are paid, they are making 24 per cent less than their male counterparts
- Currently, there is a shortage of 900,000 midwives worldwide, creating a dangerous lack of contraceptive care, maternal care, and sexual and reproductive health care, particularly in rural and remote areas.

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BOLD ACTION BY THE CMA

Health Policy Briefing

Experts call on Health Minister Duclos to rise to challenge of health-care system transformation

Continued from page 16

publicly-funded medical care systems that help patients after they become sick or injured, but public health actually refers to the organized societal effort to keep people healthy, and to prevent injury, illness and premature death.

The brief cited data gathered by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, which found that spending on public health services in 2020 amounted to about six per cent of total health expenditures in Canada, compared to hospitals at 26 per cent and pharmaceuticals at 15 per cent.

Culbert told *The Hill Times* that addressing public health could be “a legacy initiative” for any government willing to undertake it.

“We’re really hoping that the federal government can play a leadership role in the renewal of public health systems across the country,” said Culbert. “In the current phase of the pandemic, we’ve seen the burden that has been put on public health systems. They’ve been stretched to the limit. We’ve seen where they have underperformed because of decades of underinvestment and the lack of consistency in public health systems across the country. That shouldn’t be acceptable in 2023.”

The CPHA argued in the brief that public health interventions can lead to economic benefits. For example, every dollar spent on immunizing children with the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine saves \$16 in health care costs, and every dollar invested in fluoridated drinking water saves \$26 on dental care, according to the brief.

“A great deal of attention has focused on the preventive role of public health systems in this country, [and] their ability to protect populations, and we want to capitalize on that to be able to get these conversations going, because what happens in public health is that we have these boom and bust cycles of funding and political attention,” said Culbert. “We have to start somewhere. And I do believe that, based on Minister Duclos’s training as an economist, he can see the merit of investing in prevention. Preventing disease is cheaper than curing illness.”

Brett Skinner, founder and CEO of the Canadian Health Policy Institute, argued that reforms in the health-care system should involve decentralization, and greater involvement with the private sector as a partner.

“When talking about decentralization, we’re really talking

about respect for provincial jurisdictions. When we talk about private-sector involvement, we’re talking about supplementary, complementary, involvement of the private sector, [and] not the application of public subsidization to ensure universality,” he said. “That would allow for physician groups and clinical groups or hospitals to provide services for public payment and for private payment, without being penalized. And without being restricted to one or the other sectors.”

Skinner said that provinces can serve as little laboratories, each experimenting with the best approaches and best practices for health care before they are adopted elsewhere in Canada.

“Populations differ by province, by age and other factors. And provinces have designed approaches within constraints of what the law allows ... [and] they’ve designed programs that specialized in certain population needs. And they experiment in different ways,” said Skinner. “We have a high degree of similarity between the provinces, but [also] just small differences that allow us to improve our system overall over time. It’s a strength, and not a weakness, that we have these separate jurisdictions doing things in much the same way but with slight differences that allow us to make improvements over time.”

Liberal MP Adam van Koevorden, (Milton, Ont.), who is also the parliamentary secretary to Duclos, told *The Hill Times* that he doesn’t think the health minister’s job has ever been more complex than it is now, given factors such as the global pandemic and the human resource challenges in the health-care system.

“There’s just really nothing that has fallen off of [Duclos’s] radar, which I think is quite remarkable,” said van Koevorden. “We recognize that Canadians are proud of our health-care system, but that is not really meeting everybody’s expectation. From a citizen perspective, we’re really focused on making sure that those expectations are met, and that we reduce wait times and increase the number of doctors and nurses in the system. It’s just about serving Canadians and making sure that we continue to have one of the healthiest countries in the world.”

One recent focus for the health minister’s office includes improving dental care, according to van Koevorden.

The Liberal government has plans to begin rolling out the Ca-

nadian Dental Care Plan by the end of this year, with expectations of full implementation by 2025, according to a PMO press release from March 31. The plan will be available in 2023 to uninsured Canadians under 18, persons with disabilities, and seniors who have an annual family income of less than \$90,000. By 2025, the Canadian Dental Care Plan will be fully implemented to cover all uninsured Canadians with an annual family income under \$90,000.

“When I was an athlete, I didn’t have insurance for dental care, so I paid out of pocket to go to the dentist and I kind of thought that I was very unique. But it turns out there’s over 10 million Canadians that are in the exact same situation, which is something that shocked me when I became a member of parliament three years ago,” said van Koevorden. “The good news is we’re there to help Canadians and I’m really glad that we are because I’ve met quite a few people in my riding whose kids were also having to pay out of pocket ... for their children’s access to the dentist.”

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Experiences of health care workers during the pandemic

- A total of 95 per cent of health care workers reported that their job was impacted by the pandemic, and 86.5 per cent felt more stressed at work.
- A total of 92 per cent of nurses reported feeling more stressed at work, which was higher than physicians at 83.7 per cent, PSWs, or care aides 83 per cent, and other health care workers 83 per cent.
- Physicians were more likely (68.2 per cent) than people in other occupation groups to report having to change their methods of delivering care, likely reflecting a shift to virtual care.
- There were 126,000 vacancies in the health care sector in the fourth quarter of 2021, which was almost double the number of vacancies seen two years earlier at 64,000.
- Reporting job stress or burnout as a reason for intending to leave their job or change jobs was more prevalent among women (63.9 per cent) than men (59.5 per cent) and among nurses (70.9 per cent) compared with PSWs or care aides (51 per cent), physicians (48.2 per cent) and other health care workers (60.6 per cent).

Source: *Experiences of health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, September to November 2021, released on June 3, 2022 by Statistics Canada*

Accelerating interoperability is key to reducing strain on Canada’s health-care system

Michael Green

Opinion



It’s no secret that events of the past three years have placed immense strain on Canada’s health-care system, with health-care workers past the point of exhaustion. What will it take to address these challenges and restore confidence in our health-care system, among patients and health-care workers?

There is no single answer, but I would argue that accelerating interoperability is one of the key elements that must be prioritized. Interoperability affects every part of the health system. It enables patient health information to flow seamlessly between different solutions and devices. Interoperability improves continuity of care, collaboration between and among health-care providers, and patient access to their health information. By breaking down data silos, it also reduces inefficiencies and redundancies within the health system.

While interoperability continues to improve in Canada, according to two separate surveys recently conducted by Canada Health Infoway (Infoway) and the Commonwealth Fund, there are still opportunities for further growth that will benefit Canadians, clinicians, and our health system.

Infoway’s 2022 Canadian Digital Health Survey found that 74 per cent of Canadians said communication among their care providers is always or usually good. However, 24 per cent said their care providers did not have their health information/history prior to or during their visit, and 31 per cent said they experienced at least one gap in communication and co-ordination of their care in the past 12 months. This number is higher for those who have chronic conditions (38 per cent) or many health system encounters (47 per cent).

These gaps are concerning as they can delay care, result in duplicate tests or adverse drug events, or lead to hospital readmissions. The good news, however, is that we have also seen evidence of the effective role that digital health tools, such as electronic medical records (EMRs), can play in improving care.

Historically Canada had lagged behind in EMR use—in 2009, only 37 per cent of primary physicians in Canada were using EMRs, compared to 77 per cent of international peers. But the latest Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians in 10 countries found that Canada is now on par with the international average, with 93 per cent of primary care physicians using EMRs. Seventy-six per cent of primary-care physicians in Canada have electronic access to regional, provincial, or territorial information systems where they can access patient information outside their practice.

But there are three critical areas of information exchange where Canada remains behind international peers: primary-care physicians’ ability to electronically exchange patients’ clinical summaries, laboratory and diagnostic test results, and comprehensive patient medication lists. The sharing of patient summaries has been identified as a priority by every jurisdiction in Canada and will help health-care providers save time by accessing patients’ complete health information in one place, communicate more efficiently across the health system, have improved confidence in their decision making, and have more time to spend with patients.

Infoway has been leading efforts to create a pan-Canadian interoperable patient summary standard and is collaborating with provinces and territories and solutions vendors to develop and test an initial set of technical requirements.

We were pleased that 2023 federal budget included investments in Infoway to help improve health-care data and interoperability. End-to-end interoperability is a continuous, multi-year journey that requires a coordinated, consensus-driven approach embedded in proactive governance.

Canadians expect a high-performing, world-class health system, even in the face of unprecedented pressures. Harnessing digital health solutions and data will help increase system capacity, improve access, and drive better health outcomes. And interoperability lies at the heart of it.

Michael Green is president and CEO of Canada Health Infoway, an independent, not-for-profit organization funded by the federal government.

The Hill Times

Uptick in violent crime ‘definitely has political implications,’ say pollsters, as Conservatives’ push for bail reform, tough-on-crime policies lays groundwork for campaign

A recent poll found that 65 per cent of Canadians believe crime and violence have gotten worse compared to pre-pandemic times, and that 81 per cent want tougher penalties for those found guilty of committing violent crimes.

Continued from page 1

a victim shot on a bus now in critical condition, two people taken into custody, another suspect at large,” said Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.), reading from a list during an April 13 press conference in Edmonton. “Tuesday afternoon, Calgary, police discover a corpse in a suitcase. Wednesday, Edmonton, police reveal a 35-year-old was shot to death in an apartment building. Wednesday afternoon, Edmonton, a teenage boy attacked at an Edmonton mall. The boy is now in serious condition,” said Poilievre, adding that “Trudeau and the NDP have caused this crime wave, with policies that allow the same repeat, violent offenders loose on our streets to terrorize instant people.”

In the House of Commons on Jan. 30, Conservative MP Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, Ont.) said “commuters in Toronto have been set on fire, stabbed and swarmed in a growing wave of violence” and that transit operators are “scared to go to work.”

According to Statistics Canada’s portrait of police-reported crime in Canada released in August 2022, while police-reported crime in Canada, as measured by the Crime Severity Index (CSI), was virtually unchanged in the second year of the pandemic overall, there were “notable shifts” in the nature of reported crimes.

In 2021, for the first time since 2006, the year-over-year changes in the violent and non-violent CSIs moved in opposite directions, with violent crimes rising five per cent in 2021 in contrast to non-violent CSI declining by three per cent.



Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre recently said ‘Trudeau and the NDP have caused this crime wave, with policies that allow the same repeat, violent offenders loose on our streets to terrorize instant people.’ *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In an April 13 Leger poll, 65 per cent of Canadians said they believe crime and violence have gotten worse in their community compared to pre-pandemic times, 81 per cent called for tougher penalties for those who are found guilty of committing violent crimes, 79 per cent called for increased funding for mental health services, with 75 per cent call for increased police presence in their community.

“The causes and responses are unclear, but clearly something is wrong,” said Graves. “This rise predates the pandemic and I suspect it is linked to the disinformation, polarization and rising societal dysfunction.”

Clearly the internet and social media are a contributing factor, said Graves, with the rise clearly linked to hate crimes, violence against women, and visible minorities.

“This dipped in the early stages of the pandemic and then rose again in later stages,” said Graves. “This reflects the decline in mistrust and polarization that occurred in the early parts of the pandemic, but then re-expressed itself even more forcefully as the pandemic went on and on and on.”

Graves said the problem is “clearly focused” in urban Canada, and these are critical seats in the next federal election.

“I suspect that some of the populist rhetoric will be effective with much of the current [Conservative] constituency,” said Graves, noting that one particularly curious feature is that violent crime had been declining in Canada due to the aging of our population.

“This rise runs contrary to those demographic shifts, and clearly is rooted in the general distemper of the times and fraying social cohesion,” said Graves.

Big part of Poilievre’s job now to build up the war chest, says pollster Greg Lyle

Pollster Greg Lyle said he thought Poilievre’s recent approach is going to rally his base “big time,” and that a big part of the job right now is to build up the war chest for when Canadians get closer to a federal election.

And as people hear that the Conservative leader is worried and concerned about rising crime rates, pointing to the recent headlines in Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto, a lot of people are also worried, said Lyle, noting that it resulted in a change of government in Vancouver in the last municipal election.

“What I don’t know is that that extra bit of hyperbole—attacking Liberal and NDP mayors—I’m not sure people react to that,” said Lyle. “You can’t blame mayors for catch-and-release strategies.”

Poilievre recently blamed “woke Liberal-NDP mayors” for rising crime across Canada, as reported by *The Globe and Mail*.

In terms of the fight to persuade, the critical moments will unfold in the election campaign itself, said Lyle, and that the other thing that’s “a little bit odd” around the targeting of mayors is that Poilievre is not running against them, he’s running against the federal government.

That being said, Poilievre “is targeting Liberals and New Democrats, and we know you can expect Poilievre to try and do what [Ontario Premier Doug Ford] did, which is not just trying to convince Liberals to vote Tory, but trying to convince New Democrats to vote Tory,” said Lyle, calling that particular audience “pay-as-you-go moderates” that

can go any way between the NDP, the Liberals, and the Tories.

“They are more than one in six Canadians,” according to Lyle. “But again, it would be a simpler message if they were just striking primarily at their competitors at the federal level.”

Nanos also said Poilievre’s approach traditionally is a very good issue for raising funds for the Conservatives.

“They’re clearly tough on crime, much tougher than the Liberals or the New Democrats, and it’s actually a pretty good wedge issue for them,” said Nanos, noting that there have been elections in the past where a violent crime has occurred during the campaign, and it’s been an opportunity for the Conservatives.

“That’s all that needs to happen if there’s a shooting in a major urban area during the next federal election, he will have already set the framework and laid the foundation for him to take advantage of that politically,” said Nanos.

Justice Minister David Lametti (LaSalle-Émard-Verdun, Que.), in a March 10 interview on CPAC, said concerns raised on the part of provincial premiers recently “is echoed in the letter that the premiers wrote to the prime minister, that there’s a few after a certain number of very tragic events in Canada, [there’s] a fear that the system isn’t treating repeat violent offenders very well or the bail system is too lenient or that the bail certain system is too lenient with respect to crimes committed with weapons.”

The letter, spearheaded by Ontario Premier Ford following the killing of Ontario Provincial Police officer Greg Pierzchala who was shot while responding to a call in Hagersville, Ont., was ultimately signed by 13 premiers.

Randall McKenzie, 25, and Brandi Crystal Lyn Stewart-Sperry, 30, each face a charge of first-degree murder. McKenzie, from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, has a long history of charges and was granted bail six months before the Dec. 27, 2022, shooting.

The provincial and territorial leaders urged the federal government to take “immediate action to strengthen Canada’s bail system to better protect the public and Canada’s heroic first responders.”

When asked about what changes to Canada’s bail system would look like, Lametti said anything the government does will have to be framed by Charter principles, and by the presumptive right to bail in the Canadian criminal justice system.

“So I think that ought to allay a number of the different fears that have been raised, the very legitimate fears that have been raised by criminal defence counsel, amongst others,” said Lametti. “But there’s also a very legitimate view from across Canada that there are a number of instances in which the bail system has either failed or made Canadians feel unsafe in their own communities.”

‘There’s always an increase in crime associated with a decline in the economy’

Executive director of the John Howard Society Catherine Latimer, whose organization’s mission statement is “effective, just and humane responses to the causes and consequences of crime,” told *The Hill Times* that it’s difficult to know what causes upticks in crime, and that there’s always an increase in crime associated with a decline in the economy.

“We’ve seen some significant hardship visited on people, particularly those that were sort of marginalized or impoverished anyway, with the sudden increase in inflation, and an increase—a significant increase—in homelessness. So there, I think there are many background factors that go into this besides any kind of changes in policy around criminal justice.”

Latimer said the proportion of people held in jail pre-sentence compared to that in other industrialized countries “is really bad,” noting that 38 per cent of Canada’s overall prison population is in a pre-trial detention.

“Because it suggests you’re not taking the presumption of innocence and the right to reasonable bail seriously, so that’s a real problem,” said Latimer.

The rate in the United States is 22 per cent, and the United Kingdom’s rate is 11 per cent, according to Latimer, “which puts us way above most first-world countries.”

“We do need to overhaul bail reform—we don’t need more people in there—we need the right people in there, the people who are in an active crime cycle and would otherwise be doing damage in the community,” said Latimer.

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News

‘The greatest crisis in its history’: past commission offers lessons to policymakers as Bill C-13 returns to the House, say historians

The 1969 Official Languages Act came about at a time when ‘Quebec’s frustration was bursting out in a variety of ways,’ says former official languages commissioner Graham Fraser.

BY IAN CAMPBELL

In the heated debate around the federal government’s bill to amend the Official Languages Act—which is headed back to the House after finishing at committee—the history of how language policy has been crafted in Canada may offer lessons to policymakers working on the law today, say historians who have studied this aspect of Canada’s past.

On April 18, the House of Commons Official Languages Committee released its report on Bill C-13, which it had been examining since June 2022. Throughout the study, the committee heard strong opposition from organizations representing English-language minority communities in Quebec, who say the bill moves from a “symmetrical” to an “asymmetrical” approach to official languages. Many advocates for francophone communities inside and outside of Quebec agree with that assessment, but say such an approach is necessary in order to protect the French language because it is a minority within North America. Several Liberal MPs on the committee have spoken against the government on the bill.

However, these tensions are not new. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism—often referred to as the B&B Commission, or the Bi and Bi Commission—studied the matter for several years in the 1960s, leading to passage of the first Official Languages Act in 1969. The commission drew controversy as it travelled across the country for its hearings, and saw sharp differences of opinion between its 10 members. The intensity of the views expressed at its public meetings led the commission to

Official Languages Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor, left, pictured with former prime minister Jean Chrétien. Her 2021 mandate letter tasks her with introducing a bill to reform the Official Languages Act, ‘taking into consideration the pressing need to protect and promote French.’ Bill C-13 was introduced by the federal government in March 2022. *The Hill Times photograph by Sam Garcia*



issue an interim report in 1965, in which it said Canada was “passing through the greatest crisis in its history.”

Like today, the differences in views between some of the key members of the commission centred broadly around whether to take a symmetric or asymmetric approach to bilingualism—in other words, whether the language policy should treat French and English communities the same, or whether special protections are needed for the French language because, even though francophones comprise a majority in Quebec, they are a minority in North America.

‘Quebec’s frustration was bursting out in a variety of ways’

The B&B commission was established by a minority Liberal government—similar to today—led by prime minister Lester B. Pearson, who came to power in 1963.



André Laurendeau, left, and Davidson Dunton served as co-chairs of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. *Photograph courtesy of Library and Archives Canada*

According to Damien-Claude Bélanger, an associate professor of history at the University of Ottawa, the electoral math for the Liberals at the time meant they needed a significant share of seats in Quebec to win power, and an even stronger showing in that province if they were to move into majority territory, especially with the rise of the *Créditistes*, the Quebec wing of the Social Credit Party which had become a “viable political force in Quebec” that decade.

“It was playing the same role in the federal Parliament at the time that the *Bloc Québécois* plays [to] some extent today,” said Bélanger. “It was voicing a certain interpretation of Quebec’s interests outside of the bounds of the two major political parties.”

Bélanger, who studies the intellectual history of Quebec and French Canada, said tensions had been growing for decades in Quebec over the feeling that the level of bilingualism anticipated under

the 1867 British North America Act had not been realized.

An incident in November 1962 catalyzed those feelings into anger. During an appearance at a parliamentary committee, Donald Gordon, then-president of Canadian National Railway (CN) was asked by one of the *Créditiste* members why there were no francophones among the 17 vice-presidents of his Crown corporation, which had its headquarters in Montreal. Gordon responded: “As long as I am president, promotions are not going to be made because the person is

French Canadian.” In Quebec, Gordon’s remarks were widely viewed as him saying French Canadians did not have the necessary skillsets to hold upper management positions at CN.

“In Quebec, this was viewed as very symptomatic of a situation where not only was there no French being used in a Crown corporation headquartered in Montreal, but clearly, there was massive discrimination against

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French Canadians,” said Bélanger, especially since Gordon and several of CN’s vice-presidents had never been to university.

Graham Fraser, a former journalist who has covered Quebec politics and went on to serve as Canada’s official languages commissioner from 2006-2016, agreed that the Gordon affair was a lightning rod at a moment when “French-speaking Quebec’s frustration was bursting out in a variety of ways.”

This also manifested in several other ways, such as the rise of the guerilla group Front de libération du Québec in the early 1960s, and the election of a new Quebec Liberal government in 1962, running on the slogan “*Maîtres chez nous*,” meaning “masters in our own house.”

At this time, Quebec journalist André Laurendeau was one of the voices gaining prominence. Laurendeau had been calling for a royal commission to study the issue of bilingualism in Canada.

Then-Progressive Conservative prime minister John Diefenbaker had dismissed those calls, but Pearson gave a speech as opposition leader supporting the idea.

On the evening of April 8, 1963—when Pearson was elected to his first minority government—Laurendeau was appearing on election night television coverage in Quebec. According to Fraser, when Laurendeau left the studio, one of Pearson’s senior advisers in the province was there to “button-hole” him about the idea of him co-chairing a royal commission. After several weeks of pressure, Laurendeau eventually agreed.

Davidson Dunton, then-president of Carleton University and a former chair of the CBC, would co-chair the 10-person commission alongside Laurendeau. All members were bilingual and represented a geographic cross-section of Canada, though finding bilingual representation from western Canada proved challenging.

Matthew Hayday, a professor of history at the University of Guelph who studies the history of language policy in Canada, said the Pearson government, in forming the commission, was aware of the seriousness of the tensions that were growing in Quebec.

“They’re reading the political signs that there is widespread discontent in Quebec,” said Hayday. “That there is a potential threat to national unity.”

‘A public travelling roadshow’

The commission hit the road, tasked with investigating the role of bilingualism in the federal government, as well as how public and private organizations could better promote cultural relations between francophones and anglophones, and the opportunities for Canadians to become bilingual.

“They have a massive budget, and they basically make it a public travelling roadshow,” said Hayday of the “very high-profile” commission.

This included meeting with representatives of all provincial governments, a substantive



The government of former prime minister Pierre Trudeau introduced the Official Languages Act in the fall of 1968. Photograph courtesy of Library and Archives Canada

research team, and holding public forums in cities across Canada.

Some of those events became heated.

“You have the full array, from people saying, ‘We need to move towards celebrating two languages, making sure our children learn English and French,’ to people who espouse the view that, ‘Why are we still talking about this? ... We shouldn’t have any status for French at all,’” said Hayday. “And the commissioners were really shook by what they were hearing.”

This sparked the 1965 interim report, in which the commission stated it had been “driven to the conclusion that Canada, without being fully conscious of the fact, is passing through the greatest crisis in its history.”

Fraser said the initial reaction to that report was “scoffing.”

“There were a lot of editorial comments to the effect of, ‘This is exaggerated, this is not the case,’” he said.

Hayday said Laurendeau was deeply affected by what he was hearing, both in his home province and across the rest of Canada.

“Laurendeau actually kept a diary throughout his time on the commission,” said Hayday. “Basically, he said he’ll go to hearings in English-speaking Canada and feel like a convinced separatist by the end of it. And then he’ll go back to Quebec, hear what they say, and suddenly his views change. Just the degree of extremism on both sides is startling.”

While Laurendeau said he believed in actively promoting the French language, an anglophone Quebecer on the commission, Frank Scott, who Hayday said was “much more of an individual rights sort of person,” offered a counterpoint.

However, in the spring of 1968, some of the key players involved in the commission’s work changed, potentially altering its outcome.

In April of that year, Pierre Elliott Trudeau replaced Pearson as Liberal Party leader and prime minister. In June, Laurendeau, who had been carrying out his work against failing health for some time, passed away.

Had the B&B Commission been able to deliver its final re-

port to a Pearson government, Bélanger said he believes the legislation that followed would have more closely resembled Laurendeau’s vision of a language policy that recognized the different situations that exist for the French and English language in North America. Instead, Trudeau removed the focus on biculturalism, meaning that the bilingualism was not “philosophically grounded” on anything.

“Bilingualism, as André Laurendeau understood it, and as many French Canadians understood it at the time—and certainly this comes out throughout a lot of the work of the royal commission—that bilingualism rests on biculturalism,” said Bélanger.

‘No longer a constant abrasion’

In October 1968, several months after the death of Laurendeau, and while the commission was still working towards its final report, the Pierre Trudeau government tabled Bill C-120, An Act respecting the Status of Official Languages in Canada.

The act, which became law in September 1969, declared English and French to be the two official languages of Canada. It required the federal government to serve Canadians in either language, and set out to create a bilingual public service that could deliver these policies. The federal government also provided funding to the provinces to support language learning across the country in order to develop a generation of workers who could fill those government positions.

“They’re aware of the relatively low levels of English-French bilingualism among people who have English as a mother tongue, and [it was] a recognition that if you are going to have an officially bilingual federal government, not just in terms of Parliament, but



History professor Matthew Hayday describes the 1960s commission as a ‘public travelling roadshow.’ Photograph courtesy of University of Guelph



Bill-C-13, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s attempt to amend the Official Languages Act moves away from the vision of bilingualism espoused by his father, Pierre Trudeau, says professor Damien-Claude Bélanger. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

also all the various services provided by the federal government ... you’re going to need more bilingual people to be able to do that,” said Hayday.

He suggested there was also some “realpolitik” in the government’s approach to centring language education in its rollout of the new policy.

“If you’re going to make these programs acceptable to the English-speaking majority, they have to see that they’re getting something out of this, that they’re not going to be disadvantaged by a move towards making more federal government institutions requiring bilingualism as a job requirement,” said Hayday.

For Quebecers, Fraser said the new law did not immediately calm the tensions that had been mounting, but over time, he believes the changes it made to government service delivery had a significant impact when it came to mundane but necessary activities like filing income taxes.

“As time went by, the federal government was no longer a constant abrasion for French-speaking Quebecers,” said Fraser, suggesting that removing a level of “irritation” from interactions with the government may have had a large impact.

“I suspect that if [the Official Languages Act] hadn’t existed, Quebec would have voted ‘yes’ in one of the referendums,” he said.

However, Bélanger said he is less convinced that the act, as it was designed by the Pierre Trudeau government, delivered on the needs of francophones.

“It’s not necessarily a form of bilingualism that recognizes the challenges that French-language minorities experience outside of Quebec,” said Bélanger, adding that French does not radiate out of Quebec in the same way that English “radiates” into it from the rest of North America.

However, he said the current legislation proposed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) government, C-13, has the potential to address that because of its focus on actively promoting the French language.

Official Languages Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor’s (Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe, N.B.) 2021 mandate letter instructs her to introduce a bill to reform the Of-

ficial Languages Act, “taking into consideration the pressing need to protect and promote French.” The 2019 mandate letter for the former minister on the file, Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.), did not contain that phrase, and instead instructed her to “continue to safeguard and promote Canada’s two official languages.”

“The current piece of legislation acknowledges that,” said Bélanger, adding that while the circumstances that existed in the 1960s have changed, the fundamental challenges to the survival and health of the French-language remain.

Bélanger said the direction taken by the Justin Trudeau government is in some ways surprising, because it “goes against the very fibre of their being,” when compared to the symmetric vision of bilingualism set out by the Pierre Trudeau Liberals. However, he suggested that similar to the Pearson Liberals of the early 1960s, the current Liberal government is motivated by a need to retain, or even grow, their footprint in Quebec.

Hayday said the rollout of the original Official Languages Act also offers lessons for how to approach the issue in English-speaking Canada.

“I think that there was a certain amount of wisdom in terms of how the original Official Languages Act of ’69 was set up, and the programs to support it, like the official languages education programs,” he said.

He said this sense of “spreading the wealth around” was key to “keep the majority language community on side with it—with programs that were not necessarily going to be seen to be directly beneficial to them, except perhaps in the sense of this might prevent the country from tearing itself apart.”

Right now, C-13 does not appear to be on the radar in English-speaking Canada, said Hayday, but that doesn’t mean it will remain that way.

“I think the government would be well advised to bear in mind that lack of attention right now does not necessarily mean acceptance of the path that they’re going down.”

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News

Indigenous leaders say Saskatchewan 'woke up a sleeping giant' by overstepping on critical minerals

First Nations are calling on the federal government to step in to uphold treaty rights against provincial encroachment, but a former Liberal staffer says the feds should leave this 'third rail' alone.

BY KEVIN PHILIPUPILLAI

Indigenous leaders are looking to the courts and to the federal government to uphold their rights over critical minerals following recent provincial assertions of control, but a former Liberal staffer says this is not a fight the federal government should be wading into.

In the United States, the Biden administration's April 12 vehicle emissions standards announcement, which put a U.S. government-sized thumb on the scale in favour of electric vehicle production, added to the existing pressure to approve and launch critical minerals mines in Canada to supply key materials for electric vehicle batteries. But the race to develop these resources has exacerbated tensions between provinces and the Indigenous nations on whose traditional territory the resources are located.

Heather Bear, vice chief of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), told *The Hill Times* in a phone interview that the Saskatchewan government's recent critical minerals strategy and Saskatchewan First Act "woke up a sleeping giant" by inviting "the whole world" in to develop critical minerals and other resources, without any meaningful consultation with Indigenous communities.

"You've seen decades and decades of both federal and provincial governments and the settlers prospering from the bounty and the wealth of this country, while First Nations are left out to live

in poverty," said Bear. "What we're saying is enough is enough. We want what's rightfully ours, which is substantial. At the very least, resource revenue sharing, to develop a framework that is going to serve the obligations that were intended 150 years ago by our ancestors."

"When you look at the treaty that was made with the Crown in the 1800s, it was agreed that we did not cede, release, or surrender the land. We agreed to share land to the depth of a plough," said Bear. "The minerals were never discussed. They were never on the table."

The FSIN is the regional voice for 73 First Nations with territory in Saskatchewan. On March 27, the same day the Saskatchewan government released its critical minerals strategy, the FSIN announced that First Nations lay claim to all critical minerals and rare earth elements in Saskatchewan. Bear said the FSIN is also "absolutely supportive" of Onion Lake Cree First Nation's legal challenge of the Saskatchewan First Act, and is considering its own legal strategy to oppose the legislation.

The Saskatchewan First Act, which passed the provincial legislature on March 16 while First Nations and Métis community members stood in opposition in the gallery, asserts the province's "exclusive legislative jurisdiction" over natural resources, ostensibly against federal intrusion.

Natosha Lipinski, a spokesperson for Saskatchewan's ministry of energy and resources, said in an email to *The Hill Times* that the Saskatchewan government is confident that the Saskatchewan First Act is "constitutionally sound" and "does not restrict or limit existing First Nations or Métis rights," adding that the province is "prepared to defend the Act in the case of any legal challenge."

Bear said the federal government has a duty to intervene because it is the entity that has a fiduciary responsibility to uphold historic treaties between the Crown and FSIN's member nations. She pointed out that Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 were signed in 1874 and 1876 respectively, long before Saskatchewan became a province in 1905.

'It would not lead to the best outcome' for feds to try to mediate between Indigenous nations and provinces, says former staffer

Former Liberal staffer Carlene Variyan, now an associate vice president at Summa Strategies, told *The Hill Times* in a phone interview that the federal government "should not be considering" intervening as a mediator between Indigenous nations and the provinces, and that it is in the provinces' own interests to engage in genuine dialogue with Indigenous communities to address their concerns about resource projects.

Variyan, who is from Saskatchewan, was deputy chief of staff to then-natural resources minister Seamus O'Regan (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Nfld.) from 2019 to 2021. "It's up to the provinces to meaningfully engage in a two-way relationship with those Indigenous communities themselves," she said. "I don't think it's the federal government's responsibility, nor do I think it would lead to the best outcome to have the federal government play that role."

Critical minerals, such as lithium, are key components for electric vehicle batteries, and the mining industry's calls for an expedited approvals process have sparked warnings from environmental groups, along with assertions of sovereignty from Indigenous nations.

"There's no question that there's a global race right now to attract investment capital for projects related to critical minerals and the downstream products that those can produce," said Variyan, adding that the Biden administration's ambitious new vehicle emissions targets, which would not have come as a surprise to outside observers, adds to the pressure on Canadian businesses, and on different levels of government to position Canada as "a supplier of choice" for the growing electric vehicle market.

Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, B.C.) told the House Natural Resources Committee on March 21 that the exploration,



Justice Minister David Lametti, seen here on March 10, sparked an outcry from Prairie premiers when he said the federal government might 'look at' the 1930 legislation that transferred control of lands and resources to Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

extraction, processing, refining, and recycling of critical minerals present "perhaps the most significant economic opportunity" for Canada in the move towards "a lower-carbon economy," ahead of other opportunities in biofuels, hydrogen, carbon capture, decarbonization, small modular reactors, renewables and "a range of clean technologies."

When asked if the federal government's interest in ramping up critical minerals production to feed the shift to electric vehicles gives it enough of a reason to wade into resource disputes between Indigenous nations and provincial governments, Variyan answered that the provinces should have "just as much reason, both politically and from a public policy perspective," to resolve these disputes themselves, in a way that allows "good projects" to move forward.

She added that while there are significant disagreements between provinces and many Indigenous communities around ownership of minerals—"things like the Saskatchewan First Act are certainly not helping"—she has "yet to see those disagreements meaningfully block any good project from going forward when it comes down to it."

Lipinski said "it would be premature to speculate" how disputes with Indigenous nations over resource rights could affect the timelines for proposed critical minerals projects in Saskatchewan, but added that "the Saskatchewan mining industry has a strong history of working with Indigenous communities to address any concerns and ensure that economic and employment opportunities are maximized. We expect that this strong relationship will continue as new development opportunities are identified."

Automotive sector expert Damiano Peluso told *The Hill Times* in a phone interview that the U.S. and Canadian targets for zero-emissions vehicles are "pretty ambitious," and that governments in both countries, and at the federal and provincial level in Canada, will have a lot to do in terms of infrastructure, facilities, and funding "to make them achievable."

Peluso is the national automotive sector leader for the advisory and professional services firm KPMG in Canada.

"There is still a very strong interest by the public in terms of electric vehicles," said Peluso, citing recent surveys, but added that if governments and auto manufacturers aren't able to address various concerns, including the shortage of new EVs for sale, consumers will get frustrated and "take what they can get," which will mean reverting to internal combustion engines.

Indigenous leader points to the Vatican's recent repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery

Justice Minister David Lametti (LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, Que.) sparked an outcry from the Prairie premiers when he told an Assembly of First Nations conference on April 5 that the federal government might "look at" the Natural Resource Transfer Act (NRTA) of 1930—by which the federal government transferred control over lands and resources to Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Lametti later walked back those comments, but FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron said in an April 10 press release that First Nations "fully supported" Lametti's initial statement and looked forward "to exercising our Treaty rights to natural resources in the province." Bear added that the NRTA was passed without consent or consultation with First Nations, meaning it was "unlawful then and it is unlawful now."

Variyan said the reaction to Lametti's comments was "as acute as it was because of a pre-existing narrative in the Prairies that the federal government is actively seeking to take away provincial resource rights." "It's a bit of a third rail that I think has taken on a life of its own," she added, with provincial politicians stoking fears about federal intervention.

Bear pointed to the Canadian government's recognition of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, and the March 30 announcement from the Vatican that it was formally repudiating the colonial-era Doctrine of Discovery, as steps toward dismantling "the false claim of ownership to this land that was obviously occupied."

Former Indigenous Bar Association president Scott Robertson told *The Hill Times* in July 2022 that the legal structure that grew out of the Doctrine of Discovery "rears its head" today whenever Indigenous groups assert their sovereignty, "which has never been extinguished," in relation to projects on their territory.

Robertson also noted that Indigenous groups signed historical treaties with a single entity, the Crown, which then subdivided itself into federal and provincial governments, leaving Indigenous nations to deal with multiple counterparts.

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Feds seek to highlight fiscal strength of provinces before 'inevitable tightening of the spending taps,' say strategists

One economist told *The Hill Times* the provinces' fiscal position is 'quite strong,' but another argued that Ottawa should not 'egg the province on' to spend more.

BY IAN CAMPBELL

The federal government's recent assertions that the provinces are in a relatively strong fiscal position compared to Ottawa have drawn mixed reviews from economic experts, but strategists agree the government's stance represents a "pre-emptive strike" against further requests for funding from the provinces.

Government ministers and even the budget itself have suggested lately that provinces are in a better financial position than the federal government is, and seem to be urging the provinces to take on their fair share of spending.

The 2023 federal budget, presented on Mar. 28 by Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland (University—Rosedale, Ont.), included a chart that shows the federal and aggregate provincial budgetary balances from 2015 to now, with projections through 2025. That chart shows the federal balance spike deeply into deficit in 2020-21, when Ottawa undertook massive amounts of spending on COVID-19 support programs, while the aggregate provincial balance takes only a small drop at that time. Some text accompanying the chart says this was "driven by the federal government providing eight out of every 10 dollars in emergency pandemic spending," while "provincial and territorial governments continue to significantly outperform fiscal projections." Therefore, "the solid provincial-territorial fiscal position means that, together, provinces and territories have the ability to take proactive action to help build Canada's clean economy," the document suggests.

A similar message about the relative fiscal strength of the provinces has been reinforced by cabinet ministers on the post-budget circuit, such as Social Development



The 2023 federal budget, delivered on Mar. 28 by Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, makes the case that the provinces are presently in a stronger fiscal position than Ottawa. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Minister Karina Gould (Burlington, Ont.) in an April 9 appearance on CTV's *Question Period*. On the issue of affordability, Gould said the provinces could be doing more.

"We can take important measures at the federal level," said Gould. "But we also need to make sure that provinces and territories are also supporting that work."

David Macdonald, senior economist at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, told *The Hill Times* that the numbers offered in the budget's chart paint a similar picture to what he found in a report he authored in October 2022, titled *Flush with Cash: The provinces are richer than they think*.

In his report, Macdonald found that in 2022, projected provincial deficits had turned into surpluses. He said the provinces remain in a relatively strong position, as depicted by the chart in the federal budget.

"The general position of the provinces is quite strong, and so it should allow for substantially more investments if they wanted to in a variety of things," he said. "It's been clear for some time that the provinces are in a much better position than the federal government, in part because of how much support they received from the federal government over the course of the pandemic."

However, economist Philip Cross, a senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, criticized the chart in the federal budget for not offering enough specific information about its data sources. He pointed to findings by

Ernst & Young about the 2022 and 2023 provincial budgets, which found only Alberta and Saskatchewan were projecting surpluses, and other provinces were projecting deficits. Cross suggested the fiscal position of each of the provinces is too different for their aggregate position to be useful, calling the chart in the federal budget "sloppy."

These provinces are "clearly not in a position to increase their deficit spending more so," he said.

Cross added that fiscal stimulus is inflationary, whether it comes from the provinces or the federal government. He said at a time when the federal government is seeking to run a fiscal policy that will complement the Bank of Canada's interest rate hikes to fight inflation, Ottawa should not be encouraging the provinces to spend more.

Cross said the position being staked out by the federal government is likely a "pre-emptive strike against more asks from the provinces for either more money, or the transfer of tax points." However, he suggested instead of trying to "egg the provinces on" to spend more, the federal government could have simply delivered a message that all levels of government need to show spending restraint at this time.

Former Parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page told *The Hill Times* that while last year saw many provincial government outperform their fiscal projections, the reverse is happening this year.

"From a short-term fiscal outlook perspective, federal and provincial budgetary balances

generally beat expectations in 2021 and 2022 because the economy came back stronger than expected," said Page. "The reverse is happening in 2023."

'If there is backlash, they want the blame to be shared'

Former Conservative staffer Yaroslav Baran said with these communications, the federal government appears to be "pre-positioning for an inevitable tightening of the spending taps."

"Despite the fact it was a rather high-spending budget, the government recognizes it needs to start curbing this level of deficit spending," Baran told *The Hill Times*. "If there is backlash, they want the blame to be shared."

Baran, who is now a partner at Pendulum Group, noted that on issues like health care, the federal government moved away from tax point transfers and towards providing funding so it could maintain its share of the credit. However, he said, that means if the federal government needs to tighten its belt in the areas of social spending it has become involved with over the years, it also risks taking some of the blame, and therefore needs a communications plan.

"Instead of transferring funds to provinces, they figured they'd use federal funds directly and get the credit," said Baran. "With plans to limit social spending, it seems the shoe is about to be on the other foot."

Former NDP staffer Brian Topp, who has served several

NDP premiers as well as worked with the federal party, said both levels of government have valid concerns, but cautioned that "voters are smart," and they know when "first ministers at both levels are playing politics."

Topp, who is now a founding partner at GT and Company, said the federal government is "right to point out" if premiers engage in "what former Saskatchewan Premier Allan Blakeney would have called 'sharp practice,' when they assert a national health care emergency that demands more federal funding—and then run for election proposing provincial tax cuts."

However, Topp said "provincial governments are right to hold Ottawa accountable," too. He described budget cuts carried out by then-prime minister Jean Chretien and his finance minister Paul Martin in the 1990s as a "devastating download to provinces" that represents the kind of move premiers must guard against.

Looking ahead to how this tension may shape federal-provincial relations in the months to come, Topp pointed to the words of former Saskatchewan NDP premier Roy Romanow, who he served as a deputy chief of staff.

"Provinces have strong, legitimate cases for federal action on many issues," said Topp. "The federal government's job is to navigate these claims and find the 'string that unites the pearls,' as Roy Romanow would put it. That is always a tricky negotiation—one that is never 'settled' in a federation."

Former Liberal staffer Elliot Hughes said in the coming months, if there are tensions between the federal government and provinces over spending, the political approach taken by governments will be dictated by which level of government is traditionally seen as responsible for a certain policy area.

"The provinces, if they decide to take the bait, it's because they want to get into a fight with the federal government on the issue," said Hughes, who is now a senior adviser at Summa Strategies. "If the issue is good for the province, they'll probably take the bait and get into the debate with the feds. If they want it to sort of quietly go away, you may not have a [provincial minister] responding to minister Gould's statements, for example, directly. And they'll just sort of let it go by."

Provinces are continuing to make asks for new money, including a recent request from the British Columbia government for Ottawa to match that province's new \$4-billion housing investment. Macdonald suggested that matched funding offers one of the best solutions for Ottawa in such negotiations, because it is a way for the federal government to ensure the money goes to the intended program, rather than other uses, such as tax cuts.

"To get at least a matching requirement on new money to the provinces towards a particular goal that's trackable seems to me to be the minimum they would be interested in," said Macdonald.

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News

Next election expected to be even nastier, and Trudeau will have to prove he still has 'gas in his tank,' say political players

To win the next election, Justin Trudeau needs to redefine himself as 'a safe and reasonable choice,' compared to Pierre Poilievre, says Clive Veroni, but it's going to get downright nasty, say pollsters.

Continued from page 1

to prove to Canadians that he's 'not out of touch' and has 'gas in his tank,' say veteran political insiders.

With Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) seeking a fourth consecutive mandate and Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, Ont.) trying to unseat Trudeau's minority government, there will be "lots of mudslinging," political players say. To win the next campaign, Trudeau will have to come up with a convincing vision to make a case to Canadians why they should vote for the prime minister.

"The longer you're around, the worse you look, so the worse your opponents have to look, so the more negative things have to get," said David Herle, a veteran Liberal political strategist and host of the popular podcast *Herle Burly* in an interview with *The Hill Times*. "And so I think that we've been seeing that trend, and I think we'll see it even more. The campaign is going to be much more about why Pierre Poilievre shouldn't be the prime minister than it is going to be about why Justin Trudeau should have another term, although both of those things have to be present in the campaign."

Herle, who ran some of the most high-stakes Liberal campaigns in recent history at both the federal and provincial levels, said that it's a major challenge for a prime minister to win four back-to-back mandates. The last time a prime minister was able to win four terms in a row was Sir Wilfrid Laurier. So, Trudeau and his team will have to come up with some "big ideas" to animate the Liberal Party base, and a convincing argument why Poilievre should not be the next prime minister.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, Bloc Leader Yves-François Blanchet, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and Sam Garcia

According to Canada's fixed date election law, the next election is scheduled for October 2025. This means, by that time, Trudeau would have been in power for a decade. He will be going head-to-head against Poilievre who, in last year's party leadership campaign, set a record in signing up new party members and raising funds. Poilievre also set a record by winning 330 of 338 ridings across the country to win the leadership.

Even though Trudeau has won three campaigns in a row, with each successive campaign, the Liberals' vote share has gone down, something political insiders say the governing party should be concerned about.

In the 2019 and 2021 elections, the Conservatives won the popular vote, but were the runner-up in terms of total number of seats won, which is not unusual in the first-past-the-post electoral system. In 2021, the Conservatives Party received 491,817 fewer votes than the 2019 election. Also, they won two fewer seats nationally than the 2019 election.

In 2021, the Liberal Party won 5.5 million or 32.6 per cent of the vote; the Conservatives 5.7 million or 33.7 per cent; the New Democrats three million or 17.8 per cent; the Bloc Québécois 1.3 million or 7.7 million; the Greens 396,988 or 2.3 per cent; and the People's Party of Canada 840,993 or 4.9 per cent of the vote.

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

In 2021, the Liberals won 159 seats, the Conservatives 119, the Bloc Québécois 32, the New Democrats 25, and the Greens two. One now-Independent who was on the ballot as a Liberal was

also elected. In the 338-member House, the threshold for a majority government is 170 seats.

Since the last phase of the Conservative leadership campaign, Herle and a number of other senior Liberals have been counselling Team Trudeau to define Poilievre before he has a chance to define himself. So far, Trudeau has failed to do that, and Herle said he's not sure why.

"They may have some information I don't have, but judging from what I see, they should have taken a page out of [Stephen] Harper's playbook and gone right out," said Herle, referring to Conservatives running attack ads against former Liberal leaders Stéphane Dion, Michael Ignatieff, and even after Trudeau. These attacks worked against Dion and Ignatieff, but not in the case of Trudeau.

"They could have done a lot of work early to really make Mr. Poilievre look both his judgment in question and his worldview in question. And when you do that, then everything that he says gets put into that context," said Herle.

He cited the example of the 1988 federal election in which Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives ran ads against John Turner, taking a shot at the Liberal leader's insecure position within his own party, saying he didn't even have all the party behind him and was worried about his own job, not the jobs of average Canadians.

"It's that kind of frame, once you've established it, everything makes sense within it," said Herle.

Herle predicted that in the next election, the Liberals will go after Poilievre on his association with controversial figures like Jordan Peterson and the Freedom Convoy.

Nik Nanos, chief data scientist for Nanos Research, agreed that the next election campaign would be one of the most negative in recent history, and both parties are likely going to engage in extra mudslinging. On top of that,

he predicted that both Poilievre and Trudeau are going to make an argument that they may not be perfect, but each is better than their chief opponent, and it remains to be seen. He said that whoever starts this narrative first will be at an advantage.

"This [election] is no longer a popularity contest, this is more like *Survivor Island* where the most odious choice is voted off the island because Canadians are increasingly not voting for a particular candidate, they are voting against someone," said Nanos.

"They [Trudeau] need to re-inject a level of energy into their mandate, and there has to be something new. They've been in power for a prolonged period of time, and like all governments, they're at risk the longer that they're in power."

Clive Veroni, author and an expert on political branding, said that Trudeau needs to redefine himself as a safe and reasonable choice compared to Poilievre. He said that Trudeau is a perfect contrast to the Conservative leader's right-of-centre views and policies. Prior to Poilievre's leadership, Veroni said, Trudeau was coming across as tired. But, now, he looks energized and ready to fight.

"Trudeau needs to rebrand himself as new, no longer the sort of progressive firebrand," said Veroni. "That doesn't mean he's going to abandon his progressive policies, it just means he's going to demonstrate that those policies are reasonable and moderate, in comparison to the extreme right wing, and somewhat wild ideas of Poilievre."

Since the 2021 election, Trudeau has said numerous times that he's going to run in the next election, but some senior Liberals still think he may not run, and may decide at the end of this year or the next to take the proverbial walk in the snow and move on. If that happens, it remains to be seen at what stage in the current mandate Trudeau decides to step

down. However, all political insiders interviewed for this article said it appears Trudeau means when he says he intends to stay on for the next election.

Dan Arnold, a key architect of Trudeau's 2015, 2019, and 2021 federal campaigns, said that the governments that stay in power for about a decade have to be careful that they don't come across as tired or out of touch. They need to ensure that they have their finger on the pulse of the average Canadian voter, and address relevant issues. Arnold said that Trudeau's cabinet ministers are doing a good job in travelling across the country and making announcements that will improve the quality of life of Canadians. Ministers have to show with their actions that they are empathetic and understand what people are going through with issues like affordability, said Arnold.

"It's important to do that both in terms of policy, so you announce things and you do things that matter to people. It's important to do that in terms of visuals and language from a communications perspective," said Arnold. "When you do an announcement for something it's got to benefit people, show it, do have visuals with people."

Arnold said that elections are always about the future, so the Liberals have to show Canadians they have "gas in their tank" and they have more plans to deliver more for Canadians.

Nanos said that to win the next election, the Liberals will have to hold onto the ridings they won in Quebec and then make gains in the vote-rich Ontario where the Conservatives are running neck-and-neck with the Liberals. He said the Liberals will have to win again the ridings they carried in 2021 and add more in the Toronto suburbs and the Golden Horseshoe. He said these ridings voted Liberal in the last federal election and for Progressive Conservatives in the last provincial election. British Columbia, Nanos said, is also crucial as there's a three-and-a-half-way fight between the Liberals, Conservatives, NDP and the Greens.

"Right now, the battle is in Ontario. The Conservatives are much more competitive now than they have been in the past, and a lot of that is basically at ground-zero in Ontario and the Liberals," said Nanos. "It's hard to see them forming a government unless they remain competitive in Ontario. So Ontario will be ground-zero for who will be the next prime minister of Canada."

Greg Lyle, president of Innovative Research, said that the Liberals should be worried that they have lost the popular vote in the last two elections. With a better ground-game under Poilievre, the Conservatives could steal the seats that the Liberals have been winning with close margins.

"There's no doubt about it, they should be very concerned, the Liberals are winning right now on a really unique distribution of votes," said Lyle, adding that may or may not happen in their efforts to win a fourth election.

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How will the post-pandemic city and its institutions look, feel, and behave in the era of climate crisis?

Dream States: Smart Cities, Technology, and the Pursuit of Urban Utopias is one of the finalists for this year's Donner Prize for the best public policy books written in 2022. Below is an excerpt.

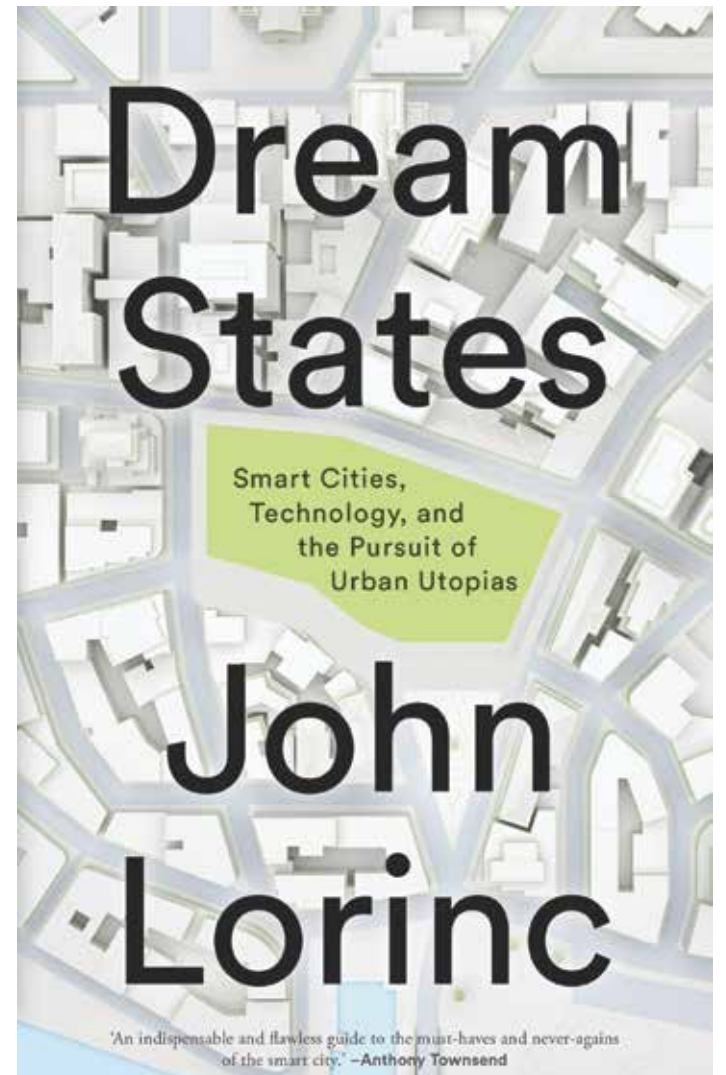
BY JOHN LORINC

The city is one of humanity's oldest inventions, and

these ever-scaling settlements have served as the backdrop or staging ground for much of recorded history—ancient imperial capitals, like Rome, Kyoto or Tenochtitlan, and, later, restless centres of commerce, like Venice, Timbuktu, London, and New York. In some cases, like medieval Florence, the inflow of vast amounts of capital and the emergence of rich merchant clans somehow sparked (or at least underwrote) periods of intense cultural or inventive activity. Others, like the contemporary Bay Area/Silicon Valley region, function like hothouse incubators for digital technologies that have changed just about everything.

Today, in most developed countries, north of 80 per cent of the population lives in cities. Globally, that figure

surpassed 50 per cent in 2008. But until the 19th century, most of humanity did not inhabit urban areas. Indeed, the vast majority of cities, which had evolved from trading posts, ports, fortifications, oases or as hubs for the marketing of agricultural products, were hardly desirable places to live, except for those with means or some kind of ancestral privilege. Deadly epidemics regularly tore through cities, killing or dispersing the inhabitants. Even in wealthy metropolises with extensive infrastructure, like Rome at the height of its influence, the vast majority lived in squalor. “Rome,” writes historian Peter Hall, “was a city of contrasts: on the one hand, the rich who could spend vast sums on banquets and all manner of luxuries; on the other, the poor who depended on the



Dream States: Smart Cities, Technology, and the Pursuit of Urban Utopias, by John Lorinc, is one of the finalists for this year's \$60,000 Donner Prize for the best public policy book written in 2022. ‘Digital connectivity [...] was already altering urban space before the pandemic, and there's good reason to believe this process has accelerated. Will cities, downtowns, retail strips, movie theatres, etc. survive? And how will the post-pandemic city and its institutions look, feel, and behave in the era of climate crisis? These are the questions for the next generation of city-dwellers, idealists and otherwise, writes John Lorinc. Image courtesy of Coach House Books

notorious *panem et circenses* (bread and circuses) and who survived under the bridges or in small, dark, cold, rat-infested slums.”

Thomas More, the English social philosopher, coined the term “utopia” in his 1516 treatise envisioning a just society. Long before More, Socrates, in Plato's *Republic*, examined similar philosophical questions. But urban utopianism *per se* emerged much later, as one of many responses to the chaotic forces that gave rise to the modern city, namely the industrial revolution that began in England in the 18th century and the cotton mills of Lancashire.

Rapid industrialization gave rise to the emergence of a new urban underclass, people drawn to cities to work in factories and relegated to over-crowded slum districts. Yet industrialization also created new forms of urban affluence, and the emerging capitalist and bourgeois classes began to retreat from the crowded and dirty inner city to proto-suburban enclaves characterized by private homes and green spaces—in other words, delineated

domestic/residential outskirts suited for families, children.

In response to the harsh urban world, social reformers proposed solutions, some of which were explicitly utopian. Cities and their common problems could be abstracted from specific histories and geographies, and thus became the objects of the work of architects, critics, artists, and inventor-entrepreneurs, as well as emerging technical disciplines, like planning and transportation engineering.

For well over a century, in fact, metropolitan regions have become the stages upon which these competing ideas have played out. They encompass the various flavours of utopianism advocated by thinkers like Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, and LeCorbusier, but also successive political and technocratic programs that yielded enormous infrastructure schemes, top-down land-use planning and urban redevelopment schemes.

Critics like Jane Jacobs pushed back against the authoritarian dictates of modernist urban planning; her ob-



Author, author: John Lorinc's book has already won the 2022 Balsillie Prize for Public Policy last year and said he wrote the book with two audiences in mind: ‘the first are all those people who are interested in and love cities, and want to know more about how they work. The second intended audience is more focused—people who find themselves engaged in building or governing cities, fashioning urban-related public policy, and developing new technologies that would fit under this very big umbrella we call ‘smart-city tech.’ Handout photograph

Continued from page 34

servations and brand of advocacy have been taken up by countless neighbourhood activists, local politicians and land use planners seeking—perhaps ironically—to replicate the organic urbanism she extolled.

Many others have followed, identifying trends ('Edge Cities'), promoting neo-traditional planning (New Urbanism, mixed-use zoning), or asserting the economic primacy of networked urban regions in global trade flows. Some academic urbanists explain cities as "systems of systems" or concentrated hubs that spark creativity and innovation. A few have even sought to explain cities scientifically, arguing that the stages of urban expansion can be predicted using empirical observations about natural/economic phenomenon like biological growth and scale.

This copious buffet of urbanist thinking has been taken up differently in different places, with varying results, some of which were utterly unintended and even savagely destructive in their application. In most big cities, however, the effect is that of a palimpsest—layers upon layers, all of it buffeted by the relentless tides of people, ideas and capital that wash in and out.

At the same time, there are many big cities that exist with almost no apparent nod to the waves of urbanist advocacy and development that have spread around the globe. Before the pandemic, I spent a few days in Hanoi, a city of relentless, anarchic energy. In its core, there are streets lined with four- and five-storey colonial buildings that completely altered my notion of mixed use. Street entrances pass through small shops to interior foyers in which the tenants park their scooters. Steep switch-back staircases pass through apartment

landings, small temples, offices and cafes spread out over multiple floors. There is no obvious order, and yet somehow it all works.

This is where "smart cities" come in. For those charged with administering urban regions, this concept exerts a kind of magnetic pull. After all, what city wouldn't want to be 'smart'? The phrase, however, is malleable enough that it means many things to many people. Does 'smart' connote the type of inhabitant who resides in these places? Is it a reference to forms of municipal organization that have somehow overcome garden-variety urban problems, like traffic? Or perhaps the label has a kind of brand appeal designed to attract companies, investors, inventors—smart people.

"One widely used definition ... defines cities as smart when 'investments in human and social capital and traditional (transport) and modern (ICT) communication infrastructure fuel sustainable economic growth and a high quality of life, with a wise management of natural resources, through participatory governance,'" commented the authors of a 2020 German study on the "varieties of smart cities."

Yet, as this study and many others have observed, the tech industry seized on the "smart city" label as a means of developing and selling new generations of scalable digital systems that claim to be capable of tackling complex urban problems, from climate change to security to mobility. Most urbanists and city planners now accept complexity as a given. In a world of mass migration, instantaneous communication and environmental crisis, anyone who fails to acknowledge that *everything* is complicated simply isn't paying attention.

The purveyors of smart-city tech, which relies on big data, algorithms, sensors, and artificial intelligence, regarded urban com-

plexity as both a market opportunity and an engineering challenge. Smart city companies, from ambitious start-ups to multi-national tech giants, promoted their powerful and highly adaptive systems as being well-suited to the messy, over-crowded urbanism of the 21st century.

“Throughout history, infectious disease outbreaks have both ruined cities, but also triggered enormous changes, in public health, social supports, culture, and so on.

While not the only target markets for smart-city tech, municipal and regional governments proved to be highly responsive customers, amenable to the messaging that better technology will improve services and lower costs, but also prevent them from falling behind. Case in point: an annual global ranking published by a smart city "observatory" that's jointly run by the IMD World Competitiveness Centre, which is

based in Switzerland and Singapore. Each city's scores are calculated using conventional economic and quality of life indicators, but also the availability of technologies, such as mobility apps or online transit ticketing, as well as public attitudes towards the use of CCTVs and facial recognition in crime prevention. Those cities whose residents express more acceptance of these technologies receive higher scores.

Yet as the Sidewalk saga [in Toronto] demonstrated, many people felt deeply uncomfortable about the prospect of fitting out urban spaces with the kinds of technologies that have, in the words of Harvard professor emeritus Shoshana Zuboff, author of *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, enabled "the wholesale destruction of privacy."

The global pandemic, however, cast a pall over the sprawling smart-city industry as local governments facing economic fall-out from COVID-19 put their spending plans on hold. Some firms that had bet very heavily on smart-city tech, like Cisco, decided to exit in the midst of the crisis. "Smart cities are a hard sell," a former Cisco director told *Connected*, a real estate trade publication. "The return on investment can be hard to quantify, and stitching together disparate smart city technologies can appear daunting. Even basic things like public Wi-Fi have been difficult."

Despite such moves by leading tech corporations, society's reliance on digital technology soared during the pandemic, and the consequences of these seismic shifts will have a significant impact on cities in the years to come. Which should come as little surprise: throughout history, infectious disease outbreaks have both ruined cities but also triggered enormous changes, in public health, social supports, culture, and so on. Digital connectivity, in

the form of specific applications such as e-commerce or video-conferencing, was already altering urban space before the pandemic, and there's good reason to believe this process has accelerated. Will cities, downtowns, retail strips, movie theatres, etc. survive? And how will the post-pandemic city and its institutions look, feel, and behave in the era of climate crisis?

These are the questions for the next generation of city-dwellers, idealists and otherwise.

Excerpted and reprinted with permission, by John Lorinc and Coach House Books. *Dream States: Smart Cities, Technology, and the Pursuit of Urban Utopias* is one of the finalists for this year's \$60,000 Donner Prize, the best public policy book written in 2022.

The Hill Times

Q&A with John Lorinc

Why did you write the book?

"Strangely, I studied math in university and ended up in journalism a bit by accident. And then in urban affairs journalism by having the good fortune to be in the right place at the right time (i.e., when *Toronto Life Magazine's* former city hall columnist decided to hang up his gloves). I've been writing about cities for a long time, and also about technology, which interests that part of my brain that also likes math.

"Smart-city technology takes in both of these long-standing interests, and has provided a gusher of stories and subjects to write about. 'Smart city' is a kind of catch-all label—as much a brand as a well-delineated concept—but the technologies that fall under this heading tend to involve big data, sophisticated analytics, and a range of devices designed to sense what is happening in a city. The idea, or ideal, is that we can gather as much data as possible about how a city works, and then analyze that data with an eye to using those insights to improve how cities work, in terms of traffic congestion, infrastructure, public space management and so on. The problem is that the city isn't 'knowable' and, moreover, the technology required to capture all that data poses real risks to the way we live in and move through urban space. All of which is to say that the topic offers a rich trove of material for an urban affairs journalist like me."

Why is this book important and who should read it?

"I wrote the book with two audiences in mind: the first are all those people who are interested in and love cities, and want to know more about how they work. The second intended audience is more focused—people who find themselves engaged in building or governing cities, fashioning urban-related public policy, and developing new technologies that would fit under this very big umbrella we call 'smart-city tech.'

"Technology is everywhere. We are able to live together in urban space only because cities have been the proving ground for an enormous range of urban technologies, from the S-bends in toilet drains to elevators serving super-tall condo towers. I use digital technology virtually every moment of my working day. And during the pandemic, we all came to rely on new or rapidly scaling forms of digital connectivity. But I'd argue that cities are so vital to the future of humanity, especially in this period of climate change, that we need to be especially mindful about unleashing powerful technologies on urban communities. So my book attempts to canvas many examples of these technologies, but also pose tough questions about how we should be thinking about them, and what we can learn from the adoption of earlier technologies—and utopian urbanist visions—as we build resilient, low-carbon and equitable cities for the 21st century."



Critics like Jane Jacobs pushed back against the authoritarian dictates of modernist urban planning; her observations and brand of advocacy have been taken up by countless neighbourhood activists, local politicians and land use planners seeking—perhaps ironically—to replicate the organic urbanism she extolled. *Photograph courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

Feature

Canada's public sector workers strike: in photos

The Hill Times photographs by Andrew Meade



Chris Aylward, top, president of PSAC, pictured April 19, 2023, outside the Jim Flaherty Building at 90 Elgin St., the Treasury Board building. It's estimated that 100,000 PSAC workers were out picketing that day, including someone dressed up in a poop costume on the Hill. There are an estimated 155,000-163,000 PSAC workers nationally, but 35,000 were deemed essential.



Feature



NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, centre, with a PSAC worker, along with NDP MPs Richard Cannings and Heather McPherson, right, pictured April 19, 2023, on the Hill.



Alex Silas, PSAC regional executive VP for the National Capital Region, leads members in a chant.



A work-from-home advocate.



A PSAC worker outside the Treasury Board's office building on Elgin Street.



A PSAC striker with a sense of humour whose sign is a dig at Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland's comments.



PSAC picketers, pictured April 19, 2023, on the Hill.



Stuart Benson
Party Central

Sachit Mehra, who's running to be Grit party president, rallies Trudeau troops at his campaign reception

The candidate hosted a reception for supporters at the 3 Brewers on Sparks Street in Ottawa on April 19.

As the Liberal Party of Canada enters the final two weeks before its national convention, where members will vote for a new board of directors and commission executives, **Sachit Mehra**—who's running to be the party's president—held a reception on April 19 bringing together nearly 100 supporters, cabinet ministers, MPs, their staffers and a gaggle of Young Liberals to rally around the candidate who they believe has the best plan to remind voters that Liberals still care and will help them win another election.

Arriving fashionably late just after 6 p.m., having lost track of time watching political panel shows in the office, **Party Central** found the crowd already gathered on the upper floor of 3 Brewers on Sparks Street was buzzing with excitement ahead of the party's national convention in early May, where members will vote for a new board of directors, commission executives, and—hopefully for the night's attendees—elect Mehra as the party's new president. It was either excitement or the buzz from the complimentary drink tickets being handed out in a fittingly liberal fashion by event organizer **Elliott Lockington**, chief of staff to Edmonton Oilers fan and federal Tourism Minister **Randy Boissonnault**.

In attendance, alongside Boissonnault and seemingly his entire office staff, were National Defence Minister **Anita Anand** and Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister **Marc Miller**; Liberal MPs **George Chahal**, **Francesco Sorbara**, **Yasir Naqvi**, and **Charles Sousa**. There was also a large contingent of Liberal staffers, including **Élisabeth d'Amours**, policy adviser with Transport Minister **Omar Alghabra** and candidate for Liberal Party vice-president (French); **Raj Gill**, a staffer with Chahal and the Young Liberals of Canada (YLC) national policy chair; as well as Young Liberal executive candidates **Huzaf Qaisar**, incumbent candidate for Ontario Young Liberal president; and **Myah Tomassi**, candidate for YLC national chair.

As no proper campaign rally is complete without a stump speech, after about 90 minutes of socializing over free drinks and complimentary 3 Brewers appetizers and flatbreads, Mehra took to the mic.



Sachit Mehra, who's running to be Liberal Party president, speaks to supporters at a campaign reception inside 3 Brewers in Ottawa on April 19. *The Hill Times photograph by Stuart Benson*

However, as is also the case with many rally speeches, the candidate needs a good hype-man. In this case, that task fell to Sousa, the Liberals' newest MP.

After extolling Mehra's experience as a lifelong Liberal, successful organizer and small business owner, Sousa said Mehra was the "right candidate" to take the party back to its grassroots and "remind [Canadians] that we care."

While Mehra's speech built on the excitement and determination that he said he'd heard from Liberal supporters across the country, at least one attendee in the room managed to catch the possibly poorly-veiled look of cynicism across **Party Central's** face when Mehra forecast a Liberal majority result in the next election.

"Shoot for the moon," the attendee told **Party Central**, which is presumably a better attitude to rally the troops around than "aim for the third almost-identical minority government in a row."

As for the party's leader, Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**, the general response is that the party still wants to dance with the one that brought them to their most recent majority in 2015.

The federal Liberal Party will hold elections for its board of directors and commission executives at the party's national convention in Ottawa from May 4-6. Mehra is running for party president against **Mira Ahmed**, former YLC National President. For more information on the slate of candidates, visit 2023.liberal.ca.

sbenson@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



Liberal MP Charles Sousa, left, Élisabeth d'Amours, Transport Minister Omar Alghabra's staffer and candidate for Liberal Party VP French; Sachit Mehra; and Liberal MP George Chahal.



Greg MacEachern, left, National Defence Minister Anita Anand, and Liberal MP George Chahal.



Sousa hypes-up the crowd of supporters.



Elliot Lockington, back row left, Ramy Ismail, Brendan Legault, Morgan Brietkreutz, Enkhjin Zorigbaatar, Quinton Graham-Bennett, Gabriel Felcarek, Marie-Pier Baril, front and left, Sachit Mehra, Justin Mohr.



Rahul Walia, left, Abdelrahman Amin, Huzaf Qaisar, Rhys Matthew, Myah Tomasi, Matthew Edginton, Sachit Mehra, Hannah Wiedrick, Sarah Mojaddedi, Lukas Redmond, Ty Bradley, Ahmed Adsiye, and Neva Moffat.



Minister of Tourism Randy Boissonnault, left, Sachit Mehra, and George Chahal.



National Defence Minister Anita Anand, left, and Sachit Mehra.



Mehra, left, and Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Marc Miller.



Dove Parmar, left, Anand's director of engagement; Stevie O'Brien, McMillan LLP; Elliott Lockington, Boissonnault's chief of staff; Caitlin Mullan-Boudreau, Anand's director of operations.

The Hill Times photographs by Stuart Benson



A crowd of nearly 100 Liberal cabinet ministers, MPs, their staffers, and Young Liberals of Canada came out to Mehra's campaign reception.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce to host its Hill Days shindig April 24 at the Métropolitain Brasserie

MONDAY, APRIL 24

House Sitting—The House will sit for five consecutive weeks (April 24–May 19). It will adjourn on Friday, May 19, for one week and will return again on Monday, May 29, and will sit for four consecutive weeks (May 29–June 23). It's scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23, 2023. 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–Nov. 17) and will resume sitting on Monday, Nov. 20, and will sit for four weeks (Nov. 20–Dec. 15).

HEAL to Release New Survey—HEAL, Organizations for Health Action, will hold a press conference to release the results a new survey on health human resources. The survey results reveal alarming retention concerns, but also how governments can help to retain their healthcare workforce. Monday, April 24 at 10 a.m. ET in Room 135-B, West Block, Parliament Hill.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce Annual Hill Days—The Canadian Chamber of Commerce hosts its annual Parliament Hill Days from April 24–25. Members from across Canada will be in Ottawa to meet with parliamentarians and officials to discuss the issues most important to Canadian businesses, and the opportunities needed to create a favourable environment for business success. It's also hosting a reception at the Métropolitain Brasserie, 700 Sussex Dr., for MPs, cabinet ministers, and other officials to network and connect with our country's business leaders. This will take place on Monday, April 24, at 6 p.m. ET. Invitation only. Contact hillday@chamber.ca for more information, or to RSVP.

Jack Austin on His New Memoir—McGill University hosts "Unlikely Insider: A West Coast Advocate in Ottawa" featuring former Senator and cabinet minister Jack Austin who will discuss his memoir *Unlikely Insider*, exploring the value of public service as a force for economic progress, social justice, and nation-building. *Montreal Gazette* writer Edie Austin, Jack's daughter and co-author, will also take part. This event will take place at the Faculty Club, 3450 rue McTavish, Montreal. Monday, April 24 at 4 p.m. ET. Details: mcgill.ca.

TUESDAY, APRIL 25

Canada's Ties with China and the Asia Pacific—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts a webinar, "Recalibrating Relations: Canada's ties with China and the Asia Pacific" featuring Guy Saint-Jacques, former Canadian ambassador to China; Rob Stewart, deputy minister, International Trade, Global Affairs Canada; and Sarah Kutulakos, executive director and chief operating officer, Canada China Business Council. This event will take place online. Tuesday, April 25, 12:30 p.m. Details: cdhowe.org.

RTOERO Reception—RTOERO, a trusted and bilingual voice on healthy, active living in the retirement journey for the broader education community, will be on Parliament Hill on Tuesday, April 25. This parliamentary reception will provide an opportunity to create connections and foster understanding

Party with Perrin: Perrin Beatty, president and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, pictured on the Hill in 2018. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a party at the Métropolitain Brasserie on Monday, April 24, at 6 p.m. It's invitation only, folks. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



of the policy needs of Canada's aging population. Tuesday, April 25, 5 p.m. in Room 268 of the Valour Building, 151 Sparks St. Please RSVP to hilldayrtoero@national.ca by Friday, April 21.

Debate: 'Do We Need to Scale up Nuclear Power to Combat Climate Change?'—The University of Ottawa hosts a public debate featuring two high-profile champions on each side of the nuclear debate: Dr. Gordon Edwards, president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility; and Dr. Chris Keefer, president of Canadians for Nuclear Energy. Patricia Fuller, uOttawa senior fellow and former ambassador for climate change, will moderate. Doors at 5 p.m., event start at 5:20 p.m., at uOttawa Social Sciences Building, 120 University Pk. More info and registration (in person and online): cips-cepi.ca.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26

Panel: 'Food as Medicine'—Canada 2020 hosts "Food as Medicine", a conversation on ways that public policy can prioritize reducing food insecurity, improving access, and building a healthier future for all. This event will take place at the Canada 2020 Studio, Third Floor, 35 O'Connor St. Wednesday, April 26 at 12 p.m. ET. Details: canada2020.ca.

IRPP Book Launch—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts the launch of its new book, *Basic Income and a Just Society: Policy Choices for Canada's Social Safety Net*, in which the authors take a hard look at Canada's social safety net, its strengths and weaknesses, and propose a new path forward, asking "How do we create a more just society together?" This event will take place at the Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St. Wednesday, April 26, 5:30–7:30 p.m. ET. Register at irpp.org.

The Walrus Talks a New City—Cities across Canada are trying to reconcile urban design with the needs of residents. From eco-sustainability to stunted improvements in transportation and a housing crunch, cities are grappling with how to envision a future that will prove both durable and flexible enough to meet the ever-evolving demands of urban living. What does it mean to make our cities more sustainable, inclusive places in the long term?

Seven speakers will explore how we can reimagine our cities, now and into the future. Wednesday, April 26, 7–9 p.m. ET at Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W., Toronto. Register via Eventbrite.

Arctic Security in a Time of Geopolitical Insecurities—Queen's University hosts a hybrid event, "Arctic Security in a Time of Geopolitical Insecurities" featuring U.S. Army Lt. Col. Wendy Tokach. Wednesday, April 26, 12p.m. ET, at Queen's University, 138 Union St., Kingston, Ont., and also via Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26—FRIDAY, APRIL 28

'God & Government' Event—The Association for Reformed Political Action hosts its two-day "God & Government" event, providing Reformed Christians with the opportunity to meet with Members of Parliament and Senators, watch Parliament in action, and train and strategize with other Christians. Wednesday, April 26–Friday, April 28 at the Sheraton Ottawa Hotel. Details: arpacanada.ca.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

Canada Growth Summit 2023—The Public Policy Forum hosts the "Canada Growth Summit 2023: Standing Strong in a Changing World Order". Speakers include Canada's envoy to Japan Ian McKay; Canada's ambassador to the World Trade Organization in Geneva Nadia Theodore; former Parliamentarian Lisa Raitt, now a vice-chair at CIBC Capital Markets; Simon Kennedy, deputy minister at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada; and Christiane Fox, deputy minister, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. This event will take place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, North Building, 255 Front St. W., Toronto. Thursday, April 27, 9 a.m. ET. Register at ppforum.ca.

Financial Institutions Superintendent to Deliver Remarks—The Economic Club of Canada hosts a lunch event featuring the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, Peter Routledge, who will discuss Canada's financial system is responding to chang-

ing economic landscape and the big issues facing OSFI in 2023. This event will take place at One King West Hotel, 1 King St. W., Toronto. Thursday, April 27 at 11:30 a.m. ET. Register: economic-club.ca.

Panel: 'Reshoring, Friendshoring and Decoupling of Supply Chains'—The University of Ottawa hosts a discussion on "Reshoring, Friendshoring and Decoupling of Supply Chains: Implications for Canada." Participants include Marie-France Paquet, chief economist at Global Affairs Canada; Kendal Hembroff, director general of clean technologies at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada; former climate change ambassador Patricia Fuller; former NAFTA arbitrator Martha Harrison; and Queen's University law professor Nicolas Lamp. Thursday, April 27, 11:30 a.m. ET in Room FSS 4004, Social Sciences Building, 120 University Pk. Register via Eventbrite.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

World Press Freedom Day Lunch—Anna Maria Tremonti is the keynote speaker at World Press Freedom Canada's annual World Press Freedom Day luncheon. She will be joined by Irene Gentle, Torstar Vice President for Inclusion and Strategic Partnerships, for an armchair discussion. This event will be held at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St., 11:30 a.m. ET. Contact info@worldpressfreedomcanada.ca. Register via Eventbrite.

Mental Health Week Parliamentary Reception—The Canadian Mental Health Association and the Mental Health Commission of Canada are co-hosting an evening reception on May 3, 2023, 5–7 p.m. at the Rabbit Hole lounge, 208 Sparks St. Opening remarks from Carolyn Bennett, minister of mental health and addictions. Guests are invited to RSVP by contacting Ms. SM Leduc at smleduc@cmha.ca.

Canadian Steel Producers Association Annual Parliamentary Reception—The Canadian Steel Producers Association's board of directors hosts their annual Parliamentary Reception on Wednesday, May 3, at the Métropolitain Brasserie, 700 Sussex Dr. This event is co-hosted with the co-chairs of

the Parliamentary Steel Caucus. Guests are invited to RSVP to RSVPOttawa@globalpublic.com by April 26.

THURSDAY, MAY 4

'When The Convoy Came to Town'—Columnist Paul Wells and Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah, former commissioner with the Ottawa People's Commission on the Convoy Occupation, will take part in "When The Convoy Came to Town," part of the Ottawa International Writers' Festival from May 4–7. Take a deep dive into the convoy itself, the response from government and community and the aftermath of it all. This event will take place at Christ Church Cathedral, 414 Sparks St. Thursday, May 4 at 6:30 p.m. ET. Details: writersfestival.org.

Webinar: Why is it so Hard to Find a Family Doctor?—The Atlantic Association of Applied Economists hosts a webinar, "If Canada has More Family Doctors than ever Before, Why is it so Hard to Find One?" Policymakers are confronting the fact that primary care service volume is falling and inequities are widening. Ruth Lavergne, associate professor of Family Medicine at Dalhousie University and Tier II Canada Research Chair in Primary Care, will present data and the different approaches that can help ensure equitable access to quality primary care in Canada. Thursday, May 4, 10:30 a.m. ET. This is event will take place online: cabc.ca.

THURSDAY, MAY 4—SATURDAY, MAY 6

Liberal National Convention—Liberals from the across the country will gather in Ottawa for the Liberal National Convention featuring policy discussions, special keynote speakers, innovative campaign training session, and the election of a new national board of directors. Thursday, May 4 to Saturday, May 6. Early-bird registration before Feb. 27 is \$499.99. There will also be a virtual access pass to the convention. Register: 2023.liberal.ca. Contact lib2023@liberal.ca or 1-888-LIBERAL.

FRIDAY, MAY 5

'Accessing Historical Records on Intelligence'—The Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History, and Library and Archives Canada, co-host a day-long event on "Accessing Historical Records on Intelligence". Friday, May 5, 8:30 a.m. ET, in the Alfred Pellam Room, Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St. Register via Eventbrite.

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Ottawa Event for King Charles' Coronation—In honour of His Majesty King Charles III's Coronation, an event will take place in Ottawa including speeches, artistic performances, and special unveilings. Dignitaries from the Table of Precedence of Canada, including members of the King's Privy Council for Canada, eminent Canadians, and individuals with ties to causes dear to His Majesty will be in attendance. Saturday, May 6. Details to follow.

Results Canada National Conference—Results Canada is hosting its national conference and Hill Day May 6–8, 2023. Advocates from across Canada will come together in Ottawa to focus on the #GameChangers that are needed to get us back on track to achieving the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Attendees will learn new skills through interactive workshops and hear from advocacy champions from around the world. Immediately following on May 8, folks will put their newly developed advocacy skills into practice and meet with parliamentarians in a Day Of Action on the Hill to advocate for global development. Register today at conference.resultscanada.ca.



Fundraising for CHEO

In a partnership entering its 16th year, CN remains committed to supporting the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) through the CN Cycle for CHEO.

Join us on May 7th, 2023 and cycle, walk or be active while keeping **safety** in mind.

Together, we can all play a role in ensuring more kids survive cancer.

www.cncycle.ca

