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THIRTY-THIRD YEAR, NO. 1923

CANADA'S POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2022 \$5.00

NEWS

## PPS asks for 'substantial increase' to address Parliament Hill security

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

The physical security of the Parliamentary Precinct amid "an evolving threat environment" has prompted a request for nearly \$10-million more for the Hill's security team for the fiscal year.

"This year's the first in three years we've asked for a substantial increase," Eric Savard, Parliamentary Protective Service (PPS) chief financial officer, told members of Procedure and House Affairs Committee (PROC). "I believe that some of the objectives, initially when PPS was created, have been achieved, but the threat environment has evolved and that's what we need to try to understand and keep up with."

As part of PROC's study of the 2022-23 main estimates on April 28, Conservative MP Chris d'Entremont (West Nova, N.S.), deputy speaker and chair of committees of the whole, provided the group with an overview of the spending request for House administration, which he said totalled

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Police officers line up on Wellington Street in front of Parliament Hill during the Rolling Thunder protest that descended on Ottawa on April 29. The 2022-23 main estimates were prepared before the Freedom Convoy occupied Ottawa earlier this year, but the Parliamentary Protective Services says it's anticipating future budget-increase requests. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

NEWS

## Continued dawdling on vaccine waiver position leaves NDP and advocates 'extremely frustrated'

BY NEIL MOSS

Nineteen months after India and South Africa put forward an intellectual property waiver on COVID-19 vaccines, Canada's continued delay to signal an opinion on the matter has left many with a bitter taste in their mouths.

The waiver was submitted at the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Council in October 2020. Since then, the Canadian

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NEWS

## Information warfare amid Russian invasion of Ukraine forces feds to sort fact from fiction

BY NEIL MOSS

With Russia disseminating disinformation about its invasion of Ukraine, the Canadian government is left trying to

combat mistruths while ascertaining how the invasion is actually being carried out.

In opposition to widespread reporting, Russia has declared that it is Ukraine killing its own

civilians and that it is not at war.

In an interview with *The Hill Times* last week, Russian Ambassador Oleg Stepanov criticized the Canadian government for

always accepting the Ukrainian explanation of events.

"It's the position approved by the government that you have to blame Russia for everything, and you have to whitewash everything

the Ukrainian side does," he said, noting that when he was summoned by deputy minister of foreign affairs Marta Morgan regarding alleged war crimes in Bucha, Ukraine, she called the Russian explanation "not credible."

*The New York Times* reported that the murder of civilians in Bucha occurred while the area

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## Kevin Philipupillai Heard On The Hill

# Russia travel bans treated as symbol of defiance and status



Bob Rae, Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, says the ban will only encourage him 'to speak out more' on the Russian government's 'illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine and their cruel treatment of the innocent.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

dle of an illegal invasion of their neighbour tells me that British Columbians stood up immediately and said we are going to boycott Russian products, we are going to stand up and open our hearts and our homes to the Ukrainian people," Horgan said, as reported by the *Vancouver Sun*. Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, **Bob Rae**, tweeted:

"To have been left off the Russian list any longer would have been embarrassing, I am grateful this oversight has finally been corrected."

Rae, who has been especially vocal in his criticism of the Russian government, added that the ban would only encourage him "to speak out more on their illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine and their cruel treatment of the innocent."

Former senator and retired general **Roméo Dallaire** tweeted simply that he was "PROUD to be on this list!"

Author and journalist **Terry Glavin** tweeted: "I could be churlish and say 'about damn time,' but I'll just savour the company I'm keeping."

*National Post* columnist **John Ivison** tweeted simply: "Bugger. I'm one of 61 Canadians just sanctioned by Russia. There goes the trip to Moscow."

Ivison's *National Post* colleague **Sabrina Maddeaux**, who was also banned, called the list "farcical" in her column, saying "Russia is making a show of banning the very people least likely to want to visit."

"It's akin to a nightclub retaliating against noise complaints from the seniors next door

by banning grandma and grandpa from Foam Party Fridays," Maddeaux wrote.

The announcement also sparked reactions from people who were left off the list, with Ottawa lawyer and author **Mark Bourrie** tweeting that he was jealous of fellow writer **Michael Harris** for getting banned. Former senator **Linda Frum** tweeted that her FOMO (fear of missing out) was "now over," after being added to the travel ban list on April 28.

*Globe and Mail* correspondent **Mark MacKinnon** was perhaps more wary of the celebratory nature of some of the responses when he tweeted that he was "indefinitely prohibited" from entering Russia. In a follow-up tweet, he addressed all the "congratulations" messages he was receiving as a result. "But for me, it's a genuinely sad day. I loved my time living in Russia and made a lot of friends there (though many of them have left). I always tried to report honestly about the country. I guess that was the problem."

## Speaker's return delayed

House Speaker **Anthony Rota** will be taking more time before he returns to the big green chair. Rota, who underwent bypass surgery in March, "hoped to be back



in Ottawa [this] week," according to his office. However, "after consulting with his doctor they both agreed that he needs to focus on rest and rebuilding his stamina. He will take a little more time before returning to Ottawa," **Heather Bradley**, director of

House Speaker Anthony Rota had hoped to return to the House this week after undergoing surgery in March. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

communications for the House Speaker's Office, said in an email. First elected as a Liberal MP in 2004, Rota represents Nipissing-Timiskaming, Ont. He was selected by his colleagues as House Speaker in December 2019, and re-elected to the job following the 2021 election. Rota is in touch with both the Speaker's office, and his MP office daily, Bradley added.

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First elected as a Liberal MP in 2004, Rota represents Nipissing-Timiskaming, Ont. He was selected by his colleagues as House Speaker in December 2019, and re-elected to the job following the 2021 election.

Rota is in touch with both the Speaker's office, and his MP office daily, Bradley added.

## Omidvar's Bill S-217 paused as similar measures moved forward in budget

As the Liberal government has included powers to freeze and seize sanctioned assets in the Budget Implementation Act, a Senate bill which would give the government similar powers if passed will be paused in the Red Chamber.

Independent Senator **Ratna Omidvar's** Bill S-217 is

currently at third reading in the Senate. Her office said it will remain on the Order Paper, but it will be kept at third reading to wait for the Budget Implementation Act (BIA) to make its way through Parliament.

Omidvar's office said the measures proposed in the BIA are "quite similar" to Bill S-217 and they are "quite encouraged" by it, but noted the office is still performing analysis on what the BIA entails.

Omidvar has introduced a Senate bill in three successive Parliaments to transform Canada's sanction regime to allow for the seizing of assets after an individual is sanctioned.

She told *The Hill Times* in March that the Russian invasion of Ukraine and sanctions on Russian officials and entities gave her bill "a new urgency."

In last month's federal budget, the government signalled it would move to "clarify" the ability of Foreign Affairs Minister **Mélanie Joly** to "cause the forfeiture and disposal of assets" from those under sanctions.

kphilipupillai@hilltimes.com  
*The Hill Times*



Independent Senator Ratna Omidvar's Bill S-217 is at third reading in the Senate. Photograph courtesy of Twitter

Getting banned from travelling to Russia is becoming a badge of honour, according to some who have been prohibited from setting foot on Russian soil, indefinitely, by the Russian foreign ministry.

On April 28, Russia announced it had imposed entry bans on close to 600 Canadians, keeping them from travelling to the country for what it says are "hostile actions" taken by the Canadian government. This new slate of travel restrictions for Canadians included Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** and his deputy and Finance Minister **Chrystia Freeland**, both of whom were already included on the country's "blacklist" and as a result were already banned from entering the country.

This came in addition to the 61 people indefinitely banned from Russia on April 21. That group of people were banned for what the Russian government described as "Russophobic" actions. The list included politicians, top-ranking political staff, military commanders, and journalists.

B.C. Premier **John Horgan** said at a press conference that he saw the ban as a "badge of honour."

"The fact that we were able to catch the attention of a brutal dictator in the mid-

## The 61 Canadians banned from Russia on April 21:

### Politicians:

- Bob Rae, Canadian ambassador to the United Nations
- Doug Ford, premier of Ontario
- John Horgan, premier of British Columbia
- Scott Moe, premier of Saskatchewan
- Jason Kenney, premier of Alberta
- Heather Stefanson, premier of Manitoba
- Romeo Dallaire, retired senator and former Canadian Forces lieutenant-general
- John Tory, mayor of Toronto
- Jim Watson, mayor of Ottawa

### Political staff:

- Katie Telford, chief of staff to the prime minister
- Cameron Ahmad, director of communications to the prime minister
- Jeremy Broadhurst, senior adviser to the prime minister
- Brian Clow, deputy chief of staff to the prime minister
- Dan Costello, foreign and defence policy adviser to the prime minister
- Sandra Aubé, chief of staff to the minister of foreign affairs
- Mike Power, chief of staff to the minister of national defence
- Oz Jungic, policy adviser to the prime minister
- Leslie Church, chief of staff to the deputy prime minister and minister of finance
- Patrick Travers, senior foreign policy adviser to the prime minister

### Public service:

- Tiff Macklem, governor of the Bank of Canada
- David Morrison, deputy minister of international trade and personal representative of the prime minister for the G7
- Michael Sabia, deputy minister of finance
- Graham Flack, secretary of the Treasury Board
- Janice Charette, acting clerk of the Privy Council

### Military/security personnel:

- David Vigneault, director of the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS)
- Lt.-Gen. Al Meininger, commander of the Canadian Air Force
- Vice-Admiral Craig Baines, commander of the Royal Canadian Navy
- Maj.-Gen. Steve Boivin, commander of Canadian Special Operations Forces Command
- Shelly Bruce, head of the Communications Security Establishment (CSE)
- Vice-Admiral Robert Auchterlonie, commander of the Canadian Joint Operations Command
- Col. Ryan Deming, commander of the 8 Wing division at the Canadian Forces Base in Trenton
- Lt.-Gen. Luc-Frédéric Gilbert, commander of the Operation Unifier training mission in Ukraine
- Frederick Côté, former commander of the Unifier training mission
- Melanie Lake, former commander of the Unifier training mission

- Ryan Stimpson, former commander of the Unifier training mission
- Jeffrey Toope, former commander of the Unifier training mission
- Sarah Heer, former commander of the Unifier training mission
- Lt.-Gen. Alain Pelletier, deputy commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command
- Rear Admiral Brian Santarpia, commander of Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic
- Maj.-Gen. Michel-Henri St-Louis, acting commander of the Canadian Army
- David Fraser, retired major general

### Journalists and media

- Terry Glavin, journalist and columnist
- John Ivison, journalist and columnist at the *National Post*
- Mark MacKinnon, senior international correspondent at the *Globe and Mail*
- Michael Melling, head of CTV News
- Sabrina Maddeaux, columnist
- Michael Harris, contributing editor for *The Tyee* and columnist for *The Hill Times*
- David Walmsley, editor-in-chief of the *Globe and Mail*
- Tasha Kheiriddin, *National Post* columnist
- Catherine Tait, president of the CBC

### Ukrainian-Canadian associations

- Borys Mikhaylets, Ukrainian League of Canada
- Halyna Vynnyk, head of the League of Ukrainian Canadian Women
- Jill Sinclair, Canada's representative to the Ukraine Defence Reform Advisory Board
- Chris Ecklund, founder of FightForUkraine.ca

### Private sector and not-for-profits:

- Balkan Devlen, senior fellow with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute
- Martine Irman, chair of Export Development Canada (EDC)
- Shuvaloy Majumdar, senior fellow with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute
- Roman Medyk, senior investment counsellor at BMO
- Ketty Nivyabandi, secretary general of Amnesty International Canada
- Richard Shimooka, fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute;
- Lloyd Axworthy, chair of the World Refugee Council

# NATIONAL TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION MONTH

IF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS  
REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT REDUCING  
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To achieve the goal of reducing smoking rates among Canadians to below 5% by 2035, the government should view vaping as a solution, not a problem.

Yet the government continues to attack vaping with tax increases, plans to abolish flavors and other measures limiting adult smokers access to evidence based information on the reduced risks of vaping product compared to smoking.

## OTHER COUNTRIES USE VAPING AS A TOOL TO FIGHT SMOKING.



### ENGLAND

In a pilot project, the UK government is allowing some hospitals to sell vapour products. It also allows doctors to prescribe vapour products as a way to help people quit smoking.



### SWEDEN

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### NEW ZEALAND

Thanks to a reasonable and science-based approach, this anti-smoking country has not implemented draconian nicotine strength regulations.

AS PART OF THE  
**NATIONAL TOBACCO  
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THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND  
HEALTH CANADA MUST CONSIDER  
**VAPING IN ITS FIGHT  
AGAINST SMOKING.**

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## Comment

# Make-or-break May for Conservative contenders

With three high-profile debates among the candidates taking place and the June 3 membership deadline approaching, now is the time to be on your game.

Tim Powers

Plain Speak



OTTAWA—The Conservative leadership race has gotten real. Wannabe candidates have now fallen out of the competition and six “verified” candidates remain. Just to be clear, they have not been verified as clinically insane for putting their hand up to lead the Conservative Party of Canada, or any political organization for that matter. Rather, they have each paid \$300,000 and each found 500 party members from across the country to support their leadership quest. If you still have questions about their mental well-being for coughing up that kind of cash, I would direct you to their spokespeople.

The sacred six, in no specific order are: Pierre Poilievre, Patrick Brown, Jean Charest, Leslyn Lewis, Roman Baber, and Scott Aitchison. Candidates’ positions and platforms aside, the Conservative Party should take some satisfaction that they have a six-person field, they raised \$1.8-million between them, and 3,000 people told this crew to give it a go. At a very base level, that says there is an enthusiasm for trying to make the Conservative Party a competitive political vehicle. Disclaimer here: while this is positive, now there is still no guarantee that once the race is done there won’t be broken hearts, dreams, and branches of the conservative movement to clean up. Such is the nature of the Conservative Party and the political tribes that populate it.

The next month will be a crucial period for the candidates and their teams. While the official winner won’t be named until Sept. 10, May could be the month when the campaign is won or lost. With three high-profile debates among the candidates taking place and the June 3 membership deadline approaching, now is the time to

be on your game. Mistakes or missteps this month could be paralyzing to top candidates like Poilievre, Brown, Charest, and Lewis. Alternatively, strong or steady performances by members of that group can enhance their candidacies. Similarly for Baber and Aitchison, this is their time of opportunity. For portions of the next month, they will have stages they never had before and the ability to inflate their stock.

May might be a month of trepidation of the gatekeepers (yes, Pierre, the CPC has gatekeepers, too) of the Conservative Party brand. First, if the debates and the post-debate storytelling from the campaigns gets personally nasty, the story about an organization on the verge of breaking apart will dominate headlines. The custodians of the CPC will just have to hold on until mid-June when they can publicly release membership numbers for the vote. It is widely expected those numbers will exceed previous leadership contests.

For both the candidates and the party, an extremely destructive wildcard has just been thrown their way. As is being roundly reported in the U.S. media, the U.S. Supreme Court, apparently driven by its Republican majority of justices, is considering throwing out the historic *Roe v. Wade* decision. A draft decision circulating says five of the nine U.S. justices on the court support overturning this crucial jurisprudence which properly affirmed a woman’s legal right to choose in America. While this is wrong-headed and destructive on so many levels, as this story evolves it will enter the Canadian Conservative leadership race like a bolt of lightning.

Conservatives have rightly lost elections in the recent past—looking at you, Andrew Scheer—for not properly understanding, protecting, and defending abortion rights. Liberals, with great effect, have stoked fears about the Conservatives’ “hidden agenda” on all manner of hard-fought reproductive and equality rights. Any candidate found wanting or evasive on the protection of those rights—or in the case of Lewis, not acknowledging that reproductive rights like abortion are not up for debate in Canada—will cause political harm to themselves and the party. Clarity, not political calculation, is essential here.

It is a big month ahead for the Conservatives on the path to choosing a new leader. It’s make-or-break time for several campaigns.

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

The Hill Times

# Political bodies, our choice

Given that we are in the middle of a Conservative leadership race with social conservatives flexing, it behooves us to take our heads out of our collective asses and fight for the right to health care for all women.

Erica Ifill

Bad+Bitchy



OTTAWA—Under his eye, indeed. Across the border, Republicans and conservatives alike are remaking the United States in the image of the Republic of Gilead. On Monday night, *Politico* broke the story of the year so far, which is that the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) is poised to overturn one of the most defining decisions of the last century, *Roe v. Wade*. As Justices Sandra Day O’Connor, Anthony Kennedy, and Davis Souter warned in the 1992’s *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decision, “An entire generation has come of age free to assume Roe’s concept of liberty in defining the capacity of women to act in society, and to make reproductive decisions,” *Politico* reminded us. The potential overturn of *Roe v. Wade* is a white-supremacist attack on women’s health, body autonomy, agency, and rights to a full suite of health-care options. It is deeply misogynistic and solves the problem of how to build a far-right, dogmatic, Christian nation. *The Nation* points out: “The anti-abortion movement in the United States has long been complicit with white supremacy.” In the 1980s the KKK put out wanted posters for abortion providers. If you force white women to have babies you have systematically reduced their economic power, and therefore their political power, while ensuring the continuation of the white race.

But anti-abortion laws force all women to have babies, why is this about white women? Because they are the only ones not criminalized for having an abortion, since they are necessary for nation-building. It is the “undesirable” women who are the targets. As an activist in *Teen Vogue* pointed out, “laws like this especially target Black and brown women, disabled people, people with low income, or working-class people. It’s a structural issue to even get access to abortion.”

In January, Texas signed into law Senate Bill 8, or the Texas Heartbeat Act, which prohibits abortion “at six weeks on the assertion that it is when a fetal heartbeat can be detected on a sonogram.” NBC News went on to note that medical professionals “say it is inaccurate and misleading to call the activity a heartbeat.” So basically this law is not rooted in science, but in the arrogance

of patriarchy to marginalize half of the population and the violence of restrictive and exclusionary political ideologies. The first woman to be charged under this law was a Hispanic woman who was arrested for murder for self-inducing an abortion. Because that’s what women do when abortion is banned.

In 2014, Purvi Patel became the first woman in United States history to be charged, convicted, and sentenced for feticide. What warranted such a dubious distinction? Patel is an Indian-American woman who claimed she had a miscarriage, but hospital officials contradicted her account and claimed she ended the pregnancy with illegal abortion drugs. The Indiana statute that she was convicted of violating, according to the *Washington Post*, “bans ‘knowingly or intentionally terminat[ing] a human pregnancy’ with any intention other than producing a live birth, removing a dead fetus or performing a legal abortion.”

In 2018, a Black woman from Mississippi, Latice Fisher, was charged with second-degree murder for the death of her newborn after delivering a still-born baby in her home. Thanks to the work of advocates, those charges were eventually dropped, but as the racial justice organization, Color of Change, tweeted, “Things would be a lot different if the District Attorney had never charged her in the first place.” The organization contextualizes this criminalization by noting that “Black women die from pregnancy complications at 3 to 4X the rate of white women. Fear of imprisonment should NOT be one of the reasons our people avoid seeking medical care.”

Just last year, Brittney Poolaw, a Native American woman from Oklahoma, was charged with—and convicted of—first-degree manslaughter for suffering a miscarriage.

BIPOC women, poor women, rural women, women with precarious status, and women with disabilities are, according to Reuters, “less likely to have medical insurance or the means to meet the extra costs that come with travelling farther to other states.”

In addition to extra costs, how does one find an abortion provider who is brave enough to perform abortions when the law is so restrictive? How does one access abortion care? In Canada, there is no law that enshrines the right to an abortion and therefore restrictions to access are used in lieu of an outright ban on the practice. This is how the Republicans in the U.S. got to the point where we are now—it began with restrictions to access. In other words, given that we are in the middle of a Conservative leadership race with social conservatives flexing, it behooves us to take our heads out of our collective asses and fight for the right to health care for all women, taking care to address access, cost, and other barriers for women who are more marginalized. It’s time for us to collectively say that abortion is health care and any restriction of it is the misogyny and violence of underfunding and undersupplying health care for at least 50 per cent of the population. This is what anti-woke looks like. Are you ready?

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

The Hill Times

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## News

# Industry stakeholders, experts applaud feds' critical minerals spending, as geopolitics loom large in supply chains

Canada must 'learn from other market-oriented liberal democracies,' when it comes to the development of our critical mineral sector, says Conservative resources critic Greg McLean.

BY MIKE LAPOINTE

The federal government's recent \$3.8-billion budget proposal to develop Canada's increasingly important critical minerals sector has been met with support from industry experts. But David Billedeau, senior director of natural resources and environmental sustainability at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, says it's still "the start of a very long journey—other countries are more advanced in this space than Canada, and we need to catch up."

Pointing out that countries like Australia realized that they were falling behind and made significant legislative changes to speed up approval processes for projects while still maintaining exceptional environmental standards, Conservative MP Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, Alta.) said in an email to *The Hill Times* that Canada must "learn from other market-oriented liberal democracies."

The Conservatives are calling for mechanisms to ensure that Canada "does not become a low-cost commodity supplier to price-setting jurisdictions," said McLean, his party's natural resources critic. He said it's the government's responsibility to make sure key resources "are not exploitable by hostile, foreign state-owned entities, to the detriment of Canada's national security interests."

Australia and Europe have already established critical mineral strategies to offset China's dominance of the market, said McLean, adding that at the very least, Canada's co-ordination needs to include the United States, and probably Mexico as well (through the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA).

China controls "the vast majority of the world's critical mineral supply and associated value-add supply chains," said McLean. "And that share continues to grow."

According to the Conservative MP, Canada will not be able to meet its climate and national security goals if the federal government fails to take "serious action" to reduce approval periods and work with allies to develop an adequate supply chain for value-added, high-technology products.

In addressing geopolitical issues, such as China's dominance in supply chains as well as Russia's invasion of Ukraine that has also disrupted supply.

Pointing to the government's mandate requiring all consumer auto sales to be electric in a little more than 10 years, Billedeau said Canada has limited capacity to process raw minerals into finished production, particularly in the EV battery space.

"The economic opportunities of processing critical minerals to



Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson, left, Conservative natural resources critic Greg McLean. Wilkinson recently said that given Canada's 'significant deposits of every mineral needed to manufacture [electric vehicle] batteries,' the country is in a position to be an 'integral player in the transition.' *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade

## Ottawa has 'put their chips on the table'

In launching the Critical Minerals Strategy, the federal government made a number of proposals within the 2022 budget, including providing \$1.5-billion over seven years for infrastructure investments starting in 2023-24, \$79.2-million over five years starting in 2022-23 for public access to critical mineral exploration and development data, and a 30 per cent tax credit for mineral exploration expenses.

The budget also proposes up to \$1-billion over six years, starting in 2024-25, to the Department of Innovation, with "prioritization given to manufacturing, processing, and recycling applications," as well as \$40-million over eight years, starting in 2022-23, to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada to support regulatory processes in the North.

Ottawa has "put their chips on the table," said Billedeau, but "right now, we are kind of in a tail-wagging-the-dog situation, where we have a budget, but we still need a critical minerals strategy."

Amid recent geopolitical shifts directly affecting supply chains in the increasingly critical global industry, Billedeau said the chamber is looking to see the strategy connect to Canada's economic growth and net-zero strategies

support our own [zero-emission vehicle] mandate are currently set to benefit China and other countries with more processing infrastructure in place," said Billedeau. "While we have these minerals in the ground, we need to sustainably develop and process these resources here at home to fully realize the benefits of net-zero and critical minerals."

When asked about the environmental implications of critical mineral mining projects, and achieving net-zero goals, Billedeau said "it's a really important issue."

Adding that the chamber welcomes investments focused on engaging with First Nations, supporting research and development, and improving regulatory processes, it was the chamber's view that a green economy must be powered by green resources, and that "we need to ensure that critical minerals extraction and closed loop systems are both economically feasible and environmentally sustainable."

## Budget 'exceeded expectations,' says CEO of mining association

Pierre Gratton, president and CEO of the Mining Association of Canada, said the budget exceeded his organization's expectations.

"It's addressing the entire value chain, it's a real strategy," said Gratton. "It's not scattergun.

It's focused on the very front end of public geoscience investments to the back end—at least as far as our sector is concerned—of helping to incentivize the transformation of metals and the kinds of products you need in the automotive sector for batteries, which we don't really produce."

"It really is a start-to-finish strategy with some significant dollars attached to it," said Gratton, adding that it's been extremely well-received by the industry, "even some of the ones that are more skeptical of this government."

Gratton said that if there were a weakness on the value chain, it would concern the issue of permits, something he thinks is recognized by government.

"This plan can't succeed if it takes 10 years to build a permanent mine," he said. "We need to find ways to be more efficient."

"All the dominoes fall: we can't actually increase our domestic production, we won't be able to supply cathode manufacturers, who won't be able to supply the battery manufacturers, and the automobile sector won't have the batteries needed to electrify," said Gratton, who also said the association has estimated it will take about eight more nickel mines just to maintain Canada's market share.

Trevor Walker, president and CEO of Frontier Lithium, a Sudbury, Ont.-based junior mining company that could soon be a major lithium supplier in North America, said his company was "ecstatic" with the government's announcement, calling it a "firm commitment."

"In our calls globally for people that would love to invest in our resource and our company, it's really turned some heads," he said.

Walker also said the federal government's budgetary announcement "sits really nicely with Ontario's critical mineral strategy," and that clearly, Queen's Park and Ottawa are "aligned or at least aligned on paper."

"Let's get going because we have a world-class resource we're working on in the Great Lakes region," said Walker.

## Relations with China and Russia 'just not going to be the same'

Charles Burton, senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, said it's important for Canada to have a source for these critical minerals that can be shared with like-minded democratic countries, because of the "great concern that we have about China's dominance in this area."

"Not only in terms of China's domestic mining, but also China's use of its Belt and Road Initiative infrastructure funding programs, particularly in Africa, to gain control of critical mineral resources in the countries that China provides financial incentives to," said Burton. "The government's announcement didn't stress that national security aspect as much as I did, but the effect is the same—clearly we're getting serious about ensuring that we have Canadian supply chains for these minerals that will prevent us in the future from being subjected to economic coercion by China."

The world's geopolitical balance is shifting rapidly as a result of Russia's actions in Ukraine, with Russia potentially shifting into a close alliance with China to sustain its economy and security, said Burton, who recently gave evidence to the House Industry and Technology Committee, alongside others who have expertise in the mining sector.

"I think that the government's decision to allocate those funds and establish this critical mineral strategy is very timely, in light of what's happened," said Burton.

"We're really heading into a situation where relations with China and Russia are just not going to be the same as they were before."

The issue has taken on an "incredible, real geopolitical dimension," said Gratton, in that Russia is the third-largest exporter and producer of nickel in the world.

"And that source of supply is now a question mark. Canada used to be No. 2, we're now No. 6," said Gratton. "We don't produce as much as we used to, we let our base metal sector shrink, and we have to do the opposite."

According to Miriam Galipeau, spokesperson for Natural Resources Canada, critical minerals are the "building blocks" for the future of Canada's green and digital economy. The country is already a top global producer of many critical minerals, and has the capacity to produce much more.

"Access to reliable and sustainable sources of critical minerals is a strategic and economic security consideration for all nations," wrote Galipeau in an emailed response to *The Hill Times*. "The global impact of COVID-19 has underscored the need for secure, sustainable, and diversified supply chains for key industrial sectors that rely on these minerals."

As part of the government's March 2021 revisions to the Investment Canada Act Guidelines on the National Security Review of Investments, done to clarify the types of transactions that will undergo enhanced security, transactions involving critical minerals and their supply chains may now be taken into account in national security reviews, according to Galipeau.

mlapointe@hilltimes.com  
*The Hill Times*

## Canada's critical minerals

In 2021, the government developed the following list of 31 minerals considered "critical for the sustainable economic success of Canada and our allies and to position Canada as the leading mining nation, as set out in the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan (CMMP)."

- Aluminum
- Antimony
- Bismuth
- Cesium
- Chromium
- Cobalt
- Copper
- Fluorspar
- Gallium
- Germanium
- Graphite
- Helium
- Indium
- Lithium
- Magnesium
- Manganese
- Molybdenum
- Nickel
- Niobium
- Platinum group metals
- Potash
- Rare earth elements
- Scandium
- Tantalum
- Tellurium
- Tin
- Titanium
- Tungsten
- Uranium
- Vanadium
- Zinc

—Source: Natural Resources Canada



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# Editorial

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## Editorial

### Now is not the time to weaken climate regulations

One finding went relatively unremarked among the headline-grabbing details stemming from last month's suite of reports from the federal environment and sustainable development commissioner.

As *The Hill Times'* Kevin Philipupillai reported this week, Environment Commissioner Jerry DeMarco found the federal government does not have reliable data on the emissions reduction or climate resilience estimates for more recent projects.

And it's not even that this is something the Liberals have ignored or failed to put in place; it's worse. It's something that Infrastructure Canada watered down because stakeholders said it was too hard to keep up.

As Philipupillai reported: "DeMarco told the House Environment Committee on April 28 that Infrastructure Canada designed and implemented an effective process to assess the environmental impacts of infrastructure projects in 2018, but that this process was weakened in 2021 to the point that Infrastructure Canada was unable to adequately account for the expected greenhouse gas emissions and resilience outcomes of the programs it funded."

Originally, the government required funding applicants to use internationally accepted standards for resilience and greenhouse gas accounting, hire a qualified third-party professional to attest that the applications conformed to these international standards, and submit raw data as their projects unfolded.

However, by March 2021, Infrastructure Canada "streamlined the process to require less information" from applicants, David Normand, a principal at the Office of the Auditor General and the lead author of the infrastructure report, told *The Hill Times*. But this was done in ways that probably addressed complaints from stakeholders that the initial process took too long. "In our opinion, they let go of too much," Normand said.

The department says it simplified things while putting a stronger internal review process in place, but there's no longer any third-party sign off.

As Normand said, there are "real and concrete advantages" to funding infrastructure that reflects the government's climate priorities, as long as the government has a clear idea of what it is funding. "Without good data, they can't do that."

Adjusting to and making the most of climate-conscious measures isn't something that's necessarily going to be a walk in the preserved park.

But, in the words of Coldplay, nobody said it'd be easy.

Infrastructure Canada isn't exactly known for its speed, but the answer to further delays isn't to simply dilute the processes in place.

If we're going to be serious about attacking climate change, that commitment needs to be present even when it's easier to do things differently.

*The Hill Times*

## Letters to the Editor

### Feds have solid case for F-35 contract—but haven't made it: Nossal

Re: "Decision to sole-source F-35s was Rlinchpin for chaos that followed: Alan Williams," (*The Hill Times*, April 27, p. 8). Alan Williams, who always knows whereof he speaks on Canadian defence procurement, took issue with my comment to Peter Mazereeuw (*The Hill Times Hot Room*, April 8, episode 93) that the Conservative government of Stephen Harper had "an exceedingly solid case" for deciding on a sole-source contract for the F-35 in 2010.

I should have made clearer that the Conservative government had a solid case that they could have made, but didn't. For Williams and I actually agree about the case that was put by the Harper government in 2010, though we disagree about what made that case so shonky. He focuses on price, capability, and economic opportunity. I have different criticisms: in my book *Charlie Foxtrot*, I argued that the Conservatives didn't actually know why they wanted the F-35—other than it was the fighter that the Royal Canadian Air Force wanted, and as a result their justifications for the F-35 sole source were politicized, sometimes silly, and always misleading about price.

But I contend that there is an excellent case that could have been made for sole-sourcing the F-35. That case can be summed up in a single question: what fighter will the United States Air Force (USAF) deploy to defend North American airspace in the 2020s and 2030s?

The answer was known as early as the mid-1990s, when the U.S. Congress decid-

ed that in future, the USAF would fly just two fighters: the F-22 and the winner of the Joint Strike Fighter program, which turned out to be the F-35. And since the U.S. does not allow foreigners to purchase F-22s, that left Canada just one option for our future fighter fleet: the F-35.

That is the solid case, if only the Conservative government had taken the time to explain to Canadians the delights of interoperability in continental air defence. Interoperability requires we have to help defend the continent in a way that satisfies our American allies, which, in an era of networked air defence, means flying whatever they are flying.

The government—the Conservatives then, the Liberals now—should have been straighter with Canadians. In choosing our new fighter, that was the only question we needed to ask; none of the other issues—price, capability, economic benefits—actually matter.

Yes, this is a most difficult message for political leaders to embrace, for we Canadians like to believe that we should have a full range of choices in world politics. But in reality, Canadian options in continental defence are severely constrained, and always shaped by the geostrategic needs of the United States. We are not well served when our political leaders pretend that we have room for maneuver that simply isn't there.

**Kim Richard Nossal**  
 Professor emeritus, Centre for International and Defence Policy,  
 Queen's University

### No one should fear heading to work, writes Chelsea reader

I have worked in the mining industry and have personally worked in areas where coworkers were killed on the job. Most workers are willing to go above and beyond what they are required to do in order to keep things running smoothly. Unfortunately, employers often do not address risks until it's too late.

No worker should be injured, made sick, or die just because they had to make a living.

Current workplace health and safety provisions are failing us. The pandemic has helped to expose the lack of protec-

tions, and I'm concerned for my family, friends, and coworkers.

Too many Canadians have suffered preventable injury, illness, and death because politicians and leaders have failed to act in time, or with enough force. We can't let their stories die with them.

We can't let them become statistics. We can't let their deaths be in vain.

Every worker should be able to go to work without fear. Every worker should return safely from their shift.

**Derrick Thomas**  
 Chelsea, Que.



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Opinion

# Let's make sure we get Canada's critical minerals strategy right



Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland's 2022 budget committed \$1.5-billion in investment over seven years for infrastructure and supply chain projects to help realize critical mineral mining projects in Canada, writes Rohan Hazelton. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Recent geopolitical developments have underscored the need to not treat critical minerals solely as an ingredient in cellphones and electric vehicle batteries.

Rohan Hazelton



Opinion

Given the context of this year's federal budget—surging energy prices, post-COVID economic stabilization, and a war in Europe—the Government of Canada was understandably more focused than perhaps in any of the Trudeau government's previous budgets. It was not Christmas morning with a bauble for everyone. It was a disciplined and focused approach to the challenges ahead for our economy, addressing needs while trying to contain spending. Among the new areas of investment, however, was a hidden gem that could turn out to be transformative for the economy of the North, and to North American security and sovereignty in the economy of the future. This was the first federal budget to identify critical minerals as a sector of strategic importance to Canada, and to commit to the development of a cohesive critical minerals strategy. This is bold, this should be commended, and this is necessary.

Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland's budget committed \$1.5-billion in

investment over seven years for infrastructure and supply chain projects to help realize critical mineral mining projects in Canada. It also committed investments toward developing data sets to help inform critical minerals exploration. It also announced an experimental 30 per cent Critical Mineral Exploration Tax Credit for certain exploration expenses related to Canadian development work in particular critical minerals and rare earth metals.

It further commits to research funds through the National Research Council to support critical minerals technology and value chains, and additionally commits to re-establishing a Centre of Excellence on Critical Minerals.

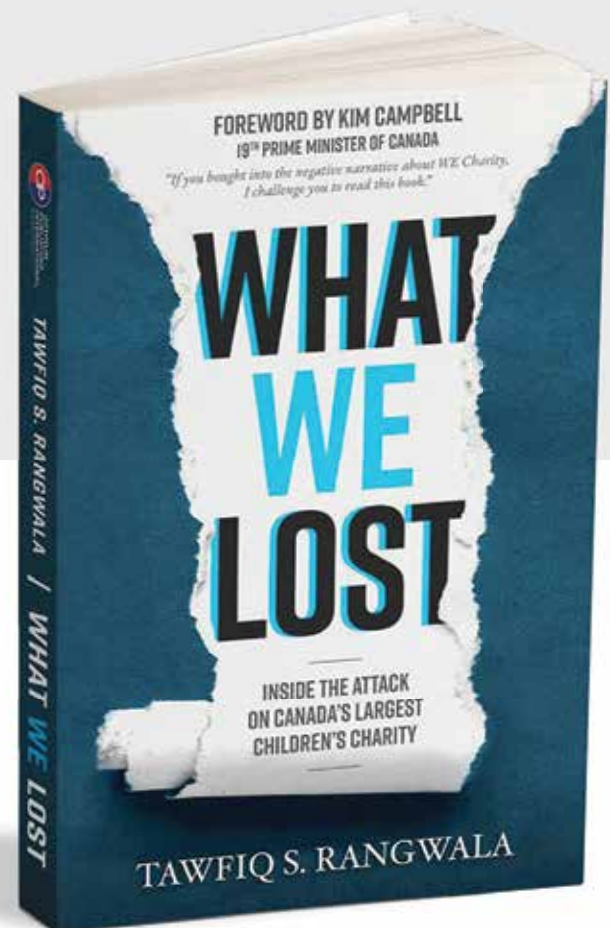
As our government works to leverage these investments to gain maximum impact, it would be prudent to consider several cautionary notes. We should maximize the flexibility of the \$1.5-billion fund, focus on the shovel-readiness of projects, and prioritize those that exemplify the economic values that ought to define future growth in the mining sector: Indigenous participation and environmental stewardship.

On the first point of flexibility, the federal budget notes that the Strategic Innovation Fund will be harnessed to support this growth area in Canadian mining, and that it will focus its efforts on manufacturing, processing, and recycling applications. While these are all worthwhile pursuits, we may want to start with so-called "lower-hanging fruit"—projects that can more quickly be commercialized into success stories to help build investor confidence and momentum in the sector. At times, the less prescriptive, the better; core infrastructure needs can sometimes be less dazzling than new technology, but can make a quicker impact.

On that note, the Government of Canada should also start with existing mining

Continued on page 12

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## Comment

# Beneath all the vague talk, the causes of populist chaos are clear enough

It's pretty clear by now that the underlying purpose of these events lies with organizers embracing a populist reaction to Canada in all its progressive manifestations.

Les  
Whittington

*Need to Know*



OTTAWA—The idea of motorcyclists rolling into town and sort of taking over is a unique North American postwar cultural phenomenon.

The whole outlaw biker concept, which took shape after a raucous “invasion” by an unex-

pectedly large crowd of bikers during the July 4 weekend in Hollister, Calif., in 1947, was immortalized by Marlon Brando's comment in the 1953 movie *The Wild One*. Asked what he was rebelling against as he and his gang pushed people around in a small town, Brando answered: “Whattaya got?”

I was reminded of that remark when the so-called “Rolling Thunder” travelling outrage crew came to Ottawa last weekend in hopes of staging a remake of February's trucker occupation in the capital.

On April 30, there was an event at the National War Memorial and a lot of talk about respecting veterans and the usual accusations against Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for supposedly committing crimes against Canadians over COVID and misplaced demands regarding vaccine mandates and mask-wearing. Police encountered an unruly crowd by the Rideau Centre as the rally, or whatever it was, got into gear on Friday night. That's not surprising, given that organizers of these sorts of events can always count

on seeing their numbers inflated by the close proximity to the University of Ottawa, where some students see fit to stage near-riots over football games.

But the police, hoping to make up for their utter failure to control the trucker-led takeover of Ottawa's downtown core in the winter, enforced their new prohibition against vehicle park-ins by protestors. So, on Saturday, the several hundred bikers here for “Rolling Thunder” were reduced

Continued on page 12

# Terror caught on tape has power to turn the tide

If one photo of a single soldier's body being violated can cause the U.S. population to protest military interventions, I cannot wait to see what reaction the Russian public will have to a set of 15 videos.

Scott  
Taylor

*Inside Defence*



OTTAWA—Last week, the press office of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Ottawa distributed a collection of video links to Canadian media outlets.

In total, there were 15 separate video clips, all of which contained alleged atrocities being committed by Ukrainian soldiers against Russian prisoners of war.

To the best of my knowledge, no Canadian media have broadcast these gruesome scenes for the simple reason that they are so graphic, even a warning to viewers about the content would not be suffice to avert trauma.

One of the clips is a literal “snuff flick,” wherein a purported



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is pictured during a 2009 UN Disarmament Conference. It's likely the rationale behind the Russian Foreign Ministry's decision to circulate videos of alleged Ukrainian war crimes was to undermine the current overwhelming popularity of the Ukrainian defenders among the Canadian public, writes Scott Taylor. *UN photograph by Jean-Marc Ferre*

Ukrainian captor stabs a bound Russian prisoner repeatedly in the throat and chest. The Russian shrieks in fear and pain, then drops his head as he dies. The jubilant Ukrainian then brandishes his bloodied dagger towards the camera and shouts “Slava Ukraine!”

There are a number of these videos that depict petrified Russian soldiers being shot while bound in captivity.

Some clips show badly wounded Russians being executed rather than given medical treatment, while others reveal bloodied and bruised Russian prisoners being physically tortured and tormented.

Another common theme of these videos is that of Ukrainians desecrating the corpses of dead Russian soldiers. One such scene has more than one Ukrainian soldier urinating on the snow-covered face of a dead Russian infantryman.

In a particularly disturbing clip, a Ukrainian soldier is filmed stabbing his dagger into the eye socket of a dead Russian trooper.

Also illustrated was the Ukrainian terror tactic wherein they take the cell phones from dead Russian soldiers and then use them to call the deceased's family in order to taunt them with the news that their loved one has been killed.

I have to believe that the rationale behind the Russian Foreign Ministry's decision to circulate these videos was to undermine the current overwhelming popularity of the Ukrainian defenders among the Canadian public.

By illustrating these atrocities committed by Ukrainian soldiers, perhaps the Kremlin thinks it will invoke a measure of sympathy for those young men serving in the Russian military. If that was the

case, they are forgetting the fact that Russia invaded Ukraine.

Sorry—Vladimir Putin instructed his commanders to conduct a “Special Military Operation” in Ukraine.

Not that anyone can justify the execution of prisoners or the desecration of corpses by the Ukrainian military, but those Russians would not have been captured or killed if they were not deployed into Ukraine in the first place.

It is also a wildly divergent public relations course from the early days of the invasion when Russian media were proclaiming an almost bloodless liberation.

As the Russian offensives were halted and then driven back by the Ukrainian defenders, even Putin's spokesman had to admit that their losses had been “significant.”

Now the Kremlin is sending out videos of their soldiers being humiliated and brutalized at the hands of victorious Ukrainians.

One would think that such images would be ruthlessly suppressed and vehemently denounced as a “hoax” by Russian authorities.

It will be pretty hard for the Kremlin to question the authenticity of these video clips when it is their own embassies circulating them.

If it is true that Putin is mobilizing reservists and conscripts to bolster his badly battered forces still waging war in Ukraine, then these videos will not be good for recruiting volunteers.

I can only imagine the impact such images would have on your average Russian soldier.

As for the Russian public's reaction to these videos, one would think it would be that of initial revulsion at what the Ukrainians have done to their soldiers, and then a sense of betrayal on the part of Putin.

Liberated people don't execute their saviours and then urinate on their corpses.

One example of public outrage at seeing their soldier's body desecrated by foreign fighters occurred during the U.S.-led international intervention in war-torn Somalia. In October 1993, Somali insurgents shot down a U.S. Black Hawk helicopter over Mogadishu.

Word soon spread that the body of an American soldier was being dragged through the streets by an angry mob. *Toronto Star* reporter Paul Watson was in Mogadishu covering the war and he was able to snap a photo of U.S. Army staff Sergeant William David Cleveland's body being dragged and beaten by enraged Somalis. That photo was first published in *The Star* and then reprinted in many American newspapers.

That image won Watson a Pulitzer Prize and the public outcry forced American politicians to end the intervention. Many analysts have opined that this single photo was what kept the U.S. from intervening to prevent the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

If one photo of a single soldier's body being violated can cause the U.S. population to protest military interventions, I cannot wait to see what reaction the Russian public will have to those 15 videos.

In the meantime, it would be wise counsel for Canadians to convey to our Ukrainian friends that violations of the Geneva convention cannot be condoned under any circumstance.

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

*The Hill Times*

## Comment

# Get used to it, Monsieur Legault: English is the international language

For Quebec nationalists, laws like Bill 96 are their revenge against the dominant economic role 'The English' played more than a century ago.

Andrew Caddell

*With All Due Respect*



**K**AMOURASKA, QUE.—April 23 came and went without much fanfare this year, as it always does. If you had forgotten, it was St. George's Day. It is odd no one notices, the given the chauvinism for other patron saints. On St. Patrick's Day (March 17) everyone is Irish. St. Andrew's Day (Nov. 30) is an opportunity for Scottish dancing. Even St. David's Day (March 1) is known to the Welsh. St. George is remembered by a scant few.

The saint, who was born in what is now Israel, was a Roman soldier of Greek parents who refused to recant his Christian beliefs and was executed on April 23, 303 CE. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, a tale was spun of George slaying a dragon near Coventry, around the time of the Crusades. In reality, he never came near England.

In Quebec, St. George's Day fell just after the Quebec National Assembly's Committee on Culture and Education wrapped up its clause-by-clause study of Bill 96—An Act respecting French, the Official and Common Language of Québec—which purports to strengthen the status of French in Quebec, but is really a nasty, xenophobic attack on the 1.2 million English-speakers in Quebec. They are often derided as *Les Anglais*, despite their roots in Ireland, Scotland, Italy, Greece, Poland, Ukraine, the Caribbean, and Asia. Not England.

Among its more egregious sections, Bill 96 allows the search and seizure of computers or phones of English businesses without recourse to the courts; restricts English in small businesses to companies with 25 employees; restricts all official communication with "the State" to French, and undermines constitutional protections for trials in English.

In a bizarre twist, it also insists funding agencies give priority to the "support and enhancement" of research conducted in French. This would involve hundreds of millions of dollars of government spending.

This runs counter to current reality. In the *McGill International Review*, Alua Kulenova writes, "English is so prevalent in the scientific community that even in

countries like Germany, France, and Spain, English academic papers far outnumber those in their own respective languages ... advancing one's scientific career internationally requires knowledge of English."

Until the First World War, German was the rising scientific language in Europe. It then declined, and English rose mainly because of the prevalence of scientists in Britain and the United States. After science, business embraced it in the post-Second World War expansion. English grew in popularity, not as a "tool of colonialism," but because it is easy to learn: there are no genders, no complicated conjugations, tenses are simple, and a vocabulary of about 1,000 words is enough to be understood.

While French is the language of daily life for eight million Quebecers, English, its great rival, is now the international language. This annoys and offends Quebec nationalists, for whom anything English is anathema, even though the English-speaking community has become a huge asset to the province's economy. And despite French being the official language here since 1974, most government information is provided in English. It is Quebec's "dirty little secret."

Nonetheless, last week, Premier François Legault said Quebec could never be officially bilingual, as that would lead it to becoming "another Louisiana." In fact, services provided in English have not caused the assimilation of the millions of Quebecers who speak only French. This is the difference between institutional versus personal bilingualism, a distinction one might expect the premier of Quebec could grasp.

The rationale for Bill 96 and its absurd regulations is the supposed "decline" of French in Quebec, even though

more people are speaking the language than ever before. For Quebec nationalists, laws like Bill 96 are their revenge against the dominant economic role "The English" played a century and more ago.

But revenge is not justice. And a Quebec that communicates with its citizens in English is not signing the death warrant for the French language, it is simply providing services to people who require them. And pay for them.

Scientists and businesspeople around the world now use English as their common language. Quebec's CAQ government is shooting itself in the foot by ignoring reality. No one may remember St. George's Day, but England's language is now the world's *lingua franca*.

Andrew Caddell is retired from *Global Affairs Canada*, where he was a senior policy adviser. He previously worked as an adviser to Liberal governments. He is a fellow with the *Canadian Global Affairs Institute* and a town councillor in Kamouraska, Que. He can be reached at [pipson52@hotmail.com](mailto:pipson52@hotmail.com).

*The Hill Times*

## ADVERTISEMENT

# Now is the time for tariff relief for farmers if we want food for the world



Brendan Byrne, Chair, Grain Farmers of Ontario

**AS AN ONTARIO FARMER**, I believe there is no greater service I can provide than to produce safe, healthy food for Canada and markets across the globe – and do it in a way that helps sustain this world for future generations.

And frankly, I need help making sure I can continue to do this – especially from the federal government.

My family has been producing food on our farm in Essex County for four generations – each generation becoming more efficient, growing more food on the same land to support Canada's food security and to export around the globe. This has created jobs for people in my community and across the province and helped grow Ontario's economy.

This year, words like famine are being discussed. Russia's horrific invasion of Ukraine has put the food supply in danger for many people worldwide. Russia and Ukraine supply 25 per cent of the world's wheat. The European Union, Africa, and Asia depend on that wheat to feed their people, and now they have to find it somewhere else.

Farmers everywhere need to grow an abundant crop. That means feeding our plants and making them as healthy as possible. Farmers often add nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, and much of that product has traditionally come from Russia. This year, Ontario's farmers are facing a critical supply shortage.

In 2021, before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, fertilizer prices were escalating because of shortages and we were dealing with a 119 per cent increase in costs on some of our most important tools – so I will tell you, we were already using them sparingly. Now we are seeing additional increases of 35 - 45 per cent due to tariffs on the fertilizer shipments coming from Russia.

Tariffs are clearly a vital tool for the government to discourage people from supporting the Russian economy by purchasing Russian goods and services. Farmers understand that, and we support economic sanctions against Russia.

However, Ontario's farmers need to produce as much as possible for the world. To do that, we need fertilizer. To get fertilizer, we will have to pay the extraordinary costs due to tariff pricing. And just as consumers are feeling the pinch from sky-high inflation, we are also bearing the increased cost of fuel, food, equipment, and other costs that continue to rise. But we also pay carbon tax on the fuel used to dry grains (wet grains can't be processed into food for people), we pay retail prices for all of our business needs, and we sell at wholesale – and we can't set our own prices to allow us to recoup costs.

We need help from the federal government in the form of some type of tariff relief. We thank them for allowing the fertilizer to come into Canada, but we can't use it to grow food for Canada and the world if we simply cannot afford it. There needs to be a program that offsets these costs to farmers. As a country we must support the people and family businesses that produce food.

Ontario farmers will have to plan now for the coming years to ensure they can access the nutrients their crops need from new sources other than Russia or Belarus. And we are committed to looking for those sources.

Less than two per cent of Canadians grow food for ALL Canadians. We are asking the government to find ways to relieve the costs of these tariffs and help us be able to grow the abundant crop that Canada and the world will need this year and for the years to come.

Now is the time. ●

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## Comment

# Beneath all the vague talk, the causes of populist chaos are clear enough



Inflamed by reams of conspiratorial misinformation, the thinking behind events like the weekend Rolling Thunder protest in Ottawa plays out as a rejection of today's cosmopolitan, tolerant, and multicultural Canada, writes Les Whittington. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

Continued from page 10

to a bit part, transiting the downtown in a brief police-supervised parade.

If the point of it all was vague, there's no doubt that there are a lot of Canadians who share in the post-COVID unrest and are indeed against whatever the government has got to offer. Last weekend, for instance, there were many non-bikers in cars and pickup trucks festooned with Canadian and Quebec flags and "F\*ck Trudeau" slogans cruising into Ottawa for the weekend rally, which drew hundreds to the war memorial. And we've been seeing this kind of angry outpouring in events on Parliament Hill going back several years, as well as in the anti-Trudeau rabble rousers who tried to disrupt the Liberal election campaign last year and, of course, in the crowds who faced off against the police in Ottawa three months ago.

As for motivation, it's hard to top Freedom with a capital F. It's a tremendous open-ended and beguiling concept, as Conservative leadership candidate Pierre Poilievre clearly understands. A backer of the truck convoy and anti-vaccine

mandates, he's made "freedom" the central idea of his messaging and appears to be alone in his ability among the leadership candidates to inspire the support of what appears to be a very extensive and motivated anti-establishment movement at this stage of the COVID saga.

Of course, freedom can be twisted in very grotesque ways. Freedom to carry guns in the U.S. has led to a seemingly unstoppable plague of killings, with 45,000 gun-related deaths in 2020. Under the concept of free speech, social media has been turned into an endless torrent of hate, discrimination, and verbal violence that regularly violates the human rights of large groups of people. And the notion that people should be free to ignore public-health

measures requiring vaccinations against a pandemic has led to an increased death toll worldwide from COVID and poisoned political discourse for years to come. Freedom, for all its importance, can be co-opted for anything. Even the slogan over the gate to Auschwitz read: "Work will make you free."

Regardless of what those who turned out at the rally in Ottawa last weekend might say about their participation, it's pretty clear by now that the underlying purpose of these events lies with organizers embracing a populist reaction to Canada in all its progressive manifestations. Inflamed by reams of conspiratorial misinformation about immigrants, elite global plots to subjugate average citizens, and vaccines as a sinister means of government control, this thinking plays out as a rejection of today's cosmopolitan, tolerant, and multicultural Canada. In its most basic form, it's Donald Trump envy. And, as with Trump in the U.S., it is nourished by grievance, hatred, lies, and distrust in the name of chaos and consequent right-wing autocracy.

Canadian politicians at every level are trying to find ways to deal with the causes of this libertarian opposition to governments, the establishment, science, progressive values, and, in some instances, of shared responsibility. The proffered solutions cover nearly every aspect of the country's socio-economic activities. But whether it will be enough to slow the apparent populist stampede—and what all this says about where our politics is headed in the aftermath of the pandemic—won't be clear for several years.

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

*The Hill Times*



Freedom is a tremendous open-ended and beguiling concept, as Conservative leadership candidate Pierre Poilievre clearly understands, writes Les Whittington. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

## Opinion

# Let's make sure we get Canada's critical minerals strategy right

Continued from page 9

projects in the North and evaluate how to kickstart them into production. There are presently four critical mineral projects in the Northwest Territories—Prairie Creek, Nechalacho, NICO, and Pine Point—that are moving toward becoming operational extraction sites and operational for the long term. The first task, then, should be assessing each project's individual barriers, and moving them to the top of the priority list.

Prairie Creek, for example, is a virtually shovel-ready mining project for zinc and silver, whose immediate need is the construction of an all-season road. The environmental assessments are complete, and Indigenous partnership agreements are already negotiated. It just needs a road to become a viable production site. Once operational, the significant economic and social benefits of the mine will immediately start to be realized—something that is particularly important as existing diamond mines are poised to end production within three years.

The North's new critical minerals sites not only have the potential to offset an anticipated decline from maturing diamond mines, they also help to sustain Indigenous employment in particular while contributing generally to tax revenue, resource royalties, and secondary economic activity such as services and transportation.

Prairie Creek is also an ideal case study in prioritizing projects with the ethos Canadians expect from mining companies. It has strong support from local community, and has done tremendous work closely with local First Nations: the Naha Dehé (Nahanni Butte) Dene Band, and the Liidlii Kue First Nation have already successfully completed impact benefit agreements, with a third in negotiation with the Acho Dene Koe Nation. These agreements ensure long-term employment, training, education, and social investments that will only increase over time. It is also a showpiece in environmental stewardship: no tailings, 100 per cent water recycling, and alternative energy baked into the operational design.

Canada is at a pivot point. Recent geopolitical developments have underscored the need to not treat critical minerals solely as an ingredient in cellphones and electric vehicle batteries. They are a strategic sector that will be used in a broader global trade and power dynamic. With China presently dominating the global market, Canada was prudent in signing a partnership framework with the United States to embark on North American critical minerals independence. Our government is equally prudent in treating this as a sector that requires a concerted development strategy, given the location of Canada's deposits.

Let's make sure that we get this right. Let's ensure Canada's critical minerals strategy does not become a victim of its own overcomplication, that it targets core infrastructure needs to kickstart immediate production—with shovel-ready projects as the obvious first focus—and that reconciliation, Indigenous and northern prosperity, and environmental stewardship be fundamental pillars to Canada's critical minerals future.

*Rohan Hazelton is president and CEO of NorZinc Ltd.*

*The Hill Times*

# Funding for fossil fuels could derail Canada's new plan to reduce emissions

Subsidies in tandem with carbon pricing is like raising taxes on cigarettes to discourage smoking while also giving tobacco companies tax breaks so they can increase production of cigarettes.

Laura Cameron  
& Philip Gass

Opinion



Canadian climate news has been a bit of a rollercoaster.

Just over a month ago, the federal government released the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan, the most comprehensive Canadian climate plan to date, and the 2022 budget, scarcely a week apart. That same week, the urgent call of the world's top scientists reached a fever pitch with the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report charting the

narrow pathways available for action to avoid irreversible climate change impacts. Meanwhile, on the eve of the budget release came the federal approval of Bay du Nord, Norwegian oil company Equinor's deep water drilling project off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, which has the potential to produce up to 300 million barrels of fossil fuel resources.

The government aims to use its recent climate plan and budget as the basis to tackle climate change over the next few critical years. However, subsidies to the fossil fuel industry and new production projects threaten to undermine progress towards climate goals.

The climate plan lays out a roadmap to achieve federal emissions reductions targets and move toward a net-zero society, including recommitting to Canada's long-standing pledge to phase out fossil fuel subsidies. However, the budget contains ongoing and new fossil fuel subsidies. This includes an investment tax credit for carbon capture and storage technologies to help oil and gas producers reduce emissions that will cost up to \$1.5-billion annually until 2030.

Of course, valid social and environmental goals are the impetus for many fossil fuel subsidies—such as the desire to create new jobs, lower energy costs for consumers in need, or reduce emissions where possible from oil and gas extraction.

The social impacts of rising energy prices on Canadians, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine in particular, are not to be underestimated or ignored.

With that said, there are other ways to achieve these goals that support workers and communities while also moving us closer to—rather than further away from—our emissions reductions targets and the path to net zero. We cannot sacrifice social protection for the environment or the economy, but neither can we sacrifice a climate-safe future for short-term social or economic gains. Rather than providing subsidies that give an economic advantage to the fossil fuel industry, we should dedicate public funds directly to consumers and workers most in need of relief. We can also institute programs and regulations to ensure that polluting corporations foot the bill for their environmental harm rather than taxpayers. Avoiding subsidies will free up public funds to instead support long-term job creation in clean energy sectors, strengthening grids and electrifying infrastructure, and investing in energy efficiency.

Fossil fuel subsidies are not compatible with the government's own climate plan nor our net-zero ambitions. For example, the federal carbon price rose on April 1, discouraging carbon pollution by making it more expensive (though the economic impact on individuals is mitigated by quarterly rebate payments). Carbon pricing is a

key tool in the global fight against climate change—but fossil fuel subsidies work against it by lowering the cost of the same pollution a carbon price discourages. This is like raising taxes on cigarettes to discourage smoking while also giving tobacco companies tax breaks so they can increase production of cigarettes. Canada's federal fossil fuel subsidies, which totalled at least \$1.9-billion in 2020, are undermining the impact of federal climate action.

Following through on Canada's commitment—first made more than 13 years ago—to end these subsidies is vital to prioritizing a safe and prosperous future for Canadians environmentally, socially, and economically. Accelerating the timeline and approach taken to phasing out fossil fuel subsidies is a live discussion in the House of Commons. Many policy-makers are calling for much-needed greater ambition, a binding commitment to not introduce new subsidies, and for all public funding programs to align with Canada's international climate change commitments. On May 3, MPs from across most of the political parties came together for a National Day of Action to End Fossil Fuel Subsidies. The government should seize this opportunity to enhance climate leadership by making fossil fuel subsidies history.

Laura Cameron is a policy analyst at the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), working in the areas of fossil fuel subsidies, just transition, and oil and gas policy in Canada. Philip Gass is lead, transitions in IISD's Energy program. His recent work has focused on just transition as well as fiscal policy approaches that facilitate climate change mitigation, including carbon pricing and subsidy reform.

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## News

# Infrastructure Canada weakened climate requirements on federally funded projects after applicants complained, audit finds

A performance audit of Infrastructure Canada's funding programs found that the government 'let go of too much' when it relaxed its 'climate lens' requirements in March 2021.

BY KEVIN PHILIPUPILLAI

Infrastructure Canada introduced a climate lens in 2018 that set clear reporting requirements for federally funded infrastructure projects, but then weakened those requirements in March 2021 following complaints from applicants, according to a new report. Environment Commissioner Jerry DeMarco's findings reveal the federal government does not have reliable data on the emissions reduction or climate resilience estimates for more recent projects.

These findings were published in an April 26 report titled *Funding Climate-Ready Infrastructure*, one of five performance audits of government programs that address the climate crisis.

DeMarco told the House Environment Committee on April 28 that Infrastructure Canada designed and implemented an effective process to assess the environmental impacts of infrastructure projects in 2018, but that this process was weakened in 2021 to the point that "Infrastructure Canada was unable to adequately account for the expected greenhouse gas emissions and resilience outcomes of the programs it funded."

Accurately tracking and meeting sectoral emissions reductions targets would be especially important under the government's new Emissions Reduction Plan, DeMarco said, because "the plan adds up exactly to what is required," meaning there would be "no wiggle room" if one sector missed its targets.

David Normand, a principal at the Office of the Auditor General and the lead author of the infrastructure report, told *The Hill Times* that his team assessed how the government applied its climate lens tool to three Infrastructure Canada programs within the April 2018 to Dec. 31, 2021, audit period.

As of Dec. 31, the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program included \$33-billion in funding from 2018 to 2028 for the federal share of projects that are funded



Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development Jerry DeMarco, pictured on April 26, found Infrastructure Canada designed and implemented an effective process to assess the environmental impacts of infrastructure projects in 2018, but weakened the process in March 2021. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

jointly with provincial or territorial governments; the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund included a total of \$3.38-billion from 2018 to 2033 for climate resilience projects; and the Smart Cities Challenge set aside \$300-million in prize money from 2017 to 2027 for local, regional, and Indigenous governments.

The government applied the climate lens tool at a very early stage of the funding application process, said Normand, partly to "assess the GHG emissions savings and the resilience outcomes of the proposed project," but also to educate the applicants and prod them to "sharpen their pencils to improve the design of these projects" in ways that better reflect climate change priorities.

Normand's team found that, from 2018 to 2021, the government's original climate lens required funding applicants to use internationally accepted standards for resilience and greenhouse gas accounting, hire a qualified third-party professional to attest that the applications conformed to these international standards, and submit raw data as their projects unfolded.

Taken together, these requirements meant that Infrastructure Canada "used to have a lot of information, to play with internally, to validate its figures," said Normand.

A briefing note prepared in September 2020 for then-infrastructure minister Catherine McKenna, obtained through an access to information request, shows that Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) applicants were required to complete a greenhouse gas mitigation assessment "in accordance with the *Climate Lens General Guidance*" before the federal

government would release funds for projects that had already been approved in principle.

The DMAF allows provinces, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other entities to apply for Infrastructure Canada funding for projects intended to protect local communities from natural disasters triggered by climate change.

A briefing note from August 2020, obtained through an access to information request, says the Municipal District of Taber, in Alberta, and the Cowichan Tribes, in B.C., applied to the DMAF for the Horsefly Regional Emergency Spillway and the Cowichan Watershed Resiliency Program, respectively, in summer 2020. These projects would have been screened according to the original climate lens.

## Infrastructure Canada 'let go of too much' when relaxing requirements, says auditor

But the environment commissioner's report outlines that by March 2021, following complaints from stakeholders and an internal backlog of applications, Infrastructure Canada had introduced a new version of the climate lens tool with less stringent requirements. Normand called this new version Climate Lens 2.

Infrastructure Canada "streamlined the process to require less information" from applicants, said Normand, in ways that probably addressed complaints from stakeholders that the initial process took too long. "In our opinion, they let go of too much," he added.

Infrastructure Canada spokesperson Zoltan Csepregi told *The Hill Times* in an email that

the department "simplified the climate lens assessment information requirements, and removed the requirement for a third-party attestation, while instituting a strengthened internal review process."

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, whose members would be among the most frequent applicants to the relevant Infrastructure Canada funding programs, did not respond to questions from *The Hill Times* about the approvals backlog and any complaints from municipalities about the more stringent reporting requirements that were in place before March 2021, and how Infrastructure Canada addressed those concerns in subsequent climate assessment tools.

DeMarco's report goes on to say that the requirements in a fourth, newer program—the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program—were an improvement over the second climate lens. The GICB program allocated \$1.5-billion from 2021 to 2026 for new and existing buildings, but did not disburse any money during the audit period.

Instead of returning to the international standards, GICB relies on an older standard for tracking greenhouse gas emissions called RETScreen, which Normand said was developed by Natural Resources Canada in the 1990s. Normand said his team had reviewed the standard and found it to be credible.

"As auditors, we are not specialists in standards, but we could see that it was comparable" to the international standards that the original approach relied on, said Normand.

The two sets of climate requirements—Climate Lens 2 and the strengthened criteria under

the GICB program—will run in parallel until 2026, said Normand. But the GICB criteria will not apply to infrastructure projects funded by the three older programs, meaning the three older programs will continue to rely on the weaker standard unless the government makes changes to that, which Normand said the government has committed to doing.

"It's not too late to fix the climate lens," said Normand, adding that there are "real and concrete advantages" to funding infrastructure that reflects the government's climate priorities, as long as the government has a clear idea of what it is funding. "Without good data, they can't do that."

## House committee passes motion requiring action plans from audited departments

Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault (Laurier-Sainte Marie, Que.) and Natural Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, B.C.) responded in general to the five performance audits in a joint statement on April 26. They said Infrastructure Canada would "strengthen the climate lens" in line with the environment commissioner's recommendations.

At the House Environment Committee, Normand and an official from Infrastructure Canada were present to answer questions, but MPs did not address the infrastructure report, focusing instead on the reports related to the carbon price, the just transition, the greening government strategy, and the use of hydrogen.

DeMarco described the five spring audits as a "mid-term report card that should help improve outcomes, because the climate change clock never stops ticking." He encouraged the committee to make it mandatory for audited departments to provide the committee with detailed action plans for meeting the recommendations in the reports, warning that failing to do so might leave "a possible gap in accountability."

NDP MP Laurel Collins (Victoria, B.C.) introduced such a motion in committee on April 28, which received unanimous consent. Departments that are subjected to a performance audit by the environment commissioner will now be required to report back to the committee within six months of the audit being tabled in the House of Commons, with a detailed action plan to address any audit recommendations they agree to meet.

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*The Hill Times*

# Climate-resilient practices, nature-based solutions are vital to Canada's next Agricultural Policy Framework

Our world-class agricultural industry is modern, progressive, and delivering sustainable products and solutions, but it needs strong policies and support measures to successfully meet the moment.

Paul Thoroughgood  
& Carolyn  
Callaghan

Opinion



The world is hungry for more food, and no one is more capable than Canadian farmers to satisfy this growing appetite. But with global food demands expected to increase by 60 per cent by 2050, ensuring Canadian agriculture is positioned to continue meeting these future market demands in an environmentally sustainable fashion must be our collective priority.

Canadian agriculture is leading this pursuit on many fronts. From field to table, the industry is embracing innovation and creating efficiencies to do more on existing land. Producers are striving to shrink their carbon footprint and enhance biodiversity. They're also adapting to the impacts of climate change on their crops, livestock, and livelihoods. This is a lot to manage.

As federal and provincial agriculture ministers meet to discuss the creation of Canada's next Agricultural Policy Framework, conservation and agricultural leaders are speaking with a shared voice. Harnessing the economic and ecological power of Canada's agricultural sector to build a greener and more resilient future demands a re-imagining of current policies. One that commits to scaling climate-resilient practices and squarely positions nature-based solutions as a means to establish Canadian agriculture as a world leader in sustainable production.

This is the message that Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, and six leading agricultural organizations have taken to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Our group—including representatives from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Canadian Federation of Agriculture, CropLife Canada, Canadian Forage and Grassland Association, Fertilizer Canada, and the Soil Conservation Council of Canada—proposed a policy framework that will benefit the country ecologically while giving the sector a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

Our framework contains several actions to advance four key areas: mitigating the impacts of climate change, preserving biodiversity, promoting sustainable practices, and increasing resiliency on Canada's farms and ranches.



Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau, arriving in the House of Commons on May 13, 2020, met with her provincial counterparts this week. Harnessing the economic and ecological power of Canada's agricultural sector to build a greener and more resilient future demands a re-imagining of current policies, write Paul Thoroughgood and Carolyn Callaghan. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Simply put, this framework is about supporting producers with new investments and incentives to adopt beneficial management practices. It's about using science and technology to increase productivity on a per-hectare basis that limits the conversion of wetlands, grasslands, and other natural habitats. And it's about effectively measuring—and monetizing—these valuable ecological services that are stewarded by farmers across the country.

A closer look at the details reveals some proactive measures we can take today.

Let's begin with the fundamental need to measure what we manage. Canada does not have comprehensive inventories of wetlands and grasslands, which makes it very difficult to account for the natural capital we've got—or how fast we may

be losing it. Completing these inventories would provide important data to inform a market-based system for valuing things like carbon storage, biodiversity, and water quality. This will improve on-farm decision-making and create greater transparency for consumers—domestic and international—who want reassurance that their food is derived from good land stewardship. It will also enable us to accurately estimate the economic values of these ecological services provided by farmers and ranchers—ones that benefit all Canadians.

Next, there's the need to optimize management of lands that are currently in production. Establishing a Marginal Areas Program that provides incentives to re-naturalize land with a negative return on investment would make a meaningful

contribution toward Canada's climate change mitigation goals, and provide farmers and ranchers with more capital to invest in areas that are most productive. Similarly, reinstating funding for a National Perennial Forage Conversion Program would support the livestock industry while protecting grasslands and supporting the recovery of many species at risk.

Finally, an important word about carbon. Canada has a tremendous opportunity to prioritize the resilience, productivity, and carbon storage capacity of Canada's soils. Soil health has not been a focus of the federal government for nearly 40 years. If Canada is to be successful in achieving its emissions targets, establishing a National Strategy for Soil Health and adding on-farm best management practices to offset agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions must be a priority.

Canadian farmers take pride in feeding the world, and rightly so. Our world-class agricultural industry is modern, progressive, and delivering sustainable products and solutions at every point in the supply chain. But it needs strong policies and support measures to successfully meet the moment.

The climate clock is ticking and it's only a matter of time until a hungry world comes knocking at our door. Canada's next Agricultural Policy Framework can—and must—ensure that we're ready.

*Paul Thoroughgood is Ducks Unlimited Canada's national manager of agricultural sustainability. Thoroughgood operates a grain farm in southern Saskatchewan. Carolyn Callaghan is a senior conservation biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Federation. Callaghan lives on a hobby farm in western Quebec.*

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## Feature

# ‘If the will is there’: Canada must address ‘root problems’ in climate plan, says environment watchdog

Last week, Canada's environment commissioner Jerry DeMarco released five reports that took a critical look at carbon pricing, the potential of hydrogen to reduce emissions, a just transition to a low-carbon economy, federal funds for climate-ready infrastructure efforts, and the Greening Government Strategy.

BY PETER MAZEREEUW

The government's plan to create a net-zero economy has some sizable flaws, according to Canada's environment commissioner.

Unrealistic assumptions about hydrogen power; a carbon pricing system that tilts the burden for change away from industry and towards the poor; and a missing-in-action “just transition” plan for workers are just a few of the problems highlighted in recent reports published by Commissioner Jerry DeMarco, a government watchdog in the auditor general's office.

The shortcomings can be fixed and the targets are attainable “if the will is there,” DeMarco told *The Hill Times*.

“This is our opportunity, with this series of reports on climate change ... to look at some of these root problems that have caused Canada to miss [targets] over and over again: nine or 10 plans for international commitments, 30 years of increasing emissions. It's our effort to help them meet their target as opposed to just make a target.

DeMarco spoke about those problems, what they mean in the big picture, and whether they can be fixed in an interview on *The Hill Times' Hot Room* podcast.

Here's that conversation, which has been edited for length and clarity.

**Let's start with the carbon pricing program. So you looked at this and found that big industrial greenhouse gas emission emitters weren't really being asked to do their share of the heavy lifting here. Why not?**



Jerry DeMarco, Canada's commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, released five audits on April 26 examining various federal efforts on the environment that his office found are falling short. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

So that's the choice the government has made in terms of how much of the burden is going to be put on consumers versus producers. And then within those categories, how the burden is going to be shared amongst the various groups, and so on. So, we found that carbon pricing is essential. It's one of the major components of Canada's current emissions reduction plan and recent ones as well. But that's no excuse for just being comfortable. We have given them several recommendations on how to improve the fairness of the program, the weight or burden shared between large emitters and consumers. And then within consumers, for example, how well is the load being spread, we found a disproportionate burden on Indigenous communities, as well as small- and medium-sized businesses.

**So what's making Indigenous communities in particular bear more of the burden?**

Well, one example that we have in our report is that the way essentially the rebate that comes from the carbon levy is structured, that's contingent upon filing a tax return. And for a variety of social and economic reasons, people close to the poverty line, some people in Indigenous communities, do not have as high a rate of filing a tax return as the average person does. So, if you have a lower than average tax return rate, then you have a lower than average number of people getting that rebate that is owed to all Canadians.

**But, of course, they're still paying the higher prices that come with the carbon pricing system.**

Right. So the payout is at the pump or on the heating bill. But

the payback comes when you fill out the schedule to your tax return. And then starting this year, it'll come in the form of a cheque, as opposed to once a year as had been done last year. So that's one of the barriers and that's not a barrier unique to this program. That's a barrier to any refundable tax credit, that Canada institutes in terms of trying to spread the load in Canada.

**These cheques that are going to start coming out now—is that going to solve the problem? Or are they still just going to people who have filed tax returns?**

It's still contingent on filing a tax return. So even though it's the \$300, or whatever the rate may be wherever the tax filer is, it's no longer a refundable credit on the last page of your tax return. But you still have to fill out a schedule that says, ‘I'm eligible for this,’ and then that'll trigger the cheque. So it hasn't been solved. It's just a different delivery mechanism, but it hasn't solved the issue with this change this year.

**Can you explain, in a nutshell, why or how are big industrial greenhouse gas emitters not paying proportionally what maybe they should?**

So the large emitters program, which is essentially industry, they have a price on carbon, either through the federal system or

through an approved provincial or territorial system. But many of their emissions are exempt. And there's a rationale for exempting them. It's a complicated area called carbon leakage, which is to make sure that you don't make the price so high that they would leave the jurisdiction to some other place where they don't have a carbon price, for example.

So that could happen with a carbon price, right? If one jurisdiction makes a high price and the next-door neighbour doesn't, then there might be a fleeing of capital and jobs. So that's reasonable to do that, to the point where you can make sure that the competitiveness is still maintained. But if you make the exemptions too expensive then this undermines the polluter-pays principle, which is that industry should be paying its fair share for the pollution that it emits.

And now that most countries are on board with fighting climate change, there isn't as much of a risk of this relocation of industrial production, because other countries are also serious about tackling climate change. It's a complicated area, with terms like carbon leakage and so on, but the idea is: try to keep the industry and jobs in Canada, but don't make the price so low that they're getting off scot-free, and having most of the Canadians pay over [an] overly large proportion of their share.

**Here's another big-picture question. Do we need carbon pricing? Or can we achieve our climate goal through some other means?**

So there's a whole range of tools to effect change. You have laws and regulations, you have subsidies, you have education, you have taxes and levies, and so on. These are all different tools available and, on paper, you could use any of them to tackle most problems. The carbon price is an effective and efficient way of doing that, because it doesn't prescribe the way that the emissions come down. It lets the market at least make some of those choices

in an efficient way rather than a regulation that might choose a particular path.

Yes, there's always going to be the debate about which tool, and it's been known ever since the idea of a levy being imposed to overcome what's called a negative externality in economics, which is essentially putting the burden on others who aren't party to the transaction between the producer and the consumer. It's always been known that sometimes that's a tough sell, because it makes the compensation for the externality visible, either at the gas pump or on your natural gas bill, for example. But it's not like you don't pay it, if you choose another way. If you put in regulations, then the cost of production might go up in the end, the price will still change. But it'll be invisible and passed on to the consumers in other ways.

So it's the visibility of it that makes it a tough political sell. Economically, it's actually one of the more efficient ways of tackling climate change. And that's well recognized by the World Bank, our Supreme Court of Canada, and so on. It doesn't make it any easier in terms of politics. But those who are immersed in the area, recognize that if you structure it properly, make it fair—which is a key point in our report, of course, making it fair for consumers—then it can accomplish the goals that it seeks to do.

**You devoted an entire report to the role hydrogen power could play in a transition away from fossil fuels. Your findings don't bode well for Canada's climate plan. Why did you decide to start looking into hydrogen in the first place? What tipped you off that this was something worth extra scrutiny?**

Well, it was primarily the release of a Canadian Hydrogen Strategy. So instead of it just being an idea, it became an actual program of government, which makes it more likely to be selected by us for auditing. It was crystallized into the form of Natural Resource Canada's hydrogen strategy. So when that was released, there was essentially more meat on the bones. And we thought, well, let's look into this because it not only shows up in the hydrogen strategy, it shows up in the actual climate plan as one of the means to reach their goals of 40 to 45 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and net zero by 2050. We wanted to see [because] a lot of people are optimistic about it, there's good things being said about it, let's dig into this and see whether the numbers add up in that strategy. And the numbers added up, but because of very optimistic assumptions. The quality of output in a model is dependent on the quality of the inputs. And these inputs were in some cases unrealistic, and in other cases, what I would say not very conservative and very optimistic.

You can listen to the full episode of *The Hill Times Hot Room* Podcast via *Apple Podcasts* | *Via Spotify* | *Via Stitcher* | *Via Google Podcasts*.

*The Hill Times*



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, pictured arriving on Nov. 1, 2021, at the COP26 World Leaders Summit, where he pledged a hard cap on emissions from Canada's oil and gas sector starting in 2025. Photograph courtesy of Doug Peters/UK Government



# PPS asks for 'substantial increase' to address Parliament Hill security

The acting head of the PPS says a future increase to service's overall budget is anticipated to deal with 'evolving threats,' such as the Freedom Convoy and other recent protests.

Continued from page 1

\$563-million—a net increase of \$19.3-million compared to the 2021-22 main estimates.

Part of the increase is a proposed expansion of the PPS budget by 10.9 per cent compared to the previous fiscal year, or an additional \$9.8-million.

The PPS was formed in 2015 through an amalgamation of the Senate Protective Service, the House of Commons Security Services, and Parliament's RCMP detachment.

During the meeting, d'Entremont told the committee that an initiative launched to transition RCMP resources off the Hill in 2018 was completed in October 2020. The PPS now assumes full responsibility for precinct security with RCMP frontline resources completely demobilized, according to d'Entremont.

Increased funding for the PPS is partly motivated by the need to establish and optimize security systems, d'Entremont said. He gave examples of multi-year projects underway for the PPS, including implementation of an enterprise resource planning



Liberal MP Ryan Turnbull says the occupation of downtown Ottawa by protestors in February 'brought up many concerns for the health and safety of members of parliament and staff on the Hill.' Screenshot courtesy of ParLVu

system, which is a business software that automates operations such as taking orders or scheduling. He also said the PPS is implementing a computer-automated dispatch system.

"Having assumed full control of the precinct security with major systems coming online, and with its commitment to people-driven excellence, the Parliamentary Protective Service is better positioned than ever before to deliver on its protected mandate in an ever-evolving threat environment," said d'Entremont.

Liberal PROC member Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Ont.) asked if the "evolving threat environment" includes consideration of the occupation of Ottawa earlier this year by the truck convoy protestors, and if that played a role in the PPS budget ask. Thousands of protestors, forming the so-called "Freedom Convoy," filled the streets of Ottawa between Jan. 28

and Feb. 20, disrupting neighbourhoods and bringing business activity in the downtown core to a halt.

"I really see that [the occupation of downtown Ottawa] was something that tested all of us in the Parliamentary Protective Service and certainly brought up many concerns for the health and safety of Members of Parliament and staff on the Hill," said Turnbull.

Larry Brookson, acting director of the PPS, said submission of the main estimates was completed prior to the occupation, and that discussions about how security measures may have changed in response to the truck convoy protests was better discussed during the in-camera portion of the meeting.

However, Brookson did say he anticipated an increase to the overall PPS budget in the future, to, as Turnbull said, "be fully equipped in order to deal with those types of evolving threats."

During the meeting, Turnbull also raised the subject of resources to accommodate the hybrid format Parliamentarians have operated under during the two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing them to virtually attend debates and committee meetings.

"We've experienced the benefits, but there's also been challenges. I, and my staff team, for example, just recently planned a big event on the Hill for stakeholders, Members of Parliament, and Senators, and have really struggled to get the resources to have a sub-caucus meeting that is hybrid and has translation services," said Turnbull. "I wonder

just how this is being addressed in the current budget. Will there be more resources and a solution for increased capacity to have more hybrid sittings?"

In response, House of Commons clerk Charles Robert said there isn't a definitive answer right now, and that would depend on the availability of interpretation services, which he said has "really limited our capacity to provide support."

"I think the conversation really has to take place with Public Works, and to see what can be done to build the pool of interpreters, and what qualifications they need to have ... in order to actually be effective in providing support for services on the Hill and elsewhere within government," he said. Once that capacity adjusts, "and once the Members decide that they want to expand the range of meetings that they want to hold that need to be

supported by the administration, we will make an assessment of the impact that that will have on our resources and respond accordingly."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the shift to more online meetings has included an increase in the number of interpreters injured on the job, according to Greg Phillips, national president of the Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE).

Since the House began using Zoom, the number of hazard reports submitted in a given sitting month has hovered between four and 18, compared to between four and 23 per year prior to the pandemic, according to a submission by CAPE to the House of Commons Board of Internal Economy on April 13.

"We've been complaining about the sound quality with these virtual meetings, and the number of interpreters that are wanting to leave the public service and work elsewhere, is just snowballing," said Phillips.

CAPE represents the 65 official language interpreters on staff with the federal Translation Bureau. Poor sound quality of video conferencing platforms or microphones can lead to interpreters increasing the volume, resulting in a greater impact on the inner ear, according to the submission.

"Unless the sound from virtual participants is improved, things are likely to continue to get worse as more committees hit their stride and scarce interpreters are called upon to staff more hybrid assignments," said the CAPE submission. "As had been theorized by some MPs, a return to in-person meetings would both reduce injuries and allow interpreters to go back to their pre-pandemic workload. However, CAPE anticipates that hybrid interpretation will remain a feature in Parliament for some time, so the issues associated with it must be addressed."

On Feb. 2, CAPE filed a complaint against the Translation Bureau with Employment and Social Development Canada's labour program, alleging it has "failed to provide CAPE members with a safe work environment," since Parliament moved online two years ago.

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The Hill Times



Larry Brookson, acting director of the Parliamentary Protective Service, told PROC he anticipates another increase in the PPS budget in the future. Screenshot courtesy of ParLVu



Parliamentary Protective Service chief financial officer Eric Savard told the Procedure and House Affairs Committee on April 28 a proposed \$9.8-million increase for the PPS in the main estimates is the first in three years. Screenshot courtesy of ParLVu

## News

# Information warfare amid Russian invasion of Ukraine forces feds to sort fact from fiction

MLI's Marcus Kolga says Russian disinformation has been 'quite sinister' while Ukraine's information operations are part of its 'battle for survival.'

Continued from page 1

was occupied by Russia, counter to Moscow's claim. Human Rights Watch reported that there is evidence of "summary executions, other unlawful killings, enforced disappearances, and torture" when Russia occupied the city.

Stepanov discounted the findings of the Human Rights Watch, saying they are staffed by "citizens of Western countries."

He said allegations presented to the Western media by Kyiv are "presented as established fact." He countered the allegations of Russia committing war crimes in Ukraine, saying that Ukrainians have testified in Russia that atrocities are being committed by Ukrainians.

He complained that the West presumes that Russia is guilty, instead of investigating through a judicial process.

Stepanov pointed to the Tagliavini Report—a European Union study on the causes of the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict which found Georgia had fired the conflict's opening shot—for the need to investigate human rights abuses after the conflict. The report found that Russia had committed a number of international breaches. He said using allegations as "propaganda" is "totally unacceptable."

In an op-ed submitted to *The Hill Times*, which was not published, Stepanov responded to accusations of Russian war crimes by pivoting to the West's human rights record.

"Every time it alleges Russia in committing atrocities, the West attempts to conceal in a secret room its own sins and liberate itself from guilt for its dark past. By demonizing us, the West is trying to escape the shame it feels



Russian Ambassador Oleg Stepanov says Canada and the rest of the West is in the wrong for always accepting Ukraine's version of events and rejecting all Russian explanations, while the Canadian government says it's working with a variety of international partners to counter and correct disinformation. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

looking at its own reflection in the mirror," the ambassador wrote.

The deluge of disinformation about the war has forced the Canadian government—along with NATO and G7 allies—to work to respond to falsehoods being presented about the war.

The Canadian government has said it is "stepping up efforts to counter disinformation at home and abroad while upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of expression and media freedom." The government had previously asked the CRTC to look into the presence of RT, which is a Russian state-controlled media organization, on Canada's television broadcasts. In March, the CRTC announced it had removed RT, as well as RT France, from "non-Canadian programming services and stations authorized for distribution."

The government has said that it is working with a variety of international partners to counter and correct disinformation, including the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism, NATO, the Media Freedom Coalition, and the Freedom Online Coalition.

Global Affairs spokesperson Christelle Chartrand said Canada is "seized" with the "challenge" that disinformation poses to "Ukraine and democracies around the world."

"Canada supports the international community, including Ukraine, in detecting, correcting, and calling out Russia's state-sponsored disinformation campaigns because disinforma-

tion undermines peace, prosperity and individual freedoms, and erodes trust in democracy. Exposing and countering the Kremlin's global disinformation campaigns and influence operations is an important part of Canada's efforts to maintain support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including in multilateral forums," the spokesperson said.

She didn't address to what degree Canada trusts the information that is passed along by the Ukrainian government.

Chartrand said Canada aims to counter disinformation with "fact-based narratives, data-driven analyses, and by leveraging partner governments as well as networks of civil society organizations concerned with safeguarding freedom of expression and independent media," adding that Canada's national security and intelligence agencies have an "important role to play responding to constantly evolving intelligence requirements, including intelligence relating to disinformation."

The RCMP have been speaking with Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in Canada about potential war crimes that they have witnessed, according to a *Globe and Mail* report.

Disinformation about the war isn't just coming from Russia; Ukraine has put forward information about their war effort that turned out to be false.

In the early days of the Russian invasion, dramatic reporting of Ukrainian soldiers refusing to sur-

render to Russia before being fired on was shared by the Ukrainian government and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who said the soldiers "died heroically" and would be awarded the title of "Hero of Ukraine." Ukraine later announced that the soldiers never died.

The Ukrainian government also shared social media posts about the "Ghost of Kyiv," suggested to be a pilot who had shot down six Russian jets in the early hours of the invasion. Ukraine later admitted the pilot never existed.

Macdonald-Laurier Institute senior fellow Marcus Kolga, who founded DisinfoWatch, said disinformation and information warfare should be analyzed through its intent.

"Ukraine is the victim of an unprovoked attack by Russia. The information operations that it has been engaging in are part of its battle for survival to save its cities, its villages, its civilians," he said, noting the myth of the "Ghost of Kyiv" was disseminated to motivate and galvanize Ukrainian support for its defence.

"This communications campaign that has been ongoing has played a very important role in Ukraine's successful defence of their country," he said.

On the other hand, Kolga said, Russia is employing disinformation that is "quite sinister."

"It's intended to cover up the reality of the nature of war in Ukraine, the crime it's committing. It's intended to erode Western trust and support in the Ukrainian government in its efforts to defend itself. It's intended

to erode morale within Ukraine, and to deceive the Russian people about the nature of Russian tactics and crimes within Ukraine," he said.

He said the Canadian government needs to look at disinformation during the conflict from the two different contexts, adding that Ottawa—to this point—has been doing a good job of verifying reports that are emerging in Ukraine.

Kolga said NATO is heavily involved in keeping watch on disinformation, noting that there would be consultations occurring between Ukraine and Canada and its allies. He added that verification can be done through private satellite companies that are taking images over Ukraine.

"Bucha was a prime example of that, where we see before or after images of that village, including images that were taken when the atrocities were happening in Bucha in real time," he said.

While having an embassy open in Kyiv could give diplomats added ability to ascertain what is happening on the ground in Ukraine, Kolga said it is a question if the Canadian government would allow its diplomats to go to frontline villages to investigate.

He noted that it is "extremely important" the Canadian government makes its decisions based on facts and that they can be verified.

"That means working with our allies and making sure that we are communicating with them, especially inside NATO," he said. Working with NATO partners, Canada can get a "clear and honest" picture of what's happening in Ukraine to have a better understanding of how to respond to support Ukraine and its needs, which includes talking with the Ukrainian government, he added.

University of Ottawa professor and Ukrainian studies chair Dominique Arel said Russia is employing propaganda where Ukraine is not in the information war.

While Ukraine has published stories of war valour, Arel said Russia has pushed disinformation about the reason for why it has invaded Ukraine and about atrocities being committed during the invasion.

"Roughly speaking, propaganda is about fabricating a narrative," he said, remarking that that fact offers a level of clarity to the narrative being pushed by Russia.

"Russia was not first attacked by Ukraine or in danger of being attacked by Ukraine, so Russia, even though it claims to be acting in self-defence, is invading and has been invading Ukraine totally unprovoked. To claim otherwise is propaganda."

He said Russia's propaganda efforts are having little impact in most Western countries.

He said in comparison with Ukraine, the Russian government makes claims about the war so "beyond the pale" that they are completely outrageous, citing Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov recent controversial comments about Adolf Hitler's heritage.

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## News

# Continued dawdling on vaccine waiver position leaves NDP and advocates 'extremely frustrated'

'Their choice was to not make a policy decision,' says NDP MP Heather McPherson on the feds' delayed decision on a COVID-19 intellectual property waiver.

Continued from page 1

government has refused to say whether it will support or reject a waiver proposal. In the U.S., the Biden administration announced last May that it would back an intellectual property waiver.

In Ottawa, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs has held four meetings looking at vaccine equity and intellectual property rights, with one more meeting expected before the study wraps up. The House Committee on International Trade previously investigated the topic during its study of reforms at the WTO.

Following the opening comments from global health advocates, the most recent committee meeting on April 28 was interrupted by debate on a Conservative motion that was first brought forward in December to order the release of documents related to the firing of two scientists at Winnipeg's National Microbiology Laboratory, which became a political controversy in the last Parliament. The second panel was unable to appear due to the committee's ongoing debate.

NDP MP Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, Alta.), her party's foreign affairs critic, told the committee last month that she was "extremely frustrated" that Canada is in its current position, still discussing the same issues as in late 2020.

She told *The Hill Times* that it is "becoming more and more apparent" that pharmaceutical companies have put "profit ahead of the lives of millions of people."

"This is a capitalist model that we are using for health care. It doesn't work," she said.

She said the system is "broken" and "rotten to its core," with a government choosing not to act and a pharmaceutical industry focused on profits.

McPherson said the issue to advance the file has been political and not one of policy.

"Their choice was to not make a policy decision. The choice the government made was to kick the can down the road over and over



NDP MP Heather McPherson says the access to medicine system is 'flawed' and needs to be fixed to address future variants and future pandemics. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

and over again, and never actually say, 'We support, or we don't support the TRIPS waiver,'" she said. "The entire thing has been a play ... to show that they have some interest in vaccine equity while taking no action on it."

McPherson said there has to be a "very serious" discussion about how vaccines are made available to the public when public funds are used in their development.

She said she hopes that the committee tables recommendations to the House "quite quickly," noting that she will ask for a concurrence debate.

"I think it's an incredibly important issue," she said. "We've turned the page in many ways in regards to COVID, but the rest of the world has not."

"It won't be our last pandemic. This is a flawed system that needs to be fixed, not just for COVID for future variants potentially, but also for future pandemics," she said.

A representative of the Bolivian government was supposed to appear at the Foreign Affairs Committee's April 28 meeting, but had to cancel. Bolivia has been critical of Canada's delay in announcing its position on the vaccine waiver. McPherson said she hopes to have the representative appear for the committee's next meeting on the vaccine equity study.

Stuart Trew, director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' trade and investment research project, told *The Hill Times* he hoped that study would have had a stronger focus on intellectual property rights and their barriers.

"The result will be yet another study and report on this issue with very little new awareness, I think, gained from Parliament on what exactly the intellectual

property barrier might be to vaccine equity and what we might do to fix this," he said.

Trew said it is "unfortunate" industry voices have left an impression that intellectual property rights aren't an issue on the file.

"There was a real piece missing on the whole point of the hearings, which is there still may be intellectual property right barriers that we can help to take out of the picture," he said. "I was discouraged to see the number of

it, but they're also not opposing it. They've basically been standing on the fence on this issue for many months now, but have also initiated an alternative third-way proposal, which has further undermined the advancement of the TRIPS waiver conversations."

Brittany Lambert, women's rights policy and advocacy specialist at Oxfam Canada, said Canada's effort through the Ottawa Group has "muddied the waters at the WTO" and "probably" postponed a decision on the TRIPS waiver.

Jason Nickerson, Doctors Without Borders' humanitarian representative to Canada, told the committee that Canada has "kicked the can down the road" in not voicing an opinion on the waiver "seemingly hoping the problem would resolve itself."

He said while vaccine supply is no longer the predominant barrier to access, restrictions around intellectual property still exist in accessing other COVID technologies, like therapeutic drugs.

A representative of Pfizer Canada told the Foreign Affairs Committee that the "patent problem is a false problem."

"It's not really a question of patents," said Fabien Paquette, vaccine lead at Pfizer Canada. "As we've seen so far, when the experts who have the production capacity and the scientists who develop the vaccines are allowed to focus their efforts on that, the industry as a whole is able to produce quantities of vaccines that meet the needs we're currently seeing in this pandemic."

Internal documents submitted to the committee by Global Affairs show that pharmaceutical representatives have praised the government's response to the

TRIPS waiver, which was first reported by *Politico*.

Canada has committed to donating the equivalent of "at least" 200 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to the COVAX facility by the end of this year, according to Global Affairs.

Appearing before the committee on March 21, Canada's WTO Ambassador Stephen de Boer said Canada's work has been tied to the Ottawa Group, which put forward initiatives to "facilitate trade in and the equitable distribution of medical goods, including vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and vaccine production inputs, and generally promote resilient and predictable supply chains." He added that Canada has been "working hard" to garner support for the initiatives at the WTO.

Without consensus around the initial TRIPS waiver, the European Union, the United States, India, and South Africa held backdoor meetings on a "compromise" approach, which has only been publicly endorsed by the EU. *Politico* reported that the text of the compromise was presented to the TRIPS Council on May 3.

The compromise, which exclusively covers vaccines, would allow developing countries to manufacture patent-protected vaccines if they did not export more than 10 per cent of the global COVID-19 vaccine supply in 2021.

The proposal has been criticized by both global health advocates and the pharmaceutical industry.

Sarosi said the compromise is "only a very small step forward."

"The current text is narrow in scope and has considerable limitations. It does not cover COVID tests or treatments. It covers only patents and not other intellectual property barriers. It narrows geographical scope, excluding countries with significant manufacturing capacity, and it creates new, onerous barriers for countries seeking to issue a compulsory licence, rather than easing current rules," she told the committee on April 4.

De Boer wouldn't say in March if Canada would support the compromise approach as the text had yet to be made public despite the contents of the agreement being leaked to the public. The text of the compromise was published on May 3.

He added that Canada never said it would reject a TRIPS waiver, but that it needs to see the text before it engages with members about the compromise.

McPherson said the compromise is not a solution to the problems the world faces with regards to access to essential medicine.

She said Canada has fallen short in its approach to the TRIPS waiver and ensuring that when essential medicine is developed with public dollars, there is a mechanism for it to be made available, as well with its access to medicine regime. She said COVAX is being undermined by bilateral agreements between countries and pharmaceutical companies.

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*The Hill Times*



The Foreign Affairs Committee, chaired by Liberal MP Sven Spengemann, has held four meetings so far on its study of vaccine equity. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

witnesses say this isn't something that we need to think about."

Global health advocacy groups appearing in front of the committee criticized the Canadian government's approach to the TRIPS waiver, while pharmaceutical representatives say the waiver would have had no impact.

Diana Sarosi, policy and campaigns director at Oxfam Canada, told the committee on April 4 that it is difficult to ascertain Canada's approach to the TRIPS waiver.

"It has been very nebulous," she said. "On the one hand, they are saying they're not supporting

# Thunder rolled

*The Hill Times* photographs by Sam Garcia

Protesters descended on downtown Ottawa April 29–30, joining in the Rolling Thunder motorcycle demonstration at the National War Memorial and the Freedom Fighters Canada event on Parliament Hill. Demonstrators were met by counterprotesters, as well as a stringent police presence and strict vehicle exclusion zone in the downtown core, as law enforcement agencies looked to avoid an encore of the winter’s Freedom Convoy that saw vehicles parked in front of Parliament Hill for three weeks.





## Laura Ryckewaert Hill Climbers

# Transport Minister Alghabra's office reaches 19 staff

Plus, Sport Minister Pascale St-Onge has a new communications director, and the NDP has two new caucus press secretaries on board.

There are five new staff to report, and one departure, in Transport Minister Omar Alghabra's office since *Hill Climbers*' last dive into the team in late December, including Emma Kristensen, who's been brought on as director of appointments, cabinet, and parliamentary affairs.



Emma Kristensen is director of appointments, cabinet, and parliamentary affairs to Alghabra. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Kristensen joined Alghabra's team in January after roughly two years as an operations manager to then-economic development and official languages minister Mélanie Joly. A former junior communications officer with the Canada Revenue Agency, Kristensen got her start on the Hill as a 2017 summer intern in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office. She subsequently landed a job as executive assistant to then-PMO operations director John Zerucelli.

A year later, she moved over to then-infrastructure minister François-Philippe Champagne's office, becoming a special assistant for operations and policy. She's since also been a communications manager in the Liberal research bureau (LRB).

According to Transport Canada's website, the minister has "one of the largest appointments portfolios in the federal government." Between various port, airport, and bridge authorities; the Canadian Transport Agency; the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority; Via Rail Canada; harbour masters and wharfingers; the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation; and more, there's a total of 317 appointments that fall within the transport minister's purview (some being governor-in-council appointments that require cabinet approval).

As previously reported, Nicholas Wright is an appointments adviser.

Laurel Lennox, who's been in the office since Alghabra took over the portfolio in January 2021, has been promoted to press secretary. She was originally hired as a special assistant for issues management, and after the election last fall was made issues management and legislative affairs adviser. Lennox previously interned in then-transport minister Marc Garneau's office in 2020 and went on to work in Garneau's Hill office as the MP for Notre-

Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount, Que., before joining Alghabra's team.

Ellen Kennedy, a former assistant manager with Ritchie Feed & Seed in Ottawa and recent Algonquin College public relations grad, joined the office in March as a special assistant for communications.



Ellen Kennedy is a special assistant for communications. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

As previously reported, Valérie Glazer is director of communications to the transport minister; she also oversees Caroline Morchat, communications assistant for social media.

Operations assistant Mankiran Dulku left Alghabra's team in January, and she's since been replaced by Fares Abu Al Soud as special assistant for operations.



Fares Abu Al Soud is a special assistant for operations. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Before being hired in January, he'd been tackling operations as an intern in the transport minister's office since May 2021. He's currently working towards a bachelor's degree in political science and psychology from the University of Toronto and also has experience as a human resource representative with the Canadian Red Cross.

Ayesha Khan joined the minister's team in March, taking over as his Ontario regional affairs adviser after roughly a year as a constituency assistant to Trade Minister Mary Ng as the Liberal MP for Markham-Thornhill, Ont.



Ayesha Khan is Alghabra's new Ontario adviser. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Khan is also a former constituency assistant to Scarborough-Rouge Park, Ont., Liberal MP Gary Anandasangaree, an ex-vice-president of finance for the Young Liberals of Canada, and spent the

summer of 2019 as an outreach intern in the LRB, amongst other past experience.

Previously, as reported, Samar Khan covered that desk as a cabinet and Ontario regional adviser. She's now an adviser for

cabinet and Prairies and Northern regional affairs.

Other regional advisers to Alghabra include: Lydia MacKay Swiatkowska, who covers the Atlantic; Philip Kuligowski Chan, senior marine policy and B.C. regional affairs adviser; and Adam Lukofsky, senior policy and Quebec regional affairs adviser. As previously reported, Angad Dhillon is director of operations.



Issues manager Nadine Ramadan. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Rounding out the list of new additions is Nadine Ramadan, who's been hired as an issues manager. Before joining Alghabra's office in February, she'd spent the last two years working for Emergency Prepared-

ness Minister Bill Blair as the Liberal MP for Scarborough-Southwest, Ont. In 2019, she spent about eight months in all in then-Ontario MPP Michael Coteau's constituency office in Don Valley East, half as an intern and the other half as a full-time constituency assistant. Coteau was elected to represent the riding federally last fall.

Ramadan has a bachelor's degree in neuroscience from the University of Toronto, and while in school she spent time as a compliance analyst with the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy's G7/G20 research group and as a clinical research assistant with the University Health Network, amongst other past roles.

Mike Maka is chief of staff to Alghabra, whose office also currently includes: Miled Hill, director of policy and interim air policy adviser; Ninu Forrest, rail and surface policy adviser; Jean Proulx, senior legislative affairs adviser; and Varisha Naeem, special assistant to the minister and chief of staff.

## Sport Minister St-Onge adds comms director

Sport Minister Pascale St-Onge has welcomed two staff to her office since February, including Elda André-Roy, who's been hired as director of communications.



Communications director Elda André-Roy. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

André-Roy was last working for the Canada Infrastructure Bank as manager of corporate communications, filling that role for roughly two years in all. Before then, she spent almost six years working in Ontario's Ministry of Francophonie Affairs as executive adviser to the assistant deputy minister.

Between 2005 and 2013, André-Roy worked for the federal Department of Canadian Heritage, including as a senior policy analyst and official languages program consultant. During that period, for a few months in 2010, she helped out the then-named department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (now Global Affairs Canada) as a media liaison officer for that year's G8 and G20 summits in Canada. André-Roy is also a former cul-

tural attaché with the Bureau du Québec in Toronto.

She'll be working closely with St-Onge's press secretary, Ariane Joazard-Bélizaire.

Also new to the minister's team is senior adviser Michael Lartigau. He's a former communications adviser with the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Quebec.

## Comms changes for the NDP

There are two new press secretaries on board with the NDP following the departure of Charlotte MacLeod in March and Nathan Little back in January.

MacLeod marked her last day on the job on Twitter on March 25, writing: "I've learnt so much and will miss all my lovely colleagues. Glad I got to witness Canadian history this week." (Referencing the confidence-and-supply agreement reached between the NDP and governing Liberals and announced on March 22.)



Tristan Oliff is a new NDP press secretary. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

A former social media officer for the writing hub Avron's The Stories We Tell series, MacLeod had been tackling media requests for the NDP caucus since October 2020. She's now joined Global Affairs Can-

ada as a communications officer, as noted on her LinkedIn profile.

Little, a former assistant to then-NDP MP Mumilaq Qaqqaq, had a relatively short run as a caucus press secretary, having first stepped into the role in October 2021. He's now an adviser with Public Affairs Advisors, a—you guessed it—national public affairs and strategic communications firm in Ottawa.

With two departures come two additions, and Tristan Oliff and Erin Burchett are now in place as press secretaries.

Oliff was previously working for Impact Hub Ottawa, most recently as a community lead. A former managing director of *Nouvelle News*, which he helped co-found, he's previously done outreach work for the federal New Democratic Party and was a policy communications adviser to then-NDP candidate Emilie Taman in Ottawa Centre, Ont., during the 2019 federal election.



Press secretary Erin Burchett. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Burchett was recently a public affairs intern with Crestview Strategy and is part of Carleton University's master of political management program's class of 2022. She also has experience as a junior

ATIP analyst with Infrastructure Canada, a commerce student with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and as a junior analyst with Public Safety Canada, as noted on her LinkedIn profile.

Mélanie Richer continues as director of communications, while Alana Cahill remains deputy director of communications, media. Jennifer Howard is chief of staff to NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh.

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The Hill Times

# Conservatives converge on Shaw Centre for Canada Strong and Free conference from May 5-7

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

**House Sitting**—The House is sitting every weekday until Friday, May 20. It will break from May 23-27, and will sit May 30-June 23. It will break for the summer on June 23 and will return on Sept. 19 and will sit Sept. 19-Oct. 7, will break for one week, Oct. 10-Oct. 14, and will sit for three straight weeks, Oct. 17-Nov. 4. It will take a one-week break, Nov. 7-11. It will return on Nov. 14 and will sit for five straight weeks, Nov. 14-Dec. 16. And that's the House calendar for 2022.

**National Culture Summit**—Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez will take part in a fireside chat, to close the National Culture Summit which runs May 2-4. This event will take place at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St., at 10:45 a.m. Details online.

THURSDAY, MAY 5—  
FRIDAY, MAY 6

**Ng Hosts Tai**—Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business, and Economic Development Mary Ng will welcome U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai during her visit to Canada from May 5-6. In Ottawa, they will hold a joint media availability, meet with stakeholders and hold a bilateral meeting. In Toronto, they will tour key facilities highlighting the trade benefits and supporting the global economic recovery.

THURSDAY, MAY 5—  
SATURDAY, MAY 7

**Canada Strong and Free Networking Conference**—Interim Conservative Leader Candice Bergen will take part in the 14th Canada Strong and Free Networking Conference. Other speakers include: Conservative Senator Leo Housakos, Conservative MP Melissa Lantsman, Reform Party founder Preston Manning, former Conservative cabinet minister Tony Clement, and former CMA president Dr. Ann Collins. This event will take place at the Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Dr.

FRIDAY, MAY 6

**Challenges and Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples**—Shannin Metatawabini, chief executive officer of National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association, will take part in a conversation with Cheryl McKenzie, director of news and current affairs at APTN. This event will happen on Friday, May 6, at noon (EDT) and is part of the Pearson Conference on Canada's New Challenges. Free registration: [www.thepearsoncentre.ca](http://www.thepearsoncentre.ca)

**Virtual Pink Tea Conversation**—Former Liberal premier of Ontario Kathleen Wynne and entrepreneur Bobbie Racette will be the special guests at the Famous 5's next Pink Tea. Friday, May 6, 12 p.m. MDT. Tickets available at [famous5.ca/events/virtualpinkteamay2022](http://famous5.ca/events/virtualpinkteamay2022).

MONDAY, MAY 9

**The Future of the Francophonie**—Louise Mushikiwabo, secretary general of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, will deliver virtual remarks in French at the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations. Monday,



Interim Conservative Leader Candice Bergen will take part in the 14th Canada Strong and Free Networking Conference, which runs May 5-7 at the Shaw Centre. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

May 9, 11:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Register at [corim.qc.ca](http://corim.qc.ca).

TUESDAY, MAY 10

**The Bad and the Ugly: Internet Governance in an Era of Disinformation**—The Balsillie School for International Affairs hosts a webinar: "The Bad and the Ugly: Internet Governance in an Era of Disinformation." What happens when the tremendous power and reach of the internet is misused and abused through propaganda, lies, and disinformation campaigns? How—and should?—the internet be governed, and by whom? A panel of experts will discuss. Tuesday, May 10, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. RSVP at [balsillieschool.ca](http://balsillieschool.ca).

**Money for Nothing: Investment and Financial Policies to get to Net Zero**—McGill University hosts a webinar, "Money for Nothing: Investment and Financial Policies to get to Net Zero," a discussion on the investment and finance challenges of the net-zero energy transition. Participants include Rachel Samson, vice-president of research, Institute for Research on Public Policy; Paul Rochon, former deputy minister of finance (2014-2020); and Martha Hall Findlay, chief climate officer at Suncor. Tuesday, May 10, 5-6:30 p.m. Register at [mcgill.ca](http://mcgill.ca).

**Inflation: The Threat and the Response**—The C.D. Howe Institute hosts a panel discussion on "Inflation: The Threat and the Response," featuring two former governors of the Bank of Canada: Stephen Poloz and David Dodge. This event will take place at 67 Yonge St., Toronto. Tuesday, May 10, 5:30-8:30 p.m. C.D. Howe members and their guests can register online.

**Still Hopeful with Maude Barlow**—The Ottawa International Writers' Festival hosts activist Maude Barlow who will discuss her new book, *Still Hopeful: Lessons from a Lifetime of Activism*. Barlow will explore the three major movements in her life: sec-

ond-wave feminism, the battle against free trade and globalization, and the global fight for water justice. This event will take place at Christ Church Cathedral, 414 Sparks St. Tuesday, May 10 at 7 p.m. Tickets available at [writersfestival.org](http://writersfestival.org).

TUESDAY, MAY 10—  
THURSDAY, MAY 12

**Seven Generations Continuum of Care**—The Assembly of First Nations hosts a three-day forum on "Seven Generations Continuum of Care," identifying approaches that will improve well-being for First Nation individuals, families and communities as they grow older. Tuesday, May 10 to Thursday, May 12, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. More information at [afn.ca](http://afn.ca).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11

**Cheers to 25 Years**—Yvonne Jones, parliamentary secretary to the minister of natural resources and to the minister of northern affairs, will be celebrated for her 25 years in politics at the "Cheers to 25 Years: Celebrating women and gender diversity in politics" event hosted by Equal Voice NL. This year marks 100 years of women in Canadian politics, with 2021 a huge year in overall gains in political diversity in Newfoundland and Labrador. This event will take place in the ballroom at the Delta Hotel. Wednesday, May 11, 6-10 p.m. NDT. Register at [equalvoice.ca/events/25-years-gala-nl/](http://equalvoice.ca/events/25-years-gala-nl/).

**Conservative Party Leadership Debate**—The Conservative Party's leadership candidates will take part in the televised English-language debates on Wednesday, May 11, for the first time. The debate will happen at 8 p.m. EST and will be held in Edmonton. Each candidate will be allocated 100 tickets at a cost of \$50 each and each candidate will be required to prepare a two-minute introduction video to be played in advance of both the in-person and online

debate. For more information, contact [lcnc@conservative.ca](mailto:lcnc@conservative.ca).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11—  
THURSDAY, MAY 12

**Montreal Climate Security Summit**—The Conference of Defence Associations Institute hosts the Montreal Climate Security Summit, an international meeting at the intersection of the security and environmental sectors. Panellists from National Defence, the Canadian Armed Forces, the Red Cross, the European Union, NATO, and the World Bank will take part. Register at [cdainstitute.ca](http://cdainstitute.ca).

THURSDAY, MAY 12

**Canada's Stem Cell Network Luncheon**—Andy Fillmore, parliamentary secretary to the minister of innovation, science and industry, will make a funding announcement at a luncheon event hosted by Canada's Stem Cell Network. Invited guests will connect with and hear directly from SCN-funded early career investigators about some of the exciting research being undertaken and their aspirations for the future of the field. This event will take place on May 12 at 11:45 p.m. at the Château Laurier in Ottawa.

**How Canada Can Lead in Privacy Reform Globally**—Ryerson University hosts a webinar, "How Canada Can Lead in Privacy Reform Globally." Elizabeth Denham, former assistant privacy commissioner of Canada and former UK information commissioner, will discuss how national laws can mesh into effective international data protection. Thursday, May 12, 4-5:30 p.m. To view, head to: [ryerson.zoom.us/j/91941276567](https://ryerson.zoom.us/j/91941276567)

THURSDAY, MAY 12—  
FRIDAY, MAY 13

**Come Celebrate the Life of Rosie**—On May 12-13, the uOttawa Public

Law Centre, Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice, Human Rights Research and Education Centre and Advocates Society, will be holding a two-day conference to celebrate the incredible life and achievements of Rosalie Silberman Abella. The conference, entitled 'A Life of Firsts,' will examine her work both before and during her time on the Supreme Court of Canada. The conference will be online and in person at the Delta Ottawa, with a reception the night of May 11 and a dinner on May 12. Registration is open at [ciaj-icaj.ca/en/upcoming-programs/justice-rosalie-abella-conference-2022/](http://ciaj-icaj.ca/en/upcoming-programs/justice-rosalie-abella-conference-2022/). Tickets are also available separately for the May 12 dinner, which will be hosted by Guy Pratte.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

**Hope for Refugee Women Gala Dinner**—Raising funds to create endowed university scholarships at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University for refugee women. There will be a three-course Afghan meal, followed by keynote address by journalist and recipient of the Order of Canada Sally Armstrong, as well as a silent auction, and live entertainment. This event will take place on Saturday, May 14, 2022, 7 p.m., in the Trillium Ballroom at the Shaw Centre, Ottawa. Ticket Price: \$150. Register & purchase tickets (until April 30): [tinyurl.com/ypjssznm](http://tinyurl.com/ypjssznm). For more information email [info.hopedinner@gmail.com](mailto:info.hopedinner@gmail.com). Follow [facebook.com/HOPEforRefugeeWomen](https://facebook.com/HOPEforRefugeeWomen) for updates and more information. The HOPE Gala is organized by the Heads of Mission Spouses' Association (HOMSA) in collaboration with the Canadian Federation of University Women—Ottawa (CFUW-Ottawa) and the International Club of Ottawa (ICO).

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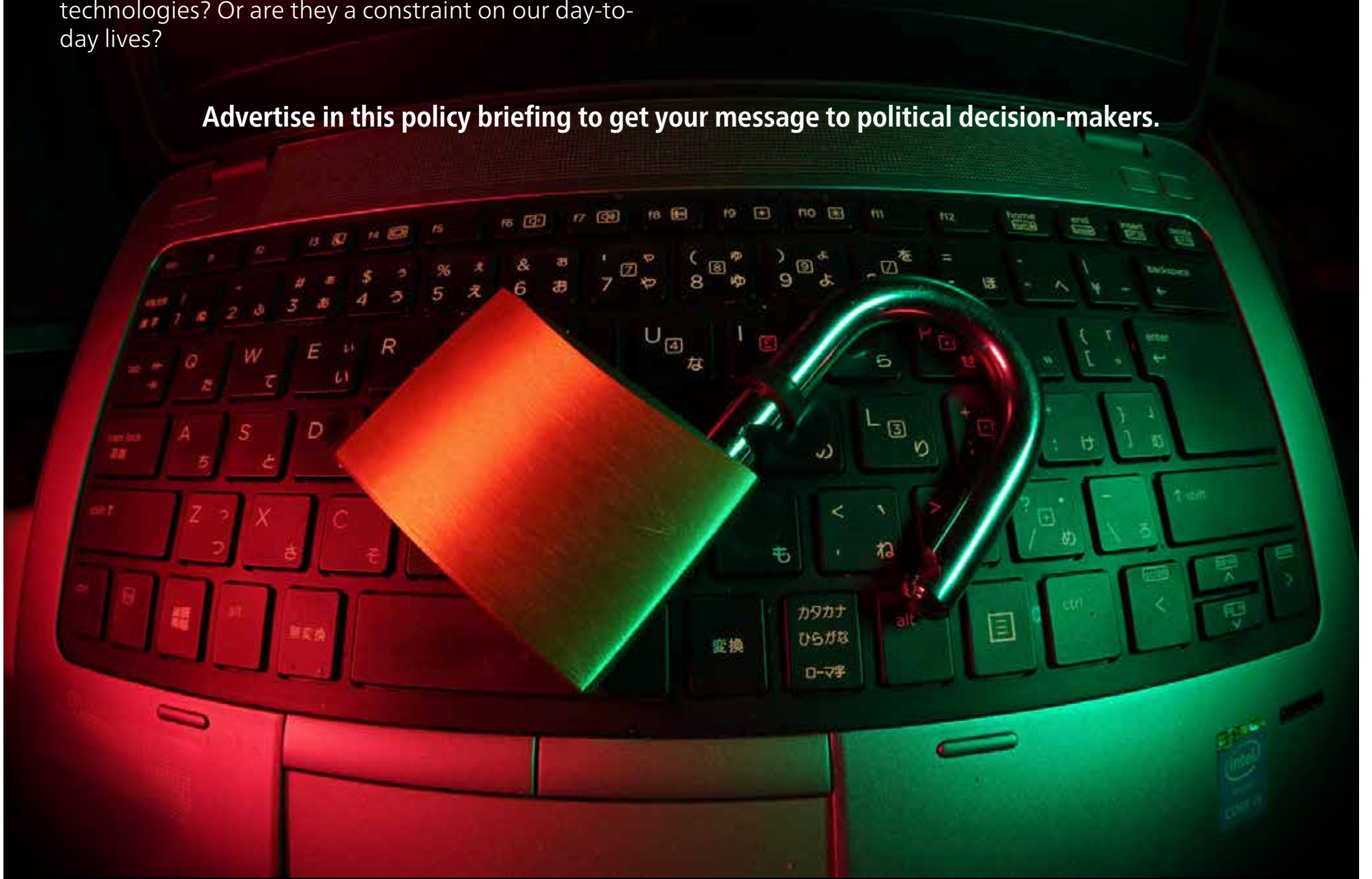
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