Telecom giant Shaw lobbies most in April, 41 communications in one month

Telecom, broadcasting lobbying were up last month.

**By Derek Arma**

Shaw Communications Inc., the provider of internet and TV services, primarily in Western Canada, was the busiest lobbyist of federal officials in April.

The Calgary-based company had 41 communication reports registered for last month, compared to just one in March. The reports showed the company met with several MPs as well as officials from departments such as Innovation, Finance, Canadian Heritage, and the Prime Minister’s Office.

Some of the other groups that were among the most regular federal lobbyists last month included the Canadian Foodgrains Banks, which had 34 communication reports filed, and the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, with 31 reports.

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The West Block building is almost complete, set to “wind up”

A worker in the West Block. Photograph courtesy of PSPC

**By Laura Ryckewaert**

The extensive work to restore the heritage-stone masonry of the West Block building is almost complete, set to “wind up” on the government’s legislative agenda.

**NEWS LOBBYING**

‘Most dysfunctional week’ in the House, and despite pulling Motion 6, Liberals still want extended sittings

**By Rachel Arillo**

Elbowgate: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau lost his temper last Wednesday evening, grabbed Conservative Whip Gordon Brown and accidentally elbowed NDP MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau in the chest. The House Affairs Committee will now investigate the incident. Screen capture CPAC

After last week’s high-profile dustup in the House and all the procedural wrangling eating up Commons time, there is still a lot left on the government’s legislative agenda and with U.S. President Barack Obama scheduled to address a joint Parliament June 29, the government is not ruling out extending sitting times.

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**NEWS LIBERAL CONVENTION**

Grassroots Liberals demand withdrawal of proposed constitution to avoid ‘most divisive convention in years’: Grit riding

**By Abbas Rana**

The Liberal Party’s leadership should withdraw the proposed new party constitution because it was put together without adequate “member consultation and engagement,” and a significant number of delegates will oppose it on the convention floor which could make this week’s biennial policy convention in Winnipeg “the most divisive in many years,” warns one Ontario riding association president.

Tom Addison, president of the federal Ontario electoral district association of Kingston and the Islands, who is coordinating a “large” group of concerned Liberals,

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**NEWS LIBERAL NOMINATIONS**

Proposed free-memberships make some Liberal MPs nervous: Grits

**By Abbas Rana**

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s idea of free memberships for any Canadian who wants to register with the Liberal Party is making some incumbent Liberal MPs nervous because it could mean more challengers than usual and tougher fights in the nomination campaigns prior to the next election.

“It’s open season for anybody to go,” said a Liberal MP who spoke to The Hill Times on condition of anonymity because he does not want to be seen opposing the party leadership. “It’s not going to involve individuals buying memberships, and that means more challengers.”

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**FEATURE HILL MEDIA**

Columnist Tim Harper leaving Star after three decades, ‘it’s a hell of a job’

**By Laura Ryckewaert**

He’s one of the best national affairs columnists in the country and for the first time in more than 30 years, on May 30, Toronto Star columnist Tim Harper will wake up without the pressure of a deadline. He’s set to leave the paper and the Parliamentary Press Gallery at the end of the month.

“I may enjoy it. I don’t know,” Mr. Harper told The Hill Times last week. “It’s completely uncharted territory. I’m kind of Type A and I don’t know how long I’ll be able to do that.”

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**FEATURE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

‘Nobody has seen anything bigger,’ West Block masonry project largest of its kind in North America

By Laura Ryckewaert

The extensive work to restore the heritage-stone masonry of the West Block building is almost complete, set to “wind up” on the government’s legislative agenda.
Two minutes in the box for elbowing, Prime Minister Trudeau

By Derek Abma

Two minutes in the box for elbowing, Prime Minister Trudeau

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau received a two-minute penalty in the House of Commons on Wednesday for elbowing Conservative Whip Gord Brown and the accidental elbowing of NDP MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau. Mr. Trudeau also apparently told people to ‘get the fuck out of the way.’

Suffice it to say, this is no way for an MP—never mind the prime minister—to behave in Parliament. But let’s not get too carried away over the scale of atrocity that has occurred. Mr. Brown wasn’t any worse for wear. I’ve personally seen him coming off the ice from a 7 a.m. hockey game on a weekday in the middle of an election campaign; he’s tough enough to handle these kinds of things.

Opposition MPs are talking about a formal censure of the prime minister, but two minutes in the penalty box would probably do the trick.

As for Ms. Brosseau, she seemed genuinely sore after this episode. The prime minister has to be careful. Anyone who can do one-armed pushups is capable of doing some damage when they’re angry and swinging elbows in a crowd.

Political figures talk about their suicide attempts

If you screw up, we will call you on it, despite the fact we news-types understand that everyone is human and vulnerable to making mistakes.

But please don’t kill yourself over it, and I mean that literally. In recent days, no less than seven prominent figures in federal politics have gone public about their suicide attempts.

First, just more than a week ago, the Ottawa Citizen’s Gary Dimmock featured an interview with Sen. Patrick Brazeau that went into graphic detail about how he slit his throat in January in an attempt to take his own life.

‘Everything just came to a tipping point. … I’m not proud of that moment, because I let a lot of people down,’ Sen. Brazeau said.

Sen. Brazeau, of course, had been dealing with scandals related to charges he faces over alleged fraud and expense claims and a sexual assault charge. Those former charges are still to be heard in trial while the other charge was dismissed in a case in which Sen. Brazeau pleaded guilty to simple assault and cocaine possession.

A few days later, Michael Harris wrote an article in Politics about how Michael Sonia—formerly the Conservative staffer and only person ever convicted in the 2011 robocalls scandal—tried to kill himself too. The article explains how Mr. Sona, in the spring of 2012, sat in a bathtub, put a .45-calibre pistol to his head, and pulled the trigger. Thankfully, the gun didn’t work properly and Mr. Sona remains on this Earth.

‘I’m not a cry-for-help moment,’ this article quoted Mr. Sona as saying.

Dental service for poor launched in honour of Bélanger

The Canadian Dental Charity Foundation did a sing along Liberal MP Mauril Bélanger a solid recent start by setting up dental service for low-income and vulnerable citizens in his honour in his riding of Ottawa-Vanier.

The service was officially launched April 29 at the Vanier Community Service Centre. The centre said in a press release that those involved in bringing this initiative to fruition “are inspired by Mauril Bélanger’s commitment towards this Ottawa neighbourhood and are choosing to invest in the well-being of its residents.”

The centre will start providing this service once a month in June. Karen Ergus, vice-president of the Ottawa-Vanier Women’s Liberal Association, who happen to be a registered dental hygienist, will be among those helping out.

Mr. Bélanger went public late last year with his diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. His condition has progressed to the point where he has lost the ability to speak. He now uses an app with text-to-voice software to communicate.

Poll shows support for O Canada change

The bill is expected to be back up for debate next week.

Delacourt book updated with Trudeau material

The bill is expected to be back up for debate next week.

Grace-Pépin Access to Information Award to be given Wednesday

The Grace-Pépin Access to Information Award will be given this Wednesday to recognize a watchdog group founded in 2009, and Marcel Pépin, founding president of Quebec’s information-access commission.

This year’s winners of the Grace-Pépin award were Ken Rubin and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, announced in January.

The event takes place at 10:30 a.m. in the lobby of 30 Victoria St., in Gatineau, Que., where Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault’s office is.

Famous 5 event in Byward Market raises almost $3,000 for Fort Mac

Famous 5 Ottawa, an organization that celebrates the achievements of women, threw a fundraiser last week for its sister organization in Fort McMurray, Alta., to raise money for those forced to flee their homes in the raging wildfire that devastated Fort McMurray two weeks ago.

It was held at the Red Lion Public House, a new pub in Byward Market, last Wednesday and raised $2,785, which turned into a donation of $8,355 when matching donations from the federal and Alberta governments were factored in.

About 80 people attended the event, including interim Conservative Leader Rona Ambrose, her partner J.P. Veitch, Nellie McCrimmon, Linda Dunlop, Delacourt, and Mail journalists Gloria Galloway, Shawn McCarthy, and Chris Hannay.
In ongoing military operations around the globe, the Super Hornet is the fighter forces depend upon in combat. Fully networked with integrated sensors and weapons, it delivers a full range of missions from close air support to air combat and interdiction. The Super Hornet also sets a new standard of availability, maintainability and cost per flight hour — providing customers with combat-proven, dominant aircraft today and for generations to come.

It’s earned its wings in combat.

F/A-18E/F SUPER HORNET

RAYTHEON  NORTHROP GRUMMAN  GENERAL ELECTRIC  BOEING
Senate rejects Sen. Harder’s request for $850,000 budget, allocates new government representative $400,000

Sen. Peter Harder requested $850,000 but received less than half of the requested amount.

By Abbas Rana

covernment Senate Representative Peter Harder made a request for an $850,000 budget to the Senate’s Internal Economy Budgets and Administration Committee last month, but last week was told that he would get only $400,000 chiefly because he does not have a Senate caucus to manage.

In an emailed response to The Hill Times, Albertas Conservative Sen. Scott Tannas, a member of the Senate’s Internal Economy Committee, said the committee decided to approve only $400,000 because in addition to this budget, the Deputy Government Representative Diane Bellemare (Alma, Que.) and the Government Whip Grant Mitchell are also getting $75,000 and $100,000 respectively.

Sen. Tannas said Sen. Harder does not have any caucus to manage so he does not need any resources for that—a responsibility that his predecessor, Quebec Conservative Sen. Claude Carignan, had. Sen. Carignan had a budget of $850,000 as the government Senate leader. He now is the opposition leader in the Senate.

The Senate’s Internal Economy Committee last month decided to approve only $400,000 chiefly because he does not have a Senate caucus to manage.

In its pitch to the committee, he said that with his budget, he wants to hire nine staffers in his office including a chief of staff, a senior policy adviser, a director of communications, three legislative assistants, a director of parliamentary affairs, an executive assistant, and an assistant.

Last week, Sen. Harder was not available for an interview, but he told The Hill Times last month that as the Government’s Representative, he’s responsible for shepherding the government legislation in the Upper Chamber, answering questions on behalf of the government in the Senate’s Question Period, and representing the interests of the Senate to the executive.

Sen. Carignan is not a cabinet minister, he’s not getting any budget top-up from the Privy Council Office. He has been sworn in as a privy councillor and can attend cabinet committee meetings.

For the current fiscal year, the Conservative Senate caucus has a budget of $1.2-million and the Liberals have a budget of a little more than a million dollars.

The Senate Internal Economy Committee uses a standard formula of calculating budgets for different Senate caucuses. Based on this formula, if a caucus has between five and 10 members, it receives an annual budget of $100,000; if the number of caucus members is between 11 and 20, it receives $300,000; and if there are more than 20, the caucus is eligible for $500,000. This budget is now in addition to $400,000 in this particular case for the Office of Government Representative (it was previously $250,000); $75,000 for the deputy government representative; $100,000 for the government whip; $600,000 for the leader of the opposition; $75,000 for the deputy leader of the opposition; and $100,000 for the opposition whip.

These budgets do not include the salaries of Senators who hold leadership positions.


In the 105-member Upper Chamber, there are 42 Conservatives, 21 Independents, 23 Liberals, 24 Sen. Danned and 19 seats are vacant—all of which are expected to be filled before the end of the year. In August, Conservative-turned-Independent Sen. Michel Rivard (The Laurentides, Que.) is retiring.

Next year, three Conservatives—Bob Runciman (Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Ont.), Kelvin Ogilvie (Annapolis Valley-Hants, N.S.), and Nancy Ruth (Cluny, Ont.)—and four Liberals—Wilfred Moore (Stanhope St./South Shore, N.S.), James Cowan (Nova Scotia), George Baker (Newfoundland and Labrador), and Elizabeth Hubley (Prince Edward Island)—will reach the mandatory retirement age of 75.

A former deputy minister, Sen. Harder was appointed to the Red Chamber in March along with six other Senators. All seven are Independent Senators, and all were made on the non-binding advice of the Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments. Prior to his appointment to the Red Chamber, Sen. Harder headed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s (Papineau, Que.) transition team after the last federal election.

araana@hilltimes.com
After procedural wrangling took up most of the Commons time last week, there’s a lot left on the government’s agenda. And there’s also the matter of Barack Obama’s address to Parliament, scheduled for six days after the House is slated to have its final sitting before summer.

The House is scheduled to adjourn for the summer on June 23. Also on June 29 to hear President Obama. Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipe North, Man.), parliamentary secretary to Government House Leader Dominic LeBlanc (Beausejour, N.B.), didn’t deny extending sittings days, and as for sitting hours, he said the House was intending to use Motion 6, which would have unilaterally changed the House of Commons Standing Orders to give cabinet ministers unlimited power over House procedure and vote timing. Generally, the schedule is agreed upon by the House leaders. After an acrimonious two days in the Commons, Mr. LeBlanc withdrew the motion, saying his objective is to “try to find a proper mechanism to extend the sitting hours and allow for a more respectful debate on government legislation.”

With MP’s return next week, they still have to pass Bill C-14, the controversial assisted suicide bill, as well as Bill C-10, the contentious bill, and as many of the other dozen or so government bills still on the order paper. Mr. Lamoureux said by pulling Motion 6, the Liberals are saying they want to try again to work with the opposition to get government initiatives through, something he says they have a responsibility to do.

In their efforts to pass government legislation, the Liberals have become frequent users of time allocation and out of frustration over this, Mr. Lamoureux said the opposition gave them no confidence that they would not continue to try procedural tricks to get in the way of important legislation. He said the motion was a joint House-leadership team idea that did not come from the PMO.

“There’s an element of trust and fair play in the negotiating process. One of the most important things is that you have to establish a solid relationship of respect and trust,” said Mr. Lamoureux.

Coming to agreement on more debate time has been central to the growing acrimony between the government and opposition House leaders, which came to a head last week.

Conservative House Leader Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu’Appelle, Sask.) said he isn’t supportive of extending the sitting hours, and as for sitting hours, said he has yet to hear a reasonable proposal. He told The Hill Times last week that it’s not up to the opposition to help the Liberals with time-management and caucus-management problems.

He said communication between House leaders was still not happening by the end of what he called the “most dysfunctional week” he’d ever seen in Parliament, largely because of the unprec- edented procedural move the Liberals were about ready to make.

Put out a press release by Mr. LeBlanc on Wednesday morning, Motion 6 sought to put the prime minister, cabinet or parliamentary secretaries in charge of what happens in the House, taking away National老乡 of both opposition and backbench Liberal MPs. The Liberals said the 17-clause bill was needed time for more debate and the “certainty and predictability” of the House procedure and vote timing.

As soon as it was put on notice, the opposition immediately reacted against it, taking any media time they had to call out the government for what they classified as a “draconian” power grab.

Then, with emotions high and participants in Motion 6 heading into the Chamber for another time-allo- cation vote on the controversial Bill C-14, the government’s physician-assisted dying bill, chaos broke out on the floor as the altercation involving Mr. Lamoureux, Mr. Scheer, Mr. LeBlanc and Ellen Brosseau (Berthier-Maskinongé, Que.) resulted in a result.

This resulted in opposition out- rage and Mr. Trudeau providing a partial recitation of his actions. The matter of privilege has now been sent to the Procedure and house committees.

The altercation quickly be- came leverage for the opposition in calling to eliminate Motion 6.

Mr. Scheer said the government’s published character as a large “massive cannon barrel staring down our faces” was a good start, but if “it was a good start, it’ll be a good start.”

“We will never forget these are the types of things they were willing to resort to the second they don’t get their own way,” he said Thursday afternoon.

The opposition relief at getting Motion 6, the Liberals are extending sittings days, and as for sitting hours, they still have to pass the bill. Mr. Lamoureux said by pull- ing Motion 6, the opposition likely could have gone to the Senate to prevent such a vote, which the government did.

Mr. Lamoureux said the government was trying to bring the bill to a vote “as soon as possible,” which he said is “a good round of discus- sions while debate was ongoing.”

The question Period with all the House Whips, and I think a great spirit of cooperation will emerge over the coming weeks.”

“We have a certain respect that holds the place together. When the respect is lost, the place falls apart,” Ms. May said.

The Liberal bill was saved, in part by one of their backbench MPs who opposes the bill and voted against it at second reading, Doug Eyolfson (Charleswood, Winnipeg North, Man.). He told The Hill Times first he voted against it, then he backed down and supported it, saying his constituents, and only changed his vote at the report stage because he “got caught up in the childish stunt.”

“Wish they had called it for a time when normally all par- ties have lower Members’ atten- dance, and none of the traditional numbers of opposition members suddenly flooded the House, it became very apparent what could happen if the opposition had staged a proce- dural stunt designed to disenfran- chise them,” Mr. Lamoureux said. It was frustrating to watch the opposition take pleasure in their proceedings but “not do the job” of their constituents at third reading.

“I’d had voted against it, the bill would have failed, but ultimately it would have demonstr- ated that opposition procedural tricks have a real impact on their ability to prevent our MPs from doing their job,” he said, adding he plans to vote to accept the bill and in favour of his constituents at third reading.

Throughout the week, both Mr. Scheer and the prime minister’s office confirmed to deny they ever attempted to premeditated plan to prevent the government was not provid- ing the opposition with a calendar of when the government was going to do anything, changing what was being called forward and pulling opposition days with dropped at the last minute.

Mr. Julian and the NDP are calling on the government to go to a new dilatory motion. Motion 6 is off the table and the use of time allocation to force bills through. They are asking the Lib- erals to stop rejecting “construc- tive amendments to legislation,” and redistribute the party make- up on the forthcoming democratic reform discussion.

“Not being in a recognized party, not being part of the nego- tiations with the government House leaders, I’m probably not as prone to say that they’ve never done anything that was less coop- erative. I think it’s likely there may have been a bit of blame … on all sides,” Green Party leader Elizabeth May (Saanich-Gulf Islands, B.C.) said during a joint press con- ference Thursday afternoon, after the delays last week, the House leaders meetings traditionally happen, thanks to a procedural move by the NDP, who instead of tabling the planned amendments to the government’s common sense and recommend for the government to go to a new dilatory motion.

Conservative MP Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, Alta.) said he threatened to drop the tie with 139 votes on either side. House Speaker Geoff Regan (Halifax—West, N.S.) had to break the tie in favour of continuing debate, so it passed to third reading.

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Grassroots Liberals demand withdrawal of proposed constitution to avoid ‘most divisive convention in years’

The proposed new constitution is meant to ‘modernize’ the Liberal Party, says Liberal Party director of communications Braeden Caley.

Continued from page 1

told The Hill Times that the proposed new constitution is an attempt to centralize power “within a small circle around the leader.”

The proposed constitution makes the membership free for any Canadian who wants to register, overhauls the party structure, and makes significant changes to the financial, internal and governance mechanisms of riding associations and commissions. If the proposed party constitution is passed this week, the party will have only one constitution, down from almost 20 now, and the party’s board of directors will draft bylaws to run the operations of the party in federal, provincial and territorial associations, councils of presidents, riding associations, and commissions such as the National Women’s Commission, and open up the party. He said the party could have done more in the consultation process but added that the party’s consultation process and the party offi cers did not get it. Two other riding association presidents who spoke on condition of anonymity on a not-for-attribution basis confirmed that a significant number of members and some riding association executives never received the survey and were not satisfied with the consultation process.

At the Liberal Party’s fi rst biennial convention after the last federal election, the delegates will vote on the proposed new constitution that has been trimmed down to 12 pages from the current 77 pages. Currently, the Liberal Party has more than 18 constitutions including the federal party constitution, constitutions of the party’s federal wings in all provinces and territories, and commissions such as the Young Liberals Commission, National Women’s Commission, Aboriginal Peoples’ Commission, and the Seniors’ Commission.

The Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party each have not one constitution for their respective parties.

Critics charge that the party drafted the constitution without adequate consultation from members; that it “diminishes” the role of grassroots party organizations like executive boards, riding associations, councils of presidents, commissions, and provincial and territorial associations; and centralizes power in the hands of a few top party offi cials.

Mr. Addison said that if the proposed constitution is passed this week, the party’s board of directors will draft bylaws to run the party operations, and if party members disagree with these bylaws, they will have to wait for another two years for their next convention to express their opinions.

“Now this small group surrounding our party Leader and Prime Minister have decided the time is right to consolidate control of the party at the very top, wrote Mr. Addison on his website. In the interview with The Hill Times, he declined to share any names of party offi cials who are trying to gain more power.

Braeden Caley, Liberal Party’s director of communications, said in an interview with The Hill Times that the proposed constitution aims “to modernize, strengthen, and open up” the party. He disagreed with the suggestion that the party membership was not consulted adequately for the proposed constitution. Mr. Caley said that more than 2,000 Liberals participated in the survey. He said that 98 per cent of survey participants said that they support modernizing the party. 91 per cent said the party should have one constitution like other parties, 96 per cent said they want to make the party more open, and 99 per cent said that they want to make the policy development process more innovative and open.

“Delegates will have the opportunity at convention, as they’ve had over the last number of months, to express their views and that’s an important purpose of the convention,” said Mr. Caley.

“One of the best things about being a Liberal is our ability to have conversations, our ability to agree to disagree with each other, our ability to converse, our ability to talk to other people... so that we can formulate the best responses and the best positions for things,” said Mr. Gerretsen.

Joe Horneck, riding association president for the Toronto-area riding of Mississauga Centre, Ont., said he’s satisfied with the party’s consultation process and has no disagreement with the new constitution.

Two other riding association presidents told The Hill Times that based on their informal conversations with fellow riding executives across the country, Mr. Addison does not have enough support to defeat the proposed new constitution. They said that the party offi ce is calling riding association presidents to fi nd out how they’re going to vote on the proposed new constitution.

The Hill Times
Proposed free-memberships make some Liberal MPs nervous

The change, some party insiders believe, would make incumbent MPs more vulnerable to nomination challenges, sometimes from single-issue or ‘phony’ candidates.

Continued from page 1

Currently, the federal Liberal Party charges an annual party membership fee of $10. However, in a speech last month in Halifax, Mr. Trudeau (Papineau, Que.) said that he wants to open up the party to any Canadian who wants to join, free of charge.

Federal Liberals are meeting in Winnipeg this Thursday through Saturday for their biennial policy convention, and no-fee membership is one of the proposed policies Liberals will vote on. According to the proposals, registered members will be able to offer their input in the party’s policy development, participate in the nomination of riding candidates, attend electoral district association meetings, and take part in the selection of party leaders, at no cost.

Party membership fees for political parties have been making headlines since the last federal election. First, the Conservative Party raised the membership fee to $25 a year from $15. After the push back from caucus members, the Conservatives’ national council reversed its decision and the annual membership is again $15. But at least one Conservative MP, Peter Kent (Thornhill, Ont.), is pushing his party not to charge any fee for membership to make the Conservatives a “big tent, no-fee party.” The New Democratic Party’s membership fee varies from province to province, ranging from free to $25.

Like any political contest, money plays a critical role in the outcome of most nomination fights of all parties. Theoretically, all party members are required to pay their own membership fees, but based on anecdotal evidence, it does not happen in most cases and fees are paid by supporters of individual nomination campaigns. Bill Liborians and Conservatives have had numerous contests going back to early 1990s when candidates or their campaigns accused each other of paying their new members’ fees.

In interviews last week, some Liberal MPs and long-time Liberal political insiders who spoke to The Hill Times on a not-for-attribution basis said that free memberships will make incumbent Liberal MPs vulnerable to more challenges than usual from their own party, single-issue candidates and other federal parties who may put up a phoney candidate against a Liberal. They explained, under the current rules, a serious challenger to an incumbent MP of any party needs to have tens of thousands of dollars, especially in urban centres where riding association membership is usually higher than rural ridings. The no-membership fee rule will open the door for any challenger to contest a nomination.

“The wishes of the riding could be circumvented,” says one senior Liberal insider who has been actively taking part in nomination campaigns for about two decades. “Conservatives or the NDP could now register online as a Liberal and out-muscle an existing [Liberal] riding association. So the Tories or the NDP or single interest groups could hijack a [Liberal] riding association and vote for a weak Liberal candidate or put up a phoney Liberal candidate.”

The source said the paid membership requirement to participate in nomination contests is a major barrier for single-issue groups or phoney candidates. He said the Liberal Party tried the idea of allowing non-paid party supporters to vote in the last Liberal leadership convention and it turned out successful. He said that because of this policy, many Canadians voted for Liberal candidates and volunteered for the party in the last election.

“As a result, Justin Trudeau was elected as leader and many of those 300,000 people who got involved as supporters became active volunteers, donors, and activists for the party,” Mr. Caley in an interview.

Joe Hornecker, Liberal riding association president for the Toronto-area riding of Mississauga Centre, Ont., said getting people engaged in the political process is becoming more challenging in most democracies around the world. He said that offering free memberships would help the Liberal Party in getting more Canadians involved in the political process.

“It’s becoming harder and harder to get people involved in political processes,” he said, adding that removing any barrier that hinders people from becoming active in politics is a positive step.

Meanwhile, the Conservative Party recently announced rules that could help many of its 98 incumbent MPs avoid nomination challenges ahead of the next election. According to the rule, if an incumbent MP’s riding has $150,000 in its bank account and at least one per cent of eligible voters as riding association members, that MP will not face a nomination contest unless more than one-third of riding association members vote in favour of having a nomination contest.

It remains to be seen if the Liberals introduce similar rules, protect their MPs outright from nomination challenges, or make them face nomination challenges. Usually, incumbent MPs in all major parties easily win nomination challenges unless their respective candidates or their campaigns try to challenge them.

Mr. Ouellette.

He said that this policy would help his party in connecting with more Canadians and recruiting more volunteers. Mr. Ouellette said that if the party makes membership free of charge, other federal parties would also come under pressure to make their memberships free, as well.

Liberal MP Rob Oliphant (Don Valley West, Ont.) said he’s in favour of free memberships but does not know what this will mean for incumbent MPs in nomination contests. He said the threat of more nomination challengers is a “positive thing,” as it would make MPs spend more time in their ridings.

“It probably is a positive thing that I will never take anybody for granted and make sure that I’m their candidate of choice when it comes to re-election,” said Mr. Oliphant.

Traditionally, incumbent MPs have an advantage over challengers because of their political experience, name recognition, and ability to raise more funds.

Braedon Caley, director of communications for the Liberal Party, dismissed concerns that Liberal MPs may face more challenges from single-issue groups or phoney candidates. He said the Liberal Party tried the idea of allowing non-paid party supporters to vote in the last Liberal leadership convention and it turned out successful. He said that because of this policy, more Canadians voted for Liberal candidates and volunteered for the party in the last election.

“The wishes of the riding could be circumvented,” says one senior Liberal insider who has been actively taking part in nomination campaigns for about two decades. “Conservatives or the NDP could now register online as a Liberal and out-muscle an existing [Liberal] riding association. So the Tories or the NDP or single interest groups could hijack a [Liberal] riding association and vote for a weak Liberal candidate or put up a phoney Liberal candidate.”

The source said the paid membership requirement to participate in nomination contests is a major barrier for single-issue groups or others who may want to challenge an incumbent MP.

“When you are paying money, it’s a different story,” said the source. “Now, all they have to do is to show up at a meeting with a 50 or 100 people and make them pick up the weakest candidate.”

In the 2013 Liberal leadership campaign in which Mr. Trudeau became party leader, the party allowed “supporters” who were not paid members to vote. In total, 300,000 paid members and supporters were signed up for this leadership campaign by all candidates.

Rookie Liberal MP Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Man.) said that he supports the idea of free membership. He acknowledged that Liberal MPs may face more challengers than normal in the next nomination cycle, he said, he’s not concerned about his own nomination contest, but it could mean political headaches for other Liberal MPs.

“It could very well mean a lot more challenges, yes. It might be [a problem] for other MPs,” said Mr. Ouellette.

While some of his colleagues are worried, Liberal MP Rob Oliphant said he welcomes free party memberships, and the increased likelihood of nomination challenges will force him to work harder in his riding. Liberal MP Robert-Falcon Ouellette, left, also supports the idea of free party memberships. The Hill Times photograph by Jake Wright
PM Trudeau wrong, but opposition parties shouldn’t overlay their hand

Y ou’d be hard-pressed to find many people who condone what Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did in the House of Commons last Wednesday night. No Conservative, New Democrat, or Liberal—not even Mr. Trudeau himself—can justify walking to the floor of the Chamber and physically forcing someone—in this case Conservative Whip Gord Brown—to adhere to the prime minister’s will.

During this angry episode, Mr. Trudeau, in his haste during a tense evening in the House, accidentally elbowed NDP MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau in the chest, causing her to leave the Chamber and miss the subsequent vote.

Credit should be given to the prime minister for apologizing unreservedly the following day. He and the Liberal caucus supported the move to refer the matter to the Procedure and House Affairs Committee, and Mr. Trudeau agreed to accept whatever conclusion might come of this review.

Many were offended and disturbed by what they saw Wednesday night. Mr. Trudeau showed a certain amount disregard for this institution of democracy by using physical force in an attempt to influence procedure. The Conservatives and NDP, however, appeared in the immediate aftermath to make the incident far more than it was worth. The words “criminal” and “assault” were thrown around by few MPs from these parties. His behaviour was entirely inappropriate, but calling it a criminal assault is stretching it.

When you look at the overall picture of what’s happening in federal politics right now, opposition parties have bigger fish to fry than this so-called “elbowgate” in terms of demanding better from this government.

For example, it is trying to force legislation on physician-assisted dying that even some members of the governing party aren’t comfortable with. Some feel it doesn’t go far enough in meeting the spirit of the Supreme Court decision that forced it, while others feel it goes too far.

There’s also the electoral reform effort that involves a Liberal-stacked committee and a refusal, so far, to put such a fundamental decision to the judgment of the people through a referendum.

These issues and others, such as mari- juana legalization and defence spending, can potentially attract the attention and passion of ordinary Canadians on various sides of the arguments.

The incident that happened Wednesday is, at most, a utilitarian sideshow for most Canadians that doesn’t make them like or dislike the prime minister any more than they already did. It certainly won’t be top of mind when they go to the polls again in 2019.

For this reason, the opposition parties should not to overlay their hands on this matter. The Liberals have withdrawn their intention to invoke Motion 6 to allow cabinet to take effectively over House procedure in order to get their assisted-dying legislation through. This elbowgate scandal might have given the opposition some leverage to get this concession out of the government. It also did some dam-age to the prime minister’s “sunny ways.”

Cops is off the mark on proportional representation, electoral reforms, says reader

R e: “Hogwash to proportional representation, two-stage balloting the way to go.” (The Hill Times, May 16, p. 9). The “party list” is this week’s hot PR (proportional representation) myth. However, the two-ballot runoff is somewhat unique. Ms. Cops’ dismissal of electoral reform as irrelevant to voters explains the irrelevance of much of the content.

Ms. Cops prefers real majorities—which we rarely see in Canada under FPTP. She would conjure up some with another winner-take-all voting system—two ballot run-offs—requiring two elections instead of one.

Winner-take-all voting systems are pretty much all the same—very poor in converting voters’ intentions into seats, as the number of seats gained by any party is disproportionate to its popular vote share. Wide regional disparities result in Canada.

Notwithstanding that a party list proportional voting system has never been recommended for Canada, and that, the proposed PR systems are all open list, (meaning that all candidates face the voters), Cops assumes that all proportional voting systems are more party-centric than winner-take-all systems.

Most Canadians would find it hard to imagine any system where political parties exert more control over their MPs than under the present winner-take-all FPTP system. Rightly so. Parliament has become largely irrelevant as decision-making is done behind closed doors, except as a bit of theatre where the government rolls out its plans.

Majority governments under proportional voting systems are usually a coalition of two or more parties. PR candidates are nominated by ridings associations or party conventions, just as they are now. Kindly explain how parties operating within a coalition, in full public view, could possibly exert more control over their MPs than a winner-take-all government with 100 per cent control. Sounds like hogwash to me.

P.E. McGrail
Brampton, Ont.

Letters to the Editor

Two-stage balloting not the way to go, writes letter-writer

R e: “Hogwash to proportional representation, two-stage balloting the way to go.” (The Hill Times, May 16, p. 9). I have had great respect for Sheila Cops, but can she not promote her favourite elec- toral reform without spreading myths?

Sheila Cops was still a member of the House of Commons when Irwin Cotler tabled the 2004 report of the Law Commission of Canada recommending a mixed-member proportional system where voters can vote for both a local MP and personally for a regional MP. If she is following the discussion, she knows that the House of Commons debated against the Law Commission’s model on Dec. 3, 2014, when half the Liberal caucus noted it had no closed lists and supported it.

If Ottawa Liberal Party members can democratically nominate eight candidates for eight Ottawa ridings, can they not democratically nominate five candidates for local MP and city-wide candidates for three regional MPs? As the Law Commission recommended, voters underrepre- sented by the local results would elect a provincial PR council to roll up the local results. Even 10 MP regions, with four regional MPs elected personally, would have accountable PR.

But Ms. Cops, to my great surprise, says PR means voters do not elect MPs, and a candidate can only win by getting as high up as possible on the party list. A terrible system, to be sure. The Law Commission rightly rejected it. No one proposes it. It is a myth unworthy of rep- etition by honourable political leaders.

Wilfred Day
National Secretary, Fair Vote Canada
Port Hope, Ont.

Two-stage balloting not the way to go, writes letter-writer

Haven’t yet received a census in my retirement home, wondering why

I live in a retirement home. None of us has received a census form. Why? Do our opinions or situ- ations not count? I’ve tried to contact our MP, Liberal Kim Rudd who repre- sents Northumberland-Peterborough South, Ont., and Statistics Canada without any luck.

Jean Finlayson
Brighton, Ont.
Trudeau wishes he could turn back the clock

Trudeau has underscored the importance of a Senate, which is free from the shackles of party politics. But now his government faces the real possibility that this independent Senate could kill the bill.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau certainly wishes he could turn back the clock. Even though a New Democratic Party stalling phalanx deliberately blocked his path, Conservative whip Gordon Brown didn’t want to help him lose his seat. To his credit, the prime minister quickly realized his mistake and stood, not once but twice, to apologize. He reinforced that with multiple apologies the following day.

That wasn’t enough for the opposition, which bombarded the Twittersphere to pump up the gravity of the incident.

With #elbowgate trending, Trudeau was accused of everything from disrespecting women to bullying a colleague.

Columnist Andrew Coyne tweeted a poem “gladly” reviling the prime minister because of his behavior. Glad revelers will be happy to focus on this first misstep for a popular new government.

Opposition parties dropped everything, including substantive discussion of assisted dying legislation, to focus on #elbowgate. They wouldn’t take sorry for an answer.

Precisely the behaviour we were devoted to procedural manoeuvres designed to bring the prime minister before a parliamentary committee for another scolding.

The real story was lost in all the political drama.

Senate concerns about the current assisted dying legislation threaten to dwarf any hyperbolic Commons storm.

The Red Chamber pre-study of proposed legislation, released last week, highlighted multiple requests for necessary amendments.

The government faces its first real test on whether a non-partisan Senate can function in practice as well as in theory. Independent Liberal Senator Jim Cowan, and Conservative Senator Denise Batters took to the airwaves with articulate arguments for their recommended changes to the legislation.

Batters, a chef with knowledge of the subject involved the death of her husband and former Member of Parliament Dave Batters, is a nationally recognized mental health advocate.

Some parliamentary objections focus on the exclusion of mentally ill persons and minors from eligibility for suicide assistance. Others deal with the restrictions related to terminal illness.

Trudeau has underscored the importance of a Senate, which is free from the shackles of party politics. But now his government faces the real possibility that this independent Senate could kill the bill.

The Liberals insist that the law must be enacted within the next two weeks but a June 6 deadline set by the Supreme Court for replacement legislation.

That judicial deadline has caused much of the stress and prompted the government to try to impose controversial procedural limitations on Parliament.

The House of Commons is becoming the media circus it really needs a cooling off period. Pushing legislation through will irritate the Twittersphere in Parliament. Given Senate and opposition reticence, speed may not even be possible. The government’s decision to withdraw its debate-limiting motion was a great start.

Trudeau should take advantage of an opening provided last week by a unanimous Alberta court judgment authorizing a mentally ill person, not confronting a terminal illness, to receive assistance in dying.

The Liberals could take the time to review this contrary-minded ruling and reconsider opposition and Senate amendments.

The Alberta ruling could be appealed, while the government concurrently sends proposed legislation to the Supreme Court for review.

This tactic would permit time to elevate drama which the government could build a stronger consensus.

Trudeau needs some well-deserved downtime before implementing a bill so fraught with controversy.

To reinforce his mantra of doing government differently, the prime minister needs to engage the Opposition and the Senate on the substance of this issue.

He also needs to get all Liberal members on board.

Rob Oliphant, the respected co-chair of the parliamentary committee studying assisted suicide, has already announced he cannot support the legislation. He sent an early signal that the proposed law would face a rough Parliamentary ride.

The summer solstice is three weeks away. An expedited judicial review could carry the matter into the fall session.

Parliament could incorporate judicial advice into drafting of a new charter-compliant bill.

That might keep all elbows tucked in.

Sheila Copps is a former Jean Chrétien-era Cabinet minister and a former deputy prime minister. She’s a registered lobbyist.

The Hill Times

Conservatives need a media truce

Anyway, what I’m trying to say here is the Conservatives need to come up with a communications plan that’s better than the one they’ve been relying on for the past 10 years or so, which is to blindly wage war against the media.

That’s just bad tactics.

OKVILLE, ONT.—When the federal Conservatives congregate in Vancouver this week for their biannual convention, lots of topics are sure to be debated and discussed.

They’ll debate and discuss economic platforms and social issues; leadership questions and environmental policy; internal polling results and fundraising tactics, all of which leads me to wonder if they’ll have time for another topic that needs discussing, i.e. the Conservative Party’s rocky relationship with the news media.

Hang on while I consult my thesaurus: I can rephrase my point with more accurate modifiers.

“Okay, let’s try this: the Conservative Party’s relationship with the media can be deemed as poisonous, toxic, hostile, and venomous.

Yeah, that’s more like it.

Anyway, what I’m trying to say here is the Conservatives need to come up with a communications plan that’s better than the one they’ve been relying on for the past 10 years or so, which is to blindly wage war against the media.

That’s just bad tactics.

As the old adage goes, “Never argue with someone who buys ink by the barrel.”

Ideally, rather than battling the media, a political party should seek to create something akin to a symbiotic relationship with journalists.

In other words, the media and politicians should each gain from their interaction.

The media should gain—free of charge interesting news content, while a political party should gain—free of charge—publicity for their message.

And yes, I know that’s probably a naïve assessment.

Politicians and politicians tend to mistrust each other. Journalists fear politicians are either manipulative or too secretive; while politicians suspect journalists will purposely distort their message or ignore it altogether.

This is especially true for conservative politicians who tend to assume that the majority of the media harbor a left-wing, anti-Conservative Party bias.

And while this skepticism about the media has always been prevalent among conservatives, it came to dominate the Conservative Party’s mindset under the leadership of Stephen Harper.

Indeed, it’s probably safe to say, Harper treated the media with something approaching contemptuous disdain.

And while this may have been emotionally satisfying for many conservatives, it didn’t result in positive news coverage.

Quite the opposite, in fact. That’s why Conservatives need to change this dynamic.

By the way, I’m not saying Conservatives need to ingratiate themselves with journalists; I’m simply saying they need to cultivate a professional relationship with the media so they can have an outlet for amplifying their message.

But what if the media really is biased against Conservatives?

Doesn’t matter.

If you give the media quality content—colourful and quotable sound bites, an intriguing narrative, a dramatic policy position—you’ll get coverage because even biased journalists can’t resist a good news story.

Again, getting coverage should always be the goal, because that translates into getting your message out to as many people as possible.

That’s not to say, Conservatives should refrain from openly taking on the media if they are being treated unfairly.

But it should be done in a way that doesn’t harm the party’s image.

Former U.S. president Ronald Reagan, for instance, once took a jab at the press when he said to a reporter, “People have a job to solve all the country’s problems, and it’s your job to make sure no one finds out about it.”

In this case, Reagan got his point across about media bias using humor instead of venom.

That’s good messaging.

At any rate, I’m just saying maybe media relations should be something the Conservatives kick around at their convention.

It might produce better results than simply kicking the media.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant. www.gerrymicholls.com

The Hill Times
Syria: the Russians were right

Great states never admit mistakes, so there will be no apology from Washington for all the anti-Russian propaganda of the past year. But it is enough that the U.S. government has actually changed its tune, and that there is a little bit of hope for Syria.

LONDON, ENGLAND—"The Russians had a more realistic analysis of the situation than practically anybody else," said Lakhdar Brahimi, the former United Nations Special Envoy to Syria. "Everyone should have listened to the Russians a little bit more than they did." Brahimi was referring to the Russian offer in 2012 to end the growing civil war in Syria by forcing the country’s dictator, Bashar al-Assad, to leave power. The United Nations proposal went before the UN Security Council, but the United States, Britain, and France were so convinced that Assad was about to fall anyway that they turned it down. Why let the Russians take the credit?

It is still in power, several hundred thousand more Syrians have died, and millions more have fled. But now, in 2016, the Russians are still relevant, because the Russians are still right.

Finally, very reluctantly, the United States is coming around to the long-standing Russian position that the secular Baathist regime in Syria must survive, as part of any compromise peace deal that everybody except the Islamist extremists will accept (although nobody will love it).

Such a deal back in 2012 would have involved the departure from power of Bashar al-Assad himself, and it could still do so today. He’s mostly just a figurehead anyway. He was living in England, studying to be an optometrist, until the death of his older brother made him the inevitable heir to the presidency that his father, Hafez al-Assad, had held for 30 years. It’s the Baathist regime’s secular character that makes it so important. Its leadership is certainly dominated by the Alawite (Shia) minority, but it has much broader support because all Syria’s non-Muslim minorities, Christian and Druze, see it as their only bulwark against Islamist extremists. Many Sunni Muslims, especially in the cities, see it the same way. They also see it as the one Arab government in the region that has always defied Israel.

The deal that the Russians could have delivered in 2012 would have duffed Bashar al-Assad but left the Baathist regime in place, while compelling it to broaden its base, dilute Islamist influence, and stop torturing and murdering its opponents. An overconfident Western rejected that deal, while its local “allies,” Turkey and Saudi Arabia, gave weapons and money to the Islamist rebels who aimed to replace the Baathists with a Sunni Muslim theocracy. Fast forward to 2016, and by mid-summer the Islamist forces, mainly Islamist State and al-Qaeda, control more than a third of Syria’s territory. The exhausted Syrian army is retreating every time it is attacked.

The deal the Russians proposed in late 2015 was a ceasefire, followed by a political process that included a Syrian-led conference, a ceasefire, and elections. It failed. Why?

The problem is the United States has not been a partner in the deal. In their bilateral meeting in Washington, D.C., Gwynne Dyer writes that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has wisely given Mr. Kerry equal billing in the ceasefire initiative, and there has been no crowning in Moscow about the Americans only seeing the light.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski, pictured Feb. 17, 2016, before their bilateral meeting in Washington, D.C. Gwynne Dyer writes that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has wisely given Mr. Kerry equal billing in the ceasefire initiative, and there has been no crowning in Moscow about the Americans only seeing the light. U.S. State Department Photograph.

Don’t discount Chong, Lisée bids for leadership

The GTA MP is calling on his party to not only join the climate change parade but to also embrace carbon pricing.

Montreal—As Stéphane Dion demonstrated by snatching the Liberal crown from Michael Ignatieff and Bob Rae a decade ago, it is poor form for a party leader to be technologically short-sighted to dismiss the possibility of an 11-hour leadership upset out of hand.

On that basis, let’s postulate at the outset that former Conserva-
Trudeau should never have gotten out of his seat, he comes undone

What was once youthful and fresh now looks young and arrogant. In a matter of minutes, Justin Trudeau undid his good reputation with all but the most rabid Liberal partisan.

MICHAEL GEIST

The government’s public consolation on the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) has stopped in Vancouver, Calgary, and Montreal in recent weeks as a growing number of people speak out on the agreement. Tens of thousands have spoken out on the TPP, but as remaining presidential candidates have tried to outdo one another in their opposition to the deal.

Both Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders have been outspoken killing the agreement might be a good thing for the country.

The C.D. Howe study, which the Liberal whip is in fully over his head, and wholly incapable of controlling his troops. It does not reflect well on the Speaker, either, because it is now apparent he does not oversee the Commons very well. And the prime minister? Well, what was once youthful and fresh now looks too old and arrogant. In a matter of minutes, he undid his good reputation with all but the most rabid Liberal partisan.

The NDP: As is their wont, they overplayed their hand, calling the elbow to Brosseau a deliberate criminal assault when any of the lawyers in their caucus could have told them otherwise. Mulcair looked like the enraged father who was defending a daughter who had been gang-raped, however, and it was an understandable response. Trudeau’s return to the scene of the alleged crime—to confront Mulcair, apparently, and toss around a few “F” bombs—wasn’t understandable at all. It was another huge lapse in judgment.

The Conservatives: If they’re smart, they will keep their cool, and stay above the (literal) fray. Referring the matter to committee was a shrewd move—it will ensure the controversy is kept alive for weeks. Stephen Harper being in the House when it all happened? It’s a safe bet that he was smiling, somewhere, on Wednesday night.

The Liberals: Canada’s International Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland has been placed in a tough position, inheriting an increasingly unpopular agreement her government did not negotiate. When the prime minister doesn’t know the facts, as he doesn’t, it is too critical. Many Liberal candidates of both those deals, but they offer better models than the TPP. The target markets are easy to identify. The Canadian government’s plan to rethink its engagement with China and has already made some progress on trade negotiations with Japan and India, two of the most important Asian markets. Concluding those deals won’t be easy, but they do point to the potential for expanding Canada’s trade presence in Asia without the need for the TPP.

Trade Agreement offers a better investor-state dispute settlement system than the TPP, while the Canada-South Korea free trade agreement, which was concluded in 2014, eliminates tariffs without requiring an overhaul of Canadian laws. There are criticisms of both of those deals, but they offer better models than the TPP.

Canada already has an alternate blueprint for a trade strategy to open up key markets throughout Asia.
Equal Voice’s five-point plan for an inclusive Parliament

Christine Moore and Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau are up against long-entrenched structural and gendered norms regarding public expectations of how they—as women—fulfill their responsibilities, whether elected or otherwise.

Further, MPs are reporting doing more casework than ever before to ensure Canadians’ proper access to programs (health care, pensions, family and tax benefits, immigration) in the face of streamlining in the public service.

It is with this in mind that Equal Voice has proposed a five-point plan to create an inclusive Parliament for all. It includes: 1. Restructuring the parliamentary calendar to reduce the weekly commute for MPs. 2. Increased staffing for the average MP to support their riding and parliamentary activities. 3. Ensuring access to infant care for MPs with young children, as well as short term caregiver leave for critical moments at the beginning and end stages of life. 4. Better leveraging technology to enable MPs to undertake some parliamentary business from the riding; as well as 5. Tangible measures to improve the tone in the House, the need for which remains acutely apparent. Enough said.

These proposed innovations are fairly standard when compared to the progress being made in the broader public and private sectors. They would allow for the possibility of somewhat saner lives for MPs and their families. They could also go some distance to reducing the extremely high rates of separation and divorce among MPs, and would ensure the children of elected Members of the House actually get the benefit of both parents. In the absence of their implementation, there are ongoing and poignant reminders of the fallout.

Exhibit A: NDP MP Christine Moore. As I’ve noted previously in this column, she has been serving in this parliamentary session with her infant daughter in tow, who was born during the last election campaign. Often alone, as her spouse is based in the riding, Moore has relied heavily on friends and family while in Ottawa to get through this period for which there is no parental leave and little flexibility. Votes, debates, committee appearances, and other engagements have often involved her daughter her lap in the arms of supportive staffers. Every Friday when the House sits, Moore makes the long drive back to her riding, mostly alone, with her child. Her fortitude as an MP—and new mother—is admirable.

At the same time, wife of the prime minister, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, has been under extreme scrutiny after inadvertent comments that revealed how much is on her plate, both publicly and privately. It’s not surprising, given her husband’s amplified responsibilities and, by extension, her own as a mother, partner, and advocate. Many have lashed out at her perceived privilege, even as she endeavours to raise the family of three young children, support her husband (who happens to lead the country), and carry out an independent role for herself as an advocate. Notably, Grégoire Trudeau is regarded as an inspiring role model given her public admission of her own life challenges, including anoric eating disorder and post-partum anxiety.

In both cases, Moore and Grégoire-Trudeau are up against long-entrenched structural and gendered norms regarding public expectations of how they—as women—fulfill their responsibilities, whether elected or otherwise. While Grégoire-Trudeau is not the first spouse of a prime minister to have a particularly public role (intended or otherwise) and Moore is not the first MP to give birth while in office, little has changed since the early days of Parliament to address the realities for women who find themselves in these positions.

In fact, many parliamentary tenants have not changed at all since Parliament’s inception in 1867. As a consequence, women are asked or assumed to “just do it” without any particular modifications or adjustments, whatever their life circumstances and regardless of the personal or professional costs. It is the epitome of a gender-blind approach which assumes that women’s experiences as elected women and/or spouses to those elected should have no bearing on the day-to-day functioning of Parliament. Individual women must simply adapt because anythinguch as addressing the challenges or seeking structural change, risks asking too much of the institution itself, let alone the public who sanction its operations. Too many have remained silent as a consequence.

The degree of gender blindness demonstrated towards, and by, many Parliamentarians themselves may explain why there is a fully functioning daycare on Parliament Hill to which MPs have had virtually no access. Even at present, there is no specific accommodation for the very real and urgent needs of elected representatives who have infants. It may also explain why, until this moment, the prime minister’s spouse, whoever she (or he) might be, has had few tangible mechanisms to access additional support in response to the unsolicited public engagement Canadians seek from the person in this position. Such a gender-blind approach is also woven into Canada’s political system writ large and could help to explain why Canada is stalled at 26 per cent women in the House, ranking 60th in the world.

In the coming weeks, the House Affairs Committee will be making key recommendations on creating the conditions for a more inclusive Parliament. They have heard from many groups, including both spouses’ associations on the Hill, the Vanier Institute on the Family, Ontario MPP Lisa MacLeod who champions changes at Ontario’s Queen’s Park, as well as Equal Voice: The recommendations from this committee could go a long way to changing the environment.

But do so, the committee and parties in the House will need to be unwavering, and non-partisan in their commitment to changing the structure of parliamentary life so that the very real and vital roles women do play on the Hill are elected and otherwise, is not just recognized, but leveraged. Otherwise, gender-blind policies, and outcomes, will continue to prevail not just for Parliament but for the vast majority of women in Canada.

Nancy Peckford is with Equal Voice Canada.

The Hill Times
Race to win top Conservative spot gathering momentum

But if the Conservative Party is to be relevant to Canadians it needs a leader who understands the nature of the challenges we face, not a leader who clings to an irrelevant mantra of small government and low taxes.

DAVID CRANE

TORONTO—While it will be another year before the Conservatives choose their next leader, the race to win the top Conservative spot is starting to gather momentum, with Maxime Bernier and Michael Chong both announcing this month, following Kellie Leitch, who announced last month.

There will be other contestants, though some may want to throw their hats in the ring afterLabour Day.

The real test for the Conservatives will be whether they can find a leader who understands the reality of a diverse, urban Canada and can relate to the challenges that are most significant for Canada going forward into the next decade of the 21st century.

So far, the signs are disappointing. Canada functions best when there is a strong opposition in Parliament, but a strong one that is relevant. Yet the Conservatives still seem wedded to small government and low taxes as their priorities, ignoring that we live in a mixed economy where economic prosperity depends on the combination of what Adam Smith called public goods and private initiative.

ANGELO PERSICHILLI

BACKROOMS SOPHIE GROEGRE TRUDEAU

Criticisms against Trudeau's naivete, extra help wrongheaded

This debate reminds me of the one about the spending habits of our Senators. The debate is about rules that don’t exist.

ANGELO PERSICHILLI

TORONTO—The dispute over the two nannies for Justin Trudeau’s children and now more staff for his wife, Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, is wrong in form and futile in substance.

This is not about money: one or two salaries will not have a major impact on the huge fiscal deficit and the increasing national debt we have. It amounts to nothing compared to the real waste of taxpayers’ money in government spending, and we cannot not talk about it because it requires a lot of work and investigative journalism.

This is about the role that the wife (or husband, whenever it will be) of a Canadian prime minister has to play. Contrary to the United States’ first lady, Canada has no specific role for the wife of the prime minister and this debate reminds me of the one about the spending habits of our Senators. The nature of the expenses are different, but the debate is about rules that don’t exist. Contracts, a precise set of rules and common sense allows some flexibility in its interpretation. I don’t believe that the Trudeau family has gone beyond that flexibility.

Time for us to deal with the two nannies that, according to some, the prime minister should be paying out of his “huge” salary.

The prime minister of Canada makes $327,000 a year, plus other perks. It is good money if compared to my salary or those of most Canadians. But many CEOs make $327,000 plus, if he buys, the suit he wears, the equipment. Reminiscent of Karl Marx who believed there was a fixed amount of work available, Bernier believes there is a fixed amount of money available and that if it is used by government, either from taxation or deficit financing, wealth creation will be lower because this money won’t be available for investment.

When government “spends or borrows, it presents the private sector from spending, and we know that the private sector is the best at creating wealth,” he said. Government should reduce taxes for all entrepreneurs, reduce the regulatory burden and promote free trade, and the economy will take off in his laissez-faire world.

Bernier doesn’t get that growth depends on many government programmes for its success, from education and training, infrastructure and investment in research and development to effective regulation that can create new markets, security, support for trade, and risk-sharing on new technologies, as well as the responsibility of demand management.

Government isn’t a burden, it is an enabler. Many entrepreneurs depend on programmes such as the foreign trade business service, the Export Development Bank, the Business Development Bank, the Industrial Research and Assistance Programs and many other such programmes.

Canada’s venture capital market, and the availability of funding for tech start-ups, would be much smaller if not for federal and provincial leadership on venture capital. What we need is ways to make these tools and the innovation-generating machinery more effective, not ideological constraints for small government.

Yet Chong is silent on this. In announcing his candidacy, his focus as well was on tax cuts and smaller government as Canada’s big need, along with balanced budgets. Deficits are bad in his view, short of an economic crisis, so he would restore misguided balanced budget legislation. Yet deferring government spending on research and infrastructure at a time of low economic growth and record low interest rates do more good than harm. He opposes the use of money from carbon pricing to help create a green technology industry and the jobs that would result, saying that the money should be returned to cuts.

Both, it seems, would have little use for an innovation strategy, leaving Canada’s future to market alone. What both ignore is that businesses have enjoyed a succession of tax cuts going all the way back to the Chretien years, along with investment incentives and near-zero interest rates, yet Canadian companies have slashed spending on research and development and many CEOs are still spending reduced amounts on innovation-generating machinery and equipment.

If the Conservative Party is to be relevant to Canadians it needs a leader who understands the nature of the challenges we face, not a leader who clings to an irrelevant mantra of small government and low taxes. We are living in a world where an effective government and an innovative business sector need each other. So far, the Conservatives disappoint. Both Bernier and Chong seem hopelessly out of date when it comes to addressing Canada’s productivity problems and modernization challenges—the essential sources of future jobs and prosperity.

For that honour and privilege, we want people leading governments to be more competent than the most successful businessman, more intelligent than a rocket scientist, as popular as a rock star, to have the body of Brad Pitt or Angelina Jolie, be as honest as Mother Teresa, and make more than the owner of a corner store in Oakville.

We might be lucky to find someone with the good looks of a movie star and the honesty of Mother Teresa, but smart too? Probably. But are we sure that a successful and intelligent person would give up success and millions of dollars to deal with the media? That he would give up all the trappings like his children don’t have to go to school, or how many times he goes to the washroom in a day? We might be lucky that these kinds of supermen or superwomen still exist, but I am sure that with a patient approach, we scarce many away from politics. If this money was wrong to use the previous child benefit program to attack former prime minister Stephen Harper, but two wrongs don’t make a right.

Even more futile is the debate over the role of our “first lady.” If Sophie Gregoire Trudeau wants to help promote Canada and Canadian values, she is welcome to and the help should be appreciated. Of course, she might need more staff, but if done properly, it’s part of the involvement of the prime ministers’ partners in the official functions of government is positive for the image of the country. If she wants to play a more prominent role, she must make that clear at the same time, she must understand her right to a private life are going to change and she should be prepared to be judged according to her job performance. Beyond that, any debate on this issue is a waste of time.

I don’t agree with some media reports letting us believe that Trudeau and his wife could walk on water. The jury on the quality and the effectiveness of his government is still out. However, I refuse to consider the new prime minister a hypocrite because of an issue based on some contradictions between statements made during the campaign and his behaviour in government (imagine that!) and because this is more a bigger public profile.

Angelo Persichilli is a freelance journalist and a former citizenship judge for the Greater Toronto area, a director of communications to former prime minister Stephen Harper and the former political editor of Canadas, Canada’s Italian-language newspaper in Toronto.

THE HILL TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 23, 2016

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CANADA & THE 21ST CENTURY CONSERVATIVE PARTY’S VISION

THE HILL TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 23, 2016

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Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer for The Toronto Star. This column was released on May 19.

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The Hill Times

INSIDE POLITICS ELECTORAL REFORM

Monsef is burning bridges with the electoral reform file

There is not yet a match for Paul Calandra on the Liberal side in the House of Commons but these days Democratic Institutions Minister Maryam Monsef is auditing aggressively for the role.

CHANTAL HÉBERT

In parliamentary politics, little is more self-defeating than a minister who consistently insults the intelligence of his or her critics. Sooner or later the approach inevitably backfires.

For a case in point one only needs to look at the last Parliament. Former GTA MP Paul Calandra rose to fame in the House of Commons as Stephen Harper’s last parliamentary secretary at a time when the Senate scandal was in full swing. In that capacity, it was he who would usually take questions from the opposition leaders when the prime minister was away. Obliviation was Calandra’s specialty. He seemed to take pride in turning question period into a gong show. In no time his desk became the place where issues of substance came to die.

For those with short memories, here is the answer he offered in response to a Liberal query about the Senate in December 2013: “The right to a Liberal party to join with us in protecting the citizenship of Santa Claus, join with us in making sure the North Pole remains part of Canada. For all of those kids around the world who are depending on Santa Claus, I ask them to abandon their ideas and stick with us, and keep Santa Claus Canadian.” This is just one of a tiresome number of examples. At one point a website devoted to Calandra quotes was created. There was never a shortage of new material to refresh it. By the time he lost his seat last October, he had become perhaps the best in the Conservative government’s disdain for the contribution of the opposition parties to the parliamentary debate.

There is not yet a match for Calandra on the Liberal side in the House of Commons but these days Democratic Institutions Minister Maryam Monsef is auditing aggressively for the role.

For the better part of a week, the minister in charge of fulfilling Justin Trudeau’s promise of a new voting system in time for the 2019 election has failed to offer any concrete evidence that her government has an agenda other than having its own way with the electoral process.

Presumably the opposition parties, she has defaulted to bromides. Like Calandra, she is prone to explanations that defy logic. The main difference is Monsef does it with a smile. Her proposed electoral reform committee is to be dominated by the Liberals. It will report to a House where a Liberal majority calls the shot. On the notion that the government is stacking the deck in its partisan favour, most independent outsiders concur with the opposition. But Monsef maintains that the fate of the reform is in the hands of all MPs. It’s clear the opposition is free to use the committee as it is the Liberals who dispose.

In response to Conservative calls for a referendum to be held prior to the introduction of a different voting system the minister initially offered a tally of tweets on the issue of electoral reform. Had she read Monsef might have found a groundswell of support for her chosen process.

Alternatively, the minister argues that a plebiscite is not an effective option to sound Canadians on the way forward because some voters would decline to participate. The underlying contention is that summer-long government-controlled parliamentary hearings and town halls are more inclusive. It is an unsustainable proposition.

By offering asinine answers to questions that resonate well with the Mushy Middle, Monsef has so far succeeded in burning bridges where she should have been building some. Even before it has gotten underway the Liberal electoral reform process is largely discredited.

It won’t be tempting to put this train wreck to the inexperience of a rookie minister but a government can do nothing to get rid of the doubt for only so long.

In the case of Calandra, for instance, observers did initially wonder whether he might not simply be out of his depth. But at some point his emperor ceased to matter, for no government minimally respectful of Parliament would have allowed its affairs to be conducted in such a farcical manner. The same will soon be true of Monsef’s disingenuous handling of the electoral reform file.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer for The Toronto Star.

THE HILL TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 23, 2016

OPINION ELECTORAL REFORM

Preferential ballots would make wedge politics less effective

Under the current system, once you have 40 per cent of voters, it doesn’t matter what the rest think of you.

DEREK ABMA

Critics of the Liberal government are compromising the democratic principles it says it’s defending by stacking the committee tasked with dealing with electoral reform with own party members are justified, as are calls to subject changes in the way we elect governments to a referendum.

Yet beyond the political missteps in this process, it should be said that the voting system the Liberals seem to favour—preferential ballots—is the best option.

The way this system usually works is that if one candidate doesn’t get a majority of first-choice votes, the last-place candidate is dropped and the second-choice votes are distributed. If a majority is still not reached, the candidate with the fewest number of votes is dropped and their second choices and even the third choices of the ballots they gained in the first transfer are distributed. This keeps going until one candidate ends up with 50 per cent-plus-one vote.

Some argue this system would favour the Liberals, since they are the middle-of-the-road party poised to attract most of the second-choice votes from supporters of both the Conservatives and New Democrats.

But political realities are fluid and this advantage might not continue because moving to a preferential-ballot system could push all parties toward changes in the way they approach the electorate.

Currently, gaining support of something approaching 40 per cent of the population amounting to about 25 to 30 per cent of the voting-age population when you factor in those who don’t vote—is usually enough to get you a majority government. So it ends up being a sound political strategy to focus on a handful of priorities that are going to resonate strongly with 30 to 40 per cent of the population. Once you have this winning voter bloc, it doesn’t matter what the rest think of you.

Not exactly nation building, is it? It is, however, a tried and tested method known as wedge politics.

But under the preferential voting system, it becomes less wise to champion highly divisive issues because even if you aren’t someone’s first choice, you definitely don’t want to be their last. Under this voting system, maybe the Harper Conservatives wouldn’t have been so narrowly focused on suburbanites with children and forgotten about urban singles, or maybe the Trudeau Liberals’ last year’s campaign would have included people making less than $45,000 a year in their definition of “middle class” for the purpose of tax cuts.

It would push parties toward the mushy middle. It could make for boring politics as parties simply offer slight shades of vanilla. Even if it did, it would be the type of boring politicians are telling politicians that Canadians want.

It might also force parties to be more creative because it would no longer be feasible to get a bunch of people to like you just by painting another party—and by extension, their supporters—in a negative light. Instead, the trick would be articulating ideas that have broad support.

Another option is proportional representation, in which the number of seats occupied by a party reflects their proportion of the vote. The idea has merits, but it also takes away the element of every MP having a geographic constituency they are responsible to. Yes, in reality this idea of representing your riding as a priority over your party is more theory than practice. But maybe the political culture of MPs can also evolve as the electoral system does.

Or you could leave things the way they are with the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system. It would break a Liberal election promise if this happened. Yet, if government does the right thing and puts this issue to a referendum, we must accept that people could reject electoral reform. Voters in both Ontario and British Columbia, within the last decade, have voted down proposals for changes in the way provincial governments are elected, preferring instead to stick with the FPTP devil they know.

While not perfect, FPTP has served Canada reasonably well over the last 150 years. While government power tends to exceed its degree of voter support, no true dictators have ever formed and FPTP has been an effective vehicle for sending governments packing when the time came.

But make no mistake, the country’s voting system can be better, and when—and only when—both parties are ready, preferential ballots should be their preference.
Telecom giant Shaw lobbies most in April

The Western Canadian cable company, which recently bought Wind Mobile and sold Global TV, was the most prolific lobbyist of federal officials last month.

Continued from page 1

There were two reports each that Shaw filed with Justin To, a PMO policy adviser on the economy and innovation—April 28 and May 4—as well as David McFarlane, a policy director for Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains—April 28 and May 5.

A request for comment from Mr. Bains’s office was forwarded to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Department spokesperson Stéfanie Power said in an email that, “the government routinely meets with stakeholders in the telecommunications sector to discuss issues related to our policies to support competition, choice, and availability of services, as well as to foster a strong innovation environment.”

Shaw has been involved in a couple of major transactions that had already received federal approval before any of this most recent lobbying took place. A $2.65-billion transaction that transferred Shaw’s media division—including Global TV and several specialty channels—with Corus Entertainment Inc. was approved by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) in late March and closed days later. However, both the new and old Corus are controlled by Calgary’s Shaw family.

As well, Shaw Communications’ $1.6-billion purchase of wireless service provider Wind Mobile was closed in March following approvals from the Competition Bureau and the Innovation Department. Separately, Wind Mobile registered a communication report for contact with several senior officials to support Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, including minister Navdeep Bains and policy director Michael McNair on April 15, as well as O’Brien and Leslie Sherban, both of the innovation minister’s office.

Officials at Shaw declined to comment on the nature of the lobbying it did of the federal government.

Conservative MP Dan Albas (Central Okanagan-Similkameen-Nicola, B.C.) and his MPs that Shaw registered having contact with last month, and most others were Conservative MPs from the West. Mr. Albas said he had a “sit-down, introductory meeting” with Mr. Knubley from Wind, and Shaw’s director of corporate affairs.

“Sounds like they’re doing this with a number of Members of Parliament, just to make sure we’re familiar with their compa-

ny,” Mr. Albas told The Hill Times. “[It was] a very basic discussion. Don’t think it took more than 15, 20 minutes, tops, and it was a pretty generic presentation. … There was still a lack of detail. It was all just information.”

Telecommunication and broadcasting were listed in 125 communication reports in April, up from 50 the month before. Broadcasting turned up in 65 communication reports in April, up from 21 in March.

Among some of other lobbying efforts focusing on broadcasting place last month, Telus Corp. had 12 communication reports in April from four in March. BCE Inc. (Bell) had 11, the same as the previous month. Rogers Communications Inc. had just one report in April after having none in March.

A recent initiative happening at the federal level that could have been of interest to Shaw and other telecommunications companies is the nearly three-week hearing the CRTC held last month on the question of whether broadband internet should be considered a basic service with guaranteed access anywhere in the country. Also, Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly recently announced the launch of a wide-ranging consultation on issues related to the fact that some have speculated could result a reconsideration of some recent regulatory changes the CRTC has implemented, such as requiring TV-service providers to offer smaller packages of channels with more choice for consumers and lowering Canadian-content requirements for Canadian-produced

Len Katz, a former commissioner and interim chair of the CRTC, said the lobbying from Shaw and other telecommunications operators to provide wholesale access to smaller service providers on fibre-to-the-home networks, which is next-generation technology offering super-fast internet speeds. Earlier this month, Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains upheld the initial CRTC decision. The government had until July— a year after the decision was taken—to issue a ruling. “To be honest, it was already April … and nothing was happening,” he said. “I’m sure a lot of people were lobbying out what the timing was and which way the wind was blowing.” Mr. Katz said.

In general, he said the bigger telecom companies were being supported by the lobby group and could support Bell’s appeal, while smaller providers of internet service had been pleased with its denial. The big companies were saying that if they’re going to invest in fibre-to-the-home, it’s very expensive and they were worried that if they were in order to give a competitor—a small ISP (internet-service-provider)—the opportunity to undercut them in the marketplace,” he said. However, Mr. Katz said this argument could be countered by bigger telecom companies will invest in fibre-to-the-home, nonetheless. “Bell could still have Rogers and Shaw competes with Telus, and that’s where the real competitive forces are,” he said. “And for one company to sort of cut back their competition, how do we expect other carrier the opportunity to leapfrog them and to promote the fact they have better infrastruc-

The government program to extend broadband internet rurally as a possible reason why Shaw and other telecom providers would be lobbying federal officials right now.

TekSavvy has four communication reports filed for this year. It reported contact with Stevie O’Brien and Leslie Sherban, both of the office of Public Services and Procurement Canada. It reported contact with Stevie O’Brien and Leslie Sherban, both of the office of Public Services and Procurement Canada. He noted that Bell has offered to sell about one-third of MTS’s wireless services to Telus, but that Shaw has not currently operate in Manitoba, “but if they were given 100,000 customers or something, they may find a way of opening up a network there and building it out.”

Bell wrapped up its acquisition of MTS on May 2. When asked if April lobbying from Shaw might have something to do with this deal, Mr. Katz said: “I think if Telus and Bell have already acquired MTS and MTS don’t happen overnight. [Bell and MTS have] likely been in discus-

ions for some time.”

Mr. To, the PMO adviser who Mr. Katz said, based on this is certainly driven by the fact we can see the large communica-

tions service providers are active, so we’re interested in making sure we get to see some of the folks in Ottawa who weigh in on some of these key issues, especi-

ally wholesale telecommunications markets, which are so core to our business.”

Abramson said TekSavvy also has an interest in the govern-
ment’s plans to support broadband expansion to rural areas. He noted that TekSavvy, in partner-

ship with another company called Execulink Telecom, was awarded a $3.15-million contract last year from the former Conservative government to provide broadband internet coverage in rural and remote areas over the next five years.

“They’re trying to till the ground for something that’s com-

ing up,” he said.

Bram Abramson, chief regulatory officer with independent ISP TekSavvy Solutions Inc., also cited the government program to extend broadband internet rurally as a possible reason why Shaw and other telecom providers would be lobbying federal officials right now.

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Collaboration is necessary for change

On May 18, Hill Times Events presented a sold-out panel discussion on Sparking Innovation. Denise Amyot, president and CEO of Colleges & Institutes Canada presented the findings of a recently released survey on applied research, which finds that Canada is falling behind its international competitors on key measures of innovation. Following Ms. Amyot’s remarks, Catherine Clark moderated an expert panel on what can and must be done to position Canada as an innovation leader.

Growing the R&D potential of colleges and institutes is crucial

Denise Amyot, president and CEO, Colleges and Institutes Canada

It’s an exciting time for innovation in Canada. With a new government busy reflecting on our innovation opportunities and challenges, CICan is thrilled to showcase how colleges and institutes serve as innovation catalysts in their communities across the country. In 2014-15 alone, more than 5,500 private sector firms turned to college/institute R&D services, ranging from conception to commercialization. Satisfaction with these partnerships is evidenced by the investments businesses themselves made, matching federal funding dollar for dollar. Growing this potential is critical to Canada’s future innovation success. Right now, colleges and institutes have access to only 2.4% of federal research funding and just 5% of faculty and 3% of students are currently involved in research projects. Just image what we can accomplish with more support.

Engaging the next generation is key

Kenneth Knox, chair of the Science, Technology & Innovation Council

With a federal government committed to positioning Canada as a global innovation leader, “the stars are aligned” to improve Canada’s innovation performance. Three ideas to consider: 1) Applied research done in colleges must serve as a catalyst for business R&D, not a replacement for it. 2) Canada’s science, technology and innovation ecosystem is a system, and we must treat it that way by working more collaboratively, inclusively and strategically. 3) With the full understanding that education is a provincial/territorial responsibility, we need to look at our education system in a more national, integrated way. We must ensure it prepares our youth for tomorrow’s reality, and improve the way we teach science, technology and innovation. This includes engaging more students and faculty in applied research activities.

Bettina Hamelin, vice-president, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada invests in both, discovery driven research and in collaborative research between industry, universities and colleges. This is to develop world-leading discoveries and to de-risk R&D for companies by providing access to knowledge, expertise and infrastructure. By responding to the needs of over 5500 companies, Colleges and Institutes are a major part of the collaborative innovation system. The College and Community Innovation program, NSERC’s greater than $50M Flagship College program, has enabled capacity-building across Canada. For example, a network of more than 25 active Technology Access Centers offer R&D services to local companies and has made Canada attractive to international partners, who establish operations here and create jobs. College/industry research partnerships spark innovations with measurable impacts in communities and nurture the entrepreneurial young talent of the present and future.

Guy Levesque, vice president, programs and performance, Canada Foundation for Innovation

Our two biggest opportunities for Canada’s future prosperity are generational change and attitude change: students in our colleges and universities embody these shifts and are ready to seize the innovation challenge before us. They have grown up in a hyper-connected, hyper-accessible environment; collectively they understand the world they live in like no other generation. The reality they know is open, shared, collaborative. We have a responsibility to this generation, to meet their needs and expectations in a way that “sparks the innovation flame.” And we can do this by offering meaningful learning experiences, providing entrepreneurial mentoring and creating open, collaborative innovation accelerators where they can succeed — and fail. The Canada Foundation for Innovation contributes to the promise this generation holds by supporting state-of-the-art equipment and facilities where students get cutting-edge skills and work with private-sector partners.

Marc Fares, vice president, digital technologies and innovation, Algonquin College

As one of Canada’s largest colleges, Algonquin is recognized as a centre of excellence in education and applied research. With the generous support of the government of Canada and its agencies, Algonquin’s Office of Applied Research and Innovation has brought our students, faculty and staff together with hundreds of industry and community organizations to help them develop products, processes, and services for implementation and commercialization. Our research partnerships have generated tens of millions of dollars in economic benefit to the Ottawa region and beyond, and we are proud to be fostering social innovation, sustainable development and job creation. We help find innovative solutions to real world problems in a wide range of sectors. Please visit www.algonquincollege.com/appliedresearch to learn how Algonquin College can help your organization.

hilltimes.com/events
Defence policy review to be finished by end the end of the year
Says Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan
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Liberals have plunged Canadian Forces into uncertainty
Says Conservative MP James Bezan
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We’re losing the long war on ISIS
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Should Canada fight ISIS in Libya
By Denis Calnan
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Drones that can be armed make sense
By Denis Calnan
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The Canadian-led C-27J Team Spartan knows the North.

Canada’s next Fixed Wing Search & Rescue Aircraft must be created with Canada in mind. So that’s exactly how our Canadian-led team built the C-27J Spartan. See what’s been missing in Canadian search and rescue at C-27J.ca
Defence policy review to be completed by end of year: Sajjan

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan says the government’s massive defence policy review is his top priority.

By Rachel Arello

In a phone interview with The Hill Times, Mr. Sajjan (Vancouver South, B.C.) said he’s confident the review will pave a successful path forward for Canadian defence because it’s “well-nested” within the Liberal government’s priorities.

“So when you look at all these challenges, we need to make sure that the Canadian Armed Forces is structured in a manner that suits the needs of today but also be agile enough to be able to respond to the threats of tomorrow, whether it’s from the counterterrorism side or the humanitarian side,” he said.

The government plans to release the new policy in early 2017. On April 6, Mr. Sajjan launched the review consultation, roundtables, and the ministerial advisory panel as part of the government’s defence policy review. It is focusing on challenges to Canada’s security, the role of troops in addressing current threats, and the resources and capabilities needed to carry out the Canadian Armed Forces mandate.

The government is accepting submissions until July 31. The following interview has been edited for length and style.

What is your top priority as the minister of national defence?

“My top priority is always knowing that our men and women are looking after our missions and we send them out on the defence review that we’ve launched is a big part of this, making sure that we do a thorough assessment and that Canadians have an input in this as well.”

“So the defence review, in a way, is my top priority; making sure that it meets the main issues that I just had mentioned.”

What has been the hardest day on the job so far?

“Unfortunately, the hardest day I can’t discuss because of the classified nature that we work in. Our troops are in harm’s way in many aspects of the world. You know, people think the difficulties of budget processes may be the thing, but it’s really the aspect of making sure that our soldiers are looked after. And whether it’s the extreme circumstances that they deal with, then having to face the challenges when you return—whether its from PTSD, or perhaps the mental health challenges—just trying to make sure that our troops have all the necessary resources at their disposal that can support them and their families.”

I understand the classified nature, but any more details you can provide on when or where this was?

“It was very early on in the first month when I became the minister of national defence.”

You and your department are currently carrying out a review of Canada’s defence policy to replace Canada’s First Defence Strategy. Why are you carrying out this review?

“Part of your mandate is to make sure that the Canadian Armed Forces is structured in a manner that suits the needs of today but also is agile enough to be able to respond to the threats of tomorrow, whether it’s from the counterterrorism side or the humanitarian side.”

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right now looking forward to all the conversations that we’re having, and there’s been some great brainstorming as we get to know whether it’s from the direct consultation that I’ve personally been part of, or fellow Ministers that are conducting their own, we have all the information to be determined. We are going to be going through the analytical phase and...
NEWS ARMED DRONES

Drones that can be armed make sense, say experts

Drone use is among the topics to be addressed in a defence policy review, which Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan says should be done by the end of this year. The Hill Times

Canadian Armed Forces Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Jonathan Vance, has argued that the military needs drones that can be armed.

"To me it makes sense," said Stephanie Carvin, assistant professor of International Affairs at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University. "Nimbleness is perhaps more useful than blunt force" in many of the missions Canada wants to be involved in, argued Prof. Carvin.

She said drones with surveillance capabilities that can be armed are useful in situations like that.

"It makes perfect sense to me," said David Perry, senior analyst with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

"If you’re buying a drone that can be armed, you don’t have to always have a weapon on it, but you are able to if you’d like to in certain circumstances. But if you buy a drone that can’t be armed, you’re never going to be able to engineer that in easily afterwards," he said.

Mr. Perry said that if a drone needs to survey an area over a period of time and then needs to strike, it is easier, and perhaps less risky, to have both capabilities in one aircraft. Handing off responsibilities between aircraft could result in errors.

He said drones have a negative connotation for some because of the image of strikes the American forces have carried out with them, but the positives of drones are numerous, those who have humans in them, so they can fly for longer, and they’re less expensive.

"I don’t think it is a bad option for our military," Jean-Christophe Boucher, an assistant professor in political science at MacEwan University in Edmonton said in an email.

"The Liberals are contemplating deploying a limited number of troops in both training and SOF [Special Operations] missions as well as contributing to peacekeeping, UAV [Unmanned aerial vehicle] that could to be armed offers a range of options that could make Canada’s contribution an added-value proposition to our allies or to the UN," wrote Prof. Boucher.

"I think Vance is over-stretching when he argues that they need to be armed. We should be able to purchase a UAV model that can carry just a payload. The decision to buy missiles can be made further down the road given the specific operational need," he wrote. Prof. Carvin said Canada needs to carefully consider the kinds of missions in which it would use the drones. She drew a comparison to considerations an individual has in buying household items.

She suggested when buying a “magical egg blender,” you have to consider if you will be blending eggs or if you’re a vegan.

"If you’re a vegan, it makes no sense for you to buy the magical egg blender," she said.

"What kind of missions will Canada be fighting? And therefore, does the tool that we are going to buy make sense?" she said.

Prof. Carvin noted that Canada has been looking at buying drones through the JUSTAS [Joint Uninhabited Surveillance and Target Acquisition System] for a long time—over a decade— and has failed to procure them.

"We have this very overly cautious approach to a lot of things, and I think that’s part of the reason why we’ve hesitated in the way that we have," she said.

"So far, Canada seems to have a fair amount of procurement problems," she said, noting that the government has a long list of requirements that are required for the drones that are not reasonable.

She noted that a drone that may be surveyed a crowd at a protest should not be weaponized for several reasons. One, because it looks bad on the government and, two, the cost of running a drone that can be weaponized is higher.

In any case, Canadians will likely have to wait to see what sort of drones will be purchased for the military.

"I would be very surprised if there is an announcement of a procurement of drones prior to the defence review," said Prof. Carvin.

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan says the Liberal government is evaluating Canada’s peacekeeping role, the use of drones, and entering the United States’ ballistic missile-defence shield.

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Drones have a negative connotation because of the image of strikes U.S. forces have carried out with them, but the positives of drones are numerous: they can fly for longer, and they’re less expensive, say defence analyst David Perry.

NEWS LIBYA

Should Canada fight ISIS in Libya?

Canada’s Chief of Defence Staff Jonathan Vance said earlier this year that Canada could take on a military role in fighting ISIS in Libya.

"I think our position has kind of been getting at was essentially that a lot of our close allies have identified that that country is problematic and we’re exploring different options to try and help regain and retain some improvement in the security situation there, and that if something happens that Canada would get involved," said David Perry, senior analyst with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

The threat is real. The Islamic State’s presence in Libya has been growing steadily in the last few months," said Thomas Juneau, assistant professor at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa.

"There appears to be a migration of Islamic State fighters from Iraq and Syria to Libya," he noted.

Prof. Juneau said that while the government problems in Libya, along with its ISIS challenges, may not be a direct threat to Canada, it is a very real problem for important allies in Europe.

"When the Liberals came to power last fall, they mentioned a few times that they were interested in being involved in Libya. At first it wasn’t really clear what they meant by that. But there were a couple of instances when officials from the then-new government that said, ‘We are interested, but we’ll only do it if and when there is a government of national unity that is recognized by the UN in Libya. We won’t do it before then.’"

Prof. Juneau said this is the right approach for the government to have because otherwise Canada would be taking part in a civil war.

"You want to create an inclusive government," he said. "Factions unite to create a government of reconciliation or national unity, he said. The incentive for these factions is that the international community can then move in and help fight ISIS.

Others say that Canada should not be looking to get involved in the challenges in Libya right now.

"It is a bad idea," Jean-Christophe Boucher, an assistant professor in political science at MacEwan University in Edmonton, said in an email.

Mr. Vance is “looking for ways to use its troops irrespective of Canada’s interests. Here, Vance puts the interests of the CAF [Canadian Armed Forces] before those of Canada,” he wrote.

"There are some talks about doing something about Libya, but Canada should in no way be at the forefront of this mission. Canada’s contribution, if ever there would be an international intervention in Libya (which would be limited), should remain limited and stay away from combat," wrote Prof. Boucher.

"It seems to me that [Mr. Vance] really trying to find new missions before Canada (and our allies) have a policy objective. Clear case of generals trying to dictate foreign policy," he wrote.

But the answer as to what to do in Libya may be complicated if refraining from getting involved means an unaligned growth of ISIS in the country.

"Waiting for a government to get its act together could take years," said Stephanie Carvin, an assistant professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University.

"It could take a very long time and that could give ISIS, the opportunity to spread, use it as a base," which could be useful for the terrorist organization because of the country’s proximity to Europe.

"I think we could actually make a useful contribution," she said.

"Continuing ISIS does work, in terms of stopping their spread in a particular territory," said Prof. Carvin, pointing to the similar work that was done in Syria and Iraq.

"Some kind of balance needs to be had, some kind of agreement," said Prof. Carvin, noting that the fighting of ISIS and process of creating a stable government in Libya could happen at the same time.

She noted that because ISIS is adept at finding ungoverned spaces and taking them over, it is essential for political goals to be met.

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Liberals have plunged Canadian Forces into uncertainty

As the government embarks on a complete review of Canada’s defence policy, it is imperative that it accounts for the threats that we are facing.

According to Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, the Canadian Armed Forces have been stretched to their limits, forcing women and girls into sex slavery, and targeting religious and ethnic minorities. The Trudeau government’s decision to withdraw Canada’s CF-18s from the combat mission against ISIS in Iraq sends a clear signal of their unwillingness to be a partner in the global fight against evil. This genocidal death cult is destroying timeless artifacts, performing mass executions, torturing and dehumanizing its captives, and creating an international death cult.

For the purchase of Fixed Wing SARs. The minister reported to the Committee of the Whole that those planes will be in place by 2015. Defence spending was falling under the Conservatives. Spending had been stretched on missions, but basic procurement—of ships, key search and rescue planes, and replacement of F-18s—actually stalled.

The minister has said things are on track to replace the F-18s, but we have not heard a clear commitment to reject the F-35s.

Replacing F-18s is still the elephant in the room

The minister has said things are on track to replace the F-18s, but we have not heard a clear commitment to reject the F-35s.

As the government embarks on a complete review of Canada’s defence policy, it is imperative that it accounts for the threats that we are facing. It must ensure that our men and women in uniform are properly equipped and trained to carry out the duties ahead of them. And most importantly, Canada’s defence policy must be truly reflective of Canadian values, and not a set of pre-determined ideological Liberal platitudes.

Conservative MP James Bezan, who represents Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, Man., is his party’s defence critic.

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DEFENCE POLICY BRIEFING

FEATURE MINISTER Q&A

Defence policy review
my top priority: Sajjan

Continued from page 19

Based on, and we accepted all of the recommendations, but a lot of the work had already started to begin before the auditor general’s report had even come out which is good to see but more needs to be done and the defence review again will help define some of those areas as well, so we can go beyond some of the recommendations the auditor general had provided.

“It’s not just simply an issue of buying enough equipment. It’s about maintaining certain things. Procurement is a big portion of this, but we also need to be mindful and we need to focus on the retention of the reserves because you invest a lot of money in training somebody. Keeping them there is equally as important. And the reserves and regular forces might be different systems, so you have to be cognizant of how that leadership manages that reserve, and we’re working very aggressively to make sure that we address some of those challenges.

Alongside the minister of foreign affairs, you’ve been asked to renew Canada’s commitment to United Nations peace operations. Will Canada take a lead in the multinational force in Haiti next fall? And how is Canada likely to get back into peacekeeping?

“It starts by first understanding the conflict areas and where Canada can contribute. So rather than just jumping into a particular area to fill a checklist, we as a government are taking a very thoughtful approach. And I work very closely with Minister Dion and [International Development] Minister [Marie-Claude] Bibeau. We have the ability to be able to work in a meaningful way that’s going to actually contribute to the peace and stability of the area that we operate in.

Does that include considering Haiti?

“Right now, it’s too early to tell. We’re at the early stages. We have places like western Africa. There are challenges in eastern Africa as well. I was actually very pleased to hear about some of the peace work that’s been happening in Colombia between government and the FARC.

“So Canada can play a significant role around the world, but we want to make sure, where we do select as a government, that we are going to have a meaningful contribution to the peace and stability of not just that country, but also to the region. And it has to be synchronized with our coalition partners so it has a much wider impact. And whether it’s in the capacity-building development work or military resources, all this has to be synchronized by understanding the conflict area that we’re working in.”

In the budget, you’ve pushed major procurement money back until 2022. How do you plan to address the ongoing procurement issues in the meantime?

“That’s the reason why that money was protected and put aside to those years. If there were projects right now that were coming to fruition that we could write a cheque for, we would be writing those cheques immediately. But unfortunately, I have inherited a procurement schedule and challenges which I have to address, and so I wanted to make sure that we protected that money.

“The prime minister and the finance minister were in complete concurrence and supported me on protecting that money, so that’s why we moved it into those years for when a lot of those procurement projects will come into fruition. But we also have the opportunity as we build greater efficiencies within our procurement system with [Public Services] Minister [Judy] Foote. We have the ability to be able to request funding be put back in earlier years in case certain projects were able to move faster.”

The military’s top female commander Christine Whitecross has said the CAF was working on a new program to recruit more women that would be released later in the spring. Can you tell me more about this?

“This is something; the recruitment of more women and of people from different backgrounds that truly reflect the population of Canada. We need to do more work. The Canadian Armed Forces leadership is fully committed to this. We want to look at not just recruiting, but also the structure within the military. I want to make sure the environment is created so that it allows for a woman to make a choice for the military, as in the simple fact of when a woman decides they want to have a family we need to make it more simple and easier so that it doesn’t impact one’s career. That’s the level of thought we’re putting into this and making sure that we truly create an environment for all Canadians and especially women to look at the military as a viable option as a career and also making sure they have full ability to be advancing their careers to the senior ranks.”

What are you doing to address the concerns raised by military veterans and reservists who are worried about losing their intellectual property rights after they’ve left the Canadian Forces?

“When it comes to property rights, there is a system in place if work has been done on the job. There are property rights that do belong obviously to the organization that you developed it in, but there is an ability for someone to be recognized in that. However, if someone does some work that wasn’t done with military resources or not on military time, then that’s a separate issue. We do have a good system in place that recognizes someone’s work and also recognizes some of the achievements that some members have made.

“I too am a bit of a closet inventor myself, and we need to promote innovation within the military because some of the best ideas don’t come from the top. They actually come from the people who are doing the work on the ground.”

Lastly, tell me a bit more about these ‘cabinet inventions’ of yours?

“I have a patent of my own actually which is for anybody with a beard. I designed a device so it can work with a facial respirator, so somebody with a beard can get a seal [a sealed protective mask].”

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BUDGET 2016-17

DEFENCE SPENDING

- $67.4-million on the Reserve Forces, including repairs and maintenance to armoured in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick;
- $50-million on military personnel and their families, including upgrading and constructing military housing across Canada; and
- $6-million to support northern operations, including investments in aerial refi e system construction to northern awards and reserves and upgrades to the suppression systems that support the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

Department of National Defence main estimates:

- $7.6-billion represents statutory forecasts that do not require approval.
- Of this, $7.7-billion represents requires approval by Parliament. The remaining $1.3-billion represents statutory forecasts that do not require approval.
- National Defence’s decrease in net authority of $1015 million, or approximately 1.6 per cent from the 2015-16 main estimates to the 2016-17 main estimates, is due to an increase in operating costs of $145 million, offset in part by investments in infrastructure projects at Canadian forces bases and other defense properties across Canada, and $7.1-million on readiness for Canadian Armed Forces military operations, including repairing and constructing live fire ranges, airfields and hangars, and naval vessels;
- $640-million over three years for humanitarian aid programs on training and advising local security forces; and
- $306-million in 2016–17 to refocus Canada’s ISIS military mission in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, including:
- $77.1-million on readiness for Canadian Armed Forces military operations, including repairing and constructing live fire ranges, airfields and hangars, and naval vessels; and
- $145-million over three years toward counterterrorism, stabilization, and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear security programming.

DEFENCE POLICY BRIEFING

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Source: Main estimates 2016-17

Source: BUDGET 2016-17

Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle
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Vets need more than job training to adapt to civilian life

We need a new model of transition that looks at the military experience of every current and prospective veteran and their families.

Transition for all veterans has predominantly focused upon employment. If the veteran is employable, then prepare and find him or her a job. If the veteran is not employable or suffers injuries, then offer medical care and compensation. Seamless transition begins this process well before release from the CF.

When leaving CF employment, finding new employment or likewise compensating and caring for the injured, if accomplished in a timely manner, should overcome transition barriers, right?

We have forgotten that the military is not a job but a vocation, a way of life. Leaving one way of life in uniform for a very different way of life as a civilian requires far more than job training, job placement, or even medical treatment: it requires life retraining.

We conveniently overlook the tools we employ to change civilians into military members. Military indoctrination is the most powerful, legally sanctioned means of manipulating a human being. The goal: to provide the most fail-safe means of ensuring Canadian citizens in uniform do what government wants, including taking the lives of others while potentially losing one’s own life. This is known as unlimited liability.

Yet government has demonstrated a very limited liability in transforming military members back into civilians. The indoctrination process occurs throughout one’s military career. Even the brief periods of basic training can result in individuals being profoundly, comprehensively, and irrevocably changed. Military indoctrination affects key aspects of emotion, perception, and cognition, not just task-oriented, institutional behaviour.

Indoctrination also emphasizes the separateness of military members from civilians. How can a military member deeply indoctrinated to mistrust civilian forms of working, thinking, and belonging be expected to have a seamless transition into a new civilian life?

Military socialization emphasizes a mission-mind where all relationships become judged based upon their contribution to or hindrance of a task, Friendships, family, and work relationships become more about common goals and less about understanding and relating to one another. Mutually encouraged growth needed for deeper intimacy, stronger relationships, and trust are subsequently diminished.

Job-seeking assistance or even job and/or education retraining are unlikely to reverse these effects. How do we create conditions to optimize the well-being of each and every veteran, past, present, and future?

If basic training is necessary to indoctrinate civilians to become military members, perhaps a reverse form of basic training can catalyze the transformation process from being military to becoming civilians once again. Self-reflection, caring relations and broader forms of thinking, are the eventual goals. However, a course that expands awareness of the consequences of the military experience can open many doors for veterans and their families.

Families along with civilians can join the transformation process, encouraging veterans to feel like they intimately belong to the society for which they were willing to sacrifice everything.

Just as military team-building suppresses important aspects of the individual during indoctrination, a parallel system of individual coaching would enhance the transformation process, optimizing the potential of each individual veteran. Socialization and other life-skills coaching would complement financial, career, and job-performance coaching.

Homelessness, suicides, veterans in the criminal justice system, and disaffected injured veterans are symptoms, the tragic manifestations of poorly understood civilian integration. Similarly, it would be short-sighted to assume that those veterans who remain hidden from the media are all optimizing their well-being, relationship, and employment potential.

Eight years ago, I proposed a “homecoming” course in this newspaper. The need is far more acute today. Let’s stop reinforcing failed or limited approaches. Let us remember the broader sacrifices of military service. Not only would each and every veteran benefit from Canada’s investment in their capacity, but Canadians would benefit from the return on the investment we make in our veterans and their families.

Sean Bruyea just completed a post-graduate degree in public ethics focusing upon the obligation government has to veterans during and after transition. He is a retired Air Force intelligence officer.

The Hill Times

Sean Bruyea

OPINION VETERANS
OPINION TERRORISM

We’re losing the long war on ISIS

Military success alone doesn’t lead to political stability.

ALEX WILNER

OTTAWA—The war on ISIS in Syria and Iraq is being won, slowly but surely. The U.S. and its coalition partners—Canada included—have destroyed ISIS’s ability to attract, train, and shrinking. Its coffers are running dry. Its soldiers are running away from the military domain towards governance, reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration. In each case, our post-ISIS strategy for Iraq and Syria will face major obstacles.

First, leveraging a sustainable solution to Iraq and Syrian political dysfunction will be necessary if we hope to defuse the sectarian strife that helped fuel ISIS in the first place. Good governance is a bulwark against political extremism. But in both states pitfalls abound. In Iraq religious and ethnic cleavages will be nearly impossible to bridge. Iraqis have lost faith in the unity of the state. And in Syria, meaningful negotiation between the dozens of armed groups will only start once the Assad regime is replaced. But ousting President Bashar Assad will require Russian involvement, and up to now, Moscow has banked on his survival.

Second, the war in Syria and Iraq has left a trail of devastation. A massive humanitarian emergency, on the scale of the post-1945 Marshall Plan in Western Europe, awaits. If conflicts in Syria were to end today, the World Bank estimates that U.S. $170-billion would be needed to rebuild the country. By comparison, since 2014, the U.S. has spent roughly U.S. $7-billion on its war with ISIS. Without major international investment in bricks and mortar, winning the peace will be difficult. Unfortunately, it’s less than clear where this money will come from. Donors have refused to line up with open wallets. Rubble may well be a lingering legacy of this war.

Third, millions of refugees have been displaced, both locally and internationally. A tiny fraction have been invited to permanently resettle in third countries. The vast majority live in camps or as migrants. Eventual repatriation into post-war Iraq and Syria is a must. But that process will involve providing refugees with homes to build, an economy to grow, and communities to join. Without these core ingredients, refugees may find few reasons to return. Hope is in short supply.

Finally, the collapse of ISIS may result in the capture of thousands of local and foreign militants. Enemy combatants will need to be detained, however. And rehabilitation strategies will need to be developed to help reintegrate militants into society. Unfortunately, retributive justice is more likely. And that ISIS has recruited tens of thousands of foreigners suggests that international provisions may need to be established for dealing with foreign fighters. Avoiding Guantanamo Bay 2.0 is top of mind.

Military victory alone won’t bury ISIS. Destroying the organization may be necessary, but it won’t be sufficient for securing the peace. Stabilizing Syria and in a way that prevents ISIS—or some future iteration of ISIS—from rising again may be the only way to bloody relevance is our next great challenge. Unfortunately, getting there will require the right political will to make breaking ISIS look easy.

Alex Wilner is an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa, and a fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, a public policy think tank in Ottawa.

The Hill Times

OPINION DEFENCE POLICY REVIEW

Defence policy review: will it confirm old assumptions and existing resourcing and evaporate, or not?

From a strict defence perspective, there are at least five issues the defence policy review must answer.

FERDY DE KERKHOVE

The Defence Policy Review (DPR) provides a unique opportunity to question some of the existing assumptions underlying the thinking about what Canada needs in terms of capabilities. The problem, right from the start, is that, beyond the very general mandate letters, the review is not underpinned by clear indications of what the government intends to do in the world and what these intentions— if any already well-grounded and thought through—will require in terms of defence capabilities. How can one say what Canada needs in terms of force structure without a broader national security perspective? What capabilities are needed for a G-7 power or are the ambitions of the government different—which is its legitimate right but it needs to define them before we embark on a strategic risk matrix? Otherwise, despite the government’s specific rejection of the concept, DPR could simply become an update of CFDS (the 2008 Canada First Defence Strategy) which had basically a procurement strategy. Alternatively, it could risk turning into an exercise in a void, financially constrained, with little innovative thinking despite what seems to be a remarkable preparatory process.

Of course, one could argue that defence, in a way, is always the same—defence of Canada, defence of North America and contributing to international security, the latter refers to expeditionary missions, as required by evolving situations in the international arena, where most critical “unknowns” reside. Yet, by now, or more acute challenges have emerged for the first two as well ... including the possibility of a Trump presidency and his insistence on a greater contribution by allies to defence expenditures.

In a sense, Trump brings home the issue of Canada as a “free-rider” when it comes to defence. Indeed, the famed CFDS was underfunded right from the beginning. Any projection of the defence budget vs. minimal capabilities requirements shows a gaping hole which the yearly defence increases in the Liberal government fail to fill. The issue is the process—in the international arena, where much of sovereignty as of defence is decided. Each has a strong foreign policy component? What does it imply for Kim Jong-un’s help in setting a “new” northern domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence. Thanks for Kim Jong-un’s help in setting a “new” northern domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence. Thanks for Kim Jong-un’s help in setting a “new” northern domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence. Thanks for Kim Jong-un’s help in setting a “new” northern domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence.

Simple terms, any slippage affects both the funding of capabilities through inflation and the capacity to respond to threats. The decision to postpone to 2022 $3.7-billion in “large-scale capital projects” spending is a clear case in point. Equally importantly, the more procurement eats up the defence budget, the more other sectors will suffer, such as training, maintenance, infrastructure, information technology.

Personnel: How sacrosanct is the 68,000 regular uniformed personnel and 28,500 reserves level? High Segal maintains that a country of Canada’s standing would have a “defence solution” to any one of these, respectively. Again, what might be desirable hits the wall of realism. Pre-emptive military action may be a “new” domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence. Thanks for Kim Jong-un’s help in setting a “new” northern domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence. Thanks for Kim Jong-un’s help in setting a “new” northern domain of war: how much does Canada need to invest in cyber defence and defence against space attacks? Joining the U.S. in ballistic missile defence is an issue that needs to be settled once and for all. It is a matter as much of sovereignty as of defence.

defence. Indeed, the famed CFDS was underfunded right from the beginning. Any projection of the defence budget vs. minimal capabilities requirements shows a gaping hole which the yearly defence increases in the Liberal government fail to fill. The issue is the process—in the international arena, where much of sovereignty as of defence is decided. Each has a strong foreign policy

For Arctic: Russia in “encouraging” us to implement essential investments in the Arctic such as completing/renovating deep water ports facilities, enhancing support facilities, and building the right berth for our Polar Class Icebreaker (in Churchill, Man.). Technology: the “art” of warfare is in constant flux inasmuch as it is determined by the ongoing changes in the nature of conflict, in addition to “conventional” enemies—terrorists, freedom-fighters/ separatists, militias, hybrid warfare, state, semi-states, pirates, criminal networks, all with a common strategy and different capabilities, some calling for sophisticated counter-measures. At the same time, the issue is adaptability of our capabilities which mostly translates into investing in technology.

But let’s be candid. A DPR, while having to address these issues, would answer at best half of the questions a national security strategy would need answers to. Each has a strong foreign policy underpinning which is unlikely to be covered by the DPR’s strategic assessment.

A few examples: What means the renewed emphasis on multilateral PKO would require in this day and age? The Middle East and beyond: How has this world of waned conflicts and provoked outside interventions, for good or ill, mostly the latter, which have lasted longer than any conflict this country has been involved in? What is the role of Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan? Was it expediency, in the dictionary sense of the word but, in fact, in the Canadian public service? What does it imply for our so-called third leg of a balanced defence obligations and for our Special Operations Forces? Northern Africa is already plagued by an Arc of Instability. What if Canada decides to be involved? We call ourselves a Pacific nation. Do we have the means to underpin this definition and what would be the requirements of an occasional ship visit will not do the trick. Does our military policy still defined policy towards Canada’s interests? Our political masters!

Ferry de Kerckhove is a former Canadian diplomat with postings in Iran, NATO, Moscow, and as head of mission in Pakistan. In 1995–1996 he was a senior research fellow at the University of Ottawa’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and a fellow at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

The Hill Times
Sharp Wits & Busy Pens takes a ‘sober-minded look’ at history of press gallery on Parliament Hill

Josh Wingrove talks about co-editing Sharp Wits & Busy Pens. ‘It’s about sharing our history, for better and for worse, at the 150th milestone. There’s a lot to be proud of, and a lot to be excited for still.’

BY KATIE MALLOY

OTTAWA—When Bloomberg Hill reporter Josh Wingrove volunteered to co-edit a coffee table book on the history of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, he had no idea what he’d signed up for. And he knows hard work. Probably best known when he was at The Globe and Mail as the only print reporter who video-recorded, with his cellphone, the shootout between RCMP and Hill security guards and the gunman who stormed through Centre Block on Oct. 22, 2014, Mr. Wingrove, 30, more recently led a team of current and former reporters who volunteered their time to write, edit, translate, shoot photos, and sift through archives to produce the book. Jen Ditchburn was the photo editor. Jennifer Ditchburn, a former CP reporter, also played a major role. The result, Sharp Wits & Busy Pens: 150 Years of Canada’s Parliamentary Gallery, published by Hill Times Books, is a substantial and colourful look at the history of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, worlds and all. The book will be launched on June 1 at the National Archives.

Why did the press gallery want to do this book?

‘The gallery has long wanted to do a book, but it’s always been a question of hundreds of people and getting the ball rolling. So the 150th celebrations were a catalyst that we didn’t have before. Jen Ditchburn, a longtime figure on the Hill as a CP reporter who is now with IRPP [the Institute for Research on Public Policy], is quite the gallery history buff and gathered a group of volunteers early in 2015 to start thinking about how to mark the occasion. I volunteered to take on the book—not really knowing fully the scale of work we were signing up for. I put a couple of calls out for volunteers, I begged and pleaded for as many as we could get.

Hélène joined, Jen wrote many of the pieces and others volunteered to write, edit, translate, shoot photos and get this thing put together. We’re proud of it.’

A lot of people may be surprised to know that the Parliamentary Press Gallery existed a year before Confederation. Can you tell a bit about that story?

Yeah, certainly I was surprised. But, of course, the journalists arrived on the Hill when the buildings opened and that was 1866, so here we are. The gallery as it is today evolved over decades, but it operated as an entity from the beginning. We have some documents still, though a lot were lost in the 1916 fire. Journalists tend to be famously disorganized people, but the gallery’s records are pretty good. After the book, our next step is digitizing them.”

You edited the book along with Hill journalist Hélène Buzzetti. How much work was this and how long did it take the two of you to complete it, from start to finish?

‘It’s about sharing our history, for better and for worse, at the 150th milestone. There’s a lot to be proud of, and a lot to be excited for still.’

By KATIE MALLOY

‘Oh, gosh, where to begin. I’ve learned we used to be way, way closer to the people. There was more of an old boys’ club not too long ago, and probably more. Women are frankly a fairly new part of the gallery, historically speaking. That shocked me, how long women were frozen out. And how broadcasters were frozen out in part by print folks trying to preserve their freelance income from broadcast outlets. But things have also stayed the same. Gallery sports teams have generally always been awful. That is clear, and not too much of a surprise.”

What was your favourite story?

‘In the big book. We’ve tried to mix authoritative history and some mirth, to capture what the people were like way back when. One anecdote from one of the stories stands out—the gallery refused entry to a reporter from a Jewish news agency just before World War II, citing a lack of space, and then got a fuming letter from an editor saying only two countries had ever reported them: Canada and, of course, Nazi Germany. It’s important to remember those things and the exclusion of women, I think. We need more diversity in the gallery today, I think they would not be worse not that long ago. And the mind boggles when I think of what homogeneous coverage that must have produced.”

How has the press gallery changed over the last 150 years?

‘It’s about sharing our history, for better and for worse, at the 150th milestone. There’s a lot to be proud of, and a lot to be excited for still.’

‘Yeah, Hélène and I assigned a story early in 2015 to start filling 150 pages. So I am thankful for all the help, humbled by all the contributors these days. Rabble-rousers all.’

The Hill Times photograph by Jake Wright

"The biggest thing is it has grown. In size, in medium. Broadcasters arriving was a big deal, and basically were let in by subtle pressure from the Speaker. TV cameras came to the House, that was a big deal. Technicians were allowed membership. So the gallery used to be a very small group of white men who wrote typically for anglophone newspapers, almost all of them with a stated partisan allegiance; a Tory paper, a Liberal paper. It was more hand-in-glove. The growth and evolution of the gallery ranks is stunning. We capture a bit of this in an oral history section of the book.”

How has it stayed the same?

‘In many ways, there have always been clashes with government, and still will be. That’s a good thing. Prime ministers have typically hated the Press Gallery Dinner. We’ll see if PM Trudeau eventually feels the same way. And we’ve always been pushing for more access. The records are clear on this, in case anyone thinks it’s a new thing that prime ministers don’t talk to the press as much as the press would like. More broadly, though, I was struck in older records that the sort of fire that draws someone into journalism has always been more or less the same. You can see the same qualities in gallery journalists a century ago that I admire in colleagues these days. Rabble-rousers all.”

Why is this book important and who should read it? How many books do you hope to sell?

‘We envisioned the book as a sober-minded look at the history of the press on Parliament Hill, its role as a filter, its controversies. We didn’t want to whitewash things. We wanted it to be authoritative and also funny. We wanted great photos. Whether we’ve succeeded is up to the reader (the photos are great, though!). But I think former gallery members, current and former MPs, anyone who is a keen follower of federal politics will all be drawn to it. And my mom’s super excited for it. That’s something, I guess. To be honest, the expectations and history weigh on us pretty heavily—I’ve already heard from folks asking if this or that is in the book, and in some cases it isn’t. Every time I see the book, I worry about stuff we had to leave out and great people I could have filled a whole book discussing. It’s amazing how quickly 150 years of history, in photos and two languages, can fill 150 pages. So I am thankful for all the help, humbled by all these stories we’ve tried to pull together, and just hope we’ve done it justice. We hope to sell as many as we can. If we sell the first book, we’ll print a second. This is certainly not about profit at all, as my zero-dollar book salary will attest to. It’s about sharing our history, for better and for worse, at the 150th milestone. There is a lot to be proud of, and a lot to be excited for still.”

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The Hill Times

Tim Harper is leaving Star after three decades

Tim Harper's last day will be May 29—his 61st birthday—and he's set to move back to Toronto. Maclean's political editor Paul Wells will replace Mr. Harper as The Star's national affairs columnist in Ottawa.

"Obviously, it's painful for The Star to lose a columnist of Tim's stature. But he is admired and respected by everyone in the newsroom, and we're all happy for him as he turns 61," said Jane Davenport, managing editor at The Toronto Star, said last week in an email.

Over a cup of coffee in downtown Ottawa on May 17, Mr. Harper said he decided to take The Star up on a voluntary buyout package offer and he's leaving on his own terms.

"They're moving in a different direction. They want to get younger. I want new challenges. I never like to get too comfortable doing anything for too long, because you lose your edge," he said. "I'll be 61 and I'm well aware of the perception that there's an awful lot of old white guys doing what I do. ... I didn't want to become like the old uncle in the corner of the newsroom." While he said he does not have "any firm plans" for what he'll do next, he said he has a project looming that's "enthusiastic about that I'm sort of crafting on my own." Though he intends to continue writing, Mr. Harper said he's looking to make a "break break" from covering politics.

"If I don't expect I'm going to be sitting on a park bench feeding pigeons and then going to Starbucks," he said, "I don't like the R Word. I don't think I'm retiring, I'm just leaving. ... I suspect I'll be writing something for somebody when they come with a box to carry me out." Originally from Hamilton, Mr. Harper moved to Toronto to study journalism at Ryerson University in 1980, before briefly working at a steel mill in his hometown after high school. He said he was "pursuing journalism after realizing "early on" in public school that he had a "knack" for writing. And he was an active part of the "post-Watergate era." "Nixon had been brought down and there was a book, a movie to follow, and everything, so it was a really sexy thing to get into," he said.

Mr. Harper started working for The Canadian Press in broadcast news while at university. After graduating in 1977, he wrote for The Thunder Bay Chronicle (before it folded), then The Winnipeg Tribune (again, just before before the paper died), then at The Ottawa Citizen before moving to Latin America to work as a freelancer, which included covering the civil war in El Salvador for The Star. He also covered stories in Nicaragua, Panama, Haiti, Jamaica, and "post-Jonestown Guyana." referring to the mass suicide involving now infamous cult leader Jim Jones that brought about the phrase "drinking the Kool-Aid."

Beyond working for "papers that folded," he freelanced for his hometown paper The Hamilton Spectator, and has also done so for The Globe and Mail.

In 1982, Mr. Harper was scooped up to work full time for The Toronto Star, starting off on the regular city beat. He first joined the press gallery in Ottawa in 1988, but shortly after the October 1993 federal election was transferred out of the bureau and onto the sports desk in Toronto, assigned to The Blue Jays. In 1994, players went on strike and "for the first time in history there was no World Series."

"It was an example of the impeccable Harper timing. They gave me the hard ball beat and the baseball players stopped playing. So I became a labour reporter," Mr. Harper told The Hill Times. He was back in The Star's Ottawa bureau within the year, and in 2001 was made bureau chief. In 2003, he transferred to the paper's Washington, D.C. office, and while there was also sent down to New Orleans to cover Hurricane Katrina, the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, and more.

"Katrina had an enduring effect on me," he said. "It really reminded ourselves we were in an American city," Mr. Harper said. "I loved Washington and I didn't want to go to management, I thought it would kill me," he said. "I actually started to like it, but the hours and the responsibility are intense when you're middle management and the operation was starting to shrink, and you suspect it's even more arduous now." In 2011, Mr. Harper became a national affairs reporter for the paper, filing columns every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, which are also syndicated in other publications, including The Hill Times.

For the last five years, Mr. Harper said he's been coming "back and forth" between Ottawa and Toronto—at first making the trek every Wednesday, then bi-weekly. More recently, has based it on Parliament's sitting schedule. He said he wanted to keep one foot in Toronto because he'd recently bought a house in the city, where he wanted to put down roots, and "thought it would keep [him] out of the Ottawa bubble from time to time."

"It's been quite instructive, because when you go back there you realize that some of the issues and players and so on that are all consuming to us here in Ottawa don't really make it down the 401. So I think it allowed me to better keep a perspective," said Mr. Harper. "I mean, I'm a political junkie. I love it. But it felt good to get away." Over his years covering politics, Mr. Harper has a number of standout memories, including watching former prime minister Jean Chrétien announce Canada would not join the Iraq invasion in 2003 and working on the Hill on "the night the budget was leaked" by then Global News parliamentary bureau chief Doug Small in 1989 (for which he was later charged, forcing then finance minister Michael Wilson to introduce the budget in an impromptu evening press conference).

Another highlight, he said, was witnessing the 1995 federal election unfold. "It just reshaped the country so much," he said. "The Progressive Conservatives were reduced to non-party status, the NDP had non-party status, and it was the rise of the Bloc [Québécois] and Reform parties," he said, adding that he was "stuck on the NDP plane and we kind of knew they weren't getting party status three days into the campaign."

But he said one of the most intense stories he's ever covered was the battle for compensation for tainted blood victims in the 1990s. It was also a story he "really enjoyed" writing. 

"You're dealing with people who didn't know what kind of life expectancy they had, and the government of the day—Allan Rock was the health minister—tried to do the right thing but didn't go far enough, and that saga went on and on and on. It was very dramatic at the time. It was a question of human rights and psychology," he said. Mr. Harper said in his recent years as a columnist he's been "rather hollowed out of life," which "makes it much more difficult to cover a beat. But while bureaus on the Hill have shrunk, "the talent level is as good as it's ever been."

Asked what advice he'd give to new reporters on the Hill, Mr. Harper said it's important to always keep perspective and not to get "bogged down" in the weeds of parliamentary theatre. "I'd try to skim the tree tops so that your reporting, whether it's social media, long form, video, whatever it is, always has both eyes fixed on [regular] people," he said. "I'm saying that it's a huge responsibility."
Rehabilitation of the West Block’s heritage masonry has also been a boon to the industry in Canada and has encouraged the development of new techniques, like large-scale laser cleaning.

Continued from page 1

it’s an important step in Public Services and Procurement Canada’s larger, multi-billion dollar project to renovate Parliament’s crumbling Gothic buildings, which are architecturally unique in North America. The federal government has spent an estimated $2.2-billion on Hill renovations in the last 15 years, including the cost of 41 different projects, and is set to spend $424.8-million in 2016-17, according to PSPC.

Walls were decayed and crumbling along with other work rehabilitation of the West Block building has involved extensive masonry restoration, involving between 75 and 175 people working over four years. Before being cleared out for work, the building’s masonry and walls were “decayed” and crumbling and in desperate need of attention, including a seismic upgrade.

“In the 50s and 60s they repaired a lot of heritage masonry with the wrong kind of mortar, a much stronger. Portland cement mortar and people of stone masons that stopped the stone from cracking,” said Mr. Jenkins. It was used on the Laurier Tower, “that’s why that one was taken down,” he said, and “many of the other walls were simply decayed” on the West Block.

The walls of the building are made up of multiple layers, he said: there’s the cut stone or field stone masonry façade that includes carvings and decorations, a layer of rubble core (made up of mortar and pieces of left over stone from carvings), a “straightforward” inside stone layer, a brick liner wall (the old method of insulation) and then the interior plaster.

In many places, that rubble core “was turning to sand,” said Mr. Jenkins, “water was getting into there and expanding the walls and integrating.” As well, “most of the mortar joints were failing in many areas,” of the building. A number of contractors were needed to put in. “In a lot of places” the inner wall contained asbestos, put in during renovations in the 1960s, which had to be removed, he said.

“They were bulging, sand was pouring out of the joints, they were in bad shape,” said Mr. Jenkins. Supports were put in and in some places “entire wall sections” were then removed, he said. “If you had seen behind our lovely white tarp there, you would have been able to walk straight through into the building in certain areas.”

Rogge Gameiro, a senior director in the West Block section of PSPC’s parliamentary precinct, said on top of all mortar, “the real state of the masonry” was a result of “time.”

Ten years of surveying, designing

Figuring out what work was required to fix the West Block was “quite a process,” said Mr. Jenkins, and one that began ten years before construction work kicked off.

First, “masonry consultants” did a preliminary survey of the building, “which established that every wall needed to be scaffolded and treated,” said Mr. Jenkins. Next, “all of the walls were photographed and about 1,500 sculptural pieces” were numbered and identified. After that, scaffolding was erected and construction managers worked with conservators “to draw every single stone on the wall” using computer-aided design software (CAD), he said.

“Every stone is numbered,” he said. “As stones get taken down the numbers are actually painted on the top side or the backside of the stone. Everything is photo-documented before it comes apart and these stones, if there are significant quantities, they are taken down and maybe moved away from that area or in fact taken off site in certain cases, or they’re left on the scaffold… while the rubble core and the inner wythe [stone layer] is rebuilt and they’re put back in.”

A small percentage of the 143,000 stones that make up masonry façade of the West Block building were so “badly cracked or weathered” they had to be completely replaced, as did roughly 1.4-million interior bricks, but he said, “the bulk of stones went back in.” The West Block building includes red Potsdam sandstone, Nepean sandstone, and Berea sandstone.

Workers used lasers to clean the heritage masonry, said Mr. Jenkins, a technology that’s been around for about a decade, but hasn’t “been used on a large-scale like this” before.

“We investigated and brought on large-scale laser cleaning and if you look at that building you’ll see a very uniform approach to it, as opposed to some of the other buildings that have been cleaned with the old methods,” he said, adding the laser “gently burns off” soiling on stones.

“It’s done with a very skilled team and they’re dedicated to that and there are many mock-ups done before you just go at the wall. There’s a four-inch band of laser, there’s a fine pencil tool. They’re working it back and forth and as you burn away the soiling on it—there’s copper soiling, there’s atmospheric soiling—as you burn these things away the stone lightens up and the laser becomes self-correcting, it becomes more gentle on the stone and the key is you don’t burn off the full patina … it’s a practiced thing.”

The sculptural masonry on the building requires “a much higher and different skill set” to rehabilitate, and conservators work closely with stone carvers, said Mr. Jenkins.

“In some cases where it’s a highly ornamental sculptural item and it’s severely decayed, they have made a maquette, a sort of a model, of what they believe it looked like and everybody has to agree on that. They make that out of plaster and then they go ahead and re-carve the entire sculptural element if it is to be replaced. In other cases, they’re drilling and pinning on new pieces of stone onto that sculptural item, they’re cleaning it with pencil lasers or mild abrasives,” he said.

The new red and black mortars used to repair the West Block are “lime-based mortars and hydraulic mortars that really self-heal as we get freeze/thaw, these mortars actually help the stone and the walls self-heal, crack and re-seal,” and are the “original colour-mortar stones,” rather than the grey that was there when work started. A number of industry and educational tours have checked out the West Block site over the years, and the project has “definitely been a boon to the heritage masonry sector of the industry” in Canada, said Mr. Jenkins, adding Algonquin College’s Perth campus “is supplying people.” Roughly 10 per cent of stone carvers working on the West Block are women, according to RJW-Gem Campbell Stonemasons.

“We’re really proud of that work [on the West Block] and we hope that people that are using the Hill in the future, and as they walk by the building, enjoy the building as much as we have during this rehabilitation process,” said Mr. Gameiro. “It’s absolutely beautiful, I cannot wait to have all the windows in place and give the public a good look at the exterior.”

Mr. Gameiro said while planning for Centre Block’s renovation is still in “very early stages,” the department is “assessing its very large masonry package of work, similar to the East Block, where some masonry restoration work is already underway, bumped up in scheduling as a result of critical need.”

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The Hill Times
Major projects in the rehabilitation of Parliament Hill: a primer

WEST BLOCK:

Construction began: February 2011.
Current work: Workers are currently building up the structure of the West Block courtyard's new infill building, which will be home to a temporary House of Commons committee room when work begins on Centre Block. Inside, finishings, electrical and mechanical fit-up work are well under way.

Overall work includes: A complete renovation of the building's exterior, the abatement of hazardous materials, interior demolition and renovation, repairs to exterior masonry, heritage restoration, splitting the old Confederation Room 200 into two separate floors (as per the original layout), and the construction of a new courtyard infill, including two levels of parliament floors.

Construction will end: Winter 2022.
Cost: Estimated to cost $863-million, including $167-million plus value added tax (VAT) cost.

Contractors: The EllisDon Corporation is doing design and construction work.

Interim functions: Work on Centre Block is complete, West Block will return to its function of providing both office space and committee rooms. The courtyard infill will be used as additional space for committee rooms.

Security perimeter project:

Construction work: Artesian ballistics and security cameras were installed on the Bank Street, South Drive, and Elgin Street entrances. The historic wall being built this year was "retrofit" at the West and East gate vehicle entrances, which flank either side of the Queen's Gate. Four pedestrian access points, with iron gates, were put in place. The green House of Commons buses, which previously entered through the East Gate, now enter through the Elgin Street Gate.

Construction began: October 2012.
Construction ended: May 2013.
Cost: The design services contract, awarded to Dassault, is estimated to cost approximately $1.5 million; the construction services contract, awarded to EllisDon Corporation, costs approximately $219 million.

Governing Conference Centre (2 Rideau St.):

Overall work includes: Overall rehabilitation of the building, including asbestos abatement, as well as re-fitting the space to accommodate interim Senate functions.

Construction will end: Summer 2018.
Cost: An estimated total cost of $219 million.

Contractors: PCL Constructors Canada serves as construction manager.

Interim function: The building's concourse space is being renovated to serve as the interim Senate Chamber. The GCC will also house 21 related offices, three committee rooms and other support spaces.

Permanent use: When Centre Block is complete, the building will return to its regular function as the Governing Conference Centre.

Visitors' Welcome Centre:

Proposed location: The welcome centre is being built underground in three phases as part of West Block, East Block and Centre Block renovations, respectively. Once complete all three sections will function as one welcome centre for all three buildings.

Proposed function: To provide visitor welcoming and security screening services, and new shipping and receiving facilities.

Current stages: Ground work is underway on parts of the West Block portion of the visitor's welcome centre, with concrete structure now being poured.

Planned timeline: The West Block portion is set to finish in 2017, with the other two phases to follow.

---compiled by Laura Ryckewaert, May 2016.


1 WELLINGTON ST.: COMPLETED

1 WELLINGTON ST.: COMPLETED

LTVP construction work: Interior renovations to provide space for parliamentary committee meetings.

Construction began: 2007
Construction ended: Fall 2010
Cost: $23.5 million
Permanent use: Right beside the Château Laurier, the Rideau Committee Rooms were renovated to serve as long-term parliamentarian committee space, but is also a key interim space that was prepared to accommodate the closure of the West Block.

Security perimeter project:

Original work:ARBOUR BUILDING (20 WELLINGTON ST.): COMPLETED

Construction work: Artesian ballistics and security cameras were installed at the Bank Street, South Drive and Elgin Street entrances. The historic wall being built this year was "retrofit" at the West and East gate vehicle entrances, which flank either side of the Queen's Gate. Four pedestrian access points, with iron gates, were put in place. The green House of Commons buses, which previously entered through the East Gate, now enter through the Elgin Street Gate.

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PMO “central control” deepening far more than people know or seem to care about

Alex Marland talks about his book Brand Command: Canadian Politics and Democracy in the Age of Message Control.

By Kate Mallory

OTTAWA—The pursuit of political power is more strategic than ever and political parties and governments are using the same brand control as the world’s largest corporations, which does not bode well for democracy, says Alex Marland in his thought-provoking new book, Brand Command: Canadian Politics and Democracy in the Age of Message Control.

Mr. Marland, one of the country’s leading experts on marketing and politics and an associate professor of political science and an associate dean at Memorial University of Newfoundland, substantively investigates the brand strategy in government and politics today and looks at how it will create serious problems for parliamentary democracy.

“Part of Brand Command builds on Donald Savoie’s argument that the centre of the government directs everything. My thesis is that political actors and public servants apply a ‘brand lens’ to policy and communications. If something seems incongruent with the PM’s brand, it must be changed to comply,” Mr. Marland said.

Why did you want to write this book?

“Both of my parents worked for the government. I realized how marketing has been encroaching upon Canadian politics. The Harper Conservative brand moved from new to new levels in Canada. They really paid attention to squeezing political efficiency and so something had to give. With the Trudeau government, it is the opposite,” Mr. Marland said.

How long did it take you to write this book?

“The Trudeau brand is refresh ing and engaging. Even those who cringe at the selfies and the blatant photo-ops should acknowledge that the change in tone is a welcome relief after the intense negativity that permeated Canadian politics dating to the early 2000s. Hopefully the honeymoon will fall away, because a shame less desire for publicity and public adulation can turn many citizens off politics too. For someone like me, the issue is that the more the media’s glare is on the prime minister, the more power that individual has. I believe that central control is deepening far more than people know or seem to care about. The downside, of course, is that candidates and MPs, and even some ministers, become regional sales reps of a message set by people at the top. It becomes a serious problem when all messages align, bordering on state propaganda.”

Turbocharging partisan games

“Brand Command” builds on Donald Savoie’s argument that the centre of government directs everything. My thesis is that political actors and public servants apply a brand lens to policy and communications. If something seems incongruent with the PM’s brand, it must be changed to comply. This may have been obvious with Mr. Harper, but I believe it is also true with Mr. Trudeau. It’s much more than political operatives tweaking their brand around—a lot of a big brand can’t go on among jettisoning them would damage the self-censorship. As one public servant told me, if you know what’s good for you, keep your lips zipped. The same is true during election campaigns.”

You argue that public-sector branding is an “unstoppable force no matter who is in power” and it creates serious problems for democracy. What are these problems and how can this be stopped?

“My concern is what message control means for Parliament, and, in particular, its ability to keep the PM in check. In my book. I look at elections these days—a candidate who said something politically incorrect or even offending politics that is archived by Facebook or Twitter gets publicly shamed, and their political career ends. In the same matic end when the party ruthlessly cuts all ties. This screen outs some bad apples and I’m fine with that. However, those closest to the leader manage to hold on in part because버mutations and communications control is deepening far more than people know or seem to care about. The role of academics to see beyond the public personas of political leaders, especially when everyone else is distracted by them.”

What are the delivery units in the centre of the Liberal government? “They are the clusters of specialized public servants working on priority files for the PMO/PCO. This is related to the Michael Barber and Matthew Mendelssohn ‘deliv erogy’ stuff.”

Is this something new under the Trudeau government? “Yes, it is new to the federal government. It originated with New Labour in the U.K. which is why the cabinet has brought in Barber—twice according to media reports—and used in the McGuinty—Wynne government in Ontario.”

Why do you say the pursuit of political power is strategic as never before? What do you mean? “The competition for power involves a level of strategic manoeuvring and tactical execution in ways that are exceedingly difficult. Even those who are least interested in politics know something is happening. Under the Harper Conservatives, has political communications changed under the Trudeau Liberals? “The Trudeau brand is fresh

Where is Canadian politics headed? “I am a cautious optimist. The proliferation of digital media means that traditional elite power structures are under stress to change and evolve. This is generally good. What is not good is that the online sphere has become a powerful interest group for the hyper-sensitive forces of political correctness. A healthy democracy is strongest when enlightened citizens carefully deliberate a variety of opinions. As a society, we need leaders who encourage thoughtful constructive debate, who are willing to challenge the wisdom of crowds, who question arguments to party labels, and who aren’t afraid to sometimes take a public punch from their own brand ambassadors.”

THE HILL TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 23, 2016

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Hecking is one of the oldest ways to get a cheap thrill and has done for public discourse what pantyhose have for backseat romance. But without good heckling the Chamber would be pretty dreary. As well, democracy in Canada is still thriving despite struggles of the legacy, or traditional, news media.

The Hill Times, Monday, May 23, 2016

**HILL LIFE PARTIES**

**PA R T Y CENTRAL**

**by Rachel Aiello**

**Hecking is good, legacy media may be doomed: what we learned from this year’s Travers Debates**

Mr. Scotti, while often odd, was the usual debate moderator; CBC’s Rosie Barton served as the “mistress of ceremony,” and former parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page served as timekeeper. Debate officials were Business Council of Canada’s John Manley and Conservative MP Peter Kent. Mr. Rae joked about Chief Government Whip Andrew Leslie narrowly avoiding losing a key vote last week, saying he would now be called “Count Leslie.”

Macleans’s Scott Feschuk and NDP MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau debated in favour of heckling as a parliamentary privilege that should be maintained. They won against CBC’s Katie Simpson and Liberal MP Rodger Cuzner who argued against heckling. All four were pretty good, but Mr. Feschuk easily

stole the show and was the run-away star. Former Conservative MP Paul Calandra was the butt of many of the heckling jokes, with Mr. Feschuk calling him the “human anecdote jokebox.” Ms. Brosseau called heckling the Viagra of democracy, there to straighten out flaccid ministerial responses. James Travers’ son, Patrick Travers, who now works in the Prime Minister’s Office as a policy adviser, took to the stage after the first show to share a few words about his dad and his memorable mantra: “Screw ‘em if they can’t take a joke.”

Then Public Policy Forum president Edward Greenspon, former editor of The Globe and Mail, took on Abacus Data chairman Bruce Anderson on whether democracy is facing serious risks from the decline of legacy media.

Mr. Greenspon pointed out many of the flaws in the current system, like having to maintain an outsider’s perspective while reporting on insider stories. However, he said that the biggest part of a journalist’s job is showing up, and legacy media does that. He argued that if new media is to succeed, it’ll be on the backs of old media.

“The greater freedom we have as news consumers, the greater freedom we have to challenge monopolies,” Mr. Greenspon said.

Mr. Anderson said Canada’s democracy is still thriving, but that the public’s access to information through the media should be a key interest to government. He suggested finding ways to open up the legacy formats to new voices and younger people, and he argued against the idea of newspaper publishers and editorial boards telling its readers how to vote. He said calling the idea “quaint” was putting it in its polite form.

Overall, Mr. Anderson’s point of view won over the crowd.

Once the debate concluded, raffle winners were announced and attendees went on their way. Among those who came out to support the event were Green Party Leader Elizabeth May; Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s director of communications Kate Purchase and her husband Perry Tsergas; Liberal MP Adam Vaughan; Buzzfeed’s Paul McLeod; Environment Minister Greg MacEachern; CPAC CEO Catherine Cano; Angus Reid Institute’s Shachi Kurl; CBC/Radio-Canada’s head of GR Shaun Coulter; Canadian Press Ottawa bureau chief Heather Scoffield and CP reporter Kristy Kirkup; The Huffington Post Canada’s Althia Raj and Catherine Lévesque; Maclean’s John Geddes; CBC Ottawa’s Joanne Cianello; Ottawa Citizen editor-in-chief Michelle Richardson and editorial pages editor Christina Spencer; Toronto Star Ottawa bureau chief Bruce Campion-Smith; Buzzfeed Canada politics editor Paul McLeod; TTV’s Laura Payton; Bloomberg’s Stephen Wicary; The Hill Times’ Kate Malloy, Ally Foster and Les Whittington; Parliament Now’s Christina Leadlay; the National Post’s new recruit Marie-Danielle Smith; Policy’s Jamieson Dickson, freelance writer Claire Wahlen; Carleton University’s Susan Harada; NDP pundit Jenn Jefferys and Media-Style’s Caitlin Kealey; as well as Sean Moore, John Chernie, Hugh Winner, Phil Kinsman, Nancy Jamieson, and many others came out to show their support for the Travers Debates.
Two more to PMO, while Garneau and McCallum hire aides

Sarah Welch, meanwhile, is director of policy and regional affairs to Aboriginal Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett.

T wo more staffers have been hired in the Prime Minister’s Office, including Natasha Engel as a special assistant for appointments and people.

Ms. Engel is a former senior vice-president with the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Montreal and a former lawyer with Norton Rose Fullbright’s Montreal office, focused on intellectual property, commercial litigation, and international arbitration, according to her LinkedIn profile.

She’s previously worked for McCarthy Tétrault, first as an intern and then as an articling student before being hired to practise commercial and intellectual property law, and intellectual property law.

She’s founder and president of the Young Business Scene of École supérieure de ballet du Québec, where she previously studied classical and contemporary dance, and was vice-chair of the board of directors for the Fondation de l’École supérieure de ballet du Québec, among other past involvements.

The conflict of interest commissioner is currently reviewing her involvement with the group.

Ms. Engel has also been chair of the board of directors for the Virginia Brunelle Dance Co. and was previously involved with the Intellectual Property Institute of Canada on its trade and copyright policy committees. She studied law at the Université de Sherbrooke and is in the midst of a master of business administration at McGill University, set to graduate in 2017.

James McMillan is a writer in the PMO. He was a communications and media relations’ coordinator for the party in Vancouver during the 2015 federal election. Mr. McMillan was a litigation fellow in the office of general counsel at Hearts New York.

He’s also been director and recording secretary with the Foundation for Alcoholism Research, starting in his first year studying a bachelor degree in English and American literature at Middlebury College in Vermont. He spent a year at Oxford University during his undergrad.

While studying, McMillan interned at a number of companies in the U.S. including Solnar One, Focus Advisory Services LLC, Silver Pictures, and Charter House Coalition. He also previously worked as a videoographer and editor with the Middlebury College Department of Theatre and Dance. In other past experience, in 2009 he was published in Chicken Soup for the Soul: All in the Family, and wrote a piece for the Gems of British Columbia: Volume One, from Penticton Writers and Publishers.

Katie Tolforder is PMO chief of staff, while Gerald Butts is principal secretary, and Jeremy Broadhurst is deputy chief of staff and deputy principal secretary.

Welch director to Indigenous Affairs Minister Bennett

Welch worked on the Hill under the premiership of Martin Liberal government as special assistant to then-heritage minister Hélène Scherrer. After the 2004 federal election, Ms. Welch worked as an MLA as an executive assistant until 2009, later joining former Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff’s office as director of finance and administration.

She was deputy national tour director for the Liberal Party during the 2011 federal election, which she spent roughly a year working as a protocol adviser for the City of Vancouver before moving to B.C.

Rick Theis is chief of staff to the minister while Carolyn Campbell is director of communications. Vincent Haraldsen is director of parliamentary affairs, and Sabrina Williams is press secretary.

In related news, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett has Sarah Welch working in her ministerial office as director of policy and regional affairs.

Before joining the minister’s office at the beginning of the year, Ms. Welch was a senior policy adviser to Ontario Aboriginal Affairs Minister David Zimmer since the summer of 2013. Prior to that, she worked briefly as a ministerial aide to then B.C. Liberal Multiculturalism Minister John Yap.

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Why protecting Canada’s boreal forest is this century’s great conservation idea

A hundred years ago, the Migratory Bird Treaty helped shape North America’s conservation ethic. Today, new initiatives in Canada offer hope for a sound environmental future.

JEFF WELLS

Historians would not consider 1916 a good year for the planet. The largest war the world had ever seen was raging in Europe, with millions of people killed and maimed and no end in sight. But during that time of despair, a ray of hope shone through in international relations. Canada and the United States signed a treaty to cooperate in an ambitious effort to restore populations of shared migratory birds, including many species that were being hunted to near extinction. Because there was little or no regulation in place before 1916, robins, doves, shorebirds, ducks, geese, and other birds were being shot at any time of the year and in unlimited numbers. The number of birds being killed each year took an enormous toll: for example, passenger pigeons, a species estimated to have once numbered in the billions, were driven into extinction. The Eskimo curlew, a small shorebird that nested in the Canadian Arctic, was also lost to extinction—its population decimated by the killing of entire flocks during migration.

With the Migratory Bird Treaty in 1916, Canada and the U.S. agreed to stop the carnage. The treaty set rules on what types of birds could be hunted and when, and created a structure to decide how many of each species could be killed. Within a couple of years, both countries had passed legislation to enact the promises of the treaty. It worked.

Many species of birds hard-hit by the relentless market hunting soon rebounded and are with us today because of this remarkable 100-year-old treaty. But this year, as we mark a century since the signing of this treaty, it’s clear that a new century requires new ideas to ensure that migratory birds survive. It is time to totally rethink the way we manage our shared natural resources.

The state of Canada’s boreal forest is a case in point. Vastly raise the benchmark for the amount of land under conservation. Experts agree that at least half of the boreal forest region should be under permanent protection from industrial land uses, with the remainder subject to world-leading sustainable development standards.

Implementation of a new conservation vision has already begun in Canada, where the governments of Ontario and Quebec have articulated ambitious commitments to protect at least half of their northern landscapes through the Far North Act and Plan Nord, respectively. The State of North America’s Birds 2016 cites the actions in Ontario and Queen as particularly encouraging. But it’s critical that these policies are fully implemented and place community-based land use planning at their core.

Just as Canadian and U.S. leaders came together 100 years ago to forge a bold new idea—a treaty of mutual promise in the midst of war—the leaders of today from federal, provincial, and indigenous governments, corporations, and nonprofits need to embrace the new ideas of conservation that will ensure a future for our birds and our people.

Jeff Wells, science director at the Boreal Songbird Initiative, is an adviser to The Pew Charitable Trust’s international boreal conservation campaign.

news@hilltimes.com

The Hill Times

The Hill Times

Canadian’s Aging Society

Policy Briefing

Publication Date: June 6, 2016
Booking Deadline: May 31, 2016

In this policy briefing, The Hill Times looks at home care for seniors and at how the number of Canada’s seniors has edged out the number of children under the age of 15 and what that means for shifting demographics and future housing demands. We look at the issue of doctor-assisted suicide and how the Canadian Medical Association is pushing to make sure palliative care reform is a political priority. We look at how the next “golden age” of Canada’s public service will be led by millennials and what the federal government must do to attract highly-valued workers under the age of 35. And we look at what our seniors means for financing more drug consumption.

The Hill Times Policy Briefing on Canada’s Aging Society: be a part of it.

Communicate with those most responsible for Canada’s public policy decisions.

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OPINION CANADA’S BOREAL FOREST

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THE HILL TIMES, MONDAY, MAY 23, 2016
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Executive Living - In the City or the Country we would love to show you one of these amazing homes!

2284 Courtice Avenue - Alta Vista
Sophisticated and contemporary design offering over 5000 sqf of living space. This exceptional home offers a bright open concept main floor ideal for entertaining with 18’ ceilings in family room, built-in sound system and gas fireplace. Dream kitchen boasts DCS appliances, granite and an island. Stunning Master with spa-like ensuite. Luc Crawford designed lower level offers impressive family space, gas fireplace, full bathroom and bedroom. Close to CHEO.

81 Springfield Road - Beechwood Village
Award winning architecture by Linebox Studio, quality craftsmanship by TLPI, and finishes selected by professional designers set the stage for this newly-built, modern home in Lindenlea. This spacious and bright end unit will exceed your expectations at every corner; from the stunning roof top terrace with views onto Parliament and the elegant open concept entertaining space, to the heated double car garage. Built to the highest standards, with every aspect carefully considered with sustainably sourced materials, eco-friendly systems, and the highest quality components. This home has achieved a LEED Gold certification.

711 Loon’s Way - Perth - Otty Lake.
The home of your dreams and a lifestyle to match. That’s smart retirement. Calling all Professionals looking at owning a sophisticated 5 year old ICF built home with all the bells and whistles. Enjoy a tranquil waterfront setting in the evenings on your kayak or paddle board. Gourmet kitchen with Caesar stone counters, open concept with wall of windows, triple car garage & so much more. Private viewing can be arranged at 613-233-4488. You won’t be disappointed so start packing & get ready for your new home!
**Parliamentary Calendar**

**Monday, May 23**

- **House Sittings:** The House is not sitting; this week it returns again on May 30. It's scheduled to sit every weekday for four weeks until Thursday, June 23, when it breaks for the summer.
- **Prime Minister Trudeau to Attend G7 in Japan—Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will travel to Japan to participate in the G7 Leaders' Summit on May 26-27 in Ishi-Shima. Prior to the Leaders' Summit, and at the invitation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister Trudeau will participate in an official working visit from May 23-25. For more information, contact the PMO Press Office at (613) 957-5555.”

**Tuesday, May 24**

- **Imagination and the Economy for a Sustained Recovery:** Co-hosted by the Pearson Centre for Progres- sive Policy and the Canadian War Museum, this panel discussion features Sandra Pupatello, co-chair, ECON Treaty Panel, Kiril Mihaylov, executive director of the Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, and Catherine Chandler-Crichlow, director of the South East Toronto Community Health Centre.

- **Canadian Club of Ottawa Hosts Chief of Staff for the Prime Minister John McCallum:** Co-hosted by the Pearson Centre for Progres- sive Policy and the Canadian War Museum, this panel discussion features Sandra Pupatello, co-chair, ECON Treaty Panel, Kiril Mihaylov, executive director of the Pearson Centre for Progressive Policy and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, and Catherine Chandler-Crichlow, director of the South East Toronto Community Health Centre.

- **Canadian War Museum in Ottawa.**

**Monday, May 30**

- **House Sitting:** The House is sitting this week and is scheduled to sit for four weeks until Thursday, June 23, when it breaks for the summer.

**Tuesday, May 31**

- **Filling the Prescription: The Case for a National Prescription Drug Program**—Co-hosted by the Ottawa-Carleton Diabetes Association, this event features Dr. Andrew Jutel, the organization’s executive director, and Dr. Andrew Jutel, the organization’s executive director.

- **Business Council of British Columbia 50th Anniversary Reception**—Join leaders from B.C. businesses, aboriginal communities, post-secondary institutions and parlia- mentary guests for a celebration of 50 years of success between BCBC members and their partners across country in building a strong and prosperous Canadian economy. Wednesday, June 1, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Room 200 Sir John A. Mac- donald Building, 144 Wellington St. To RSVP, please contact Alicia Adams at Alicia@earscliffe.ca.

**Wednesday, June 2**

- **CPJ’s 2016 Annual Meeting**—Join CFIM director, Coral Bratt, and other guest speakers for an introduction to this project and ways in which practitioners and government policy can be adapted to result in positive change for seniors in Canada. As seniors are expected to increase to more than a quarter of the Canadian population by 2031, increasing numbers of older people are struggling to meet the health care needs of their aging popula- tion. In this year’s budget speech Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced his intent to invest in innovative practices to protect the integrity of the health-care system and find ways to work with partners to identify solutions. The forum will explore important public affairs issues and ways in which practitioners and government policy can be adapted to result in positive change for seniors in Canada.

- **June 3:** At the Centre Block, 55 Colonel By Dr., Ot- tawa. Registration prices are $49 for subscribers and $99 for non-subscribers. Special group discounts are available. The Capital Glass Collective is having its introductory fund- raising event. This new entity in Ottawa’s art scene aims to build a new generation of glass artists in this city’s downtown and surrounding regions, including the special one with the Ottawa Christian Native Friendship Centre. We need the community’s help to get started so we are hosting this fundraiser as an introduction to this project and to raise funds toward the equip- ment and at-risk youth program. June 3. Tickets are $55 and can be purchased through Eventbrite. The event will be at 250 Centre Block, Bay 287, 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

- **Murray Sinclair: Reconciliation and Poverty in Canada—** Senator Murray Sinclair will deliver the keynote address at Citizens for Pub- lice Justice’s 2016 Annual Meeting Forum on Thursday, June 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Institute, 435 Wellington St. Murray Sinclair is a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and an erudite writer, activist, and speaker on the topic of reconciliation in Canada. He is a leader in many efforts to create a better Canada. His work is available. Refresh- ments will be provided. To RSVP or for more information, contact Brad Wassink at brad@cpj.ca or go to www.cpj.ca/agm-2016.
FRIDAY, JUNE 3
4 in Ottawa

Happens June
Dinner
Press Gallery

FEATURE EVENTS

FRIDAY, JUNE 3

Canada. Also speaking on June 3 is Dianne Watts, a pivotal moment in federal-municipal relations as historic investment in cities and communities. The minister will address 1,500 municipal leaders from across Canada about the government’s interest to anyone wanting to refresh their advocacy activities or shorten the learning curve for working with Ottawa. Topics to be covered include: What’s your point? Why do you matter; building a referral network; introducing your ideas into federal policy and programs; working with committees; and building a credible presence. Cost is $250. Seating is limited. For more information or to register contact: bhawley@brendanhawley.com or call 613-612-2036.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4

Parliamentary Press Gallery Dinner — It’s the 150th Anniversary of the Press Gallery at its Annual Gallery Dinner. Saturday, June 4, 5:30 p.m., Canadian Museum of History River View Salon. The dinner will be held in the Grand Hall at 7 p.m. Dress: cocktail elegant (black tie optional). For press gallery members and guests only.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5

FCM Annual Conference in Winnipeg — NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May are keynote speakers on the closing day of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Annual Conference. For more details on the FCM conference: www.fcm.ca or contact Robin Walsh rwalsh@fcm.ca

MONDAY, JUNE 6

IRPP Reception — Graham Scott, chair of the board of directors of the Institute for Research on Public Policy, will host a reception to introduce guests to the IRPP’s current priorities on Monday, June 6, 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m., Rideau Club, Macdonald Room, 99 Bank St, Ottawa. Please RSVP before May 28, by e-mail at events@irpp.org.

TUESDAY, JUNE 7

CIPMM’s 27th Annual National Workshop — June 7-8, 2016, the workshop fee is $75 plus HST and includes access to 30 keynotes and breakout sessions. More than 400 delegates from PWGSC, ESDD, DND, HC, RCAF, CSEC, DFATD, DFO, TBS, NRCAN, IA, CAC, and LAC. Senior government officials from the lead departments and agencies will be at the networking reception. There will be exhibitors, subject matter experts representing both the public and private sectors. Please contact CIPMM Secretariat at admin@cipmm.cpmg.ca or at 613-725-0980.

CPAC’s Annual Reception Invitation — Welcome Class of 2016, Room 100, Sir John A. Macdonald Building, 144 Wellington St., Ottawa, June 7, 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Please RSVP before May 27 to rsvp@cpac.ca

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

Senator James Cowan and Consumer Health Products Canada — Invite Parliamentarians and their staff to the “Suicidion, BBQ & Ice Cream Social” on Wednesday, June 8, 2016 in the East Block Courtyard from 12 p.m.-2 p.m. CHP Canada is the industry association that represents the companies that make evidence-based over-the-counter medicines and natural health products. RSVP@cpac.ca

House Speaker Party — House Speaker Geoff Regan extends a warm East Coast invitation to MPs, Senators, and government and opposition party members to join him for a Kitchen Party on Wednesday, June 8, 2016, at the Farm, Invitation only.

Business Council of Canada Summer Open House — Hosted by John Manley, president and chief executive officer, the summer open house will be held June 8, 5 p.m.-7 p.m., Sun Life Financial Centre, 99 Bank St., Ottawa, 10th floor, RSVP by May 27 to nancy.wallace@businesscouncil.ca

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

Bacon & Eggheads Breakfast — PAGSE presents a talk “Crude oil on water: an expert perspective on spills, their impacts and remediation” with Ken Lee, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. Thursday, June 9, 7:30 a.m.-7:50 a.m. Parliamentary Dining Room, Centre Block. No charge to MPs, Senators, and media. All others $75. Pre-registration required by Friday, June 6 by contacting Donna Boag, PAGSE_page@csic-sec.ca or call 613-991-6369.

MONDAY, JUNE 13

Public Sector Management Workshop — The Financial Management Institute of Canada presents its annual Public Sector Management Workshop in St. John’s, Nfld., under the theme “Winds of Change.” Keynote speakers include: Cathy Bennett, Minister of Finance & President of Treasury Board for the province of NL; Senator Beth Marshall, Bill Mathias, CEO of the西藏, and Jennifer Heil, Olympic Champion, and Kevin Paige, former Parliamentary Budget Officer. June 13-14 Registration is opened to anyone. For more information and registration visit http://www.fmic.ca/events/ PSMW2016

Conference of Montreal—The International Economic Forum of the Americas presents its annual Montreal conference. This year’s theme is “Shaping a New Era of Prosperity.” Until June 16. Hotel Bonaventure, Montreal, Que. Featuring speakers including UNESCO director general Irina Bokova, Quebec Energy Minister Pierre Arcand, Canadian Chamber of Commerce CEO Perrin Beatty, Foreign Minister Stéphane Dion, Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland, OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría, and more. forum-americas.ca/montreal/2016

THURSDAY, JUNE 16

Hill Times Event: The Value of Medicines in Canada — There is no longer a one-size-fits-all program in Canada is a complicated endeavour. There is significant misinformation in the conversation around the cost and affordability of medicines in Canada. In the past few years, politicians and the media have raised many concerns regarding medicines becoming unaffordable for governments, for private insurance, and for Canadians. Missing from these conversations is a discussion on the value that these medicines bring to patients, providers and to the health system. Recognizing that health-care sustainability is a significant concern to both policy makers and citizens, we need to look at solutions that can bridge these concerns. Hill Times Events explores the issue of the value of medicines and the pricing of pharmaceuticals in Canada on June 16 during our policy panel networking breakfast. 7:30 a.m.-9 a.m. at the Ottawa Marriott Hotel, 100 Kent St., Ottawa. This is a free event. Advance registration is required. Send in your politician, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental event in a paragraph with all the relevant details under the subject line ‘Parliamentary Calendar’ to news@hilltimes.com by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or Friday at noon before the Wednesday paper.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29

Three Amigos Summit — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will host U.S. President Barack Obama and Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto in Ottawa on June 29. For information, call the PMO Press Office at 613-957-555.

MAY 2017

Conservative Party Leadership Convention — The Conservative Party Leadership Convention will select their new leader on May 27, 2017, Dan Black is chair of the party’s leadership election organizing committee announced last week. The party is urging Conservative Party members to join the member directory to renew them in order to vote. For more information, contact Cory Haie, press officer of communications, Conservative Party of Canada, at 613-697-5614.

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

WHAT’S YOUR POINT?

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2016

What’s Your Point? A half-day workshop on government relations (advocacy and mediation). Hosted by Brendan Hawley & Associates from 9:00 to 1:30 on Friday June 3, 2016 in the Barrick Boardroom of the Canadian Science Museum, 4th Floor, 240 McLeod St., Ottawa. This will be of interest to anyone wanting to refresh their advocacy activities or shorten the learning curve for working with Ottawa. Topics to be covered include: What’s your point? Why do you matter; building a referral network; introducing your ideas into federal policy and programs; working with committees; and building a credible presence. Cost is $250. Seating is limited. For more information or to register contact: bhawley@brendanhawley.com or call 613-612-0136.

Micro-Multinational: Enabling the New SMEs face through cross-border trade. Successful micro-multinationals. Further, she will provide an overview of the e-commerce landscape in Canada driven and technology enabled. Andrea Stairs, a new commerce has emerged that is consumer driven and technology enabled. Andrea Stairs, managing director of eBay Canada, will give an overview of the e-commerce landscape in Canada and how the Internet is enabling Canadian SMEs from all corners of the country to become successful micro-multinationals. Further, she will highlight opportunities and challenges Canadian SMEs face through cross-border trade.
“What do you think of the federal government’s response so far to the wildfire in northern Alberta? What’s important going forward?”

KATE PURCHASE
Liberal strategist

“Canada is a country where we look out for our neighbours and lend a hand in difficult times.

“The people of Fort McMurray and the surrounding area can count on the full, continued support of this government. Our relief efforts are government-wide and far-reaching: National Defence continues to provide air support to firefighting and the delivery of essential aid; Canada Post continues to ensure the people of Fort McMurray can get their mail, wherever they prefer; while the RCMP continues to keep affected communities safe, conduct road blocks, and provide search and evacuation efforts.

“To complement these efforts, our government established an ad hoc cabinet committee to coordinate federal recovery and rebuilding measures for the thousands of Canadians affected by the wildfires. We also expanded extended employment insurance benefits to three additional regions—including Edmonton.

“In the days and weeks ahead, we will continue to match every dollar individually donated to the Canadian Red Cross in support of those affected by the wildfires. We are tremendously proud of the outpouring of aid from Canadians across the country, and thank first responders for their heroic work.

“We know that all of us will continue to support the residents of Fort McMurray as they begin their recovery.”

CORY HANN
Conservative strategist

“Well, it was certainly good to see the Prime Minister finally make his way to Fort McMurray to see the devastation firsthand. This is a wildfire that forced a mass evacuation—one of the largest of its scale for a fire in Alberta’s entire history, and residents and evacuees there need to be reassured their government is ready to assist.

“While nothing concrete was delivered, I personally remain hopeful that this disaster stays on the Liberals’ radar as much as it has for our interim leader and our entire caucus. Rona Ambrose and our caucus have been to Alberta helping firsthand, they’ve been visiting Red Cross centres across the country, attending fundraisers that help the people of Fort McMurray, or even helping host our own fundraisers here in Ottawa.

“Going forward, we need to be prepared to move swiftly and ensure as residents start to return to Fort McMurray, they’re given the full support they require—whether that’s moving infrastructure funds into the area to help with the rebuild, working with charitable organizations to help allocate donations and other items, or being prepared to assist in other areas as people’s lives start to come back together.”

RICCARDO FILIPPONE
NDP strategist

“The response to the wildfires in Alberta is one area I think the Liberals haven’t fallen short.

“They did all the right things. They worked swiftly, closely, and cooperatively with the Notley government. The aid and support put forward was generous and without strings attached—including matching Canadians’ donations to the Red Cross.

“Also, although Fort McMurray was already designated in the initial 13 regions that the government targeted to receive extended EI benefits, the fires that raged through it are having economic ripple effects in places like Edmonton as well. Having been left out of the extended benefits plan since the start, on May 13 the government extended EI benefits to a number of areas including Edmonton. This was an important part of helping with the larger economic fallout from the fires.

“The most important thing moving forward will be for the government to honour their long-term commitments to the people of Alberta. The Prime Minister has committed to being a partner for the weeks, months and years ahead. Being there for Albertans a long time from now—when the crisis has faded from memory—will be the true test of their response.”

MATHIEU R. ST-AMAND
Bloc Québécois strategist

“On the whole, we could say that the Trudeau government has responded well to the crisis in Alberta. However, by announcing that the fire-affected areas will be added to the list of regions where EI benefits will be extended, the government is not at all addressing the problem of access to EI.

“Adding five weeks of benefits is all well and good, but workers still need to qualify. To really support workers, Minister Mihychuk should launch an in-depth review of EI. Insurers have done a great job with small claims, but when it comes to large claims, EI insurance needs to be restructured.

“Originally, the idea behind EI was that it would be a hand in difficult times. This is a disaster of that magnitude. It is a test of their response.”

CAMILLE LABCHUK
Green strategist

“The northern Alberta wildfire brought unimaginable devastation to communities, but it also brought out the best in people—both in the affected areas as well as from people across the country. The outpouring of donations, kindness, and support has been truly inspiring. We should be proud of our response as Canadians, and applaud federal, provincial, and municipal governments for their cooperation and quick response to this tragedy.

“Thinking long-term, we know that Canada is certain to experience future disasters, like seismic events on the B.C. coast or in the Quebec/Ottawa Valley region, or the floods, wildfires, and droughts that are increasingly likely as our planet heats up. In the aftermath of Fort McMurray, we need a national conversation about adaptation and resilience to all natural threats.

“We need to adapt our emergency response systems to a post-climate change world. Our coordinated response to natural disasters will help us protect as many lives as possible, and save our communities from devastating losses to the greatest extent that we can.”

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Mary Bertone - past president, Canadian Dental Hygienists Association

Josephine McMurray - network investigator and project lead, AGE-WELL, and assistant professor, Wilfrid Laurier University
Kiran Rabheru - past president, Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry

Nadine Henningsen - executive director, Canadian Home Care Association
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