



SUMMER 2025

# Beyond the Hill

Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians



**Mongolia study tour**

**Falling off the cliff  
with Sue Barnes**

**The Ottawa Treaty**

**Yasmin Ratansi on  
the Aga Khan IV**

PM 40027604



# A walk down memory lane



*The Hon. James McGrath and Doug Rowland.*



*The Hon. Jean Charest and Maurice Harquail.*



*Murray Cardiff, the Hon. Sarmite Bulte, Ian Watson and Léo Duguay.*



*Marlene and Ron Catterall.*



*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper and Barack Obama.*



*Peter Milliken, Speaker of the House of Commons 2001 to 2011, with Dan Hays, Senate Speaker from 2001 to 2006.*

# Beyond the Hill

Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians

Volume 20, Issue No. 1

Summer 2025

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*This giant statue in Mongolia is dedicated to the memory of Genghis Khan.*

*Cover photo by Dorothy Dobbie.*

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**ISSN** 1920-8561

Canadian Publications mail product  
Sales agreement #40027604

**Our Mission Statement**

*Beyond the Hill*, a magazine for former parliamentarians, is designed to engage, enlighten and inform its readers about each other, their Association and its Educational Foundation. Its aim is to encourage participation in the Association and to promote democracy. The views of the contributors to this publication do not necessarily represent those of CAFP nor its Educational Foundation. *Beyond the Hill* welcomes letters to the editor, submissions and suggestions. P.O. Box 1, 131 Queen St., House of Commons Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1A 0A6. Telephone 1-888-567-4764, Fax: 613-947-1764 E-mail: [ex-parl@parl.gc.ca](mailto:ex-parl@parl.gc.ca). Website: [www.exparl.ca](http://www.exparl.ca).

## The rocky road to human rights

**Ms. Dobbie,**

I hope this message finds you well and in good spirits.

Through you I would like send “kudos” to Lynn McDonald for her recent opinion piece in the summer issue of *Beyond the Hill*.

I am currently in the midst of reading “The 1867 Project” and appreciate her commentary.

I would suggest that with a little bit of editing Ms. McDonalds piece would be well suited as an op-ed opinion in Canada’s national newspapers.

*Regards*

*David Bjornson*

## Falling off the cliff

**Hi Dorothy,**

Last week, much to my delight, I received CAFP’s French-language magazine. As usual, I perused the articles in the magazine.

An article by Madame Dobbie particularly caught my attention. Part 2 touched me deeply. Finally, someone really understood what I went through after leaving the House of Commons! I can’t hide the fact that I had a lump in my throat and could hardly hold back the tears.

As a backbencher who had only served one term from 2019 to 2021, after 15 years of activism, the aftermath was very painful. I went through a depression, a separation and a reconciliation. This malaise, which no one around me understood, had been experienced by others.

“It’s like falling off a cliff”, as Mrs. Dobbie so aptly puts it. She also talks about post-traumatic stress! So that was it! After three years, I finally have an explanation and I now know that I wasn’t alone in going through this ordeal. Thanks to therapy and the support of those around me, I’m doing much better.

Special thanks to Mrs Dorothy Dobbie for broaching the subject. Without knowing it, she is helping me to understand the grief I had to go through after my political involvement. A thousand thanks again!

Thanks also to CAFP and the magazine team. Your work is greatly appreciated!

*Best regards to you all,  
Louise Charbonneau*

**Dear Mme. Charbonneau:**

I am so glad that the article helped you. So many of our former colleagues went through the same thing and it breaks my heart that nobody ever tells you what is coming up.

Please put your mind at peace now. The way formerly elected politicians are treated is heartbreaking, but it is not because of something lacking in you. Those who feel the separation most deeply are often those who were the most sincere about their work and about their commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of their fellow citizens.

We are trying to explain this to the Boards of Internal Economy so that we can reach out and help more people in a positive and proactive way, Your letter will be very helpful in this endeavour.

*Dorothy Dobbie, C.M.*

*Past President, CAFP*

...



### Biography of Hugo Laviolette, CAFP Administrative Assistant.

My name is Hugo Laviolette, and I am currently a third-year student in Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Ottawa. Since May 2023, I have been working in the parliamentary environment as an Administrative Assistant for Member of Parliament Francis Drouin. This role has allowed me to develop skills in administrative support, casework management, and assistance with parliamentary activities.

I am excited to be joining the team at the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians. I look forward to contributing to the association’s projects, supporting events, and maintaining active communication with members.

I look forward to meeting you and working with you in the coming months.





*Matt DeCoursey.*

# Message from the President

By Matt DeCoursey

**D**ear Friends and Former Parliamentarians,  
Perhaps our role as former Parliamentarians will never be as consequential as it will be in 2025.

Since even before January 20th, we have endured daily threats to Canada's sovereignty from the Trump Administration. It seems our once relied upon partners in the US are intent to put at risk the longstanding economic and security ties that have made our bilateral relationship the strongest in modern history.

Domestically, we are almost guaranteed (if it has not already happened at the time of distribution) to go to the polls in a federal election. Many Parliamentarians have decided not to re-offer. Many others may still make that decision. Others, still, will lose their seats.

On both fronts – whether defending the values of democracy and Ca-

nadian sovereignty or of supporting the transition of Parliamentarians into post-elected life – we at CAFP are essential voices of reason, experience and insight. While often acutely political, the non-partisan nature of our activities allows us to rise above perceived partisan interest and collectively stand up for the best interests of our colleagues, of our institutions, and of Canadians.

Canada, as much as it ever has, needs a strong Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians (CAFP).

Already, we have begun the work of planning ways for our organization to express its voice in the current unstable geo-political climate. Our focus will be on ensuring Canada's sovereignty, advocating for our democracy, and helping safeguard our economy. With your support, we will succeed.

Members of our association, themselves from across the geographic, lin-

guistic, and partisan spectrum, have begun the work of engaging departing Members of Parliament and Senators. Our long-term stability as an association requires those who have served Canada to see CAFP as a platform for continued service. With your support, they will, and our association will flourish.

This is a time of great uncertainty, no question. However, if former Parliamentarians work together in support of our colleagues and our country, we can help ease that uncertainty for many.

I hope you too will find a way to support our great nation, and the many friends and colleagues who have given much in its service. Let's make 2025 a year of consequence for Canadian Former Parliamentarians.

Yours in friendship,  
Matt DeCoursey,  
President, CAFP



*Matthew Dubé helped lay wreaths at the Remembrance Day ceremony in 2024 at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.*



# Mongolia

## The land of eternal blue sky

By the Hon. Bryon Wilfert



*Standing in front of the Genghis Khan National Museum in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Left to Right: Ken Boshcoff, Dorothy Dobbie, Elizabeth Wilfert, the Hon. Bryon Wilfert, Mahbanu Ratansi and Yasmin Ratansi. Back row: our guide, Staffer Annie Bourbonnais, Dorothy's friend Judy Saxby, the Hon. Jean Augustine and Chungsen Leung.*

**I**n September 2024, a delegation of CAFP members travelled to the Land of Genghis Khan, the Land of Eternal Blue Sky – Mongolia.

It was a fantastic opportunity to experience the warmth and charm of the people, the incredible landscapes, and the ability to meet various political, academic and business leaders.

Mongolia is an emerging democracy in Asia, and we had the opportunity to meet with members of the Association of the First Democratic Constitution Parliamentarians, to discuss democratic reform to exchanging

views with a former Foreign Minister TSOGTBAATAR Damdin to expand both bi-lateral relations and parliamentary, the atmosphere was exciting and insightful.

We stood in Sukhbaatar Square (named after the hero who declared independence from China in 1921) and gazing towards the Great Hural (Parliament Buildings) with a massive statue of Genghis Khan facing us, you got a real sense of the dynamism of the country, with young and old strolling through the square or taking photos.

In meetings with Canadian Ambassador Choufani; Vice Chair of the Business Council of Mongolia, Buyanjargal Byambasaikhan, and Vice Chair Randolph Koppa and their colleagues, we got a strong sense that Mongolia is open for business and that Canadians have real opportunities in the fields of education, green energy, tourism, etc.

This country, sandwiched between China and Russia, has been pursuing a Third Path with Canada, upgrading its relationship to a cooperative partnership in 2023.

Whether we had ice cream from





Ken Boshcoff with the camel cavalcade statues at the Flaming Cliffs.



Dorothy Dobbie gets a lesson in falconry. This sport is very much rooted in the history of Mongolian nomads.



This large statue is dedicated to the memory of Genghis Khan. By the time of his death in 1227, Genghis Khan's empire covered roughly 12,000,000 square kilometers.



A cultural experience in Ulaanbaatar.

the many street vendors (a Mongolian treat in any weather), traditional Mongolian cuisine, or horseback riding, the warmth and friendliness of the people was always evident.

One special visit was to the Genghis Khan Museum to enjoy some of the more than 10,000 original exhibits from Modun Shanyu, covering the founder of the first nomadic state to the beginning of the 20th Century. With its six floors of exhibition halls we were treated to a very interesting guided tour which brought the history to life.

In meeting with the Chair of the National News Agency, Montsame, Sodontogos Erdenetsogt, we learned about the plan to reintroduce Mongolian script to replace Russian Cyrillic

in 2025. Khishigjargal Enkhbayar, co-founder of the UN Association of Mongolia, talked about dealing with young people and climate change projects. We were treated to an array of individuals who brought their passion and knowledge displaying a very energetic society.

Ulaanbaatar, the capital, is a city on the move, and we had time to walk its many busy streets and appreciate the historic and modern architecture that is flourishing.

Mongolian culture is something that is unique, vibrant and exhilarating. We were treated to a traditional Mongolian cultural experience which included dancing, singing, and gymnastic performance.

The trip concluded with many par-

ticipants spending a few days out in the Gobi Desert – meaning waterless place.

The unique landscape has long been associated with a romantic setting (western minds), and places such as the Yol Valley in the Gobi Gurvan National Park, and the Flaming Cliffs were opportunities to experience Mongolia under the stars.

The CAFPP Study Tour, was very special for all of us, and it provided a glimpse into a country that truly is unique in Asia, and has significant potential for further collaboration with parliamentarians, as well as business people.

The Hon. Brian Wilfert was a Liberal Member of Parliament from 1997 to 2011. He is the Honorary Consul of Mongolia for Ontario.





*The final day on a trip to the Flaming Cliffs at sunset where the group enjoyed a glass of wine and toasted Bryon Wilfert, Ontario's Honorary Consul to Mongolia, who so skillfully led our delegation.*



*The never-ending majesty of the scenery.*



*Downtown Ulaanbaatar, a very modern city with lots of cultural icons, green boulevards and unbelievable traffic congestions.*



*Luxury yurts. They were equipped with showers and even a bidet attachment to the toilet!*



*The delegation met with Sandra Choufani, Canada's Ambassador to Mongolia.*



*When rain washes out one trail, an alternate is easily created.*





*Wonderful restaurants with private rooms, Asian style.*



*The Hon. Bryon Wilfert speaks to a professor of archeology at the university where we viewed ancient fossils.*



*Gengis Khan, the big man himself. He had six wives and many concubines. It is said that some 16 million men today are descended from him.*



*Parliament buildings. They have several international visits a week. The square in front of the buildings is humming with activity.*



*A meeting in Parliament. It is interesting to note that the Russian Cyrillic alphabet is still in place on buildings and official signs, but the government has a plan to replace it with the Mongolia alphabet within five years. Their official second language is English.*



*Entrance to an original temple.*



# Diversification, global co-operation and national resilience

## Lessons from a Former Minister of Industry

By Eduardo Rondon

“Canada’s political and economic structures in the present day have shifted drastically,” says the former Minister of Industry, the Hon. Tony Clement. Due to a resurgence of polarization, Canada lacks the strong leadership and stout communications between governmental agencies that existed and allowed Canada to be the first country to address the 2009 financial crisis.

Civil unrest and hopelessness are frequent during economic turmoil, adds Tony, who was the Minister of Industry during the 2009 recession. However, Canada is a country built upon national persistence and global cooperation in the face of global disasters and national protectionism, and the economic crisis we are facing is nothing Canada has not already faced and resisted triumphantly.

Canada’s history with the United States has always been one of cautious co-operation. In the past century, Canada has flourished under an Americanized globe and has maintained a closer relationship with the US than most when it comes to trade, business, and partnerships. The economy has increasingly relied on exports to the United States. This has raised concerns since President Donald Trump began imposing tariffs and stated that if Canada is not able to withstand the economic pressure caused by his protectionist policies, he would gladly make our nation the 51st state. Clearly, our independence is a price too hefty to pay for economic growth. However, the resilience and strength of Canadians has not been lost. Canada will resurface in the face of economic pressures just as it did time and again in the past.

Canada’s position as a middle power does not condemn it to depend on stronger countries for guidance, rather,



*The Hon. Tony Clement, a former Minister of Industry.*

it places the country at the core of co-operation in the global stage. As Tony says, while maintaining economic relations with the U.S. is geographically smart, strengthening global relations through international organizations is critical. To him, this could include further involvement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, Canada’s trade deal with the European Union.

Diversifying our exports would not only ensure more viable solutions to an impending crisis before facing it, but it would also further develop Canada’s brand as a global co-operator. While these solutions are desirable, Tony Clement highlights the need for strong leadership.

When the odds were stacked against Canada, former prime ministers such as John A. Macdonald and Wilfrid Laurier didn’t submit to other nations for guidance but instead exercised strong leadership to fight threats to the country’s sovereignty. Canada’s

representatives have long sought alternative solutions to crises, implementing careful policy to ensure Canada would withstand international pressures.

Tony warns that, although global economic co-operation might be helpful, our geographic positioning makes the U.S. one of the most profitable and efficient importers of Canadian goods. He adds that crises originating from the States will result in crises in other nations. He cautions that if Canada shifts too strongly towards any other regional bloc, the dependence will remain similar, simply changing to whom we are dependent. The former minister believes the best long-term solution to economic crises is preparing alternatives before needing them.

By participating more actively in regional organizations such as NATO, Tony says Canada can find solutions to the crisis that maintain regional co-ordination while complementing it with global co-operation.

While the current political and economic positioning of Canada might seem dire, these issues should not serve as reasons to give into American annexation, but, as Tony concludes, they should be lessons in proactive solution-drafting and resilience. He sees reasons to actively craft a stronger sense of resilience and leadership within Canada to combat economic stagnation.

In a few decades, if handled correctly, this event may motivate future generations to keep fighting for the preservation of Canadian sovereignty. This crisis, while undoubtedly harmful, will inspire future leaders to respond to seemingly hopeless international crises with the famous optimism and cooperation that has characterized Canada since the beginning of our Confederation.



# Balancing accessibility and theatrics in Parliament through social media

By Eduardo Rondon

The political landscape is constantly evolving, adopting new technologies to enhance accessibility and foster more efficient interactions between politicians and their constituents. Social media, in particular, has propelled democracy to unprecedented levels, enabling leaders to communicate instantly with their entire nation and empowering citizens from coast to coast to influence decisions made on Parliament Hill.

Third parties now benefit from “a workaround to reaching mass audiences,” a former NDP digital strategist said, allowing them to promote their platforms without financial resources comparable to larger parties. Pressure groups have also modernized their approaches, taking on more active roles than ever before.

Grassroots movements can now organize and recruit with a reach far beyond what the outdated pamphlet could achieve. These trends are growing and are poised to become even more prominent in the following years.

David Sommer, former head of digital for former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, was instrumental in advancing the digital transformation of Canadian politics. Drawing inspiration from President Barack Obama’s use of social media, Sommer promoted the use of selfies during the 2008 campaign. Though a long shot at the time, the strategy scored a point for the Liberal team.

Selfies and social media not only helped the former prime minister seem more up to date than his opponents, it also turned the public into a means for free advertising. While Sommer mentions the party “very rarely posted selfies on Justin Trudeau’s account,” individuals eagerly shared them on their own, unlocking an untapped market of free, trendy, and organic political promotion.

While increased accessibility to politics is always desirable in a democracy, the use of social media introduces potential repercussions that may outweigh its benefits. The proliferation of selfies and

social media might have deepened parasocial relationships, making constituents view Justin more as a friend than a political leader.

Nevertheless, Sommer said that such trends are not new – fan mail and fan art have been long sent to prime ministers, even before the usage of social media. Social media has merely amplified these reactions, he states, since that is the type of relationships people have always developed towards leaders of their countries.

The notion of politicians as celebrities might not be new, but it highlights a larger concern: the merging of politics and entertainment. Humour has been widely used to engage the public and shed off the aristocratic vestiges that politics have tended to hold. Yet, humour also risks reducing politics to a spectacle rather than a serious decision-making system impacting the lives of all Canadians. Overindulgence in humour and the inherent informality of social media, Sommer said, may create a perception of the leader being “disconnected from the needs of regular people.”

The former head of digital advises politicians to strategically strike a balance between playfulness that resonates with the public and the seriousness they expect from their leaders.

Just as how social media has reshaped the way politicians communicate with their constituents, it has also redefined their use of humour overall – enter, “the meme.” Memes, humorous images shared online, have become a popular tool for engaging younger voters. Every Canadian political party has joined the meme bandwagon in recent years, but not all memes have been received equally.

Sommer said that with overuses or misuses of memes, there is a chance that it will “hurt their credibility.” Nader Mohamed, the NDP’s former digital lead, echoes this point, warning that politicians need to ensure their usage of memes seems organic, using trends that their candidates are “naturally able to take part in” by understanding “[their]

strengths and weaknesses,” rather than simply jumping onto the most viral meme at the time.

Another significant shift brought by political social media is the transition from policy- focused discussions to character-driven narratives. Mohamed advocates for a “diverse communication strategy” that incorporates both humorous content to capture the public eye and long-form, serious content to explain their policies in detail.

While social media offers a possible departure from traditional advertising strategies, political parties must be cautious to not alienate demographics who may not be as active online. To balance these types of advertisements, Mohamed states that a “comprehensive, robust campaign” is necessary to ensure the party is not overlooking more traditional methods of advertising.

While TV might not be as popular as it once was, entirely dismissing traditional media would be a strategic error, as it continues to serve as a device to target groups that social media might alienate.

The rise of social media in politics has transformed the political battlefield drastically in recent years, and it will continue to evolve the sector, as well as itself. With a strategy that is constantly transforming and reinventing itself, missteps are inevitable.

The political sector in Canada, Mohamed concludes, lags “years behind any trend.” While visible in political fields globally, this phenomenon is particularly prevalent within Canada since major parties fear backlash whenever new techniques are presented.

The usage of social media by numerous parties has shown that, although these techniques might have been a long shot in previous years, taking that shot was essential, not only to gain popularity through creative and relevant means, but to completely redefine the way political parties tackle advertising and accessibility in the future.



# The Hon. Eleni Bakopanos

## Breaking barriers in Canadian politics

By Michael McBean

**T**he Hon. Eleni Bakopanos spent over a decade serving her constituents in the House of Commons and constantly strove to break down barriers for women in Canadian politics.

She represented the Montreal ridings of Saint-Denis and Ahuntsic from 1993 to 2006. Eleni served in numerous roles in government including parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Assistant Deputy Speaker and parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Social Development and Minister of Human Resources.

Eleni said she was honoured to serve her constituents for over a decade.

"I loved talking to people and I loved listening to them," Eleni said in an interview with *Beyond the Hill*. "You are not serving yourself. You are serving your constituents. You are serving your country. Being a servant of the people was a great honour for me."

Eleni was the first woman born in Greece to become a Canadian member of Parliament, proud to have represented her Greek origins in the House of Commons.

"The country that I immigrated to opened its doors and gave me all these opportunities," she said.

Eleni had the opportunity to represent Canada on numerous occasions at the international level and said her Greek background helped her to connect with others on the global stage. There are now three women of Greek origin in the House of Commons, a number Eleni is happy to see growing.

Former Member of Parliament the Hon. Marlene Jennings described Eleni as a determined leader who was not afraid to make a difference.

"She is dynamic, she knows what her values are, and she has no hesitation in standing up for those values,"



*The Hon. Eleni Bakopanos*

Jennings said. "That's something we find less and less amongst our elected officials which made Eleni stand out."

Jennings said she is grateful for her long-standing friendship with Eleni and the mentorship she provided when she first arrived in Ottawa.

"When I came in 1997, Eleni was one of the MPs who mentored me during my first month and year," Jennings said. "She helped guide me through the labyrinth that is the House of Commons and the Canadian Parliament."

During her time as an elected official, Eleni advocated to help provide safe spaces for women in politics. Eleni helped to create the first Liberal women's caucus, something that did not exist before. She said while there has been some progress when it comes to the political recruitment of women, there are many issues at hand.

"The biggest barrier that women face is overcoming self-doubt," Eleni said, noting her increasing worry about the toxicity in politics today and how it could deter women from wanting to serve their communities.

"Yes, more women are interested

in entering politics, but more of them are leaving politics," she said. "They have found that it's a very toxic environment."

Eleni continues to dedicate time to mentoring young women interested in the political process whether that be as an elected official or those who prefer to work behind the scenes.

Looking back at her political career, Eleni is proud of the day-to-day things she was able to get done for her constituents. She also takes pride in major milestones that she and her government worked toward such as Canada recognizing the Armenian genocide or negotiating agreements with other countries.

After her time as an MP, Eleni worked for a couple of years as Caucus Liaison to the Office of the Official Opposition. She later worked as Director of Government Relations at her alma mater, McGill University.

Continuing to advocate for women to have their voices heard in Canadian politics, Eleni has served in different roles with the Equal Voice Foundation, a charity dedicated to improving gender representation in politics. She has also assisted with the McGill Women's Alumnae Association.

Eleni hopes her career inspires more women to enter politics and pursue the noble calling of being a public servant.

"People should know that individuals who enter politics are really entering because they want to make a difference in people's lives," Eleni said. "As a parliamentarian, I was a servant of the public and we have to remember that is what our role should always be. Not a politician, a servant of the public."

*\*Eleni also served as vice president of CAFB and was a comforting and reliable support for me as president during COVID. She is warm, kind and tough when she needs to be. We need more Elenis in politics! – Dorothy Dobbie*



# The Ottawa Treaty continues to represent the “golden age” of Canadian diplomacy

By Mia Parker

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, the Ottawa Treaty, was ratified March 1, 1999. It marked a milestone, not only for the world-wide effort toward peace, but for the legacy of Canadian diplomacy.

Landmines kill indiscriminately and often stay hidden, arming the land for generations to come. The weapons continue to threaten civilian lives long after a conflict has passed, with deadly and disabling impacts. In the 1990s, efforts to prohibit the use of landmines gained traction, but consensus and concrete steps were hard to come by.

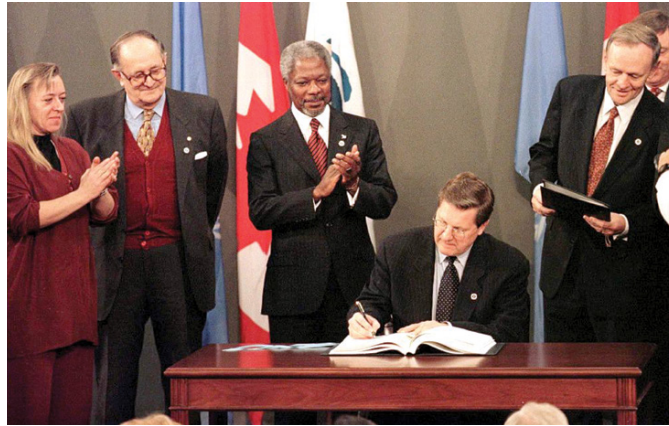
The Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, the then-minister of foreign affairs, became passionate about the issue, engaging in formal and informal meetings culminating in inviting nations to sign the Ottawa Treaty Dec. 3, 1997.

“I think that gave us a sort of positioning that was fairly unique inside the international system, as a middle power,” Lloyd told *Beyond the Hill* in an interview.

But treaties don’t gain much traction if they’re not ratified, and the bulk of Canada’s diplomatic efforts to ban landmines involved creating allies and convincing other nations to sign on and support the treaty.

Alongside Lloyd, many Canadian former parliamentarians were instrumental in garnering global support against landmines. One of these individuals was the Hon. Jacques Saada, a Liberal MP of nearly nine years.

“At the time, we lived in the golden age of Canadian diplomacy,” he said.



*In 1997, Foreign Affairs Minister the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy signs the Ottawa Treaty. From left, anti-landmine advocate Jody Williams, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize that year, Cornelio Sommaruga, president of the Red Cross, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. Photo provided by Lloyd Axworthy.*

Jacques called the work on the treaty the junction of idealism of peace and pragmatism of the necessary work.

When Lloyd invited Jacques to join the delegation tasked with negotiating the final treaty, he enthusiastically accepted. Though the treaty had gained international traction, certain important players had yet to fully commit. India and Pakistan; Israel and Arab countries it was in conflict with; and Jacques’ home country, Tunisia, were all countries that Canada still needed to convince.

Jacques was the first Canadian MP from Tunisia. Born in the capital city Tunis, he went on to become Canada’s minister for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the regions of Quebec and minister responsible for La Francophonie, as well as government house leader.

When asked to help with the treaty, Jacques began speaking with the Tunisian ambassador. At the time, no Arab countries had signed on to the Treaty. Many were engaged in ongoing conflict where militaries used the mines to their advantage.

“One must understand that anti-personnel mines are arms that continue to be active regardless of the end of conflicts,” he said. “These are weapons that prevent agriculture and thus proper nutrition, especially in disadvantaged countries.”

In their international diplomacy work, the Canadian representatives met with or heard of various mine victims, many of whom were never even combatives.

“It’s a weapon that touches children in particular, and there are anti-person-

nel mines that were made in the shapes of toys so children would become interested and jump on the mines. These mines created victims years and years after the end of conflicts.”

To Jacques, eliminating these weapons was giving playgrounds back to kids, fields back to farmers, and dangers out of the natural environment. This was the most important disarmament treaty in history.

He was appointed alongside the Hon. Paddy Torsney at the Oslo Conference calling for a total ban on anti-personnel land mines at the United Nations in 1997.

Jacques was responsible for convincing Tunisia to agree to sign and ratify the Ottawa Treaty. He was also a major player in meetings with the francophone parliaments, and brought in Madagascar.

“There is certainly a history of the world where Canada has been a leader, a pioneer at the forefront,” Jacques said.

As of 2022, 164 countries have signed the Ottawa Treaty.

*Written with Beyond the Hill files from Kyla Goulet-Kilgour.*



# Reinvigorating democratic processes

By Ajit Mehat

Canadians value peace order and good governance as a foundation of Canadian society and our identity, to the same extent as our neighbours to the south value life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for theirs. Arguably, peace and order are the product of good governance, and good governance depends on the engagement and consent of Canadians through democratic processes seen as being valid and legitimate.

Democracies world-wide are experiencing strains and stresses as confidence in democratic processes drops and polarization on key social, environmental, and financial issues grows. So, too, in Canada there is a perception, and a growing consensus, that group decision making through democratic institutions at all levels is failing: That the system is broken and polarized; that it doesn't address the real, kitchen table issues facing Canadians; and, that it works only for the elite.

This growing consensus is supported by verifiable polling data, amplified by the 24-hour news cycle, and boosted further by the reach of social media which feeds an unending stream of misinformation and disinformation generated, in some cases, by humans and, in others, by bots.

It is not difficult to see how Canadians, and their representatives, have a difficult time trying to find common ground on the way forward to address increasingly complex issues. When the public square – in real life or online, where we debate alternatives, where civil discourse and democracy should live – is rapidly emptying and people are moving to its boundaries to barricade themselves and defend their truths, the first casualty will be that of good governance.

Yet, when Canadians ask what they can do to navigate a way forward, they are overwhelmed with noise from traditional and social media to such an extent that it is impossible

to detect the signal. Frequently, the noise consists of nothing more than handwringing or restating the problem in an echo-chamber for a captive audience.

So, without being melodramatic, democracies are finding themselves in a crisis. And, in the midst of a crisis, perhaps we can heed the words of Winston Churchill who is reported to have said: "Never let a good crisis go to waste." Perhaps the chance to convert a crisis into an opportunity can be taken up by the two key democratic institutions that are at the heart of providing good governance for Canadians, namely, the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada.

The House of Commons has a unique constitutional role in the bicameral legislature of Canada for many reasons, not the least of which is that it, periodically, renews the mandate it receives from the electorate. Canadians are proud of the fact that when the mandate is handed to another political party, the transfer of power is peaceful and orderly. The key question for Members of Parliament is how to engage Canadians in the period between elections, in a manner that can be scaled to the seriousness of the issue before them.

Townhall meeting, focus groups, and individual meetings may provide depth of discussion on issues but are difficult to scale to level of hundreds or even thousands of constituents. Online surveys or other means of mass engagement, by contrast, can reach more people but are limited as to the depth of issues that can be explored. The Senate, as the other chamber in our bicameral legislature, with its key responsibility to provide sober second thought on proposed legislation from the House, has a different, albeit related, challenge namely that of legitimacy and validity of its review of proposed legislation conducted through the committee hearing process.

On many occasions, the valuable

work of the Senate is undermined by the legitimacy question due to the nature of the appointment of Senators. While the Senate has benefited recently from historically significant changes to the appointment process, the question of the validity of its recommendations, given the limited reach of the committee process, remains.

For example, in the current 44th Parliamentary Session, the Senate has reviewed or is reviewing approximately 391 bills (286 referred by the House and 105 initiated by the Senate). In this process, over the last three years, the Senate has heard from 1,327 witnesses.

Barriers, such as the need to prepare a brief or appear before a committee, favour large organizations and result in a small and skewed sample of voices providing input to the Senate process. Thus, apart from the question of legitimacy, the challenge for both the House and the Senate, is similar: How to undertake engagement with Canadians that is both broad and deep. This necessarily means supplementing current tools of engagement with new and emerging tools driven by information technology. For example, a hybrid public engagement consisting of deliberative assembly and online digital platforms could provide the scale and depth of discussion that is needed to inform democratic decisions.

In this regard, a group of Canadians – spurred on by discussion at the September 2024 Victoria Forum, a collaboration between the University of Victoria and the Senate of Canada – is exploring discussions with the Senate on how to reinvigorate its public engagement efforts in support of legislative review. At the heart of the conversation is the need to supplement deliberative assemblies with a digital platform such as Ethelo, an internationally recognized digital democracy platform, open-sourced, built in



Canada, tested and proven to achieve consensus on polarizing issues, scalable and bilingually accessible, with a robust and secure algorithm.

In this time of social and political polarization and diminishing trust in democracy, concerned Canadians and former parliamentarians of different political affiliations from different regions of the country, are searching for common grounds for strengthening democratic institutions and rejuvenat-

ing democracy. We need to hear more about such efforts and successes, and failures, as we struggle forward.

The crisis in the erosion of trust in democracy and its institutions is real. The solution requires innovating thinking and action. We cannot continue to repeat the way we have engaged Canadians in the past and expect a different result. Einstein said as much in a different context. The consequence of inaction risks the peace,

order and good governance that Canadians expect, and are now demanding, from their leaders.

*Ajit Mehat is a retired senior public service executive. He negotiated legal aid agreements with the provinces and territories at the Department of Justice and set up the Workplace Health and Safety Agency in Ontario. Collaborating with Ajit: Former MP and MLA Gordon Hogg and Orders of the Day editor Brian Kieran.*

# The lighter side of Parliament

By Michael McBean

Parliament may be a place of debate and division, but sometimes, a good joke can be the real winner of the day.

Various MPs from all parties have become known for their wit and comedic ability. Some of the best jokes told often take aim at everyone, including taking a look in the mirror from time to time.

"It's all about trying to find something people can relate to that is not harsh or vindictive," said former Nova Scotia Liberal MP Rodger Cuzner. "I think you also have to be willing to take a shot at your own backyard as well."

Rodger became known for his humorous interventions during his time in the House of Commons. He began an annual tradition of delivering a politically themed rewrite of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas during Member's Statements around the holiday season.

Rodger's minute-long poems were different every year and would take jabs at all parties, including his own. He said humour can often give politicians a boost in popularity, especially in this digital era.

"In the emergence of social media, you end up picking up 300 to 400 new followers," Rodger said. "It's a great way to grow your footprint and people start to pay attention when it comes to the serious issues."

Friend of Rodger's and current Nova Scotia Liberal MP the Hon.

Darren Fisher has kept the holiday tradition alive and well in the Commons. Rodger said he is to see it continue and has even consulted on its delivery.

Former Alberta Conservative MP the Hon. Monte Solberg said humour can be an effective way of gaining people's attention.

"If you can talk about public policy issues in a way that can see the funny side of them, I think you can find an audience that otherwise might not be very engaged in politics," Monte said. He notes he would often use humour during Question Period and earned respect from his colleagues for his lightheartedness.

Monte added that humour can also be a way of getting the attention of the media on Parliament Hill.

"When you use humour, it tends to attract media attention," he said. "If you want to get your message out to a much broader audience, something that appeals to the media makes sense."

Former Saskatchewan NDP MP Bill Knight said humour can play an important role during parliamentary debates, particularly during tense moments.

"Humour is crucial to cutting through tension in debates," Bill said. "It took away the rancor and made people laugh."

The annual Parliamentary Press Gallery dinner has traditionally

been a hub for humorous speeches by Prime Ministers, party leaders, MPs and journalists with many remarks earning critical acclaim.

One year, Rodger recalled preparing former Liberal leader the Hon. Stéphane Dion for his speech at the function alongside many of his Atlantic caucus colleagues including the Hon. Scott Brison, the Hon. Robert Thibault and the Hon. Mike Savage. Rodger said he did not think this was a coincidence as Atlantic Canadians often have their way with humour and are not afraid to poke fun at others.

"By nature, Atlantic Canadians are pretty down to earth and have an open sense of humour," he said. "We are not scared to laugh at ourselves and certainly not scared to laugh at the foibles of others."

In a time with increased political polarization, Rodger, Monte and Bill said humour is essential in building collegiality and lightening the mood during difficult times. While humour can be a powerful tool in politics, Bill said not everyone can wield it effectively. Those who master it can break tension, engage the public and even strengthen political relationships.

"I think it's a good weapon in your toolkit, if you are good at it," Bill said. "Your timing has to be good, you have to be confident and you have to have your delivery down to be effective."



# From Parliament Hill to community impact

## The ongoing fight against sedentary disease

By John Weston, President of the Canadian Health and Fitness Institute

During my years on Parliament Hill, I witnessed how partisan differences could dissolve when addressing issues that fundamentally affect Canadians' wellbeing. The unanimous passage of Private Members' Bills I initiated, Tackling Crystal Meth and Ecstasy (Bill C-475) in 2011 and National Health and Fitness Day (S-211) in 2014 (initiated in the House, then redirected through my friend and everyone's hero, Senator Nancy Greene Raine, in the Senate) demonstrated that health transcends political divides.

Those experiences taught me that change often happens through unlikely alliances. I rallied MPs across party lines to run together on Tuesdays and swim on Thursdays – activities that improved our own health while modeling active lifestyles for Canadians. Events like Bike Day and Swim Day on Parliament Hill further amplified this message.

Yet, I've come to realize that our most significant civic contributions can emerge after our parliamentary service ends. My post-Parliament work with the Canadian Health and Fitness Institute (CHFI) has revealed a health crisis as serious as any we debated in the House of Commons.

### The silent epidemic

While Canada has made tremendous progress battling infectious diseases, we now face a different but equally devastating epidemic. The data paint a stark picture: 61% of Canadian children and youth fail to meet basic physical activity recommendations – just 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity daily. Screen time increased by three hours daily during the pandemic, with only 18% of youth staying below the two-hour recommendation for recreational screen viewing.

The World Health Organization



*Canadian Health and Fitness Institute CHFI Co-Founders Dr. Jack Taunton (right) and John Weston (left) with the Hon. Carla Qualtrough (centre), MP, the first ever Minister of Sport and Physical Activity.*

now ranks physical inactivity as the fourth largest cause of death globally. When comparing 57 countries, Canada ranked a disappointing 28th in overall physical activity and an alarming 52nd in sedentary behaviour, despite our natural advantages of mountains, lakes, and community facilities.

The mental health implications are equally serious. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that 1.6 million Canadian children and youth have a mental health disorder. This crisis particularly affects millennials and Gen Z, with 30% of Canadians between 18 and 35 now seeing a therapist.

### The cascade effect

The diseases we're fighting through CHFI are often silent and insidious,

linked in ways that create a devastating cascade: sedentary behaviour leads to obesity, which increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Meanwhile, physical inactivity and isolation feed into loneliness and mental illness. These conditions don't just affect individuals, they ripple through families and communities.

Just as we recognized in Parliament that preventing drug addiction was far better than treating it, CHFI addresses these interconnected health challenges at their root. We're working to create environments and policies that make healthy living the easier choice for Canadians.

### Building on Parliamentary foundations

The National Health and Fitness Day legislation we passed in 2014 was





*John Weston: I take a Digital Sabbath (no screen time) Sundays through 7 pm!*

just beginning. Today, CHFI builds coalitions across government, business, and community organizations to transform how Canadians think about and prioritize health.

Our initiatives include the Let's Move Canada podcast series, reaching thousands with evidence-based information on physical, mental, and spiritual health. Our collaboration with organizations like the Trans Canada Trail, Outward Bound, and GoGetFit are bringing physical activity back into classrooms. We've launched hut-to-hut trail systems to encourage outdoor activities, and we collaborate with Indigenous communities through the Indigenous Physical Activity and Cultural Circle.

Our Annual National Forum on Health and Fitness assembles experts, leaders, and advocates to generate practical strategies for reversing alarming trends. This year's Forum will be held on National Health and Fitness Day, June 7, 2025, at Zoomer Media Headquarters in Toronto. We're also developing an Active Communities Index to help municipalities assess and improve their fitness facilities and programs.

#### **The Parliamentary advantage**

Former parliamentarians possess unique advantages in addressing this crisis. Our understanding of policy levers, our ability to build cross-sectoral

relationships, and our familiarity with both the public and private sectors position us to be particularly effective change agents outside Parliament.

More importantly, we understand that political achievements often transcend individual terms in office. The unanimous passage of National Health and Fitness Day laid groundwork that CHFI continues to build upon years later. The relationships formed across party lines during those parliamentary runs and swims now fuel collaborations that extend beyond political careers.

#### **Join our movement**

CHFI has set an ambitious goal: to Make Canada the Fittest Nation on Earth by 2030.

We've been honoured to have the Governor General serve as our Patron, and we've assembled an impressive board of 40 directors and advisors representing diverse fields of expertise. Yet to reach our goal, we need more allies in this vital fight.

As former Parliamentarians, you understand the power of collective action. I invite you to join our movement in several ways:

First, consider supporting CHFI through donations or corporate sponsorships. Your financial support enables us to expand successful programs and develop new initiatives that directly address sedentary behaviour in

communities across Canada.

Second, help us strengthen our leadership by recommending individuals with relevant expertise for our Board of Directors and Advisors. We seek passionate leaders from healthcare, education, business, and community advocacy who share our commitment to improving Canadians' physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Finally, use your influence to highlight the sedentary disease crisis within your networks. Host community events, speak at local organizations, or write about these issues in your platforms. The more Canadians understand the stakes, the more likely we are to reverse these troubling trends.

A call to former Parliamentarians

As winds of change sweep our nation, I encourage fellow former Parliamentarians to consider how your civic service might best continue outside the House. The networks, knowledge, and negotiation skills developed in Parliament remain valuable assets in addressing today's most pressing challenges.

The health challenges facing Canada today demand the same non-partisan commitment we occasionally achieved in Parliament. Our experience navigating complex systems positions us to be effective advocates for preventative approaches to health, approaches that require patience, persistence, and strategic thinking.

The crisis of sedentary behaviour presents former parliamentarians with an opportunity to demonstrate that our commitment to public service extends well beyond our time in office. Just as we worked across party lines to improve Canada then, we can continue building healthier communities now – one step, one swim, one bike ride at a time.

Together, we can make Canada the fittest nation on Earth by 2030.

For more information on how to support CHFI's initiatives, please visit [chfi.fit](http://chfi.fit) or contact me directly at [john.weston@chfi.fit](mailto:john.weston@chfi.fit).

John D. Weston was the Conservative member of Parliament from 2008 to 2015 for West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky Country.



# Beyond 'Angry Tom'

## The principles that defined The Hon. Thomas Mulcair's career

By Eduardo Rondon

The Hon. Thomas Mulcair's political career, as he defines it, is one of persistence, principle, and an unwavering commitment to public service. With a career spanning both provincial and federal politics, he has navigated the complexities of governance at multiple levels, earning a reputation for many across the political spectrum as a formidable parliamentarian and an advocate for accountability.

Tom's path began in Quebec, where he was elected to the National Assembly three times as a member of the Quebec Liberal Party. His tenure included serving as minister of environment under Premier Jean Charest.

Before doing that, Tom was president of a regulatory agency, an experience that further shaped his understanding of public administration. Despite holding significant positions within Quebec's political sphere, he felt constrained by the province's unique political dynamics.

In Quebec, "all Federalist forces were gathered under one tent" – the Liberal Party he was part of. "Left and right worked together within the liberal tent, because the overarching objective was to keep Canada together."

This broad coalition, he notes, left little room for alternative federalist political perspectives to flourish, such as the NDP, which found itself overshadowed by the province's federalist-sovereigntist divide. In merging all of the federalist parties under one big tent, clashes within it were inevitable, particularly regarding "strong environmental positions against pipelines," Tom said.

The lack of complex parties, he concluded, had to be solved, not within the existing big-tent parties, but through a breakaway from these. Seeking a political space where he could better champion his principles,



*The Hon. Thomas Mulcair was the leader of the NDP from 2012 to 2017.*

Tom transitioned to federal politics, running as an NDP candidate.

"The fact that Canada had been led by either the Conservatives or the Liberals," he said, pointed, "to the incredible challenge that it was to break through with the NDP."

His tenure coincided with the generally named "Orange Wave": a historic surge of NDP representation in

Quebec and across Canada. He was the NDP's second member to serve as the Official Leader of the Opposition. Tom remains aware of the fact that, to this day, "there's still no NDP at the provincial level."

Tom's leadership also came with internal challenges. The NDP had long been an English-ran party at its core, and his rise to leadership initially



sparked concerns for some members. He emphasized that once elected, the party “came together as one.”

“I never sensed any contestation until the 2015 campaign,” he said. Externally, one of the main critiques of his leadership was the combative style he employed during Question Periods. While dubbed “Angry Tom” by some, he rejects this characterization as a misinterpretation of his approach.

“Anybody who’s worked with me during my many years in Parliament or in Quebec City will be happy to point out that that is not the case,” he said. Instead, he sees his assertive questioning as a necessary function of the opposition.

“The passion is there — the willingness to stand up and take a stand and sometimes get pushed back for it.” For Tom, opposition is not about aggression, but about accountability. He be-

lieves that a robust and well-prepared opposition strengthens democracy by ensuring transparency and holding governments to account, role that is lost if the opposition becomes too permissive.

This type of question, he adds, also reduces polarization in the social sphere by designating Parliament as a place where formal and mediated discussions can happen. Without these systems in place, the public might feel underrepresented and adopt more polarized views, leading to aggression between ideologies.

According to Tom, there must be a balance between argumentation and resolution in these periods. After all, if these values are not weighed, Parliament could become just as polarized as the social sector.

The former MP explains the opposition needs “to show Canadians that

there’s a government in waiting.”

“The role of the opposition is to be a constructive opposition,” Tom said. While he challenged the Harper government rigorously, he would “still have meetings and discussions with [him]” to find common ground where possible.

Beyond parliamentary debate, Tom sees community engagement as fundamental to political life. He embraces the shift toward virtual accessibility and believes evolution can help MPs maintain stronger ties to their constituents.

“Today, you can accomplish a lot of your parliamentary work away from Parliament,” he said. Though MPs of the past risked being consumed by the demands of Ottawa, he values the modernized functions of Parliament in helping keep representatives connected to who they represent.

## Inside the job: Parliamentary Librarian

By Averil Winn

**R**esearch. Collection. Educational programs. Corporate services. Centre Block renovations. The Parliamentary Guide Program. There’s one organizational body on Parliament Hill that touches all of these subjects; the Library of Parliament. At its head, Christine Ivory, Parliamentary Librarian.

The title of the position evokes an image of a single head librarian in Parliament’s library, sifting through pages to find answers to research questions about Canada’s parliamentary history. While research is part of the job, the Parliamentary Librarian oversees a wide variety of activities at the Library of Parliament.

The position of Parliamentary Librarian was created after Confederation, and after undergoing a few modifications, the role as we know it today was established through the Parliament of Canada Act. The Act provides that the Parliamentary Librarian and the Associate Parliamentary Librarian are named by the Governor in Council. Christine Ivory was nominated in 2023 after several years of service at the library.

She now manages the organiza-

tion, and meets with teams, managers and directors to discuss their projects. These projects include aspects of the Centre Block renovations, Information and Technology on Parliament Hill and the Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy, among other things. She also supports teams in serving parliamentarians’ research needs. There are certain occasions where she will meet with parliamentarians to discuss specific research questions or discuss things that they would like to see in the library’s collections.

“I’ve been quite fortunate that over my career at the library, to have worked in every service area we have,” Christine said. Beginning her career at the library almost twenty years ago, she has seen many facets of the library’s activity.

She has held many roles within the organization, including the manager of Education Outreach in 2008, director of Information Technology in 2019, and acting director general for Information and Document Resource Services until just prior to her nomination as Parliamentary Librarian. She believes her prior experience

helps her in her role as Parliamentary Librarian and gives her better perspective when making decisions about new challenges or opportunities.

As someone with such breadth of experience within the Library of Parliament, Christine has a great appreciation of the changes she has seen throughout her many positions.

“Like anything at Parliament, we’re in constant evolution,” she said. The work of the Library has changed in many ways, from the hybrid work model brought by the pandemic, to changes in subject matter of research requests in recent years.

Through all the changes and her many years with the organization, Christine says it’s the people she works with and the groups that they serve which keep her invested in her work. She expressed her passion for her work comes from working with bright, dedicated employees at the library. This also extends to the parliamentarians they support and the work they do to educate the public.

“The great motivator is who we are doing this for.”



# Parliament's "McGill Five" ten years later

By Mia Parker



*Charmaine Borg.*



*Matthew Dubé.*



*Laurin Liu.*



*Mylène Freeman.*



*Jamie Nicholls.*

The 2011 federal election saw the NDP forming an unexpected Official Opposition, but the election also saw another surprising phenomenon for Parliament. A group of McGill University students moved from their campus NDP club to the federal NDP caucus.

Students Charmaine Borg, Matthew Dubé, Laurin Liu, Mylène Freeman and Jamie Nicholls made up the McGill Five. They represented five of the 103 national seats and 59 seats in Quebec won by their newly popular party.

The NDP's unexpected surge in Quebec mid-campaign saw the young students take ridings from incumbents, something experts and the students themselves were not anticipating.

At the time of his election for Chambly-Borduas, Matthew Dubé told McGill's journal of record that he was surprised by the result.

"As the election drew near, polls suggested it would be a real dogfight. In the end there was nearly a 10,000-vote difference in my favour," he told the McGill reporter.

Matthew was co-president of the university's NDP club, alongside Charmaine Borg. In the 42nd General Election in 2015, Matthew was the only one of the McGill Five to win back his seat.

At 20, Laurin Liu became the youngest woman in Canadian history to be elected to Parliament, and the second-youngest MP in the 41st Par-

liament. Living in urban Montreal at the time, the student journalist didn't even have a driver's license.

Laurin won the riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, calling the experience of forming opposition a learning curve for everyone. For her, the transition was huge, and the demanding nature of MP work required her to pause everything and start a new life.

"I was definitely very surprised to win," she said. "I was at a polling station that night as a volunteer overseeing the casting of the ballots, and I got a text message on my flip phone that I've won, and it was a huge shock."

Laurin said her age could be disarming for her colleagues, but at times made people more comfortable around her because she wasn't intimidating. She became her party's assistant critic for environment in 2011, and assistant critic for industry, science and technology in 2012.

Though she only held a seat for the 41st Parliament, she describes the experience as a whirlwind and recounts her time after work in the bar speaking with the other McGill Five MPs about the crazy experience.

Laurin says the work she looks back on most proudly was working with fellow MP Andrew Cash's proposed legislation to make changes to the Canadian Labour Code to protect interns in federally regulated workplaces.

After the end of her time in Parliament, Liu finished her studies at McGill and got a master's degree at

the London School of Economics. She began working at international nonprofits and philanthropies, eventually becoming the UN's advocacy co-ordinator for WaterAid.

After completing two terms in Parliament, Dubé has done political commentary and became vice president at Proof Strategies. He is also a director of CAFP.

Charmaine became a lawyer, currently as legal counsel for the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission. She's also worked as legal counsel for Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada, and as an associate for Dentons.

Mylène Freeman, who represented Argenteuil-Papineau-Mirabel, was the NDP's critic for the status of women. After her term, she got a doctorate in political theory and became heavily involved with the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

Jamie Nicholls was a doctoral student in Urban Planning when he was elected for Vaudreuil-Soulanges. He became the NDP's assistant critic for various ministries, including official languages, energy, natural resources and transport. After his term, he went on to be the mayor of Hudson, Que. Jamie is also the founding director of the Watershed Council and co-founder of Hudson Forest School.

Ten years after their term in Parliament, the McGill Five are known as the university student group that took Canadian politics by surprise.



# CAFP Meeting in St. Andrews, New Brunswick

From September 6 to 8, 2024, including visits to Ministers Island and Campobello Island.



*Brad Henderson, the mayor of St. Andrew's, New Brunswick, addresses the meeting.*



*The island features several significant landmarks, including Covenhoven, Van Horne's grand shingle-style mansion, a massive livestock barn, a bathhouse overlooking the bay, and remnants of early Indigenous habitation. The island's shell middens indicate that the Passamaquoddy people used the area for thousands of years.*



*Visitors can explore walking trails, historic buildings, and breathtaking coastal views while learning about the island's unique blend of Indigenous, Loyalist, and railway-era history. The island is a designated National Historic Site of Canada and remains a popular destination for history enthusiasts and nature lovers alike.*



# From jazz club activism to Parliament

## The many lives of Paul Manly

By Eduardo Rondon

For many born into political families, the path forward seems pre-ordained – party and ideological loyalties often shaping their trajectory. Yet, Paul Manly’s journey defied this convention, not out of rebellion but out of necessity.

“I grew up in a very political family,” Paul says. His parents were both involved with the, and from a young age, he was immersed in the world of campaigns and grassroots organizing. At just seven years old, he was already knocking on doors; this was the first time he was chased off a porch while distributing leaflets.

Paul’s early life in politics consisted of watching his dad in the House of Commons, absorbing the intricacies of governance. Rather than inspiring him to follow suit, these experiences had the opposite effect. As a teenager, he resolved, “There was no way I was going to do that.”

Politics, to him, seemed too slow-moving, too entrenched. Change, he believed, would come from activism – through art, through storytelling, through music.

“I started playing in nightclubs when I was 18,” Paul says, noting music became his medium of advocating for reform in social and environmental interactions. He later “realized jazz wasn’t going to change the world,” so he got into filmmaking.

Though seemingly removed from politics, filmmaking honed skills that would later prove invaluable for his career. As a documentary filmmaker, Paul raised awareness for environmental issues, creating compelling narratives within complex topics.

“As a documentary filmmaker, you do a lot of research and get multiple perspectives,” he says. These same skills – critical thinking, persuasive storytelling, and public engagement – became essential when he eventually entered Parlia-



*Paul Manly.*

ment. Despite his early reluctance, Paul found himself drawn back to the political sphere.

“Governments have a place in shaping our economic, environmental, and social policy,” Paul says. If he wanted to create meaningful change, he had to run for office.

He initially tried to run for the NDP but couldn’t win the nomination due to previous comments made against the party, so Paul found his home with the Green Party. He admired Elizabeth May’s leadership style, which encouraged consensus-building amongst its members rather than rigid party discipline.

Winning the second-ever Green seat in Parliament came with unique challenges. Representing a smaller party meant carrying a heavy workload, but it also meant Elizabeth could finally “divvy out some of the work.”

“An hour after I was sworn in, I was in front of the finance committee defending amendments,” Paul says. “I had fourteen critic roles right off the bat.”

Navigating Parliament as a small party also required working across ideological divides. At times, Paul found

himself collaborating with members of the Conservative Party – an alliance that was unlikely, but pragmatic for him.

His experience in documentary filmmaking had trained him to listen, understand opposing viewpoints, and find common ground. Paul also notes that many are surprised with his cross-partisan work because of a general misrepresentation of the Green Party’s values.

“People are always surprised that a Green Party guy knows how to take down a big tree,” he says. “But I can run a chainsaw – you know, my dad was a feller.”

The party’s broader philosophy of sustainable economic projects, he argues, is sometimes overshadowed by a superficial understanding of environmentalism. The disconnect between the party’s general perception and their true values comes from their status as a small party, Paul says. Since they “don’t get the funding that comes with official party status,” they aren’t able to employ the same level of public messaging as larger parties.

After his time in Parliament, Paul shifted his focus to municipal politics, winning a seat on the Nanaimo City

Council. While the issues they deal with remain similar, he finds the local approach to governance offers different avenues. Policies are felt more immediately since problems are addressed locally, and the council's decorum allows for more constructive and effective dialogue.

"We have rules of decorum in our council chambers, and the mayor is a very good chair," he notes. These fac-

tors, he believes, foster a healthier political culture – one he wishes were more prevalent at the federal level.

Though no longer in Parliament, Paul remains a dedicated advocate for environmental reform. One of the most pressing yet underrepresented crises is "the crash in biodiversity, which contributes to climate change." He continues to work across multiple fronts, not

only at a city and regional level but also as a filmmaker and community advocate.

"Understanding the needs of your community is important because you're a representative, so your job is to represent people," he says. In his multifaceted work, Paul weaves in his diverse experiences – in music, behind a camera or in the House – to set his priorities.

# Representing Canada on the world stage

By Michael McBean

Former MPs and Senators have gone on to diplomatic postings around the world to ensure Canada is at the table and ready to do its part. Many former parliamentarians have found their international roles both challenging and rewarding.

"It's a great honour to have the responsibility of living and working in London and speaking on behalf of Canada," said former Saskatchewan Liberal MP the Hon. Ralph Goodale.

He has been posted in London, England, since 2021, serving as the Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. Ralph said he appreciates the history of Canada's long-standing relationship with the British.

"There's a relationship between our two countries that's deeply rooted in hundreds of years of history and heritage," he said. "Those natural instincts and values just create a bond between the United Kingdom and Canada that is very strong to this day."

Ralph's time in the United Kingdom has been nothing short of eventful. He has witnessed everything from the Queen's Platinum jubilee to her passing in 2022 while also seeing changes in the country's government and major global events.

It is a special feeling to represent Canada at what he calls the best embassy in Britain, Ralph says.

"We have this glorious location on the edge of Trafalgar Square," he said. "It is generally regarded as the most visible, prominent and prestigious embassy of them all."

Not too far away, former Newfoundland Conservative MP the Hon. Loyola Hearn served as Canada's ambassador to Ireland. He was ambassador from 2010 to 2014 and was proud to represent Canada in a country he had personal ties to.

"When your country asks you to represent them internationally, that's certainly an honour," Loyola said. "My ancestry is Irish on both sides of the family, and we were always very close to Ireland so I felt at ease there."

He takes pride in what he was able to do during his time as ambassador, particularly when it came to connecting the two nations.

"When I first arrived in Ireland there were no direct year-round flights between Canada and Ireland," Loyola said. "We eventually worked toward getting year-round direct flights from Toronto to Dublin and later they added other options from Canada as well."

He also negotiated to create more student and job opportunities between the two nations.

Former Ontario Liberal MP the Hon. Sergio Marchi also represented Canada internationally and said sometimes he had to pinch himself with the opportunities he had.

"Having been elected to Parliament on behalf of Canadian citizens was a high privilege," Sergio said. "But in a different way, serving your country abroad and sitting behind a Canadian nameplate was also a very high privilege."

From 1999 to 2004, he served as the Canadian ambassador to the World Trade Organization and the UN agencies in Geneva, Switzerland.

Sergio said while politics and diplomacy go hand in hand, there are some key differences.

"You have to have a great deal of patience, much more than in politics," he said. "It's because diplomacy generally moves slower. That does not mean you are not busy, it just means the management of issues goes at a slower pace."

Sergio said he would like to see more young people explore roles in diplomacy, especially in a time with increased political polarization.

"Public service on the international stage is a great opportunity for individual growth and you get to feel the satisfaction that good public service brings," he said.

While representing Canada at the international level is an honour, it can also be a challenge to spend long periods away from home. Ralph, Loyola and Sergio all found their own ways of keeping in touch with their home country and said advancements in technology have been helpful.

Ralph said he still misses his home province despite the often-cold prairie temperatures.

"I was glad to get back to Saskatchewan at Christmas and shovel some snow on the driveway and get a little bit of 45 below for a few days," Ralph said. "At the end of the day, home is home and that's what matters."





Dorothy Dobbie.

# Canada is suffering a democracy deficit – here is one reason why

By Dorothy Dobbie

Slowly, over the last few decades, the relevance of backbench MPs has been eroded until they are now expected to be mere puppets in the hands of – no, not the Prime Minister directly, but the apparatus that has grown up around that office.

This has taken place during the last six decades with evermore power being vested in the PMO, then filtered down through unelected, backroom-chosen politicos working for this new centralized machine. The head of this machine is generally the PM's Chief of Staff, the keeper of all the keys.

That individual, under the guise of relieving pressure on the overburdened leader, becomes increasingly the first and often the last line of defence. The leader hears what this person determines the Leader needs to hear and often the information arrives packaged in the manner most appealing to the gatekeeper.

To extend this power, this same office and individual has been controlling the hiring of staff for ministers, reducing their power and relevance. We have all heard various ministers say over the past few years that they “didn’t know” about this or that key piece of information. I believe them and I do not condemn them for it. How frustrating it must be to be given a mandate to accomplish something, then to have minimal or no power over achieving the goal.

This erosion of power is not a construct of one government or one party or entirely of the federal government. I see it happening at all levels, provincial and municipal, too. And it is probably not exclusive to this period. Think back in history to the Rasputins and the Machiavellies of the past and the nameless, countless others who served as the powers “behind the throne”.

A former MP, who once served as chief of staff to a minister, asked how far his power extended, to be told by

## Things that could change

1. Ministers must be allowed to hire their own chiefs of staff.

2. Deputy ministers and other bureaucrats should report to and directly brief ministers, rather than chiefs of staff.

3. Members should be required to write their own speeches for the House of Commons rather than choosing pre-scripted materials. And they should be encouraged to abandon scripts and speak from the heart.

4. Staff should never be allowed to attend caucus meetings. This is where members get to air their real thoughts.

5. Political party selection committees should be allowed to make decisions on the understanding that they are responsible for the result. The rules for refusal should be clear to all potential candidates.

the minister that in effect he had all the authority of the minister. The difference here is that the new chief of staff respected his minister and, while he felt free to provide his opinion to the minister, he understood who had the last word. This former MP also understood and respected the authority of the electorate. Not so with all those who come to these positions today. This cohort is all about gaining and maintaining power.

They may start off as young staffers only to develop a certain cynicism about governance and the value of the elected member, who may have less experience than they do. As they advance, some become good at usurping authority through the gatekeeper status. They are the first recipients of information and how that is deployed is a mighty tool.

Sadly, that this is accepted by the elected members starts way back during

the nomination and “selection” process. The public is led to believe that if you want to run, all you have to do is put your hand up, then get out there and sell memberships and convince party members that you deserve the right to represent the party in the election. You will debate against a worthy opponent and may the best candidate win! And that is the way it should work. But it doesn’t.

Instead, Parties have “selection” committees that vet the potential candidates before they are even allowed to sell memberships. Committee chairs and members are chosen for sterling reputations in the community, and they think their mission is to simply ensure that the potential candidate is not a criminal or a child molester or worse, a stalking horse for the Opposition. Their tendency is to want to say Yes to the majority of contenders and let the nomination process be the final arbiter. Too often that is not the way it works. Some nameless party member reporting to some other nameless authority may have already decided who is to be selected and the other contenders are quickly weeded out under one criterion or another.

This is a much larger topic than I have room to explore here, but perhaps it will make you think. Some of you will remain active and influential in your parties. Perhaps you can use some of that influence to plant seeds of change. Speaking to a few former members who agree with these thoughts, produced an idea. Perhaps former members of each party should nominate former a list of former MPs who would make good chiefs of staff to the next prime minister. At the very least, the individual would have some respect for the realities of being a member or a minister and understand how vitally important it is that true representation is allowed to prevail.

Dorothy Dobbie, Progressive Conservative MP for Winnipeg South 1988 to 1993, is the former chair of CAFPP.



*The Hon. Sue Barnes.*

# Life after office

## Another look at falling off the cliff

By the Hon. Sue Barnes

Some amongst you are entering a difficult life transition. Leaving parliament, whether by your own choice or that of your voters, presents what appears to be a seamless path back to previously known normality. It is not.

You likely won't realize this for many months to come as the blurry activity of closing offices, saying goodbye to friends and staff, bureaucratic detail compliance, and the rapidity of events encompass you. Then it hits.

The identity with your work, the power once available is gone. So too are the daily discussions with colleagues, formerly a hallway away, now obstructed by an inconvenient time zone or two. We identified with our given roles, not just during working hours, but twenty-four seven.

Work, important work, did consume us as parliamentarians. I believe we all came to parliament, perhaps naive, but with good intentions to improve the lives of fellow Canadians. We learned how to tap into the multitude of resources readily available to fulfill each task. We learned, even as adversaries politically, to cooperate for results. And there was satisfaction when legislation passed or policies advanced.

The reintegration back to the home, the family, and the region where I lived was not seamless for me. I felt that I had to earn my way back into that family that I had left each week while an MP. The spouse and children had adjusted their roles to fill the voids I had willingly left behind. They did not accept that I was back ready to take over again. Mine was not the only life that had changed while I pursued my career in Ottawa.

Similarly those community organizations where I was warmly greeted didn't know how to deal with the "former MP". Another had my role.



*Life after the big day is unpredictable.*

The invitations stopped, the flood of emails and calls slowed then gradually disappeared.

Perhaps if someone had warned me it would have been easier – someone to remind me that I was not my job, that life didn't stand still while I functioned in parliament. It may have helped if I had been able to share with someone who had been through it could relate this as akin to the phases of grief. Having recently been through the experience of personal loss and grieving, I easily see the similarities today.

The Association of Former Parliamentarians can help you and membership is gratis for the first year. Nonpartisan and understanding contact is available. A simple conversation can make a difference, and the study travel activities and meetings provide an opportunity to meet with those who truly understand just what it was that you did for a portion of your life.

This organization was established

by an act of parliament. CAFP has an office and a small staff on the hill and an inadequate budget allocation. There is also an education foundation.

Over four hundred former senators and MPs participate to various degrees and thus it can fulfill a need you may be surprised to have at this point in your career. Maybe not today, but six months or a year hence.

Every year there is an AGM in Ottawa to elect the volunteer board of directors. During this two-day event, a very special memorial service is held to remember those who passed over the last year. Family members are welcomed and invited to the luncheon which follows the service.

One regional meeting is held annually outside Ottawa and a very interesting annual study tour is held internationally. This article is being written in the lobby of our hotel in Rome while the federal election proceeds in Canada.



You will be welcomed and supported by like-minded individuals who can help, challenge, or provide the collegiality that is always welcome in our lives.

Eventually as time passes, that new life post-parliament takes shape. You get back to the core person who some-

times before didn't take the time to be wholly present in the conversations, meetings, and interactions.

That power of purpose in your life discovers other outlets and once again you will belong in your world. You will have found that footing that perhaps is

less in the spotlight, but valued by others, and more importantly, yourself. Life has just changed, and you are in control again. Bon voyage!

The Hon. Sue Barnes represented the riding of London West from 1993 to 2008 as a Liberal member of Parliament.

## A few things you should know about your association

By Dorothy Dobbie

**C**AFP was established May 29, 1996. Its membership encompasses both former House of Commons members and former Senators. The Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Commons are honorary members and chairpersons of the Association.

The House of Commons provides CAFP with office space at 131 Queen Street in Ottawa. The Association receives about \$28,000 annually for incidentals, the expense shared by the House of Commons and the Senate. This is in addition to the equivalent of one full-time staff member. In reality, we share two staff members with the Spouses Association. When we travel on a study tour, or to a regional meeting, we each pay our own way, and we share the costs of taking a staff member with us to handle the logistics. We buy all gifts that are dis-

tributed as a delegation.

The Chairperson of the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians is 30th on the Order of preference (Senators are 21st, members of the House of Commons are 22). No other parliamentary association is given that honour. Yet for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, other parliamentary associations had a budget of \$4,300,496.

We have been trying to get an increase in our funding since 2022. Let us hope that we can achieve this in the coming year.

### Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians Act

#### Objects

5 The objects of the Association are

- (a) to put the knowledge and experience of its members at the service of parliamentary democracy

in Canada and elsewhere;

- (b) to serve the public interest by providing non-partisan support for the parliamentary system of government in Canada;

- (c) to foster a spirit of community among former parliamentarians;

- (d) to foster good relations between members of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada and former parliamentarians; and

- (e) to protect and promote the interests of former parliamentarians.

#### Non-partisan

6 The Association shall not pursue its objects for any partisan political purpose.

*Find out more about the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians (CAFP) on their website at [exparl.ca](http://exparl.ca)*

Dorothy Dobbie, Progressive Conservative MP for Winnipeg South 1988 to 1993, is the former chair of CAFP.

## Diego Eduardo Rondon-Capurro 2004 - 2025

**I**t was with great sadness that Beyond the Hill heard of the recent passing of one of our writers, Diego (Eduardo) Rondon-Capurro. Eduardo was incredibly hard-working and kind, and we are grateful for the opportunity to share his work in this edition.

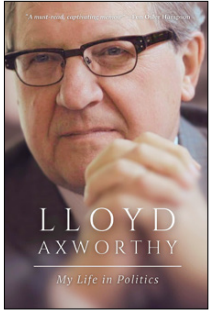
Eduardo was originally from Lima, Peru, and moved to Utah as a teenager. In an interview with Dorothy and Mia, Eduardo talked about how the adjustment between countries and cultures prepared him for navigating the nuances of non-partisanship. Though he'd come across people he disagreed with, Eduardo always fo-

cused on the humanity underneath differing perspectives. He later told us he enjoyed working for the magazine because he felt the work was moving past the polarization in politics and towards friendlier discussions. His family shared with us that he was "deeply interested in politics and saw his writing as a meaningful way to contribute to broader society."

Before coming to us, Eduardo was a business analyst at Pet Angels in Utah. He was also a leader in his high school debate team and founded and led the school's Model United Nations team. Eduardo was an English tutor for children in underdeveloped

areas of Peru, and he loved cooking, baking, and music. At the time of his passing, Eduardo had just finished his second year at Carleton University, working towards a bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in law and a concentration in Canadian politics. He was only 21 years old.

Eduardo was deeply passionate and excited about his work for the magazine, and he was honoured to interview formers such as Tony Clement, Paul Manly, and Thomas Mulcair. He is remembered lovingly by his friends and family and our team remembers him with much gratitude and respect for his contributions.



# Lloyd Axworthy's My Life in Politics

## Essential reading in Canadian diplomacy

By Michael McBean

**L**loyd Axworthy: My Life in Politics is a candid and reflective memoir introducing readers to more than the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy's career as a politician.

Born in Saskatchewan in 1939, Lloyd moved to Winnipeg as a child, where he was shaped by Winnipeg's North End neighbourhood. The working-class area and his mother's strong belief in the power of education helped to make him into the man he is today.

"It was a very diverse community," said Lloyd in an interview with Beyond the Hill. "I grew up in an environment where people were Ukrainian, Polish and from other places around the world."

In high school, Axworthy had the chance to listen to a speech from former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson at Winnipeg's Civic Auditorium. The speech resonated with Lloyd who said as a teenager he was not initially interested in politics. It was a pivotal moment.

"He [Pearson] talked about what it meant to be Canadian," Lloyd said. "I think it gave me a real sense of how we do have our own distinction and that we should be independent."

Lloyd was captivated by Pearson's vision of Canada as a peacekeeper and what he was able to accomplish. A personal highlight for Lloyd was during his time as transportation minister when he renamed the Malton Airport to Toronto Pearson International Airport.

After graduating from the University of Winnipeg, Lloyd's academic journey took him to Princeton University in the 1960s, where he found inspiration in the political movements of the era, including the civil rights movement and John F. Kennedy's presidency.



*A speech by Lester Pearson convinced a young Lloyd Axworthy to investigate politics.*

He eventually returned to Winnipeg where he was later elected as an MLA for the Manitoba Liberals.

His move to federal politics came in 1979 when he won a seat in the House of Commons. Over the years, Lloyd held various roles, including Minister of Human Resources and Minister of Foreign Affairs under Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

One of Lloyd's proudest achievements was his leadership in the campaign to ban landmines which culminated in the Ottawa Treaty. Signed by 122 countries, it was an unprecedented initiative that required partnerships from major international groups. His efforts earned global acclaim, and Axworthy was even considered for the Nobel Peace Prize.

"Canada was taking the lead," Lloyd said. "It gave Canada an incredible boost in its diplomatic presence in the world."

Lloyd said his upbringing played a role in why this issue was so important to him.

"Growing up in wartime and just

having a sense of what war can do to people really made this important for me," he said.

Another accomplishment Lloyd takes great pride in was his government's creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"I think it was important in the substance, but it was also important in what it did for the country," he said. Lloyd described the Charter as being vitally important for minority groups in Canada to have their rights clearly protected and codified in law.

While Lloyd's memoir reflects upon his greatest accomplishments as an MP, it also offers glimpses into his personal life and the challenges of balancing public service with private struggles.

The final chapters of the book offer an analysis of ongoing issues that still affect Canada today. Reconciliation with Indigenous people is something Lloyd is particularly passionate about.

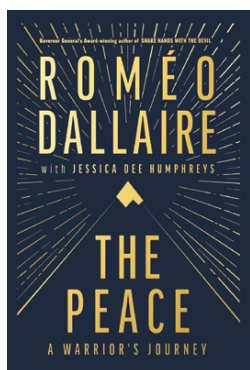
"They were the original founding people, not the English and not the French," Lloyd said, noting he would like to see Canada restore practices from Indigenous culture.

"We have to think about how we can start incorporating Indigenous law and their beliefs into what we do and how we make decisions," he said.

Lloyd issues a call to action on how he would like to see democratic reform in Canada to achieve a more inclusive, participatory political system.

Lloyd Axworthy: My Life in Politics is a thought-provoking read, offering a nuanced look at both the man and the political landscape he helped shape. It is essential reading for anyone interested in the evolution of Canadian diplomacy and where the country should go from here.





# Roméo Dallaire's The Peace

## An important guidebook toward a better world

By Mia Parker

When Lieutenant-General and former senator Roméo Dallaire presented his newest book, *The Peace*, at the Ottawa Writers' Festival, he said to the crowd, "I'm just an old soldier, who wants to continue to serve."

This service has taken many forms throughout his career, as a military and peacekeeping leader, Canadian senator, and author and activist of various causes. In earlier books, Roméo advanced the issue of child soldiers and raised awareness of mental health challenges like his own journey with PTSD.

*The Peace* takes on the structure of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, following Roméo through his Hell, Purgatory, and the heaven-like depiction of *The Peace*. His hell was the "biblical horror" of the Rwandan Genocide. Tasked with assisting in the implementation of a peace accord, Roméo watched the descent into a genocide, seeing 800,000 killed, and millions hurt, orphaned and displaced. Begging for help, he was confronted with the governing belief that human lives didn't matter, and he was left powerless to help, haunted by the spirits of the dead.

As he recounts the experience in *The Peace*, Roméo also describes how it imbued him with a "vision of our shared humanity and [his] own responsibility to it." Through chapters each emphasizing a different aspect of the hell that became his experiences in Rwanda, Roméo captures for the reader the history underlying the conflict, the motives of the local groups and of the international powers, and the tensions on all levels that he and his fellow soldiers had to reckon with.

Beyond the crisis in the African country, Roméo discusses other conflicts, wars and great tragedies of humanity that contributed to his perspec-

tive on conflict. The "Hell" portion of the book takes the majority of pages, culminating in an urgent discussion of a current conflict, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and Roméo's fear that we will remain trapped in this period of short-term and small-minded thinking about conflict and peace negotiation. He calls for a revolution.

Roméo's Purgatory consists of a review of current failings in how peace is approached and negotiated. He has seen a cycle of reactionary relationships of nations, precarious solutions, and cessation of hostilities over lasting peace.

"Truce is nothing like peace," he writes. The security is often temporary and heavily strained. His Purgatory is also defined by adherence to the status quo, and the ongoing factors that build tension and conflict, like inequality and irresponsibility.

The ultimate existential risk of war, he alludes to, is the modern threat of nuclear warfare. It also coincides with looming threats relating to climate and general divisiveness. Addressing these issues requires a new conceptual framework altogether, he argues.

Roméo believes Canada has lost the sense of its role in diplomacy on the world stage. He says the diplomatic corps is gutted, and history will hold the nation accountable.

"Canada has turned out to be a great disappointment in having lost its focus as being a leading middle power that can be the bridge between the developing world and the big powers and produce the innovative solutions that everybody's expecting of us," he said in an interview with *Beyond the Hill*.

Canada and the world need to rebuild. *The Peace* is a guidebook from one of the country's most well-known and respected soldiers.

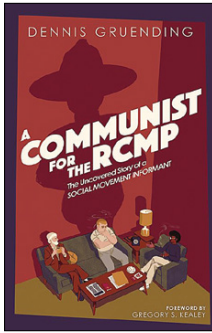
In writing, Roméo drew on his experiences as a senator. When he sat in the red house, he continued to bring attention to issues like the continued use of child soldiers. He says the parliamentary debate was civil and respectful, allowing him to really think about issues in that capacity.

Dante's Paradise is described as a solar system – other planets in an organic and dynamic system. Roméo's is similar. The man who had seen the worst of war and bloodshed, brought very near suicide, and continued to witness the carnage of the world, oriented himself towards a new concept – love.

"When you lay your head on a pillow at night beside the person that you love, nothing else counts. It is the most powerful emotion," he said, noting that it has the power to change one's whole perspective on the future, and building love is an important aspect of the quest for lasting peace.

The world now needs engaged leadership, crisis prevention, and global security, as well as love. *The Peace* is a concept beyond band-aid solutions. Roméo's goal for humanity is working towards and achieving a state of perpetual and unthreatened peace. Not only is this necessary to protect communities from the harm of war, Roméo views it as an emancipation, a kind of revolution, and a pathway for people to come together to collaboratively solve other global issues.

In a time that continues to see conflict, in a world that is plagued by looming threats of nuclear warfare, and still sees inequality and division, *The Peace* is an important reflection on what matters most, and how we get there. Combining his experiences as a soldier, a leader, and a senator, Roméo takes on a new role as a visionary for a better world as he authors this text.



# A Communist for the RCMP

## The investigation of a lifetime

Reviewed by Averi Winn

An investigation into an investigation, a former MP and journalist dives into the decades of work of an RCMP spy planted deep in the communist movement of Canada, in a story of the politics of surveillance and betrayal.

*A Communist for the RCMP* is a detailed account of the career and life of Frank Hadesbeck, the spy who investigated communism in Canada. Looking at Hadesbeck's family history and his life leading up to becoming an informant for the RCMP during the Cold War, author Dennis Gruending provides excellent context for how it all began.

This book is an insight into the world of historical spy work conducted by the RCMP during the Cold War. Through the use of historical documentation, including Hadesbeck's own journal, Dennis walks the reader through Hadesbeck's missions for the RCMP, and his thoughts and feelings about his work for over thirty years.

Frank Hadesbeck was born into a family of Hungarian immigrants. He and his family suffered many hardships throughout his life, from the loss of his mother to their continued economic instability. Living in southern Saskatchewan and southern Alberta, he struggled as a young man to find stable employment.

Hadesbeck was able to support himself for short periods travelling for seasonal work, but that was never enough to get him on his feet. His short stint with the American Army did not provide him the career he was looking for either. It did, however, provide him with training which empowered him to join over one thousand other Canadians in volunteering to fight for the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War.

Dennis recounts passages from Hadesbeck's diary admitting to not being particularly roused by the communist

ideology. He remains largely unpolitical in his opinions about the communist party and associated people he writes about, despite the incredibly political nature of the war he volunteered to fight in. Most of his critiques or dissent involved the administration of the army. It is perhaps his lack of deep political passion that allowed him to work in communist spaces for so long, gain their trust, and patiently gather information.

In the mid-1930s, Hadesbeck began his career with the RCMP by posing as a member of the Communist Party in Calgary, Alta. Over the course of several months, he collected names, addresses and other important information regarding the Party's most prominent members. He surveyed union strikes for any potential communist activity and following the ban of the Communist Party, became a member of the Labour Progressive Party. He chose key positions within the party which allowed him to easily access important information and transmit it to the RCMP in complete secrecy.

But to say the book is simply the story of a heroic spy would not quite capture it. As articulated in Dennis' foreword, this is a story of betrayal; the betrayal of comrades, of Canadians, of rights and freedoms. It's also about the betrayal Hadesbeck felt by the RCMP, and his strike back in publicizing what had been hidden away.

Beyond exploring the spy's life, *A Communist for the RCMP* contains an implicit conversation about power; who has it, and how they wield it.

"Being a parliamentarian heightened my knowledge and concern about the abuses of power," said Dennis in an emailed statement to *Beyond the Hill*. The book highlights the extent to which the RCMP was willing to go to collect information about a social movement, from private correspondence to personal addresses.

Dennis dedicates many pages to speak about the RCMP's (and formerly the North West Mounted Police's) historical activities dedicated to maintaining a status quo. When recounting Hadesbeck's investigation of Tommy Douglas's committee on public health, including union representative Walter Smishek, he highlights that it now seems strange that the RCMP worked in opposition to "Canada's most cherished social program."

*A Communist for the RCMP* is a thorough walk through Frank Hadesbeck's career which spanned over three decades. In 215 short pages, Dennis takes the reader back and forth in time to analyze the work of the RCMP against communist ideology before, during and after the Cold War.

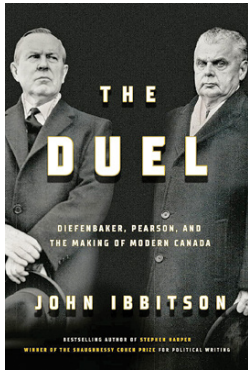
Concerns about RCMP overreach in conducting clandestine investigations like this were familiar to Dennis, an NDP MP during the end of the twentieth century. It was not lost on him that the issue was closer to him than most.

"As NDP MPs, we suspected that members of our party had often been among the targets of RCMP surveillance," said Dennis. "We have since learned through public documentation that there was extensive surveillance upon Tommy Douglas, David Lewis, J.W. Woodsworth, and other social democrats. That was overreach and there is no defensible reason for it."

The genre of extensive investigations into social movements has not died. As Dennis writes, Indigenous land defenders and environment activists have also been identified as "potential terrorists" and subject to similar surveillance.

Through the exploration of Hadesbeck's work, *A Communist for the RCMP* opens questions about Canadian agencies' appetite and tolerance for extensive surveillance, and how this could affect the movements and politics that live today.





# John Ibbitson's *The Duel*

## The personal tale of two prime ministers

Reviewed by Eduardo Rondon

Politics, like all social sciences, is inherently subjective, shaped by individual interpretations of the world. John Ibbitson's *The Duel*, published in 2023, captures this phenomenon masterfully.

The book explores the lives of former Prime Ministers John Diefenbaker and Lester B. Pearson. By chronicling their family histories and pre-political lives, Ibbitson illustrates how formative experiences influenced their political priorities – as the ending of Chapter One suggests, “Their childhoods shaped their futures.”

For instance, John “...used to get quite upset when [his] schoolmates teased [him] about [his] name”, which influenced his lifelong commitment as a politician to equality regardless of ethnicity. Having grown up in western Canada, John nurtured a unique relationship with Métis and First Nation communities. During his legal career, he also represented Indigenous peoples in courts; developing a strong connection with these communities further solidified his decision to extend suffrage to marginalized groups.

While one's formative experiences are critical to their political development, *The Duel* shows how the lessons drawn from those events are equally significant. Despite similar backgrounds of modest families and frequent relocations, John and Lester's interpretations of their experiences diverged, moving their political ideologies away from each other.

John's western upbringing and German heritage instilled a sense of regional alienation in his understanding of his social positioning.

He saw the Liberal Party as intrinsically British and its focus on Quebec and Ontario as unjust.

These feelings of alienation caused John to be more introverted in character and cautious of the British majority. His regional and ethnic background made him “Western in orientation [and] populist in his bones.”

In contrast, Lester's English-Scottish heritage and his upbringing in the insularity of Ontario provided him with a sense of belonging within the majority culture, even with his working-class background. These factors fostered a co-operative personality that aided his tenure in foreign affairs but stunted an understanding of the Western struggle that his opponent possessed.

*The Duel* also touches upon the importance of historical context in shaping both leaders.

Lester and John endured two world wars, experiences that significantly impacted their policy priorities. Although both men experienced the same events, Ibbitson shows how the lessons they took from these differed due to their individual experiences.

Lester's focus on global co-operation, culminating in his Nobel Peace Prize for the development of Peacekeeping in the Suez Crisis, stemmed from his desire to avoid the devastation of global conflict.

John learnt more from the aftermath of WWI, seeing how post-war transitions led to the Great Depression. Because of his understanding of the wars and populist priorities, he “...considered unemployment the worst imaginable social ill.” He

focused his policies primarily on regulating employment during crises through Keynesian economics.

What makes *The Duel* compelling is its exploration of the often-overlooked female influence in shaping political decisions. While not active in the political sphere, their mothers' morals and guidance profoundly impacted the politicians' attitudes. Until her last breath, John “...phoned his mother almost every day and wrote to her every few days” to let her know the issues he was facing.

Their wives, though relegated to domestic roles, were instrumental in political strategizing, networking and refining speeches. While John's first marriage was tumultuous, many people commented on the importance of his wife in his success as a politician, mentioning how “If anyone [could have] make John a success, it [would have been] Edna.”

Maryon Pearson was among the first women to attend the University of Toronto, dreaming “...of a career in writing or journalism or even diplomacy.” Despite resentment over sacrificing her ambitions by marrying Lester, her contributions to the former prime minister's career underscore the historically hidden yet significant role of women in politics.

*The Duel* acknowledges the political reality that, while many political breakthroughs stemmed from women “...through advice to [their] husbands,” their merits were mostly attributed to the men. Maryon's legacy continues to shape Canadian institutions beneath its male-dominated facade.

While *The Duel* excels in connecting personal histories to policy de-

cisions, it leaves certain ideological contradictions unexplored. John, for example, championed equality and opposed British norms due to his German background, yet in his political career, he promoted the concept of “One Canada” and advocated for the preservation of the Union Jack.

These inconsistencies, while mainly rooted in party allegiance and a rivalry with Lester, might merit deeper analysis within the book’s framework. It would have been insightful to see how the Prime Ministers prioritized certain values over others due to their personal experiences when their beliefs found themselves at odds.

Throughout the book, Ibbitson presents a colourful retelling of political events by describing the moments in great detail. Though other writers might consider excluding elements that do not work towards

the bigger picture, the author omits no detail, regardless of how minuscule it may appear, to describe the environment and emotions in which these moments took place.

Through vivid adjectives and rich descriptions, the author painted a vibrant picture to immerse readers in the scene and emotional context of each story. Even in describing the weather during electoral seasons, the author presents a vivid scene.

Overall, *The Duel* humanizes political figures often viewed as infallible and unquestionable. By highlighting personal quarrels and emotional responses, Ibbitson reveals the humanity behind a politician’s public persona. While Lester and John had countless reasons to dislike each other, this book portrays how their relationship deteriorated due to a mere dislike of each other’s characters.

Whether in John’s deciding to

join the Conservative Party out of dislike for Liberal club leaders at his university, or his dislike for John F. Kennedy emerging from him mispronouncing his last name, *The Duel* highlights human emotions in the actions of politicians.

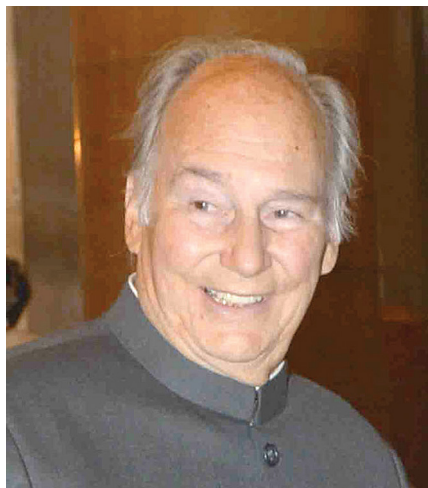
The book intimately includes anecdotes given in private settings rather than carefully crafted speeches, such as JFK’s insults towards John, which sheds the mysticism that these actors tend to hold. This approach fosters a more nuanced and humanized understanding of political actors. It encourages greater political participation by individuals who feel they might be “too flawed” for the political sector. After all,

John Diefenbaker and Lester B. Pearson, despite their enduring legacies, were just as human, and committed as many missteps, as anyone else.

# The legacy of His Highness the Aga Khan IV, a visionary leader

By Yasmin Ratansi

On February 4th, 2025, the world mourned the passing of His Highness the Aga Khan IV in Lisbon, Portugal, at the age of 88. As an Honorary Citizen of Canada and the 49th hereditary Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims, his life and work embodied a profound commitment to humanitarianism and pluralism. While addressing the Parliament of Canada on 27th February 2014 and explaining the dual responsibilities the Imam is mandated to carry, His Highness said, “The role of the Ismaili Imam is a spiritual one; his authority is that of religious interpretation. It is not a political role. I do not govern any land. At the same time, Islam believes fundamentally that the spiritual and material worlds are inextricably connected. Faith does not remove Muslims – or their Imams – from daily, practical



*His Highness the Aga Khan IV was the spiritual leader of the Ismaili Muslims. Photo courtesy of the Government of India.*

matters in family life, in business, in community affairs”.

The Aga Khan's contributions to humanity are vast and multifaceted,

making it a challenge to encapsulate his impact in a brief overview. His vision extended well beyond the Ismaili community, as he emerged as a transformative leader whose efforts resonated globally. His humility set him apart; he prioritized substance over spectacle, working tirelessly to reshape lives on every continent without seeking the limelight.

His connection to Canada dates back to 1972, during the expulsion of Ugandan Asians by President Idi Amin. Collaborating with Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, he facilitated the resettlement of 6,000 Ismailis in Canada, ensuring they became self-sufficient members of society. This initiative led to the establishment of the Industrial Promotion Service (IPS) in Canada, providing essential seed funding for entrepreneurial ventures among his followers.

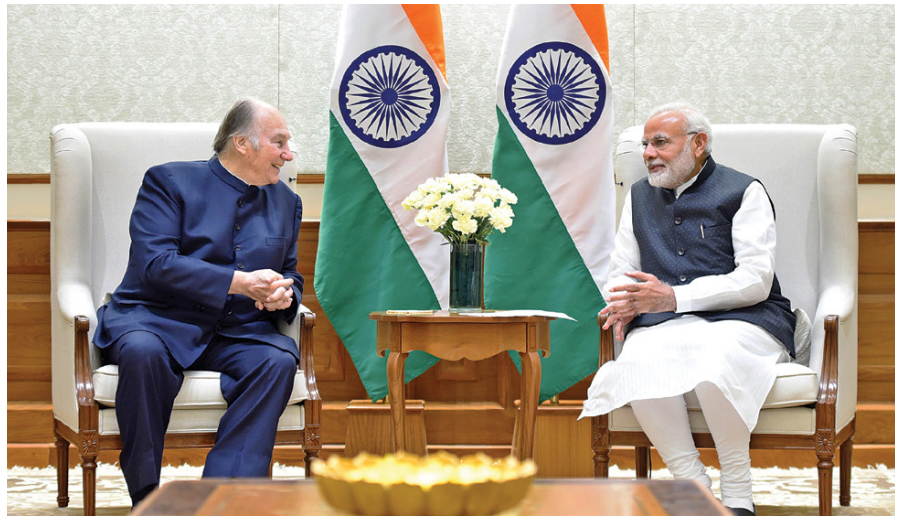


In 1967, the Aga Khan founded the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), an organization dedicated to economic development, education, healthcare, and cultural initiatives. He articulated his belief in the integration of faith and worldly responsibility, stating, "This Muslim belief in the fusion of Faith and World is why much of my attention has been committed to the work of the Aga Khan Development Network." The AKDN has since grown into a vast humanitarian institution, with over 1,000 projects across South and Central Asia and Africa, employing nearly 100,000 individuals. The World Bank recognized the AKDN as an exemplary partner in economic development, underscoring its effectiveness and reach.

In partnership with the Government of Canada, the Aga Khan established the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa in 2006. This institution focuses on research, education, and the promotion of pluralistic values, drawing inspiration from Canada's diverse societal fabric. In his book, *\*Where Hope Takes Root\**, the Aga Khan emphasized the necessity of nurturing pluralism across various sectors, stating, "Developing support for pluralism does not occur naturally. It is a concept that must be nurtured in every forum."

The legacy of His Highness the Aga Khan IV is one of profound vision and unwavering dedication to the betterment of humanity. His work has inspired countless individuals and institutions to embrace pluralism, civil society, and mutual understanding as cornerstones for a more harmonious world. As we reflect on his remarkable contributions, we recognize the indelible mark he has left on global society, reminding us of the power of leadership grounded in humility and purpose.

The Aga Khan used his wealth for the benefit of humanity. Some examples for Canada are the Aga Khan Museum, the first Islamic Museum in North America. The purpose is to understand the diversity within



*His Highness Aga Khan IV (shown here with Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi) was very active on the world stage. He had a significant relationship with Canada, including an honorary citizenship and a position in the Order of Canada. Photo courtesy of the Government of India.*

Islam and to eradicate the "Clash of Ignorance". The Aga Khan garden connects the Aga Khan Museum to the Ismaili Centre. The garden is a welcome green space to the surrounding high rises. He once said, "The Islamic ethic is that if God has given you the capacity or good fortune to be a privileged individual in society, you have a moral responsibility to society." This was not just a principle he preached – it was one he lived. He dedicated his life to ensuring that those left behind were brought forward, that education was a right, not a privilege, and that prosperity was shared, not hoarded." (1)

"I'm drawn to the question following the death this month of Prince Karim Al-Hussayni, better known as Aga Khan IV. The breadths of initiatives spearheaded by the prince's foundation were remarkable. One week we announced a program to combat an epidemic of intestinal disease in Bangladesh, the next the debut of an Ismaili Centre in Chicago, then high school scholarships in Kenya and the opening of vocational schools in India, followed by a trip to Xi'an, China to support renovation of local mosques. Today, the Foundation has a large footprint serving more than 10 million people through partnerships with civic i.e.,

non-Muslim – organizations". (Alan Ripp)

Some tributes from notable Canadians:

Former Governor of Canada David Johnson said: "This man is a bridge between North and South, East and West. His leadership is beyond politics, beyond race, beyond religion. In a world torn by division, hostility, war and fear of nuclear holocaust, he is a shining beacon of inspiration and of hard-headed accomplishment in improving the lot of humankind, in elevating the quality of civilized life and in uplifting all peoples of the world to cherish the brotherhood of man."

"The Aga Khan gave far more to Canada than the other way round. He also acted as a good will ambassador for Canada, something money cannot buy" (Haroon Siddiqui – Toronto Star)

At a time when we are being faced with manic pronouncements and threats to our sovereignty from our nearest neighbour, we must remember that the Aga Khan, the greatest spiritual leader of our time, believed in Canada. (Former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson).

*Notes: (1) New African Magazine.*

Yasmin Ratansi was the Liberal member of Parliament for Don Valley East 2004 -2011 and 2015- 2021.

# Our tribute to those who have passed on



*Carole-Marie Allard.*



*The Hon. Iona Campagnolo.*



*Marlene Catterall.*

The Hon. Iona Campagnolo: "In 1982, she was elected as the President of the Liberal Party of Canada and became the first female President of a Federal Political Party."

## **Ms. Carole-Marie Allard**

**Sept. 6, 1949 – March 18, 2024**

Carole-Marie Allard, former Liberal Member of Parliament for the riding of Laval East, Québec, passed away on March 18, 2024. Born in 1949 in Dolbeau, Québec: She was the stepmother of the Hon. Melanie Joly. She had a fruitful career as a lawyer and a journalist before she entered politics. She obtained a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from McGill University before going to law school at the University of Ottawa. She is also a graduate of the Canadian Securities Institute and the Institute of Corporate Directors. After being called to the Québec bar in 1991, Carole-Marie practiced commercial law, corporate law, and labour and employment law. She was elected to the House of Commons in 2000 and served as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage in 2003. Carole-Marie was the Vice-Chair of the Committee on Non-medical Use of Drugs, and a member of many committees, including Canadian Heritage, Government Operations and Estimates, Official Languages and Justice and Human Rights.

## **The Hon. Iona Campagnolo**

**Oct. 18, 1932 – April 4, 2024**

The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, former Liberal member of Parliament for Skeena, British Columbia, passed away April 5, 2024. She was born in 1932 on Galiano Island, British Columbia. Iona served in both provincial and federal politics during her thirty-year political career. She served in the House of Commons from 1974 to 1979 as the Minister of state for Fitness and Amateur Sport and as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (now known as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada). In 1982, she was elected as the President of the Liberal Party of Canada and became the first female President of a Federal Political Party. Iona was awarded the Order of British Columbia in 1998. She was also an Officer and a Member of the Order of Canada. After her time in Federal politics, Iona was the first female Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, a role she filled between 2001 and 2007.

## **Ms. Marlene Catterall**

**March 1, 1939 – August 12, 2024**

Marlene Catterall is remembered as an accomplished politician and a trailblazer for women's political involvement. She was born in Ottawa in 1939 and became a city councillor in 1976, serving until 1985. In 1988, she won a western Ottawa riding for the Liberals and later became the first woman government whip. Marlene was re-elected over the following four terms, retiring in 2006. She was instrumental in getting Ottawa's Famous Five monument, now outside the train station that houses the Senate. She received the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case and the ACFO-Ottawa Laurier Francophile award. Before politics, Marlene was a high school teacher and a full-time mom to three. In her many roles, she was known for her compassion and commitment to fairness and equity. The Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians gave her a Distinguished Service Award. She leaves behind her children, loving husband Ron of 62 years, family and many friends. Marlene passed away August 12, 2024, at the age of 85.



**The Hon. Michel Benoit Cogger**  
**March 21, 1939 – Jan. 27, 2025**

Michel Benoit Cogger was a Canadian lawyer and businessman who advised Brian Mulroney and served in the Senate for 14 years. Appointed in 1986, he served until 2000 and participated in many committees, including as vice chair of the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Michel became close with Mulroney when they were both law students at Laval University in the 1960s, and later led Mulroney's attempt at leadership in 1967, and his successful campaign in 1983. Born March 21, 1939, Michel was a corporate and business lawyer with many years in the industry. He was also vice president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. Michel was married to Erica for 38 years until she died in 2012, and his family knew and loved his wonderful storytelling. He passed away January 27, 2025, survived by their three children and five grandchildren.



*The Hon. Michel Benoit Cogger.*



*Robert Aldred Corbett.*



*John Martin Cummins.*



*Joe Daniel.*

Robert Alfred Corbett: "He was an avid sailor, twice crossing the Atlantic in Caribbean races, one of which he won.

**Mr. John Martin Cummins**  
**March 12, 1942 – March 2, 2025**

John Martin Cummins was born in Georgetown, Ontario, where he went to the University of Western Ontario and earned his bachelor's degree at Kings University College. He went on to the university of British Columbia for his masters. He had a varied career, first teaching school in the Northwest Territories and later at Peace River, Alberta. He spent time working in the pulp and paper industry and finally spent 20 years as a commercial fisherman. He ran for the Reform Party in 1993, winning the riding of Delta-Richmond East. While an MP, he served as the critic for Fisheries and earned the nickname "maverick MP". When he retired from politics, he said, "My hope when first elected was that when my time here was done the folks at home would say, 'He kept his word. He represented us well. That remains my fondest hope.' Thank you." In 2011, he left federal politics to become leader of the B.C. Conservative Party, leaving after two years to retire to the family farm. John is survived by his wife Sue, daughter Carolyn, and son Martin as well as stepdaughters Kristina and Erin, 10 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

**Mr. Joe Daniel**  
**Dec. 5, 1954 – Jan. 28, 2025**

Joe Daniel was the MP for Don Valley East for the Conservatives for four years.

He was born in Tanzania, East Africa, December 5, 1954, and was schooled in India. Joe completed an engineering degree in England and worked for Westland helicopters. He immigrated to Canada in 1987 and worked on the EH101 program for the Canadian Armed Forces. Joe moved to Toronto to work at Celestica and teach at Humber College, writing and presenting many academic papers on Fiber Optic technology. He also owned a graphic design and printing service business. While he served in the 41st Parliament from 2011 to 2015, Joe participated on many committees, including Citizenship and Immigration and on Industry, Science and Technology. Most recently, he was Honorary Consul for Uzbekistan in Canada. He passed away January 28, 2025, at 70, and is missed by many.

**The Hon. Joseph A. Day**  
**Jan. 24, 1945 – May 27, 2024**

Coming from a humble background, Joseph Day grew up in a hardworking family, lending a hand at their grocery store from a young

**Mr. Robert Alfred Corbett**  
**Dec. 14, 1938 – April 6, 2025**

Robert Corbett served the folks of Fundy-Royal as a Progressive Conservative member of Parliament for 16 years, from 1978 to 1993. This was after he had already spent a four-year term as an MLA in New Brunswick Legislature. He was an avid sailor, twice crossing the Atlantic in Caribbean races, one of which he won. As a businessman, he founded the Gagetown Nursing home and later, after politics a marine surveying company. On Parliament he served as chairman of the Canada-Arab World Parliament and was well known for his sympathy for Palestinians. He is survived by his children: Susan, Rivers, Robert, Sarah, and Ross Corbett, 14 grandchildren and his sister Margaret Ann as well as his many friends and dearly beloved in laws.



*The Hon. Joseph Day.*



*Peter Elzinga.*



*Walter Firth.*



*The Hon. Jean  
Beatrice Forest.*

### **Mr. Walter Firth**

**Jan. 25, 1935 – March 2, 2024**

Mr. Walter (Wally) Firth was a former parliamentarian and a Métis indigenous rights activist who passed away March 2, 2024. Walter was born in Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories in 1935. Prior to entering politics, he had a career as a flying instructor, a fur trader with the Hudson Bay Company, and an Indigenous rights advocate. Additionally, he worked for CBC Northern Service in Inuvik and Yellowknife as a broadcaster. In 1972, he was elected under the New Democratic Party as the first indigenous Member of Parliament from the Northwest Territories. He served as the NDP critic for Indian Affairs and Northern Development (now known as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada). Walter was an active member of his community, creating organizations dedicated to supporting indigenous communities in the North and advancing their political interests. He also played the fiddle, the saxophone and the piano.

Walter Firth: "He worked for CBC Northern Service in Inuvik and Yellowknife as a broadcaster. In 1972, he was elected under the New Democratic Party as the first indigenous Member of Parliament from the Northwest Territories."

age. At the Royal Military College, he met Georgie Fraser, the love of his life, with whom he shared a lifetime of devotion. After graduating, Joe pursued a law and master's degree, both of which shaped his distinguished legal career. Even after leaving Military College, he never stopped giving back to the institution that shaped him. After running for office for the Liberals several times, in 2001, Joe was appointed to the Senate by the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien. He immersed himself in policies that reflected his lifelong values. He held office for more than 18 years, from 2001 to 2020. He contributed to dozens of committees and his heart was always with his family and community. Joe found his greatest joy at Belleisle Bay, where his family cottage became a gathering place filled with laughter, conversation, and connection.

### **Mr. Peter Elzinga**

**April 6, 1944 – Nov. 8, 2023**

Peter Elzinga represented Pembina from 1974 to 1986 for the Progressive Conservatives. Born April 6, 1944, in Edmonton, Peter was a rancher, living in Strathcona county for 27 years with his wife Patricia. As a federal MP, Peter became min-

ister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and minister of Economic Development and of Agriculture. Peter later won a provincial seat for Sherwood Park, becoming deputy premier. Peter was also executive director of the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta, chief of staff to the premier of Alberta, and president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. He left government in 2004 to donate a kidney to his friend. His service to Alberta and Canada was recognized with several honours, including Sherwood Park Kinsman of the year, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, Alberta Centennial Medal, and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal. Peter was also recognized by Sherwood Parks Heritage Mile as the representative with the most distinguished record of community contributions, had a bronze sculpture unveiled in 2012, and was presented with an Eagle Feather recognition from the Whitefish Lake #128 First Nation. A scholarship was established by his family to provide support to those in financial need. Peter is survived by his wife of 58 years, three sons, five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and his sister.

### **The Hon. Jean Beatrice Forest** **July 24, 1926 – Jan. 10, 2024**

The Honourable Jean Beatrice Forest passed away January 10, 2024, at the age of 97. Born in Minnetonka, Manitoba, Jean was active in her community prior to her appointment to the Senate by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien in 1996. She worked as a businesswoman, a teacher, and eventually sat as a Trustee and Chair on an Edmonton School Board. She worked with organizations such as the Jaycees and other educational and religious associations. Jean was appointed to Alberta's first Human Rights Commission. She was the Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Alberta from 1978 to 1982. Jean was recognized for her work in 1987 when she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada. She was also awarded the Alberta Achievement Award as well as a mu-



nicipal award through the City of Edmonton for her significant contribution to the community. Jean Forest Leadership Academy, an all-girl junior high school, is named in her honour.

**The Hon. Francis Fox**

**Dec. 2, 1939 – Sept. 24, 2024**

Francis Fox was an MP for nearly 12 years and a senator for six, first elected in 1972 and served until 1984. He represented the Deux-Montagnes for the Liberal Party and was Solicitor General of Canada, the secretary of state, minister of Communications, and minister for International Trade. Francis became principal secretary to the prime minister in 2003 and was a senator from 2005 to 2011. He held multiple degrees from various universities, including l'Université de Montréal, Harvard University, and Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar. Before being elected, Francis was a lawyer and the prime minister's chief of staff. Born December 2, 1939, his legacy includes introducing legislation to make O Canada the national anthem, introducing the Access to Information Act and overseeing the creation of Telefilm Canada. Francis was also a captain in the Canadian Army and served as chair of the board of Montréal International. He is missed by his wife, artist Viviane Case-Fox, their two children, and many grandchildren, his brother and two sisters and nieces and nephews. Francis passed away September 24, 2024, at the age of 84, after a battle with cancer.

**The Hon. John Allen Fraser**

**Dec. 15, 1931 – April 7, 2024**

The Honourable John Allen Fraser was born in 1931 in Yokohama, Japan. He served in the House of Commons as the Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Vancouver South from 1972 to 1993. John was elected Speaker of the House of Commons in 1986,



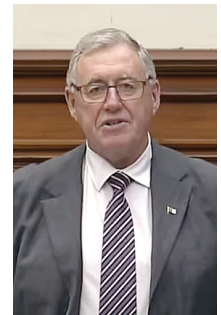
*The Hon. Francis Fox.*



*The Hon. John A. Fraser.*



*Maurice Godin*



*Daryl Kramp.*

The Hon. John Fraser: "John was elected Speaker of the House of Commons in 1986, becoming the first to be elected by fellow Members of Parliament."

becoming the first to be elected by fellow Members of Parliament. He was the Postmaster General for the Post Office between 1979 and 1980, a time when he was also serving as the Minister of the Environment. He was a member of many committees, including Foreign Defence Policy, Economic and Regional Development, Priorities and Planning, Legislation and House Planning, Federal-Provincial Relations, Labour Relations and Public Service. John was the minister of Fisheries and Oceans from 1984 to 1985, and the critic for the Solicitor General of Canada, the Environment, Fisheries and Oceans, the Post Office and Labour during his time at the House of Commons. He was also Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations for the Environment from 1994 to 1997. He was named an Officer of the Order of Canada and an Honorary Lieutenant Colonel for the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. John passed away April 7, 2024, at the age of 93.

**Mr. Maurice Godin**

**Oct. 21, 1932 – June 14, 2024**

Maurice Godin was a manager for Hydro-Québec and represented the riding of Châteauguay in the 35th and 36th Parliaments. Running for the first time in 1993, Maurice won

a seat for the Bloc Québécois with 34,271 votes. He was a lifelong independent, born in Montreal October 21, 1932. While in Parliament, Maurice was his party's critic for Veterans Affairs and assistant critic of the Environment. In his first term, he was a member of the standing committee on Human Rights and the Status of Disabled Persons, the Special Joint Committee on Canada's Defence Policy, and the standing committee on Industry. After his re-election in 1997, he also sat on the standing committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. He did not seek a third term and retired from politics in 2000. Maurice passed at the age of 91 in Laval June 14, 2024. He is survived by his wife Lucille Day, his three children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is also lovingly remembered by his sisters, brothers, and the many who were touched by his friendship and public service.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp**

**June 14, 1947 – Feb. 8, 2024**

Mr. Daryl Kramp, former Conservative member of Parliament for the riding of Prince Edward-Hastings, Ontario, passed away February 8, 2024. Born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, in 1947, Daryl had a fulsome career in municipal, provincial

*Robert Lane.**The Hon. Ed Lumley.**The Hon. Charles Mayer.*

The Hon. Ed Lumley: "Ed also helped raised a great deal of money for the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians. He was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2014."

and federal politics. First elected as a municipal councillor and deputy reeve in the municipality of Madoc, Ontario, he transitioned to provincial politics when he was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario in 2016 for the riding of Hastings-Lennox and Addington. When elected as the Conservative MP for Prince Edward-Hastings in 2004, Daryl served as the chair of the standing committee on Public Safety and National Security, the vice chair of the committee on Public Accounts and the Government Operation and Estimates Committee. He served until 2015. He was also deeply involved in international affairs associations. He was the director of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, a member of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Canada-Ireland Interparliamentary Group and the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, among many other associations. Daryl's daughter, Shelby Kramp-Neuman, was also elected to the federal riding of Hastings-Lennox and Addington and currently serves in the House of Commons.

#### **Mr. Robert Lane**

**Nov. 29, 1927 – Jan. 13, 2025**

Robert Lane represented Winnipeg-St. James for the Progressive

Conservatives for eight months. Born November 29, 1927, in Winnipeg, Bobby joined the Royal Canadian Navy at 18 and served from Victoria to Halifax. He initiated the Veteran's Memorial Endowment Fund while serving on the Deer Lodge Hospital Foundation. Bobby worked at a Beaver Lumber store, as a rent collector, and later opened his own real estate firm. He was elected President of the Winnipeg and Manitoba Real Estate Boards, became a director of the Canadian Real Estate Board, and was a board member of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. Active in the St. James Chamber of Commerce and the West Winnipeg Rotary Club, he was a believer in community involvement and raised funds for many community organizations. He was also a Shrine Circus volunteer and volunteered for various parishes. Bobby received a Canada 125 Governor General's medal in 1993 and in 2012 he was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal for outstanding public service. He loved golfing, writing poetry, researching family history and community service. Bobby passed away January 13, 2025, at 97, and is survived by his four children, seven grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

#### **The Hon. Ed Lumley**

**Oct. 27, 1939 – April 16, 2025**

A Windsor, Ontario born businessman, Ed Lumley received his Bachelor of Commerce before going into business in Cornwall. In his spare time, he coached both hockey and football. Serving first as Mayor of Cornwall in 1972, he gained a reputation as a guy who got things done.

He served as a Liberal member of Parliament for Stormont-Dundas from 1974 to 1984 during which time he held many portfolios as ministers for Communications, Regional Industrial Expansion, Industry Trade and Commerce, Regional Economic Expansion and, earlier, minister of state for Science and Technology, Trade and International Trade. He was also a parliamentary secretary to the minister of Finance and to the minister of Regional Economic Expansion. Defeated in 1984, he went on to become vice chairman of BMO Nesbitt Burns and lead director of Magna International. In 2006, he became Chancellor of the University of Windsor, raising millions for the university. Ed also helped raised a great deal of money for the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians. He was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2014. He was the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee medal and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal. He is survived by Patricia, his wife of 63 years; his five children: Bob, Kelly, Dawn, Cheryl and Chris, and their spouses as well as thirteen grandchildren.

#### **The Hon. Charlie Mayer**

**April 21, 1936- April 30, 2025**

The Hon. Charlie Mayer was born and raised in Saskatchewan. He graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a degree in agronomics.

In 1965, he bought a farm in Manitoba where he raised Simmental cattle and three daughters near Carberry. He was always opposed to supply manage-



ment and became involved with the Beef Producers Association, opposing the establishment of supply management to that industry. He is credited with the removal of oats from the Canadian Wheat Board's single desk system.

In 1979, he ran for a seat in Portage-Lisgar-Marquette and won for the Progressive Conservatives. Under Brian Mulroney he became Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board, Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds, and Minister of Western Economic Diversification and finally Minister of Agriculture.

He served on many boards and was a founding member of the Frontier Centre for Policy. Founding president Peter Holle said of Charlie, "He was very solid on policy."

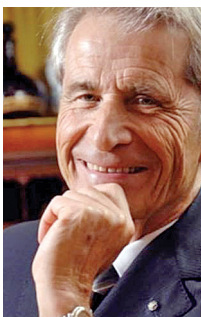
The Wheat Growers Association paid tribute Charlie saying he was a "principled leader, passionate advocate and steadfast friend to Canadian agriculture .... championing farmers and fighting for market freedom. He was never in it for praise – he did what he believed was right for our industry."

Charlie was inducted into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2005.

### **The Hon. Yves Morin**

**Nov. 28, 1929 – June 4, 2024**

Dr. Yves Morin passed away peacefully on June 4, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. His achievements are innumerable, one of the most prominent being his research in cardiology. Yves' outstanding contributions in cardiology revolutionized the field, with over 150 published works and decades of medical practices in numerous institutes and hospitals. His contributions earned him the title of Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Laval University, where he shaped the future of countless physicians. He was appointed to the Senate of Canada by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and served there from 2001 to 2004. He was a member of numerous committees. For his ex-



*The Hon. Yves Morin.*



*John Murphy.*



*The Hon. Gilbert Normand.*

The Hon. Yves Morin: "His achievements are innumerable, one of the most prominent being his research in cardiology. Yves' outstanding contributions in cardiology revolutionized the field."

traordinary legacy, he was named Officer of the Order of Canada, Officer of the National Order of Quebec, and Knight of the National Order of Merit of France. Yves' lifelong devotion to knowledge and medicine culminated in his book, *Les cœurs tigrés*, which emphasized the historically overlooked role of the Augustinian nuns in founding the first permanent hospital in northern North America. His work was honoured with the Prix Armand-Frappier of Québec and the Prix de la création littéraire at the Salon International du Livre de Québec. His legacy endures in the advancements he pioneered, the policies he shaped, and the lives he inspired.

### **Mr. John William Murphy**

**August 26, 1937 – June 12, 2024**

John Murphy was a man of deep roots – in family, in community, and in service. Born in Halifax, he developed a tight-knit bond with his brother, a relationship that shaped his life. On a day trip to the Valley, a kind stranger rescued them from a flat tire and invited them for breakfast. That man's daughter, Julia, would become the love of John's life. Together, they built a family in Wolfville, one of John's proudest achievements. Before entering poli-

tics, John worked in professions far from Parliament – selling clothing and working in mines – but these experiences kept him humble and connected to his community. John never forgot where he came from, and he dedicated his life to helping others in achieving a success story as impressive as his. His lifelong advocacy for the less fortunate extended beyond politics, seen in his work with Friends of Schizophrenia Society, the National Council of Welfare, Citizens for Public Justice, among many others. When elected as Liberal member of Parliament, he carried his mission forward, fighting for those in need with unwavering dedication. He sat in Parliament from 1993 to 1997, contributing to numerous committees. John's warm smile, boundless generosity, and outgoing personality made every life he was a part of a little brighter.

### **The Hon. Gilbert Normand**

**March 31, 1943 – Jan. 1, 2025**

Gilbert Normand was a physician, mayor of Montmagny, Quebec and Liberal MP for seven years. He was born in Montmagny on March 31, 1943, and practiced medicine for over 25 years. Gilbert was elected to represent Bellechasse-Etchemins-Montmagny-L'Islet in 1997 and was



*The Hon. Frank Oberle.*



*The Hon. Jim Peterson.*



*Kim Elizabeth Rudd.*



*Werner Schmidt.*

The Hon. Frank Oberle: "He founded the Tree Canada Foundation and received the Canadian Forestry Achievement Award in 1992."

secretary of state for Agriculture and Agri-food, Fisheries and Oceans, and for Science, Research and Development. He sat on the committees of Health and Industry, Science and Technology. Gilbert passed away January 1, 2025. His legacy includes his respected work as a doctor and infrastructure projects for the community of which he was mayor. Gilbert is survived by his wife Line Ancil, their three children, eight grandchildren, his sisters and many more who knew him.

#### **The Hon. Frank Oberle**

**March 24, 1932 – Sept. 12, 2024**

Frank Oberle was born March 24, 1932, in Forchheim, Germany, and immigrated to Canada in 1952 after surviving the Nazi regime in Germany and Poland. He became a baker, logger, miner, insurance salesman, and mayor of Chetwynd. Elected in 1972, he spent nearly 21 years representing Prince George-Peace River for the Progressive Conservatives, leaving in 1993. Frank was the minister of Forestry, Environment, and State for Science and Technology. His cabinet legacy includes overseeing the CanadArm's development on the International Space Station. He founded the Tree Canada Foundation and received the Canadian For-

estry Achievement Award in 1992. He founded the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research. Frank authored two autobiographies detailing his journey from war to Parliament. He was his family's biggest cheerleader and is survived by his four children, eight grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Frank passed peacefully on September 12, 2024, at the age of 92.

#### **The Hon. James (Jim) Scott Peterson**

**July 30, 1941 – May 10, 2024**

James (Jim) Peterson grew up in London, Ontario, where he found his lifelong partner while in elementary school. From hockey rinks to debate halls, from academia to community, he excelled at everything he did because he embraced each ambition with determination and kindness. As an international lawyer, Jim played a pivotal role in the defection of Soviet ballet star Mikhail Baryshnikov during the peak of the Cold War – a daring act that forged a lifelong friendship. After a prominent legal career, Jim continued positively influencing Canada as a Liberal member of Parliament for Willowdale, where he held the roles of Secretary of State for International Financial Institutions and minister for International

Trade. During his tenure, he reformed the Criminal Code to provide stronger protections for women who were victims of assault. Jim found happiness tending to his farm, teaching woodworking to children in his community, and spending time with his beloved dog, Duffy. In his 23 years in the House of Commons, he was known for his many roles in cabinet and shadow cabinet.

#### **Ms. Kim Elizabeth Rudd**

**Nov. 18, 1957 – March 12, 2024**

Kim Rudd passed away peacefully on March 12, 2024, in Cobourg, Ontario, surrounded by her loved ones. She was 66 years old. Kim carried significant household responsibilities from a young age. As the first Member of Parliament for Northumberland-Peterborough South, she served as parliamentary secretary to the minister of Natural Resources, chair of the Parliamentary Health Research Caucus, and a member of the standing committees on Finance and Natural Resources. Kim was a Liberal Member of Parliament for four years, from 2015 to 2019. Beyond politics, she was an active member of numerous local charitable organizations and an advocate for education through the institutions she owned: Cook's Day School, Willis College, and Archer CPR Training. Her entrepreneurial skills earned her the RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur award. She remained deeply rooted in her hometown, remaining active in the Rotary Club of Cobourg and local sporting groups. Despite her many achievements, Kim always considered her family her proudest accomplishment.

#### **Mr. Werner Schmidt**

**Jan. 18, 1932 – March 29, 2024**

Werner Schmidt dedicated his life to the service of others, through governance and education. Werner's political journey spanned both federal and provincial spheres. He helped



found the Reform Party of Canada, representing the riding of Kelowna. He later served under the Alliance and Conservative parties, taking on many critic roles and was vice-chair of the Conservative Caucus. Werner was in the House of Commons for more than 12 years, from 1993 to 2006. He previously led the Alberta Social Credit Party in the provincial legislature. Beyond politics, Werner was a strong advocate for education as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. He carried this passion into leadership roles, serving as executive director of the Alberta School Trustees Association and vice president of Lethbridge Community College. Even in retirement, his commitments never wavered, volunteering and mentoring in political campaigns to support those who shared his dedication to public service. Werner Schmidt passed away at the age of 92, surrounded by his beloved wife, sons, and grandsons – the family he cherished and for whom he worked to build a better world.

#### **Mr. Robert Sopuck**

**July 11, 1951 – Oct. 23, 2024**

Robert Sopuck was a Conservative MP from 2010 to 2019, serving as the party's critic for Environment and National Parks for two years. He was born in Winnipeg July 11, 1951, and went on to get a Master of Science degree in fisheries science at Cornell University. Passionate about conservation, Robert worked as a fisheries biologist with the federal and provincial governments. With his growing interest in policy, Robert became the provincial director of the Sustainable Development Coordination Unit. He later became the director of environmental affairs at the Pine Falls Paper Plant and later a policy analyst at the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. Robert's contributions to wildlife and habitat conservation have been recognized by national and international awards. While in office, he sat on the standing committee



*Robert Sopuck.*



*The Hon. Chuck Strahl.*



*Paul Szabo.*

Robert Sopuck: "Robert's contributions to wildlife and habitat conservation have been recognized by national and international awards."

tee on Environment and Sustainable Development and was vice chair for the standing committee on Fisheries and Oceans. Robert passed away on October 23, 2024, at age 73. He is lovingly remembered by his wife Caroline, two children, three grandchildren, sister and brother, and nieces and nephews.

#### **The Hon. Chuck Strahl**

**Feb. 25, 1957 – Aug. 13, 2024**

Chuck Strahl was a logging businessman and member for Chilliwack-Fraser Canyon for 17 years, from 1993 to 2011. He was born to a logging family on February 25, 1957, in New Westminster, B.C. He met the love of his life, Debby Bateman, at 10 years old. They married in 1975. Chuck ran for public office in 1993 after many years in the family logging business. He was the whip and house leader of the Reform Party, and later the house leader for the Canadian Alliance party. He held various critic and party roles and became deputy speaker of the House of Commons from 2004 to 2006. When the Conservatives won government in 2006, Chuck became minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, and minister responsible for the Canadian Dairy Commission,

the Canadian Wheat Board, and for British Columbia and the Territories. He also served as minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, and later minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, responsible for the National Capital Commission and Canada Post. Despite his success in politics, Chuck always valued his faith, family and friends above all. He passed away on August 13, 2024, at 67. He is survived by his wife, mother, two brothers and a sister. He is also mourned by his four children and many grandchildren. Chuck's son, Mark Strahl, currently sits in the House of Commons.

#### **Mr. Paul Szabo**

**May 10, 1948 – Dec. 19, 2024**

Paul Szabo represented Mississauga South for the Liberal party from 1993 to 2011, through six Parliaments. He was a member of many committees and chaired the standing committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, the standing committee on Government Operations and Estimates, and others. Born May 10, 1948, he was also a published author.



*Donald Taylor.*



*John William Thomson.*



*The Hon. Monique Vézina.*

Paul Szabo: "Paul was awarded 'The hardest working' member of Parliament in 2006 and won the same award twice more."

Paul was a chartered accountant, director of finance for TransCanada Pipelines, a corporate treasurer for United Cooperative of Ontario, and vice-chair and director of the Mississauga Hospital for nine years. He was also director of Interim Place shelter for abused women for five years and was a director of the Peel Regional Housing Authority for five years. He spoke more words than any other MP in the 38th and 39th Parliaments. He was the parliamentary secretary to the minister of Public Works and Government Services. Paul was awarded "The hardest working" member of Parliament in 2006 and won the same award twice more. He was also elected as a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario and received the Rotary International Paul Harris Fellowship for his work and support for Rotary. Paul passed away December 19, 2024, at age 76 and leaves behind his wife Linda, three children, four grandchildren, and four siblings.

**Mr. Donald (Don) L. Taylor**  
**May 29, 1931 – Dec. 14, 2022**

Donald Taylor was the MP for Cowichan–Malahat–The Islands from 1979 to 1980. He was born in Edmonton, Alberta, May 29, 1931.

Don was also a teacher and travelled the world with his family. He spent a year teaching in England, and was passionate about exposing his children to churches, cathedrals and castles across Europe. After retirement, he and his wife Mavis travelled the world from Europe to Asia. Besides gardening and lawn bowling with Mavis, Don loved to spend his time watching sports on mute and listening to jazz. While in Parliament for the Progressive Conservatives, Don served on many committees. He passed away at age 91, December 14, 2022. Don is survived by his wife, two children, two grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

**Mr. John William Thomson**  
**Dec. 28, 1928 – January 9, 2025**

John William Thomson represented Calgary South for the Progressive Conservatives for five years and was a respected businessman and philanthropist. He was born in Toronto on December 28, 1928, he moved to Calgary in 1955 after receiving his chartered accountant designation. In 1965, John founded Thomson Drilling, which became an international success. He married his wife of 68 years, Joan McFarlane, after meeting her at a wedding reception. After

being elected in 1979, John participated in several committees, serving as vice-chair of the Subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs to Promote Profit-sharing by Employees in Business. He was a golfer, whose love for the game was only outmatched by his love for his family. John and his wife founded the Julia McFarlane Diabetes Research Centre at the University of Calgary in 1979, and they sponsored the Thomson Family Community Park in Calgary's Beltline, just two blocks away from where they were married. John passed away January 9, 2025, at age 96. He is survived by his sister, five children, 12 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

**The Hon. Monique Vézina**  
**July 13, 1935 – Dec. 15, 2024**

Monique Vézina was an MP Elected to Rimouski–Témiscouata for the Progressive Conservatives from 1984 to 1993. She was minister of several portfolios. Born in Rimouski, Quebec July 13, 1935, she worked for numerous organizations for education and family services. She became president of her local credit union and an executive for a Quebec-wide credit union, serving on Quebec's higher education council, her local school board, a provincial auto insurance board, and she was an honorary board member for the Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale. Elected for the Progressive Conservatives in 1984 and serving until 1993, Monique was appointed minister for External Relations and la Francophonie, minister of Supply and Services, and minister of state for Transport, Employment and Immigration, and Seniors. From her career in politics, she chaired the National Commission on the Future of Quebec, became an officer of the National Order of Quebec and received the National Assembly medal for her contribution to society. Monique was president of the Mouve-



ment National des Québécois and winner of the Grand Patriote prize. Her legacy also includes drafting the first Women and Development policy, highlighting the central role of women in community development. Monique passed away December 15, 2024, at 89, a few months after her husband, Jean Yves Parent. She is lovingly remembered by her four children, five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and her brothers and sister.

**Mr. John Glass Williams**  
**Dec. 31, 1946 – July 15, 2024**

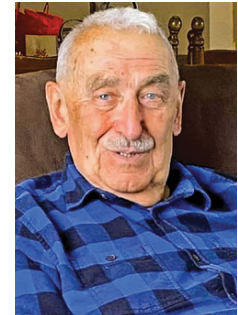
John Glass Williams was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, and spent nearly 15 years in the House of Commons. He is described as a humble country boy with a dry but wicked sense of humor. Though his time in office took him all over, John was happiest back in rural Alberta on his hobby farm, caring for his beloved pet jersey cows. He found joy in building homes for his chickens, and most of all, he loved spending time with family and friends in Alberta and Scotland. John succeeded in school but left at a young age to work at the Clydesdale Bank and moved to Canada to begin a career with the Royal Bank of Canada, inspired by an uncle working for the Hudson's Bay. He met his first beloved wife Carol Munro in 1971, and they married in 1975 and had two children. John represented St. Albert in the House of Commons since 1993, serving as the Reform Party's critic for public accounts. Serving on many committees, John chaired the Public Accounts committee from 1997 to 2005 and founded the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption. After tragically losing his wife to cancer, John married Dr. Christine Botchway and they had a daughter. He retired from politics in 2008 but worked on the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption until 2013. John passed July 15,



*John Glass Williams.*



*The Very Reverend the hon. Dr. Lois Wilson.*



*Bob Wood.*

The Very Reverend the Hon. Dr. Lois Wilson: "For her work in human rights, ecumenism, social justice, and political contributions, Lois was awarded 14 honorary degrees."

2024, at 77 after dedicating his final years to his faith. He is missed by his wife, children, four grandchildren, and many more lives he touched.

**The Very Reverend the Hon.**  
**Dr. Lois M. Wilson**

**April 8, 1927 – Sept. 13, 2024**

Lois Wilson was an independent senator from 1998 to 2002 and an active member on the Human Rights and Aboriginal Peoples committees. She was born in Winnipeg, April 8, 1927. Lois was the first female Moderator of the United Church, president of the World Council of Churches, vice-president of the World Federalist Movement and chair of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. For her work in human rights, ecumenism, social justice, and political contributions, Lois was awarded 14 honorary degrees, the Queen's 25th Anniversary medal (1977), The Pearson Peace medal (1985), Officer of the Order of Canada (1984), Order of Ontario (1991), Companion of the Order of Canada (2003), Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Award for Christian Unity (2010), and the Heart and Vision award (2011). She was also the chancellor of Lakeland University and authored 10 books. Lois passed away at age 97 in Fredericton, N.B., and is

survived by four children, 12 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

**Mr. Bob Wood**  
**March 11, 1940 - April 12, 2025**

Born in Ayers Quebec, Bob Wood served the riding of Nipissing as a Liberal member of Parliament for 16 years from 1988 to 2004. He started his career as a member of the RCAF from 1959 to 1964 and then moved into broadcasting in Sherbrooke, Quebec and later North Bay Ontario. He also served as Deputy mayor for North Bay for four years. He was known as a caring man who did many small acts of kindness, bringing Santa's anonymous blessings to families at Christmas and donating prepaid gas cards for others who needed to travel out of town for medical appointments. In 2021, he was honoured for his work in keeping 21 Wing in North Bay back in 1998. The city renamed Airport Way to Bob Wood Drive. "He believed in public service, in living life to the fullest and in approaching each day with gratitude. He lived that way – fully and gratefully – until the very end," said his daughter, Sue-lane Wood.

# The Hon. Murray Sinclair

## The legacy of a leader, a senator, and a friend

By Michael McBean

**N**ov. 4, 2024, Canada lost former Senator Murray Sinclair, but his legacy of advancing the rights of Indigenous people lives on in the memories of his past colleagues.

Murray served as a Senator from 2016 to 2021 before being appointed chancellor of Queen's University for a three-year term. Murray was known for leading the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and advocating for Indigenous rights.

Former Senator Jim Munson worked with Murray and remembers him warmly.

"I think of a gentle, dignified and determined human being, and you felt that when he first walked into the Senate," Jim said in an interview with *Beyond the Hill*.

A member of Peguis First Nation, Murray was born in 1951 north of Selkirk, Manitoba. He graduated from the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Law in 1979 and was called to the bar a year later. Murray was the first Indigenous judge in the keystone province and the second in the country.

Murray's legal career made significant strides in Indigenous law. As a lawyer, he fought to ensure Indigenous peoples' legal rights were recognized and upheld within the Canadian legal system. His legal work included advocating for treaty rights and fighting against discriminatory practices that impacted Indigenous communities.

"It was quite simple, when he spoke, you listened," Jim said, noting Murray's tremendous insight over issues facing Indigenous people. "We listened to the lessons of life we should have learned a long time ago."

Murray became known for his work in leading the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The commission's work focused on informing Canadians about the devastating impact Canada's residential school



*The Hon. Murray Sinclair receiving his Order of Manitoba in the summer of 2024.*

system had on Indigenous people. In 2015, the commission published its final report documenting the history of the country's residential system.

In 2016, Murray became Canada's 16th Indigenous Senator. Murray was a member of numerous Senate standing committees including those on Indigenous services, constitutional issues and fisheries and oceans.

Thousands of tributes poured in after Murray's passing with his former colleagues knowing him for being a respected voice on Indigenous issues in Parliament.

"Murray Sinclair was a great friend and Senate colleague. We were appointed at the same time. He inspired me every day. Rest in peace Murray," said former Senator Frances Lankin in a post on LinkedIn.

"Many of us are mourning the sad and untimely demise of a great man Murray. I had the honour to work with him in the Senate. He was kind, humble, patient and a great teacher especially to me. His passing is a great loss to all Canadians. Rest in peace

my friend," said former Senator Mobina Jaffer in a post on X.

Murray was also a frequent speaker at conferences and events, where he educated both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences on the importance of reconciliation and understanding. His speeches often focused on the need for Canadians to confront uncomfortable truths about the country's history and to work together towards a more just future.

In 2021, Murray retired from the red chamber and moved on to Queen's University. Over his career, Murray earned many awards including being named a Companion of the Order of Canada, named to the Order of Manitoba, and winning a National Aboriginal Achievement Award.

Jim Munson said he hopes people continue to remember the lessons Murray offered to Canadians when it comes to reconciliation.

"I look at Murray Sinclair as being a teacher to all of us," Jim said. "We as students listened and we need to continue to listen."





*Save the date!*

Join us for the 2025  
Memorial Service  
and Annual General  
Meeting June 15 & 16

#### Event Schedule

- **Welcoming Reception:** June 15th
- **Memorial Service:** June 16th - Please join us to honour and remember those who have made significant contributions to our community.
- **CAFP and Education Foundation AGM, Reception, and Dinner:** June 16th

Register today – secure your spot by registering at [exparl.ca](http://exparl.ca). We look forward to seeing you in June.

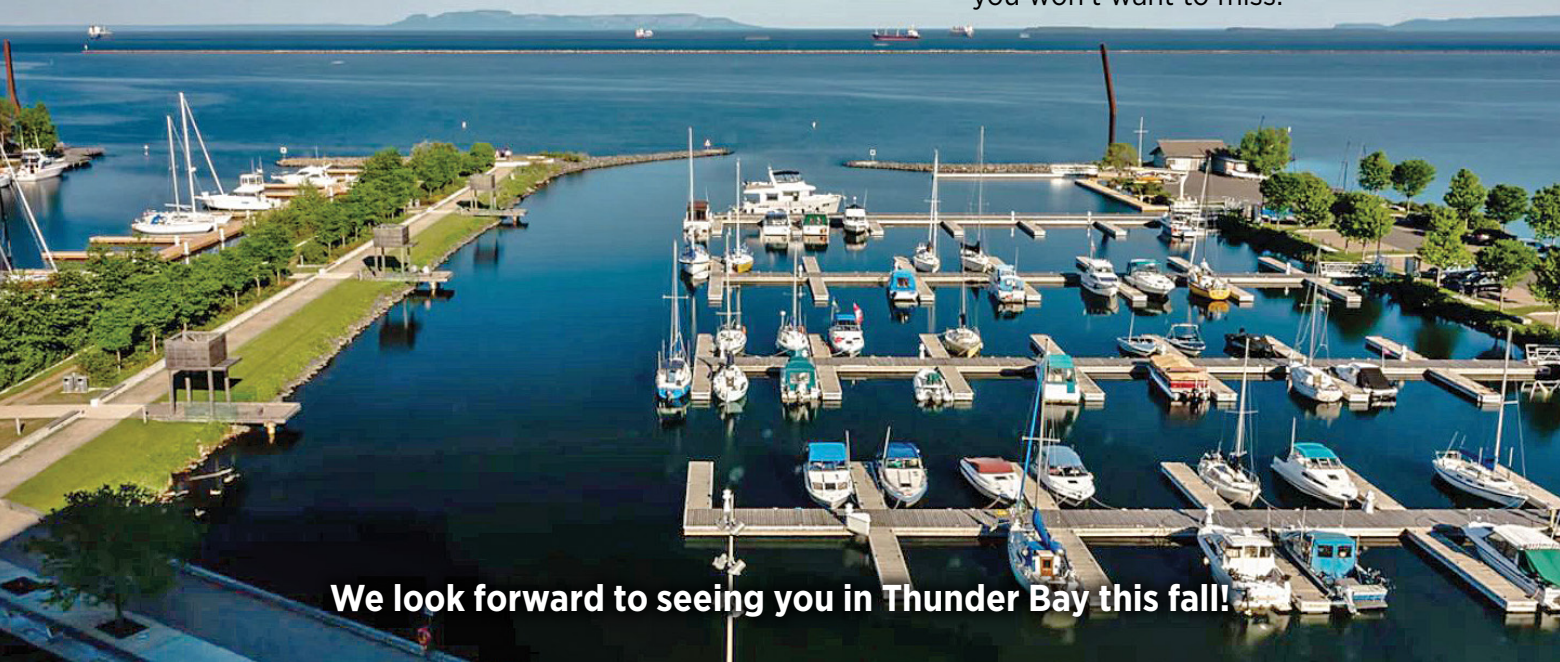
*Save the date!*

Regional Meeting in  
Thunder Bay, Ontario  
from Sept. 19 - 21, 2025

We're excited to announce the upcoming Regional Meeting in beautiful Thunder Bay, Ontario, from Friday, September 19 to Sunday, September 21!

This is a wonderful opportunity for our members to come together, network, and share ideas in an inspiring setting.

Mark your calendars now! More details, including registration information, will be coming soon. Stay tuned for updates as we prepare for an event you won't want to miss.



We look forward to seeing you in Thunder Bay this fall!